



COMMUNITY-WIDE YARD SALE DRAWS CROWD AT SPORTSMAN LAKE P9

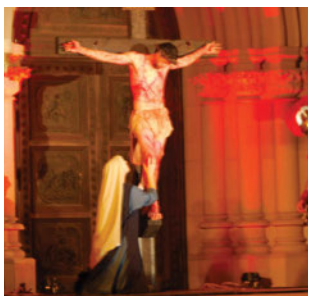


CONTRIBUTED

CHS JUNIOR THIRD RUNNER-UP IN MISS ALABAMA'S OUTSTANDING TEEN 2016 P6

YPCULLMAN: YOUNG PROFESSIONALS MIX, MATCH AND HAVE A GREAT TIME P2

COLLEAGUES REFLECT ON CECILIA SMITH'S "MAJOR IMPACT" ON CULLMAN TOURISM P3



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HUNDREDS GATHER AT THE SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT P7

FAIRVIEW HOSTS ANNUAL CULLMAN CO. ARCHERY TOURNEY P4

LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

TONY PERDUE AND THE TMFP BAND ROCK KARMA'S

Amy Leonard

amy@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN - "We work for tips, y'all. We've got some fines to pay and legal battles to fight. You think we're kidding, but we're not," Andy Clark, lead guitarist extraordinaire for Tony Perdue and the TMFP Band, informed the Karma's Coffee House crowd on a Friday night a couple of weeks ago.

The statement only added credit-

ability to their showcase of original outlaw songs and a set that also included classics by Jerry Lee, Elvis and Hank Sr.

Always quick with a kind word, Sunday morning church good manners and infectious laugh, Perdue is a native of Holly Pond. And, this local son and north Alabama rockabilly staple came home to Karma's to play a lively two-hour set with Clark, a Huntsville resident, on March 11.

No longer a scrappy kid with

green spikey hair and eyeglasses bigger than his profile, Perdue has an unmistakable style that was a welcome change in the Cullman soundscape.

Playing as a duo without the band's bassist nor drummer, Perdue and Clark proved that, as they have matured, the richness and depth of their musical styling has followed suit.

Tipping his hat to the classic country **P10**



JASON LEONARD

Holly Pond native Tony Perdue is a north Alabama rockabilly staple.

WALK MS: CULLMAN 2016 FILLS HERITAGE PARK

Annual walk raises funds to fight multiple sclerosis



AMY LEONARD/CULLMANSENSE

Walk MS: Cullman 2016 took place at Heritage Park on Saturday morning, March 19.

P10

EMA NEWS

CULLMAN COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETS

Event Featured Guest Speaker Keith Blackwood from Cullman-Jefferson Gas

Sharon Schuler Kreps

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CULLMAN - On Thursday, March 17, the Cullman County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) held its first of two meetings for 2016 in the Cullman County EMA training room. The event featured guest speaker Keith Blackwood from Cullman-Jefferson Gas, who spoke to the attendees about first responder

training for natural gas leaks and emergencies.

"As a reminder, the LEPC did vote in 2009 to go from quarterly meetings to just the required two meetings per year, unless we needed more," said Phyllis Little, Cullman County EMA director. "That can be changed at any point by the membership by amending the bylaws. Right now we are operating under two meetings a year for the association and this

committee is tasked with all hazards-planning."

After the meeting was called to order, Cullman City Police Chief Kenny Culpepper led the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterwards, the committee reviewed and approved the financials.

"In addition to the \$2,500 that shows on the report, we have had \$1,300 in voluntary donations from **P7**

HEALTH

County Schools' Nutrition Director Adams Integral Part of Statewide Farm-to-School Initiative

Cullman County Schools one of five school districts in Alabama that made USDA grant reality



DR. AMBER ADAMS

Child Nutrition Director, Dr. Amber Adams, enjoys working with local farmers and providing homegrown food to the children in Cullman County Schools.

Sharon Schuler Kreps

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CULLMAN - Last month, the Food Bank of North Alabama (FBNA) and partners were one of 21 projects in the nation to win a U.S. **P5**

ONE STEP CLOSER TO NEW COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT

Amy Leonard
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CULLMAN – Communication was the key topic on Tuesday night as the four finalists for the position of Cullman County Schools Superintendent were put through public interviews by the Cullman County Commission on Education. The interviews took place at the Cullman County Board of Education office downtown.

The four finalists are vying for the role that was vacated by Dr. Craig Ross back in November of last year. CCBOE’s Interim Superintendent, Dr. Brandon Payne, will be leaving his role after the new superintendent comes on board. Payne, who was previously CCBOE’s assistant superintendent under Ross and long-time principal of Vinemont High School, has accepted a position with LEAN Frog in Huntsville.

Prior to the evening, the finalists were each given a copy of the questions to be asked at the public interviews. Each candidate, while answering in their individual styles, emphasized the key point of communication and all identified as being servant leaders.

Mr. Shane Barnette, principal at Cullman County’s West Point Intermediate School and the only finalist with direct ties to the school system,

was the first interview and cited the County’s need for consistency and emphasized the position would not be a stepping stone to ready him for greener pastures.

“During my tenure as an educator I’ve had opportunities to take positions outside of our district. There’s been high school positions that pay more than what I’m making now, but I choose to be here. This is where my heart is. This is where I want to be. I believe our school system right now is in need of long-term stability, and I think I can provide that. I bring stability, but with gradual, strategic innovation.”

Barnette “felt like God was calling me to be an educator” and is currently attending Samford University to complete his doctorate. If chosen for superintendent, he plans to “listen, listen, listen” to the needs of all of the schools and their students.

“Each day as an instructional leader and a principal I feel like I do everything I can for my teachers and my students to be the very best that they can be, to be the best leaders that they can be, and I feel like if you choose me to be superintendent of Cullman County Schools I will do that for our entire county.”

Dr. Donald Snow, the second interviewee of the night, is the current principal of Aus-

tin High School in the Decatur City School District. A member of the class of 1986 from nearby Arab High School, Snow has been an educator for 24 years and is in his 13th year as principal and athletic director at Austin. Current enrollment at Austin is over 1,400 students with 90+ teachers under Snow’s leadership.

Identifying as a leader who isn’t afraid to roll up his sleeves to seek solutions, Snow outlined his open-door policy and history of implementing successful programs designed to increase graduation rates as his assets.

Supportive of one-to-one initiatives, Snow wishes to see a netbook in every student’s hand while ensuring teacher training for technology. Noting that he “hires good people” as a key to combating personnel issues, Snow would spend his first few months “getting to know the players” in the schools throughout the system and finding out about Cullman.

Snow noted his 24 years of experience as the key to making him the best candidate for the superintendent position.

Dr. Elizabeth Swinford, consultant/superintendent of Tuscaloosa County Schools and native New Yorker, was the most experienced candidate with 32 years in education, 25 of those in administra-

tion. Despite the years spent in administration, Swinford was quick to point out that she “will always be a teacher.”

Swinford is the only applicant with a previous superintendent position having served five years in the position in the Tuscaloosa County School System. She said she would incorporate a “listen and learn” approach and utilize community forums and social media to communicate with the county. Identifying the need to be a strong presence and representative of the board of education in the community, Swinford said she would remain active in her many volunteer positions including United Way, the Alzheimer’s Association and Relay for Life.

Noting she has never had a budget go in the red, Swinford said she has been responsible for budgets up to \$180 million and is a strong supporter of taking advantage of available federal and state grants. Most recently, she oversaw the planning, building and opening of the new Brookwood High School in Tuscaloosa.

“I have experience as a superintendent. I have many years at central office. I know how to get along with people because I have a great background in HR. I think that I would make you proud and I would serve this community,”

shared Swinford.

Lastly, Dr. Rick Carter, current director of virtual programs for the Athens City School District, aptly incorporated a PowerPoint presentation during his interview. Displaying his extensive professional affiliations and accomplishments, including being a 2014 National Principal of the Year Nominee and serving as National Association of Secondary School Principals State Coordinator, Carter noted, “I do believe that one person can make a difference.”

Stressing the need for communication, Carter displayed his objective of “clear and concise communication” and a framework for achieving his communication goals which included individual monthly meetings with principals, quarterly town hall meetings and strong reliance on advisory committees.

Carter explained his goal of having the students within the system, “Ready for college. Ready for work. Ready for life.” He noted that the “safety of students and staff” would be his first priority and the school facilities that were in need of repair would be taken care of before the technology initiatives cited by some of the other applicants.

Referencing the butterflies in his stomach the day of the interview as an indica-

tor of his passion, Carter said, “If you’re not nervous about an opportunity, especially in leadership, something’s wrong. It doesn’t mean you can’t do it. It just means that you understand the responsibility that’s required of the position. 10,000 kids, not even counting the hundreds of employees or the communities that are dependent on Cullman County schools. It’s a major undertaking. It’s one that I don’t take in the slightest as being something easy. It’s going to take work.”

Carter concluded with, “But, what I can tell you about me is that I’ll give you everything I’ve got.”

The Commission will meet again on Monday, March 21 at 6 p.m., where it will appoint the new Superintendent of Cullman County Schools. The meeting will take place at the Cullman County Board of Education central office in the board room. The CCBOE is located at 402 Arnold Street NE.

For background, see:
<http://cullmansense.com/articles/2016/03/04/ccboe-superintendent-position-search-narrows-four-applicants-brandon-payne-step>

<http://cullmansense.com/articles/2015/11/19/cullman-county-boe-accepts-superintendents-resignation>

YPCULLMAN: YOUNG PROFESSIONALS MIX, MATCH AND HAVE A GREAT TIME

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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CULLMAN – On Thursday, March 17, at Karma’s Coffee House, YPCullman (YP for Young Professionals) met for the first time. More than 50 of Cullman’s young professionals attended the inaugural meeting for the group, which is designed to groom

Cullman’s next generation of business leaders. A product of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, YPCullman challenged the young adults of Cullman County (ages 22-39) to meet, mix and maintain friendships.

“YP is a young professional’s group,” said Ben Smith, director of small business for the Chamber.

“Our intention is to enjoy each other and find a way we can impact the community through one way or another. Since this is our first quarterly meeting, we’re not really sure what that’s going to be. We want to leave it as sort of a grassroots movement and let everybody here decide. It’s really going to depend on what everyone wants to do. I

think the main thing is getting people together, making those connections and then, from there, you can have something happen. We just want to engage our generation.”

“This first year we are going to do more social things with the 40 and unders to get to know each other, learn each other - the climate, the culture they are in,” said Leah Bolin,

Chamber president. “We are giving everyone a survey tonight and we want them to determine the direction of what YP is going to do, because it’s their group.

“We’ve planned four quarterly socials this year, and then we will probably gain speed with each one. Then by 2017 I think you’re going to see some amazing things out of

this group,” she smiled.
The next YPCullman gathering will be on May 5 at Goat Island Brewery. Employers are encouraged to send their employees who are ages 22-39. For more information about YPCullman, email Magan Bartlett at mbartlett@cullmanchamber.org.

PULMONOLOGIST KARL T. SCHROEDER, MD JOINS CRMC; BRINGS LUNGGPS TECHNOLOGY TO CULLMAN

Meredith Easterwood
CRMC

CULLMAN – Cullman Regional Medical Center (CRMC) is pleased to welcome pulmonologist Karl Schroeder, MD to the medical staff, specifically to the practice of Cullman Primary Care Multi-Specialty Group. He is currently scheduling appointments for new patients.

Schroeder is passionate about the early detection of lung cancer.

With this, he has started a Lung Nodule Clinic in which he biopsies small nodules found in a patient’s lungs in order to detect and treat lung cancer early.

