

# Health & Education





Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Susan Mann, assistant director of the Pell City Public Library, said e-books can be downloaded to PC, Mac and many mobile devices.

# Libraries keeping up with technology

By ELSIE HODNETT  
Home staff writer

Area libraries are keeping up with technology by offering e-books to patrons, as well as regular books.

"The Pell City Public Library began offering e-books in 2011," library director Danny Stewart said.

Stewart said in October 2011, library patrons checked out slightly more than 50 books. More than two years later, patrons check out approximately 400 e-books each month.

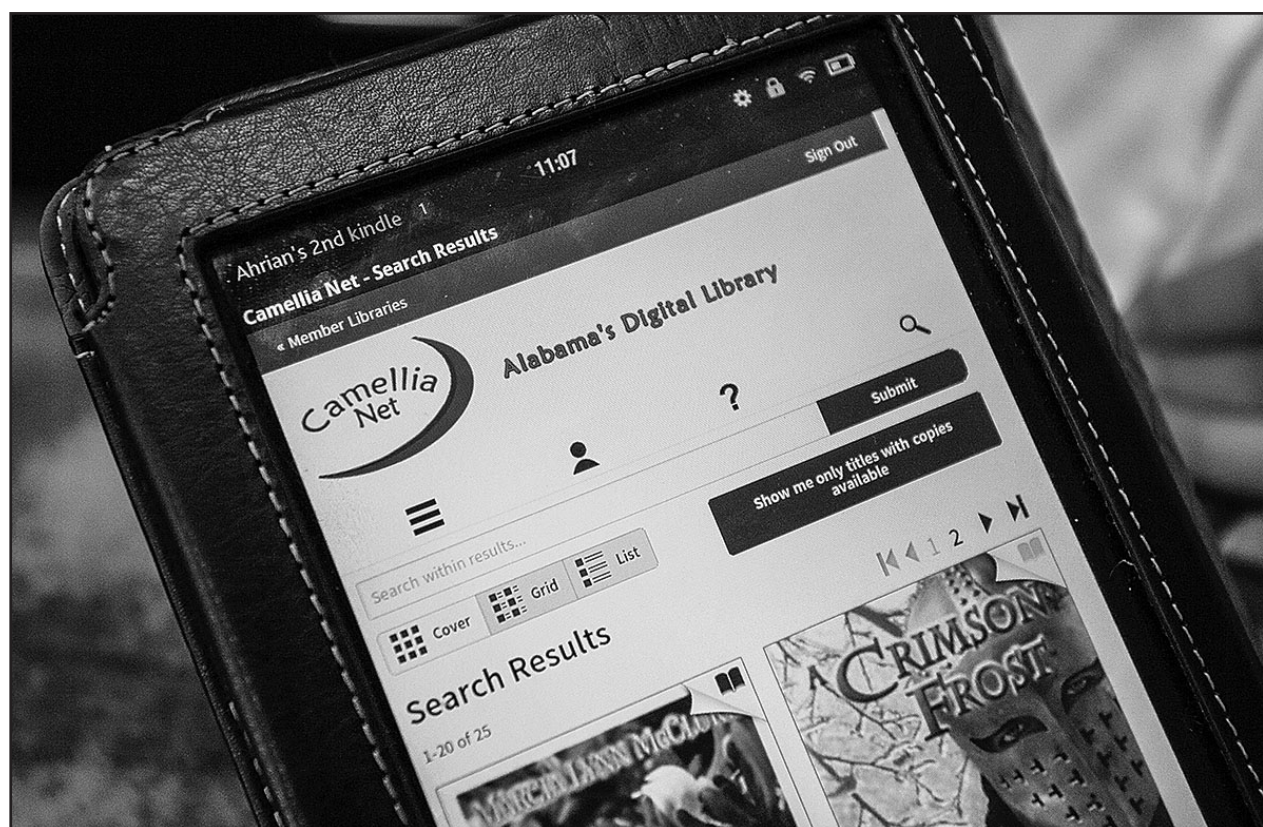
"In 2011, patrons checked out about 6,000 regular books each month, and that number has remained steady," he said. "As the number of e-books goes up, it helps our overall circulation go up."

Susan Mann, assistant director of the Pell City Public Library, said in 2011 many patrons received e-readers as gifts for birthdays or Christmas.

"They found that it's not hard to download the e-books, and the e-readers are convenient to pack and take on trips," she said. "You can also adjust the letter size to larger print, and the e-readers are easy on the eyes. There were just a lot of positive features, so we began to have a lot of people asking about e-books."

Mann said the library joined Camellia Net, a consortium of other Alabama libraries.

"The service is powered by OverDrive and includes audiobooks, music and e-books," she said.



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Many libraries have joined Camellia Net, a consortium of other Alabama libraries, that provides audiobooks, music and e-books.

"Patrons may access the e-books through a link on the library's website, [www.pellcitylibrary.com](http://www.pellcitylibrary.com)," she said.

To sign in, patrons select the Pell City Public Library, then enter their library card number. For patrons with library cards that begin with 1000, their pin number is the last four numbers on the card. For patrons with library cards that begin with 1001, their pin number is the last five numbers on the card.

Mann said the e-books are downloaded to PC, Mac and many mobile

devices. "Titles will automatically expire at the end of the lending period, and there are no late fees," she said.

Stewart said the demand for computer and Internet usage continues to remain steady as well.

"In October 2011, there were 2,800 computers signed out for usage," he said. "The usage is about the same now."

Stewart said they are working to update the library's website, [www.pellcitylibrary.com](http://www.pellcitylibrary.com), and put databases on it. "We have a couple

genealogy databases you can access from home," he said. "We also have a wide variety of newspapers from every state you can read from home."

"We have had Wi-Fi for six or seven years now," said Shirley Spears, director of the B.B. Comer Memorial Library in Sylacauga. "That really changed the world for us. It meant that people could enjoy the library more as a place. Some people don't want to use a computer center. They would rather bring a laptop or e-reader and sit in a quiet corner and work or read."

Spears said the library has offered e-books for a couple years now.

"When we began looking into e-books in the fall of 2011, not that many people had e-readers," she said. "But then a lot of people got e-readers for Christmas in 2011 and that really brought the demand for e-books."

Spears said people began making inquiries about e-books and they began taking email addresses.

"People began giving us donations so we could purchase e-books," she said. "They were excited

about the service. We had a large number of customers donate."

Spears said the B.B. Comer Memorial Library signed up to become a member of Camellia Net in early 2012. There was a long waiting list to join the consortium, and joined in May 2012.

"The demand for e-books was high from the beginning," she said. "We checked out about 500 e-books the first month we offered the service. Our circulation has remained high ever since. Customers check out between 300-500 each month depending on the e-books available."

Spears said the library also participates in the "Advantage Plan," which is a separate account available only to customers of the B.B. Comer Memorial Library.

"You go in and use your library card to access the e-books," she said. "The instructions on how to download are on the website. You can check your particular library because download instructions may vary by library."

Spears said with the e-books, patrons may have to wait to check out books, but that is the same with hardback books.

"One of our biggest constituency is students," she said. "When we write grants, we ask the school librarians for suggestions of e-books to be added to the pool for the students to enjoy. Some of the school-requested e-books

See Libraries, Page 3

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# Libraries

From Page 2

go in the Advantage Plan so local students can access them.”

Vickie Harkins, director of the Armstrong-Osborne Library in Talladega, said the library began looking into e-books in 2011.

“We were finally able to join the Camellia Net consortium in late 2012,” she said. “It seemed that people were moving towards e-books and inquiries began to grow.”

Harkins said e-books were something they knew the public would want.

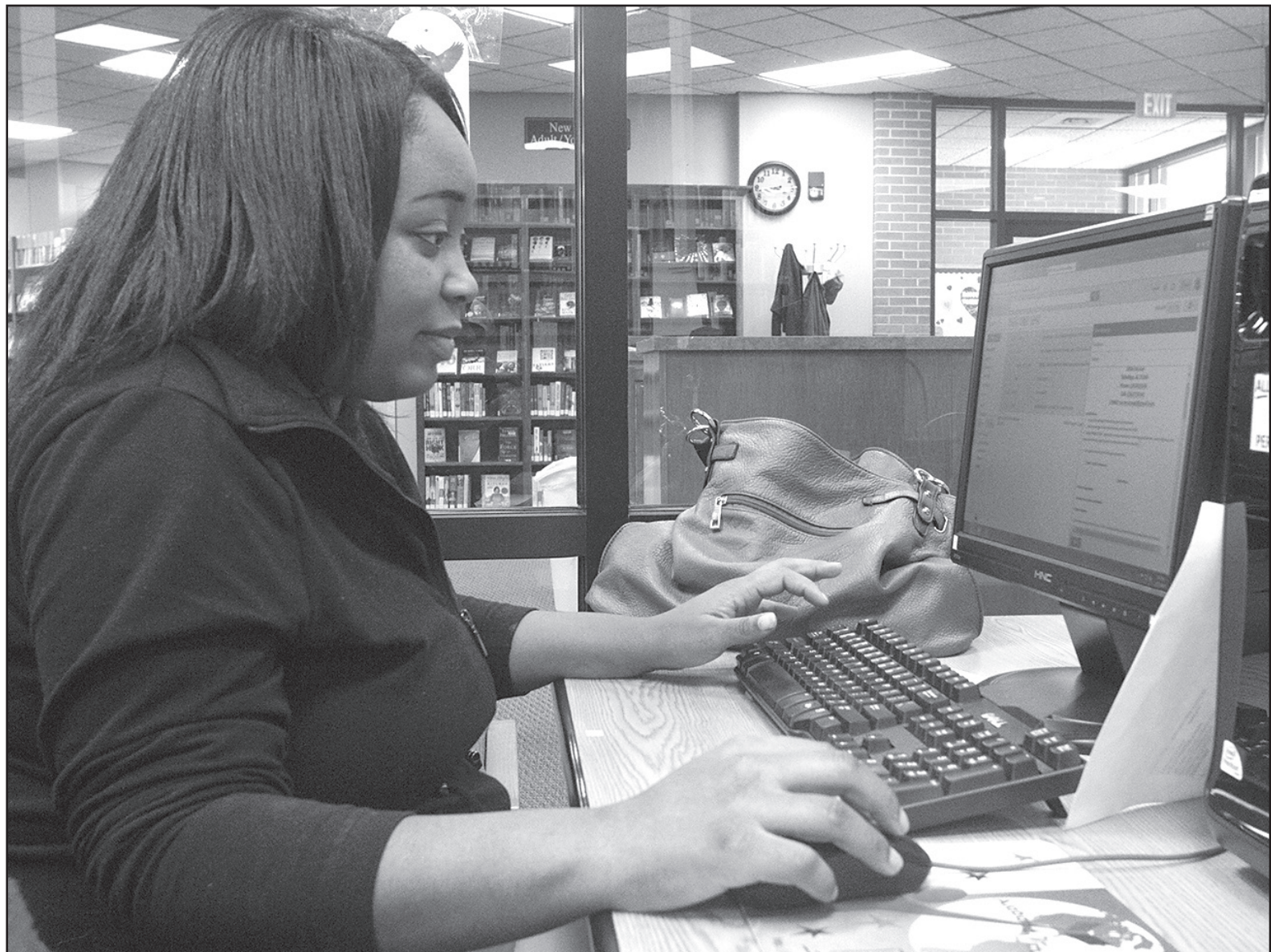
“Circulation was slow at first, but has picked up,” she said. “People didn’t know we offered e-books at first. Once they learned e-books were available, the circulation increased a whole lot.”

Harkins said people of all ages enjoy the e-books.

“We do not have the Advantage Plan yet, but have been looking at it,” she said. “If the demand continues to increase, which it is, we will look into it further.”

Harkins said The Friends of the Library donated a children’s computer with educational software.

“Every day, the children’s computer is used heavily,” she said. “I had



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

**Stephanie Montgomery of Talladega uses a computer at the Armstrong-Osborne Library in Talladega.**

wondered if the children would use the computer, but they immediately

went to it and began using it.”

Harkins said there is

educational material for every age group.

“It has something for

all children,” she said.

“The educational software is so much fun—they love

it.”

Contact Elsie Hodnett @ ehodnett@gmail.com.

# CACC works on student success centers

By BILL KIMBER  
Home staff writer

A relationship of mutual cooperation and support is benefiting Central Alabama Community College and each of the communities it serves, its top executive said.

“I am continually impressed with the spirit of cooperation and support the college enjoys from the communities we serve,” said Dr. Susan Barrow, who became interim president of CACC last year.

“I strongly believe the college and our communities are poised for continued growth and success. It is our privilege to serve central Alabama.”

Improving the likelihood of career success for residents of central Alabama has been the focus of the college for decades. And this year, the college is redoubling those efforts at each of its locations.

CACC is working to develop student success centers at its campuses in Alexander City and Childersburg and its center in Talladega, said Brett Pritchard, spokesman for the college.

