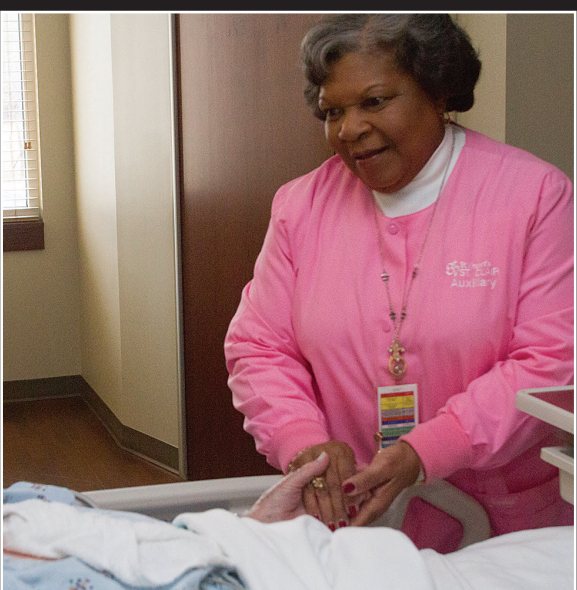


Friends & Neighbors



A journey together makes a forever family



Laura Nation-Atchison/The Daily Home

The Lee family of Childersburg became a family of seven instead of four when they adopted sisters Alexis, Cheyenne and Sierra last December. From the left are Darrell Lee, daughters Bailey and Toni and Mom Tracey Lee with daughters Sierra, Cheyenne and Alexis in front.

Story and photos
By LAURA
NATION-ATCHISON
Home lifestyles editor

Five sets of big smiles and five sets of little feet, one not quite so little anymore, she's the big sister and now 22 years old.

The Lee family looks just like any other family on a pretty Sunday afternoon, enjoying some playground time and looking forward to having lunch together after Sunday morning church services.

Eventually, Darrell and Tracy Lee of Childersburg gather their happy brood together, load up and take off for lunch from their church, First Baptist in Vincent.

The family that now numbers seven has been officially a family since Dec. 18, 2013, and their journey together is just beginning.

With two children in the family already, the Lees say they felt very blessed, but also felt there was room for more children in their lives, and tried to be patient.

A hope came true for the Lees 11 years ago when daughter Toni was born after the Lees married in 2001.

Toni joined Lee's daughter, Bailey, in the family, but the couple still felt a calling for more little ones to become a part of their lives.

There had been three miscarriages for the Lees, and with those losses, the couple decided there might be another way for them to fulfill their desire for a large family.

"It was our desire for more children that started our discussions about adoption," Lee said.

So, the Lees went ahead and joined up for

taking the classes that prepare families for adoption, and upon completion of them, there were more discussions of taking the steps to formally adopt.

It was a decision that the Lees knew would take the most careful and thorough thought and consideration.

"Not long after completing the classes, we found ourselves not being sure," Lee said. "We were happy with the children that we had and told ourselves we did not want any more."

But this was about the time that Mrs. Lee became pregnant and a second miscarriage took place.

This was a turning point back to the Lee's feelings that having more children was absolutely their calling.

"It did not take long for us to see that we had been kidding ourselves," Lee said. "We did want more children and also, we wanted Toni to be a big sister and for Bailey to have more siblings."

When another pregnancy turned into another miscarriage for the Lees, the couple had more issues to consider for their family's future.

"We talked more, and we agreed that we could not bear another miscarriage, so we started the adoption process again."

The Lees met with representatives from the Alabama Department of Human Resources, had a home study completed that is required for the adoption process.

"We prepared to wait for God to lead us to the child who needed us," Lee said.

Their two children already in the family were all for the prospect of hav-

ing more join in.

The youngest, Toni, told her parents "yes" to the prospect, and simply said having more brothers or sisters would mean she wouldn't have to play in the yard by herself anymore.

"She is just so full of love, it's very fitting that she was actually born on Valentine's Day," Lee said.

Their oldest, Bailey, no longer a child but 21-years-old, was happy about the thoughts of more children joining the family, too.

Bailey is so taken with her new family members, which changed from the thoughts of just one to three more, that she's planning to finish college closer to home now, leaving school in Huntsville to attend Auburn University. "I have four little sisters back home and three of them I am just getting to know," she said. "I want to be there for my family because they need me."

When their time came for more children, it turned out that the first step would be foster care, and for three children, not one child.

"When we heard of them, we just both knew it was right," Lee said. "We reached out to DHR and told them that we wanted them."

And the day that Sierra, Cheyenne and Alexis joined the Lee household at ages 6, 5 and 4, the Lees said they knew the children would eventually be eligible for adoption and that they wanted them all.

"We told DHR that very day that we were prepared to offer them a home for as long as they needed it," Lee said. "We let them know from the first day that we would



Laura Nation-Atchison/The Daily Home

Since Dec. 18, the Lee family has officially become five children. Pictured, from top to bottom, are Bailey, Toni, Alexis, Cheyenne and Sierra.

adopt."

Both Lee and his wife are in professions that call upon an understanding of love and nurturing.

Lee is a consultant for Comfort Care Hospice in Talladega and is also a licensed practical nurse. He worked for a number of years in long term care units of nursing care facilities.

Mrs. Lee, a teacher in the Vincent School System, specializes in teaching Spanish in the eighth through 12th grades.

One of the first things Lee said he and his wife learned to realize was that the process is not about what you want or hope for in a child.

And also, in choosing words to express to others who may be considering adoption, the Lees share this:

"As wonderful as it all is and sounds, and it is, everyone needs to know that it is not easy and that are problems that can arise that can shake you down to your very core."

Children can come into your home after suffering unspeakable abuse and neglect and the issues that can affect these

things, Lee said.

"There is a long list of disorders that they can have and dealing with these issues can be a daily struggle," he said. "Your support system is more important than you can imagine."

And in wondering why things such as abuse or neglect can happen, Lee said remembering that it's really that the children's psychological needs haven't been met and that someone dropped the ball.

"And that somewhere in their past, they did not have their safety needs met, wither," he said. "Somewhere in their past they learned mistrust instead of trust, and never bonded with anyone."

This is why, the Lees stress, that "your foundation has to be solid."

Lee said he and his wife knew that it was their lord and savior who called them to bring the three sisters into their family.

"And even on the days that we do not have all the answers, we know that we are exactly where we are supposed to be," Lee said. "Our support system begins and ends with Christ. Now, within this

support system, he has blessed us both with loving families and friends who stand firm beside us and lift us up in prayer daily. They reach out to us by word and deed and bless us along with these children."

"Adoption is simply about love," he said. "It's about reaching out to a child who is hurting and telling them that you know they are scared and that they don't trust you. We know you have been hurt and that your life has not gone as it should have. We know all this and we are choosing to stand in the gap and take you in. We will love you for the precious gift that you are and we will love you even when you don't want us to. We will love you for the rest of our days here on Earth and we will never leave you."

If you're one who is considering becoming adoptive parents, Lee said it's never too soon to begin the process of preparing.

"There are children out there who are still looking for their forever family," he said. "And they are still waiting for you."

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Mosley dedicated to helping other people

By **CHRIS NORWOOD**
Home staff writer

Clifford Mosley has dedicated most of his life to helping others. And many cases, the help he gives is particularly effective because he has been there himself.

For instance, Mosley may be best known in the community for involvement in Alzheimer's support. The problems of people caring for those with dementia and Alzheimer's are all too familiar, because he cared for both his parents, half a dozen aunts and three uncles who also had the disease.

According to a biography he provided, Mosley started working in the dietary department at the hospital in Talladega in 1965, when he was still in high school. After graduating in 1969, he went to work in the emergency room as a nursing technician while working nights at a textile mill to put himself through LPN school. He eventually accomplished his dream of becoming a licensed

practical nurse, but it was short-lived.

About a year after getting his license, bone cancer was discovered in his right leg, and he was diagnosed with osteoporosis a year after that.

He has since undergone a total of 57 surgeries on his neck, hips and legs.

Dr. Edward Roberts also helped pay for his license. He worked for Roberts until he died, Mosley said.

It was while he was still working at the hospital that Mosley became involved in Alzheimer's support, thanks to the efforts of Martha Capps. They were both working in the emergency room when Capps invited him to First Baptist Church.