“I’m excited to bring the new LungGPS technology to the Cullman area,” Schroeder said.

“This advanced technology can aid in earlier diagnoses of lung cancer which may allow for less invasive treatments for patients.”

A native of Huntsville, Schroeder received his

medical degree in 2007 from the University of South Alabama in Mobile after receiving his undergraduate degree in chemistry from the University of Montevallo.

Schroeder completed his internal medicine residency and internship at the University of South Alabama in 2010.

Following his residency, he completed a fellowship in pulmonary disease and critical care medicine at the University of South Alabama.

Schroeder is married to Dr.

Melissa Schroeder, an internal medicine physician currently practicing in Pinson.

They have three children. In his free time, he enjoys watching his kids play soccer, playing golf and spending time with his family.

To schedule an appointment with Schroeder, call the CRMC Physician Referral Line at 256- 735-5600 to be connected directly to his office or visit www.crmchospital.com.

Dr. Karl T. Schroeder has joined Cullman Primary Care Multi-Specialty Group.



CRMC

COLLEAGUES REFLECT ON CECELIA SMITH’S “MAJOR IMPACT” ON CULLMAN TOURISM

Wendy Sack

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CULLMAN – If you're close to the tourism industry in our area, the announcement of the departure of Cullman's Tourism Director Cecelia Smith most likely came as a complete shock, as explained by several Tourism Board members and business owners.

While the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce has no comment, Smith has stepped forward to answer a few questions regarding her time in Cullman. Smith declined to answer questions about why she was dismissed from the Chamber Monday evening March 7, 2016. Multiple people claim that Smith was relieved of her position around 6 p.m. and then escorted out of the building. Smith would not confirm these reports; however, she did not deny them.

CullmanSense asked Smith several questions, and below are her responses.

CS: So what attracted you to the job?

Smith: From a young age I've always received enormous satisfaction in bringing others together. I felt like Cullman was at a tipping point for some great possibilities, and I thought it would be a great opportunity to be involved in helping shape the future of tourism here. There are people in Cullman with great vision and I just wanted to add to the discussion and hopefully be able to be a positive influence.

Knowing that my actions can have a direct impact on our visitors' experiences motivated me to constantly innovate and improve. Visiting Cullman is not just a destination, but an experience, and it was extremely important to me that I keep that experience a positive one.

CS: What was the best part of your job?

Smith: The best part of my job as the Tourism Director was promoting the Cullman area and what it has to offer. Meeting new people and building relationships throughout the Cullman community, both personal and professional, and taking an opportunity to get to know each business or individual a little more to find out what's important to them and how I can help promote them along the way.

Every person in our community plays an important role in the way that visitors view Cullman. Also, collaborating with a Tourism Board that is truly dedicated to being leaders in promoting the Cullman area. I could have never have been as successful without the support of a tremendous Tourism Board of Directors.

CS: What has been your most rewarding experience in the past year?

Smith: In my role, this has included traveling to cities with the support of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association to share with potential tourists and tell them what we have to offer. They are great cheerleaders, as they promote our community regularly.

At the same time, the residents of the Cullman area continue to instill the Southern values of welcoming visitors and newcomers and looking out for their neighbors. I am absolutely in love with what the Cullman area has become over the past couple of years. I am thankful for the support I have received since the day I arrived.

CS: Where to now?

Smith: I am not sure. God will open the right door for me. I have learned to embrace change. We moved often. Each move brought new challenges and new opportunities. One thing that stayed constant was that I made many friends in each town that I called home. Cullman residents have embraced me and I have become all the better for my time here. Thank you!

After we spoke with Smith, members of the Tourism Board were contacted, including current Board President Josh Wiggins.

Wiggins, like most of the board, was shocked when he found out Smith had been asked to leave the Chamber the previous evening. "I was one of the few that did know because it happened so late at night," said Wiggins. "I was so in shock that I tried to call the other board members so they would know before our meeting."

Wiggins went on to read a written statement.

"Cecelia will be greatly missed. It was great to work with her during my short time on the board. I just recently became Chair and was looking forward to working with her further. She was always very

organized and always keeping us up to date on all the projects regarding tourism in Cullman. As far as I know she is one of the best tourism directors we've ever had," he continued.

"She was known at the local, state, and regional levels. She represented Cullman at many different trade shows all over the country. I'm just hoping in the future we will find someone that will continue all of her great efforts she displayed in tourism for Cullman."

Wiggins was one of only a few people notified about the decision. The rest of the Tourism Board found out Tuesday morning (March 8) at their scheduled monthly meeting.

Others in Cullman's tourism world reached out to CullmanSense to speak about their feelings about Smith's dismissal and whether it is a positive or negative move.

Donny Wilson, Director of the Evelyn Burrow Museum, said he has had the privilege to work alongside many tourism directors. However, when it comes to Smith, Wilson said there was something different.

"Not taking anything away from the others, Cecelia was the best I have seen in all my years. She worked hard to keep a balance with the many difference personalities that make up tourism in our community. This has been one of the hardest parts of the job in the past, yet she seemed to do it effortlessly," said Wilson.

He said one of Smith's best attributes was her willingness to go anywhere to promote Cullman and all it offers. This meant a lot of traveling and a lot of trade shows.

"The many trade shows promoting Cullman and the county, and staying in contact with all of us and helping to promote the many different aspects of tourism in the county. She made a big impact on tourism in Cullman and north Alabama, sitting on the Executive Board of North Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourism Association. It will be hard to replace her in my book. She has been a big asset that will be missed," he finished.

Nathan Anderson, Director Cullman City Parks & Recreation, said, "Cecilia is always great to work with on any tourism project. She always looked for ways to promote Parks and Recreation wherever she went. We really appreciate all she has done for us."

Meanwhile in Hanceville, at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Jennifer Prybyla, assistant director of

pilgrimages, reminisced on how the two met.

"I met Cecelia back in July 2013 when she started working as the Tourism Director. I invited her to come and visit the Shrine," said Prybyla. "She agreed and came (with camera in hand) for a tour within a few days. Instantly, upon meeting her, I knew she was a perfect fit for this job because she had so much passion for meeting new people and seeing new sites."

When asked if Smith had been a positive boost for the Shrine and the surrounding area, Prybyla said, "Cecelia has been such a positive boost for the Shrine over these past few years. Not only did she love the beauty of the Shrine, but the roots in her Catholic faith helped enrich her experience when visiting," she continued. "As she promoted the Shrine throughout Alabama and northern states, she was able to take her own experience and share it with others, which she did so often. Over the past few years, she has brought many people to the Shrine, including her own family, a Tourism Board member and photographers."

One constant Prybyla could count on was Smith coming by the Shrine at least once per month to restock brochures for local attractions and events, along with restocking maps at the Shrine's information booth.

"Cecelia also asked me to be part of the Tourism Board in 2014. I was very honored that she wanted a representative from the Shrine to be a part of Cullman tourism," she said.

Prybyla was asked how she would best describe what Cecelia has done with her time as Tourism Director from her perspective. Her full response is below:

"Cecelia has done an

outstanding job as Tourism Director. Not only does she have a loving heart and friendly personality, but Cecelia gave her all when it came to this job. She always had a smile on her face and truly loved promoting Cullman. Cecelia helped make Cullman very known by attending meetings, events, ribbon cuttings, Snowbird shows, and the list goes on and on. I really saw her love for Cullman and dedication to this job during our Tourism Board Meetings. She always came prepared with handouts of monthly Chamber activities, a division activity report, and articles about Cullman in magazines. She always had new ideas that she would bounce off of us members, especially when it came to unifying businesses, attractions, and restaurants. Our Board has grown over these past two years because of her inspirations such as: billboards, brochures, Cullman map, new website, and Tourism Awards event.

Cecelia's position as Tourism Director will be replaced, but she CANNOT be replaced. I am deeply saddened that everything she worked so hard for might be jeopardized if the Chamber does not choose someone with such dedication and passion about tourism. Our Tourism Board has truly been hurt because of the loss of our leader and the way it was handled."

CullmanSense editor Wendy Sack reached out to the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce from Friday through Saturday (March 11 and 12) in an attempt to secure a quote. However, the chamber stated in an email, "It is Chamber policy not to discuss current or prior employees."

CullmanSense publisher Noah Galilee reached out to the Chamber's full Executive

Board, along with Chamber President Leah Bolin once we received an email response asking that we cc (carbon copy) the entire Executive Board when asking such questions (about employees). Galilee asked any of the members to make a comment, but all declined to reply to the email except for one.

Gloria Williams, member Executive Board of Directors for the chamber, has been a big supporter of Smith since her arrival in 2013. Williams had the following to say about Smith and her time in Cullman and what all she's accomplished.

"When I first met Cecelia, she had been hired to take over the responsibility of the tourism in Cullman and Cullman county thru the chamber of commerce. I was newly appointed to the executive board of directors. I had not personally been involved with tourism, but I knew we were in bad need for someone with experience to step in. The hotel industry was totally in a turmoil and we needed someone to jump into a situation and get everyone pulling together. Cecelia was not from Cullman, but her experience and connections had an overwhelming reaction. Everyone seemed to get back on track and the tourism train took off with a positive force. I believe losing Cecelia is a loss for Cullman and Cullman County. Her winning smile and the love she has for tourism will be totally missed. I wish her all the best for whatever God has in store."

Publisher's Note: CS strives to be impartial and tell all sides of every story, but when parties wish not to speak with our reporters, editor or publisher, we can only report the sides willing to come forward.

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NASP ARCHERY

FAIRVIEW HIGH SCHOOL HOSTS THIRD ANNUAL CULLMAN COUNTY ARCHERY TOURNAMENT

Sharon Schuler Kreps
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FAIRVIEW – The Third Annual Cullman County Archery Tournament was held at Fairview High School on Wednesday and Thursday, March 16-17. Elementary, middle and high school students from throughout the county came together and competed for trophies as well as bragging rights for the year to come.

“This is the Third Annual Cullman County Archery Championship which is a two-day event,” said Mark Moore, Fairview’s archery coach.

“We have both the County and City Schools involved for a total of 15 schools. This event has grown every year; this is the third year we have hosted it. Archery is fun and it gets a lot of kids involved in a sport, especially the ones who aren’t involved in football, cheerleading, baseball or whatever. It’s just an awesome thing for the kids.

“Archery is probably the fastest growing sport across the nation as far as high school and middle school sports goes,” he grinned.

There are many advantages to participating archery. Children who take archery are taught discipline and mental focus.

They learn to pay attention to detail and to be persistent. Patience is another very important life lesson that is gained – it takes lots of it while trying to hit that bull’s eye!

“This is my second year of archery,” said Elijah Edge, a ninth grader at Fairview.

“Last year I won 1st place in the middle school division for Cullman County. I wanted to take the trophy home with me last year, but had to leave it at the school,” he grinned.

“The tournament is a little harder this year because I am in high school, so there’s a little bit more competition.

“Archery is fun, the

tournament is a good thing,” he added.

“It lets the other schools get together and have a good time. Being in a tournament brings a lot of pressure, but being under pressure helps you to shoot well. It’s fun getting out and doing what you love; archery is something fun you can do with your friends.”

The tournament couldn’t have been done without lots of work from volunteers throughout the Fairview community.

“I’d like to give special thanks to Coach Hite and Coach Moore for the time they have dedicated to these kids,” said Tonja Grace, Fairview archery parent and team volunteer.

“Thank you to Terry Gandy for helping and supporting our boys, and thank you also to Lance Gandy and Elijah Edge for spending the last three hours getting everything set up and ready.”

