

# *Shoals* WOMAN

August 2019

## Shoals Woman *of the* Year

Ginger  
Willingham

A look back  
at Shoals Woman of the  
Year awards luncheons

Sandra Killen  
Burroughs  
Shoals Woman of the Year  
luncheon speaker

Planning  
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Out and About



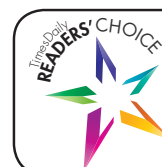




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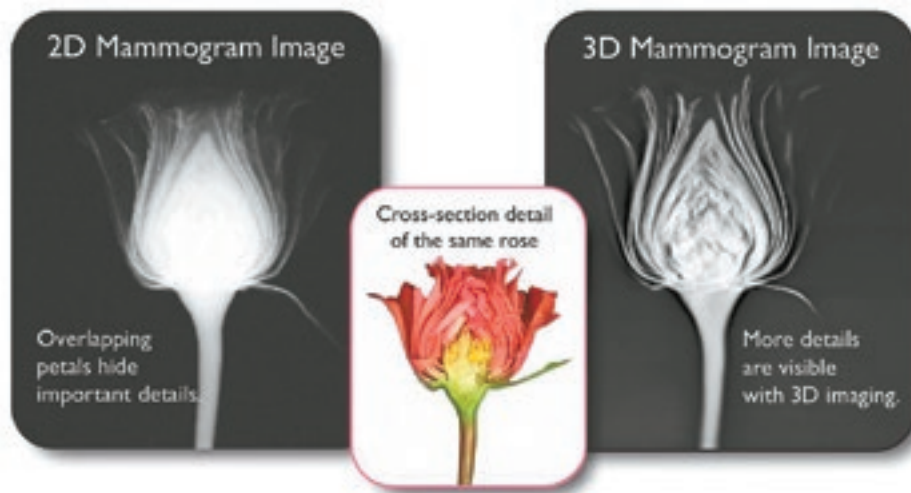
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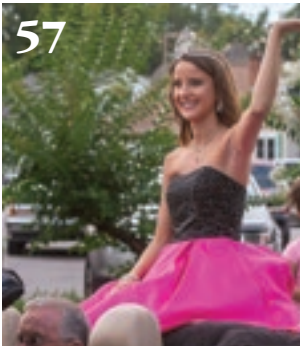
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# Shoals WOMAN

August 2019

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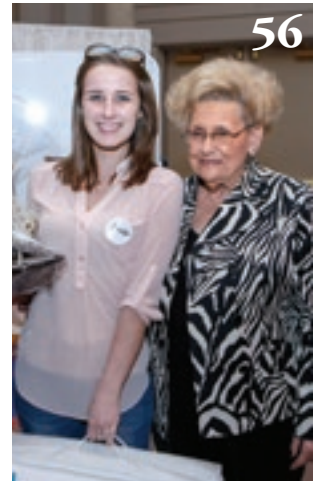


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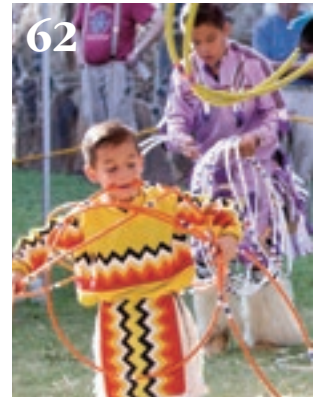
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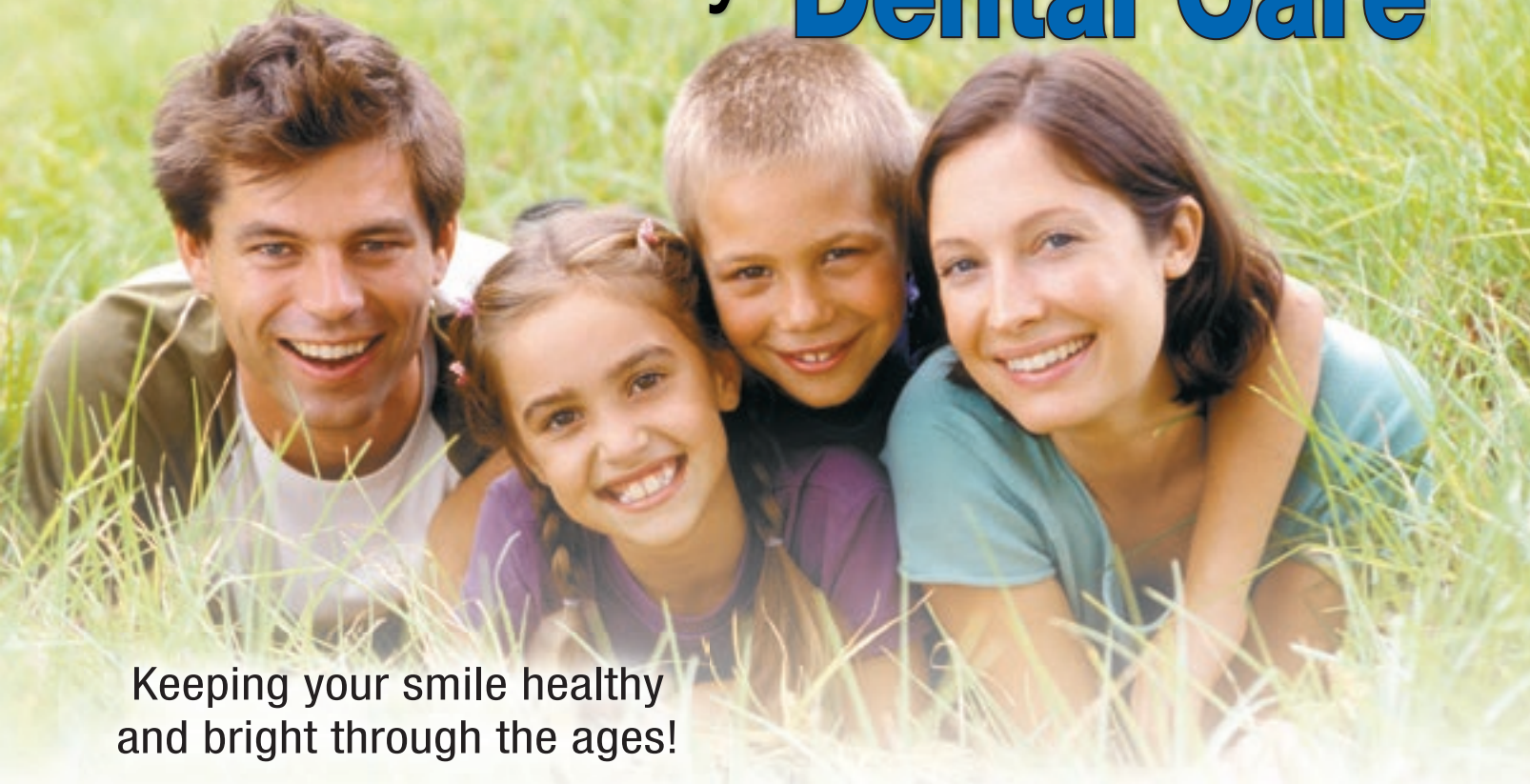