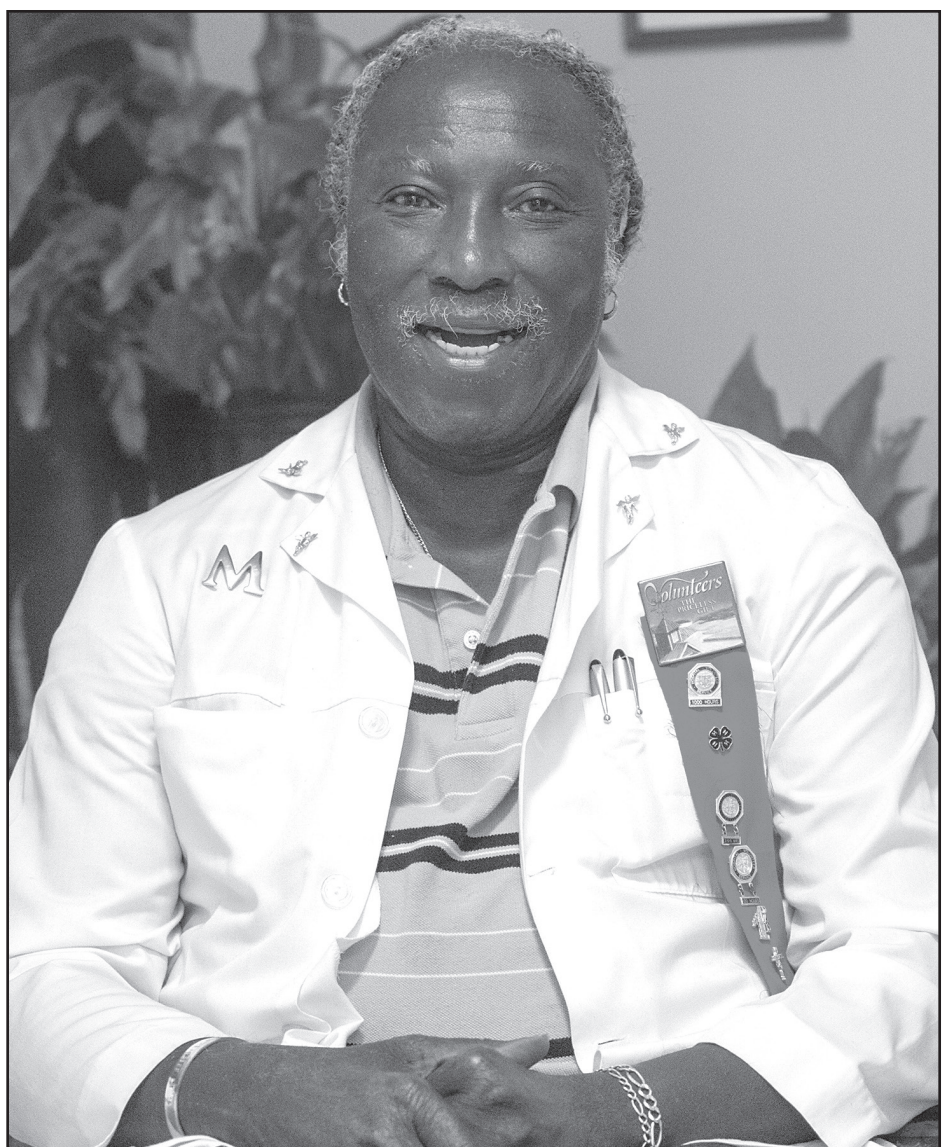
"I went, like a crazy nut," Mosley said. "I was the only black person there. But then someone said I was a great person to volunteer for president of the Alzheimer's Support group. I was voted in in 1979, and sworn in in 1980." He became the volunteer president at the hospital after that.

"Alzheimer's can tear

a family apart," he said. "You don't see it if you just visit someone for 5 or 10 minutes at a time, but a caregiver knows. You see the dementia first, where you lose track of little things, like your keys or glasses, or you forget what you put in the microwave. Alzheimer's is different. You misplace facial figures, you can't keep up with who is in your house. There's a world of difference."

"When I moved in to care for my mother," he continued, "she would tell people that I hadn't fed her for two or three days. Of course, that wasn't true, but that's what the disease can do to you. If people don't know better, there's no telling what they might believe. With Daddy, that was different, he just tried to kill all of us. We had to get all the guns and knives out of his house."

Always a hard worker, Mosley worked at Crown textiles and at the hospital simultaneously for a while. "I loved nursing, loved taking care of others over myself. I always felt it was my calling. I was



BRIAN SCHOENHALS/THE DAILY HOME

Clifford Mosley has worked as a nurse and surgical liaison, and still runs an Alzheimer's disease support group and is president of the Curry Court Resident Council. Alzheimer's, he says, is a different kind of disease, because "cancer patients can tell you where it hurts. With Alzheimer's, God takes their mind away, and there's no pain for them," just for the caregivers.



BRIAN SCHOENHALS/THE DAILY HOME

Clifford Mosley was awarded a ribbon by students from Talladega County Central High School, which he uses to display other accolades he has won working with the families of Alzheimer's patients and those undergoing major surgery at Citizens Baptist Medical Center.

a drum major for a while and thought I might want to dance at first, but I knew nursing was what I wanted to do as soon as I did it."

As his condition worsened and conventional nursing became more difficult, Mosley again found a way to help people that he deeply empathizes with: surgery patients.

"I was determined to get back to help serve as a surgery liaison," he said. "I helped people in the waiting room. I thought about my mother and my sisters, and how you just don't do for families. Joyce Pruitt helped with the idea, and we got it approved by Jack Hethcox, who was the

administrator then. I did that for about five years. If a procedure took longer than expected, I would go into the (operating room) and ask what was going on, and relay that information to the family. I would ask them to be patient, and as soon as I heard anything from the operating room I would let them know. I tried to give them a sense of what was happening."

Mosley proudly displays a Mickey Mouse drawing displayed in his home from a little girl with tonsillitis complications. Mosley served as liaison for her family, among many others.

He has also served rotating, two-year terms

as president and vice president of the Curry Court resident council. He is currently serving a two-year term as president, which will be followed by another two-year term as vice president.

"I listen to people's complaints, and help solve issues between neighbors. If the washers and driers take their tokens, I can help them get their money back, things like that, one thing after another. I pray that I can help treat others as they want to be treated themselves. You've got to be a good neighbor to have good neighbors."

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Life a series of love stories for Corene Lackey

By **BILL KIMBER**
Home staff writer

From her home life to her career to hobby of writing songs, life is a series of love stories for Corene Lackey.

Her home in Hollins and her job in Oak Grove are a long way from her childhood in the middle of California, where she grew up an only child in the rural community of Stevinson. Her mother's family had moved there from Oklahoma in the 1920s, ahead of the rush westward during the Dust Bowl in the 1930s.

"They probably looked like the family from 'The Grapes of Wrath,' driving an old Model T, sleeping alongside the road and cooking over a campfire," Lackey said.

As a young lady she went from Stevinson to Niles, Mich., where she had a short-lived marriage and a daughter.

From there, "I was recruited to a job in Milwaukee," Lackey said. "I met a man from Alabama and we got married, and when he retired we moved to Alabama," she said.

She loved her career in international business, working on financing for overseas dealers for one firm and in overseas sales administration for another. She gained an understanding of people from different cultures as she worked with people in

Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

"When we first moved to Alabama, we rented an apartment in Ashland. We bought some land in Hollins, but it was vacant. So we lived in Ashland until we could relocate to Hollins. We started with a mobile home because we planned to build a house. We didn't like apartment living — we were used to having, as they call them on Home and Garden Television, a detached home. We bought a mobile home and put down there, and later we actually moved an existing home onto the property."

They moved to Hollins in 1981, and her husband, Larue Dean, died in 2000.

Meanwhile, Lackey had gone to work as city clerk in Goodwater.

"When we came to Alabama and my husband retired, I looked around for a job, but there was no one that I interviewed with that was in the international market that would even seriously consider me. I had one headhunter tell me, 'I'm sorry, there just aren't any women in that field down here.'

"Someone called and asked me if I would be interested in interviewing as clerk in Goodwater, so I went to work there from 1990 to 2003. I was going to retire then and go back north."

Lackey explained that

her daughter Gail still lives in Michigan, and she has long wanted to go back there and be near her and her grandchild and great-grandchild.

"I had all this stuff I needed to do to get ready to sell the place, and Carolyn Zeigler, who was the town clerk in Oak Grove, decided she was going to retire, so I was asked if I wanted to be considered as clerk. I decided I could go on working while I got the place ready to sell. I went to work in Oak Grove in early 2004, but my plans to head north were happily interrupted by James Lackey," she said.

Her love stories with music and with James Lackey intertwined.

Lackey explained that after Dean died, she decided to attend a singles group at an area church, and made friends with a woman she met there. That woman had dabbled in music at a weekly picking and grinning session at Bill Hamilton's plumbing shop in Sylacauga.

"Bill has always been very gracious about letting anybody try to perform who wanted to. She and I started singing — or trying to sing — and we just really enjoyed it."

She didn't know anything about keys or chords, but James Lackey, who was also widowed, was willing to teach her.

"James and his wife, Barbara, had performed around this area for many



BILL KIMBER/THE DAILY HOME

Corene Lackey retired as town clerk, but continues to work part time as special projects coordinator in Oak Grove.

years. Had he pushed a career in music, James would've been able to hit the big-time, because it was still available to people back in the '60s. You could go to Nashville and come back with a recording contract. He chose to keep his music a hobby because he didn't want to be gone from his family. He worked for Alabama

Industries for the Blind for more than 40 years.

"We saw him somewhere, and my friend said, 'What if I asked James if he would work with us to learn some songs and learn what key to sing in?' That's how we became acquainted. And after a while, we decided we liked each other pretty much."

They married in 2005.

James Lackey had been in a serious accident when he was 20 years old, and doctors predicted he wouldn't be able to walk by the time he was 40, Lackey said.

"It was only after we got married that he had to start using a cane," she

See Lackey, Page 5

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Lackey

From Page 4

said. He was 81 years old when he died last August. "He was a sweet, wonderful man. It (the marriage) was almost eight wonderful years. "He helped me so much. Doing music together was a part of our lives that we enjoyed so much.

"I have two love stories — Larue Dean and James Lackey. The Lord has blessed me with two wonderful husbands."