Archery has become a very popular sport among Cullman’s area youth. Back in January, through a local grant from the Heritage Archery Club, a Cullman chapter of the Bowhunters of Alabama, National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) archery equipment was awarded to four area schools.

This was a result of the local club working together with the city and state in support and promotion of the Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources’ Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) Division’s community archery strategy.

West Point School, Fairview High School, East Elementary School and Welti Elementary School all applied for the grant and received the equipment, purchased with private funds.

Heritage Archery Club offered \$5,000 in grant funds to area schools and partnered with the WFF Division and CP&R for distribution and

promotion of the continued archery lifestyle here in Cullman and all of Cullman County.

An overview of the tournament results is below. For full standings, visit <http://qrne.ws/naspfhs>.

TOURNAMENT RESULTS Elementary School Division Teams

1. East Elementary 3073
2. Welti Elementary 2543
3. Holly Pond Elementary 2472
4. West Point Intermediate 2374
5. Sacred Heart 2293
6. Hanceville Elementary 2260
7. Vinemont Elementary 2178
8. Fairview Elementary 1639

Individuals- Boys Top 3 (see link for full standings)

1. Evan Johnson, EES 262
2. Arden Crane, EES 261
3. Jackson Bentley, EES 260

Individuals- Girls Top 3 (see link for full standings)

1. Katie Skinner, EES 280
2. Haylie Segers, EES 266
3. Reese Fox, EES 254

Middle School Division Teams

1. Cullman Middle School 3151
2. West Point Middle School 3043
3. Vinemont Middle School 2977
4. Holly Pond Middle School 2865
5. Fairview Middle School 2707

Individuals- Boys Top 3 (see link for full standings)

1. Colton Rayborn, CMS 280
2. Connor Laney, CMS 275
3. Cy Lambert, CMS 273

Individuals- Girls Top 3 (see link for full standings)

1. Sarah Hudson, WPM 272
2. Abella Skipper, CMS 270
3. Karley Blaylock, FMS 264



PHOTOS COURTESY SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

East Elementary Team High School Division Teams

1. West Point High School 3360
2. Fairview High School 3193
3. Holly Pond High School 2720

Individuals- Boys Top 3 (see link for full standings)

1. Ethan Little, WPH 286
2. Brenden Riethman, WPH 285
3. Daniel Farr, WPH 282

Individuals- Girls Top 3 (see link for full standings)

1. Savannah Campbell, WPH 286
2. Madeline Whitesell, WPH 286
3. Breanna Junkins, WPH 276



West Point High Boys



West Point High Girls



Cullman Middle School
Individual Boys



Katie Skinner Individual
Winner Elementary

COUNTY SPORTS SCHEDULE
WEEK OF MARCH 21

MONDAY
Baseball
Cullman vs Osceola (FL) TBA
Good Hope vs JB Pennington 7 p.m.

TUESDAY
Softball
Cullman vs Marbury (Gulf Shores) 9 a.m.

Softball
West Point vs Athens Bible 2 p.m.
Good Hope vs JB Pennington TBA

THURSDAY
Baseball
Holly Pond @ Susan Moore 4:30 p.m.

Compiled by Josh McBayer

PREP BASKETBALL SCORING WRAP-UP

MONDAY
Baseball
Hanceville 6, Good Hope 2
Hanceville 17, Good Hope 0
Vinemont 12, Brindlee Mountain 0
Vinemont 7, Brindlee Mountain 3

THURSDAY
Baseball
Cullman 8, Austin 1
Lawrence County 14, Fairview 3
Lawrence County 10, Fairview 6

Softball
West Point 4, Fairview 1
Susan Moore 14, Vinemont 4

Softball
Lawrence County 10, West Point 3
Good Hope 8, Pennington 3
Vinemont 1, Holly Pond 0

TUESDAY
Baseball
Lawrence County 10, Fairview 5

FRIDAY
Baseball
Cullman 12, Thompson 5
Cullman 6, Thompson 0

Softball
West Point 10, Falkville 5
Good Hope 7, Oneonta 5

Softball
Cleveland 17, Vinemont 0

Compiled by Josh McBayer

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HISTORICAL PROFILE: CULLMAN FLORIST

Amy Leonard

amy@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Celebrating its 50th year, Cullman Florist is a staple in the local flower business that has outlived all of its original competition from the 1960s.

Originally owned by Gladys Bright and Sylvia Ward, the flower shop operated under the name of Brighton Ward’s throughout the depression of the 1930s and until it was sold in 1966.

That’s when Geneva King took over.

“When Mother first bought it, of course we kept the phone number, and when we answered the phone, we had to say, ‘Cullman Florist, formerly Brighton Ward’s’ and I don’t know how long we did that. It seemed like forever!” said King’s daughter, Annette King McHan.

King, a Holly Pond native, began her floral design career as a teenager while working for her future husband’s aunt who owned a flower shop. The aunt taught young King the tools of the trade.

What couldn’t be taught, however, was King’s dedicated work ethic which was needed to get business booming at her newly acquired Cullman Florist.

First located on Ward

Avenue on the city’s west side, Cullman Florist and its tiny, but feisty owner groomed many of the town’s best known designers. Running the roads to design workshops and events, King would load her designers into her van and make sure they stayed on top of the latest trends.

Working beside King after school and on Saturdays was her daughter, McHan, who watched and learned from a young age. McHan was in the fourth grade at St. Paul’s Lutheran School when her mother purchased the business.

Known for her dedication and charm, King’s commitment to her business knew few limitations. During Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day and other flower giving holidays, King would often come home late at night and feign sleep until her husband fell asleep. Once Harold King was snoring and she could get back to the shop without a firm talking to from her husband, King would hop out of bed and get back to work.

“There were professional women in the 1960s in Cullman, and Mother aligned herself with them. She was fierce. She loved her civic duties and those meetings were a priority.”

The shop moved to a new

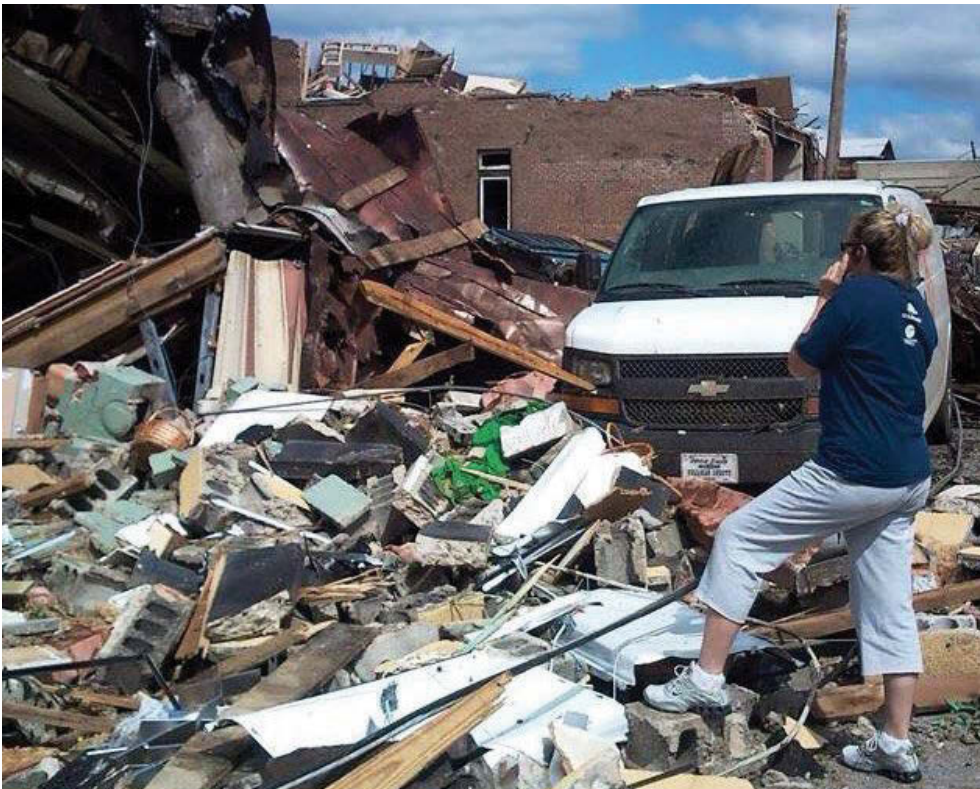
location on the east side around 1980, and business continued to grow for the passionate King, who soon purchased her newly rented location from the Doyle family. While King remained visible in groups like the Pilot Club and Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce and was winning the Businesswoman of the Year award, her daughter was attending college at the University of Montevallo. Yet, when home, McHan continued to put in hours at the family business.

In 1999, King placed Cullman Florist in the capable hands of McHan and her husband, Terry. To be expected, there were growing pains. McHan tells of when the credit card machine was implemented at the shop, which was foreign to King.

“The main thing that changed is we started taking credit cards. Mother was horrible at taking orders,” laughed McHan.

Taking orders by hand for many decades, King would usually list only a customer’s first name on the “bill to” line with no address. After all, she knew who her customers were. However, that made billing a nightmare.

“Those were the same disagreements she and my daddy had beginning in the



ANNETTE MCHAN

The Cullman Florist shop was completely destroyed by the tornadoes of April 27, 2011.

60s,” laughs McHan, “Daddy would say ‘Geneva’ and Mother would mutter, ‘Oh shoot, what did I do now?’”

King passed away on November 7, 2010, six months before the 2011 tornadoes that devastated many buildings and businesses in Cullman. Cullman Florist was one such business, suffering a complete loss of the building.

“We stayed in the same location until April 27, 2011

when we blew over to the Warehouse District,” joked McHan.

In its new location at 111 First St. NE, Cullman Florist is still the go-to shop for wedding flowers, funeral arrangements, get well soon gifts and personalized service.

Citing a conversation that her husband had with local developer Roy Drinkard, McHan said, “Everybody sells flowers. Publix sells flowers.

Wal-Mart sells flowers. Everyone does. So, what do we have to offer that’s different than that? Service. Personal service. Reliable service. We comfort people in loss. We encourage people in the happy times. That’s what we have to offer.”

That kind of service is what Geneva King built Cullman Florist on and it’s what continues to grow the vision of her daughter, Annette McHan.

Adams (from Front)

Department of Agriculture Farm-to-School Program grant.

The food bank and partners were awarded \$100,000, the highest award possible, which will fund a statewide Farm-To-School initiative. Cullman County Schools is one of five school districts in the state that collaborated to make the grant a reality.

According to a release from the FBNA, the statewide Farm-To-School initiative is made possible by “an unprecedented collaboration among the Alabama Department of Education, Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries, Food Bank of North Alabama, Alabama Cooperative Extension, Cornell University, Alabama Farmers Federation, TotalCom, a Huntsville marketing firm, and five leading school districts including Madison County Schools, Madison City Schools, Huntsville City Schools, Cullman County Schools and Birmingham City Schools.”

Cullman County Schools Child Nutrition Director Dr. Amber L. Adams was the catalyst behind the school system’s involvement in the program.

Since Adams came on board as child nutrition director in June 2015, county school lunches have undergone some interesting changes. For one, those old cardboard milk boxes are a thing of the past; now students drink their milk, available in white, chocolate and strawberry flavors, from small plastic “chugs” that fit perfectly in their hands. From time to time, special guests are invited to sit down and eat with students, especially during events such as “Bring a Friend to Lunch Day,” “Honoring Local Farmer Day” and “Dr. Seuss Day.” But the biggest change is that students across the county are now eating fresh fruits and vegetables grown right here in Cullman County.