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## ON the COVER



Photograph by Heather Sherrill of Create Portraiture

This year will mark the 15th year the TimesDaily has recognized remarkable women in our community with the Shoals Woman of the Year award and award finalists. We've decided to use this year to look back at the genesis of the award and how it has grown into an awards celebration that fills the house year after year with residents who want to help us recognize the life-changing work these women have achieved.

This year's recipient, Ginger Willingham, doesn't just speak of service, she rolls up her sleeves and leads volunteers with her foundation to fill backpacks with food that will feed families, especially children, on weekends. We've noticed that among our finalists and recipients, each year there have been women who vow to do what they can to make sure the children in our community are fed. Willingham's volunteers started with seven families and now serve more than 200 across Lauderdale and Colbert counties. The bags are filled not with just enough to feed the children on weekends during the school year, but with extra to feed their family as well. Willingham said she would like to expand the work into finding a way to give food to children and their families during the summer months. We believe in her, and believe she and her volunteers will find a way.

The four finalists share in Willingham's example to give back to their community. Residents who attend Shoals Community Clinic are benefiting from Hester Cope's volunteerism. Residents who receive food from the former armory building in southeast Sheffield are directly benefiting from Penny Freeman's desire to help veterans, those who are disabled, homebound or elderly, and to help children. Sheffield residents who are proud of the revived life in the downtown district can look to Laquita Logan for leading the charge to reinvest back into her community. And for years, we've all known and benefitted from the judicial wisdom of Deborah Bell Paseur, who didn't just rule from the bench as district judge, but who found ways to make a difference in the lives of individuals who suffer from addiction and those who are fleeing domestic violence.

They, and the women before them, are all among a hall of fame of sorts that we have been privileged to honor with the Shoals Woman of the Year award.

Thank you, all, for making this a better place to live.

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# GINGER WILLINGHAM

# called to serve

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by KENDYL HOLLINGSWORTH  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE

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# 2019 SHOALS WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Ginger Willingham

Service has always had a special place in Ginger Willingham's heart.

She and her husband, Josh, knew they wanted to help children. But with Josh still playing Major League Baseball, they weren't sure how they could do that.

"We didn't really have time here, but we wanted to raise money for kids here," she said. "We were passionate about that."







Since they started the Josh Willingham Foundation in 2009, the duo and their faithful volunteers have dedicated their time, energy and money to doing just that through their golf tournament and fundraisers for local charities.

The foundation helped with the devastation from the April 2011 tornadoes and rebuilt a playground in Phil Campbell for children with special needs.

Little did she know that was only the beginning.

"I love raising money

and giving it to other organizations, but I really wanted to do something hands-on ... that we could really get involved with besides just writing a check," she said.

In 2014, after plenty of discussion and prayer, Willingham and two of her friends from church learned there were children in the community whose only opportunities to eat were at school. This inspired another program: Isaiah's Call.

Named for Isaiah 58 in the Bible, Willingham and about 20 volunteers

Ginger Willingham sits in her home office.



meet every Wednesday during the school year to pack bags with enough food for the children and their families to have during the weekend. Her dad is always the first one there to help, she said.

That work started with seven families at Central Elementary School in Lauderdale County. Five years later, they serve 210 families across Lauderdale and Colbert counties, as well as Safeplace, a local shelter for women and men and their children who are fleeing domestic violence. Willingham said school counselors have been instrumental in identifying how many students need help.

"So far, we've said that we felt like God has blessed us to do it, and no matter how many bags we have,

we've never had to tell anybody 'no,'" she added.

In the future, Willingham said she would like to figure out a way to get bags to the children during the summer. If one thing's for sure, she said Josh will always be ready to help see her "crazy ventures" through.

As she works toward that goal, Willingham continues to serve the community in other ways. She volunteers with her church, Stony Point Church of Christ, to help with Room in the Inn, which is a shelter for homeless individuals in the area.

She also coaches golf at Mars Hill Bible School. Though she wasn't sure how she could do it, Willingham said she ended up loving it. The girls team

recently competed at the state level.

"I thought, I may not can teach them a whole lot about it, but I'm going to be there and be encouraging and be a role model," she said. "It has been so rewarding."

Looking back, Willingham said it's been amazing to see the power of a community coming together for one goal: to serve others. For her, it's something she does because it's the right thing to do.

"No matter how young you are, if you see a need, do it," she said. "You never know how big it's going to be and what an impact it's going to have on somebody."

"My tattoo is 'love God, love others,' and that's what I want to live—just to be able to love and serve. That's a big deal for me."

Willingham sends hand written cards to donors to thank them for their support.