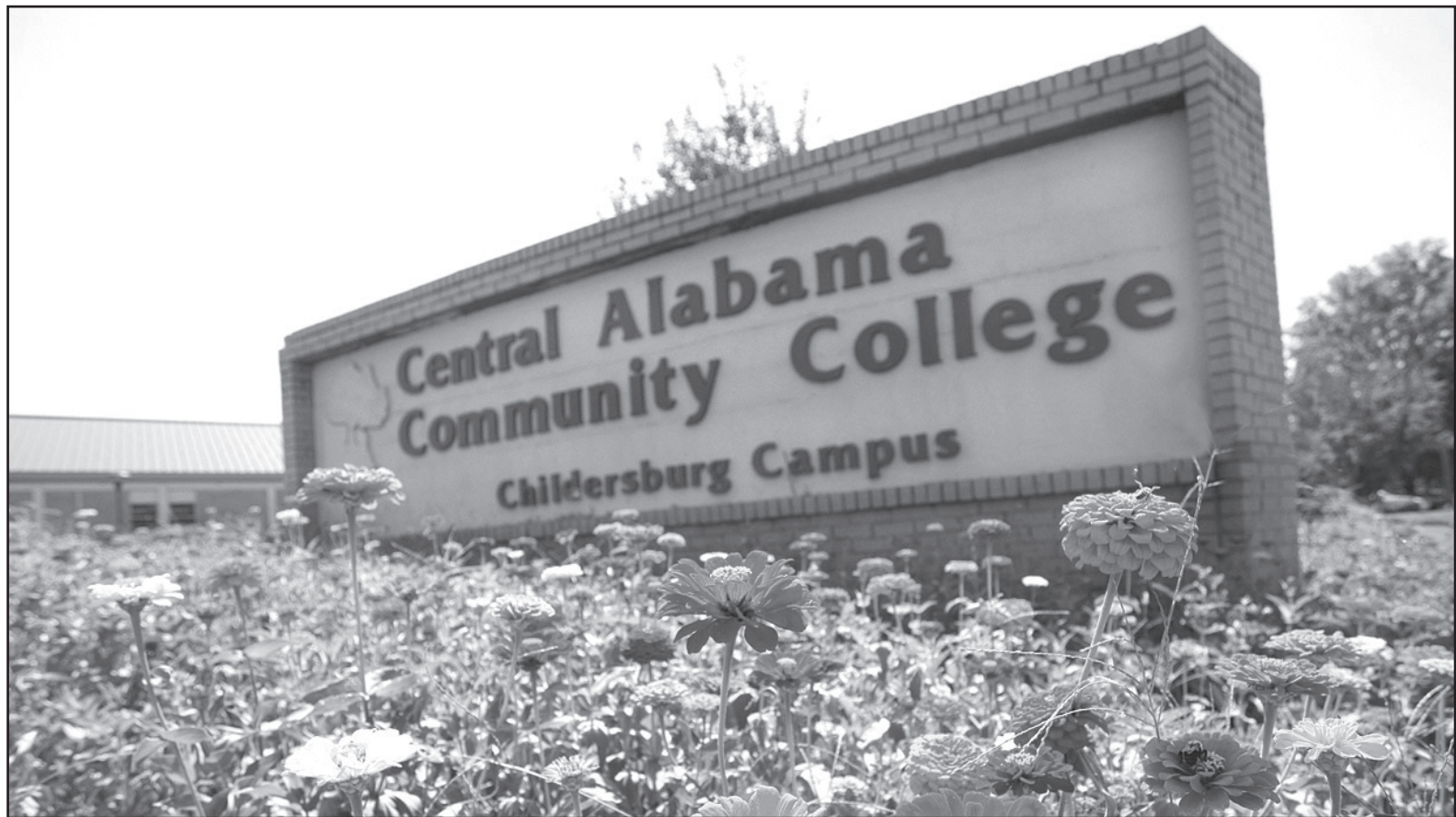
“We’re using Title 3 federal grants to create centers where we will do anything we can to help our students succeed,” Pritchard said. “They can go to that one spot and get help. Tutors will be there, and faculty members will be available to give supplemental instruction on certain things.”

The college is also being reviewed this year to renew its Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation.

The president said CACC remains a leader in community development.

“In the work force development and community development arenas we excelled in creating significant expansion of our dual enrollment programs, which increases our potential for community and economic development,” Burrow said.

Pritchard said CACC is



**Central Alabama Community College provides a variety of educational paths at its Childersburg campus, shown here, its Alexander City campus and its Talladega center.**

continuing to look for ways to expand its dual enrollment opportunities.

“The governor endorsed dual enrollment in his state of the state address,” he said.

CACC is working with schools throughout its service area to secure funding and provide more opportunities for high school students to take college courses for credit before graduating, as well as to create technical education partnerships with area high schools, Pritchard said.

“We started with Sylacauga High School because they expressed an interest in working with us to create a technical education consortium” he said.

Burrow came in as acting president last year and is now interim president.

For the past 10 years, Burrow served as Beville State Community College’s dean for academic transfer programs and dean of the Hamilton campus. She is completing her 26th year with the Alabama Community College System.

Burrow recently completed her PhD in higher education leadership from the University of Mississippi. She holds a clinical nurse specialist masters and post master’s family nurse practitioner certification from UAB.

In addition to her career as an educational and community leader, Burrow practiced primary family health care in rural clinics throughout Northwest Alabama for five years.

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Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

The Talladega center of Central Alabama Community College offers primarily academics, though the drafting and design technology program just shifted there.

## CACC

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Vice President Richard Hawkshead is in charge of the college's business office on the Childersburg campus, and spends much of his time there.

LaResea Embry is administrative coordinator of the Talladega center.

Pritchard said Burrow has brought new energy to the college's top office.

"As a community college, we try to serve the

needs of each individual community. We want to provide the best education possible, whether it's an academic transfer or technical-oriented courses and degrees where people can go to work after two years," Pritchard said.

"Our whole focus and the center of what we do here is to provide the best education possible, whether you're going out and seeking a job or going on to a four-year university."

Last fall, 2,100 students were enrolled in the college's three locations.

CACC was formed in 1989 by the merger of Alexander City State Junior College, which was established in 1963 and opened in 1965, and N.F. Nunnelley State Technical College, which opened in Childersburg in 1966.

The Talladega center is smaller and offers primarily academics, though the drafting and design

technology program just shifted there. "It's a very good two-year program," Pritchard said.

Other tech programs include machine shop, welding, cosmetology, air conditioning-refrigeration, computer science, manufacturing technology, industrial electronics and nursing.

"Nursing has always been a strong program of ours," Pritchard said. "I've been here 15 years and

the demand for nurses has continued to rise."

The PN, or practical nursing, program takes one year, and the ADN, or associate degree in nursing, takes two years.

The one-year program begins in summer semester and applications are due by Feb. 1.

The two-year program begins in fall, and the application deadline is April 1.

CACC has an open-

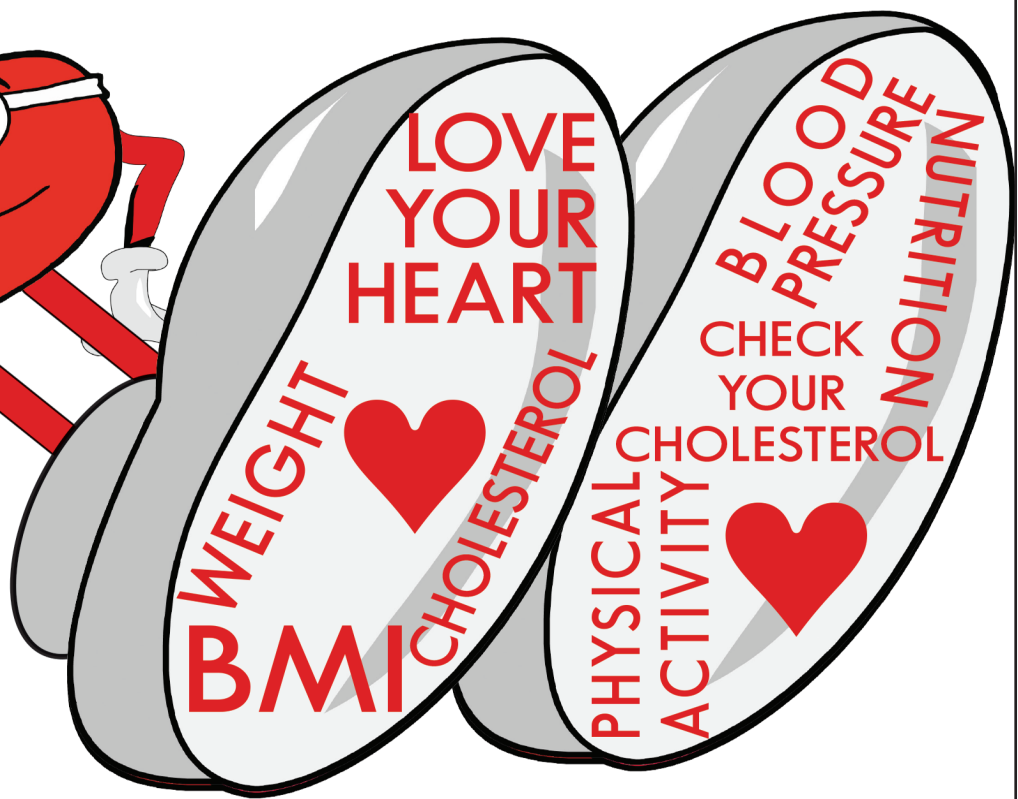
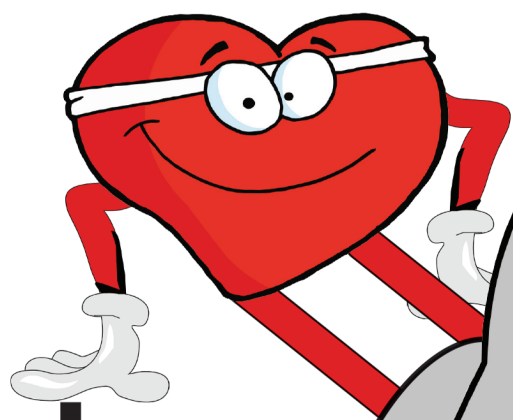
door policy, meaning anyone with a high school diploma or GED may enroll. The college offers GED preparation classes to help students prepare for admission, and once in the college, the Compass test is used to determine at which level of math, reading and English the student will begin, Pritchard said.

Students are not

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**CACC**

From Page 4

required to take the ACT for admission, but those who have done so will be exempt from the Compass test in each area in which they scored 20 or higher on the ACT.

“Once you have your test scores, the counselors will look at them and place you in the correct coursework that you need to take,” Pritchard said.

“A student can declare right out of the gate. We have degree programs in some areas and certificate programs in certain areas. Certificate programs are generally one year and don’t have as many core academic classes involved. A degree program will have math and language and social sciences classes, plus the coursework needed to get that degree.”

CACC encourages students planning to transfer to a four-year college or university to earn an associate of science degree.

“You can transfer up to half your (four-year) degree,” Pritchard said. “If a university requires 120 hours for a specific degree, you can transfer up to 60 hours of that degree from here.”

CACC encourages students to use the online STARS guide offered by Troy University, which takes into account the major the student wants to pursue and the four-year Alabama public college they want to transfer to and determines what classes the student needs to take at CACC.

“It’s like an insurance policy,” Pritchard said. “If you follow the STARS guide and you don’t change your major, you have an agreement between you and that four-year college that they have to accept those classes when you transfer.”

Pritchard said Alabama’s community colleges were designed to offer Alabamians the opportunity to go to college within a half-hour of home.

“It’s an affordable option to further their education and be able to go home after they get done,” he explained.

“Our tuition is about \$140 per semester hour, and a lot of four-year colleges are over \$400 a semester hour. You’re looking at a considerable difference.”

Families find community colleges more affordable, too, because students can eat and sleep at home, rather than paying room and board at a four-year school.

“Over the course of four years, you could save \$20,000 to \$30,000, and maybe even more than that,” Pritchard said.

Burrow lauded CACC’s athletics program, noting that in the last year, “Our student athletes and coaches demonstrated absolute excellence in earning two national championships.”

Pritchard said CACC’s national championship in baseball was a first in the 75-year history of American community college baseball. No team from Alabama ever won that championship before, he said.

“We’re extremely proud. We also won the national championship in golf last year, which was our sixth national championship in golf. For a college with 2,000 to 2,300 students, that’s a phenomenal feat when you think about all the community colleges in the country,” Pritchard said.

The women’s softball team averages more than 40 wins per year, and sees many players transfer to major universities.

“All three of our sports are very competitive, statewide and nationally,” Pritchard said.

Contact Bill Kimber at [bkimber@dailyhome.com](mailto:bkimber@dailyhome.com).



Jim Smothers/The Daily Home

DeForest Chapel, right, Foster Hall, center, and Foy Cottage, far left, are among the historic buildings on the Talladega College campus.

# Talladega College is poised for growth and changes

By **JIM SMOTHERS**  
Home commentary editor

In the past five years Talladega College has experienced a historic revitalization after teetering on the edge of oblivion for several years.

Under the leadership of college president Dr. Billy Hawkins and his administration, the college has experienced extraordinary growth in programs, numbers and capital projects, and he’s not finished yet. He has three multimillion dollar projects on the drawing board he wants to see through to completion in Talladega.

The college had been in a cost-cutting mode, and one by one all of the school’s sports teams were eliminated. That also sent enrollment on a downward

spiral, with fewer than 300 students remaining before Hawkins’ arrival in January 2008.

Among his first moves were to restore those teams to both start building numbers and start bringing activities back onto the college campus. Hawkins also brought a marching band to the college, currently with 200 members in uniform and dozens more added to the program. The college has no football team, so this is not a half-time show band. Students participate in competitions as a show band, and also participate in a number of competitions and parades. They are scheduled to march in eight parades at New Orleans’ Mardi Gras, and as the lead band in seven of them.

The men’s basketball

team has won two national championships in the past five years, and is ranked in the top 10 among NAIA schools this year. The women’s basketball team has also won a champi-

onship, and other inter-collegiate sports include baseball, softball, soccer, track and field, golf and volleyball.

ROTC is available at the college, and the famed

Talladega College Choir has almost 100 members.

Last year Talladega College set an all-time enrollment record of more

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**Talladega College President Dr. Billy Hawkins brought a marching band to the college, currently with 200 members in uniform and dozens more added to the program. Students participate in competitions as a show band and participate in a number of competitions and parades.**

**TC**

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than 1,200 students, so far outstripping dormitory space the college entered into a contract with a local motel to house some of the students.