“One of the things I really enjoy about my job, although it’s not something I have to do, is working with Tony Glover with the Cullman County Extension Office,” said Adams. “I had never realized what a gem Cullman County was in terms of agriculture, and I began to wonder why we weren’t doing any farm-to-school activities. Again, this is something I don’t have to do; it’s just something I am interested in and this is the

perfect place to do it,” she smiled.

“When I came to Cullman last year, the schools were already getting some of their sweet potatoes from a local grower,” she explained. “I partnered up with the Food Bank of North Alabama, Cullman Caring for Kids, the County Extension Office and local organizations that represent Cullman County farmers to expand our current outreach efforts because we are all in this together. At the end of the day, I’m trying to feed as many hungry kids as possible, and that is what they are trying to do as well.”

With the help of the FBNA and Cullman Caring for Kids, Adams soon began meeting with local farmers, finding out what they grow and where they are located. Once all of the information was gathered, Adams began to pair local farmers with the schools closest to them. Now, homegrown sweet potatoes and other fresh produce are delivered to the schools on a regular basis.

The \$100,000 USDA Farm-to-School Program Grant is only awarded to one organization per state, and was awarded to the FBNA

and its partners. It will allow the food bank to increase the volume and diversity of locally grown produce served in over 1,500 school cafeterias and 13 summer feeding programs.

“This pioneering farm-to-school initiative gives Alabama school children access to fresh, healthy food choices and creates economic opportunities for family farmers,” says Frank Speed, administrator of the Food Distribution Program for the Child Nutrition Programs at the Alabama State Department of Education.

The partners, including Cullman County Schools, will use the funds to connect schools with local farmers and promote healthy, locally-grown fruits and vegetables in school cafeterias across the state. The project’s aim is to help the state address serious public health issues while fostering economic development. In Alabama one in three children (ages 10-17) are overweight or obese. At the same time, the state has lost over 2,000 farms in five years according to the latest U.S. Census of Agriculture.

“This award is a win for local farmers and a win for Alabama children,” said Kathryn

Strickland, executive director of the FBNA. “It will enable us to support local farmers with our food purchases and at the same time promote healthy eating in schools.”

“Farm-to-school programs work—for schools, for producers and for communities,” said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. “By serving nutritious and locally-grown foods, engaging students in hands-on lessons and involving parents and community members, these programs provide children with a holistic experience that sets them up for a lifetime of healthy eating.”

“I feel so honored to be a partner with the Food Bank of North Alabama in this endeavor and am grateful for the opportunity to expand Cullman County’s current farm-to-school initiatives! One of the hardest things about offering more fresh fruits and veggies in a school nutrition program is the cost,” said Adams. “This additional funding will help offset the costs associated with the local produce-to-school movement. I think the local farmers are happy with the current farm-to-school outreach that has

been extended to them, and this should only excite them further.”

Adams attended Wallace State Community College after graduating from Arab High School. She transferred to Jacksonville State University where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition and dietetics. She continued her education and earned both her master’s in public health and doctorate in community health education from Walden University.

Before coming to Cullman, Adams worked at the Alabama State Department of Education Child Nutrition Program as education administrator. Before that, she worked with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and taught health and wellness as an adjunct instructor at Middle Tennessee State University. She served as a Child Nutrition Program Director in Calhoun County and worked with the Sodexo Marriott Corporation, as well as a private caterer, in Anniston.

To learn more about the USDA Farm-to-School Grant Program, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-grant-program>.

CHS JUNIOR THIRD RUNNER-UP IN MISS ALABAMA'S OUTSTANDING TEEN 2016

SYLACAUGA – On Sunday, March 6, the Miss Alabama's Outstanding Teen 2016 pageant was held at B.B. Comer Memorial High School. Cullman's Brooke Edwards, a junior at Cullman High School, was named third runner-up.

Edwards was awarded a total of \$66,700 in college scholarships, including a \$500 cash scholarship, an \$8,000 Auburn University scholarship, an \$8,000 University of Alabama stipend, a \$14,000 University of Montevallo scholarship, an Auburn University Achievement Scholarship (\$2,000 for four years) and Troy University Chancellor's Scholarship (\$32,000 over four years).

Tiara Pennington, a 17-year-old junior at Helena High School, was crowned Miss Alabama's Outstanding Teen 2016. She received a total of \$186,780 in scholarships.

First runner-up was Auburn High School's Jessica Baeder, who received a total of \$30,000 in scholarships.

Second runner-up Charity Bowden of Hooper Academy received a total of \$30,000 in scholarships.

Finally, fourth runner-up, Lindsay Fincher, a student at Handley High School received a total of \$92,000 in scholarships.

Top ten semifinalists included Caitlyn McTier of Sylacauga, Annie Ozment of Childersburg, Katie Zeigler of Smiths Station, Kyra Callens of Birmingham and Katelyn Richard of Hoover.

The Miss Alabama's Outstanding Teen Pageant is the only affiliate of the Miss Alabama Pageant, Inc.

For more information, visit <http://outstandingteen.homestead.com>.



Miss Alabama's Outstanding Teen Top Five. From left, Lindsay Fincher, fourth runner-up; Charity Bowden, second runner-up; Miss Alabama's Outstanding Teen 2016, Tiara Pennington; Jessica Baeder, first runner-up; and Brooke Edwards, third runner-up.

CONTRIBUTED

THE LINK'S ANNUAL EVENT AN EMOTIONAL, UPLIFTING AFFAIR

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The Link of Cullman County's annual event and auction, GROW 2016, took place on Tuesday night, March 15, at Loft212. This year's event included a review of 2015, recognition of the Link's 2015 Dream Big award winners, a message from Shane Quick of Premier Productions and a silent auction to raise funds for all the GROWTH happening at The Link.

"In 2014 we began a new award for The Link of Cullman County where we honor two sets of people within our community that are willing to "dream big" and partner with us for God and through the vision we lay on our hearts to accomplish," said Julie Hall, director of neighbor relations.

"The first is a community partner, the second is a neighbor; someone who has come to us in crisis, has set a dream and is now well on their way to accomplishing that."

The Dream Big Community Partner award was given to Stephen Skinner, along with Sherry Henry, who is one of The Link's "neighbors" Skinner has employed at his storage facility business for over a year.

Neighbors are those whom The Link has reached through ministry at the Cullman Child Development Center (CCDC), by going into the elementary and high schools and those who have walked through the doors at The Link.

The Dream Big Neighbor award was presented to Peggy Thornton, who has regained her life with the help of The Link.

Once homeless, Peggy has served time in jail and gone through rehab.

Once she found The Link, she earned a certificate from its first Jobs for Life Class, took parenting and many other classes, worked several part-time jobs and attends church on a regular basis. She was able to get her children back and has relationships with her family.

Shane Quick of Premier Productions was the night's guest speaker.

Quick is an inspiration and member of our local community. He has personally experienced how God can plant seeds within us and help make them grow beyond our wildest dreams.

"I'm not supposed to be here tonight," Quick began.

"I, like a lot of people who go to The Link, came from a broken home. I am the only member of my family that has not been addicted to drugs. Mental abuse, physical abuse and just about anything you can think of happened in my home in Hanceville, Alabama. I had a plan to take my own life; I literally saw no hope for the future. I was not supposed to be here tonight, but God put a very specific thing in my life to change it. People; throughout my life, one by one, God put people in my life at the right time, just in the nick of time.

"You don't know how many people come into your program and it's their last straw, it's the last thing they have left," Quick said, addressing The Link staff.

"That is what God did, one by one. Isaiah 52:7 says, 'How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring the Good News', and that is what you guys do."

After Shane's inspirational story, Dawn Owens, founder and executive director of The Link, addressed the crowd. She was extremely thankful for everyone's help in the past and she shared her vision for the future.

"Growth takes on many different forms," she explained.

"For a life transforming organization like us, we seek to see a change of heart, a renewal of the mind and ultimately new actions. Because of the generosity of so many incredible donors, we have seen growth in our neighbors all across the county, from the youngest to the oldest. Thank you for partnering with us in 2015," she added.

"Your generosity and support are making an eternal difference in the lives of so many neighbors in our community. We hope you will continue to partner with us in 2016 so that together we can see God continue to GROW us individually and corporately."

The night was filled with emotion, and lots of happy tears were shed as people listened to the success stories

of The Link's neighbors.

"Every time there's a meeting, an event, anything at all...I am completely blown away by what God is doing through this ministry," said guest Stacie Carter.

"Loved hearing personal testimonies of lives transformed, watching the graduates receive life degrees, hearing Shane Quick's amazing talk, seeing the growth over the last few years. I loved it."

Those who feel called to

help or know someone who needs help are encouraged to visit The Link at 1101 Third Ave. SE or reach them by phone at 256-775-0028, email at info@linkingcullman.org or online at www.linkingcullman.org.

For helpful information that is updated frequently, follow The Link on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TheLinkofCullmanCounty/.

SAVE THE DATE

DANCING IN THE STREET

Spring 2016 Charity Fundraiser

FASHION SHOW

AND LUNCHEON

April 27, 2016

Administrative Professionals' Day

McGukin Civic Center

11:00 am Shopping 11:30 Lunch

Ticket Sales Locations: Museum, Civic Center

Contact: Joyce Black 256-595-0622

Peggy Day 256-709-4625

Ticket Price \$20

PILOT CLUB OF CULLMAN

the VINTAGE BEVERAGE CO.

1627 MAIN AVE. NEXT TO FUN ZONE

FAITH

HUNDREDS GATHER AT THE SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

Stations of the Cross Performed Live by the Cenacolo Community

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

HANCEVILLE – On Friday, March 18, the Cenacolo Community performed the Living Stations of the Cross live in the piazza at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville. Hundreds of people were there to witness the powerful, yet solemn performance.

“I’d like to thank Mother Angelica and all the Sisters for allowing us to be here once again. What a beautiful setting that helps introduce us to the story of Holy Week,” said the Most Rev. Robert J. Baker, S.T.D., bishop of the Birmingham Diocese.

In the Catholic Church, the Stations of the Cross is a devotion that commemorates the day Jesus Christ died.

There are 14 devotions, or stations, that focus on spe-

cific events of his last day, beginning with his condemnation.

While doing the Stations of the Cross, individuals move from station to station, stopping at each to recall, meditate and pray until all 14 are complete.

In Catholic churches, the Stations of the Cross can be seen along the walls as a set of 14 small statues or images depicting the events Jesus endured that day so long ago.

The stations are most commonly prayed during Lent on Wednesdays and Fridays, especially on Good Friday, the day of the year on which it is believed the events actually occurred.

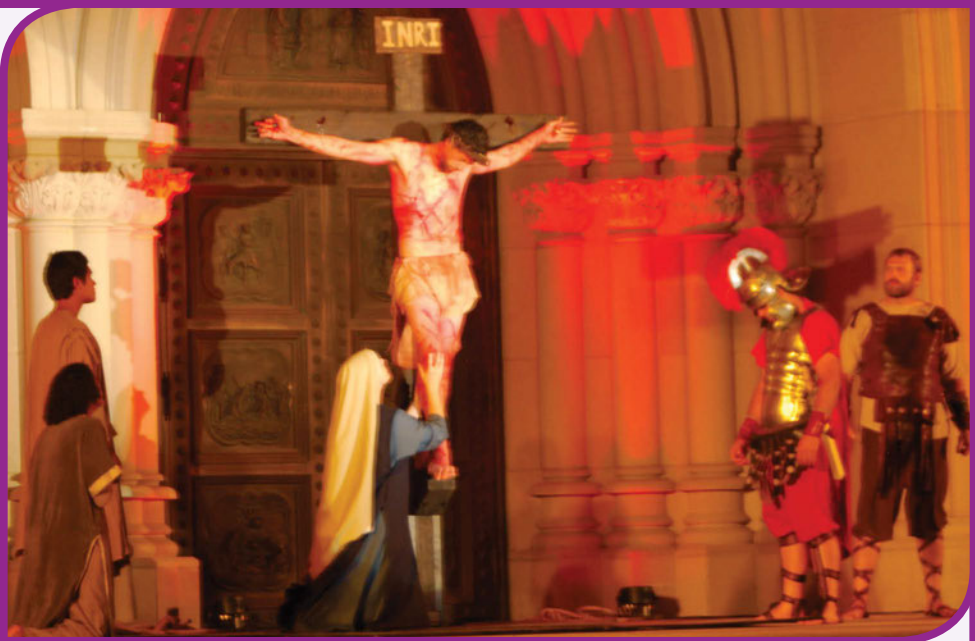
“It just tore my heart to pieces to see what all he went through, what he did for us, what he did for me; I’m nobody,” said attendee Jason Hicks with tears in his eyes.