## HESTER COPE

# Community involvement from childhood to adulthood

by LAVETTE WILLIAMS

Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL of CREATE PORTRAITURE

Hester Cope's passion for volunteering began in high school. To her, it was fun and challenging. Sometimes she would spend her days in the quiet library putting books back on shelves or managing the staff of the school's newspaper. Other times, she was backstage preparing to put on a play or trying to design a yearbook that would outdo last year's. She loved being involved.

She still does. Now, Cope dedicates her time to Shoals Community Clinic, a nonprofit organization that provides affordable health and dental care. She's been with the clinic for about 20 years writing grants and working on fundraisers.

"It is really an important thing because we have people in the community without insurance," said Cope. "While those who are at the very bottom of the ladder and are on Medicaid get help from the government, the ones with minimum wage jobs cannot afford health care."

The Shoals Community Clinic offers several services for those in need such as the Medication Assistance Project and the Healthy Heart Project, but two programs Cope has spent years grant writing for are the Well Woman Project and the Community Garden and Nutrition Project.

The garden program allows those who want to grow their own vegetables a place where they can

grow some of their own food. The Well Woman Project is one that particularly works with women to avoid illnesses.

"I can't think of anything nicer to do with my time," Cope said. "I have the experience of making a difference for someone else and making their lives better."

But that is not all that Cope has done. In fact, it is one of many things she has done to contribute to the Shoals community.

From 1992 to 2007, Cope served as director of the Florence Main Street program. Stepping into this position, she had noticed something was off about downtown. There were a lot of buildings that were empty and had not been renovated. It was quiet and there needed to be streetscape projects to help make people want to come downtown.

Along with the help of many others, Cope worked hard to make sure people occupied the second floor of downtown buildings and get the buildings themselves in good shape. She also worked to bring in new businesses and have events, like First Fridays, to bring people into downtown.

Florence City Council President Dick Jordan said Cope has been dedicated to beautifying and helping to make Florence pedestrian-friendly.

"She's been an asset to this city and helping maintain the vitality of the downtown," Jordan said.

Cope said she wanted the downtown to be successful because it is a statement about who you are.

"Anybody who comes into town knows that this is a very special place because our downtown is alive and well and thriving," she said. "When people come to see if they want to establish a business here or if they want to open some type of business opportunity, they judge it by your downtown. That's your first impression."

Cope has lived in many places, from Auburn to Muscle Shoals. She said there is one thing that sets Florence apart from the rest.

"It's the people," she said. "They are wonderful. I have the nicest people that I go to church with, that are neighbors of mine, and that I meet on the street. It's amazing how open and friendly they are."

Cope came to Florence in 1974 as a young adult with her husband and their 4-year-old daughter. She said she feels fortunate to have reared her daughter in this community.

Cope said there are many aspects to love about downtown Florence. There's not a huge amount of traffic, there are many events always taking place and there are opportunities for success for growth.

"It's just a very pleasant place to be," she said.







## PENNY FREEMAN

# A heart for mission work

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by KENDYL HOLLINGSWORTH  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE

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Serving on the Sheffield City Council was never something Penny Freeman imagined herself doing.

But that's exactly what happened when she ran for—and won—the District 4 seat in 2016.

Freeman was encouraged to run after she established a Neighborhood Watch group in southeast Sheffield, and though her journey took an unexpected turn with her decision to run for a seat on the council, it has allowed her to kick the mission work she loves into high gear.

While she enjoys helping veterans and those who are disabled, homebound or elderly, it's children who have always captured Freeman's heart.

As a former educator, Freeman understands how literacy can change lives. That's why she has worked with programs that support youth literacy and has even volunteered her own time and expertise to help families who can't afford a tutor.

"Building academic confidence has been one of the things that has meant the most to me because you never know where your beginnings are and where your endings will be, so if you can gain

academic confidence at an early age, and especially a desire to continue to be curious about the world around you, it can take you anywhere," she said.

Freeman's passion for education also inspired her to hold an annual "Back-to-School Bash." Parents show up in droves to collect school supplies for their children, who enjoy food and fun with teachers outdoors. Last year, she added a health fair to the mix.

"It gets bigger every year," she said. "It's fun when it can be something like a youth-led block party and you see your teachers dancing, and you see them as human. You eat hotdogs with them and clean up spills with them and jump on the bouncy house with them, and it fosters a totally different atmosphere and relationship."

"That was one of the things that I loved about it is that we didn't just shell out some school supplies—we also created a different opportunity for a relationship."

Noticing the hunger in her community also inspired Freeman to establish a food bank in southeast Sheffield. She met with local ministers, organizations and

residents to feed more than 100 children without stable access to food outside school. Now, they serve about 600 families every Wednesday.

"If you can meet people where they are and give them a hand up—not a slap in the face—that is why we're here. ... Not to make someone feel badly about their circumstances. It's just to help other people."

As a former Girl Scout with a son nearing Eagle Scout status, Freeman also helped establish units for Girl, Boy and Cub Scouts in Sheffield. Her other accomplishments include getting youth involved with the NAACP to find their voice, and establishing a junior city council to help youth become more engaged in the community—things she hopes will carry into adulthood.

After a productive three years on the council, Freeman said the future is all about furtherance and continuance. A unified community will be a key ingredient in that.

"I feel like there's no task that's insurmountable if you band together," she said. "When you start working hand in hand with other people, then you realize a greater purpose."







## LAQUITA LOGAN

# Reinvesting in her community

by SHERHONDA ALLEN

Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL of CREATE PORTRAITURE

It started with Laquita Logan noticing the “dilapidate” buildings in Sheffield’s downtown district.

She and her husband were downtown at the first street party held on the town’s main street.

“I said these are the most beautiful buildings I have ever seen, and they’re just dying,” she recalled.

She and her husband operated a pharmacy in Towne Plaza, “and we really like the people of Sheffield. They would come in and we would build a relationship with each and every one of them.”

