

### Remembering the glow of Alabama summers past



### BY SUSAN COOK

Special to The Daily Home

I remember the first time I tasted honeysuckle.

Looking at the golden flower in my palm, I carefully pinched its green base and slowly glided the white thread outward until I saw the clear drop of nectar at the end—the tiniest drop of sweetness that tasted like summer on my

I found the honeysuckle in the woods behind my house while walking the

curving paths my father had carved into the soft earth. So many summers spent in the dark green shade of these woods.

In the mornings, I'd follow my brother to the stream where we'd flip over the mossy rocks, searching for salamanders and crawdads. We never caught them, though. It was thrill enough to discover their hiding place and see them scurry away.

Our cousin would join us most days, and we'd craft makeshift sailboats to race in the ripples of the stream. I don't think mine ever won, but I loved to watch our flimsy but hopeful paper regatta. When the heat and humidity overwhelmed us, we jumped in clothes and all, into the deepest part of the brook, shocked and delighted that water could be so cold when it was 95 degrees in the shade.

Some hazy afternoons, I would take a book and under the dappled light fly through the pages, imagining I was the main character, and the adventure was happening to me.

When I got older, my father, one Sunday summer afternoon, took me to the river, where he taught me how to paddle our old aluminum canoe. There was something freeing about navigating the waters and maneuvering wherever you wanted along the river's path with just the slightest change of your paddle.

My grandfather taught me how to fish--to recognize the feel of something deep below the water's surface nibbling on your line. To know when to yank and begin reeling in the big one. He, more than anyone I've ever known, taught me the value of patience. To enjoy the quiet stillness, the power of waiting, and the reward if you do.

On certain summer nights, after a day spent fishing on the lake, we'd light a bonfire. I still can't resist the flames of a fire flickering softly in the quiet summer night. Marshmallow-roasting sticks primed and ready, we toasted the fluffy white puffs until they tasted like sugar struck by lightning. Afterward, we'd maybe sing a campfire song and gaze at the flames, or strike up a game of UNO, Crazy Eights, or Rummikub if my Granny was around.

If I dive a little deeper, I remember seashells. Kneeling in the sand, not worried about how I would get it off me, I collected seashells in a plastic ziplock bag. Some were gray, some were pink, and a lot were broken, but each one I carefully stowed away. Back home on my twin bed, I'd carefully spread them out to admire the pearly ridges wondering where they had traveled before washing ashore near my feet. I showed my collection to an uncle I barely knew, who treated each one like a rare treasure, reliving his summer memories through my child's eye point of view.

Nowadays, I wish I saw more fireflies, or "lightning bugs," as I prefer to call them. I look for them at dusk, but I rarely see their intermittent glowing. We used to catch them in Mason jars with rough holes cut into the lids only to set them free again when we were ready to turn in for the night.

Looking back over my summer memories, I used to think about how boring my life was growing up in the hot glow of those Alabama summers. But time is our greatest teacher.

The memories of summer meld together until they, too, are like the drop of nectar from the honeysuckle. So much contained in seemingly so little.

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### Dr. Adia Winfrey: 'We are so much more alike than we are different'

### Talladega has hometown candidate in this year's general election for Congress

**BY SAM PRICKETT** 

Special to The Daily Home

Dr. Adia Winfrey didn't grow up in Talladega, but she's always considered it

Both her parents came from deep-rooted Talladega families, and even though she was born in Kentucky and raised in Louisiana, they would constantly remind her "that this was where I lived, that my home was in Talladega. They made sure I realized it."

Winfrey and her family moved to Talladega in 2014, and now she's running to represent the city and the rest of Alabama's Third District in Congress, challenging Rep. Mike D. Rogers in the November 3 general election.

Prior to entering politics, Winfrey, who holds a doctorate in psychology, had become well-known for publishing the book Healing Young People thru Empowerment (H.Y.P.E.): A Hip-Hop Therapy Program for Black Adolescent Boys, which was based on her doctoral dissertation. That book, published in 2009, was intended "to help youth explore emotional wellness and goal-setting," but also looked at broader issues of social justice and oppression within our families and our communities."

The book gained national attention, and Winfrey appeared in Jet Magazine, on NPR and on The Tom Joyner Morning Show. "That rally changed my life," she says. To date, she says she's trained "well over 2,000 professionals" in the H.Y.P.E.

Winfrey didn't decide to seek public office until 2018. She'd been inspired to enter politics while volunteering for Sen. Doug Jones' successful 2017 campaign. The senator's victory in Talladega County encouraged Winfrey to run for Rogers' seat in the 2018 Democratic primary. She lost to Mallory Hagan — who was in turn defeated by Rogers in the general election — but she still describes that campaign as "the most amazing experience" that taught her a lot about voters

in her district. "One of the biggest lessons I learned when I ran the first time is that we are so much more alike than we are different," she says. "A lot of times we misjudge our neighbors and make assumptions about people before we even give them a chance. I had to check a lot of my

assumptions at the door with that race." Winfrey, who was elected chair of the Talladega County Democratic Party last year, hadn't planned to run for the House seat again in 2020, but encouragement from people "all over the district"

changed her mind, she says. "A lot of the calls I was getting were from people who had supported my opponent last time, who had watched my race from the beginning. They liked my innovation, they liked my focus on agriculture and that we were able to build such a grassroots movement so fast. They really felt that an energy and a spirit like that is what the district needed to help unify people and get the vote

out. People were just encouraging me from that perspective, that who I am as a person and my background could draw a lot of people in, even Republi-

cans."

Much like Jones, who ran on a campaign platform of "finding common ground," Winfrey says she hopes to appeal to voters "from diverse backgrounds" and from across the partisan divide.

"I am an African American woman, and when I first ran, more than a few people told me that I didn't stand a chance. Why was I running in this area? But when I actually ran and

was meeting the constituents, that was not the impression I got. It was amazing, the support and feedback, even from Republicans when they heard my platform and heard my story. They were just supportive and encouraging."

Winfrey's platform heavily focuses on education, especially the need to provide students with career paths in agriculture, citing the steady increase in the average age of the American farmer. "We can do a better job of preparing the next generation of farmers and the next generation of people in agriculture," she says. That involves placing focus on cooperative education and career tech programs in schools throughout the district.

Talladega High School is a good example of this, she says, "but that needs to be more of the norm, not the exception to the rule."

She also stresses the importance of bringing broadband internet access to Talladega County. "Broadband can make our farmers more marketable and can help them to be more competitive, help them generate more revenue and just find smarter, better, cleaner ways to farm," she says.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it an increased need for broadband, she said, both for socially distanced communication and for students' education. "The pandemic has really shown that there's a great variance in what education looks like within our district and within our nation. We have to get real about how we are funding the resources that we are making available."

The pandemic has also caused a shift in the way campaigns are but Winfrey says she's heartened, not discouraged, by the changes.

"When people were contacting me last summer and driving up here to Talladega and asking me if I would run, I was just telling them, 'Guys, if I run again, I'm doing everything outside the box. The way politics is working now is not working, and I feel like we need to shake everything up.' And boy, look at what happened! We got shaken up."

Her whole campaign has become vir-

tual, she says. "For me, it was a comfortable transition. I'm used to doing things virtually. But it's really been an adjustment helping the constituency get familiar with it, especially since a lot of your hard-andfast supporters are typically older. But at this point, I think people are really into it. I'm personally kind of excited about

what this all ends up looking like. "My prayers of course are with all of us as we try to remain safe, as well as with the families who have lost loved ones, people who are sick. That's been heartbreaking. But it's my hope and prayer that we can take this current moment and stressful time and find ways to make improvements within our community."

(Editor's note: A profile of incumbent U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers' campaign will be published in an upcoming issue of The Daily Home during the month of July.)

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Bob Crisp/The Daily Home Lakeside Grill owners Keith Clements and Nicole Anderson

### For a taste of the beach on Logan Martin, visit Lakeside Grill on Coosa Island

**BY JOELL REGAL** Special to The Daily Home

As I made my way down Coosa Island Road two Friday afternoons ago, I couldn't help but notice the strong sensation of community, family, and small town vibes that only lakeside living can provide.

Nostalgia was evident in the air and also within Lakeside Grill. As I walked into the new restaurant, I felt transported from Coosa Island Marina to Coosa Island Beach. Fully engulfed by a sea of aqua blue paint and apparel, appropriately paired with the light sand-colored pine of the patio, the open garage doors provided an airy, beachy feel that I have yet to experience east of Birmingham.



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beach to Logan Martin Lake.



Satisfied patrons enjoying some of the signature dishes on Lakeside

**Bob Crisp/The Daily Home** 

Grill's menu.

Once I sat down with owner Nicole Anderson, I learned that she and her business partner, Keith Clements, have combined backgrounds in culinary arts, real estate, boathouse construction and restaurant consulting: the perfect recipe for a legacy. "We kind of married the two backgrounds so that we could create something something for the people here."

With such menu entries as "Sunsets and Smiles" and food served on frisbees, I knew I would enjoy my Lakeside Grill experience. I began with Nicole's BBQ Tots, which were loaded with grilled chicken (also available with pork), drizzled with both barbeque sauce and ranch dressing and topped with a jalapeno fun. We love the lake, and we wanted popper. I think I literally left one tot in the basket when Captain Keith's

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Cajun Alfredo rolled in like the tide. House-made alfredo sauce (Keith's recipe), perfectly tender shrimp with a hint of spice and a colorful trio of peppers almost had me licking my plate. But I'm a lady and remembered I was out in public, so I chose to spoon the last of the sauce into my mouth instead.

As the sun was setting, I ended my meal with the chocolate peanut butter pie, appropriately listed under the "Sunsets and Smiles" portion of the menu. Chocolate, peanut butter, a sunset and a lake... of course I was smiling. Who wouldn't be?

Lakeside Grill not only offers a variety of food options but plenty of memorabilia as well. Similar to a beachside souvenir shop, Lakeside sells hats, koozies, keychains, t-shirts, and you guessed it frisbees. There's live music on weekends, a bar and plenty of parking for both cars and boats.

When asked how they were able to pull off such a successful restaurant opening right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nicole's response was as endearing and hopeful as the very children who played on the lawn right in front of us: "Does it matter if you have faith in the Lord? Does it matter if you have an amazing community of support? What is there to be afraid of?"

Well, when you put it like that, Nicole, I guess there is nothing to be afraid of. Coosa Island may be small, but it's home to big flavors, fond memories and a lighthouse of inspiration at a time when the lakeside community needs it most, thanks to Lakeside Grill.



**Bob Crisp/The Daily Home** Lakeside Grill is a new waterfront restaurant on Coosa Island

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### Talladega native represents her hometown in Miss Universe organization



### BY BUDDY ROBERTS

Special Projects Editor

It was an early Tuesday afternoon in June, and Brittany Harvell was enjoying some time by the water after finishing her college finals online that morning.

"It's so peaceful and relaxing here," Miss Talladega USA said as she sat on Logan Martin Lake's Talladega shoreline. "I love the sunshine and the fresh air and listening to the birds chirp. I'm all about summer, and being out here by the water is great stress relief. I don't have to think about school or anything else."

School was soon back on the horizon for her, as she has resumed graduate studies in physical therapy at the University of South Alabama, but before she did, Harvell spoke with The Daily Home about her hometown, her studies, and how, as Miss Talladega USA, she could potentially become Miss Universe.

### What does it mean to you to be representing your hometown of Talladega in the Miss Universe organization?

"I am so excited to have the opportunity to represent my hometown in the state and hopefully national competitions. Throughout my time in the Talladega City School System, I served as an ambassador, cheerleader and much more. I was always doing what I could to positively represent my town, and I am so thankful I get to continue to do so this time in a much bigger light."

### How did you become Miss Talladega USA?

"For the Miss Alabama USA competition, you must apply and be chosen from many qualified applicants throughout the state. You then choose your title depending on the area you are from or reside in.

### You're preparing for the Miss Alabama USA pageant. When and where will the pageant be?

"Due to the unforeseen circumstances with COVID-19, the Miss Alabama USA competition will more than likely be pushed back to a later date. Until then, I will have even more time to be fully prepared in all areas of competition. After winning the title of Miss Alabama USA, which I am hopeful will happen, I will spend the year serving the wonderful state of Alabama while preparing to compete in the national pageant for the title of Miss USA, which leads to the Miss Universe pageant. The state pageant is just the beginning to many new opportunities and personal growth, and I am so excited for what is in store."

### Have you participated in pageants

"Yes. I competed in my first pageant at the age of 6. I continued doing local, school and scholarship pageants all the way through high school and some during undergrad, where I have won numerous titles. During my time at Talladega High School, I was Miss Freshman, Miss Sophomore, Miss Junior and finally went on to become Miss THS my senior







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year. However, the Miss Alabama USA competition is one of the biggest I will have ever competed in. I have already been preparing for months and will bring my best self in order to represent Talladega."

### How supportive has the community been of your role as Miss Talladega

"They have been so supportive in ishing high school? my journey to Miss Alabama USA. The City of Talladega has been so generous in becoming one my official sponsors for the pageant, along with Mayor Ragland being so invested as well. I have just begun going around to businesses in the Talladega area looking for sponsors, which is what helps pay the fees for the completion, and I am grateful for all the support and donations I have already received.

"Over the next few months, I will continue going to businesses in hopes to have enough sponsors to cover the majority of the fees for the statewide pageant. I also plan to host a couple of benefit nights at local restaurants in the future as well. I have also had many peo- ing are good words to describe me. ple in the community follow my Facebook and Instagram pages, Miss Talladega USA 2021, to follow along on my journey as well as send well wishes. I am blown away at all of the love and support I have gotten from my hometown."