“It was really beautiful. They also did a great job with the narrating to go along with it to really drive the point home. Personally, this came at a good time in my life and this has really put things in perspective for me.”

The Cenacolo Community is part of the international Comunità Cenacolo, (Community of the Cenacle/Upper Room). It was founded in Italy in 1983 by a faith-filled religious sister named Elvira Petrozzi.

Mother Elvira felt certain that God was calling her to serve the poor of the modern world, the disillusioned young men and women who live in desperation and hopelessness who are convinced that life has no meaning or value.

Unable to find peace or joy in their lives, they seek to fill the emptiness with the il-



SHARON SCHULER KREPS/CULLMANSENSE

With colorful lights and authentic looking costumes, the Cenacolo Community performed the Living Stations of the Cross at The Shrine for hundreds of people Friday evening.

lusory pleasures of the world, such as drugs and alcohol, only to find themselves filled with intense interior isolation.

Placing complete trust in the direction of the Holy Spirit, Mother Elvira tells all who live in darkness that Jesus Christ is the only one who can heal and transform their shattered lives.

He changes despair into hope, sadness into joy, hatred into forgiveness and death into life.

There are now over 60 Cenacolo communities

throughout the world.

Four of them are located in the United States; three are in Florida and one, Our Lady of Joyful Hope, in Hanceville.

“I’ve never seen the Living Stations of the Cross, especially at The Shrine; we are new to Cullman,” said attendee Tammy Carpri afterwards.

“It was a beautiful experience and it really brings us in touch with the Easter season. A few weeks ago I saw it advertised and thought about going, but we kind of forgot about it, but today I remembered and decided to go. God

obviously brought us here, there are no coincidences,” she smiled warmly.

The Living Stations of the Cross was truly an inspiration to behold.

Plenty of tears were shed, hearts were humbled and prayers were said. All that attended felt they had been abundantly blessed and many vowed to come back to see it again, year after year after year.

For more information about the Cenacolo Community, visit them online at www.hopereborn.org.

Committee (from Front)

businesses and industries this year,” Little announced.

“So the association does have some funds if there is a project that the community needs to take up, whether it is a training class that we have to pay somebody to come in for or to purchase equipment at the end of the year for the Hazmat Team.”

Old business was discussed at this point.

There was no unfinished business pending and it was confirmed that the number of 302 facilities has not changed since the last meeting.

The group was given a list of 23 incidents that were reported since Jan. 22. Candace Adkins from the Alabama Department of Public Health is the committee’s healthcare representative.

She told the group that they had formed the Alabama Health Coalition, which consists of seven counties in north Alabama.

The Cullman group will meet monthly other than the

months when the whole group gets together quarterly.

The focus of the group is how to take care of healthcare issues during emergency events.

“The group will be doing a functional exercise that everybody north of Jefferson County will be participating in. It will be an April 27- based event with tornadoes; there will be a hospital and long-term care facility that’s ‘hit’ to see how we will deal with that. We have that scheduled for May 11. It is an HSEEP-compliant exercise. If anyone wants to participate in that, please let me know and we will get you involved.” (HSEEP-Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program)

After the business part of the meeting was over, guest speaker Keith Blackwood, an engineer with Cullman-Jefferson Gas, gave a presentation.

He discussed the properties and characteristics of natural gas, the explosive

limits of natural gas, potential ignition sources and types of emergencies.

He concentrated on what to expect from Cullman-Jefferson Gas and what Cullman-Jefferson Gas expects from first responders in the event of an emergency.

It was very informative and there was plenty of discussion afterwards.

At the end of the meeting, Little announced the EMA’s next scheduled event-Tornado Awareness Training, which will be held on June 10 from 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. in the Cullman County EMA training room (basement) located at 2020 Beech Avenue SE.

For more information about the event, call 256-739-5410, email cullmancountyema@gmail.com or visit www.cullmanema.org.

Find them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CullmanCountyEMA.

Music by
Alan Menken

Lyrics by
Howard Ashman Tim Rice

Book by
Linda Woolverton

CULLMAN HIGH SCHOOL'S THEATRE
AND CHORAL DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

Disney's
**Beauty
and the Beast**

**Cullman High School
Auditorium**

Tickets available at the door
\$10 Adults, \$5 Children (12 and under)

OPENING NIGHT
Friday April 8th 7:00 pm

MATINEES
Saturday April 9th 12:30 pm
Children under 12, Senior Adult \$3 Show
Saturday April 9th 3:30 pm
Understudy Show

FINAL SHOW
Saturday April 9th 7:00 pm

Presented in conjunction with the Licensing Company, Musical Theatre International

**Follow us on Twitter
@CullmanSense**

Monday

City of Cullman Zoning Board Meeting
Monday March 21, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., City Hall Auditorium

Garden City Town Council Meeting
Monday, March 21, 6 p.m. at Garden City Town Hall

West Point Town Council Meeting
Monday, March 21, 6 p.m. at West Point Town Hall

Appointment of New CBOE Superintendent
The Cullman County Commission on Education will meet on Monday, March 21, at 6 p.m. for the purpose of appointing the Superintendent of Cullman County Schools at the Cullman County Board of Education central office board room, 402 Arnold St. NE.

Bosom Buddies Support Group
The Bosom Buddies Support Group offers support to individuals affected by breast cancer. The group will hold its next meeting on Monday, March 21 from 6-8 p.m. in Cullman Regional Medical Center's Ave Maria Room in the Community Education Center located in Professional Office Building 2. Donna Shanklin will be speaking about nutrition. For a complete list of upcoming support groups and events at Cullman Regional Medical Center visit the online Calendar of Events at www.crmchospital.com.

Storytime at the Library
Storytime at the library every Monday and Tuesday at 10 a.m. Join us for fun! Listen to stories, learn songs and make crafts. Contact 256-734-1068 for more information.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

Cullman Senior Center Bingo
Play Bingo at the Cullman Senior Center every Monday and Wednesday. Activities from 8 a.m. - noon. A hot meal is served at 11:30 a.m. daily. For more information, call 256-734-0145. The Cullman Senior Center is located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW.

Overeaters Anonymous
Overeaters Anonymous will be meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Carriage House, located behind Grace Episcopal Church. For more information, contact 724-376-2124 or 256-352-1143.

Kiwanis Club
The Cullman Kiwanis Club invites all local men and women who are interested in taking part in community service along with great fellowship, fun, networking, and learning to attend their weekly meeting at noon each Monday at St. John's Church Christ Hall. Come see what Kiwanis is all about and enjoy a great luncheon meal as well.

Domestic Violence Survivors' Support Group
Victim Services of Cullman's Domestic Violence Survivors' Support Group meets every Monday from 5-7 p.m. at the old County Board of Education Building (310 Third Ave. SE) Childcare is available. Call 256-775-2600 for more information. Crisis Line: 256-734-6100.

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Free English Classes
The Link of Cullman County hosts classes, 10 a.m. on Mondays and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays. Beginner and Advanced classes available. Call 256-775-0028 for information.

Tuesday

Cullman County Commission Meeting
Tuesday, March 22 at 10 a.m. in the Commission office conference room, first floor, Cullman County Courthouse.

Living Landscape Class: Growing Apple Trees with Steele Orchard
March 22 at 6 p.m.at the North Alabama Agriplex. There will be a discussion led by Linda Steele of Steele Orchard on growing apple and peach trees, as well as yummy Steele Orchard apple treats. Apple trees may be available for purchase. Class is \$5 per person. 1714 Tally Ho Street SW.

Storytime at the Library
Storytime at the library every Monday and Tuesday at 10 a.m. Join us for fun! Listen to stories, learn songs and make crafts. Contact 256-734-1068 for more information.

Dodge City Senior Citizen Luncheon
Every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. Come enjoy fun, food and games at Dodge City Town Hall.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

Board Games at the Library
Each Tuesday the Cullman County Public Library will host a gaming program from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. A variety of board games, cards and dominoes are available for play at the library for teens and adults.

Cullman Knifty Knitters
Members of the Cullman Knifty Knitters group meet each Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m. in the Cullman County Library. Everyone is invited to learn how to knit yarn, and needles are free. This group is open to all ages, both accomplished knitters and those wishing to learn the art form. Crocheters are also invited to take part in these weekly meetings. Please call Lesia for more information at 256-734-2720 ext. 23.

Special Needs Bowling Night
Individuals with special needs and their families are invited to the Cullman Area Special Needs Bowling Nights, every Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. at the Cullman Bowling Center. Please RSVP before 12 noon the days of the events. The charge is \$3 per person. For more information, contact Rhonda at 256-962-2208.

AA Meeting

The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Celebrate Recovery
Meets at Holly Pond Methodist Church on Tuesday nights. Free meal at 6 p.m. Program starts at 6:30 p.m. Two court stamps available. Open to everyone with a Hurt, Habit or Hang-up. 37851 AL Highway 91 in Holly Pond.

Addiction Recovery
The Link of Cullman County hosting Christ-centered, 12-Step Addiction Recovery meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. 1101 Third Ave. SE in Cullman. Call 256-775-0028 for more information.

Free English Classes
The Link of Cullman County hosts classes, 10 a.m. on Mondays and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays. Beginner and Advanced classes available. Call 256-775-0028 for information.

Wednesday

Good Hope Senior Center Meeting
Seniors meet every Wednesday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Pot Luck Lunch at 11 a.m., games, crafts, special speakers and more. Contact Gen Bradford at 256-636-2100 or Jackie Gentry at 256-739-0403.

Cullman Senior Center Bingo
Play Bingo at the Cullman Senior Center every Monday and Wednesday. Activities from 8 a.m. - noon. A hot meal is served at 11:30 a.m. daily. For more information, call 256-734-0145. The Cullman Senior Center is located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW.

Saint Monica's Group
Saint Monica's Group is for those who are addicted to drugs or alcohol. The meetings begin at 7 p.m. each week in the Rectory basement of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. For more information, please contact either Brian at 256-595-5015 or Rita at 256-507-0358.

Wednesday Lunch Buffet at TP Country Club
Lunch Buffet at TP Country Club from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Call 256-739-0738 for more information.

AA Meeting
The Cullman Downtown Alcoholics Anonymous will meet at 1519 St. Joseph St. NW. Every day at noon will be an open discussion meeting, Sunday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion and speaker meeting, Tuesday at 7 p.m. is an open discussion meeting (with meal at 6:30 p.m.), Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday at 10:30 a.m. is women's big book study; and Friday at 7 p.m. is a closed discussion meeting (no card signed). All meetings are non-smoking. The last Tuesday of each month is open speaker meeting/birthday night. For more information, contact the AA coordinator at 256-736-6000.

Divorce Care Support Group
The Link of Cullman County, 6 p.m. Call Denise at 256-590-3719 for more information.