More than a million dollars was spent on renovations of the exterior of Foster Hall, but after estimates to restore the interior soared in the millions the board changed course and decided to build a 200 bed dormitory on property the college already owns. That building has a tentative estimated cost of \$4.5 million, with plans to raze some houses on Battle Street to make room. Hawkins said other uses would be found for Foster Hall.

Another planned building is an art museum to be built primarily to house the Amistad mural series commissioned for the college in the 1930s. The panels depict scenes from the takeover of the slave ship Amistad and related events, and panels recounting the founding of the college. Hawkins said he already has a million-dollar pledge to construct the museum, which would feature galleries for those murals and for other art exhibits that could be hosted at the college. Plans call for the museum to be built in the Foy Bowl area just off Battle Street near the eastern entrance of the campus.

The mural panels are currently on a tour of museums in major cities across the country, presently in New York City. They are to be displayed

in Washington, D.C., before being returned to Talladega, which puts pressure on the college to raise funds and break ground to have the museum completed in time for their return. The tentative estimated cost of the museum is \$3 million.

It's estimated a half million people will see the murals on the tour, which helps bring notice to the college as well as enhances the reputation of Hale Woodruff, the artist who created them.

It's hoped the museum will help bring visitors and tourists to Talladega and to the campus.

"The state of Alabama has yet to recognize the treasure we have in these murals," Hawkins said. They have been appraised at \$40 million.

A new multipurpose gymnasium, convocation center and student activity building is the biggest project on the drawing board. Current plans call for an arena with seating for 3,000 people and retractable seating that would allow the same space to be used as a banquet room. An upstairs ballroom and restaurant are other amenities hoped for in the new building. The proposed location is on the west side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive behind the president's home. Plans are to make it large enough to hold the college's commencement ceremonies, which are currently held outdoors at the mercy of the elements. Current estimates for the center range

from \$8.5 million to \$10 million.

These three building proposals follow other campus renovations, including a major refurbishing of the college's dining hall, Fanning Refectory, and work at Foster Hall, Foy Cottage and Callanan Gym.

For the fall semester the college counted an enrollment of 1,003 students. Of that number, 85 percent were African American, 10 percent white, 4 percent Hispanic and 1 percent Asian. They represent 18 foreign countries, and the top five states represented are Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana and Tennessee.

The college offers 17 bachelor's degrees in four divisions, Business and Administration, Humanities and Fine Arts, Natural Sciences and Mathematics and Social Sciences and Education.

The college is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Talladega College is one of 55 members of New York University's Faculty Resource Network, a program that offers opportunities for research, curricular advancement and faculty development. Talladega faculty members attend summer programs on a rotating basis for enriching experiences that help them be better teachers in Talladega's classrooms.

Beginning this fall, the college plans to offer two-year Associate's degrees in addition to Bachelor's degrees, and Hawkins said the college will begin an online education this fall "in a big way."

According to the college website talladega.edu, tuition and fees for residential students total just under \$9,000 per semester, and under \$6,000 for off-campus students.



Jim Smothers/The Daily Home

**TC President Dr. Billy Hawkins has plans to build a museum, a dormitory and a student activity center on the campus, and hopes to break ground on two of the projects this spring.**



Jim Smothers/The Daily Home

**William Mitchell is director of the famed Talladega College Choir, which has almost 100 members.**

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AIDB President Dr. John Mascia said he is proud of the academic component of the institute's program, and the gains the schools make on all of their campuses.

## AIDB overcomes obstacles, meets challenges in '13

BY SHANE DUNAWAY  
Home staff writer

2013 ushered in change for the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind as Dr. John Mascia took the reins as president from outgoing President Dr. Terry Graham Feb. 1.

With his first year drawing to a close, Mascia pointed to some areas where the institute was able to overcome obstacles on the road to continue improvements as the staff of more than 1,200 employees provide services to more than 21,000 infants, children, adults and seniors with hearing and vision loss in the state's 67 counties.

"Always making sure we have the appropriate funds and resources to provide the best possible education and rehabilitation is a challenge," Mascia said. "We met that challenge last year. The (state) Legislature supported us and we also received some federal money through a \$925,000 grant to provide technical assistance to local schools around the state. We're very proud of that."

"The other challenge we had, and will continue to have, is making sure that we're able to recruit and train specialized staff. We've implemented some

programs over the last year to ensure our staff is receiving the best training and we also need to make sure we're growing new leaders. It's a big challenge for us as well as many other programs around the country."

In 2013, approximately 40 students graduated from Alabama School for the Deaf, Alabama School for the Blind and Helen Keller School and an additional 55 students graduated from the E.H. Gentry Technical Facility.

"Our numbers are relatively stable with a slight increase in our average programs," Mascia said. "We're proud of the academic component of our program, and we're proud of the gains our schools make on all of our campuses."

One of the biggest capital improvements on the horizon will be the construction of a 7,200 square-foot band hall, to be named Landreth Hall in honor of former ASB band director Eugene Landreth.

The \$1.4 million project, scheduled to begin in spring 2014, received approval from the AIDB Board of Trustees during its quarterly meeting in November.

"We're very proud we were able to garner the

support to build a band hall at the Alabama School for the Blind," Mascia said.

Mascia discussed multiple technology initiatives made possible by several federal grants and allowing specific technology to be provided for students who are deaf, blind and deaf-blind.

"At ASB, our technology area has grown tremendously over the past year," Mascia said. "The focus is to make sure all children regardless of what their vision is — whether they have low-vision or whether they are blind — can access the information either by modifying the print on the screen, by converting what's on the screen into a voice output or by converting what's on the screen to Braille."

"The institute also increased the amount of portable devices we have, particularly focusing on the students at Gentry."

"We want to make sure that our adult students at Gentry who are going out either to college or to a job site have portable technology available to them so that they're able to do their jobs and interact with both the people they work with and the public," Mascia said.

Mascia said he recently

See AIDB, Page 8



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

AIDB has storm shelters under construction at ASB, E.H. Gentry and the Helen Keller School courtesy of a \$1.2 million in grant money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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**AIDB**

From Page 7

signed off on continuing the Alabama Telecommunications Access Program, an AIDB-run program that provides devices to Alabamians across the state.

"This technology is provided to mostly older adults so they can have communication access on the phone or through the Internet," Mascia said. "We also provide technology so that deaf-blind folks can access the telephone. Instead of the words coming out in print form, they come out in Braille. It's really incredible.

"Our goal is to always make sure our folks are connected to their community and to other people," Mascia said. "It's such an exciting time to be alive because the technology is available to make that happen. If you think about Helen Keller's time, she needed a person to be with her to connect her to other people. Now, because of technology and better training techniques, people who are deaf, blind and deaf-blind are able to live and work independently."

Not only is technology thriving at AIDB, Mascia said several programs have grown, including services programs at Gentry, job coaching programs at regional centers statewide and the institute's spoken language program.

"We continue to grow in our ability to serve children who are in our spoken language program," Mascia said. "This allows us to meet our goal to provide choices for children and for parents. We have a very strong American Sign Language program and that will always be a part of ASD, but with increasing



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

**The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind has increased the amount of portable devices its has, particularly focusing on E.H. Gentry. Joel Stephens and Arlene Browning are shown using one of the devices.**

technologies, more children who are born deaf are using a combination of their hearing and sign language. Our goal is to be able to provide services for children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing at the ASD campus."

Mascia said the institute also increased its partnerships with local businesses at the Alabama Industries for the Blind by working with a company called GoJo.

"We're producing some bags for Jim 'n Nick's Barbecue," Mascia said. "We're working with an air filter manufacturer.

Expanding our reach and working with private companies so we can provide more job opportunities for people who are blind is something we've been able to do this year and we'll continue to do so."

In the realm of safety, Mascia noted the impending completion of three storm shelters under construction at ASB, Gentry and the Helen Keller School courtesy of \$1.2 million in grant money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"They should be done within a few months,"

Mascia said. "There's nothing more important than making sure our staff and students are safe. We're very grateful that we've been able to partner with FEMA and provide state-of-the-art shelters so we know our folks will be safe. May God forbid we have a repeat of the tornadoes we had back in 2011."

The institute took steps to enhance the effectiveness of its school resource officer by requiring the officer to take American Sign Language courses and effectively opening a direct line of communication

between the officer and the students.

"We want our students and our community to have freedom here at AIDB, but we also know that in these current times, we have to do what we can to secure our campuses," Mascia said. "This year, we decided that having a school resource officer that can develop a rapport with our children and work with them in a proactive way before trouble happens is something very positive."

During the summer, AIDB staff members participated in what Mascia

called a "very realistic" 3-hour active shooter training scenario in an effort to bolster readiness if such a scenario were to occur.

"That's something we plan on continuing to do in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies," Mascia said. "We found (the training) to be extremely helpful. We're trying to expand our safety and security measures at AIDB, and I believe we have succeeded."

As Mascia progresses through his second year on the job as AIDB president, he said the key to the success in his role has been the interaction with his students and staff at each campus.

"A week doesn't go by where I don't visit the campuses," Mascia said. "I spend time in the cafeterias with the children — usually having breakfast at least once a week. What I've enjoyed the most is getting to know our kids and our staff, making that personal connection with them. It helps me to plan for the future and it also gives me energy and motivation to do the best job I can on behalf of them and their families."

Mascia said he is grateful the local deaf and blind communities have been so accepting of him and his family.

"Not only do I enjoy spending time with the folks in the deaf and blind communities, I also learn so much from them," Mascia said. "I believe that helps me do a better job as president. It's about building relationships with folks and getting to know them as people. By doing that, you learn what they need in terms of services."

Contact Shane Dunaway at [sdunaway@dailyhome.com](mailto:sdunaway@dailyhome.com).

# YOUR GUIDE TO EYE HEALTH

*Diet, lifestyle, environment, and aging have a profound effect on vision. Aside from aging, you can modify these risk factors. By making eye-healthy choices, you can reduce the severity or rate of progression of a vision affliction.*

*You should seek advice from and schedule regular, annual examinations with your eye care specialist, more often if you are experiencing diminished vision.*

## MACULAR DEGENERATION

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a progressive eye condition affecting as many as 15 million Americans, with 200,000 new cases each year. AMD causes severe vision loss because it attacks the macular of the eye, where our sharpest central vision occurs. It gets in the way of reading, driving, identifying faces, watching television, safely navigating stairs and performing other daily tasks. AMD never causes complete blindness, but it robs the individual of all but the outermost, peripheral vision, leaving only dim images or holes at the center of vision.



## LIFESTYLE AND SIGHT

Lifestyle choices are far more important for vision health than people realize. How one lives in today's environment brings both risks and rewards. After aging, smoking is the most significant risk factor for AMD. Obesity has been connected to high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease - both of which are risk factors for glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy and AMD. Exercise - enough to sweat, three times a week.



## SUNLIGHT AND SIGHT

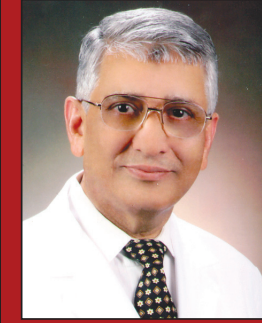
Exposure to intense sunlight may contribute to AMD. It also increases risk for cataract and corneal disease. Protecting your eyes from the ultraviolet (A and B) and blue light spectrum by wearing wide-brimmed hats and UV-blocking sunglasses (amber protects best against blue light.)



## NUTRITION AND SIGHT

A diet that includes colorful fruits and vegetables, dark leafy greens, nuts, frequent servings of fatty, cold-water fish and foods low on the glycemic index is a foundation for healthy vision.

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# More than 700 students now attend Jeff State in Pell City

By DAVID ATCHISON  
Home staff writer

Officials say Jefferson State Community College in Pell City is officially a "campus," so what does that mean? Growth, a lot of growth.

And growth not only means more students, but more teachers and more college courses available for local students.

Former Pell City Mayor Guin Robinson recently told local officials about the early beginnings of the Jefferson State Community College in Pell City.

He said when it first opened in 2006, there were 271 students.

"We started off strong, but look at it now," Robinson said. "It's been a pretty magical ride."

Jefferson State Community College in Pell City now boasts more than 700 students, said Nicholas Kin, campus division chairman.

He said the Pell City campus offers about 70 classes per semester, and the faculty has also continued to grow with the student population.

"When I was hired there were zero full-time faculty members," Kin said.

Now the Pell City campus has 12 full-time faculty members and classes have become more diverse for students. In all, the Pell City campus has about 40 full- and part-time employees.

He said the Pell City campus allows area students to attend school closer to home, and with the growth more and more classes are being offered.

Kin said with more students, the Pell City campus receives more state funds, which will help enhance programs for local students.

In 2012, the first nursing program class began and last year the first class of nursing students graduated.

The Pell City campus offers accredited and non-accredited courses for students.

Kay Potter, director of community and corporate education for Jefferson State Community College, said non-accredited programs are career programs that students can get special certification to enter the workforce.

She said students can complete a certification course, which is a lot like job training for a specific job, anywhere from 10 weeks to six months. Currently the Pell City campus offers a certified nursing assistant program, a dental assistant program and medical billing and coding.

"We do offer a few computer classes, and an ACT preparation course," Potter said.

But more students attending Jefferson State Community College in Pell City are seeking two-year and four-year degrees.

"We have a very diverse student population," Kin said.

He said about 60 percent of the students attending classes at the Pell City campus are recent high school graduates. The other 40 percent are non-traditional working adults.

"Half of the classes we offer are at night," Kin said.

He said about 60 percent of the students attending the Pell City campus are seeking an associate degree with the idea of transferring to a four-year college.

"We have a joint admission program," Kin said.

The program offers

Jefferson State Community College students access to the University of Alabama facilities.

Kin said once a student completes the basic associate's degree course work, they are guaranteed admissions into UAB and scholarship.