### What are your favorite memories

of growing up in Talladega? "Definitely Friday night light cheering in general. I cheered for Zora Ellis my seventh and eighth grade years, serving as captain my eighth grade year. I then cheered on the THS junior varsity squad my ninth grade year and the THS Varsity squad my 10th, 11th, and 12th grade years and served as captain my senior year. As a cheerleader, we

going to elementary schools each week for pep rallies and hosting community wide pep rallies. I remember as a little girl going to football games and looking up to the cheerleaders, wanting to be like them someday and to eventually have that opportunity to serve as a role model for others was so rewarding."

### What has been your path since fin-

"I graduated high school in 2016 as class valedictorian. I then furthered my education by receiving my bachelor's degree in exercise science at Auburn University, where I did so in only three years while maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA. Two weeks after graduating from Auburn, I moved to Mobile where I am now in the doctor of physical therapy program at the University of South Alabama and am set to earn my degree in May of 2022. Upon graduation, I plan to work with the geriatric population and in a neuro rehabilitation center or nursing home."

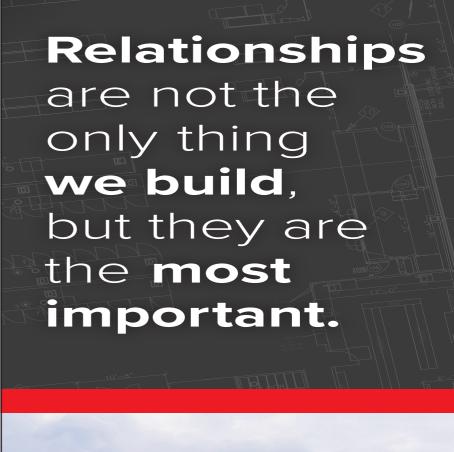
### How would you describe yourself?

"I think passionate and hard-work-I constantly set goals that I am passionate about and work until I achieve them. I hope that through the Miss Universe Organization as well as the career I have chosen, that I am able to make a difference and serve those around me. I make sure that I always have a 'why' to what I am doing and work diligently to

### achieve the things I have set for myself." What is something an acquaintance might be surprised to know

about you? "Some people may be surprised to know that as much as I love competing in pageants and getting all dressed up, I also like to hunt and fish."





Weekend, July 11, 2020 Page 9A



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### My Home Town Scenes



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Dawson Macon Loves Fishing On Logan Martin And The Outdoors With Family.

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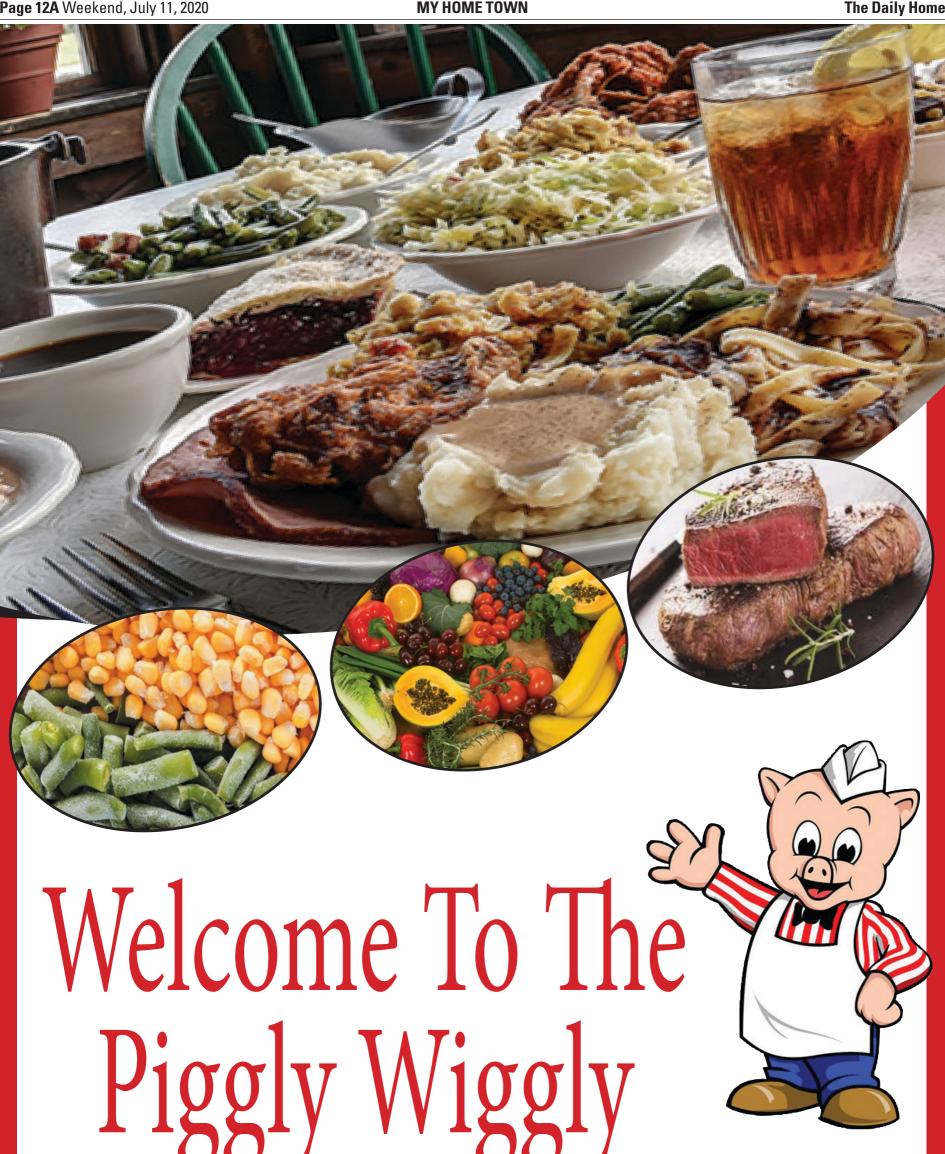


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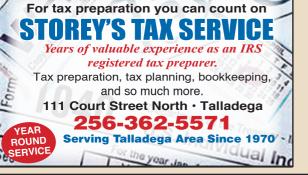


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Submitted photo
Miss Childersburg Annie Ozment with her parents, Jimmy and Vicky Ozment

**BY VALLEAN JACKSON** 

Special to The Daily Home

### The stresses and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic haven't discouraged Miss Childersburg.

"I have always believed that God will place me exactly where I am supposed to be at the moment I am supposed to be there," Annie Ozment said. "In a time as uncertain as now, I am just living life one day at a time and trusting in the Lord's plan."

As the reigning Miss Childersburg, Ozment will represent her hometown in the Miss Alabama pageant, which was scheduled for this summer but has been postponed until next year due to the pandemic.

"Typically, title holders in the Miss Alabama organization hold their titles for a year, but we get to hold them for another year due to this year's circumstances," she said. "With this opportunity of another year, I hope to be able to continue to set examples for the youth of Childersburg by giving back to the community and raising funds for people in need of food in our town and surrounding areas. During this time I am blessed to be able slow down a

little, reflect and set new goals."

Ozment, a graduate of Childersburg High School and a senior psychology major at Auburn University, has a very outgoing personality, is a young woman of many talents and has a passion to help others, serve her community and make a difference.

"It is such an honor to represent my hometown and share my love for the town that helped make me who I am," she said. "To work with Alabama Childhood Food Solutions as their spokesperson for many years is a great opportunity, but to help during these times is very special. It warms my heart to see the youth of our community so eager to serve and help."

Aside from her dedication to her community, Ozment has pursued the study of psychology toward the goal of applying for occupational therapy school. Before attending Auburn, in high school, Ozment was a well-rounded high school student. She played volleyball, golf, cheered and danced. She credits all of those endeavors with helping prepare her to seek the title of Miss Alabama.

"Preparing for Miss Alabama teaches you so much more about yourself than you could ever imagine. The amount of determination it takes to be properly prepared is incredible. Throughout my pageant journey, I had to switch my talent from clogging, due to an ankle injury, to singing. Singing in front of thousands of people is something I never imagined, but with an amazing support system and hard work, I was able to build the confi-



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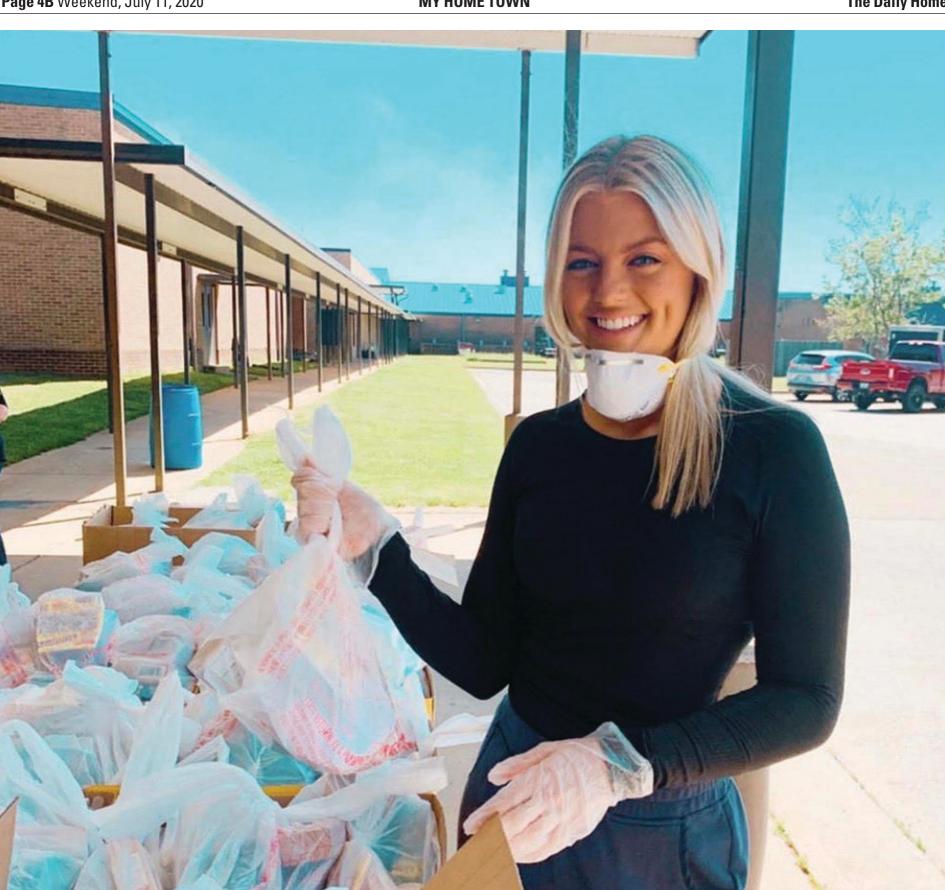
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Miss Childersburg has worked with ACFS to distribute food to Talladega County students and their families while schools have been closed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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I have always believed that God will place me exactly where I am supposed to be at the moment I am supposed to be there," Annie Ozment said. "In a time as uncertain as now, I am just living life one day at a time and trusting in the Lord's plan."

dence to do so. This has shown me that it is possible to find new talents and become good at anything with hard work."

Ozment credits Anita Mahaffey, the Miss Childersburg pageant director, with encouraging her to seek the title. She said that Mahaffey has always encouraged her, reminded her to trust the plan of the Lord and to make the most of her moments and opportunities. Her support team also includes a former Miss Childersburg, her mother, Vicky Ozment.

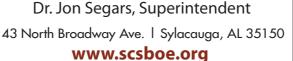
"My mom has always been my biggest fan as far back as I can remember. From dance recitals, tee-ball games, college finals and anything in between. She has always been right by my side. For Miss Childersburg, she steamed my dresses, listened to me practice my talent, calmed my nerves when I got overly excited and helped me to prepare for certain things based on her previous experience. She is one face I can always count on smiling back at me from the audience no matter what. I am lucky to have such amazing footsteps to follow."

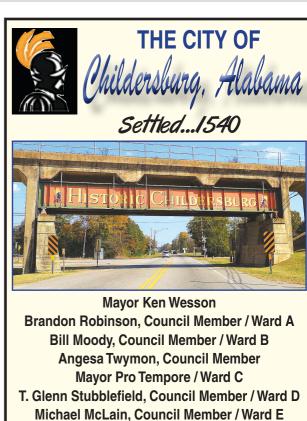
Despite the challenge of the pandemic causing a delay in the Miss Alabama pageant, Ozment continues to be positive and press on. She is taking all necessary precautions to stay safe for the sake of others and herself. Asked if she would reset 2020 if she could, she said she would not.

"Although this year has been full of struggles and uncertainty, I have learned so much about life and myself. I work best when I'm surrounded by others, so I miss being around friends and classmates, but the bright side is the chance to re-center and examine my progress of goals.

"I am praying that our nation is healed from this disease soon and everyone is staying as safe and healthy as possible. I am hopeful for the remainder of this year and hope others are too. I am who I am today because of the great people of Childersburg and I'm glad to call Childersburg my home."









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### LEAPS Academy: Where lives are changed

BY AMANDA E.H. PRITCHARD

Special to The Daily Home



Speech therapist Savannah Vance looks on as August Baldwin happily chases soap bubbles he has made.

Photos by Amanda E.H. Pritchard



From left are LEAPS Academy Director Ashley Faust, speech Therapist Logan Dodd and occupational therapist Amelia Hanan.

In an encouraging and welcoming environment, children who attend LEAPS Academy aren't just students, they're family.

Established in 2010, LEAPS has developed a unique mission: "to embrace all children in a nurturing learning environment that enriches every aspect of a child's life." Serving children from birth to age 18, LEAPS (which

stands for Learning Effective Academic and Play Skills) individualizes each child's learning goals.

"We look at each child," said academy director Ashley Faust, M.A., ECSE. "We take into consideration how each learns best and use our resources to meet each child's full potential."

Classified as a private school, LEAPS' class size of nine (at maximum) is among its strong suits. "We're able to provide that one-on-one support where our students are engaged in purposeful functional learning experiences," said Faust. LEAPS is a year-round school that is always seeking

to accept new students. "We never want to close the door on a family," Faust said. "We choose year-round because our population of children cannot hold on to skills over large breaks. They are already trying to play catch-up on some skills so we try to minimize the rate of regression."