Logan grew up in Columbia, Tennessee. Her father was a minister and a carpenter, and moved his family to Alabama to pastor a church when she was 14 years old.

“I got uprooted from a huge school and moved to a little bitty school and it was a culture shock,” she said with a laugh. “But you know what? It was the best thing that could have happened to me. I love it.”

Logan said she spent time in Sheffield as a child, and she and her grandmother would come downtown to get ice cream. She said she remembers sitting on the stool at the counter, trying to get it to spin.

“That was fun for me and I liked Sheffield. I just always did.”

But, as an adult, there were the old buildings that got her attention.

“You just see all these buildings

that are just in dire need of repair. I wanted to open a boutique, and I said I really want to open one in Sheffield. And so, we decided, and the mayor helped us. He said I’ve got this little lot and you can put your boutique there.”

It was the beginning to a revival of life in Sheffield’s downtown business district.

“Other people got on board and started coming in, and bringing businesses in. And so now what used to be a ghost town with a tumbleweed going down the road is beginning to be full of life,” Logan said.

“We like to do a lot of things for the community – help the community get things going, and it’s a lot of fun.”

They didn’t just reinvest in the community through the boutique. There is Sheffield Hardware across the street from The Rock coffee shop and Christian bookstore. Red Clay Table restaurant and the Logan room soon followed. There are four loft apartments over the bookstore and four over the hardware store. They are all rented by young people.

Logan speaks with pride when noting how her two sons are using carpenter skills taught to them by her father.

“My kids are builders,” she said. “They learned that trade from my dad. My dad was a professional builder and a minister, and so every year for summer when the kids were out of school for

summer, I gave them to my daddy because I had to work. So it worked out really good because daddy, he would train them, and now they have something that they are capable of doing, something that was passed on by their grandfather.

“One (son is) at the hardware store and he does all these buildings . . . and the other one is an artist and he does all of the detail. If you go over to The Rock and look at the trim on the bookcases or look at that counter that’s that log split, that his.”

She hasn’t stop investing in her adopted hometown. An old bank building is undergoing renovations into a bed and breakfast. It will have apartments as well as rooms.

Logan quietly gives of her time and resources to support organizations like Shoals Save A Life and Samaritan’s Purse, as well as Northwest-Shoals Community College and the Colbert County Sports Hall of Fame. Her humbleness in sharing her resources to help others was noted by the individual who nominated her for Shoals Woman of the Year.

When you meet Logan, it is obvious she is not looking for accolades.

“I would just encourage anyone to get involved in your community and see where you can help,” she said. “You’ll get back . . . personally, more than what you ever put in.”







## DEBORAH BELL PASEUR

# Hope for a Brighter Future

by KENDYL HOLLINGSWORTH

Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL of CREATE PORTRAITURE

It was pure coincidence that Deborah Bell Paseur was named after the only female judge in the Bible.

It was because of Deborah's strength that her mother bonded them in name.

Paseur never dreamed she'd become an attorney, let alone the first woman elected to district judge in Lauderdale County. But that's exactly what she said God had planned for her.

Growing up around substance abuse meant Paseur was no stranger to struggle, but rather than let those struggles define her, she let them guide her to her life's work.

Despite her father's alcoholism, Paseur described her parents as "loving, caring, compassionate people" who had a heart to help others—a trait they passed on to her.

As a young lawyer, she found herself helping disadvantaged women.

"Through networking with other lawyers and other agencies that serve the needs of people, a group just came together, and we just recognized that there was a need for ... a safe place for particularly women and children to be able to go."

The "Sack Lunch Group," as it was called, worked two years to

establish Safeplace in 1981.

Since then, the shelter has exploded in services and locations.

"We were just trying to create a shelter program, and now the array of services is unbelievable," Paseur said.

Her work with Safeplace hasn't ceased. Today, she provides legal services to the organization pro bono.

But helping domestic abuse survivors isn't the only thing on Paseur's radar; she also works tirelessly to give children a brighter future through her work with Shoals Scholar Dollars.

The organization has been raising money since 2010 to award scholarships to high school students in Lauderdale and Colbert counties. While not everyone can get a scholarship, Paseur said they've been a vehicle for other worthy students to find help, often through Pell Grants.

The ultimate goal? To increase students' chances for success.

"Education is the way up and the way out," Paseur explained. "It can break the cycle of generational poverty. It gives a real chance. If you provide that really rock-solid education from early childhood on, then our whole country is going to succeed, and we're going to raise the level of success for everyone, and certainly in Alabama."

Paving the way to a better future has also been the goal of the local Drug Court and community Corrections programs, which Paseur also had a hand in developing.

Both are targeted toward offenders whose cases have a drug or alcohol component.

"That's what I was dealing with was dysfunctional families and addictions, which I had an understanding about because of my own experiences growing up, as well as my training—professionally, in college, and then on the bench," she said.

Paseur saw her own father become clean and sober, so she knew it was possible for others. It was just a matter of helping them help themselves.

Paseur may be pulling back in her legal work, but she's staying busy serving on multiple boards, volunteering in the community and handling cases for other judges when she can.

"Life is not a guarantee of smooth sailing," Paseur said. "I totally believe we're here on this earth to love and serve God by loving and serving each other, and being encouragers to each other."

"Because of my particular experience, God knew that's where I could make a difference. I'm thankful to have found it."





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## Shoals Woman of the Year Awards Luncheon speaker: Sandra Killen Burroughs

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# Being involved in the community

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by LAVETTE WILLIAMS  
Photos by HEATHER SHERRILL  
of CREATE PORTRAITURE

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When Sandra Killen Burroughs took the position as the executive director of the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, she knew what she was getting herself into.

Burroughs had been in tourism since 1995 and had worked at Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association for 11 years, supporting small and local businesses. William Foster, who is a Tuscumbia city councilman, credits Burroughs for publicizing his business, Rattlesnake Saloon, when he opened it.