James Lackey's son, Frankie, a Nashville songwriter, helped the Lackeys start the Weogufka Center Songwriters, an affiliate of the Nashville Songwriters International Association. The local group meets monthly at the Weogufka Center for the Arts, and some of its members perform each Friday night at Raspberry Bakery in Sylacauga.

"The songwriters are just one big family," she said.

"I wrote my first song in late summer of 2005," Lackey said. "I've done a lot of writing in my life — stories, grants and proposals at work — and I've always had a love of writing. This was my first time to take a whack at songwriting.

"The way it works for me, I have these little bursts of inspiration. It's like a tape recorder goes off in my head with lines. I have to write them down right away or I'll forget. You have to capture it or it disappears.

"There was more than one time I would wake James up in the middle of the night and say, 'I have a tune in my head or some words I've just written. He was such a sweetheart. His fingers were like magic. He would play it on the guitar, then we would record it, go back to bed and work on it again in the daylight hours."

Lackey plays dulcimer and guitar, though she says her skills are limited.

"A couple of songwriter friends have taken pity on me, and when I play on the songwriters stage they play along with me. James would always play along and cover up all my mistakes," she laughed.

"I write probably more gospel than country. Some of my songs are like old-time rock, a little bit. I try to modernize. I was raised at a time when traditional country is what you heard, and that's sort of what comes out.

"Music has been a big part of my life. It was part of both of our lives for several years. Because I'm so challenged with playing, I considered just quitting, but my heart is in it and I just figured that the Lord will help me get through it. I've written some songs since James passed away and I've been able to struggle through the chords and know what key I'm in."

James and Corene Lackey wrote one song together — "Old Dog" — that's on a compilation CD that was recorded to raise money for Sylacauga's Animal Rescue



BILL KIMBER/THE DAILY HOME

Corene Lackey and Oak Grove Mayor Tony White look over plans for the expansion of the Oak Grove Senior Center.

Foundation.

Songwriter Roger Vines remembers how the song came about.

"They were always picking at each other, and one night she said, 'He may be an old dog, but he still makes me bark.' They turned it into a great song," Vines said.

Vines continued, "There are so many good things I could say about Corene. She's just a wonderful person. We call her the queen bee of our songwriters hive. She's been a leader to all of us. She's always helpful, and it just

amazes me how involved she is with the Oak Grove Senior Center and with the community and with the songwriters group.

"She has a real positive attitude and just likes to help people."

At Oak Grove, Lackey served as town clerk for three or four years, but returned a couple of years later to work as special projects coordinator. She works part-time writing grants and renovating the filing system.

"Oak Grove is a great little town. The mayor and council are really

good people who work well together," she said.

Mayor Tony White called Lackey a "unique, special person that I have learned a tremendous amount from, and I still learn from her today.

"She is so knowledgeable about municipal government. What's not fantastic about her? I love her to death."

White said it's always a highlight when Lackey and some of her friends sing at the senior center.

Lackey still plans on going back to Michigan one day.

"I love it here, and James' children have been wonderful to me. But I need to go back where my child and my grandchild and my great grandchild are. I want to spend some time with them. I probably am going to be a snowbird. When I do make the transition — and I don't know yet when that's going to be — I will be a snowbird."

Contact Bill Kimber at bkimber@dailyhome.com.



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Volunteering 'doesn't feel like work'

By **EMILY MCLAIN**
Home staff writer

Celeste Landers has many jobs, but the Sylacauga native says she is fortunate that none of them feel like work.

"God gives everyone a gift, and I, for years, could not figure out what my gift was because I don't have musical talent, I can't sing, I can't build buildings," Landers said. "But one day God said, 'Helping others is your gift.' That is one thing I get joy from, and I feel kind of selfish, because I get so much joy from it."

In addition to her job as environmental safety and transportation manager at Metro Environmental, Landers is president of both the Animal Rescue Foundation and the Sylacauga-area affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. She is also a wife, mother, grandmother and foster parent, along with many other roles.

"I like to help in any way I can, and most of the time I feel God-led," she said. "I get so much pleasure out of the things I do that it doesn't feel like work."

Landers' community involvement began more than 20 years ago when she took on the job of co-leader for two Girl Scout troops. She was co-leader for 11 years and then became neighborhood cookie chairman for one year. Landers still keeps up with the girls from her troops, who are now women, many with children of their own.

"When it tell you I get joy out of things — one of those young girls has just become a Girl Scout leader for her children, and it's just so exciting to see that transition," she said.

Landers, who worked at Kimberly Clark for almost 25 years before joining Metro Environmental about seven years ago, served as Relay for Life team captain for Kimberly Clark and now for Metro.

She was also sponsorship co-chairman for the South Talladega County Relay for Life for many years until this year.

"I've been doing Relay fundraising for 16 years," she said. "I'm also part of a cancer prevention study through Relay where you give blood and tell them your life history basically and report to them every year so we can try to figure out what causes cancer."

"I've had a lot of family members and friends who have been lost to cancer or had cancer. My sister had cancer last year, and now she's cancer-free. So it's like, when you can't help a person specifically, you at least know you're trying to help the only way you can."

In other areas, Landers does help people specifically. She has fostered at least 30 children in the last seven years.

"I've had them anywhere from three days to three years," she said. "I fought God on that one for about a year, but it was like God kept putting it in front of me until I finally checked into it and took the course to become a foster parent."

Landers, who adopted one of her foster children, said fostering is one of the most rewarding and challenging jobs she has ever held.

"It's funny how much it affects your life in ways you didn't expect," she said. "It's made me grow up and understand the difficulties families go through that you don't even think about. It's a very educational experience to be a foster parent. Some of these kids, I have asked God, 'Why are you bringing me these children if I don't seem to be helping them?' Because after they leave, I see them getting right back into trouble. But God told me very plainly not to worry about that. 'You just do what I tell you to do,' he said. I hope that maybe



BRIAN SCHOENHALS/THE DAILY HOME

Celeste Landers is president of the Sylacauga-area Habitat for Humanity and the Animal Rescue Foundation, in addition to her job at Metro Environmental and her role as a foster parent.

I'm planting that seed that will grow later."

Landers also helps families in need through Habitat for Humanity, with which she has been involved for nine years. The organization constructs safe, affordable homes entirely through donations and volunteer work. Families selected for the homes purchase the house from Habitat with monthly, interest-free payments over 20 years.

"I just love seeing the people when they get their new home," Landers said. "I love knowing that we got somebody out of a poverty situation into a safe home where they can focus on their family and their children's education and not have to worry about whether the roof is going to fall on them."

Habitat completed its 11th home in Sylacauga last summer and is taking this year to rebuild its funds and seek new board members and construc-

tion volunteers.

Fundraising is a goal at the Animal Rescue Foundation as well. ARF provides animal control for the city, but also utilizes its own funds to rescue animals. Landers said her heart for animals led her to become involved with the group.

Habitat and ARF also give Landers an outlet to work with young people and get them involved in giving back to the community, she said.

"We need young people involved, and they keep me young," Landers said. "I have five grandchildren now who are old enough to start getting involved, and I want them to find things they are passionate about. It will help them figure out what they want to do in life. They might want to be a veterinarian or an engineer, and this could help them discover that."

She said she is but one part of the puzzle that

makes these organizations work.

"I work with great people, and I'm just part of the bigger plan, because it's not just me," Landers said. "God leads me to where people need help, I think. I'm a good organizer, and that's what a lot of groups need, so I think that may be why God puts me where he puts me."

Landers, who is also involved at her church, Full Gospel Tabernacle in Talladega Springs, said she is looking to offer more quality versus quantity in her volunteer efforts this year.

"This year, I've decided to learn the word 'no,'" she said. "I resigned from sponsorship chairman on Relay for Life, and I'm just trying to be a little more focused on what I can do better."

Don't think the volunteer extraordinaire is done giving back though. In fact, she is just getting started.

"My husband, Barry, and I are very into horses," she said. "We are working on plans to build an arena at our home to teach about horses to scouts, foster children, youth groups, school children. We have six horses, and we just built a new barn. So that's my long-term goal is to build an area to serve as an educational learning experience for children."

Landers said she hopes it is clear that her volunteer efforts are not to serve her own will, or bring attention to herself, but to give glory to God.

"I don't want people to say, 'Look at what she is doing,' she said. "I want people to see what I am doing and say, 'Look at what God is doing through her.'"

Contact Emily McLain at emclain@dailyhome.com.

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Life has been fulfilling for Wilby Wallace

By
CHRIS NORWOOD
Home staff writer

The space allotted for this article will not be sufficient to describe everything that Wilby Wallace has accomplished in his lifetime. But don't worry, he's writing a book that will describe some of the remarkable successes of his life. It will certainly be a page-turner.

"There's a lot I've been through," he said. "I was tough on crime, but I was tough on punishment, too. I wanted to equalize, and treat everyone as I wanted to be treated," he explained.

Wallace was born and raised in Talladega, the eighth child of 14. He joined the U.S. Army and served in Korea, where he was selected for a top secret clearance involving fuses for atomic weapons. After coming home, he attended the Tuskegee Institute and earned a degree in forestry, only to find there were no jobs in that field available to an African American at that time. Over the years, he has also studied at Talladega College, Auburn University, Troy State and the FBI Academy. He remains an Auburn fan to this day.

"I had an opportunity to go to Memphis to work as a railroad detective, but my mother didn't want me to go, she thought it would be too dangerous.