Thursday

Easter Triduum | March 24-26 at Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament
The Shrine will open at 7:30 AM & Divine Office will begin at 7:45 AM during the Easter Triduum (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). No public recitation of the Holy Rosary during Triduum. For a complete schedule, visit <http://qrne.ws/shrine>.

Hanceville City Council Meeting
Thursday, March 24, Hanceville City Hall, work session at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

Overeaters Anonymous
Overeaters Anonymous will be meeting at 1:30 p.m. in the Carriage House, located behind Grace Episcopal Church. For more information, contact 724-376-2124 or 256-352-1143.

Cullman Senior Center Live Band and Karaoke
The Cullman Senior Center will have a live band or karaoke every Thursday from 8 a.m. - noon. For more information, call 256-734-0145. The Cullman Senior Center is located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW

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Addiction Recovery
The Link of Cullman County hosting Christ-centered, 12-Step Addiction Recovery meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. 1101 Third Ave. SE in Cullman. Call 256-775-0028 for more information.

Friday

Easter Triduum | March 24-26 at Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament
The Shrine will open at 7:30 AM & Divine Office will begin at 7:45 AM during the Easter Triduum (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). No public recitation of the Holy Rosary during Triduum. For a complete schedule, visit <http://qrne.ws/shrine>.

2016 March Community Luncheon-Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
Friday, March 25, from 11:30 a.m.- 1 p.m. at the All Steak Restaurant. The guest speaker will be Ron Starnier, executive vice president of Conway Inc. and Site Selection magazine, an international corporate real estate publication based in Atlanta. Ron will be giving an important update on trending factors regarding workforce, economic development, industry and site selections. Reservations required. If you would like to attend, please register by calling the Chamber office at 256-734-0454 or emailing info@cullmanchamber.com.

org. There is a 48-hour cancellation policy. Cost is \$15 for Chamber members & \$20 for future members. To register online, visit <http://qrne.ws/cocmarch>.

4D Farm Spring Celebration
Visit the farm on March 25-26 for a fun-filled day of egg hunts, visiting with the Easter bunny and enjoy all the exciting farm activities that we have to offer. You can zoom down our 80-ft slide, take a ride on our 250-ft zipline and jump on our HUGE jumping pillow! We will also open April 2. Easter bunny and egg hunts will only be taking place the weekend of Easter, but we will have all other spring farm favorites on April 2 as well! See you on the farm!! 7182 County Road 703.

Lenten Fish Fry Supper
Cullman Knights of Columbus will sponsor Lenten Fish Fry Suppers each Friday leading up to Easter. To be held in the Sacred Heart of Jesus Family Life Center, the supper, either eat-in or take-out, will run from 5-6:45 p.m., leading up to weekly Stations of the Cross at 7 p.m. in the church. Meals are \$8 a plate or a family can eat for \$25. Baked or fried fish with traditional accompaniments will be served, with all proceeds used for the Knights of Columbus church and community projects. All are welcome to attend the dinners. For more information, call Barbara G. Ragsdale at 256-347-3471.

Cullman Caring for Kids- United Way Food Bank
The food bank is open every Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. - noon for eligible families. Located at 402 Arnold St. NE Ste. W-1. For more information, or to make a donation, call 256-739-1111. www.cullmancaringforkids.com

Cullman Senior Center Gospel Singing
The Cullman Senior Center will have a Gospel Singing beginning at 9:30 a.m. every Friday. Special guests share devotions at 10:30 a.m. A hot meal is served at 11:30 a.m. daily. For more information, call 256-734-0145. The Cullman Senior Center is located at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW.

AA Meeting
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Saturday

2016 Easter Drama: The Passion at Temple Baptist Church
March 26-27 at Temple Baptist Church in Cullman; March 26 at 5 p.m., March 27 at 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Call 256-737-0112 or email easter@templebaptistcullman.com for more information. Childcare will be provided. Temple Baptist is located at 30 County Road 1184, Cullman, AL 35057.

Easter Triduum | March 24-26 at Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament
The Shrine will open at 7:30 AM & Divine Office will begin at 7:45 AM during the Easter Triduum (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). No public recitation of the Holy Rosary during Triduum. For a complete schedule, visit <http://qrne.ws/shrine>.

4D Farm Spring Celebration
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Easter Egg Hunt at Sportsman Lake Park
On Saturday, March 26 at 9 a.m. Sportsman Lake Park will hold its traditional Easter Egg Hunt. The event is free to attend and will feature everyone's favorite floppy-eared rabbit, the Easter Bunny himself.

War Recovery
From 1-2 p.m. at Redemption Assembly of God, 516 Shaefflel Rd. Cullman. We have court refer. in Cullman Co. Call Susan, 256-620-6966 for more info.

Saving Forgotten Warriors
Organization helps area disabled Marine and Vietnam veteran Cpl. Kenneth Beasley and other area veterans in need. Clean-up days for Cpl. Beasley are each Saturday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Beasley's home at 185 Co. Road 823. Volunteers are needed and donations are accepted. See Facebook page "Saving Forgotten Warriors" for more info or call Jeremy (352-440-4076), Tammy (256-286-3136) or Josh (256-615-5263).

AA Meeting
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Old-Fashioned Easter Sunday Extravaganza
"Bring your family, your bonnets and a covered dish!" Easter Sunday, March 27 at East Side Baptist Church, Highway 278 East at Convent Road, Bible study at 9:30 a.m., Worship at 10:30 a.m., Covered dish lunch at noon, Easter Egg Hunt with 1,000 filled plastic eggs after lunch.

Sunday Brunch Buffet at TP Country Club
Sunday Brunch Buffet at TP Country Club from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call 256-739-0738 for more information.

AA Meeting
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Announcements and Upcoming Events

Bob's Grief Support Group
On the last Thursday of each month, Bob's Grief Support Group meets at the Chapel at Smith Lake Park. For more information, please call 256-595-7331.

Relay For Life of Cullman County: 2016 Calendar Announcements
• Relay For Life Team Spirit Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 7, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Team Spirit Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 28, First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life Survivors' Breakfast, 7 a.m., Wednesday, May 4, Cullman Church of Christ; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal
• Relay For Life of Cullman County, 6 p.m.-midnight, Friday, May 6, Cullman County Fairgrounds; contact Helen Allen, 256-709-4019; www.relayforlife.org/cullmanal

Project Closet
At Longview Church of God, on the second Wednesday of each month from noon - 6 p.m., the public is welcome to come and shop for clothes at no charge. Donations of clothing are accepted, and shoppers can swap donations for any clothing in the closet. Call 256-734-2566 for more information.

Cullman Senior Center Creating Cookbook
Cookbook will be created this summer. The center is asking for seniors age 60 and older to submit their favorite recipes. You can also submit a recipe in memory of a loved one. Mail recipes to: Cullman Senior Center, 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW, Cullman, AL 35055. Please include your name and phone number.

Food Assistance
Every second Saturday at Harmony Word of Life Church. NEW HOURS: 1 - 3 p.m. Take Highway 157 to Battleground, turn right onto County Road 1212, go half mile to County Road 1204, turn left and drive a half mile. 256-739-2956.

Cullman Parks & Rec Community Classes at the Cullman Civic Center
Yoga- Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Ballroom, Latin and Swing Dancing - Thursdays, \$10 per class; Oil Painting and Acrylics - Mondays from 6:30 - 9 p.m.; Nia Dance Fitness / Ageless Grace - Tuesdays at 9 a.m.; Rock Climbing (at Hurricane Creek Park) - Saturdays at 10 a.m., \$25, call to register at 256-734-2125; Wilderness Survival Course - Sundays with reservation, call to register at 256-734-2125. For more information, contact Waid Harbison at 256-734-9157.

Free GED Classes
Sponsored by Wallace State Community College Adult Education Program. Call 256-352-8077 or 1-866-352-WSCC for more information.

Clothes Closet
Addington Chapel UMC in Bremen has clothes available free to those in need. No qualifications or paperwork needed. Call 256-287-1791 or 256-287-1828

Masonics of Cullman County Meetings
Held at 7 p.m. at the following locations: Baileytown 472 (first and third Thursdays); Baileytown 472 (first and third Thursdays); Cullman 421 (Mondays, call 256-734-1231); Logan 500 (second and fourth Thursdays, call 256-747-4243 or 256-747-2908); Sincee 854 (second and fourth Thursday, call 256-796-5794 or 256-796-5018); Vinemont 562 (first and third Thursday, call 256-796-7244).

Cullman County Commission Meetings
The Cullman County Commission meets every second and fourth Tuesday, except in cases where the meeting date falls on a holiday, in which case the meeting is moved to the following day. Meetings are scheduled for 10 a.m. in the Commission office conference room, first floor, Cullman County Courthouse, unless otherwise specified.

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2016 Strawberry Festival
May 6-7, 2016, at Depot Park, a host of local farmers will offer strawberries to purchase both days of the event. Strawberry-themed foods, ice cream, drinks and more will also be a part of the festival. Huge lineup of music to be announced on April 1, free kids' games and rides, dozens of craft vendors and a car show. Food trucks will also be on-site both days. The event will kick off during the day Friday with Senior Day from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.; the festival will run from 4-10 p.m. on Friday, and 8 a.m.-10 p.m. on Saturday. For more information on CP&R's 2016 Strawberry Festival, visit www.cullmanrecreation.org or call 256-734-9157.

Cullman Pilot Club Spring 2016 Charity Fundraiser
The Pilot Club of Cullman will host its spring 2016 charity fundraiser, Professional Women's Fashion Show and Luncheon: "Dancing in the Street," on Wednesday, April 27 at the Cullman Civic Center. The event will be "a way of celebrating Administrative Professional's Day." Doors will open at 11 a.m. so attendees can shop the booths set up by area businesses. Boxed lunches provided by Sweet Peppers Deli will be served at 11:30 a.m., with a fashion show beginning soon thereafter. Door prizes will be given away during the show. Tickets for the event are \$20 and can be purchased at the Cullman County Museum or the Cullman Civic Center.

Colors of Cancer Day
April 2: We will start off the day with a 5K at the Fairgrounds. Registration is at 7 a.m., 5K run will start at 8 a.m., and awards will be handed out at 9 a.m. The parade will begin at 10 a.m. in the North Shopping Center and be lead up Highway 31 by Cindy, the pink firetruck, to the Fairgrounds. The Fairgrounds will host a Drum Line Competition between area high schools at noon. Vendor Booths, Food and a Bounce House will be available during the afternoon. There will be a Balloon Release at 2 p.m. to end the day. More info: Amanda Rogers at amanda.rogers@crmchospital.com or Becky Richardson at brichardson1957@yahoo.com.

Color Me Cullman 5K

April 9 at 8 a.m. at Sportsman Lake Park; The Color Me Cullman 5K is a colorful experience where we promote healthiness and happiness. Our event is all about people of all different speeds, ages, shapes, and sizes ready to get COLORFUL! Come on out to Sportsman Lake wearing a white T-shirt as your blank canvas and get ready to become a piece of artwork!

2016 Bloomin' Festival Arts & Crafts Fair
Saturday and Sunday, April 16-17, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The 32nd Annual Bloomin' Festival Arts and Crafts Fair to be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 16-17, 2016. St. Bernard has been recognized by the Southeast Tourism Society consistently in the past nine years as a "Top Twenty Event in the Southeast."