Ensuring each child is meeting their learning needs, LEAPS provides a quarterly assessment.

About a year ago, LEAPS Academy incorporated a clinic alongside the school in order to offer more ser-

vices. The clinic is outpatient and offers speech, physical therapy, occupational therapy and family counseling that is billable through parents' insurance. "We wanted to extend these services to our com-

munity," Faust stated. "It's convenient for families who can't get to Birmingham for those services." Medicaid and Blue Cross Blue Shield are accepted.

LEAPS Academy is currently working on becoming a dyslexia service site, and it can assist children

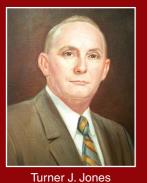




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diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or pay for half tuition or copays for a year. (ADHD), autism, sensory processing disorder and developmental disorders and those who need assistance with Wall: "Sponsorship is one of the most amazing gifts you early intervention, vocational, life, social skills and more.

The clinic offers free screenings every Tuesday from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at 2806 Dr. John Haynes Drive, Suite B in Pell City. The clinic also offers TeleHealth options for evaluations, speech and occupational therapy for those staying at home due to the pandemic.

In turn, a way the community can support LEAPS Academy is through the Sponsor Wall. When you enter LEAPS, you're greeted with friendly artwork created by corporations can choose one or more pieces of artwork.

The sponsor of each work of art then learns the story of the child that produced it. In purchasing the artwork, copays (typically covering four clinic visits, totaling \$160)

can give a child. Each of these pieces of art have been created by one of our sweet children in need. We have prioritized their needs according to what we feel will make the biggest impact on their individual skills."

Due to COVID-19 LEAPS Academy's enrollment has declined from 54 to 32. When Gov. Kay Ivey ordered Alabama's shelter-in-place orders, LEAPS Academy, like many others took to Zoom.

"Our biggest challenge was our students are so hands-LEAPS Academy students. Individuals, companies and on," said Faust. "Classes were held for 4 to 5 hours a day. We were shut down for seven weeks, then able to open

Much like the rest of the state and country, LEAPS individuals, companies or corporations contribute for Academy looks forward to navigating all of the unknowns of the 2020-2021 school year in true family fashion.

"For our upcoming school year, we're trudging for-LEAPS released this statement regarding the Sponsor ward. In case we get shut down and sent home again, we've created an entire year for online learning," Faust said. "Should shelter in place happen again, we're ready."

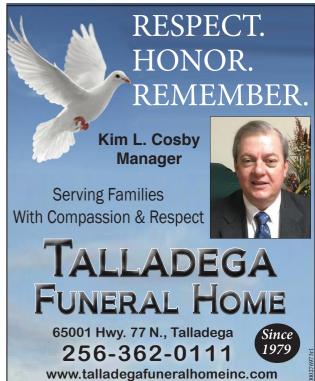
> LEAPS Academy & Clinic is hosting an open house Tuesday, August 2 at 6 p.m. The public is welcome to visit and learn more about the academy.

> Strengthening skills from academic to daily interactions to fine and gross motor skills, LEAPS Academy exists to help children become their best selves. Or as faculty members like to say, "LEAPS Academy Inc.—Where God is felt, love is seen and lives are changed!"

> For more information, visit the academy's Facebook page or call 205-884-7621.







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### Hometown Block Party postponed until 2021 Chamber cites concerns for safety of Pell City community



Tucker Webb/The Daily Home The annual Hometown Block Party routinely brings as many as 10,000 attendees to Pell City for an afternoon and evening of entertainment, food and shopping.

### BY AMANDA E.H. PRITCHARD

Special to The Daily Home

Due to the spike in coronavirus cases, the Pell City Chamber of Commerce has decided to cancel what would have been the 21st annual Hometown Block Party.

"This was a very difficult decision to make," said executive director Urainah Glidewell, "but we want to be considerate of public health and current guidelines and make the best decision for our community, volunteers, vendors, first responders, sponsors and nonprofit groups that are involved in the event."

by a unanimous vote by members of the chamber's board of directors.

"We are disheartened with the thought of not having the block party this year, which has become an annual tradition and brings the community together," Glidewell said. "But we feel moving forward with the event this year with the given uncertainty would be a risk for our community."

Maintaining an optimistic outlook, however, Glidewell added, "The Hometown Block Party will be back in

The decision to cancel the popular event was made 2021, and we will endeavor to make it better than ever."

The block party has routinely drawn crowds of as many as 10,000 people, featuring such entertainers as Jamie Lynn Spears, The Wingnuts and DieDra & the Ruff Pro Band, to name a few.

Glidewell said the chamber will continue to spotlight its members through social media, newsletters and infomercial initiative. To learn more about chamber activities and events, visit www.pellcitychamber.com and www.facebook.com/PellCityChamber.







Sunday Worship @ 11 theupliftingword.com







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**Evening Worship** 

**PM** 

6:00

Sun.

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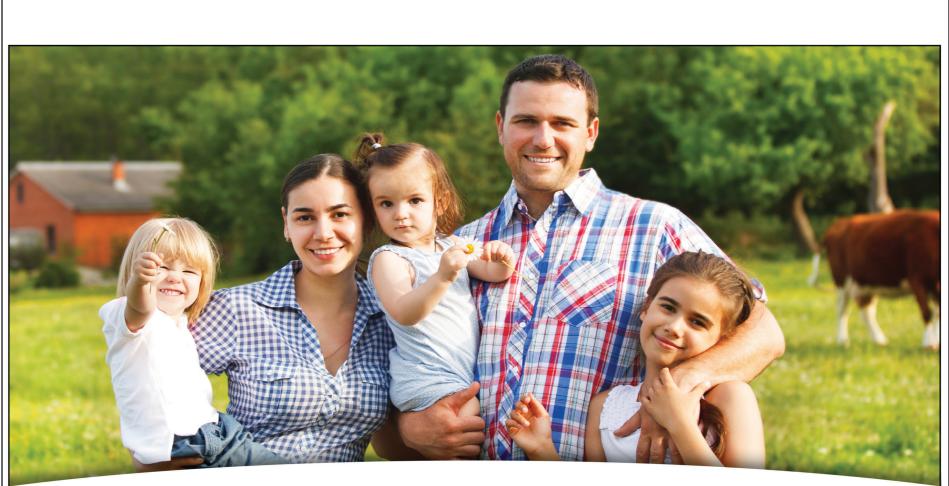
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Talladega

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Morning Worship - 11 a.m.

Evening Worship - 6 p.m.

Wednesday Night - 6 p.m.

### RIDGEVIEW

### **BAPTIST CHURCH** 1711 Allison Mill Rd.

**Talladega** (256) 362-3971

Sunday School 9:00 a.m. **Sunday Celebration** 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Celebration 6:00 p.m.

**Pastor Tommy Strickland** www.ridgeviewbc.net

### Our Lady of the Lake

Catholic Church 4609 Martin St. S. Cropwell (205) 525-5161

**Father William Lucas** Daily Mass: Mon., Tues., Thurs. & Fri. 9 a.m. Wed. Evening Mass: 7 p.m.

Saturday Mass: 5 p.m. **Sunday Masses:** 8:30 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

### Central Baptist Church

P.O. Box 1085 126 Spring St. N., Talladega (256) 362-4836

Brother Bo Hamilton Sunday School - 9:45-10:45 a.m. Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m. Evening Worship - 6:00 p.m. Wednesday AWANA - 6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting - 6:30 p.m. Youth Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

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### First Baptist Church

200 8th Ave. SW, Childersburg (256) 378-6058 Sunday Services 10:30 am

www.firstbaptistchildersburg.org

### **Bemiston United Methodist Church**

300 Wells Ave. Talladega (256) 521-1230 Pastor Glen Horn

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(205) 338-2645 Sunday

Sunday School 9:00 am Morning Worship 10:15 am Adult Choir 5:00 pm **Evening Worship** 6:00 pm Children's Choir 6:00 pm

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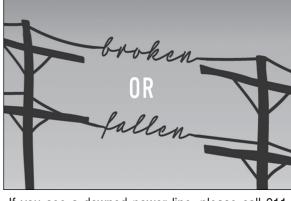


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### Meet ROOdy the kangaroo at My Farm Day St. Clair County family shares unique pet with community

BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

What do you get when you bring a kangaroo to a local farm?

A hopping good time.

That's what Caren and Danny Davidson hope visitors have when they visit their farm in Springville. The Davidsons pair have a profound love for animals and the selection of activities and animals (such as ROOdy the kangaroo) they have selected for My Farm Day make the St. Clair County attraction truly distinctive.

"Our farm is not for profit but to give back and provide a different experience for people," Caren said. "My husband is a school teacher and a coach, and I am the director of human resources for a law firm in Birmingham. What we do as far as people coming to the farm for different activities and experiences, we hardly call it a business, honestly. Both of our jobs are full-time, but we choose to share our hard work with

My Farm Day offers goat yoga on the weekends, which is scheduled to resume in the fall due to COVID-



ROOdy the kangaroo investigates the mats used for goat yoga classes.

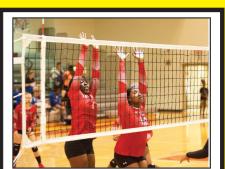


Submitted photos Goat yoga classes draw many visitors to My Farm Day in St. Clair County.









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said. "One day I reached out to a yoga instructor in the area and asked her if she would be interested in teaching a goat yoga class. She was willing, and we have become friends since, and then after we invited over some family and friends who didn't mind getting dirty, and that's how goat yoga happened."

The farm has about eight goats and hopes to have two or three by the time fall sessions start.

"Our goal," Caren said, "is to provide an experience and give people something outside of the normal. In fact, the money that we make goes to the yoga instructor and is invested into the farm for food and shelter for the animals."

The Davidson's strive to impact the lives of others through sharing the expe-

rience of animals and nature. That goal led to their latest addition to the farm, ROOdy.

"It is important that the R and two Os are capitalized to emphasize the fact that he is a kangaroo, but ROOdy came about as a surprise for me," said Caren. "My husband got him for me for Christmas. He had been talking about getting me a wallaby or a kangaroo -- why those choices exactly, I honestly don't know. It is something I never asked for. With either choice, I was definitely hesitant because of being unsure of how to care for it properly. So when Christmas came and I saw the kangaroo, I was definitely shocked. My husband says he found a family in Louisiana that raises them and he was able to get him young.

"At first I was nervous, but now I love him so much, and he is the perfect addition. In the daytime, he goes outside to get acquainted with the other animals, and by night he's in the house with us wearing his diaper. He at times sleeps inside a bag that looks like a pouch, but he has about outgrown that. Sometimes while I'm feeding him his bottle, we snuggle up on the couch. I would say we watch TV together, but I'm pretty sure I do more of the watching. He's so lovable. He's a year old, 35 to 40 pounds, and he's almost getting too big for me to carry."

ROOdy may be a wild animal, but he has quickly adapted to life on the farm. He interacts well with the dogs and goats. The Davidsons plan to get another kangaroo soon so that ROOdy can have

some companionship of his own breed.
As ROOdy continues to grow, they

are working to build him an ideal habitat that he can be comfortable with. His currently-in-preparation new spot will be near the goats, since they are already getting along.

"When the fall comes around and goat yoga is back in full swing, people

will be able to do goat yoga while being able to see ROOdy and take pictures from the fence. However, petting will not be allowed, as we are still learning his behavior."

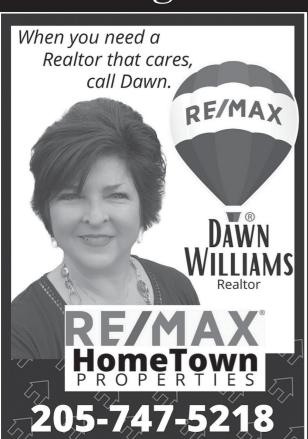
The Davidsons are happy to share

their love of land and animals with others in local communities. For more information about My Farm Day, visit www.myfarmday.com.

Our goal," Caren said, "is to provide an experience and give people something outside of the normal. In fact, the money that we make goes to the yoga instructor and is invested into the farm for food and shelter for the animals."

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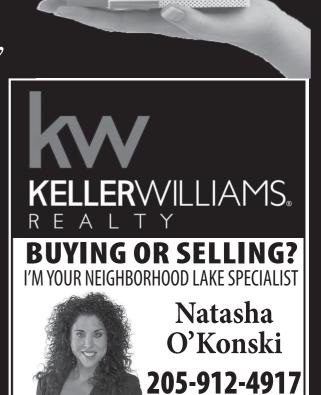
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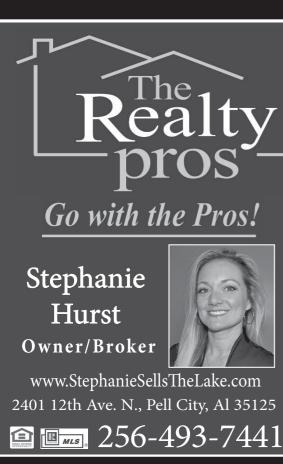


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My Farm Day in Springville is owned by Danny (above) and Caren Davidson. Their farm allows visitors to interact with animals in innovative ways, such as goat yoga. Classes, which have been suspended for the summer due to COVID-19, are expected to resume in the fall.

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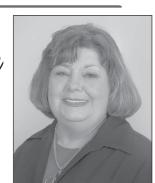
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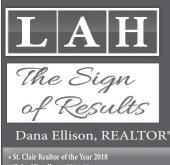


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### **Peacefully Chanting:** 'Let's find what brings us together'

### Local organization seeks to promote unity in divisive times

### BY MICHELLE LOVE

Special to The Daily Home

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, people across the globe have used their collective voices to move towards change. While some protests throughout the United States took a less than peaceful turn, others have been conducted in a more peaceful and organized fashion.