So, he came and Talladega's mayor at that time, Dr. J.L. Hardwick,

gave him a job in the police department.

Wallace said that there were two or three other nominal African-American police officers at the time, but they functioned more as security guards than actual police officers. "They didn't have any arrest authority," he said. "So I was the first African-American Talladega police officer that could actually put people in jail."

His first arrest was a prominent white man known as Hog-Eye, who he picked up for public drunkenness. "He called me every name in the book, and I just smiled," Wallace said. Back then, "the only people getting arrested were poor white folks and black folks." That soon began to change. "We wanted to do right, not just pick on folks," he said. Wallace eventually worked his way up from rookie officer to police chief, where he was responsible for setting up the city's first detective division. He was appointed chief toward the end of the tumultuous tenure of Mayor Johnny McKinney and served in that position for three years before, as he puts it, "Gov. George C. Wallace grabbed me."

Wallace had first met the once and future governor (no relation, obviously) in the 1950s, through Senator Bobby Weaver. "I liked his law and order stance," he said. "There was a lot of animosity towards him, but he was

one of the finest governors this state every had. He took me in and put me on as a founding member of the Alabama Law Enforcement Planning Agency for this part of the state."

In that capacity, he was responsible for implementing state and federal funding partnerships, and was able to secure funding for Talladega College. He was also a charter member of the Alabama Crime Victim's Commission.

As the end of his time as chief was coming to an end, Gov. Wallace approached him and asked him what he wanted.

"I said I had been in law enforcement all my life," Wallace replied. One of the governor's assistants was told to take him downstairs "and I thought I might get something with the state troopers, or as a prison warden. But he looked in the appointment book and saw that they needed an assistant commissioner for the state Department of Corrections. They appointed me to that, and I was the first African-American DOC commissioner, too."

He was an assistant commissioner for two years before the commissioner died in a car accident in Georgia, and he was appointed to the top job. He continued to serve in that capacity under governors Guy Hunt, Jim Folsom Jr., Fob James and



BRIAN SCHOENHALS/THE DAILY HOME

Wilby Wallace is shown with just a few of the awards he has been awarded during his long career – along with an Auburn championship hat.

Don Sigelman.

As corrections commissioner, Wallace oversaw a \$200 million budget, got several new prisons built and witnessed four executions. But his proudest accomplishment was the establishment of a boot camp for juvenile offenders near Childersburg.

"I worked with Mayor Larry Barton, Sen. Jim Preuitt and Reps. Ron Johnson and Clarence Haynes. We were able to do a property swap with the (Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind) and got it set up. It was the most effective way to keep young people from going to prison, and it gave judges some more discretion. It was the only one of its kind in the state. But then

Gov. (Bob) Riley converted it to a work camp for adult prisoners."

During the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan appointed him to the local selective service committee, where he never missed a meeting. He also worked in radio and television and served on the Alabama Citizens Advisory Committee, to which he was also appointed by George Wallace.

After retiring from the DOC in 1997, he took on a new job as the Talladega City School System first (and, to date, only) full-time truancy officer. He retired from that position last year.

He has also served as a member of the Talladega Municipal Airport Board

for many years.

He has received numerous awards and accolades over the years, including the Drum Major for Justice Award in 1995. He was the first African-American to be so honored.

"It's a very prestigious award, and I cherish it," he said.

"I'd have a lot of firsts, and a lot of young people today don't realize that," he explained. "So I talk to kids in high school, and I encourage them to stay in school. I am dead set on encouraging all students, black or white, to either get a quality education or learn a trade. That way, they can maintain themselves, and be proud men and women in the future. That's my goal."

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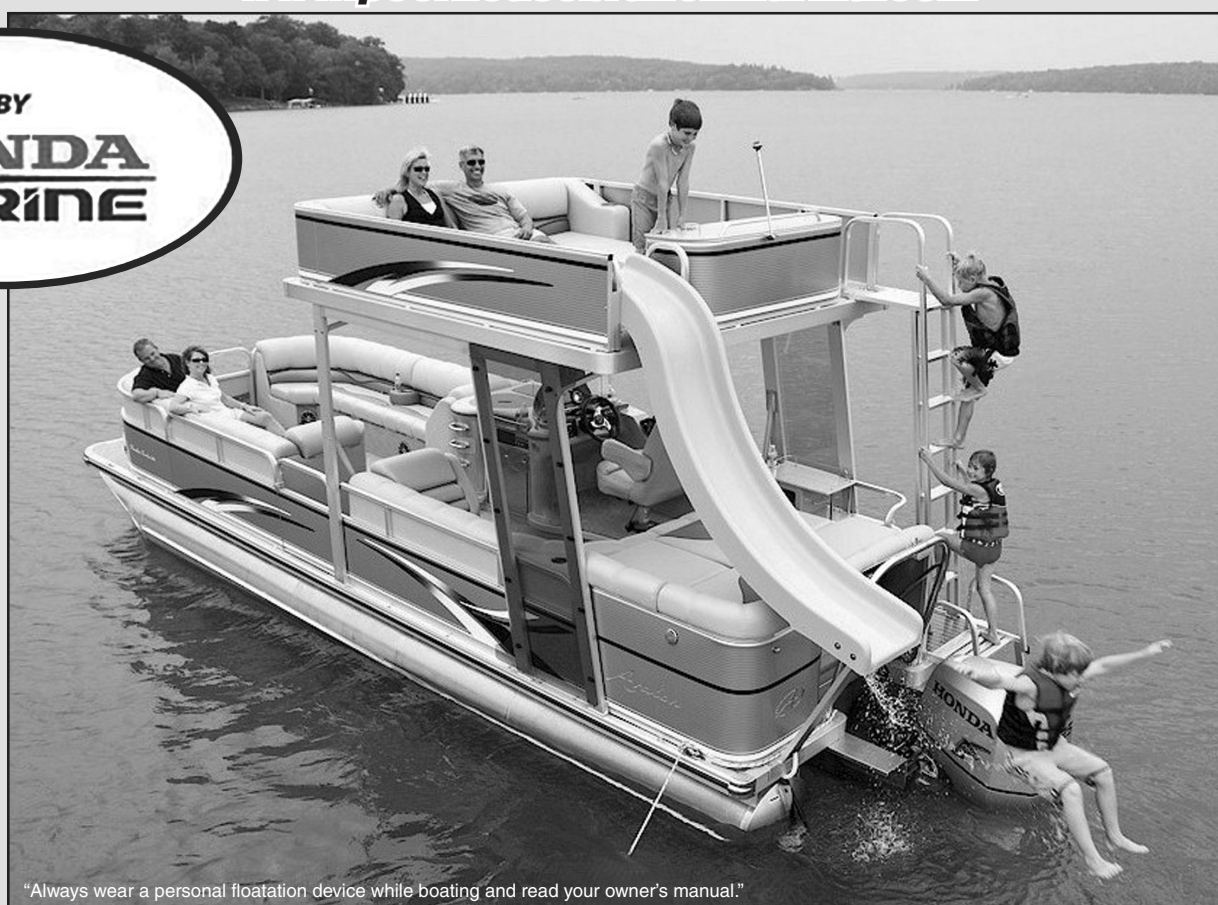
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A lifelong passion for community, children

By
EMILY MCLAIN
Home staff writer

Both retired from working with the Sylacauga public, James and Annie Leonard now have time for the activities they are truly passionate about — though it turns out their interests aren't all that different from the work they did for decades.

"We've always enjoyed working with young people and kids," James said. "And I think they enjoy being around us. They have always respected me, because I respect them."

Retired since 2003, James worked 45 years as maintenance director for the Parks and Recreation department, where he maintained city parks and buildings and built a reputation as a jack-of-all-trades and an icon for Parks and Recreation employees, said Maxye Veazey Senior Center director Sherry Vickers.

"James is a legend with Parks and Recreation," Vickers said. "He was somebody who could do just about anything. He was always friendly and easy to work with. He didn't see color, and he didn't mind helping you, no matter what. He's definitely one of a kind and a special guy."

He and Annie were also involved in the Tree Commission and Beautification Council, for which James personally selected a "Lovin' Care" yard of the month for many years.

The best part of his job, though, was meeting people and building relationships, he said.

"You got a chance to meet a lot of different people with different personalities," James said. "You learned to treat everybody right. I enjoyed working with the kids who used to work with us. I had a lot of patience with them, because you can tell they need somebody to be patient with them

sometimes. I don't believe you could go anywhere in Sylacauga, and I'm not just bragging, but I don't think you could find a kid in Sylacauga who said I mistreated them in any way. I always tried to look out for them, and I could get them to work for me."

Also providing a public service, Annie was a library clerk at B.B. Comer Memorial Library for 30 years before retiring about two years ago. She jokingly said that unlike her husband, there are probably some children in town who are angry with her.

"I'm sure there are some upset with me, because I had to help a lot of people with homework, and I wouldn't do it for them. I made them read and find things for themselves," she said. "But I enjoyed working with people, and I really liked research, searching for information, and I enjoyed the people I worked with."

Library director Shirley Spears said Annie was a good employee who showed compassion for library patrons.

"She worked well with the public and was especially effective with young people," Spears said. "She was an effective employee, and she tried very hard to help people and was sensitive to their needs. She and James are a very special couple."