"Arts in April Celebration" 2016 at WSCC
Wallace State Community College is seeking artists to participate in an exhibition of local community artworks Monday, April 4 - Saturday, April 30 as part of the annual 2016 Arts in April Celebration. In conjunction with WSCC's Earth Week Celebration, participants for this year's Arts in April Community Exhibition "Spring Upcycle" are invited to create artworks based on general themes of nature, its beauty and its conservation. More specifically this year participants are encouraged to use repurposed, recycled and found materials to create "upcycled" artworks which will become creative, imaginative, and lasting reminders of our everyday roles as recyclers and partners in conservation. The deadline for submitting is March 18. All entries should be ready and suitable for display when submitted. Contact Adrian Scott at 245-352-8145 or adrian.scott@wallacestate.edu for complete rules and guidelines or the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts front desk at 256-352-8277.

Heritage Skills: Natural Body Care at the North Alabama Agriplex
March 29, 6 p.m., we have a Heritage Skills class on natural body care taught by our own VISTA Nicole. You can register on our website at agriplex.org under the registration tab. Please register and share!

"Althea" at WSCC
The Evelyn Burrow Museum at Wallace State Community College presents "Althea" as part of the South Arts Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers at the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts on Thursday, April 14 at 9:30 a.m. Following a screening of the film, the filmmaker will engage the audience in a discussion about the film and their work as filmmakers. Admission is free and the event is open to the public.

Dancing for a Cause
April 2 at 6 p.m. in the Cullman High School auditorium. Join us for the inaugural Dancing for a Cause charity event hosted by The Factory Dance Productions! Set up like a local version of Dancing with the Stars, Cullman County and City favorites will compete to raise money for various charities. Each set of contestants will represent the charity of their choice. Out of town judges will score the contestants on overall entertainment value, not dance technique. The winners will receive a large donation towards the charity of their choice! The runner-up and our "People's Choice" winners as voted on by the audience will get donations towards their charities as well! Remaining money will be distributed amongst our Company dancers to help pay for regional and national traveling expenses. Please check our website for a list of sponsors and contestants! www.thefactorydance.com

"Beauty and the Beast" Presented by Cullman High School
On Friday and Saturday, April 8-9, the Cullman High School drama and choral departments will present their rendition of Disney's Broadway musical "Beauty and the Beast." CHS Theater Director Wayne Cook and CHS Choir Director Sarah Driskell will lead the production. Opening night is Friday, April 8, at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 9, showtimes are 12:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are priced at \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under the age of 12. Senior citizens and children under the age of 12 will receive \$3 tickets at Saturday's 3:30 p.m. show. For more information, call 256-734-3923 or visit <http://chs.culmancats.net/>.

Cullman City Head Start
Now accepting applications for the 2016-17 school year. Must live in city limits and be 3-4 years-old on or before Sep. 2 and meet qualifications. Call 256-734-0234 for more info.

Rock the South
June 3-4 at Heritage Park. Check out www.rockthesouth.com for more details.

4D Farm Spring Celebration
Visit the farm on March 25-26 for a fun-filled day of egg hunts, visiting with the Easter bunny and enjoy all the exciting farm activities that we have to offer. You can zoom down our 80-ft slide, take a ride on our 250-ft zipline and jump on our HUGE jumping pillow! We will also

COMMUNITY-WIDE YARD SALE DRAWS CROWD AT SPORTSMAN LAKE

Sharon Schuler Kreps
sharon@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – Sportsman Lake Park was the place to be on Saturday, March 19, as hundreds showed up for the community-wide yard sale. More than 75 vendors were scattered throughout the park, some looking to unload clutter from their homes, others to earn extra cash for themselves or to help fund special causes. Whatever the reason, lots of people came out to enjoy the beautiful weather and to search for terrific bargains.

“God was with us today,” said Jeremy Hogan, founder of Saving Forgotten Warriors, an organization that advocates for the health, safety and well-being of United States veterans. “Not only were we able to raise \$1,200 for our organization, but we were able to spread the word and meet more veterans. This community is amazing and I love that we are a part of it.”

Natasha Holcombe had a booth at the yard sale for a slightly different reason. She was raising money to go on a mission trip with her church.

“I am here to raise



Hundreds of happy shoppers spent the day at Sportsman Lake Park at the community yard sale on Saturday.

money for a mission trip to Nicaragua,” she explained. “We are leaving on July 16 and will be there until July 23. I have made around \$200 so far today; I have to raise a total of \$1,500 to be able to go. It’s really hard when you also have college tuition due at the same time,” she chuckled.

“I go to church at Holly Pond First Baptist, but we are going with Mt. Zion and four other churches; there are 25 total people going,” she added. “This isn’t my first mission trip though. I went to Guatemala two years ago and built a retaining wall. It was major hard work the whole

time,” she grinned. “This time we are strictly sharing the Gospel, so it’s a little different.”

Belinda McKinzie and her sister-in-law Nancy came all the way from Blount County to set up their booth at the yard sale. Brenda owns ‘It’s a Sewthern Thang,’ a business specializing in customized sewing. “Today has been great,” McKinzie said. “This is the first time we’ve ever been here for a yard sale, but we plan to come back again and again. It is such a nice area and the weather is just perfect,” she smiled. “We have really sold a lot of items today. We

have car seat canopies, aprons, blankets, bibs, dream catchers. I make quilts. I hand quilt and monogram. Everything in our booth is handmade. I can’t wait to come back and do it again!”

Yard sales can be a perfect way to earn some extra cash. Saturday’s sale was one of two that will be held at Sportsman Lake Park this year. The second, which will take place in the fall, is scheduled for Oct. 22.

For more information and to keep up with all events held by Cullman County Parks and Recreation, visit <http://www.cullmancountyparks.com/>.

THE FACTORY DANCE PRODUCTIONS TO HOLD FIRST BIENNIAL ‘DANCE FOR A CAUSE’ COMPETITION

Will Hogue
will@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – On Saturday, April 2, The Factory Dance Productions of Cullman will begin what it hopes to make a biennial (every other year) tradition. In the Cullman High School Auditorium, The Factory will conduct what it has named the “Dance for a Cause” competition, which will start at 6 p.m. and go until 8 p.m. at the Cullman High School auditorium.

“It is a play on the name “Dancing with the Stars,” said Nohealani Naehu, co-founder and co-owner of The Factory Dance Productions in Cullman.

Along with her partner, Keri Payne, Naehu started the event as an effort to benefit the performing arts in Cullman, as well as local charities.

Tickets for the event are \$10 for adults \$8 for children. Infants get free admission. All the proceeds from ticket sales and donations go to local charities and to keeping the doors open and the lights on at The Factory.

In fact, although registration for those interested in competing in the event is closed, those who

are registered and who will be competing will be vying for the top prize, which is designating the largest cash donation to the local charity of their choice.

“We would really like for anyone and everyone to come and attend. We would really like to have your support,” Neahu said.

Neahu’s partner Payne got the idea for this event from one she started in another part of Alabama.

“I helped start ‘Dancing with the Starz of the Shoals’ about three years ago in Florence, and it has become a huge success! It is a fun tradition that we hope to continue in the Cullman area every other year,” Payne said about the event. “Promoting the art of dance

is very important to me, and this particular event is community-driven so everyone can come together to celebrate dance and several area charities! It is sure to be a fun, laid back evening for everyone,” she continued.

Tickets will be available at the door the night of the event at the CHS auditorium.

Sponsor list:

- USA Healthcare- Alabama LLC: Platinum Plus
- Comfort Care: Platinum Plus
- Surgical Arts: T-Shirt Sponsor
- Drinkard Development: Platinum Sponsor
- Gloria Williams Freedom Insurance: Gold Sponsor
- Catoma Dermatology: Gold Sponsor
- Blue & Gray Drugs: Silver

Sponsor Pitts Chevron: Silver Sponsor

- Dale’s: Silver Sponsor
- Walker Brothers: Silver Sponsor
- Shirley Quattlebaum State Farm Agent: Silver Sponsor
- Casha Enterprises: Silver Sponsor
- Cotton Seed Warehouse LLC: Bronze Sponsor
- Alabama Farm Credit: Bronze Sponsor
- Cotton Seed Warehouse, LLC: Bronze Sponsor
- Desperation Church: Bronze Sponsor
- Just Paws: Bronze Sponsor
- Yogurt Mountain: Bronze Sponsor
- Steve, Maria, Mary Kate, & Jack Stanford: Bronze Sponsor
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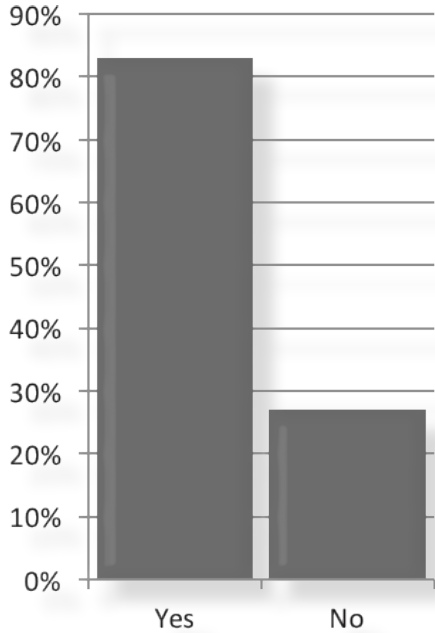
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Poll

Will you be filling out a bracket for the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament?



This Week's Poll

Do you suffer from spring allergies?

Vote Today at
CullmanSense.com/Poll

Light a Candle, Spread HOPE



Join your community in the fight against cancer! At Relay For Life, teams take turns walking or running around the track. Teams consist of people representing companies, churches, clubs, organizations and families. During Relay For Life, team members enjoy games, food, music and camaraderie while camping out on the surrounding grounds.

Participants also share in a special luminaria ceremony to remember those individuals who have been affected by cancer. Candles are lit in honor or memory of those touched by cancer and placed around the track. You are invited to support this effort by making a luminaria donation and having a candle lit in honor of a loved one who has been touched by cancer. Simply fill out the back of this form and return to a team member, team captain or mail your order to the address listed on the reverse side.

Thank you for your support. For more information, call 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

Luminaria Order Form

Minimum donation: \$10.00 each

Yes, I would like to make a luminaria donation in honor of or in memory of the following:

In Memory/Honor of: (circle one)

In Memory/Honor of: (circle one)

In Memory/Honor of: (circle one)

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____
Payment method: Check _____ Cash _____

Thank you for your donation. Please make checks payable to the **American Cancer Society**. Return to:

Attn: Tess Kimbrough
1024 County Road 730
Cullman, AL 35055

Walk (from Front)

Amy Leonard

amy@cullmansense.com

CULLMAN – The National Multiple Sclerosis Society's Walk MS: Cullman 2016 event was held at Heritage Park on Saturday morning. The annual walk celebrates those fighting MS and raises money to find a cure for the debilitating neurological disease that affects approximately 400,000 people in the United States and up to 2.5 million global citizens.

Although a light rain fell in Cullman earlier in the morning, the sky had relatively cleared by the 9 a.m. walk start time.

Hundreds of participants gathered to enjoy free biscuits provided by Jack's Family Restaurants, live music and a quick cardio warm-up by Jennifer Lewis of the Cullman

Wellness and Aquatic Center. Soon after, the walkers began their trek around the park in a show of solidarity for those battling the crippling disease.

Amber Williams of Team MSfits proudly displayed her team's quilt which highlighted MS Walk shirts from the past several years.

Chances to win the quilt were available for \$2 each. Her mother, Angela Snider, was diagnosed with MS in 2008.

"When my mom first started having symptoms, the rules and regulations said you had to be so sick before they would diagnose and start treating you," said Williams.

"As a result, my mom ended up having to quit work and go on disability. She was finally diagnosed in 2008 and was able to start treatment then."

Since then the laws have

changed allowing for diagnosis and treatment to begin earlier.