He said generally, students seeking four-year degrees, transfer to colleges like UAB, Jacksonville State University and Troy University. Some students later attend Auburn University or the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Huntingdon College also has an admissions office on the Jefferson State Community College Campus in Pell City. Huntingdon also offers courses at the Pell City campus through their Adult Degree Completion Program.



In photo at left, Nicholas Kin is the division chairman at the Jefferson State Community College Pell City campus.

Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

In bottom photo, Biology professor Brenda Hammer teaches students at the Jefferson State Community College Pell City Campus.



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Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

The new St. Vincent's St. Clair opened in December 2011. Its focus is on delivering top-quality care to the community.

# Meeting community needs hospital's goal

By ELSIE HODNETT  
Home staff writer

St. Vincent's St. Clair Hospital continues to expand and fulfill its goal of meeting community needs.

"St. Vincent's St. Clair continues to offer more services to meet the needs of our community," said Evan Ray, FACHE, president of Rural Hospitals for St. Vincent's Health System. "At a time when rural hospitals across the country are struggling, we opened the new St. Vincent's St. Clair in December 2011. Our focus is on delivering top-quality care to this community. The key is to partner with local care providers and other entities."

Kidada Hawkins, vice president and COO of Rural Hospitals, said St. Vincent's St. Clair Hospital recently opened a Vein Center, expanded its Advanced Wound Center, added pain management services, has a Sleep Disorders Center and added therapy options.

"The need for a Vein Center was there, so to get the program going we combined it with the Advanced Wound Center," he said. "We moved to a new space in the beginning



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

St. Vincent's St. Clair's Advanced Wound Center has been open two years. It offers traditional nurse-led wound care and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy.

of February, which allows more open days because with the wound center,

there was only one day a week available for the vein center."

Ray said the Vein Clinic moved to a different suite in the Physicians Plaza. Dr. Duane Randleman Jr. is medical director and is Board Certified in General Surgery and Thoracic Surgery.

"We can go to five days a week with the Vein Center if the demand is there," he said. "We have two new cardiologists trained in veins. The Vein Clinic offers a minimal-invasive procedure for

the treatment of varicose veins using radiofrequency or lasers."

Hawkins said St. Vincent's St. Clair Hospital offers free vein screenings periodically. The next free vein screening, the third one in a five to six month period, is scheduled for Feb. 19.

Hawkins said the Advanced Wound Center has been open two years now. Dr. James West is the medical director and is Board Certified in General Surgery.

"It offers tradition-

al nurse-led wound care and Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy," he said. "The Advanced Wound Center treats wounds that haven't healed satisfactorily in two to four weeks."

Hawkins said the hospital added pain management services. Chronic pain management treatments include activity modifications, physical therapy, trigger point injections, multidisciplinary pain treatment and pain medication management.

"The Sleep Disorders Center, which opened

about a year ago with medical director Dr. Fazal Rahim, provides sleep studies by referral," Ray said. "Our accreditation visit went well and we anticipate becoming accredited in the coming weeks."

Rahim is Board Certified in Neurology.

Hawkins said the hospital's physical therapy department increased services with the addition of an occupational therapist and a speech therapist in

See SVSC, Page 11



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Dr. James West is medical director of the Advanced Wound Center at St. Vincent's St. Clair.

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## SVSC

From Page 10

2013.

"We provide lab testing, diagnostic imaging, physical/occupational therapy and inpatient services for the residents of the new Col. Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home," he said.

Ray said St. Vincent's St. Clair Hospital continues to maintain patient satisfaction scores above the 90th percentile nationally.

"We are routinely recognized by Ascension Health for our work surrounding quality outcomes," he said. "And we are experiencing very strong volumes versus prior years in inpatient, outpatient and surgical services."

Ray said with state-of-the-art surgical suites, the hospital has been able to attract additional surgeons to its medical staff. In 2013, additional cardiologists, general surgeons, orthopedic surgeons and gastroenterologists joined the medical staff.

St. Vincent's St. Clair Hospital now offers full-time general surgery coverage for both scheduled and emergency procedures, with the addition of Dr. Scott Smith as a full-time general surgeon and is Board Certified in General Surgery and Thoracic Surgery.

"St. Vincent's Health System is celebrating the 115th anniversary of the founding of our first hospital in Birmingham," he said. "Back in November 1898, four Daughters of Charity established the hospital to serve the needs of a booming city of more than 100,000 people who had little access to health-



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

**Kidada Hawkins, left, vice president and COO of Rural Hospitals, and Evan, FACHE, president of Rural Hospitals for St. Vincent's Health System, are shown in the chapel at St. Vincent's St. Clair.**

"We are routinely recognized by Ascension Health for our work surrounding quality outcomes. And we are experiencing very strong volumes versus prior years in inpatient, outpatient and surgical services."

*-Evan Ray, FACHE, president of Rural Hospitals for St. Vincent's Health System*

care."

Ray said St. Vincent's Health System has the oldest hospital in Birmingham.

"That hospital, with modest beginnings, is now a five-facility health system connecting our community to some of the nation's best medical resources.

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our community to access quality healthcare close to home."

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Look for more Foot Facts in future editions of The Daily Home.

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# CVMC promotes wellness through community initiatives

By **EMILY McLAIN**  
Home staff writer

Most people think of hospitals when they are sick, but Coosa Valley Medical Center in Sylacauga wants to be known as a place for wellness also.

“We always want people to think of us when they are not feeling well,” said Christy Knowles, chief human resources officer, “but we want to move to being the place people also view as a resource to help them live a healthy and fit lifestyle.”

A Community Health Needs Assessment conducted last year identified overall wellness of the community as an area that needs emphasis in Sylacauga. The assessment brought together stakeholders from all areas of the city — government officials, business owners, hospital employees, church leaders and more — who all agreed overall wellness is a point for improvement.

In response to that assessment, CVMC promptly began making changes to encourage a healthier culture among Sylacauga’s residents. The first step was reacquiring and renovating the on-campus fitness and wellness center.

“Our gym is exceptionally clean,” said marketing coordinator Lindsay Johns. “It’s the only one in the area with a climate-controlled indoor walking track and working racquetball courts, and it’s staffed with full-time attendants.”

The center has cardio and weight equipment, locker rooms with show-



**Coosa Valley Medical Center in Sylacauga seeks ways to link its services to community needs, as evidenced by its efforts to increase wellness, in a changing health care environment.**

ers and offers personalized attention and group classes including yoga, kickboxing, Zumba and more. Membership has increased almost 70 percent since the gym reopened last fall, sporting the new motto “Be active...Live well.”

CVMC is promoting healthy eating as well. It is now offering healthier food options in Hickory Street Café. The café is open to the public and has space available to host

meetings. It is also hosting a monthly healthy eating class to address a different nutrition topic each month. The classes, led by registered dietitian Meredith Mims, are held the fourth Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. in the private dining room at Hickory Street Café.

“We want to use this class to reach out to the community and support smart choices and show people healthier diet and

exercise options,” Mims said. “We will have a new topic every month based on feedback and interest. Some of the topics planned are weight loss, a heart-healthy diet, diabetic diet, and healthy grocery shopping. There are endless possibilities for what we could cover.”

Mims said the class will take a close look at diets required for numerous medical issues and how to maintain a healthy balance

while managing certain diseases. It will also offer practical tips for anyone to follow, she said, like doing your grocery shopping on the outer aisles of the store to avoid more processed foods on the inner aisles.

“Portion control is one of the biggest issues people have,” Mims said. “A lot of people are surprised to hear that a serving of meat is just the size of your palm. Another important factor to staying healthy

is to balance your diet and exercise. People think you can just diet or just exercise, when really, you’re not maximizing your health unless you are doing both.”

In another move toward a healthier environment, the hospital is now a tobacco-free campus. It has limited tobacco use to designated areas for several years, but made the move to completely smoke-free and tobacco-free at the start of the year.

“We have seen a number of industries adopt aggressive policies regarding tobacco-free initiatives,” CEO Glenn Sisk recently said. “Many hospitals across Alabama have joined this effort, and the Board and leadership of CVMC believe it is our responsibility to do the same. In recent years, we have attempted to advance good health messages to the community, and this represents another favorable step in that direction.”

Of roughly 65,000 patients a year, about 28 percent are tobacco users, as well as 30 percent of employees, according to Human Resources Officer Christy Knowles. While CVMC does anticipate the ban to be unpopular among some people, it is prepared to offer assistance by making smoking cessation counseling, literature and products, like patches or gum, available to employees and patients.

“We always want to encourage our employees to live healthy lifestyles, and we think we should set

See CVMC, Page 1B



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The gym at Coosa Valley Medical Center is exceptionally clean, and is the only one in the area with a climate-controlled indoor walking track and working racquetball courts, marketing coordinator Lindsay Johns said.

## CVMC

From Page 12A

the example for patients that come through here, but we're not trying to force people into a lifestyle change," Knowles recently said. "What we are trying to do is encourage and provide support."

Its medical services are also always a point the hospital seeks to improve. CVMC has made numerous additions to its medical staff in the last several years and continually seeks to improve public

confidence through providing quality care.

The hospital is the community's largest employer, Sisk said at a recent community event, with more than 600 employees and medical staff representing more than 20 areas of specialization. It has a payroll of about \$23 million in benefits and salaries and has an economic impact of \$133 million in the Sylacauga area, Sisk said.

CVMC has historically performed in the top 7 percent nationally and

is accredited by the Joint Commission. It has also been recognized in the last year by the American Heart Association and the American Association of Critical Care Nurses for exceptional care in its emergency department and critical care unit.

The hospital continually seeks ways to link its services to community needs, as evidenced by its efforts to increase wellness, in a changing health-care environment.

"Given the challenges

created by changes in federal healthcare insurance laws, the CVMC team continues to prepare to assist the residents of our region in gaining access to care. We remain steadfast in our commitment to recruit new physicians and add new and beneficial services while exceeding the expectations of our guests with every interaction."

Contact Emily McLain at [eadams@dailyhome.com](mailto:eadams@dailyhome.com).



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*Dr. McCollough is a graduate of the University of Alabama School of Medicine with a Sports Medicine Fellowship through Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine. He is board certified in Internal Medicine and is board eligible in Sports Medicine.*



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Joel Taylor, left, is administrator at Citizens Baptist Medical Center in Talladega. Family practitioner Lea Clayton, center, has been brought into the Lincoln clinic, and Emily Rehburg, right, is a pulmonologist.

# Cutting edge technology continues to be added at CBMC

By CHRIS NORWOOD  
Home staff writer

Citizens Baptist Medical Center in Talladega has added cutting edge technology in the past few years, and will continue to do so in the future, according to Administrator Joel Taylor.

"The Epic system for electronic records went live in April," he said. "We've gone through a lot of education for the physicians and staff, but I have to say it has been an overwhelming success."

Taylor said the hospital would be eligible for some government reimbursement for the new systems after a "meaningful use."

"From my vantage point," he said, "it has a big impact for the caregivers, who can access a centralized usable record from home using a smart phone or iPad, a way to interact with the hospital. But it also gives the patient a way to check their records from home, using the 'My Chart' application over their home computer. That can also be used to transfer records among referring physicians. That technology is going to continue to evolve."

There are also some new faces. "Dr. Milka Martinez had been working with Dr. Jett in Lincoln, but she transferred here as a hospitalist in May," Taylor said. A hospitalist specializes in several aspects of in patient care.

"You need an ever changing knowledge base in the hospital," he said. "She works seven days on and seven days off."

Family practitioner Lea Clayton has been brought into the Lincoln clinic, and has been well received, Taylor said. Dr. Craig Marshall joined the Munford clinic in June, with Rene Staude, and the clinic hours there have been expanded from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to "improve access and better meet the needs and demands of that community," he said.

Nurse practitioner Amy Ledbetter has moved from Talladega to the Munford clinic, and Max Thrower has replaced her in Talladega. "He brought his own patient base with him," Taylor said.

"We are working to meet the primary care needs of north Talladega County in the hospitals

and clinics," he added. "We're working to add specialized services where they're needed, and where they can be supported."

Pulmonologist Emily Rehburg joined in the fourth quarter of last year, and new services include outpatient wound care and general surgery with Wes Harden. "He's been a great addition for the last 15 months or so," Taylor said.

Starting in February, Citizens will begin offering hospice care in conjunction with their existing home health program. "That's addressing a community need with strategic health care," he said. There will also outpatient vein care offered in the coming year. "We'll be addressing leg issues, things causing pain and discomfort and procedures that are beneficial for that. You see that in a lot of markets now, and that's something we're hoping to start up in the first quarter."

The mammography facilities have been updated recently, so that "if you got a mammogram last year, you will find the equipment much more patient friendly," he said.

And, of course, historically the Citizens emergency room has been the most important piece of the puzzle.

"The emergency department is a major part of primary care, and while that will eventually change with health care reform, it still fills a major void for a lot of people. We had a record number of visits last year, and that growth will continue. So we're focusing on timeliness now. It's on average less than 30 minutes to see a physician and less than two hours total stay. Those averages have been a pretty consistent focus for the last several years."

Long term, there are still some questions. "We are still actively pursuing a physicians office building," Taylor said. "We don't have a timeline, but that is still on the radar. But with changes coming in health care, we may be moving away from that and changing more to patient population management. Buildings are crucial, but we also need to invest in connectivity and physician/hospital relationships. We'll be working with other health care providers, building a



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Starting in February, Citizens Baptist will begin offering hospice care in conjunction with its existing home health program. In the bottom photo is RN Jennifer Spary, EMR.



foundation for the other pieces."

Some of the hospitals future plans will depend

on whether or not the state expands Medicare, as it would be able to do under the Affordable Care

Act, but to date has not done. "The ramification if they continue to expand the program will

impact everyone," Taylor said. "That is probably the most significant event looming right now."