In addition to their careers, the Leonards built a tradition of providing children in their neighborhood off Odena Road with entertainment, snacks and an ear to listen to their concerns.

"We've always had a bunch of kids around, even before we had a child," James said. "I built a full-size basketball court for them, and we played a bunch of other sports. We had a movie one night a week and a cartoon one night a week for the kids in the neighborhood. My wife made popcorn, cupcakes. We played Bingo. We just used to have a



EMILY MCLAIN/THE DAILY HOME

James and Annie Leonard are "a very special couple"

good time."

At one time, James and Annie even used a school bus to pick children up who had no transportation and take them to the public swimming pool and other recreation facilities. They balanced each other's traits — with James providing the entertainment and Annie providing the snacks for the children who congregated at their home.

"I tell you what, my wife never left anything out of a good meal," James remembered. "You had the pickle and the salt and pepper, whatever went on a hamburger or hot dog, she brought it. She never forgot anything."

A second generation of neighborhood children gather at the Leonards' home now that they have a 7-year-old grandson, Annie said.

"When our grandson is here, he brings all his friends," she said. "It's different now than it was years ago, so you kind of wean off them a little bit, but you still know they

need some guidance and they need a place to play. I just always enjoyed working with children, ever since I was a child myself, and they seemed to enjoy coming around."

In retirement, the couple of nearly 46 years find themselves doing more of the same things that have always brought them joy — spending time with children — and some of the things they never had time for before, like traveling, Annie said.

"I got the chance to go to Rome since I've been retired, and I'd like to do some more traveling," she said. "And now I can spend a lot more time with my grandson. He spent the summer with us last year, and we go on little trips here and there."

As for James, it's all about the tennis court. An avid player himself, James is also arguably the biggest fan of the Sylacauga High School tennis team.

"They probably consider me a member," he said, laughing. "I get joy from watching them go from not being able to hit a ball to playing well

and improving. I help them hit sometimes, and I encourage them to enjoy the game, just relieve some of the pressure, and they'll do better."

James is also on the board for the Arc of South Talladega County, where he attends meetings and helps with fundraising efforts for the organization that serves adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Annie will tell you she and her husband haven't contributed to anything in ages, but the Leonards' work in the community is not forgotten — something they are reminded of when they run into the adults who were once children playing basketball in their yard.

"The kids never saw me curse or drink or smoke," James said. "Some of those kids are grown with their own children now, and right now, if I go around and they have a beer, you'll see them put it to the side. They don't want me to see it, because they know

I never did that around them. I want to tell them, 'Y'all are grown now. You can have a drink.' But I have to give it to them — they always show respect, and they will tell us 'thank you' and that they appreciated what we did for them when they were little."

Looking back, the Leonards are happy with their contributions to Sylacauga, and they look forward to the years ahead, spending time with family and enjoying the city they have lived in all their lives.

"We've had a good time, and the Lord has really blessed us," James said. "I couldn't have found a better woman than my wife, and we wouldn't have what we do if it wasn't for her. Everything has turned out good, and life has been good to us. It really has."

Contact Emily McLain at emclain@dailyhome.com.

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Frazier has helped others her whole life

By
DAVID ATCHISON
Home staff writer

Frazier talks fondly of “her students,” and she sees former students frequently.

“Pell City is my home,” said Frazier who came from a family of 10 children.

Frazier and her sister, Alice White, are the only siblings who are still alive. White was married to the late Earnest White, who was elected and served on the Pell City school board for almost a decade.

Once a week you can find Frazier at the Hospital. She works there every Monday from 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Frazier, who has a 37-year-old son Jamey, said she began working as a teacher because of her love for children. She worked as a youth director for a church, before becoming a teacher at a public school.

She said her son’s wife is Kimberly, and the couple have one daughter, Isabella.

She is still very active in church and sings with the First Baptist Church South choir. She is also the director of programs.

Frazier said her husband, Jesse, is also retired. He worked for 37 years at the Goodyear Tire plant in Gadsden.

Since retiring, Frazier has not slowed down a bit. She is involved with other boards and committees.

During her entire life, Marion Frazier has helped people, in the schools, in church and she continues to provide a helping hand at the hospital in Pell City.

“I just like helping people,” said the 69-year-old woman, who has served more than 20 years with the St. Vincent’s St. Clair Hospital Auxiliary, a non-profit group that raises money for the hospital, college scholarships and assists at the new hospital in Pell City.

“I started in 1993,” Frazier said.

She first learned of the hospital auxiliary group on one of her many trips to the old St. Clair Hospital on Dr. John Haynes Drive.

“I turned to my sister and said, ‘That’s something we could do,’” Frazier said. “I started in the summer, while I was still teaching.”

Frazier, who grew up and has lived in Pell City all her life, was one of the first African American teachers to work for the Pell City School System.

She taught fourth-grade at Eden Elementary School, Iola Roberts Elementary School and Kennedy Elementary School, where she retired after 32 years with the School System.



BRIAN SCHOENHALS/THE DAILY HOME

Marion Frazier volunteers at least once a week at the St. Vincent’s St. Clair Hospital. She is shown visiting with Mary Ingram.

“I try to stay active,” she said. “It keeps me moving.”

Frazier serves on the board of directors for the St. Clair County Children’s Advocacy Center, more commonly known as The

Children’s Place, which provides a safe environment for children who have been abused or where abuse is suspected.

Frazier also serves on the steering committee for the YWCA Domestic

Violence.

She said each year the committee organizes a big fundraising luncheon to help raise money for the domestic violence program.

When Frazier is not

helping others, she’s being a grandmother to her six-year-old granddaughter Isabella.

“Yes, we’re active,” she said. “All this keeps me moving, and I enjoy it.”

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Piatkowski could've lived anywhere, but chose Childersburg

By **BILL KIMBER**
Home staff writer

Gene Piatkowski could've lived anywhere on earth, and he chose Childersburg. And in a little more than a decade, he has become well-known for his volunteer efforts in all types of civic affairs in his adopted hometown.

The New Jersey native had lived in several states in his career as a tech support manager with the phone company before he and his wife, Nancy, found their paradise on the Coosa River.

Piatkowski grew up in Atlantic Township, now Coltsneck, N.J., on about 12 acres of family land. "If we didn't grow it or raise it, we didn't eat it. I learned to do a lot of things that way," he said.

He attended high school in Freehold, N.J., where music superstar Bruce Springsteen was a classmate of his younger brother. "My brother played with him in a band in grammar school. I met him when he was 12 years old or so, but he would never remember me."

Piatkowski always liked tinkering with electronics, and became a ham radio operator at age 16. After high school, he went to Central Technical Institute in Kansas City, Mo., earning a two-year degree in electrical engineering. "It's been bought up and swallowed up by several other schools through the years," said Piatkowski, now 69.

He worked at Bell Labs in New Jersey until 1979, when he moved to Louisville, Ky., transferring to South Central Bell as part of a tech support team headquartered there. In 1982 he was transferred to South Central Bell's headquarters in Birmingham to do the same work for all five South Central Bell states.

In his retirement, Piatkowski still does some contract work designing and installing computer systems.

"Retirement is a state of mind. Since I retired from the phone company I've had other assignments with other companies, mostly computer design work," he said.

Piatkowski's wife works for the phone company as an analyst. The couple moved to Duluth, Ga., while she worked in downtown Atlanta, and she found the commute exhausting.

"It took her two hours each way to commute downtown 30 miles away. She rode the MARTA train halfway, and if it rained it was horrible. We looked to relocate closer to a MARTA station and decided that after looking at a bunch of places, we couldn't find one that met our criteria," he said.

He said they wanted a place where they could go in the back yard and not see anyone or be seen by anyone, and there was nothing affordable that gave them the privacy they wanted.

"My wife found this place on the Internet, and we moved back to Alabama in 2002," Piatkowski said.

"Nancy found it online on a Saturday morning. It had just been listed the day before," he said. "We contacted the agent and made arrangements to see it that evening. We drove

from Atlanta and got here at about five o'clock. We walked in the back yard and decided this was it, without even seeing the inside. We bought it that day."

The house sits on three lots, and Piatkowski bought the woods behind the place as well, so there's no threat of anybody building nearby.

"We like the privacy, and we like being able to walk around 25 acres and see squirrel and deer."

A boat came with the house and they used it once in two years, "so we traded it in for a new kitchen," he said.

His wife, a Maryland native who grew up in Memphis and mainly Huntsville, now telecommutes. Her boss is in San Ramon, Calif., and her teammates are in Texas and other locations.

She went to the University of Alabama and has a son who lives in Birmingham, and she is noted for providing delicious baked goods for civic events.

As for his own civic involvement, "I enjoy helping out. I've got a lot to offer," Piatkowski says.

"I started out being drafted into the Childersburg Historical Preservation Commission. We have two major properties — the museum and the grist mill — that we take care of."

At the grist mill, "The city pays certain bills, and



Gene Piatkowski, left, chats with Police Chief Doug Wesson after a meeting of the Childersburg City Council last month.

we raise money to pay the rest."

Serious work is ongoing to shore up the foundation of the 1860s mill.

Right now, Piatkowski and others are working on the third annual Grits Festival, to be held Saturday, May 3. The fund-raiser is held on the Saturday before the spring race at the Talladega Superspeedway each year, offering a fun pastime for

visiting race fans.

People from 20 or more states have attended the event in its previous two outings.