The group Peacefully Chanting, which formed in Talladega in late May, has made its mission to work against injustices "the right way," according to founder

"Everyone was doubting us and saying, 'You can't keep the peace, all these protests start out peaceful but you can't keep the peace,' and we said, 'All right, watch this because we're going to go about it the right way," she said.

The group started with a post Bearden put on Facebook calling for people to stand up for change. The result was the organization of Peacefully Chanting with fellow Talladega residents Kionne Barclay and Kendra Bradford. The three of them worked through the local government channels to plan protests in Sylacauga and Talladega.

"We went and got permits, we went and talked with the police chief, the mayor, we had everything okayed through them and the police were with us to help keep the peace with not only the protestors but with other people and traffic," Bearden

After organizing a few protests, Bearden, Barclay, and Bradford moved towards creating a Facebook group so they would have better access to expanding their efforts. To join the group, the administrators set up a simple question to make sure the individuals who requested to join agreed with the group's mission.

"We ask, 'Why do you want to join?' And based on their answer, if they show that they care about bringing change through peace and not violence, we allow them to come in. Because that's what we're all about," says Bearden.

Bearden says Peacefully Chanting's goal is to raise awareness of community issues and to bring communities together. "We asked the public at our latest protest what other things in the community they would like us to address, and they brought up things like the crime rate and unsolved murders, things like that. And I know that's a big issue, but we've got to take the proper steps to bring about those necessary changes."

Bearden adds she personally does not condone how some of the protests around the country have taken a less than peaceful turn. "I'm not with the rioting or the looting. I understand we're hurting and that we are angry, but the reaction to an action has a lot to do with how you're heard and how you're viewed, and that is my own opinion. I hear everyone and understand, but there is a deeper purpose behind protesting."

Bearden says the community response has been equal parts positive and negative. "We've received a whole bunch of 'thank yous' and 'I love yous'. That's the positive. We've had support from the mayors of both Sylacauga and Talladega. They want to stand behind us and support us."

But the current climate has led a lot of people to "expose their negativity," she ds. "We have addressed the negative comments, and we've been called names and we all say the same thing, 'Well, we love you. We're sorry you feel the way you feel, and God bless you.' Because feeding into that negativity is not doing anything but disrupting our personal peace."

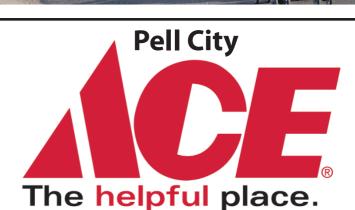
She asks that people respect their way of protesting. "It's all about respect. We're just trying to do things the peaceful way, and that is what Peacefully Chanting stands for: peace, love and equality for everyone. That's what we want. That's why we're out there boots on the ground. It's not just about police brutality. It's about peace and love and what we have to do to bring about the love. We stand for peace and equality because that's what matters.

"People keep asking me, 'Why are you doing this? You're white. Why are you getting involved?' That seems to be a big issue with a lot of people. The reason is simple: I grew up in a predominantly black neighborhood, and I've seen their struggle. I hear their voice. I heard it before all of this happened. I'm doing this because I have a family that includes a black husband and biracial children and I



Photos by Buddy Roberts/The Daily Home Destiny Bearden leads a peaceful protest march in Sylacauga, one of many organized throughout the country in the days following the murder of George Floyd in Minnesota.





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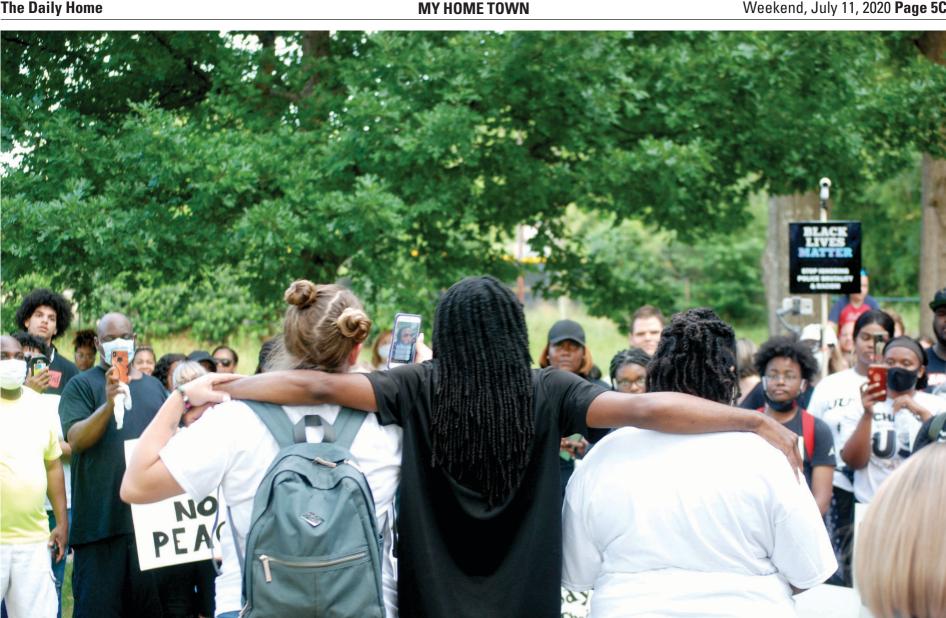
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**Buddy Roberts/The Daily Home** From left, Destiny Bearden, Kionne Barclay and Kendra Bradford address the crowd at a peaceful protest rally they organized in Talladega County.

do not want that happening to my husband. We have come very race and have left the organization because they do not feel as if I'm doing."

Since this interview was conducted, Barclay and Bradford have parted ways with Peacefully Chanting due to conflicting interests of where the future of the group was heading. Bearden has partnered with the Fearless Communities Initiative to further expand Peacefully Chanting to include more communities and focus on issues other than racial divide. She says she has the support of multiple communities and is hopeful for the future.

"The beginning of our organization was to stand for peace, love, equality and strength in all skin colors and communities, no matter the predominance of one race. And I am still standing on that platform. Kendra and Kionne have focused their view on one

close to that happening to my husband, and that was the scariest they can unify a community until the black lives of the communitime I think I've ever had in my life. That's why I'm doing what ties get their equality. And I understand that and am totally for it."

Bearden believes that by working together as a united front and keeping faith as a priority, people can make the necessary change towards equality and love.

"I do not have just a few people behind me. I have multiple communities, and we are willing to come together and put our boots on the ground for one another. We are listening, we are working to make a difference, and we encourage individuals to become a part of it. That's what evil, hate, corruption, racism and anything of that nature doesn't want to see. When we get together and find what connects us, our world gets a little closer. Let's find more of what brings us together."

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### Ashville is home to what may be St. Clair County's most unique business



Submitted photo Alabama Mailbox Company is at 130 6th Avenue in Ashville. What makes the establishment unique is that it is also a supplier of exotic pets.

BY VALLEAN JACKSON Special to The Daily Home

Do you need a new mailbox, custom street sign, some rustic furniture, new pottery or even a new pet lizard?

If so, Alabama Mailbox Company in St. Clair County is your one-stop shop. With 18 years in business, Marty and Grace Crews have invested much hard work into the success of the company.

"My wife and I started the mailbox business out of our house but moved to a storefront when it outgrew what our home could hold. We also got a little tired of our home not being so private. There was a space that became available, and when it did we took advantage of the opportunity."

Mailboxes and exotic pets are a curious combination, but Crews said that he has always had a love for reptiles and

always wanted to open his own pet shop.

"Everything just kind of came together. I was in the military for 20 years and with always moving, it was kind of hard to focus on opening a pet store. So when the mailbox business cmw along, that became the overall focus. However, after realizing the extra room we had in the store, we expanded to selling reptiles. My own personal pet store would have been a little more inclusive, but then again, I did not feel like maintaining fish tanks."

Crews admits being surprised by the growth of the reptiles side of the busi-

"I never would have thought so many people in this area would be interested in reptiles. Christmas and birthdays are some of our busiest times, but I would say we are definitely a great place to come for a gift at any time. We have quite the selection of items, but when it comes





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Submitted photo This distinctive and docile lizard is an example of the exotic pets that can be obtained through Alabama Mailbox Company. Their colorful designs, generally low maintenance and uniqueness have contributed to a growth in popularity for exotic pets.

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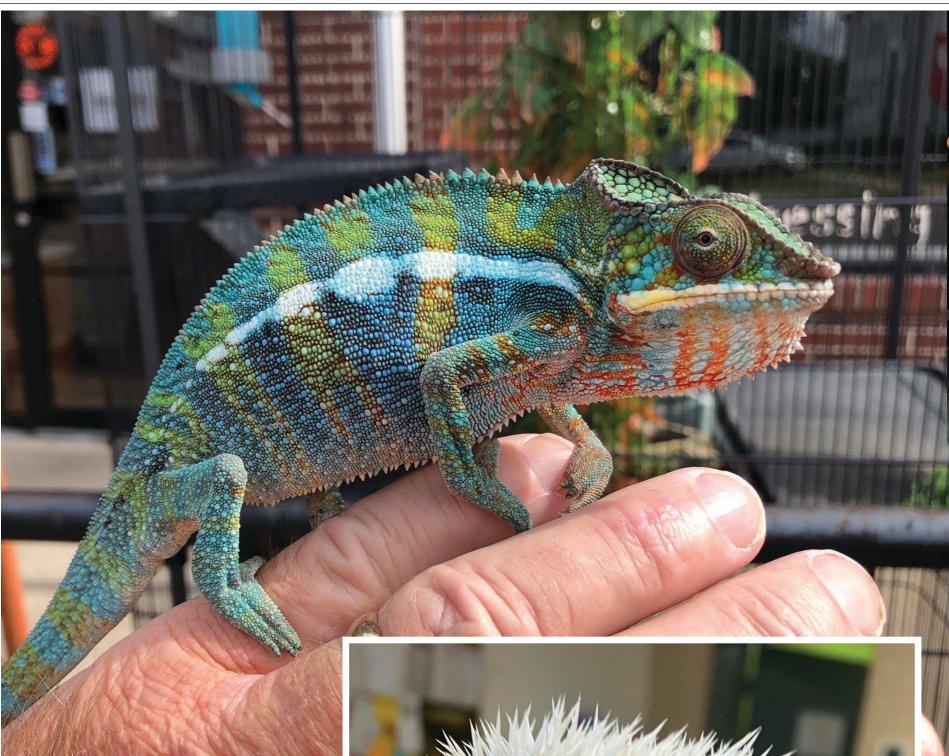








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to reptiles, we sell a lot of bearded dragons, which are a desert species, and snakes."

The staff of Alabama Mailbox Company is dedicated to helping customers understand their products, whether it is a custom mailbox installation or a new pet snake. They also provide an open door for customers to come in and ask questions about their pets and even help assist in better health, if possible.

"To be involved in the community is something that has always been important to us," Crews said. "From being a part of the city council, to donating to the community through mailboxes, street signs or financially, giving back and staying involved is how we

stay connected to the community." Even while adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff continued to work hard to keep customers a priority. "Even if it is a picture of a mailbox repair taken from the living room window, we assessed what was needed and provided the services to get the job done," said Crews.

Submitted photos If you're looking for a new pet and are considering a brilliantly colored chameleon or whitequilled hedgehog, Alabama Mailbox Company in Ashville is the place to go.

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### The Show Does Go On for Spotlight Summer Drama Camp

BY SUSAN COOK
Special to The Daily Home

There's nothing quite like the exhilarating thrill of live theatre, whether you're a member of the audience or an eager stagehand waiting in the darkened wings. Or maybe you're the nervous actor about to make your first entrance.

While theatre, like so many other entertainment venues, has taken a hit due to the pandemic, the innovative people at the Spotlight Summer Drama Camp find ways to forge forward and continue to educate and create even in this time of heightened awareness. Spotlight is a county-wide drama education program with a mission to foster drama education and encourage community participation in theatre in St Clair County.

This year's 10-day Spotlight Summer Drama Camp will take place on July 20-31st from 9 a.m.-noon for campers between the ages of 6 and 16, with a registration fee of \$200 per student. The camp will be held at the Center for Education and Performing Arts (CEPA) located at the Pell City High School Campus. For more information, visit www.pellcitycenter.com

A typical day for the drama campers will involve learning improvisational skills, performance techniques and all-important set-building experience.

Shelby Maddox, the Spotlight program coordinator, says that "there's really something for everybody when it comes to theatre. It's not just being on stage. We







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try to get everybody involved. So, while acting may not be your complete forte, you can still learn acting and improv skills while also being able to setbuild as well."

This year, Maci Johnsey is conducting the camp, and as a former camper and experienced teacher, "loves coming back, and we're really excited to have her," according to Maddox.

For those students who want more instruction, there is a Master Acting Class for ages 12-16, for an additional \$185, during which campers will receive 20 hours of intensive acting training from noon to 3 p.m.

"The focus is on the older kids who want more advanced acting classes, such as those that include movement exercises," Maddox said. "We're also going to be taking them through the audition process, because while knowing how to audition is super important, it's often skimmed over or left to the sidelines."

Knowing how to prepare for an audition helps to minimize nervousness and inspire confidence, and those preparation skills translate well to other life experiences, such as interviewing for a job or public speaking. Students in the Master Acting Class will also present their own showcase in addition to the final group performance.

At the end of the 10-day camp, the students will have a chance to show off

their skills in a performance. This year, Musicville is the showcase that will be performed on July 31. As the name suggests, it is a musical. Campers will be given two vouchers for the event, but doors will be open to the public, with tickets sold at the door. The showcase performance will take place in the CEPA theater, directly across from the high school.

Due to COVID-19, Maddox says, "one thing that we plan on doing is maintaining social distance. The guidelines can make it difficult, but it still makes it possible. Most of the employees and volunteers will be wearing masks the whole time."