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# School System continues to thrive

By DAVID ATCHISON  
Home staff news

The Pell City School System has turned the page to a new chapter with a new superintendent at the helm, Dr. Michael Barber.

"I think it's been a good six months," Barber said.

After serving as assistant superintendent for 11 years, the Board of Education unanimously approved hiring Barber to serve as superintendent.

Barber, who is a product of the Pell City School System, graduating from Pell City High School in 1983, is humble when he talks about the past six months and the positive direction the system continues to travel.

"It's been exhilarating and a very enlightening experience for me," Barber said. "I was the assistant superintendent for 11 years, but there are things you don't see or feel until you have the ultimate responsibility."

Barber took the place of Dr. Bobby Hathcock, a sort of mentor for the current superintendent. Hathcock retired from the School System in July 2013.

"Ya'll hired a good man," Hathcock told the board after it unanimously agreed to hire Barber as superintendent.

Barber earned his bachelor's, master's and EDS degrees from Jacksonville State University. He also has a doctorate in ministry from Temple Baptist Seminary.

Barber is pastor of Mount Zion Freewill Baptist Church in Pell City. He served as associate pastor for the church for about 10 years before becoming the church's pastor in 2007.

Barber has worked in



Dr. Michael Barber has served as Pell City schools superintendent for the past six months.

education for 24 years. He started his teaching career as a fourth-grade teacher at Lincoln Elementary School and then Stemley Elementary.

He was promoted to assistant principal at Drew Middle School in the Talladega County School System before becoming principal in 1997 at Iola Roberts Elementary

School in Pell City.

While Barber has been the superintendent, the construction of storm shelters at Williams Intermediate School was completed, and renovation work has begun at Eden Elementary.

Barber found a new central office for the School System and the school board unanimous-

ly approved the purchase of the former St. Clair County Department of Human Resources building.

"When we move into the building, it will be paid for," Barber said. "That's huge."

The school board bought the building from the St. Clair County Commission, and will

move into the spacious building for less than a \$300,000 investment.

Renovation work is currently underway at the building, which is located next to Interstate 20 off Dr. John Haynes Drive.

"All the heating and air units are working," he said.

He said the new facility will allow all central office

personnel to be under one roof. The facility will also provide enough space for a teacher training center inside the new central office.

Under Barber's leadership, the School System continues to thrive.

Recent numbers released from the State

See **Thriving**, Page 4B



## SYLACAUGA PEDIATRICS

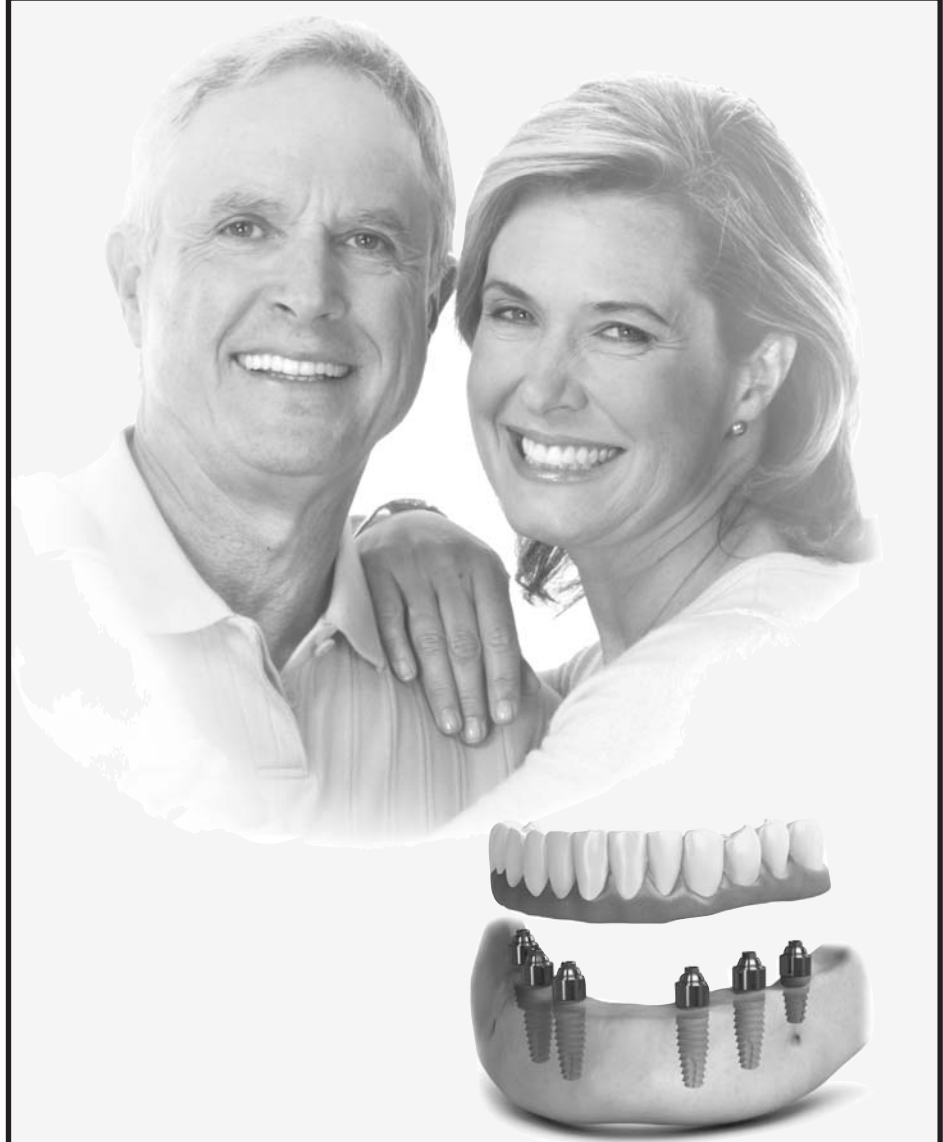
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# Thriving

From Page 3B

Board of Education reveals that the graduation rate for the Pell City School System is above the state average.

Barber said the graduation rate at Pell City High School is at 87 percent, while the state graduation rate average is 80 percent.

Despite recent downturn in the economy, the Pell City School System also maintains its required reserve balance to cover all operating costs for one month.

"The reserve is where it needs to be," Barber said.

He said he supports

common core curriculum, so students who transfer from other states or schools have the same educational skill levels as students for the same grade level.

"There is some controversy because some people might see it as losing their autonomy at the local level," Barber said. "But we have always had standards to follow, common courses. This just makes it uniform from state to state."

The School System has also integrated technology in the classrooms.

"Devices are fine if you have the infrastructure to support them," Barber said.

Certain classes have computers or tablets for the entire classroom.

"Some classes allow students to bring their own devices," Barber said.

He said devices will change, but the School System needs to have the infrastructure in place to support those devices.

"We also need to make sure teachers utilize technology efficiently," he said.

He said School System personnel meet on a regular basis, working together to identify the needs of students and how to meet those needs.

"I have some wonderful people at the table

assisting me," Barber said.

He said everyone works together for the common good to make the School System better.

"We're going to get up and try to make it better every day," he said.

Barber said he enjoys being able to set a direction to help improve the School System.

"I know every decision I make impacts our students, employees and the city," he said. "I try to make the best possible decisions for our kids and our community."

Contact David Atchison at [datchison@dailyhome.com](mailto:datchison@dailyhome.com).



The state building inspector recently gave the final approval of the new storm shelters at Williams Intermediate School.



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

The former St. Clair County DHR building will serve as the new central office for the Pell City School System this summer, after renovations to the facility are completed.



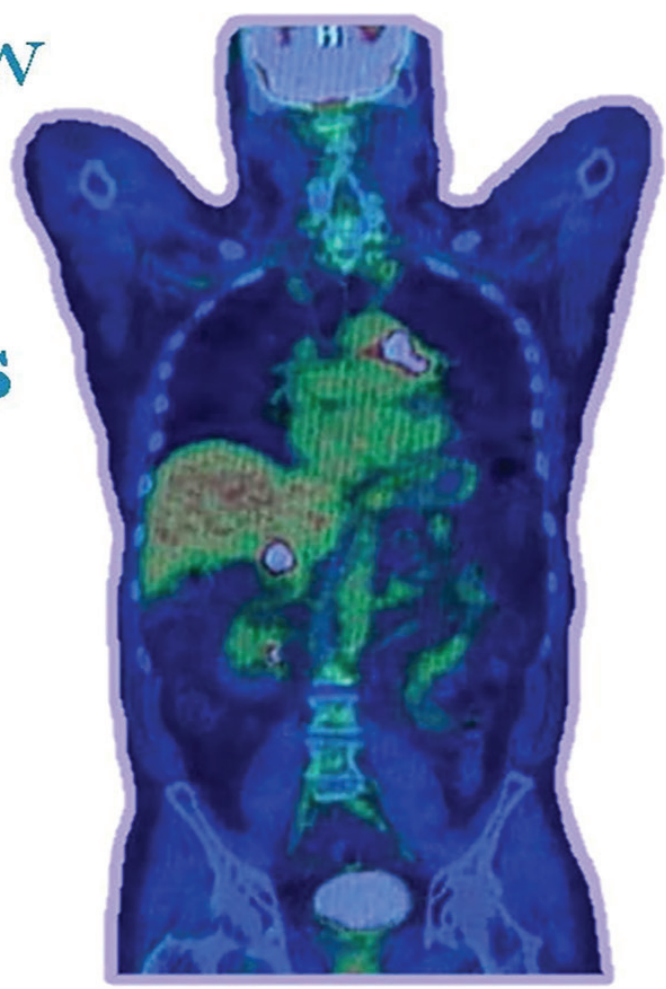
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# Talladega City School System moving forward

By **CHRIS NORWOOD**  
Home staff writer

The next school year will likely be a period of transition for Talladega city schools, as Superintendent Doug Campbell begins his retirement at the end of the current academic year. And Campbell says he is leaving behind a strong system as his legacy.

"In Talladega city schools, the 2012-13 school year and the beginning of the 2013-14 school year is being perceived as a shining example of district unity, perseverance and excellence. Great strides were made last year and are continuing to be made this year in the areas of student achievement, curriculum resources, fiscal accountability, technology, and facility improvements," Campbell said in a prepared statement.

He went on to say that "several events occurred during the 2012-2013 school year that brought significant recognition and honor to the district." The system successfully renewed its district accreditation from AdvancEd and was publicly commended for having many excellent educational practices in place at the school levels. The boys' basketball program and girls' volleyball team made it to the state play-offs. The Career Tech Robotics team went to the Southeastern BEST competition and the ROTC program won a very prestigious state competition, with the high school JROTC program receiving a trophy for 1st place overall for the Drill

Team and Color Guard. Houston Elementary School received the Gold Award of Distinction for achieving all HUSSC (Healthier US School Challenge) requirements, among others.

"We continue to focus on incorporating 21st century technology into all classrooms and we've made tremendous progress in this area in the last couple of years," Campbell said. "We are emphasizing strategic teaching strategies in all classrooms, small group instruction to address each and every student, and (we are) beginning to use more project-based learning, especially at the high school level, the Career Tech Center, and through technology at some of the elementary schools. Job shadowing has been an emphasis at the high school level, which allows students to experience job site training. This is, also, an excellent example of how we are continually promoting school community relations. We are working at every level of education in the system to prepare students to become productive members of society ... starting with elementary, then junior high, and moving into high school where greater emphasis is placed on College and Career Readiness standards. We are working on an initiative to provide more arts education in the schools. Arts can foster critical thinking and problem solving in students by stimulating creativity. We are proud to have Heritage Hall partner with us in providing not only visual

arts in the classrooms, but performing and literary arts as well."

For the future, Campbell said, "our district takes great pride in developing educational programs that prepare students to become lifelong learners who are successful, responsible, and productive members of a global society. Our district will continue to make every effort to protect our community's educational investment while optimizing student achievement; encourage parents and the community at large to get involved in helping us to promote high levels of student achievement; take the necessary steps to ensure all students acquire the skills needed to achieve success in an ever changing world, and to make sure all our students graduate ready to be classified as college and career ready.

#### Common Core

In 2010, the State Board of Education voted to adopt the new "Common Core" standards. After the adoption of these standards, Alabama created its own based on the national core standards. These are known as the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards. The new standards outline what students should be able to accomplish in math and reading and language arts, regardless of where they attend school in the state of Alabama, according to a statement from the central office.

Curriculum and instruction coordinator Dolia Patterson said, "As

a result of the SDE adopting these new learning standards, this framework was utilized in establishing the goals for our curriculum and instructional programs and outlines the fundamental skills that we want our students to have in reading and math when they graduate. Alabama's new college and career standards are much more rigorous than its previous standards. They are designed to help ensure that students are learning the necessary knowledge and skills needed at each grade level. These standards emphasize critical thinking and applied knowledge that we want students to take with them long after they graduate."

Patterson said the implementation of the College and Career Ready Standards into the curriculum continues to be a transitional process. "Even though we have utilized several programs since the adoption of the standards, we are still learning and applying different strategies to improve student performance. A College and Career Ready Implementation Team has been organized at the system level to assist in the transition process. The team consists of administrators, elementary, middle and secondary teachers in the areas of reading/language arts and math. These administrators and teachers attend quarterly professional development training sessions provided by the SDE. During the training, resources and strategies on how to identify and understand the



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

**Talladega City Schools Superintendent Doug Campbell begins his retirement at the end of this academic year. He says he is leaving behind a strong system as his legacy.**

significant shifts in instruction are provided for the teachers."