"I like taking an interest in the community. I go to all the City Council meetings just to stay aware of what's going on. If something needs to be done, I like to be in the middle of it."

City Clerk and Historical Preservation

Commission official Sandra Donahoo said Piatkowski's work doesn't go unnoticed.

"Gene is super good for this city. He's always volunteering, and he and his wife are both super contributors. They love our city, and they show it every day by participating in activities."

Piatkowski enjoys shooting, and joined the local Fraternal Order of

Police chapter to be able to use the organization's shooting range.

"I like the organization and what they stand for, and I try to help them out all that I can," he said.

Childersburg Police Lt. Tommy Wallace, a former president of the Fraternal Order of Police, said Piatkowski works hard to support the organization.

BILL KIMBER/THE DAILY HOME



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(205) 338-3374

Traditional Worship
8:30 am & 10:30 am
Wide Open
Contemporary Worship
10:30am
Sunday School 9:15am

Rev. Sam Huffstutler
Rev. Arthur Harrison
Website: www.pellcityfumc.org

Bemiston Baptist Church
300 James Street
Talladega
(256) 362-2859
Sunday School 9:45am
Worship 11:00am
Evening Worship 6:00pm
Wednesday Service 6:00pm

Crosspoint Church
8000 Liles Lane
Trussville
205-655-0364
www.crosspointchurch.info
Pastor
Ryan F. Whitley

Lincoln Baptist Church
21 Chestnut St.
Lincoln (205) 763-7351
www.lincolnbaptist.org

Stemley Baptist Church
399 Rock Church Road
Talladega
(256) 268-9751
Pastor - Carl Armstrong

First Baptist Church
200 8th Ave. SW, Childersburg
(256) 378-6058
Sunday Services:
10:30 am & 5 pm
Dr. John E. Beck, Pastor

Mt. Zion Freewill Baptist Church
Martin St. No., Pell City
(205) 338-3708

Sunday School 9:45am
Worship 10:45am
Wed. Service 7:00 pm
Gospel Blue Grass-
Every Sunday 5:00pm
Sunday Night 6:00pm

Pastor- Michael Barber
Associate Pastor-
Travis Webster

Bemiston United Methodist Church
300 Wells Ave.
Talladega (256) 362-0643
Rev. Glen Horn
Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Morning Worship
11:00 am
Sunday Evening Worship
5:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study 5:00 pm

Ridgeview Baptist Church
1711 Allison Mill Rd.
Talladega
(256) 362-3971
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service 6:00 p.m.

Knollwood Presbyterian Church
155 Knollwood Ln.
Sylacauga (256) 249-2648
knollwoodpres@bellsouth.net

SEDDON BAPTIST CHURCH
1015 Hardwick Rd.
Pell City
(205) 338-4285
Pastor - Dale Foote

The Sanctuary
46639 US Hwy 280
Sylacauga
(256) 207-2464
Freddie Edwards Pastor

Concord United Methodist Church
85 Concord Church Rd.
Talladega
(256) 268-0633

Plainview Baptist Church
24343 AL Hwy. 21
Talladega

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
4840 Wolf Creek Rd. S.
Pell City
Sunday Service
11:00 am

Eden Westside Baptist Church
223 Wolf Creek Rd. N., Pell City
(205) 338-7711
www.edenwestside.org
PASTOR: JACKY CONNELL
Sunday Services
8:10 am & 11:00 am
Life Discovery 9:35 am
Sun. Night Worship 6:00 pm
Wed. Night Bible Study 6:30 p.m.
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(205) 338-2645
Sunday School 9:00 am
Worship 10:15 am
Sunday Evening Service
6:00 pm
Wednesday Service
6:30 pm
www.nhbpc.com
Pastor:
Paul Brasher
Associate Pastor:
Jacque Snow

Cropwell Baptist Church
2700 Hardwick Rd.
Pell City
(205) 338-7995
www.cropwellbaptist.org
Sunday Services
8:45 a.m. Sunday School/
Small Groups
10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship Service
6:30 p.m.
Evening Worship Service
Wednesday Services
6:15 pm KIDZ Activities &
DIG for Preschoolers
6:30 pm "Hydrate"
Student Ministry
Adult Bible Study & Prayer
Time & Discipleship Studies

Spring Valley Baptist Church
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SUNDAY:
Sunday School 9:00 am
Morning Worship 10:15 am
WEDNESDAY:
Supper 5:30 pm
Youth Discipleship 6:15 pm
Children's Discipleship 6:15 pm
Adult Bible Studies 6:30 pm
Service Ministries 6:30 pm
4193 U.S. Hwy. 11
Springville
(205) 467-2285
www.springvalleybaptistchurch.org

Harvest Center Church of God
3207 - 8th Ave. N.
Pell City
(205) 338-2853
Pastor, Paul A. Lett
Sunday Service
8:15 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School
9:45 a.m.
Sunday Service
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Youth
6:45 p.m.
Wednesday Service
7:00 p.m.
www.harvestcenterchurch.com

New Life Fellowship
3540 Acmar Rd., Moody
(205) 640-3612
nlfmoody.org
skygazer7@yahoo.com

Odena Baptist Church
1125 Odena Rd. N.
Sylacauga
(256) 249-3850

Tinney Street Church of Christ
324 Tinney Street
Talladega
(256) 761-1283

Clare Purcell United Methodist Church
Corner of Nimitz & Allen St.
Talladega

Ironaton Baptist Church
5938 Ironaton Rd.
Talladega (256) 480-5996
Pastor Gary Plummer
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship
11:00 a.m.
Sunday Night Worship 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Night
Prayer Meeting 6:30 p.m.

Christ Point Church
112 Mission Center
110 N Anniston Ave
(256) 249-4364

Central Baptist Church
P.O. Box 1085
126 Spring St. N., Talladega
(256) 362-4836
Pastor: Dr. Sam Tate
Sunday School - 9:45-10:45 a.m.
Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m.
Discipleship Training - 5:00 p.m.
Evening Worship - 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday AWANA - 6:00 p.m.
Prayer Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Adult Choir Practice - 7:15 p.m.

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Rev. Raymond Stewart
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Sunday Morning Worship
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Sunday Night Worship
5:00 pm
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Victory Students 6:30 p.m.
Victory Kids 6:30 p.m.
www.victorypellcity.com

First United Methodist Church
105 E. Spring St.
Sylacauga
(256) 249-0362
www.firstmethodistchurch.com

Argo Christian Fellowship
936 US Hwy 11
Trussville
(205) 467-7062
Pastor Jerry Mahner
www.argochristianfellowship.com

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church
4609 Martin St. S.
Cropwell (205) 525-5161
Pastor: Rev. Michael Sexton, V.C.
Daily Mass: Mon., Tues., Thurs.
& Fri. at 9 a.m.
Wed. Evening Mass at 7 p.m.
Saturday Mass at 6 p.m.
Sunday Masses at 8:30 a.m.
& 11:15 a.m.

First Baptist Church
10 Broadway Ave. S.
Sylacauga
www.fbcstv
SERVICE TIMES
9:45 A.M.
Bible study for all ages
11 a.m.
Celebration Worship
6 pm
Worship Wednesday
6:00 p.m.
Mid-week service
Dr. Rick Patrick

Sylacauga First Assembly Of God
560 Gantts Junction Rd.
Oak Grove (256) 249-2461
Pastor Charlie Glover

Mount Olive Baptist Church
21 Mount Olive Circle
Talladega
(256) 362-0953

Sycamore Baptist Church
118 Main Street
Sycamore
(256) 249-9488

Mignon Baptist Church
900 Avondale Ave.
Sylacauga
(256) 249-4303

Marble City Baptist Church
1512 Quarry Rd.
Sylacauga (256) 245-6337
marblecitybaptist.com

Shute gives back to community he loves



BOB CRISP/THE DAILY HOME



BOB CRISP/THE DAILY HOME

Billy Shute grew up in Pell City and has remained here with his family.

Shute has a long family history of being in the real estate business. His grandfather was George Porter, Porter Realty in Talladega.

By DAVID ATCHISON
Home staff writer

Billy Shute grew up in Pell City, attending Pell City schools and playing high school football. Now he works and raises a family in the city he loves so much.

Shute, 44, also tries to give back to the community that gives so much to him, serving on the Board of Directors of the Pell City Chamber of Commerce and as a sergeant of arms for the Rotary Club of Pell City.

“We moved here when I was 7 years old,” he said.

His parents moved from place to place, working with a large chain store.

“My parents got transferred a lot,” he said. “We eventually landed here.”

It was Shute’s last move as a child.

It was his family’s final move to Pell City that put them close to other relatives.

His grandfather was the late George Porter, Porter Realty in Talladega.

“He was an appraiser and a broker, also,” Shute said.

His grandfather provided Shute his first exposure to the world of the real estate business.

Shute graduated from Pell City High School in 1987.

He was also a member of the 1986 high school football team that went 11-3 that season, earning a trip to the semi-final round of the state playoffs.

“It was called the Turkey Bowl back then,” he said.

The towering Shute played tackle, although he wasn’t as tall when he was in high school as he is now. Shute was only 5 feet 11 inches when he played football for the Panthers. After graduating, he grew to 6 feet 4 inches tall.

He enjoyed playing football for the Panthers.

“I love it,” Shute said. “We had some good times, some good wins.”

Shute eventually went to work for his uncle, Josh Porter, who was a real estate appraiser.