While canceling this year's theatre camp could be seen as the path of least resistance, Maddox believes it's important that students have this opportunity to attend.

"The theater community took a big hit with COVID-19, and we had to adjust, and we had to adapt, but it's one of those things where theatre is so versatile you can. It's such an escape for some people, especially for students who have felt trapped in their houses. Theatre is always a growing thing. It's always been nurturing and growing and adapting, so I don't think it could ever stop. Theater is still possible, and I think we can do some fantastic shows while keeping everybody safe. We'll just have to tailor it."

Perhaps now more than ever, theater can offer a creative outlet for self-expression while also building community and friendships in a safe environment. The drama camp is a fun and engaging way to spark a passion for acting and involvement in the theatre while working towards a common goal.

While Broadway may have dimmed its lights until 2021, the lively spark of live theater is shining bright in Pell City, proving once again that the show really can -- and does -- go on.













The Spotlight Summer Drama Camp focuses on building student confidence, exploring creativity and making new friends. Theater is an engaging way for students to hone communication and public speaking skills. "Performing in front of hundreds of people prepares you for all kinds of jobs," said three-year camp volunteer Chase Spears. "I don't think I would be scared to give a sales presentation or a speech, and that's because I participate in theater." And as the accompanying photos from past camps show, students have a lot of fun while they learn new skills.







Weekend, July 11, 2020 Page 11C

Spotlight is a county-wide, all-ages drama education program. Its mission is to foster drama education and encourage community participation in theater in St. Clair County. Spotlight is supported by Hargray, The Rotary Club of Pell City, Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, The Alabama Council on the Arts and the Pell City School System. This year's Spotlight Drama Camp will be held at Pell City's Center for Education and Performing Arts later this month.

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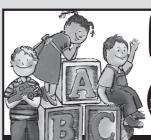
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A conversation with Barney Google and Snuffy Smith cartoonist John Rose

Long-running comic strip is a mainstay in Talladega and St. Clair's hometown newspaper



BY BUDDY ROBERTS Special Projects Editor

One of my favorite summer paper, and I'm back in the late 1970s-early 1980s, lying on at my grandparents' house.

was only big enough for a weekly newspaper, to which my grandparents subscribed, in addition to the nearest daily newspaper, which was the Rome News-Tribune. I was partial to the News-Tribune in those days because it had a daily comics page, and when I got to my grandparents' house on Friday nights, I knew there'd be a week's worth of the funnies there for me to catch up on.

remain among my most valued possessions. That box is a the century's greatest illustrators. time machine. I can open it, see those yellowing strips of

my grandparents' living room floor, not a care in the world memories is spending weekends as I hang out with my weekday black-and-white and Sun-

day four-color friends. Peanuts, Blondie, Beetle Bailey, Henry, Nancy, Dick Tracy, The Phantom, a new comic strip called Garfield --I grew up in a small town in northwest Georgia that I loved them all. Even Prince Valiant in the Days of King Arthur, although I wasn't yet old enough to fully appreciate its sophisticated art in the Hal Foster style. But my absolute

favorite was Snuffy Smith. I wouldn't learn until years later that Barney Google and Snuffy Smith (the strip's official title), even back then, was one of the oldest continuously published American comic strips, that it was created by Billy DeBeck (who actually I would clip out those I especially liked and soon had added new words to the English language via the strip) and a box full of unevenly-cut newsprint rectangles. Four that Fred Laswell, who took the strip over from DeBeck and decades later, I still have that box and its contents, which produced it from 1942 until his death in 2001, was one of

All I knew was that the shif'less moonshining, chick-



**Snuffy Smith cartoonist John Rose** 





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en-stealing, card-playing resident of Hootin' Holler he'd often say it was 'fine a frog's hair.' And then he'd bring Barney and Spark Plug back for at least three sepand his supporting cast of Loweezy, Jughaid, Lukey and Elviney Barlow, Sheriff Tait, Parson Tuttle, Doc Pritchert, Silas the storekeeper and Uriah the mailman were friends I enjoyed getting to catch up with once a week.

That's why, when (back in present time) I received an introduction to John Rose (the strip's current artist, and only the third in its more-than-100 year history), it was with contained fanboy enthusiasm that I approached the Q&A he was gracious enough to grant The Daily Home, in which the strip is one of the most popular features and has been for years.

Rose, who has garnered multiple awards for his tradition-honoring take on Snuffy Smith and friends, holds a degree in art from James Madison University and worked as an editorial cartoonist for more than 30 years. Barney Google and Snuffy Smith is now his fulltime endeavor, and he spoke about his tenure on the strip from his studio in Virginia.

#### Like many of us, did you grow up reading the com-

"Yes, and I loved and still love so many of them. I have memories of spreading the newspaper out on my grandmother's living room floor and reading the comics as a very young child. Some of my favorites then were Barney Google and Snuffy Smith, Peanuts, Beetle Bailey, Blondie and Hi and Lois. As I got older, in addition to those strips I really enjoyed Mother Goose And Grimm, Shoe, The Far Side, Bloom County and Calvin and Hobbs and many, many more. I always enjoyed Snuffy Smith, and I began working on the Barney Google and Snuffy Smith comic strip in 1998 as Fred Lasswell's inking assistant. When Fred passed away in 2001, King Features hired me to be the cartoonist on the strip."

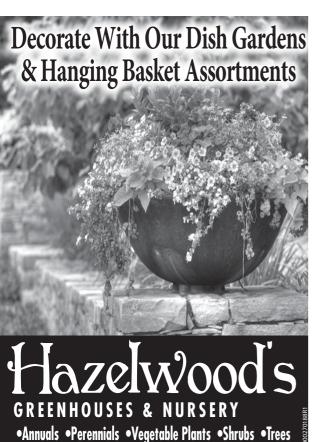
#### How did that opportunity come your way?

"In the late 1990s, I was talking with a friend who was an editorial cartoonist, and he told me that he was working as an assistant on a syndicated comic strip. It then occurred to me that maybe this might be a way I could bring in extra money for our family. So when I decided to try to pursue such a position, the first comic strip I thought of was Barney Google and Snuffy Smith. I had never met Fred Lasswell before, but because I was in the National Cartoonists Society, I had his contact information. I worked up some sample Barney Google and Snuffy Smith comic strips and mailed them, along with copies of some of my other cartoon work, to Fred.

"As a cartoonist, you receive a lot of rejection, and Fred was a true legend in our business. He was amazingly talented. So when I mailed that package, I fully expected to get a 'thanks, but no thanks' letter back. A few weeks passed and then one day as I was eating a nutritious lunch of Cocoa Puffs, the phone rang. I answered the phone, and the voice on the other end of the line said, 'John, this is Fred Lasswell. I got the packet of samples you sent me, and I really like the way you draw big noses.' I probably choked on my Cocoa Puffs.

"He ended up hiring me as his inking assistant. He was very into technology, so he did not mind that I lived in Virginia and he lived in Florida. He faxed me the penciled strips, and I inked them, scanned them into the computer, and emailed them back to him for his approval. We talked by phone, fax or email almost every day, and I also met with him in his Florida studio a few times. He was a very kind man and a wonderful friend, mentor and teacher to me. I worked for him for three and a half years. It was a wonderful opportunity to learn from a master cartoonist. If he liked my work

"I have also made a few more subtle changes over the years. For one thing, the characters can read now, and I have also created a few secondary characters. I have tried to stay true to Fred's art style, but I know some of my style has come in over the years, and that's natural.



laugh. If I made a mistake he'd say, "Stop looking out the window!" And then he'd laugh and I'd rework my

"When Fred passed away, King Features offered me an audition and they liked my work, so they hired me, and I have been drawing it ever since. It is the greatest joy of my professional career to create this comic strip

With it being such a long-running and historically significant comic strip, did you feel a sense of legacy when you took over?

"From the very beginning, I knew I had really big shoes to fill. I have always tried my very best to stay true to the characters and the rich legacy of this comic strip. I will always be thankful to King Features for entrusting this honor to me. I am also extremely grateful to Billy DeBeck and Fred Lasswell for their wonderful work before me."

#### To what do you attribute the longevity of Barney Google and Snuffy Smith?

"The secret to any successful long-running comic strip is the characters. Most of these characters were created before I started working on the strip, so I cannot take the credit for creating many of them. But I have been blessed with a truly wonderful group of characters to work with each day, characters that readers want to come and visit with in the newspaper every day."

#### Do you have a favorite character?

"That's kind of like asking me to pick my favorite child. Each character probably has a little bit of me in them. Snuffy is my personal favorite, but I also really enjoy working with Snuffy's nephew Jughaid and baby

#### What approach have you taken to put your own stamp on the strip while respecting its history?

"Probably the most noticeable change I have made is that I have made Barney Google and Spark Plug semi-regular characters in the comic strip. I do a lot of Snuffy Smith Chalk Talk presentations to groups, and at the end of each presentation, I have a question-and-answer portion. The most frequent question I got asked is, 'Whatever happened to Barney Google?' So about eight years ago, I mentioned this to my editor at King Features and asked if I could bring Barney and Spark Plug back for a weeklong visit. My editor thought it was a great idea. That week was so popular that now we

arate weeklong visits each year. In 2019, for the Barney Google And Snuffy Smith comic strip's centennial year, we brought them back for about five weeks, including a 100th birthday storyline featuring Barney and Spark Plug that lasted about two and a half weeks.

"I have also made a few more subtle changes over the years. For one thing, the characters can read now, and I have also created a few secondary characters. I have tried to stay true to Fred's art style, but I know some of my style has come in over the years, and that's

Have there been other former regular characters that you've brought back?

"Yes, Snuffy's Maw and Paw, Snuffy's niece Bizzy Buzz Buzz and the spooky witch character Granny Creeps, to name a few."

#### Would it be accurate to say Snuffy Smith isn't (and generally hasn't ever been) a topical comic strip?

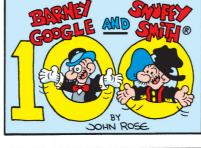
"I think that is correct, for the most part. Sometimes current events may come up in the strip, but only in the most general sense. For example, Barney and Snuffy did 'serve' in World War II during the 1940s. Barney was in the Navy, and Snuffy was in the Army, but their wartime adventures were fun and fictional."

#### What is your routine for producing the strip?

"I have a studio in my home. I work on all six daily comic strips at one time. Once I have the ideas, I pencil all six strips and then ink and letter them. Then I scan them into the computer, clean them up in Photoshop, and email them to King Features. Once the dailies are completed, I start on the Sunday comic strip. The process is the same. Once I have the idea, I pencil it, ink it, letter it, scan it into the computer and email it to King Features. With the Sunday strip, I also create a color guide. From start to finish, it takes me about two to three hours to create a daily comic strip and about 15 hours to create a Sunday comic strip. I draw the strip by hand on Bristol board paper with pens and brushes using india ink. And lots of white-out."

#### Is there anything you'd like to say in conclusion?

"Bodacious thanks to The Daily Home for carrying our Barney Google and Snuffy Smith comic strip. I am also especially thankful to your readers for reading our comic strip each day."



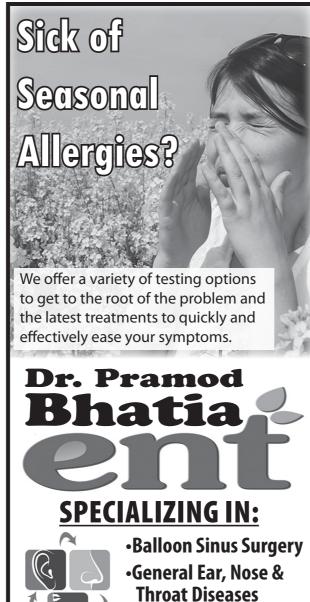












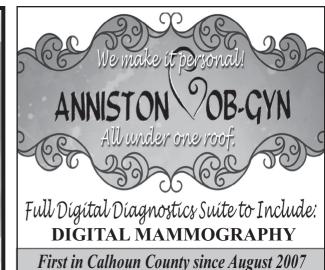
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# Something new and different on Logan Martin Lake

# Developer has plans for growth of Tiny Homes community

**BY KELLI TIPTON** 

Special to The Daily Home

The city of Lincoln and its surrounding areas offer a variety of properties, neighborhoods and communities to suit homebuyers of all ages and lifestyles. Lake to RV and mobile home communities to expansive stretches of private farmland on winding county roads, available properties in Lincoln are as varied as the people who buy them.

home home community at River Bay retired couples, newly married couples and the lakeside community.

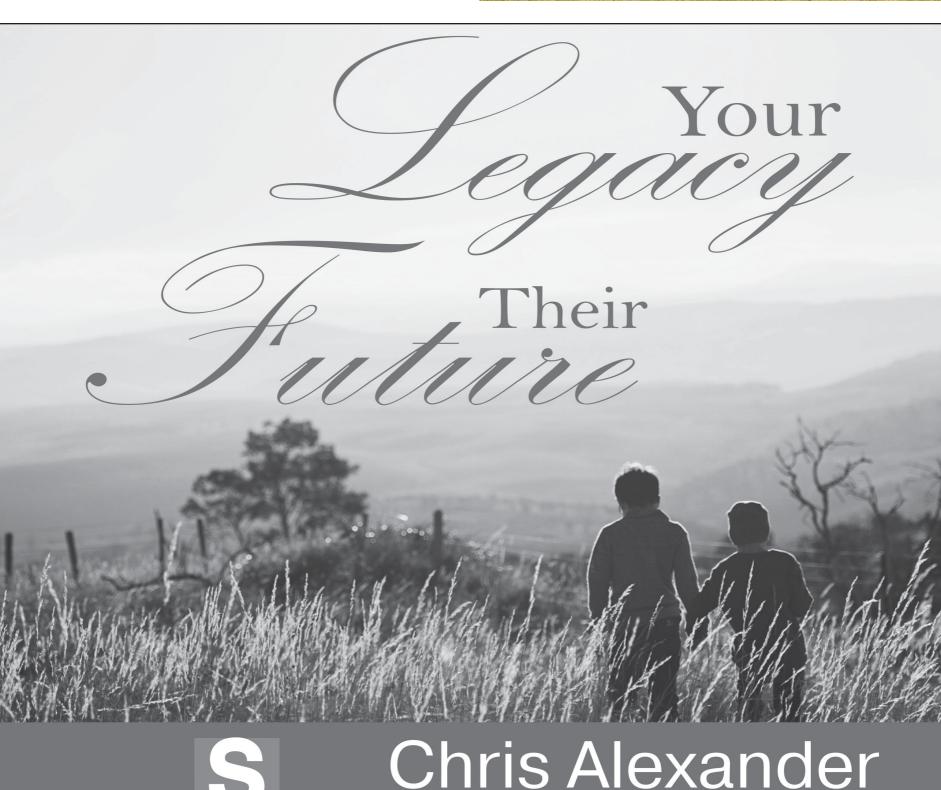
and couples who want to downsize.