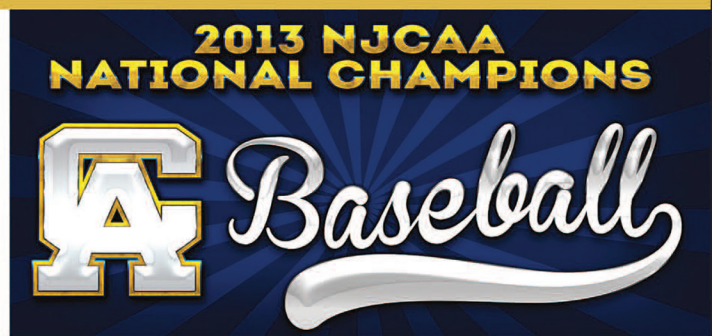
The instructional shifts that apply to the standards in reading/language and math also result in shifts in the instructional practices. More emphasis is focused on real-world problem solving, reading and writing in every classroom, collaboration and engagement in meaningful productive classroom discussions on worthwhile content, maximizing instructional time, extended learning opportunities and formative assessments for understanding.

"As a system, we have

been able to purchase new textbooks in the areas of math and reading and language arts for grades K-12, to assist us with including the common core standards into our curriculum. These resources assist our teachers in teaching to the standards as outlined in the Alabama Course of Study Standards and College and Career-Ready Standards. Curriculum pacing guides that provide an outline for teachers to use in planning instruction were developed by the teachers. Use of these pacing guides help

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# 2013 year of advancement for Talladega County schools

BY SHANE DUNAWAY  
Home staff writer

For the Talladega County School System, 2013 represented a year of advancement in terms of initiatives and a year full of accolades at the state and federal levels.

The Project-Based Learning and 21st Century Learning initiatives set in motion under Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Lacey's watch continued, while "The Leader in Me" initiative, a program designed to increase teacher effectiveness, student engagement and academic achievement while preparing students to be leaders in the 21st century, swept through elementary schools throughout the county.

Lacey said secondary schools and the students who attend them aren't being left out in the cold as far being empowered to lead.

"The 'Leader in Me' is just for elementary schools," Lacey said. "We have leadership focus in our secondary schools, but it's not through 'Leader in Me.' That's an expectation that all these initiatives be permeated throughout the School System, K-12. In the secondary schools, seventh through 12th (grades), we're developing leadership through student ambassador programs and opportunities for the students to lead within their school.

"For example, our classroom managers, who are appointed on a weekly basis when visitors come into the classrooms, greet the visitors and explain to them what the objective of the day is in the classroom," Lacey said. "We're really just cultivating leaders at all grade levels. It's just a little bit different from the 'Leader in Me' program at the elementary level and what we're doing with high school students."

Under Lacey's leadership, the system embarked on a modernized path with more than half the schools in the county adding the use of technology to the teaching tool belt.

"The 21st Century Learning initiative includes our integration of technology to support student learning," Lacey said. "Our goal is to have all schools have a 1:1 student-to-computer ratio. We're moving at a steady pace with that



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

## Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Lacey

initiative."

In September, B.B. Comer Memorial Elementary School became the first elementary school to be integrated into the initiative and B.B. Comer Memorial High School also incorporated its technology into their teaching program.

When Fayetteville High School, Lincoln High School and Munford High School implemented the new technology initiatives in January, it meant all high schools in the county system had met Lacey's goal.

"The technology is used to support student learning," Lacey said. "The computer or the technology does not replace good teaching. If the students are working on a project, they may be using their device to research information on that particular topic. They also may be using their device to create a multimedia presentation. Or they may be using the device to develop an iMovie that would give an overview of the information or project they are

actually working on. There are multiple ways that the technology is being used to enhance learning."

An example of the technology in action observed by Lacey involved a distinct feature of 21st Century Internet use — blogging.

"The teacher had just posed a question in a classroom related to the objective for that day," Lacey said. "A section of the lesson was for every student to respond to that question through a blog-type format. So the other students couldn't necessarily see what each other was writing, but the teacher could see the comments made by all the students. Technology enhances the communication of our students in that manner because it gives every student an opportunity to be involved and a voice in their learning."

Lacey said she believes using technology in projects and classroom assignment while simultaneously promoting collaboration and teamwork will help the students as they progress through the system and

life.

"With the integration of technology, we know that the world outside of school is based on technological competence these days," Lacey said. "Our kids need the experience at this level in order to be well-prepared as they enter college, the military or the workforce — whatever their chosen career path may be. They need to have a good working knowledge of how technology can support them once they leave us."

Lacey pointed to recent graduation data as a barometer to measure the success of implemented initiatives in place across the county.

"During the past five years, we've seen steady growth in the graduation rate," Lacey said. "The state graduation rate is at 80 percent, and that's an all-time high for our state. For Talladega County schools, 84 percent is also an all-time high for our students. I think with the emphasis beginning in elementary through secondary with the technology to support learning, Project-Based Learning, 21st Century Learning and developing leadership — all of that is really paying huge dividends as we see our graduation rate increasing over time."

The system also implemented the College and Career Readiness Standards for English and math, sometimes referred to as the "Common Core" curriculum.

"These standards are more rigorous for students in order for them to be able to understand the complexity of problem-solving, higher-order thinking and critical thinking skills," Lacey said. "There's a lot of negativity about the Common Core, but it's simply a more rigorous set of standards that will better prepare the students to be college or career ready when they graduate from high school."

Lacey said the increased challenge for students helps those who choose to go to college avoid rehashing material already taught in remedial courses.

"Right now in our state, and, really, across the nation, that's a problem," Lacey said. "A high percentage of students graduating from high school are going to college and having to take remedial courses. The

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## Forward

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to ensure that there is alignment between the classrooms within a school and with other schools within the system. This process helps to ensure that all children at the same grade level will be studying the same topic roughly at the same time in the year. Our teachers have also had extensive professional development training in the use of strategic teaching strategies and use these methods, as well as the strategic format to plan lessons for instruction," Patterson said.

"Common benchmark assessments for math have been developed for our middle and high school students using GlobalScholar Achievement Series. The data from these assessments are used to monitor student performance and to provide remediation to students as needed using our Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Response to Instruction, sponsored by the State Department of Education, is one of the programs being fully implemented by our system. It is a framework that integrates core instruction, formative assessments, progress monitoring, and intervention/acceleration within a multi-tiered system to support student learning.

"Our system also used the Global Scholar Performance Series. This component of the GlobalScholar assessment is a diagnostic tool that is used periodically during the school year to determine the level of students' understanding in the core academic areas and to make informed decisions regarding instruction. The diagnostic reports from these assessments may be used for differentiated instruction, to set goals for students, and to measure student progress over a period of time."

### PRE-K

"The Talladega city schools Pre-K program has been used as a model site for Alabama for the past six years," according to a statement from the central office. "Our students are actively engaged in learning each day through group lessons, center-related activities, and through the use of 21st century technology. The program is strategically planned to offer each student the educational materials and background information they will need to be successful and prepared for Kindergarten and first grade. The program is located at Houston Elementary where we enroll 18 students per year in the class and TCS would like to increase this program by having two classes in order to accommodate more students. We continue to see amazing outcomes with student learning as each year progresses. Not only is this program provided to enhance the educational opportunities for these students, but

it allows them to grow socially as well."

### CAREER-TECH

Talladega High School Career Tech Center offers programs in everything from agricultural science to cosmetology. Certifications include ServSafe in the Family Consumer Sciences Program, CPR certification through American Red Cross in the Health Science Program, certified nursing assistant certification through work at the nursing home, as well as clinical hours and OSHA and National Machinist certification in the automotive, molding and precision machining program. IC 3 and MOS certification is also available through the Business Management Program. NCCER certification is offered through the welding program at Career Tech.

Talladega Career Tech director Trisha Turner applied for a 21st century technology grant and received \$75,000. This has been used to create an access lab for the career tech center. The Cosmetology department continues to provide night classes for CACC. Recently, Turner applied for a grant through the 21st Century Workforce Fund Act and received an approval letter for more than \$100,000 toward an industrial maintenance program."

During his last year as superintendent, Campbell also sited several other accomplishments across several areas of concern.

"All elementary schools continue to meet state requirements," he said, and

"Talladega High School continues to meet state requirements and maintained a graduation rate of 80 percent."

"The district has taken every step possible to cut costs," he said. "The district has on hand at least a three month's operating balance and the district has no outstanding long-term debt," Campbell said. Also, "In every academic setting, technology plays a key role. The district is constantly moving toward the concept of one to one," meaning one computer per student.

As for the physical facilities, "Talladega High School, Houston and Graham have new roofs, as well as Harwell Auditorium. All other facilities' roofs are expected not to need repairs for at least the next five years," Campbell said.

"Talladega High School's auditorium has received all new seating, the baseball complex is scheduled to receive new lighting and poles (and) all HVAC systems have been either upgraded or replaced."

Contact Chris Norwood at cnorwood@dailyhome.com.



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Munford High School was among three Talladega County schools to earn the 2013 National Green Ribbon Award for its staff and students' environmentally conscientious efforts.

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County

From Page 6B

premise is if we're doing a better job with more rigorous standards at the local level, then our students will be better prepared or more college and/or career ready once they leave us."

Though there are some who may have a preconceived opinion of "Common Core," Lacey debunked the negative connotations.

"The Common Core lends itself to more creative and innovative teaching like with Project-Based Learning," Lacey said. "It really opens the door to allow teachers more flexibility in their teaching. I think that one of the biggest misnomers is that it limits teaching. There's conversation that so much of what is to be taught, teachers are being told what to teach, but really what's happening is it's really expanding the innovation of teaching. That's what I would want to voice is that it's really enhancing a teacher's opportunity to teach in innovative and creative ways."

The system raked in numerous accolades, with Lincoln Elementary School and Munford Middle School taking home recognition as winners of the 2013 Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools Banner School Award, following in the footsteps of Childersburg High School and Munford High School, which won the year prior.

Fayetteville High, Munford High and Munford Middle Schools earned the 2013 National Green Ribbon Award for its staff and students' environmentally conscientious efforts.

Their accomplishments, coupled with the previous year's winners from the county —



Lincoln High School was among the Talladega County schools that implemented the new technology initiatives in January.

Munford Elementary and Winterboro High— netted the schools a visit from U.S. Department of Education representatives in July.

Lacey noted these and many other achievements were a group effort from all in the county involved with the system.

"In our School System, we are a collaborative team, and we're all working for the same goals," Lacey said.

# Sylacauga schools plan for the future

By EMILY McLAIN  
Home staff writer

Schools in the Sylacauga School System are setting the path now for what is to come in the years ahead.

The School System has been hard at work for several months on a strategic plan that was recently presented to the Board of Education. School leaders are hoping the hard work to compose the plan will pay dividends in the future.

"It is the framework we now will use in guiding decision-making for the schools, and that's an exciting thing," Superintendent Dr. Todd Freeman said. "It's going to be exciting to implement something that is a community-driven plan. This is what the community wants; these are the expectations we have, so I look forward to that."

The plan will be in use from 2014-2019 and outlines goals and strategies for achievement in four main areas: governance and leadership; teaching and assessing for learning; facilities, resources and support systems; and collaboration, communication and continuous improvement.

Marcia Burke of Burke Education, a group that facilitated development of the plan, told the Board of Education at a Jan. 23 meeting that the schools

are planning "from a very advantageous vantage point."

"You're not climbing up a steep mountain," she said. "You've got a great deal of public confidence; you've got some good academic achievement, a sound fiscal position. In terms of where you could be planning to get from here to there, you are moving from a level of comfort and challenging yourselves to do more."

The schools system relied heavily on public input to compile the plan, and Freeman said comments from community members were right in line with what educators wanted to improve upon as well. Some of the main areas identified for improvement were: expanding the availability of technology, growing preschool programs, increasing fine arts offerings and other electives, and expanding the career and technical education programs.

"The community and planning team were on track with things that raise the level of what we are able to provide for our students," he said. "I'm very appreciative of the people who have worked on it. I really have stayed out of the process, because you want the plan to reflect

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# Future

From Page 7B

the feelings of the teachers and the community, and not be driven by one person. It needs to be a vision for all the schools, and my responsibility is to carry out and meet those goals.”

The plan breaks each category into goals and then strategies for achieving those goals. Under governance and leadership, the goals are to: provide qualified, effective, innovative BOE members; provide qualified, effective, innovative system and school leaders; provide opportunities for collaborative efforts to improve school system governance.

Goals for teaching and assessing learning are: provide meaningful, rigorous, relevant, high-quality instruction to meet all students’ needs; improve student achievement and progress toward a 100% graduation rate; provide qualified, effective personnel to meet the needs of the instruction program; collect, analyze and use student data for improved learning and teaching.

For facilities, resources and support systems, goals are: maintain safe and secure learning environments; provide and maintain facilities throughout the system; provide, maintain and allocate up-to-date technology; use student data to improve achievement; use financial, demographic and resource use data to guide fiscal decision-making and planning; provide effective transportation, health and wellness and nutrition services.

Goals for collaboration, communication and continuous improvement are to: use accreditation monitoring plans to increase



Sylacauga City Schools Superintendent Dr. Todd Freeman, top photo, is helping set the path now for what is to come for the School System in years ahead.

Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

Career/tech director Christy Caine works closely with businesses, industries and Central Alabama Community College to help prepare students like Jessica Roberts and Jenna Ballard, at left, prepare for the workforce.

student achievement, evaluate system success and guide decisions; provide access to data to stakeholders; expand relationships with families, business and post-secondary institutions; monitor and report on the strategic plan.

The school system has already begun working on many of the areas identified in the plan, evidenced through Sylacauga High School’s grant-funded expansion of Advanced Placement courses and its career and technical education department.

“We want to make sure that what we’re doing is

lined up with workforce development needs,” Freeman said. “So that’s why (career/tech director Christy Caine) works very closely with businesses, industries and Central Alabama Community College in making sure we’re preparing a workforce for our community.”

Another part of the strategic plan that schools are already working on is improving and maintaining its facilities. The high school is in the midst of the second of four phases of construction to renovate most of the school.