Williams shared, "I feel like if those laws were the way they are now when my mom first started having symptoms, she would probably still be able to work."

"Mom was actually supposed to be here this morning, but she's had a rough few days with her MS so I told her that she's not invited anymore and she has to stay at home and start feeling better!"

The goal for Saturday's walk was \$59,815, and one-fifth of that amount was raised prior to the event.

For more information and to find resources, visit the Alabama-Mississippi chapter of the National MS Society at <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Chapters/ALC>.

Purdue (from Front)

and 50's rock standards that he grew up with, Perdue adds his flare and storyline to the tradition.

"Growing up in Holly Pond, my dad had been a disc jockey in the Navy and he had all of these old rockabilly and country records, so that's how I got into that music. But, then I was a weird skateboarder kid at the same time so it was a mishmash of rebellion with the classics," explained Perdue.

As those around them dis-

cussed the current political atmosphere, Perdue and Clark mused that signs reading "David Allen Coe for President" would be a welcomed sight and perhaps not so out of place in light of this election cycle's chaos.

Appreciated by younger enthusiasts, overall wearing granddaddies and damn near everyone in between, Tony Perdue and the TMFP Band has north Alabama tapping its collective foot to the rockabilly beat.

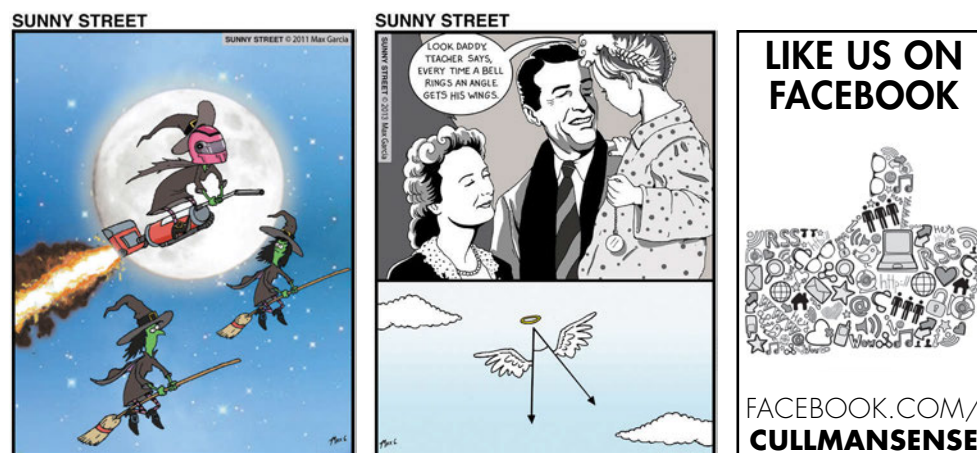
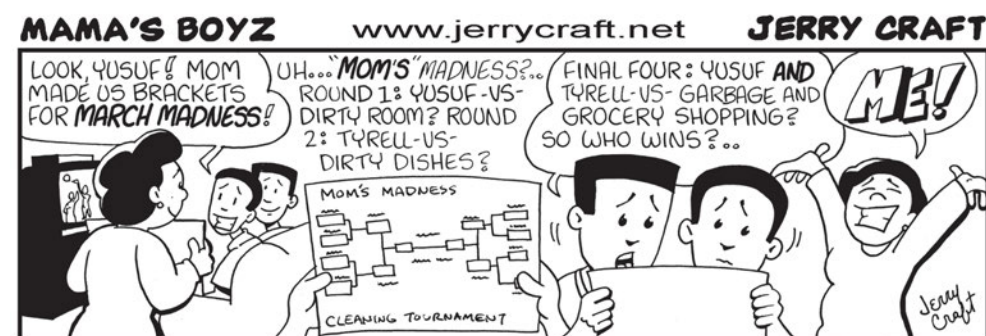
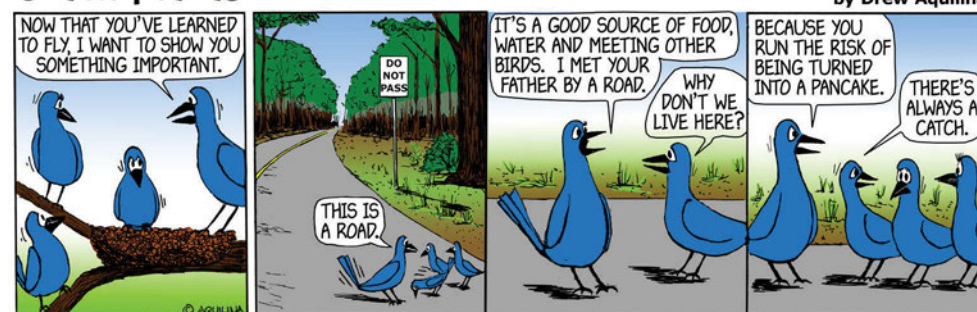
Most recently, they released an EP titled "Stubborn as a Mule" which is available for download at www.tonyperdue.com. The band played on St. Patrick's Day at Maggie Myers Pub in Huntsville and another show this past Friday night. Another Cullman show date is in the works and will be announced when details are finalized.

If you see any of Perdue's kinfolk, make sure you tell them he's sounding mighty fine these days.

COMICS

Green Pieces®

by Drew Aquilina



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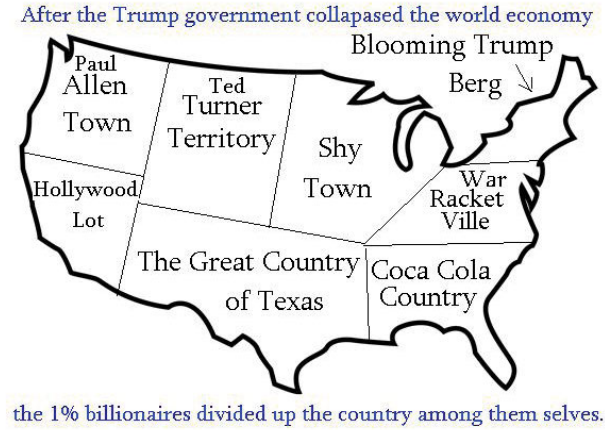


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OPINION

BUILDING NEW “NONVIOLENT CITIES”

John Dear
PeaceVoice

Last year, I was invited to give a talk on peace in Carbondale, Illinois. I was surprised to discover that in recent years, activists from across Carbondale had come together with a broad vision of what their community could one day become—a nonviolent city. They wanted a new holistic approach to their work, with a positive vision for the future, so that over time their community would be transformed into a culture of nonviolence.

They created a coalition, a movement, and a city-wide week of action and called it, “Nonviolent Carbondale.”

They set up a new website, www.nonviolentcarbondale.org, established a steering committee, set up monthly meetings, and launched “Nonviolent Carbondale” as a positive way to promote peace and justice locally. In doing so, they gave everyone in Carbondale a new vision of what their community could become.

From the start, the Carbondale activists held their local organizing meetings occasionally before city council meetings, which they then attended together as a group. At city council meetings, they started suggesting and lobbying ways their city could become more nonviolent.

Their movement eventually became based out of the main Carbondale Library.

Over the years, they have done positive work with their police department, local schools and the school system, religious communities, the library system, and local nonprofits.

As grassroots activists, they have lifted up a positive vision of their community and brought it into the mainstream.

Over the years, they put their energies into their “11 Days” program – 11 days in March filled with scores of actions and events for all ages across the city.

Twice their 11 days focused on peace; twice on compassion, and last year the focus was on food. One of the outcomes from last year’s 11 Days, for example, was a new organic food market started in the poorest neighborhood in town.

“Nonviolent Carbondale” offers a model for activists, movements, and cities across the country. With their example in mind, the group I work with, Campaign Nonviolence, [www.campaignnonviolence.org] is launching the “Non-

violent Cities” project using “Nonviolent Carbondale” as an organizing model for other cities.

Taking the lead from friends and activists in Carbondale, Campaign Nonviolence invites citizens across the U.S. to organize a similar grassroots movement in their city, to put the word “nonviolent” in front of their city, and to help others envision, organize and work for a nonviolent local community.

As far as we can tell, this organizing tool has never been formally tried anywhere in the U.S., except in Carbondale. This movement is a new next step in the visionary, organizing nonviolence of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Perhaps the key aspect of “Nonviolent Cities” is that each city will be summoned to address its violence in all its aspects, structures, and systems; to connect the dots between its violence; and to pursue a more holistic, creative, city-wide nonviolence, where everyone together is trying to practice nonviolence, promote nonviolence, teach nonviolence and institutionalize nonviolence on the local level, to really build a new nonviolent community for itself and others.

We want not just to undermine the local and regional culture of violence, and end all the killings, but to transform it into a culture of nonviolence.

This means that “Nonviolent Cities” organizers would promote the vision, teach nonviolence, and inspire people at every level in their community to work together for a new nonviolent community and a new nonviolent future.

That would include everyone from the mayor and city council members to the police chief and police officers, to all religious and civic leaders, to all educators and healthcare workers, to housing authorities, to news reporters and local media; to youth and grassroots activists, to the poor and marginalized, children and the elderly. Together, they would address all the issues of violence and pursue all the angles and possibilities of nonviolence for their city’s transformation into a more nonviolent community.

The first goal would be a rapid reduction in violence and an end to killing.

Nonviolent cities would work to end racism, poverty, homelessness, and violence at every level and in every form; dismantle housing segregation and pursue racial, social and economic integration; end police violence and institutionalize police nonviolence; organize to end domestic violence and teach nonviolence between spouses, and nonviolence toward all children; work to end gang violence and teach nonviolence to gang members; teach nonviolence in every school; pursue more nonviolent immigration programs and policies; get religious leaders and communities to promote nonviolence and the vision of a new nonviolent city; reform local jails and prisons so they are more nonviolent and educate guards and prisoners in nonviolence; move from retributive to restorative justice in the entire criminal justice system; address local environmental destruction, climate change, and environmental racism, pursue clean water, solar and wind power, and a 100 percent green community; and in general, do everything possible to help their local community become more disarmed, more reconciled, more just, more welcoming, more inclusive, and more nonviolent.

If Carbondale, Illinois can seek to become a nonviolent city, any city can seek to become a nonviolent city.

This is an idea whose time has come. This is an organizing strategy that should be tried around the nation and the world.

The only way it can happen is through bottom-up, grassroots organizing, that reaches out to include everyone in the community, and eventually becomes widely accepted, even by the government, media, and police.

Two international groups pursue a similar vision--International Cities for Peace (www.internationalcitiesforpeace.org) and Mayors for Peace (www.mayorsforpeace.org, which has 6965 cities committed in 161 countries)—but, as far as I can tell, no U.S. group has ever attempted to invite local communities to pursue a vision of holistic city-wide nonviolence or organize a grassroots movements of non-violent cities.

On our website, www.campaignnonviolence.org, we have posted “Ten Steps Toward a Nonviolent City,” a basic initial list of organizing tasks for local activists which includes: creating a local steering committee; finding a mainstream institution that can serve as a base; organizing a series of public meetings and forums; studying violence in the community; meeting with the mayor and the city council; and organizing a city-wide launch.

Gandhi once remarked that we are constantly being astonished by the advances in violence, but if we try, if we organize, if we can commit ourselves, he declared, we can make even more astonishing new discoveries and advances in nonviolence.

With the example of “Nonviolent Carbondale” before us, we have a way to organize every local community and city in the nation, a way to envision how we can all one day live together in peace with justice, and the possibility of new hope. If we follow the example of Nonviolent Carbondale, we can help transform our culture of violence into something completely new---a culture of nonviolence. That should always be our goal.

John Dear, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is an American Catholic priest nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

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