The first group of tiny homes, named The Summit, was started about two years ago next to a large, sheltered RV park. These new shelters have a metal roof, a concrete pad and outdoor electri-

"These new additions are quickly mak-From waterfront lots on Logan Martin ing River Bay the crown jewel of Logan Martin Lake," said DeLane Griffin, managing member and community developer for McCaig & Griffin Properties.

Griffin partnered with Roy McCaig about 5 years ago, and after McCaig's The ongoing development of a tiny death, he continues to carry out the visions they had for River Bay to make Resort is getting a lot of attention from a positive impact on the city of Lincoln





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Photos by Bob Crisp/The Daily Home.

"We are working hard to create a close community here for the RVs and tiny homes. They do get of the resort to have a tropical feel. together occasionally to cook out and socialize," he said.

A July 4th outdoor decoration contest brought out their friendly competitiveness, and the winner was presented with \$100. Members chose the winner by voting on the resort's private Facebook page. The page has photos of sunsets, wildlife, boats and fishermen of all ages with their prize catches. The resort also has a summer playlist on Spotify and wonderful reviews from River Bay Resort members.

"I want this to be like a little tropical area on the lake," she said.

And it was her idea to bring in the tiny homes.

"So, in fact, the Tiny Homes would not be here if she hadn't convinced me, because I was not buying into it. because I was not buying into it. I was an RV guy. But it has added a whole different dimension to the resort. And while we rent many more of the RVs, the Tiny Homes get 10 times more attention. There's nothing quite like this on the lake, and our vision www.mccaiggriffin.com and www.lovelakeliving.com.

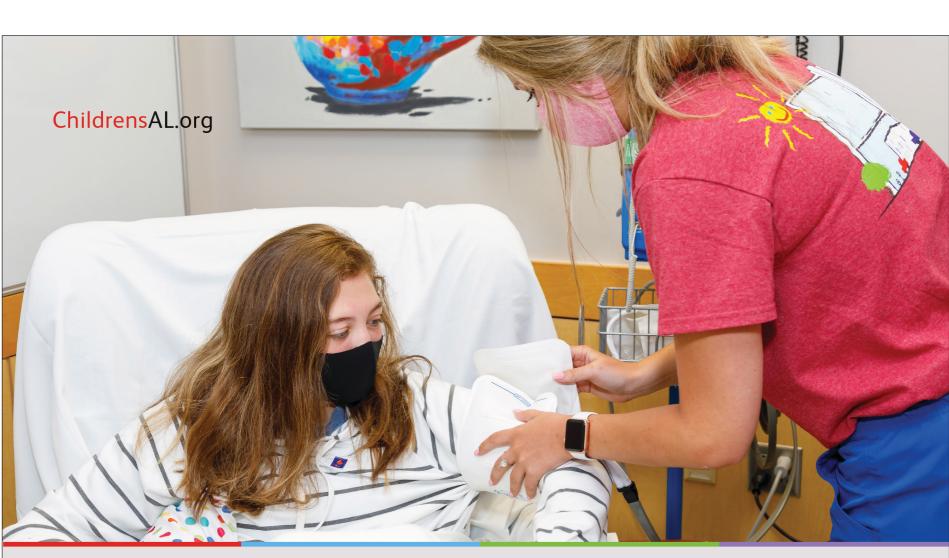
DeLane's wife, Deanna, designed the landscape was to have something unique to offer," DeLane said'

Future plans include a general store, a coffee shop, a community pool, and a community area with a stage for live music events.

'My vision for the entrance is to have a big mountain with a waterfall coming over the top of it," DeLane

And he can make it happen, because he also owns SRS, a company that produces artificial mountains and rocks, such as those seen at upscale resorts.

For more information about Riverbay Resort, visit



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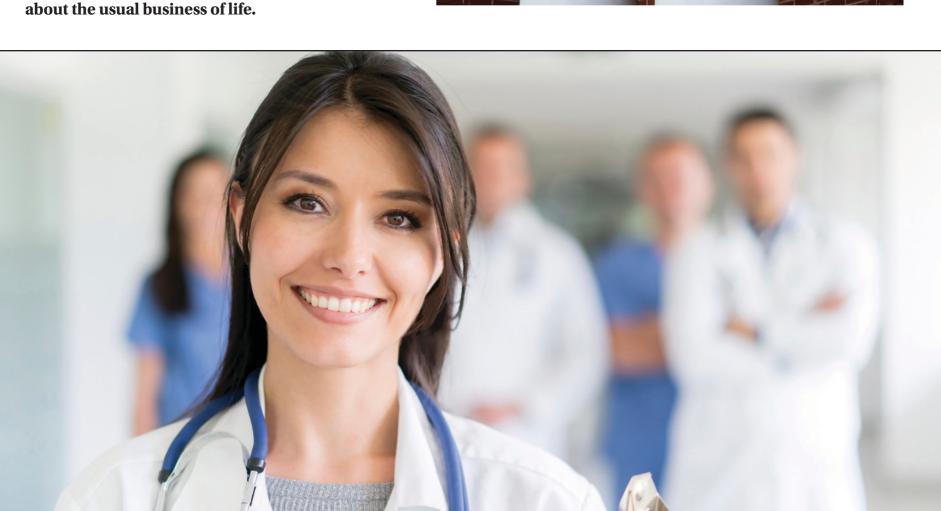
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# Views around The Square

BY SUSAN COOK
Special to The Daily Home

The simple small-town life. Even the phrase has a soothing appeal. But like so many places, it's easy to become immune to your hometown's charms as you whir by the same scenes each day, on your way about the usual business of life



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toric square of downtown Talladega. At first glance, it seems like so many other southern towns built in the 1800s, until you take a moment to focus on its details.

Like a watercolor painting, the vibrant yet soft colors of the old brick buildings meld together. Taking a closer look, the brick patterns begin to pop out. Diamond shapes form a colorful border, and sloping arches grace the windows and doors, softening the otherwise ordered lines. Nearby, a red brick building looks at you with its eye-catching windows, each one adorned with a regal white crown.

An inviting red door with two small black lanterns beckons you to take a closer look, maybe cup your hands around your eyes like a child, block out the sunlight, and take a peek inside.

the square is reflected in the swirling waves of old glass panes, making cars and trucks look like strange fish swimming by.

like a glamorous movie star, refuses to be ignored. Art Deco Grecian accents trace a mint green and red pattern up the inky glass, and you catch a glimpse of the 1930s as you think back over the shows and celebrities who have come and gone.

Your eyes finally rest on the stern and stately courthouse standing directly across from the theatre. Constructed a full century before the Ritz Theatre in 1836, the courthouse building transports you even further into the past. It's the oldest courthouse in continuous use in the state, but the white, banded columns look practically new. The layered sections are reminiscent of a wedding cake, even down to the flower-like accents.

Gazing up, an American flag wafts in the warm July breeze as life returns Stepping back, the colorful world of to its usual bustling pace. Even in a place where you've lived most of your life, beauty and discovery await around every corner if you just take a moment to look.











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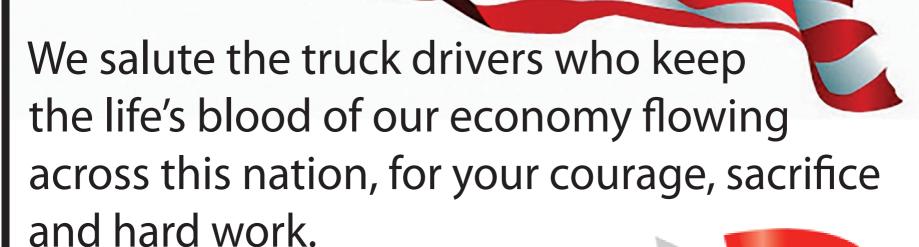
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# New APC VP calls Talladega his hometown

# Terry Smiley believes in service to others



Special to The Daily Home

Talladega native Terry Smiley has assumed responsibilities as vice president of Alabama Power's eastern division, a role that oversees the company's operations — including sales, economic and community development, and external affairs — in a region that includes Talladega, Calhoun, Etowah and eight other surrounding counties.

Smiley was prepared for the role, he says, by his time spent growing up in Talladega. Now, he says, he feels a responsibility to give back to the community that raised him.

Smiley started his new role at Alabama Power in September, just two years after joining the company. Before that promotion, he'd worked as the company's external affairs and marketing manager for the Birmingham area — and before that, he'd spent over two decades working at Alagasco, the natural gas utility now known as Spire.

He held a variety of jobs there, including roles in operations, customer service, marketing, and governmental relations. "It's been a privilege to work in the utility business for over 26 years," Smiley says. "I believe it's important to be well-rounded and my experience in various areas has been beneficial to me in my current role."

"I oversee a team of community relations employees who ensure we are serving our communities to the best of our ability by being actively engaged with and supporting the goals of our civic, education, business and nonprofit partners, along with our elected officials," Smiley

For Smiley, that means personal involvement with a number of local organizations. He serves on the board of directors for the Presbyterian Home for Children, the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce and the Jacksonville State University Foundation. He's also a member of the board of trustees at Talladega College and a member of the Anniston Rotary Club.

Smiley — who attended Birmingham-Southern College, where he was an All-American basketball player for two years — says that this community involvement isn't just part of his job; it's a way of giving back to the community that raised

"I was very blessed to have many people in the community to invest time in me at an early age," he says. "Family members, teachers, church members, and coaches. I am the beneficiary of individuals that were committed to service and giving back to the community. I believe it's my responsibility to pay it forward and be of service to others. I am very fortunate to work for a company that's committed to service and provides me with an opportunity to work with others to uplift our community."







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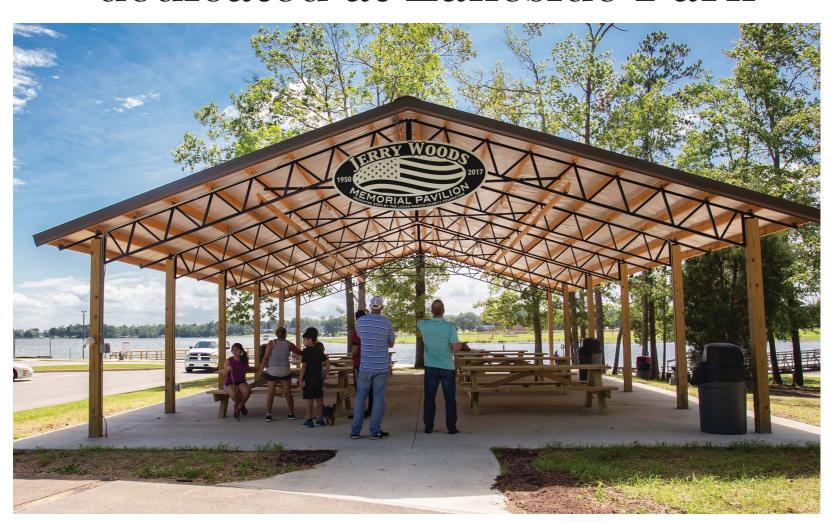


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**BY KELLI TIPTON** 

Special to The Daily Home

Visitors to Pell City Lakeside Park are now enjoying the picnic tables, seating and shade underneath the newly constructed Jerry Woods Memorial Pavilion.

Woods was the owner of Woods Surfside Marina on Logan Martin Lake and co-founder of LakeFest & Boat Show, the South's largest in-water boat show.

The Logan Martin Charity Foundation, which organizes the annual event, held a small but well-attended dedication ceremony on Wednesday, June 10 during which Woods was honored and the 30x60 pavilion was presented friends spoke about his love for the lake and to the Pell City Parks and Recreation Depart-

"The pavilion dedication was an emotional occasion for Jerry's family, Diana, Mark and Eva," said Justin Hogeland, a member of the Logan Martin Charity Foundation. Hogeland worked with Woods to organize most of the LakeFest events since its inception and served as an organizer of the dedication ceremony, which was attended by such officials as Pell City Mayor Bill Pruitt, City Manager Brian Muenger, Police Chief Paul Irwin and representatives of the city's parks and recreation department.

During the ceremony, several of Woods' the people in the community. They told of his efforts to make Lakeside Park a more enjoyable place for families, and they recalled personal memories of his friendship and examples of his leadership.

The Daily Home

"He would have loved this," his wife Diana said at the end of the ceremony. Her voice cracked with emotion while others nodded in agreement and wiped tears from their eyes.

The pavilion was originally scheduled to be dedicated in May, during the 10th annual Lake-Fest event, but COVID-19 concerns forced the event to be cancelled for the benefit of pub-

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lic health and safety. The foundation has already scheduled next year's event for May 21-23, 2021.

percent" by LakeFest proceeds, he added. "The sole purpose of LakeFest is to give back to the community, and we have now exceeded \$300,000 in donations that has been given back since LakeFest was founded a decade ago," Hogeland said.