The second phase involves reconfiguring the main office and entrance, adding and renovating classrooms and a new counseling suite.

“This project is certainly going very well,” Freeman said. “I anticipate it to be complete this summer.”

The next phase to renovate the library and old gym will be bid in the next couple months, Freeman said, and the final phase to renovate the newer gym will follow, with all work to be finished by summer of 2015.

Also, the school system will bid construction of a new central office soon.

The project is now in the design phase. A 15,000 square foot building has been proposed, to be located on the same property as the current Fourth Street central office.

“I think the central office will be something the community can be proud of, and it can be used by the community and city for events,” Freeman said. “It can be a shared space. I’m hopeful we’ll be able to bid that later in the spring.”

As for general business for school administrators, much of this spring semester will be spent planning

for the next school year.

“We’ll be looking at our budgets, staffing, programs and preparing our professional development, school calendar,” Freeman said. “All of those things are happening now to get ready for next year, and all of it is focused squarely on the instructional program, making sure those things fit the goals of our strategic plan. Everything we do this semester will be preparing for next year, according to the strategic plan.”

Contact Emily McLain at eadams@dailyhome.com.

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Bill Kimber/The Daily Home

The transformation of the former Curtis and Son Funeral Home at 315 W. Fort Williams St. in Sylacauga into a 21st century medical clinic is almost complete.

## Doctors bring vitality to old building

By **BILL KIMBER**  
Home staff writer

A group of doctors is bringing new vitality to an old building in Sylacauga, transforming a former funeral home into a medical clinic for the 21st century.

WellPlex represents a complete re-imagining of the former Curtis and Son Funeral Home South Chapel, and is home to four practices: Sylacauga Obstetrics and Gynecology, Lung Care, PathGroup and Weight Loss and Wellness for Women.

“When you walk in, it doesn't look anything like what you've seen before,” said Regina Bice, office manager for Dr. Jonathan Rehberg, Dr. Todd Bader and Dr. Emily Rehberg.

Outdoors, the new façade of masonry, glass and stacked stone is a whole new look for the formerly red brick building.

“It will be a huge difference from the street,” Bice said. “It's amazing. It looks like something in Birmingham, nothing like what we've seen in Sylacauga.”

Inside, the clinic bears no resemblance to the building's former incarnation, either.

Walls have been moved and an elevator has been installed, creating exactly the look, feel and flow needed for the medical practice.

The ground floor is home to Sylacauga OB-GYN, Weight Loss and Wellness for Women and PathGroup.

Dr. Jonathan Rehberg and Dr. Todd Bader are both board certified in obstetrics and gynecology, and provide a wide array of women's health services.

Weight Loss and Wellness for Women is part of Sylacauga OB/GYN, and is open three days a week. The medically-directed weight loss program uses body composition and lab data, lipo B-12 injections and appetite suppression to help

See **Building**, Page 10B

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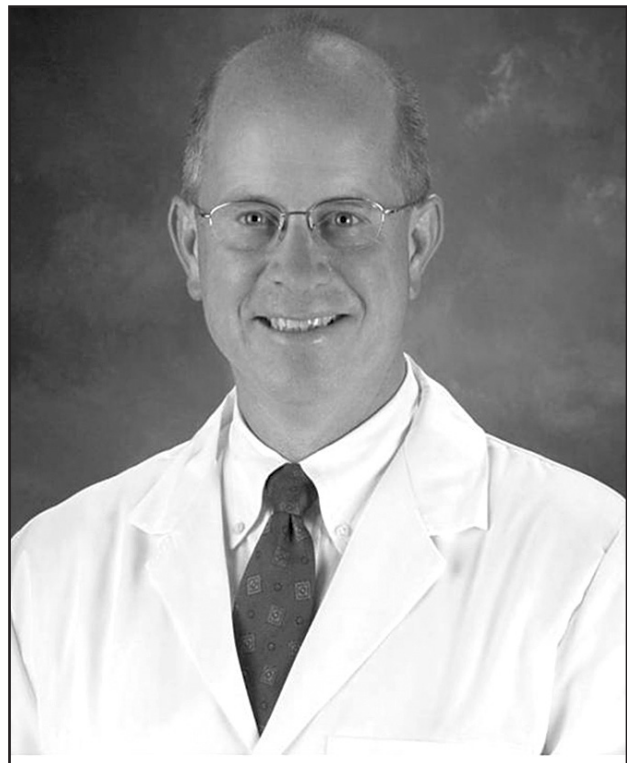




Dr. Jonathan Rehberg



Dr. Emily Rehberg



Dr. Todd Bader

**Building**

From Page 9B  
patients lose weight. "We've seen people lose 60 to 70 pounds in a year," Bice said.

PathGroup provides a stand-alone patient service center where all types of patients can get a variety of lab tests done in a convenient location.

On the building's second floor, Dr. Emily Rehberg's Lung Care practice provides pulmonary care, critical care, hospice and palliative care.

"We're very proud," Bice said. "The practice has grown by leaps and bounds. We will have so much more space, and more room to grow and

add physicians in the future.

"We've rented for five years, and we want to own our own building and pay

for it," Bice said. "It's like a home. You want to own it."

Contact Bill Kimber at [bkimber@dailyhome.com](mailto:bkimber@dailyhome.com).



Bob Crisp/The Daily Home

The Veterans Administration Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Childersburg served 1,949 patients last year.

**VA outpatient clinic provides primary care**

By BILL KIMBER  
The Daily Home

Veterans in Talladega County who need primary care or mental health services don't have to travel all the way to Birmingham to get what they need. The Veterans Administration's Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Childersburg brings care closer to home.

"Last fiscal year, we served 1,949 unique patients there," said Jeffrey Hester, chief of public and consumer affairs for the VA in Birmingham. With repeat appointments, the clinic provided 13,066 visits last year.

Hester explained that the Childersburg CBOC is one of a network of clinics strategically located around Alabama to provide basic medical services close to where veterans live.

"For any specialties, they refer them to Birmingham," Hester said.

He said 859 patients have already been served in Childersburg in the current fiscal year, which started Oct. 1. "The previous year there were 1,806 unique patients. We may surpass 2,000 there this year," Hester said.

The clinic opened in February 2009 at 151 9th Ave. Northwest near the Piggly Wiggly supermarket.

Other towns with similar clinics are Guntersville, Gadsden, Jasper, Huntsville, and Sheffield.

Alabama has three Veterans Administration medical centers. The one in Birmingham opened in 1953 and offers a comprehensive range of services. There's one in Tuscaloosa, and the Central Alabama center has campus-

es in Montgomery and Tuskegee.

"We pretty much do all the acute tertiary care here," Hester said of the Birmingham VA Medical Center.

"We're a Level 1A facility, the most complex you can achieve in the VA system. We do open heart surgery, kidney transplants and more."

That hospital sees some 62,000 patients each year.

He said the Veterans Administration offers domiciliary care and long-term nursing care around the state, as well.

"The people of Childersburg were very receptive and nice to us when we opened there," Hester said, adding that two health care providers work in the clinic.

"Usually each health care provider sees 1,200 to 1,300 patients," he said. "Each team will have a physician and a nurse. Based on growth, sometimes we will have to get a bigger building or expand."

As wars have wound down in Iraq and Afghanistan, the face of the American veteran has changed, Hester said. There are still a number of World War II, Korean Conflict and Vietnam War veterans, but now there are an increasing number of younger veterans with health care needs different from those of the older veterans.

Also, more female veterans are using VA health care. Hester said last year 110 women were seen at the Childersburg clinic.

"With an increased number of female veterans getting out of the DOD, we have providers available to handle gender-related concerns," he said. "A lot of

dynamics have changed." VA contracts with other hospitals to provide child-birth services.

Hester said the Veterans Administration was established in 1930, but had its roots after the Civil War

with old soldiers' homes. Health care is the biggest part of the VA in terms of employees, while VA

benefits are the largest part in terms of dollars, Hester said.

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**The Sylacauga Board of Education holds monthly meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Meeting dates are subject to change and will be posted on the website and at each school building.**

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Gary Hanner/The Daily Home

This is the Alacare building in Pell City. It covers all of St. Clair County and portions of Talladega and Jefferson counties.

# Alacare has been taking care of patients statewide since 1970

By GARY HANNER  
Home staff writer

## One Man's Vision

A man who in the 1950s had a vision for home health care because of the lack of available care for his elderly mother and other older family members created an agency that has been taking care of millions of patients throughout the state of Alabama since 1970.

The man was Major Charles Beard and the agency he created was Alacare Home Health and Hospice.

During Beard's 13th mission to Berlin, his returning plane was shot down over Belgium. After evading German captors, he rejoined the fight with partisans in the Belgian Underground.

Listed as Missing in Action and presumed dead for 10 months, he was actually fighting with the Nazi resistance fighters. After D-Day, Beard was able to cross over enemy lines and rejoin the Allied Forces.

He returned home to Birmingham and attended the University of Alabama before rejoining the Air Force during the Korean War to once again serve our nation. When he re-enlisted to serve in the Korean War, he was unable to find home care for his mother because home care was very limited at the time.

"The only home care available was through the local health department or the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA)," said Marsha Boswell, director of Education for Alacare Home Health and Hospice.

Beard worked in the gas industry, continued to fly planes, and was raising a family of five children along with his wife, Mary Sue.

"He felt like he was



Charles Beard was a major in the United States Air Force. He founded Alacare Home Health and Hospice.

doing well, and he saw a need for home care," Boswell said. "After Beard was unable to donate money to the VNA to support the growing need for home care, Mr. Charlie (as he is affectionately called by those who knew him) decided to start his own agency in 1970."

Boswell said that although Beard did not have a medical background, his desire to serve and give back to the community was so strong that he began to collaborate with a local physician, hired a couple of nurses and the rest is history.

Alacare became the first privately owned, home-grown agency in the state of Alabama, operating out of Jefferson County. Since that time, Alacare has been taking care of patients statewide with 25 branches in Alabama, covering all counties except three.

"We have been recognized as one of the premier home care agencies in the state of Alabama," Boswell said. "Alacare has over 1,000 employees and has received numerous awards for excellence in patient care."

Before passing away in November 2001, Beard entrusted his children, John Beard and Susan Beard Brouillette, to continue his mission of providing the best possible health care in the home setting.

"This has not only benefited Alabama's citizens, but the foresight he demonstrated as an industry pioneer has greatly benefited the entire country as the need for affordable home health care and hospice services have grown exponentially in the last four decades," Boswell said.

"My grandfather's legacy has been recognized numerous times, including being posthumously inducted into the Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame and the Alabama Nursing Hall of Fame," said Lanford Beard, granddaughter of Charles Beard.

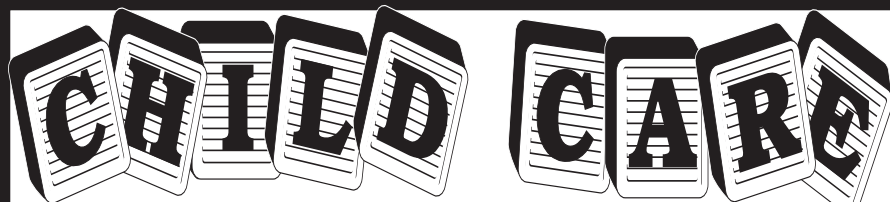
The Alacare office in Pell City covers all of St. Clair County and parts of Talladega and Jefferson counties.

"Home care is not an indefinite service," Boswell said. "You help the patients reach their goals, and then discharge. Patients have access to nurses, physical therapists, speech therapists, occupational thera-



Pictured are Charles and Mary Sue Beard.

See Alacare, Page 1C



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# Alacare

From Page 11B

pists, social workers, home care aides, chaplains, wound specialists, and nutritionists. Hospice is a different service, patients stay with us until death. They have access to the same services, including a bereavement team. We have nurse practitioners that make home visits and work closely with the patient's primary doctors and our own medical directors. We help them through death, help prepare the family, help them know what to expect, how to monitor medications, how to give pain medicine, how to address their symptoms, and keep their loved one pain-free and alert until death. After that, our bereavement team follows the family."

Marsha Hardy Boswell RN, BSN, MSEd, has been director of education for the past 19 months and has worked for Alacare a total of 10 years.

One local man who has a firsthand account of Beard is Andy Eden, who lives in Riverside.

"I got to know Mr. Beard when I was working for Union State Bank in the early 1990s in Hoover," Eden said. "Alacare was a customer of the bank, and I had the experience of getting to know him pretty well."

Eden said Beard was truly what he would call an 'American Original'. "He was a very smart businessman, and he realized the importance of building relationships with people," Eden said. "He soon found out I had an interest in history, and he would always take the time to talk to me about his experiences as a bomber pilot during World War II, and how they affected his life to the



Gary Hanner/The Daily Home

**Marsha Boswell has been the director of Education for Alacare for the past 19 months.**

present day. I remember when he picked me up at the bank one day, took me to lunch, and then took me to see a B-17 Bomber that had flown into the Birmingham airport. It was truly unique to crawl through that bomber with someone who had actually flown one in combat in World War II."

Eden said the last time he visited with Beard, he had already left banking to become a history teacher.

"He told me how important he thought teachers were in molding young people," Eden said. "He gave me a framed quote about the importance of attitude that I still keep on my dresser at home, and look at every

day."

Eden said it was a short time after their last meeting that Beard died.

"I remember thinking how we had lost such a great man," Eden said. "Mr. Beard, to me, epitomized what Tom Brokaw called 'The Greatest Generation' – The World War II Generation. Men and women who grew up during the Depression, served in World War II, and came home to build our country into the greatest in the world. I still think of Mr. Beard every day, and the lessons I learned from him."

Contact Gary Hanner at [ghanner@thescclairtimes.com](mailto:ghanner@thescclairtimes.com).