“She came to the saloon and found it very unique,” Foster said. “Next thing I know she’s turned my place into a tourist attraction for the state of Alabama. I pulled into a rest area and (Rattlesnake Saloon) was in 16 different pamphlets.”

Becoming executive director of the Alabama Music Hall of Fame just seemed like the perfect fit not only with her love for tourism but with her schedule. It didn’t interfere with her duties as Lexington’s mayor, and helped her

gain closer connections to other mayors and city council members statewide.

“Being involved in the community is probably one of the most important things I can do as the director of the hall of fame and my involvement as a mayor of a small town,” Burroughs said. “I already had really good relationships with the other mayors, but now I’m working with them on a different level and a different position, and it’s really worked out well.”



Debbie Wilson, executive director of Muscle Shoal Sound Studio, said Burroughs is always a confident professional.

"It's been cool to see her kind of rise in the ranks in tourism and land in a natural spot of leadership at Alabama Music Hall of Fame," Wilson said.

One thing Burroughs wants to focus on as director is making it known that the Alabama Music Hall of Fame is a statewide organization.

"We encompass music from all genres from all of our state of Alabama," she said. "We want to get

more involved with other towns and cities in the state reaching everywhere in Alabama. We want to encompass as much music history as we can into the museum."

"We have a jewel sitting right here in the Tennessee Valley that I am very proud to be representing," she said. "I invite everyone to come out . . . and tour the museum and remember that there's always something new going on. It is a celebration every day of the incredible music and musicians we have in Alabama."

Burroughs calls the Alabama Music Hall of Fame a "jewel sitting right here in the Tennessee Valley."



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at Shoals Woman of the Year awards luncheons.





It's been an honor  
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to recognize local  
women who have  
contributed to the  
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life we enjoy here  
in the Shoals.

For the past 15 years, the Shoals Woman of the Year award has grown from its inception that saw a small gathering come together to honor these women, to the regularly sold out awards luncheon that now takes place at the Marriott Shoals Conference Center in Florence. It is a testament to the community's appreciation and eagerness to honor these recipients, finalists and nominees, and to encourage them and other women to keep up their important work in elevating the lives of others. Thank you, Shoals women, for loving the people in our community.



Each year, the TimesDaily gathers previous Shoals Woman of the Year award recipients for a group photo, like this one from 2017. From left are Sherry Fowler (2005), Natalie Gordon (2006), Kay Parker (2007), Felice Green (2009), Mercy Winters (2017), Pam Fleming (2010), Elba Barnes (2012), Susie Martin (2014), Angie Hamilton (2015), and Ninon Parker (2016).





In 2005, Sherry Fowler was the first recipient of the Shoals Woman of the Year Award, received from former magazine editor Monica Collier.



2016 finalists were from left Jennifer Butler Keeton, Krista Manchester, Lisa Patterson, Ninon Parker and Angela Jackson.



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2015 Shoals Woman of the Year Angie Hamilton poses with the magazine cover unveiled at the luncheon.



2008 Shoals Woman of the Year Betty Burdine.

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Richard Parker hugs his wife, Ninon,  
after it was announced she was the 2016  
Shoals Woman of the Year.



2006 Shoals Woman of the Year Natalie  
Gordon regularly attends the awards  
luncheon in support of other women. Here  
she poses with 2016 finalist Angela Jackson.





The awards luncheon brings together friends, family and community supporters who have the opportunity of meet and talk with finalists. From left, 2018 Shoals Woman of the Year Jessica Davenport chats with Dixie Griffin and Pat Slusher during the 2017 luncheon where Davenport was guest speaker.

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Kay Parker (2007) chats with Angie Hamilton (2015) during the luncheon where Hamilton was announced the Shoals Woman of the Year recipient.



TimesDaily Publisher Darrell Sandlin congratulates 2017 Shoals Woman of the Year Mercy Winters.



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2016 Shoals Woman of the Year Ninon Parker stands next to the magazine cover that was unveiled at the luncheon.

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2015 finalists were Angie Hamilton, Angela Jackson, Lynne Aquadro, Kim Burney and Jean Gay Mussleman.



Jessica Davenport poses with the magazine cover announcing her as the 2018 Shoals Woman of the Year.

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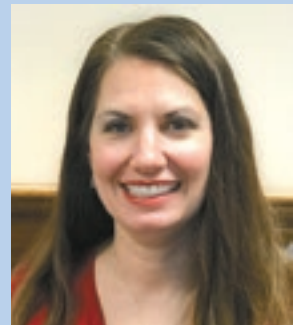
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2009 Shoals Woman of the Year Felice Green chats with Dihanne Westfield at the 2016 awards banquet.



2017 Shoals Woman of the Year Mercy Winters chats with a friend at the 2017 awards luncheon.





2017 finalists Mercy Winters, Judy Hood, Connie Bradford, Sandy Cross and Emily Rhodes.

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From left, 2013 finalists, Susan Bentley, Rebecca Rockhill, Sarah Jennifer Thompson, Bettie Robinson and Diane Coward.



From left, 2015 Shoals Woman of the Year Angie Hamilton chats with finalist Jean Gay Mussleman.



2012 Shoals Woman of the Year Elba Barnes speaks to the crowd after Tennessee Valley Media owner Clint Shelton announced Barnes as that year's recipient. Tennessee Valley Media is the parent company of The TimesDaily, which sponsors the award.







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Kay Parker receives a hug after accepting the 2007 Shoals Woman of the Year award.



2010 Shoals Woman of the Year Pam Fleming poses with her magazine cover.





From left, 2018 finalists Andrea Holt, Sonja Croone, Jessica Davenport, April Clark and Rebecca Daugherty.

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2018 Shoals Woman of the Year Jessica Davenport poses with her children, Paizlee and Kruz.



2007 recipient Kay Parker poses with her Shoals Woman of the Year magazine cover.