Proceeds have also been used to help fund a wetland boardwalk at the park for Logan Martin Lake Protection Association's community education outreach project.. The boardwalk is 70-feet long and has a large observation deck with benches at the end and features signage that identifies various plants and other parts of the wetlands. The project cost \$39,000 and was

completed in 2014.

Other projects that have been wholly or partially Construction of the pavilion was financed "100 funded by Lakefest proceeds include paved, handicap-accessible walkways in the park, a floating pier and an extension of the main pier to accommodate more boats at the park's beach area.

The Jerry Woods Memorial Pavilion will serve as LakeFest's VIP area each year, and it can be rented for such activities as bass tournaments, picnics and family reunions at other times.

"It's one of the bigger pavilions at the park, and it's one of two pavilions there that have lights and ceiling fans. The sign has a flag on it, which is something that was near and dear to Jerry's heart. He always had a special place in his heart for veterans. He loved them and was always concerned with their care and

welfare," Hogeland said.

"We wanted to find a way to honor him in a permanent way. We thought about a boardwalk or a pier, but we decided a pavilion would have more stability, and it's a structure that you can see whether you're on land or the water. Jerry's ultimate goal was to give back to the community. He loved to do things for Lakeside Park, and we're pleased to honor him by putting his name on this special place for the community to use."

Diana said she would like for him to also be remembered for his love of veterans, animals and children. "He supported numerous charities that benefit and provide services for all of them. He had a special place in his heart for veterans, dogs and kids."





# FALL SPORTS REGISTRATION

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**Contact Sylacauga Parks and Recreation for more information:** 2 W. 8th St., Sylacauga, AL • (256) 249-8561 www.sylacauga.recdesk.com



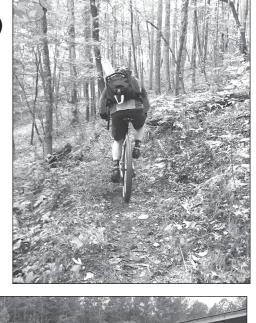
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## Hard work, dedication and family values pay off for Allen Oil Company

#### BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

co-owner of the Sylacauga-based petroleum company that bears his family's name, and he's fully aware of the heritage that comes with his responsibilities.

"Yes, my sister Debbie Armstrong and I are the current owners," he said, "but I really want to make sure my dad gets his credit because we couldn't be where we are today without the hard work he invested. His dedication gave us a head start and the ability to have a stable job and to be able to help others."

Their father, Harmon Allen, founded Allen Oil Company, a wholesale petroleum dealer that in time expanded into other endeavors. "Allen Oil is not our only business," Tim Allen said. "We distribute oil to a lot of vendors and locations, but many are unaware that we have seven retail stores and have a real estate business. However, more people know about our retail stores than

all of our oil distributions." Allen said that he remembers when gas was \$0.29 a gallon, but "things are definitely different opposed to when I was growing up. When my grandfather and father started a service station in 1957, they were full-service stations, and we had curb markets. Back in the day, we had everything a grocery store had in the size of a convenience store. Now with the way the world has evolved, things have changed dramatically, but I would say definitely for the best. In our stores we own, we offer hot meals in our Allen Brew Markets, pastries and cakes in Betty Ruth's Cafe and we even have liquor stores in some estab-

Betty Ruth's Cafe is Oil Company. named for Tim and Debbie's mother, who died in 1991.

Tim Allen is a current would pass on to those balancing multiple businesses or aspiring to, Tim says that hard work is essential. "Work smart, save your money and put your money consistency of hard work will show and become a great strength in building the back bone to your business. My father's hard work is why we with my father daily. Even at 82 years old, he still comes in and gives his input, and we respect it. If he disagrees with something, we usually value his input."

munity is important to Allen they can enjoy coffee free

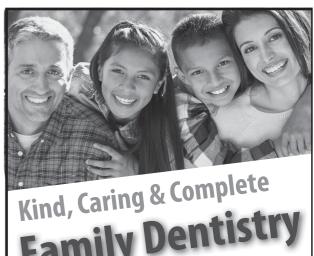
"To be involved in the community is an essential Asked what advice he for us," Tim said. "We are very active and give our support constantly throughout various businesses, schools and community programs. Whether it is buying a banner, donating to our first back into your business. The responders or picking up trash along the highway, we believe highly in showing our support. In fact, when COVID-19 struck and businesses suffered in certain are here today. I still consult aspects, we stepped in and bought certificates from businesses and gave them away in our stores to generate more business to those establishments. I also have do not go ahead with it. That created a portable coffee is how much we continue to bar for teachers and staff of schools that we have part-Being a part of the com- nered with in the area, where

these various things in the community is our way of saying that the hard work they invest constantly does not go unnoticed either."

During the start of the pandemic, Allen Oil and their businesses were able to remain open and help others get through this trying time. Allen believes that the company did not suffer as much as it could have from the pandemic because it was "a little ahead of the curve" due to instinct and a little research.

"Back in February, we put up shields for employees and gave them gloves and masks, so when the outbreak happened, we were in a sense already prepared. The only delay was the order for more that I placed a little after that did not arrive until about

of charge for a week. Doing May, but a great thanks goes wood, but it's also been a big to our staff for sticking in blessing that no one on our there during COVID, and we staff has encountered the truly appreciate it. Knock on virus."



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Submitted photo

Allen Oil Company is proud to be a well-established part of the Sylacauga community, says co-owner Tim Allen

## For home preservation, Ace is the place in **Pell City**

#### BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

Ace Hardware stores are known across the country for providing quality products

and customer service. Angela and David Majure, owners of the Pell City Ace location, assure local customers that's what they'll find when they visit their

hometown store. "When it comes to expanding or surveying for a new location, the goal is to find an area in which we can be considered the neighborhood store," David said. "We were very fortunate to find the building in Pell City. It was an opportunity to provide hardware items and plenty of benefits for the city and surrounding areas."

Since opening the store in November 2019, the Majures have not been disappointed by the investment. David believes that the success of the business comes from striving to be a blessing to the community, hiring dedicated team members and providing good customer

"In just the short amount of time we have been in the location, business has really exceeded our expectations," he said. "We have even had to do a job fair to gain more employees."

The Majures know that Ace Hardware stores are known for being a source of materials and information for convenient home repairs and do-it-yourself projects, but they believe that the Pell City store's goal is home preservation instead of just renovations, with the intent to help customers maintain their homes and hire experts

for projects if needed.
"I truly believe that our brands and machinery set us apart from other stores," David said. "For instance, our paint matching department is the most popular service at the Pell City location. Customers can bring in a chip of paint or a picture

frame and our state of the art into their homes, so they paint matching machine can took the projects on themmatch the right color, and selves. homeowners love it."

an advocate for the commuered essential, but we are still nity, the Majures go beyond following CDC guidelines, being purveyors of hard- David said. "The safety of our ware supplies and strive to customers and employees is give back to the community, always open to opportunities to help others.

"Though we were new to the area, when the coronavirus first broke, we wasted are thankful for their "great no time in donating supplies staff," because their hard to the hospitals and first responders, and for me that felt good to be able to pro-

vide," David said. Amid the pandemic, when home repairs were necessary, Ace was definitely the place people flocked for quick repairs and renovations. According to the members, and that makes us Majures, their customers did feel great, that we can be the not want plumbers, electricians, or strangers coming

"We were blessed to When it comes to being remain open and be considvery important. So we continue to implement social distancing and are sanitizing

areas constantly." The Majures say that they work is a great part of the

success of the store. "As business continues to be great," David said, "we strongly believe that we are living by our motto of providing amazing customer service and being a blessing to the community and team place with the helpful hardware folks."



Submitted photo Angela and David Majure are the owners of Ace Hardware in Pell City.



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## Southland Golf Carts enjoys being part of the community

#### **BY VALLEAN JACKSON**

Special to The Daily Home

Southland Golf Carts is a family-owned business that has successfully served St. Clair County -- and the entire state -- since 2001, offering golf carts, accessories and service.

"My parents were the ones that originated Southland Golf Carts, and for them it kind of all just fell into place one day," said owner Jacob Harper. "My dad started off buying three golf carts one day, and the next day they were sold, and things just took off from there. After a while, things just started to transition over to me. I took over and have loved it ever since."

Southland offers new and pre-owned golf carts (in either gas or electric that can be purchased or rented), service and repairs, customization, accessories and more than 20 years of experience. It has affordable prices and serves as a one-stop shop, which is a great convenience for customers.

"Out of all the services we provide, our sales department is most popular, and I think that has a lot to contribute to customers personal use and the business we do with various apartment complexes and companies," Harper said.

Southland advises treating golf carts as you would any

vehicle you were seeking to purchase, and advise a test drive before purchase. Any conditions or repairs needed can be done at the location, or even after purchase, repairs can be done at the location. Southland started in Pell City, and Harper loves its loca-

tion there. "It's like the hometown place. A part of our connection to the community stems from our staff. Just about all of our employees live in Pell City or in close proximity, and that is important to us. It's like being surrounded by family."

Just like most businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic

affected Southland as well. Though it was considered an essential business due to some of the services and products it provides, some changes had to be made to its operation.

"This pandemic has caused things to change drastically

for us," Harper said. "The events and rentals we had scheduled have been canceled, and we are still suffering with a shortage of parts from overseas."

Despite these challenges, Harper remains hopeful that things will recover, and believes in the meantime, it is important for businesses to adjust accordingly.



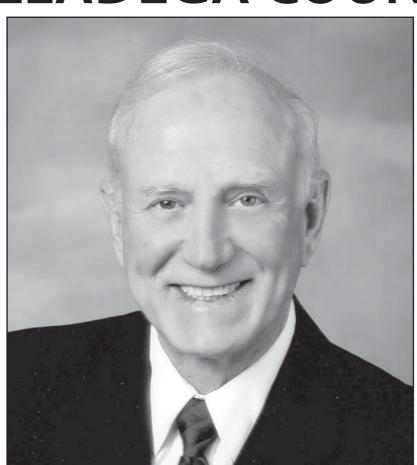




Southland Golf Carts is at 2945 Logan Martin Dam Road in St. Clair County.

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"During the Pandemic, it has been hard to personally reach out to the residents in District 5. I humbly ask for your vote and pray that each one is staying safe during this difficult time. Thank you!"

Pd. Pol. Adv. by Buddy Milam, 215 W. Curtis Rd., Sylacauga, AL 35150

#### MY HOME TOWN

# Marble City Pharmacy: A mainstay of the Sylacauga community

#### BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

Marble City Pharmacy has been an advocate for the Sylacauga community for almost two decades. The family-owned business has been successful due to good customer service and a foundation built of hard work.

"Mr. Hobson and our father started this business, and what they created is a lot to live up to," said co-owner Jacob Johnson. "Mr. Hobson himself was a legend and very well known throughout the community, and our father, who was also a pharmacist, was very involved in the community as well, so between the two of them, the pressure was on with some big shoes to fill."

Jacob and his brother Jared, co-owner and pharmacist, took over the business after Hobson's death and their father's retirement and have been the owners for seven of Marble City Pharmacy's 17 years.

"To work aside my brother is truly a great experience," Jacob said. "Most of the time as adults we do not get a chance to spend a lot of time with family, but being able to work together has made us closer as brothers, and to have somebody to understand my days definitely helps. However, our father still checks in from time to time, so that is a help as well."

Johnson believes that through the transition into owners they were fortunate to enter a business that was already stable and successful. The standard established by the previous owners to

maintain a good welcoming environment and provide quality customer service has remained paramount.

Marble City Pharmacy provides the services of any retail pharmacy, but it is also for immunizations and health screenings -and now COVID-19 testing -- that its customers come.

According to Johnson, customers prefer coming to the pharmacy opposed to going to a doctor's office and have to endure long waits.

"When it comes to connecting to the community as a pharmacy, we aim to provide financial support to our customers through processing insurance policies and helping where we can," Jacob said, adding that he and his brother believe in making people in the community aware that they are there for any questions or concerns outside of just dropping off or picking up prescriptions, especially in recent weeks.

"This pandemic has only caused minor changes for us, but overall we were not affected," he said. "If you had high blood pressure before the pandemic, you most likely still do and need your medicine as before. So medication needs have not changed, but the way we work has been altered. We have always offered curbside services because we are in the middle of a strip mall and do not have a drive-thru, so that again is nothing we are unfamiliar with."

As the world continues to adjust to the pandemic, the Johnson brothers and their staff will be there for the Sylacauga community.





Offering a full inventory to care for the community's pharmaceutical needs as well as a varied array of gift items, Marble City Pharmacy is at 264 W Fort Williams St. in Sylacauga.

# Sylacauga Utilities Board provides quality, affordable services

#### **BY VALLEAN JACKSON**

Special to The Daily Home

has been established since vices. 1952, providing reliable and of Sylacauga and surrounding communities.

even separately, our services vices at a lower cost," Miller are cheaper than most companies' throughout the state which is very beneficial to coronavirus pandemic the residents and businesses within the city and surrounding areas," said Mitch Miller, general manager.

Sylacauga Utilities Board originated as the city's first natural gas supplier. Due to financial hardship after putting in the gas lines, the board was invested into to cut down debt the city accumulated while installing the now starting to do disconpipelines. This investment helped to grow the company and expand.

The board was also one of the first electric utilities in Alabama to install computer-controlled load management systems to control peak demand, thus reducing the cost of power. This allows cost to be more affordable opposed to the rates of other companies, Miller said.