# News for those with hearing loss is good

By **LAURA NATION-ATCHISON**  
Home Lifestyles editor

Advances in technology have offered new answers across the board for better health and health awareness, and when it comes to better hearing, the news for those with hearing loss is very good.

Trey Pattillo grew up in the business of bringing better hearing to people, and with 50 years now behind the company pro-

viding professional help for hearing, Pattillo said the options and devices now available are far ahead of those offered in the past, particularly prior to the past decade.

"The technology available has greatly improved from when I first started in the field," Pattillo said.

What once meant simply trying to find amplification answers has turned into using what are actually mini computers aligned

to each individual's needs, and usually available within a day's time.

These devices reset as needed automatically for the user, employing digital customized technology. Those with hearing devices can adapt them to work with their iPhone, Blue Tooth and other technology.

"They are programmed for that particular per-

See **Pattillo**, Page 2C



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

**Terry Walters of Pattillo Hearing and Balance, a licensed hearing instrument dispenser, assists patients with their testing and provides the information needed for hearing improvements.**




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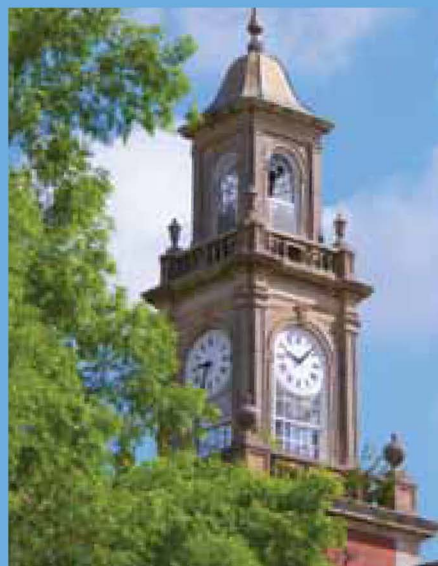
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# Pattillo

From Page 1C

son," Pattillo said.

The majority of people who need to increase their hearing ability are older, probably five to six people out of 10 who are seniors have experienced some form of hearing loss, according to national statistics.

"It is mostly seen with elderly people, but hearing loss can affect everyone," Pattillo said.

Pattillo likens the need for hearing exams and correction to the need for having eye exams and the most precise glasses or other means to improve vision.

"I recommend having your hearing checked once a year, just like having your eyes checked," he said. "But no one really thinks they want a hearing aid."

Pattillo is quick to point out that just as with vision, everyone's hearing needs are different and making improvements for people is what his company is all about.

And instead of hearing aid devices that were once bulky and simply the magnification devices they once were, today's hearing devices are so much more wearable and often nearly invisible to anyone else.

Seeing people experience the difference they can achieve in their hearing is the biggest benefit for being in the field of hearing improvement, Pattillo said.

"Once a person gets to experience the hearing improvement it can bring for them, they are finally relieved," he said.

It may be hard to imagine, but most people with hearing loss can find improvement with just one visit to Pattillo Hearing and Balance.

A hearing evaluation usually takes from 30 to 45 minutes and most people can be fitted with a device that very day, Pattillo said.

Pattillo Hearing and Balance does not charge



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

**Pattillo Hearing and Balance in Talladega is a full service center for testing and determining hearing as well as for custom fitting devices to improve hearing.**

for hearing evaluations and the maintenance and adjustments, if needed, are done at no extra charge, too.

The company will also provide maintenance service for makes and models of hearing devices that were not purchased at Pattillo.

The company encourages those who are in search of help with their hearing to bring along a family member when they visit for an evaluation. This can help the patient as well as the hearing specialist.

"Sometimes having a familiar voice during the hearing test can help with the evaluation," Pattillo said.

There are 10 Pattillo Hearing and Balance offices now, one in Talladega, Pelham, Anniston, Bessemer, Childersburg, Jasper, Montgomery, Trussville and in Tuscaloosa, and the company's main office is located in Birmingham.

Contact Laura Nation-Atchison at [lnation@daily-home.com](mailto:lnation@daily-home.com).



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

**Terry Walters gives Frances Combs-Lane a hearing test.**

*'I recommend having your hearing checked once a year, just like having your eyes checked.'*  
- Terry Pattillo

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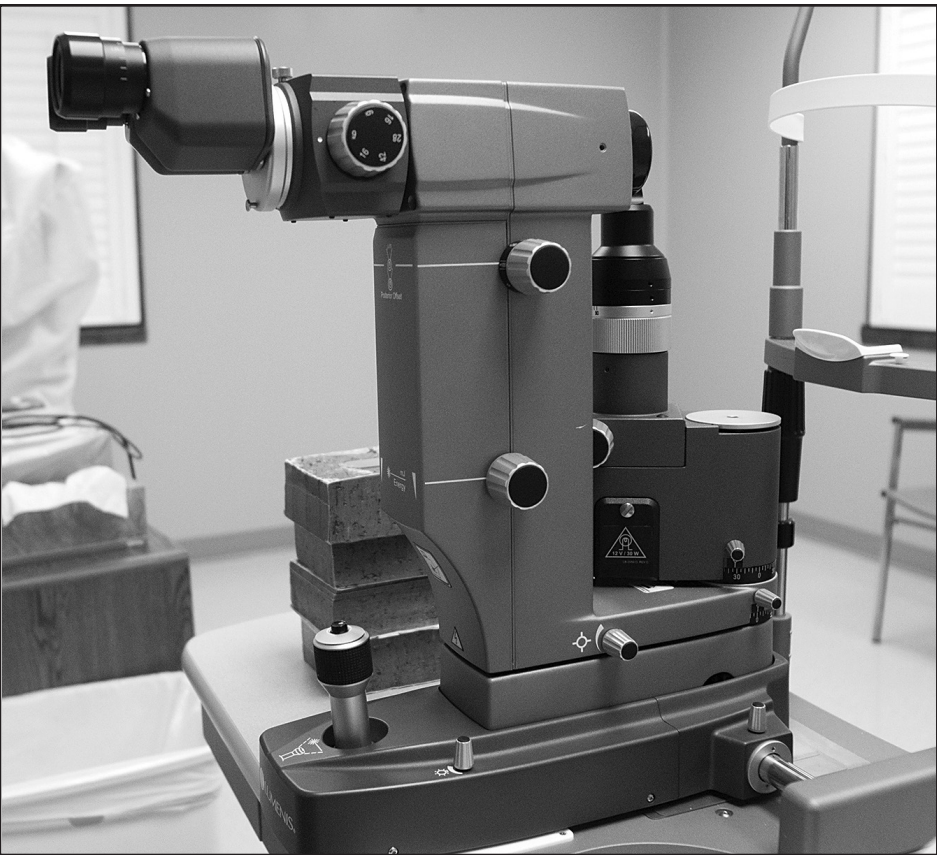
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Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

Khan's practice treats every patient from pediatric to adult, and can handle most eye diseases in-house.

The OCT machine is used to diagnose macular degeneration, and optic nerve problems.

# Khan's practice ingrained in community

By WILL HEATH  
Home staff writer

Nearly 40 years ago, Khalid Khan — a native of Pakistan whose educational background includes Harvard and the University of Connecticut — came to Talladega “because of an opportunity.”

“There was an opportunity to start a practice available in 1975, and I came here and did that,” Khan says. “Since then we’ve been here. We made Talladega our hometown.”

Khan’s practice, Talladega Ophthalmology Clinic, is now ingrained as a part of the community, at 216 Battle Street. He recently opened a second office in Pell City, in the professional building on the campus of the old hospital, where he sees patients on Wednesdays.

“I’ve been in the community (in Talladega) for

39 years,” he said. “I have examined and treated the eyes for three generations of people.”

Khan is the only practicing ophthalmologist in the area, which is no small distinction.

“An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who has gone through training to examine eyes and operate on eyes surgically,” he said. “We can treat diseases of the eyes here, and perform surgery.”

Among the most common diseases Khan is able to treat in his Talladega are glaucoma, cataracts and eye infections. Additionally, his office is home to the latest technology in eye surgery.

“Most things we can do here locally,” he said. “A few things we do have to refer to specialists, but most everything we can do here.”

See Khan, Page 4C



The Talladega Ophthalmology Clinic is open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

Using laser technology, Dr. Khan says he can examine patients with glaucoma, as well as treating scar tissue that occurs following cataract surgery.

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# Khan

From Page 3C

Khan says he and his staff do their best to stay up-to-date with the latest technologies and practices for eye surgeries. Most recent is technology for lens replacements, for patients with severe cataracts.

"The eye is basically like a camera," said Khan. "A camera will not take a good picture if the lenses are dirty."

"A cataract is basically a condition in which the lenses are being obscured, and the eyes are not transmitting clear images to the brain. With this, we can replace the lenses and restore a clean lens."

Technology has even evolved enough that the surgery does not require sutures.

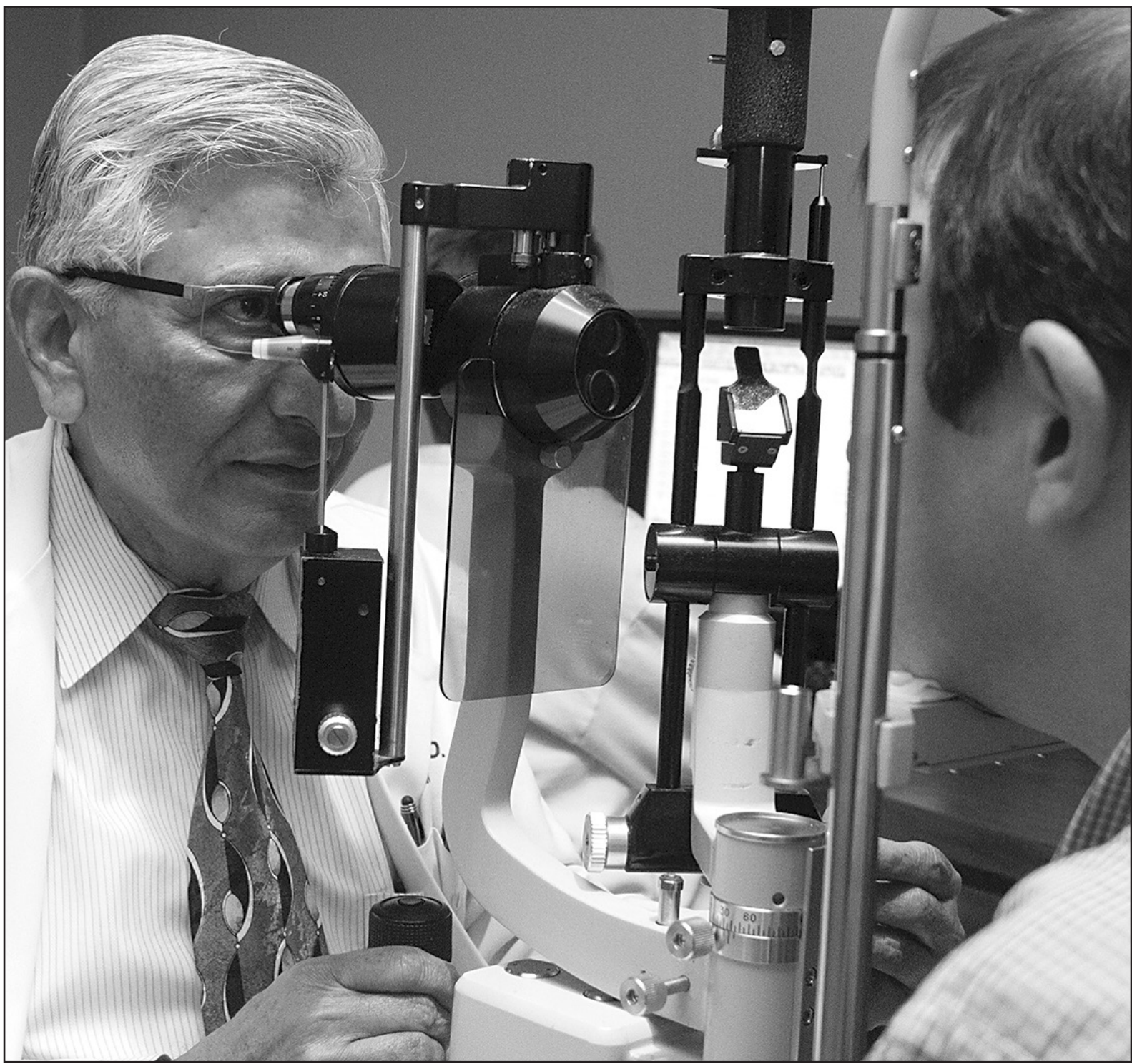
"Whatever changes occur, we bring to the people here locally," he said. "We have all modern equipment to diagnose the eyes and treat eye diseases."

The key to it, he says, are the people who work with him, including three "well-trained" technicians and a receptionist. There is also Barbara Khan, who works as the office manager, who has been his wife for 12 years.

"We do almost everything," he said.

Khan also said he takes a proactive approach toward treating patients at every socioeconomic level, no small task with the rising cost of health care in every circle.

"We don't go by economics here," he said. "Anybody who needs care is welcome. That's my passion, that's my hobby and that's my profession."



Brian Schoenhals/The Daily Home

**Khalid Khan has been practicing ophthalmology in Talladega since 1975, and says he has seen three generations of patients at his clinic.**

"I am hopeful with Obamacare, we will see more patients who have insurance. We do work for the Alabama Lion's Club —

they send us patients and we see them for free. But I am hopeful that is going to change, and more people will have insurance,

one way or another." Khalid Khan's office in Talladega is open every weekday except Wednesday, from 8 a.m.-

5 p.m., and his Pell City office is open the same hours on Wednesdays. For more information call 256-362-1590, or 205-

338-6444.

Contact Will Heath at [wheath@thestclairtimes.com](mailto:wheath@thestclairtimes.com).

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