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2013 recipient Sarah Jennifer Thompson poses with her Shoals Woman of the Year magazine cover.



Past recipients gather for a group photo in 2018. From left, Sherry Fowler, Natalie Gordon, Betty Burdine, Felice Green, Jessica Davenport, Susie Martin, Pam Fleming, Ninon Parker, Kay Parker and Mercy Winters.





2010 recipient Pam Fleming accepts her award from Clint Shelton, owner of Tennessee Valley Media, the parent company of The TimesDaily, which sponsors the Shoals Woman of the Year award.




2011 recipient Debbie Rappuhn makes her way to the stage to accept her Shoals Woman of the Year award.

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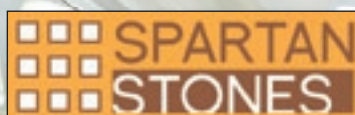
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2014 Shoals Woman of the Year Susie Martin poses with her magazine cover.



It is always an honor when past recipients attend the awards luncheon, like here at the 2011 event where recipient Debbie Rappuhn (center) is flanked by from left, Sherry Fowler, Natalie Gordon, Kay Parker, Betty Burdine and Pam Fleming.





2009 recipient Felice Green with her Shoals Woman of the Year magazine cover.

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The first award recipient, Sherry Fowler, poses with her 2005 Shoals Woman of the Year magazine cover.



2015 Shoals Woman of the Year Angie Hamilton receives a congratulatory hug and kiss from husband Joe Hamilton.





2006 Shoals Woman of the Year Natalie Gordon pauses for a photo with her award.



From left, 2018 finalists Andrea Holt, Sonja Croone and Jessica Davenport share a moment of laughter prior to the awards luncheon.




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Peggy Lewis hugs 2012 Shoals Woman of the Year Elba Barnes.



In 2014, all of the past recipients attended the awards event and are shown here with that year's Shoals Woman of the Year Susie Martin. From left are Sherry Fowler, Natalie Gordon, Kay Parker, Betty Burdine, Felice Green, Susie Martin, Pam Fleming, Debbie Rappuhn, Elba Barnes and Sarah Jennifer Thompson.





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# out & about Derby Days



Jennifer Fisher and friends



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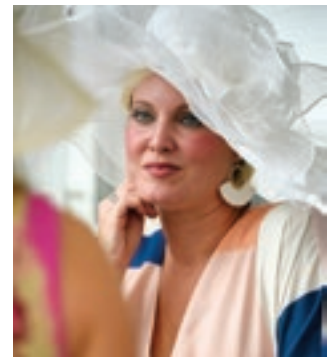
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Details: coondogcemetery.com  
or call 256-383-0783.

### SEPT. 13-14 OKA KAPASSA - RETURN TO COLD WATER

Spring Park, Tusculumbia  
Sept. 7 (School Day) 8  
a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Sept. 8 Community Event  
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Free  
Details: okakapassa.org or  
256-383-0783



Trail of Tears ride.



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## Join the "Home Instead Jay Walkers" in the Shoals Walk to End Alzheimer's!



**Sunday, September 15**  
**2pm @ McFarland Park**

Make a team,  
 join a team,  
 make a donation  
 or become a  
 sponsor!

**Home Instead**  
**SENIOR CARE**  
*To us, it's personal.*

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To register and find more information, go to [alz.org/walk](http://alz.org/walk)

### **SEPT. 14** **SHOALS DRAGON BOAT** **FESTIVAL**

McFarland Park, Florence  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
 Registration fees for  
 participants  
 Free to spectators  
 Details:  
[shoalsdragonboatfestival.com](http://shoalsdragonboatfestival.com)

### **SEPT. 17-22** **NORTH ALABAMA** **STATE FAIR**

65 Sportsplex Drive  
 Muscle Shoals  
 Admission charged  
 Details:  
[northalabamastatefair.org](http://northalabamastatefair.org)

### **SEPT. 21** **TRAIL OF TEARS** **COMMEMORATIVE** **MOTORCYCLE RIDE**

Free  
 Details: [al-tn-trailoftears.net](http://al-tn-trailoftears.net)

### **OCTOBER**

### **OCT. 2-26** **BELLE MONT QUILT SHOW**

1569 Cook Lane,  
 Tuscumbia  
 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,  
 Wednesday-Saturday  
 Discussion program, 1  
 p.m. each Friday  
 Museum rates  
 Details: 256-381-5052

### **OCT. 5-6** **OKTOBERFEST** **ST. FLORIAN CITY PARK**

Free  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
 Details on Facebook:  
 St. Florian Oktoberfest



Oka Kapassa festival in Tuscumbia.



**OCT. 19**

**ALABAMA**

**RENAISSANCE FAIRE**

Royal Autumnal Feast

7-10 p.m.

Florence-Lauderdale

Coliseum

702 Veterans Drive,

Florence

Cost: \$25, advanced

Details: Facebook page

**OCT. 26-27**

**ALABAMA**

**RENAISSANCE FAIRE**

Wilson Park, downtown

Florence

Free

10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Oct. 26

Noon to 6 p.m., Oct. 27

Details: alrenfaire.org

**NOVEMBER**

**NOV. 2-3**

**2ND ANNUAL**

**CON-FUZION CONVENTION**

Muscle Shoals Recreation

Center, 1000 Gatman Park

Drive

Featured guests include:

Original cast member

from the pop TV show,

"The Munsters" and family

saga, "Little House on the

Prairie"