He said Dot Wood

with Wood Appraisal took him under her wings and taught him the appraisal business.

He got his appraisal certification while working with Wood.

Shute worked for the St. Clair County Revenue Office as a tax appraiser. He moonlighted for Wood when he was employed by the county.

“I would do appraisals outside the county so there were no conflicts,” he said.

Shute got his appraisal certification in 2004, and in 2005, Thanksgiving week, he went into business for himself.

“I decided to take the leap,” he said. “And I have never looked back.”

Now, Shute operates his own appraisal business. It provides him more time for community organizations that help others in the community.

For the past 10 years, Shute has been a member of the Rotary Club of Pell City, an organization that raises money for local charities.

He currently serves as sergeant of arms for the Rotary Club.

“I get to tell everyone to sit down and shut up,” he joked.

Shute has also been an active member of the Greater Pell City Chamber of Commerce, which helps support local businesses in and around Pell City.



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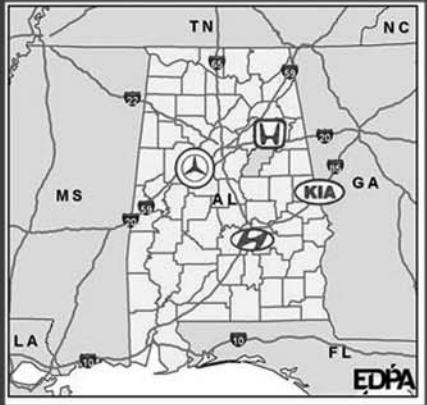
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Fayetteville's Kayla Sherbert a born leader

By
ERICH HILKERT
Home sports writer

Kayla Sherbert has demonstrated leadership in every facet of her life — on the softball field, in her church, and at her school.

"I wish we had more Kaylas," Fayetteville principal Byron Brasher said. "She is dynamic, she is focused; she's not just a great student, she's a great athlete. She's been playing softball for many years. She's in the band. She's just an overall well-rounded student. She's taking college classes and many other activities and maintaining her GPA and doing well on the ACT. I'm very excited about Kayla; this is her junior year, so we have her one more year and she will be missed after she graduates next year. She is a great individual. She has done some community work, some things that she has done at her church and that's awesome. Any time we have students that take a lead in the community that's just what we want."

Sherbert is at the top of the Fayetteville 2015 junior class, recently scored a 31 on the ACT, and is already getting an early jump on college. She is currently enrolled in University of Alabama's Early College online program.

"It has been an amazing experience for me," Sherbert said. "I have learned so much, even things that aren't a part of my class. I've learned just

how to work and how to be self-motivated because it is hard, it's hard if you're not self-motivated. You have to be organized and to keep everything on track. I make mistakes, but fixing your mistakes is what is important."

In May 2013, Sherbert participated in the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) State Leadership Seminar held for three days at Troy University with other high school sophomores from all over the state. She will return this year to serve as part of the alumni staff.

"As an alumni staff, we focus on serving because we went to HOBY and were taught leadership is leading by service," Sherbert said. "You show your leadership by serving others and by caring for others. At HOBY, we actually did a service project where we all brought cans to HOBY. It was on a stage piled up probably 10 feet wide. It took 300 kids two and a half hours to separate that stuff and pack it. It was just so much and it was just so overwhelming to see people could bring just a little but when you bring everybody together it just turned into so much."

A few years back, Sherbert demonstrated her leadership abilities at her church, Talladega Springs Full Gospel Tabernacle, by starting a youth-led retreat for younger girls around the ages of six through 11.

"She is an exceptional leader for young people," Talladega Spring Full

Gospel Tabernacle pastor Joe Kelley said. "A couple of years ago, she came to me and wanted to do a young girls retreat at our church. So, we asked her to put together an agenda and her thoughts of that retreat and let us review them and we would let her know. I reviewed her notes and had one of our deacons review her notes and we made absolutely no changes. It was 100 percent, it was great. She did a very good job leading that."

Additionally, Sherbert is extremely active at her school, having participated in the Senior Citizen Social, serving in the Key Club, and playing for the softball team.

"She does a great job in the classroom," Fayetteville athletic director John Limbaugh said. "As far as her community work, it's well-known here at school. She started a youth program herself and is very involved in her church. I'm familiar with her work at the church through being a pastor in this community. All the other activities—softball, Key Club and all the other activities at the school that is involved in—it's quite amazing what one student can do to make a difference."

Sherbert has been the starting second baseman on each of the past two Fayetteville softball teams that have made consecutive trips to the state softball tournament in Montgomery. Sherbert admitted she isn't the sin-



BOB CRISP/THE DAILY HOME

Kayla Sherbert has shown leadership in every area of her life, from sports to her church and at school.

gularly most talented player on the team but makes up for it with her hard work and determination.

"I love softball," Sherbert said. "I've played every year since I was four. It makes me sad that next year is my last year; I just can't even imagine. I have natural abilities, but it isn't as much as other girls on my team. But I think what helps put me to their level is my hard work because I work so hard. I really love it, I love the game. That's

something that you really have to have."

While Sherbert feels confident she will attend the University of Alabama upon graduation in 2015, she can't imagine being anywhere other than Fayetteville for now.

"I wouldn't want to be anywhere else and that's what I tell people who come in," she said. "I'm a student ambassador here, so people come in and I have to tell them about our school and that's what I tell

them every time because that's what I love about this school: it's a family school. I've never been to any other school, but I've never heard of any other school that is like this one. I've talked to friends that go to different schools and they can't comprehend this fact: I know every kid in my class by middle name. That's very unusual, but it's so great because I know them. It helps us have a relationship."



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Preparing taxes, 'cruising' her favorite things

By
ELSIE HODNETT
Home staff writer

For Lincoln resident Glenda Carlisle, preparing taxes and taking cruises is what life's about.

"I can get on the ship and go different places and just relax," she said. "I don't have to unpack and repack every day to see different places."

Glenda grew up in Eastaboga. She and her husband, Bobby, attended Lincoln schools and met at the Lincoln Dairyland — a local hangout. The couple moved to Lincoln shortly after they were married.

"We got married in 1967 and had two daughters, Lisa and Lynn," she said. "I had been working for the Anniston Army Depot as a transportation clerk and Bobby worked at the Depot in fire control."

Glenda said in 1972, when her daughters were small, she took a break from the Depot for about three years.

"During that time, I took the H&R Block tax course because I wanted to do my own taxes," she said. "After school, I decided I wanted to work part time, so I did for three years before going back to work at the Depot."

Glenda is a senior tax advisor for H&R Block Lincoln Office. She is also an enrolled agent with the

IRS, which means she can do any tax return for anything the IRS might ask for — businesses, partnerships, corporations — anything.

"When both daughters were in college, I continued to work at the Depot and worked nights at H&R Block," she said. "It was a natural fit to go back to work for them — I wouldn't do it for any other tax service or on my own. I like having the company behind me."

In 1999, Glenda retired from the Depot after 28 years, but she continued working for H&R Block, and has 27 years altogether.

"For many years there was no H&R Block office in Lincoln, and I was a big advocate for opening one here," she said. "They finally did open one in 2008. I work during the tax season and am retired."

Even retired, Glenda stays active in the community, giving free talks regarding taxes and tax changes, talks on cruise travel, speaks at Lincoln High School and serves on the Lincoln Board of Adjustment. And she enjoys her passion — cruising.

"We began cruising in 1994," she said. "I had always wanted to go on a cruise and my husband didn't. I finally got him on one and now he doesn't