"We are one of 36 utility boards in the state of Alabama, and we have six departments, each dedicated to a service with one department dedicated to billing.' Sylacauga Utilities Board

offers electricity, natural gas, water, waste water services and internet. Miller believes that out of all their services offered, the most popular

services are electricity and water, because both are necessities The internet service offered is state-of-the-art, according to the board. The strength of connection that

is produced is dedicated directly to that customer and

not only residents and businesses in the area but also helps the board to navigate Sylacauga Utilities Board and monitor the other ser- with them to find the best foundation of support and

"Our constant goal is to affordable utilities to the city provide all services in a very economical nature as well as to continue to provide "I believe combined or lower rates, and reliable ser-

Being faced with the and the effect it has had on many, the Sylacauga Utilities Board has taken that hardship into account in dealing with its customers. To protect customers and employees, the building offices are closed to the public and consideration was extended for three months.

"As of June, we are just nections of services due to non-payment or customers

solution."

He and the board's staff of its customers.

is not shared. This benefits not communicating they are working to continue need more time," Miller said. to serve the community "If more time is needed for by not only providing relisome, we are still working able services but to create a improvement for the benefit



## Local service.

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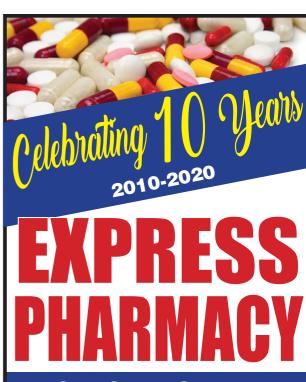
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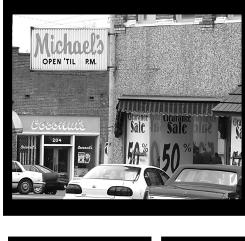


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# Hometown auto dealership serves Talladega community

BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

Bill Stanford Automotive has been in business for over 30 years, developing a reputation for being able to turn denials "We do help those with bad credit," said general manag-

er Cheryl Cate. "We have several lenders that we reach out to that could potentially get people approved if they do not have the best of credit. We sell quality cars, but we believe in second chances because we know that things happen in life."

Owners Bill and Lynne Stanford started the business

when they discerned the need for a quality auto dealership in Talladega. Last January, Stanford transitioned to a new location on East Street North, where it continues to enjoy

Cate describes Stanford as "a great employer and friend" that she has worked with for 30 years. Her own love for cars and helping others is what keeps her a part of the establishment. "To watch people drive out after thinking they could not be approved is something I love about my job," she says. Asked what advice she would give to prospective car buy-

ers, Cate recommends researching the dealer and the type of car you are looking for, having money to put down and being aware of your credit score.

"We are not just a car dealership," she says. "We also are an advocate throughout the community. We support the schools, sport teams, cheerleading and more and try to help

With businesses locally and across the nation suffering from the coronavirus pandemic, the dealership considers itself fortunate, according to Cate.

"We were very fortunate to remain open through everything, and we have held in there, but I will admit that there have been some challenges. Things definitely are different, but I believe things will get better."



Bill Stanford Automotive is at 411 East Street N in Talladega.



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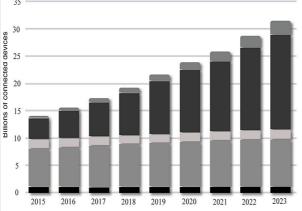
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Source: ONF and Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2017 The Sylacauga Utilities Board requires a one-year commitment.

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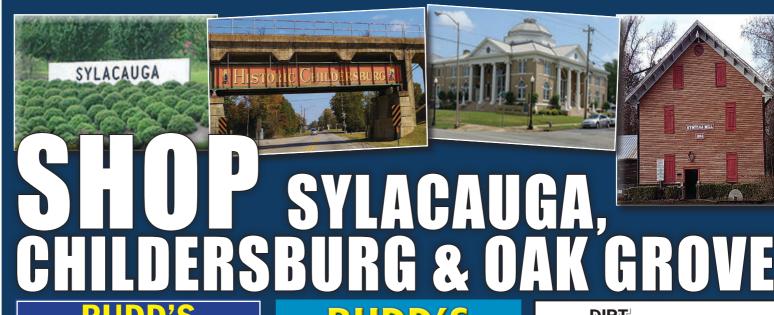
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## Usrey Funeral Home cares for families in times of need

#### BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

Usrey Funeral Home has been a part of the Talladega Community for more than 90 years. The owners and staff take pride in being available at all hours to offer condolences and support for those who have lost loved ones in death.

"Before taking on the funeral business, I sought after a building science degree at Auburn University because I was interested in construction, but I saw myself more in the funeral business," said owner Mike Perry. "Being able to help people get through the most difficult time of their life is the best part of why I do what I do."

Since opening in 1927, Usrey Funeral Home remains a locally-owned family business. Its staff is experienced in helping families cope with the emotions and heartache death causes.

"Our best way to give support and connect with the community is to act as a first responder in a sense," Perry said. "No matter the time of day, we will show up where the death may have occurred. To provide such service enables the bereaved the option of a next step, to help walk them through what to do, and make the best of decisions to create a great home going."

Usrey Funeral Home is a full-service establishment that offers multiple service options and serves all faiths.

With us, you get a full experience from visitation to the funeral to the grave side," Perry said. "Even in the midst of the pandemic, we are still making sure families are getting a great experience as they lay their loved ones to rest."

Though the CDC has set guidelines in place that restrict large gatherings, funerals may still be held, and graveside services are an option now chosen by many families.

Perry, who follows in the footsteps of his grandfather and father in continuing the tradition to serve others by making a difference in people's lives. "With an excellent staff, we are very much involved in every aspect in making sure everything comes together," he



With locations in both Talladega and St. Clair counties, Usrey Funeral Home is owned by Mike Perry.

# Hometown embroidery shop has customers all over the world

#### BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

Jalene Peaspanen took a leap of faith to start a business that she could operate while taking care of her daughter. With much persistence -- and a few tears here and there -- she says she has been blessed to be in business at Sew Nice Embroidery & Gifts in Ashville for 16 years. "My store means a lot to me," she said.

"I have been selling since I was a child, and when my daughter got diagnosed with diabetes at age 6, it was hard to find child care that could cater to her needs. So I decided that selling things now could not possibly be so different. I needed to be able to take care of my daughter and have a reliable income." Sew Nice Embroidery & Gifts offers

embroidery, monogramming, screen printing, heat press, vinyl signs, engraving and be customized, she can do the job.

printing. It's popular with t-shirts, and a lot of businesses or organizations use them for promotional purposes or to support a cause, and I honestly love it. Though it is my job, I love being a part of the community and

also to help give back to the community. She

helps raise money for local causes, sponsors many events and she keeps a blessing box by her shop where people can donate items to those in need.

As the world shifted to uncertain times, Peaspanen and staff had to close the shop for almost two months due to the coronavirus outbreak. When business is usually at its peak at the start of spring, Peaspanen saw a huge decline in orders, finances and emplovees.

"My store is back open, but we have not reached our full competency yet. I still have uniforms that have not been picked up, and I'm not sure when some of my staff will be able to come back, but I believe that things will pick back up. In fact, our shipping orders have increased which is good, and we ship all over the world."



Owned by Jalene Peaspanen, Sew Nice Gifts & Embroidery is at 70 6th

# **SHERIFF** JIMMY KILGORE

# Do Not Be A ICTIM

TALLADEGA COUNTY SHERIFF JIMMY KILGORE would like to remind all residents of Talladega County that it is not policy to call or contact citizens to tell them there is a warrant for their arrest. More importantly, deputies will not ask for money, or demand that a resident send money to take care of any situation. A simple phone call to one of the offices can verify if there is a warrant for their arrest.

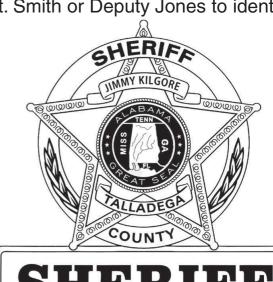
In recent months, there has been a rash of fraudulent telephone-oriented schemes. The most recent scam is that the caller is from the court system and the victim did not appear for jury duty. The caller then instructs the victim to drive immediately and purchase a prepaid debit/credit card for an amount that differs each time, and read the card information off to them over the telephone. Once the caller has that information, and transfers the money from the card, it is almost impossible to trace, much less retrieve the funds. The people perpetrating these crimes are primarily out-of-state and outside the United States. When Investigators start tracing phone calls, those numbers are no longer in service, or the callback goes into a constant loop. It is almost impossible to apprehend or prosecute these predators.

The callers also use an app to make the number they are calling from appear to be one of the Sheriff's Office telephone numbers. They then use a common name such as Sgt. Smith or Deputy Jones to identify

themselves and they have even stated they are with agencies, that although sometimes are fictitious, sound intimidating.

Sheriff Kilgore also warns citizens not to give out social security numbers or bank account numbers over the telephone. As tax season is here, remember the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) typically contacts taxpayers via good old-fashioned mail through the United States Postal Service. "Your bank will know your account numbers. All you should ever have to relay to the caller is some security information, such as a mother's maiden name, or the answer to some other pre-selected security question," advises Sheriff Kilgore.

Often the targeted victims are elderly or people who have never had any interaction with law enforcement. Citizens who have received similar calls or been victimized by scammers are encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Office at 256-761-2141 or 256-245-5121.



DRI

# Quality materials, customer service hallmarks of Alabama Brick

#### **BY VALLEAN JACKSON**

Special to The Daily Home

Alabama Brick has been creating exteriors for businesses and dream homes for more than 40

The family business has been operated by members of three generations and expanded to five different locations in central Alabama, which its staff attributes to great customer service and satisfaction.

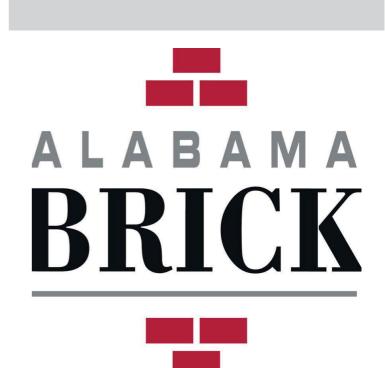
"Alabama Brick is a business where we build your dream home. We help prospective customers realize that no project is too big or small to take on and to not think your dream home can't happen because it costs too much," said Charles Richerzhagen Jr., outside sales representative. "Though brick and stone is our most popular product, because it is the best exterior product when building a home, we also have other products, such as block, sand and

For prospective home builders, Alabama Brick advises customers to choose brick because of its many features and benefits, such as durability, fire protection, longevity and permanent color.

"I would say that our service is the best in the industry," Richerzhagen said, "not just because of our products and its quality but because of our knowledge of what we offer."

He believes that the company's connection to the Pell City community is tied to owner Jeff South, who is a resident of the area and quick to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. "This pandemic definitely was different but nothing to hold us back from prospering. We were lucky enough to continue to be strong in our daily operations with just a few added steps of daily sanitizing," Richerzhagen said.

He added that the success of the business is "a 100% team effort, and we are blessed to have a staff where everyone carries their own weight in the



# Butts To Go: Pell City's "local store"



Owned and operated by Wade Reich, Butts To Go is at 410 Martin Street N in Pell City.

#### BY VALLEAN JACKSON

Special to The Daily Home

How often can you get a good meal at a gas station? It can be rare that you get something truly satisfying at the same place where you fill up your tank, but Butts To Go has redefined eating good on the go.

Inside the Pell City Texaco is a good and affordable barbecue restaurant that provides freshly prepared meals while being easy on the pockets.

"The biggest and best part of my business is the food," says owner Wade Reich. He and

partners Tim Jackson and Charlie Robinson took over the gas station in 2008, and Reich an opportunity to increase inside sales by offering something the public could

"There is really no money in gas with the amount of competition there is," he said, "so making the choice to establish Butts To Go was definitely a good decision for the market,

Butts To Go's menu ranges from smoked pork and baby back ribs to steaks and chicken to whole Boston butts and a variety of sides. During the holidays, ham and turkeys are also available, as well as the option of catering for a family dinner or event.

"Our smoked wings are very popular, along with baby back ribs and butts," Reich says. "I believe it is the flavor of our meat that makes us stand out opposed to other establishments whose focus might be the sauce. We cook with our customers in mind because our goal is to cater to people who do not have the time to cook. Offer food that is convenient, affordable, and it gives more time to spend with family."

Reich believes the station's place in the Pell City community is that it is regarded as "the local store. We are number one in Pell City by Trip Advisor among the top restaurants to go to, and to me that says a lot."

Butts To Go is a business that is tied to the community. It might be well known for delicious barbecue, but it is also well known for its fundraising and support to local high schools and churches. Reich said that giving back is important because without the support from the community, the station would not be in business.

Food is an essential need, so as the COVID-19 pandemic struck, business remained the same for Butts To Go. According to Reich, it already provided takeout services, but a con-

cern became short supplies of certain meats. Though I will say you can not go wrong with pork -- maybe if you eat too much -- we

have been selling a lot of steak lately, especially during the

In addition to support of the community, Reich said that the success of the business is due to a good staff. Butts To Go is normally staffed by 10 employees, but during the holidays more help is hired, and with the Fourth of July, reinforcements were also definitely needed.

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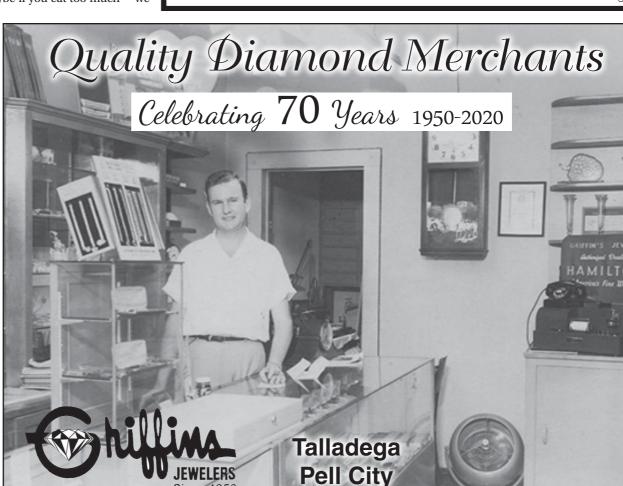
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