Admission charged

Details: confuzion.net

**NOV. 11**

**VETERANS DAY PARADE**

**AND CEREMONY**

Main Street, Tuscumbia

Time TBA

Free

Details: visitTuscumbiaAL.com

**NOV. 29-DEC. 24**

**TREES OF CHRISTMAS**

Tennessee Valley Museum

of Art

511 N. Water St.,

Tuscumbia

1-3 p.m., Sunday

9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-

Friday

10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Dec. 24

Details: tvaa.net or

256-383-0533

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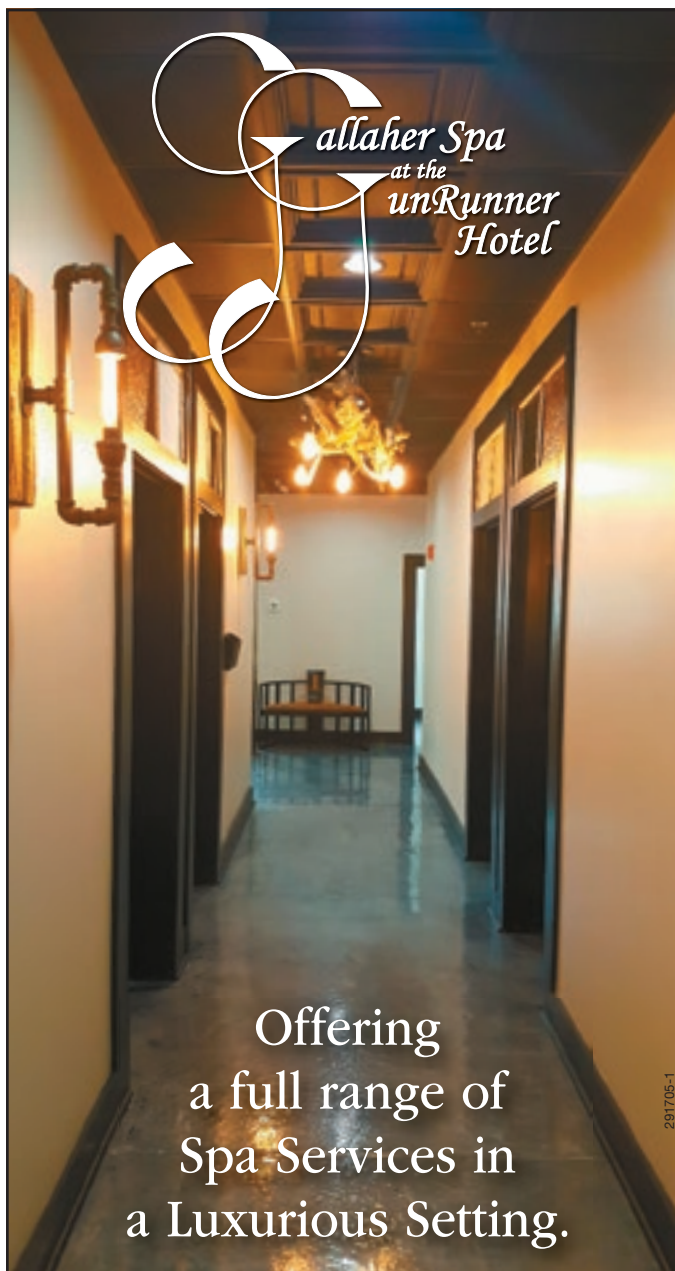
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## **DECEMBER**

### **DEC. 1 PLANTATION CHRISTMAS**

Belle Mont Mansion  
1569 Cook Lane,  
Tuscumbia  
1-5 p.m.  
Admission charged  
Details: 256-383-0783 or  
256-381-5052

### **DEC. 6 9TH ANNUAL DICKENS CHRISTMAS FEAST**

Tuscumbia Depot  
Roundhouse, Tuscumbia  
Holiday dinner with  
the character of Charles  
Dickens classic "A  
Christmas Carol"  
7 p.m.  
Admission charged  
Details: 256-383-9797 or  
256-383-0783

### **DEC. 7 9TH ANNUAL "DICKENS CHRISTMAS, Y'ALL"**

Downtown Tuscumbia  
various locations  
Times TBA  
Admission charged for  
some events  
Details: 256-383-0783 or  
256-383-9797

### **DEC. 7 CHRISTMAS AT IVY GREEN**

300 N. Commons W.,  
Tuscumbia  
8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Admission charged  
Details: 256-383-4066



Renaissance Faire in Florence.





# NOMINEES

for the 2019 Shoals Woman of the Year

Ana Carolina Behel  
Nickie Campbell  
Stacey Cole  
Patsy Congleton  
Hester Cope  
Sonja Croone

Kimberly Farris  
Martha Flanagan  
Penny Freeman  
Kimberly Jackson  
Angelaca Jones  
Laquita Logan

Sandy Goode Lynch  
Krista Manchester  
Cindy Mashburn  
Peggy McCollum  
Debbie Nelson  
Deborah Bell Paseur

Teresa K. Rogers  
Diane Carroll-Rowell  
Kaytrina Simmons  
Ginger Willingham  
Denise Woods

## past WINNERS



### 2005 | SHERRY FOWLER

Fowler was chosen for her work with the North Alabama Head Injury Foundation. Her daughter, Mary Darlene, sustained a debilitating head injury in 1986 when she was struck by an intoxicated driver. Fowler was advised to place her daughter in a nursing facility. She refused. She received the training necessary to care for her 19-year-old daughter at home. Fowler continued working with the foundation after her daughter's death in 2005.

### 2006 | NATALIE GORDON

Gordon was 24 years old when she battled cancer and underwent a life-saving surgery: the removal of her left arm and shoulder. She was mother to a 7-month-old and a 3-year-old and Gordon said she was not prepared to lose parts of her body. More importantly, however, she said she was not prepared for her children to lose their mother. She said the surgery was traumatic and depressing, but Gordon adjusted and became an inspiration to others. She vowed not to let her loss stop her.





## 2007 | KAY PARKER

Parker and a friend, Sharon Scogin, developed the idea for The Healing Place after Parker saw a television report about a grief support center in Portland. She believed a similar center was greatly needed in the Shoals. The Healing Place became a haven where adults and children learn to work through their grief after a loved one's death. Parker's goal was to give people a place to be heard and to learn healing thoughts, including learning how to cherish memories and keep them from being debilitating.