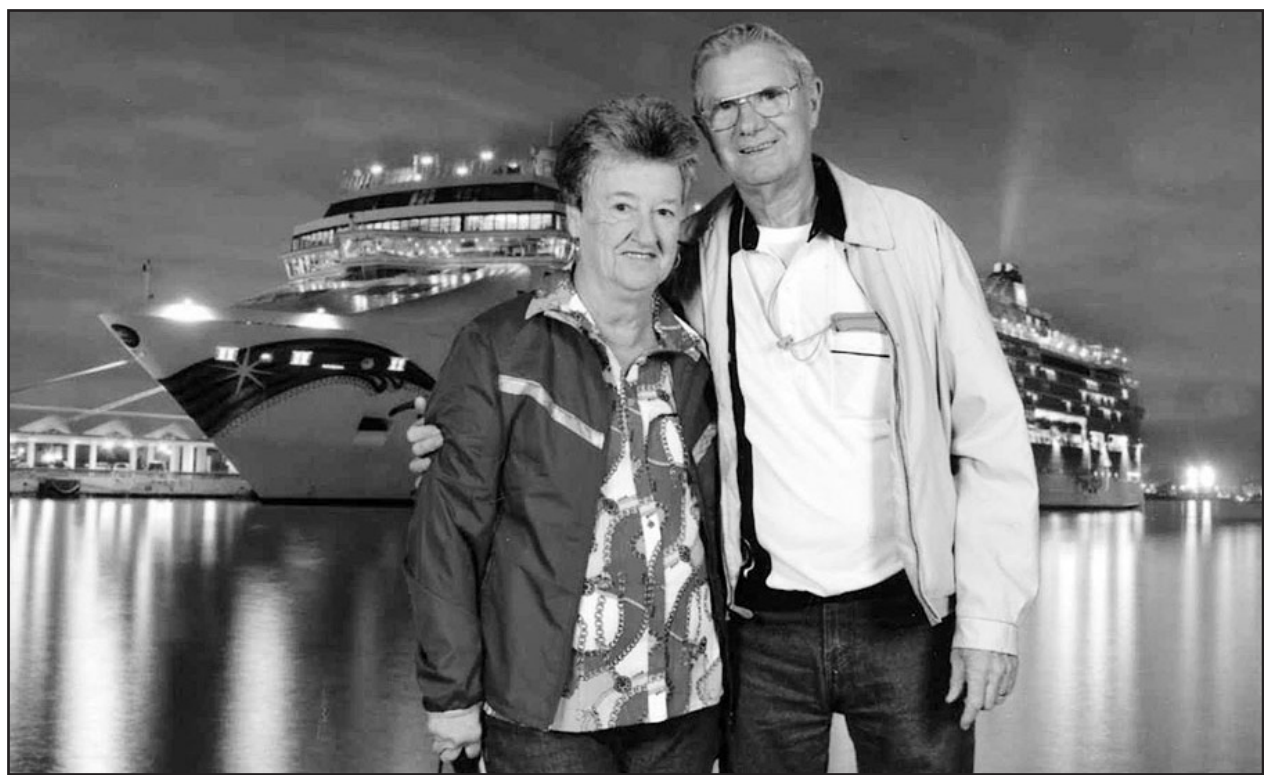


Photo Submitted

Glenda and Bobby Carlisle prepare to set sail on the Norwegian Jewel from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., in December 2013.

want to get off. He enjoys it as much as I do."

Glenda said she enjoys taking cruises with friends.

"I also book travel for cruises," she said. "I got my friends into cruising. I like doing a bit of everything. We love to cruise and I like to see people go on cruises so I like to book them."

Glenda said she has been on cruises all over the Caribbean including Aruba and Curacao, Alaska, Mexico and the Mexican Riviera.

"We've been on a total of 43 cruises," she said.

Glenda said her grand-

sons, Austin, 17, Grayson, 12, and John, 9, have gone on cruises with them and love to cruise too.

"We did four cruises last year," she said. "It's a passion of ours."

Glenda said her favorite place is Aruba.

"I enjoy the laid-back style, and they are just real friendly," she said. "We have gone to the Caribbean the most — probably about 35 times. And we are going back the end of this month."

Contact Elsie Hodnett at ehodnett@dailyhome.com.

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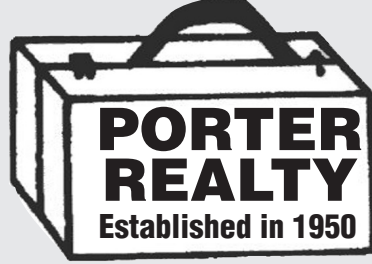
Paid for by the Paul Manning Campaign, PO Box 119, Wattsville, AL 35182, Ricky Parker, Chairman.



BOB CRISP/THE DAILY HOME

Glenda Carlisle grew up in Eastaboga. She and her husband, Bobby, attended Lincoln schools and met at the Lincoln Dairyland.

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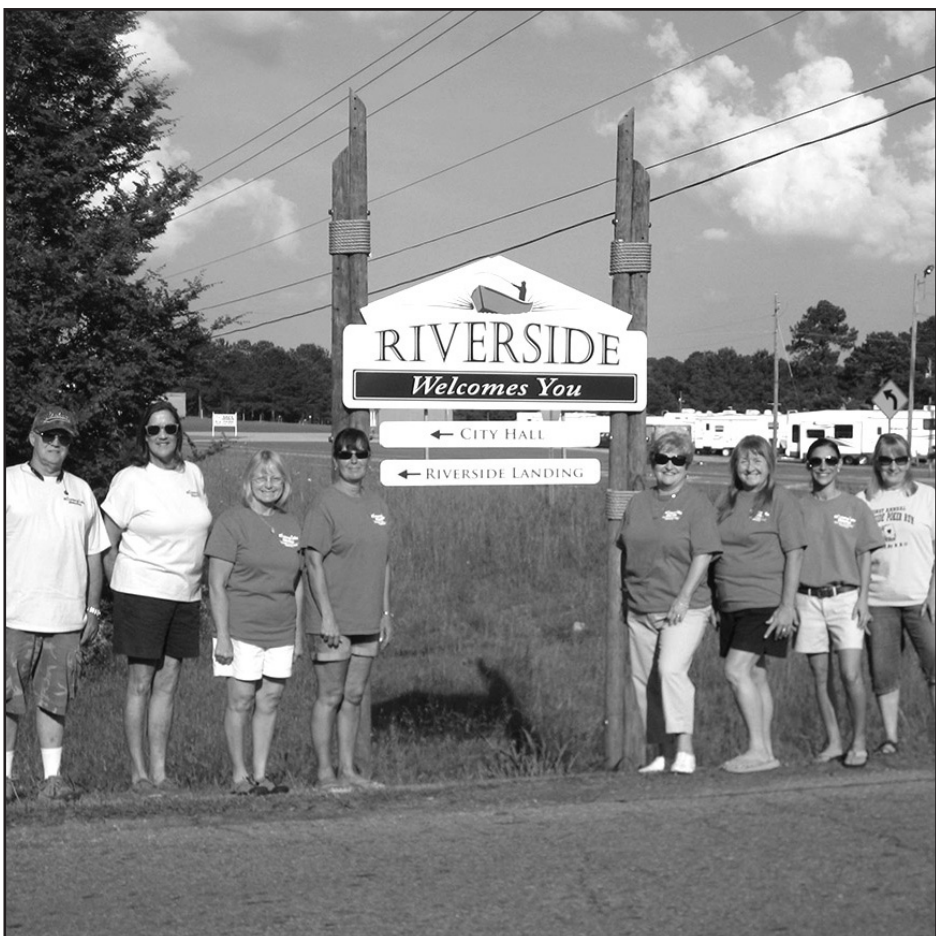
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- 9 am - Casual 'n Christ Worship
- 9 am - Children's Worship
- 10 am - Grounded Worship
- 10 am - Sunday School All Ages
- 11 am - Traditional Worship
- 4 pm - Youth Activities
- 6 pm - Youth Worship
- 6 pm - Bread For The Journey Worship

WEDNESDAY OPPORTUNITIES

- 5:30 pm - Fellowship Meal
- 6 pm - Adult Bible Study
- 6 pm - Children's Activities and Bible Studies
- 6 pm - Youth Fellowship

Organization helps keep town of Riverside beautiful



Elsie Hodnett/The Daily Home

The Riverside Beautification Organization raised funds and purchased a "Welcome to Riverside" sign located at the intersection of U.S. 78 and Depot Street. From the left are RBO members Walter Moll, Cathe Walker, Julie Ponders, Teresa Hammond, Lisa Boyd, Sandy Kerr, Elise Moreland and Sam Moll. The sign was built by Gilreath Printing & Signs LLC.

By **ELSIE HODNETT**
Home staff writer

The Riverside Beautification Organization continues to beautify the city and work toward a recycling program.

"The Riverside Beautification Organization was formed in October 2007," said Julie Ponders, secretary of the organization. "Past presidents Cindy Parsons and Cathe Walker and I got together with the idea of forming a beautification club to include beautifying Riverside and working on a recycling program."

Ponders said the three held an open house at the Riverside Storm Shelter to see who else might be interested in forming a beautification organization.

"We named ourselves in 2008 and formed the board," she said. "We obtained nonprofit status in 2010."

Ponders said the organization started out with 9 original members, most of whom remain active in the RBO.

"The RBO is a volunteer group with no membership fees," she said. "The first thing we did was begin planting around City Hall. We held several fundraisers so we could purchase plants to go at City Hall. We maintain the plantings at City Hall and expanded to include the post office and at Riverside Landing."

Ponders said in 2008, the RBO also planted a Leyland Cypress tree in front of the fire station to serve as the city's Christmas tree.

"We also held the city's first tree lighting event, complete with Santa and refreshments," she said. "It became an annual event everyone looks forward to, and the tree has grown a lot since then."

Ponders said the RBO started Earth Day clean-

ups in April 2009, which has become an annual event as well. The RBO and volunteers gather and clean the roadways.

"We were throwing around ideas for fundraisers and Lynn Carmichael knew of the poker run on Smith Lake and suggested we try a similar poker run here," she said. "Our first poker run was held at the former Alan Battle's Riverside Marina in 2009. We had about 90-100 participants, which greatly exceeded our expectations. We were amazed. With its success, the poker run became our main fundraiser."

Ponders said the following poker runs were held at Lakeside Landing. The event has grown each year and remains a successful and fun event for the community.

"In 2010, we began our campaign for funds to build a 'Welcome to Riverside' sign," she said. "We held our annual fundraising events and were

able to purchase and build the sign in May 2013 at the intersection of Depot Street and U.S. 78."

Ponders said when the RBO was chartered, one of the goals was and is to support all city activities.

"We participated both years in the chili cook-off and we participate in the fall festival each year," she said. "We also organized the purchase of Christmas decorative lights, snowflakes and sailboats to go along Depot Street during the holidays. We put the lights up in 2012 and added additional lights in 2013."

Ponders said the RBO welcomes all new members and volunteers. Meetings are the last Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the storm shelter.

"We are still working toward getting a recycling program in Riverside and continuing to beautify our city," she said.

Contact Elsie Hodnett at ehodnett@dailyhome.com.

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