## 2008 | BETTY BURDINE

Burdine has spent her life helping people, first as a nurse, then as coordinator of the Lifewise Seniors program for Eliza Coffee Memorial Hospital in Florence. She didn't stop there, but volunteered in several community endeavors. She helped raise money for the American Heart Association and was instrumental in procuring the monument for Lillian Diebert in Diebert Park in Florence. Burdine's caring nature extended to Lillian Diebert, who she would look in on before Diebert's death in 2011.



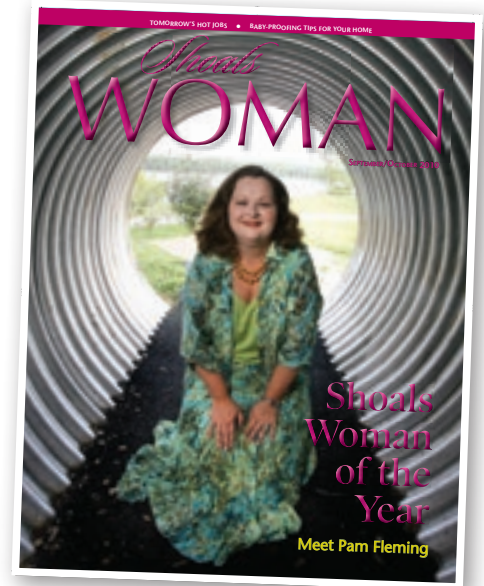
## 2009 | FELICE GREEN

Green retired from the University of North Alabama in 2003 but didn't sit still. She has a special love for children and will don costumes to read to children at various outlets across the Shoals. Green also expressed her love of art and dance and became a member of the Poza Dance Troupe while remaining active in Delta Sigma Theta sorority, which she helped charter at UNA. She is a known organizer of events during the W.C. Handy Music Festival including the ABCs of Blues & Jazz. She is a volunteer with the Salvation Army and St. Vincent De Paul Society at Our Lady of the Shoals Catholic Church in Tuscumbia.



## 2010 | PAM FLEMING

Fleming's outgoing personality helped her carry on a tradition she first learned from her parents: help people in need. She was honored for her work in helping to create the boundless playground at Riverfront Park in Sheffield. The playground is play-friendly to any child, regardless of his or her abilities, with a sandbox that wheelchair-bound children can roll up to and play in. Fleming also was instrumental in getting a new home for the Ealy family when their daughter, Shanteki, was diagnosed with leukemia and was told she could not return to her home because of its condition.



## 2011 | DEBBIE RAPPUHN

Rappuhn took her daughter to the Florence-Lauderdale Animal Shelter for a school project but soon returned to offer her services as a volunteer. She painted and scrubbed and initiated improvements that included a cat habitat room, a puppy room and a laundry room with a sink for bathing animals. She was appalled at the number of animals euthanized and dedicated countless days to finding homes for those unwanted pets – even if it meant sending them to other shelters and homes across the country.

## 2012 | ELBA BARNES

Barnes needed to care for her ailing parents and moved from Birmingham to Florence to be near them. She soon realized there was an important gap in available services in the area: there was no place where adults like her parents could go for social interaction, exercise and art activities. Such a place would also offer respite for caregivers. Barnes brought an idea for an adult day care to Westminster Presbyterian Church. In July 2009, Westminster Interfaith Caring Place opened, initially as a Sunday-only program. By November, it was offering a mid-week break so caregivers could go Christmas shopping. Eventually the nonprofit center would operate Monday through Friday.





## 2013 | SARAH JENNIFER THOMPSON

After Thompson's sister, Sidney, died in January 2006, Thompson honored her sister's memory and founded Sidney's Safe! Foundation. It was a place where other women could learn how to stand strong against domestic abuse and how to seek recovery from addiction. The foundation has branched out to help children, too. It is an outreach that provides hundreds of bags of food a week to local schoolchildren who otherwise would go hungry.

## 2014 | SUSIE MARTIN

Susie Martin was only required to spend four hours a month with the girl who became her "little" at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Shoals, but she and 13-year-old Sabrina Carles are together every weekend, all weekend. The program allows Sabrina to be Martin's Little until she is 15, but Martin jokes she will keep her until Sabrina gets married.



## 2015 | ANGIE HAMILTON

Angie Hamilton presented the idea for a one-stop center that could streamline help for victims of domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse and physical abuse, and elder abuse – cases she saw regularly as an assistant district attorney in Lauderdale County. The idea was immediately well received, and One Place of the Shoals was born.



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## 2016 | NINON PARKER

Ninon Parker grew up on the front lines of celebrating the history of the Shoals, including as a member of Ivy Green's first cast of "The Miracle Worker" – the stage play that celebrates the awakening of Helen Keller to the world around her. Parker's community involvement is one of historical preservation and business promotion that keeps the Shoals a vital place that recognizes its important past, as well as its exciting future.



## 2017 | MERCY WINTERS

A member of the Salvation Army Women's auxiliary, Mercy Winters was instrumental in bringing the successful Empty Bowl Luncheon to the Shoals as a fundraiser for the Salvation Army each year. She is hands-on in her volunteer work, not only in helping to plan the luncheon each year, but leading her "clay mates" group to meet at her and her husband's ceramic business to make the bowls that are featured at the luncheon. She has even gotten her neighborhood involved in community charity work by organizing an Iron Bowl event that benefits a different charity each year.

## 2018 | JESSICA DAVENPORT

Jessica Davenport's children, Kruz and Paizlee, were born with Schimke Immuno-Osseous Dysplasia, or SIOD. In simple, dire terms, the children have a rare form of dwarfism that brings with it renal failure and a weakened immune system. It's also fatal, with a life expectancy of 9 to 11 years. Instead of falling apart, Davenport founded Kruzn for a Kure Foundation and has raised the \$1 million needed to get the attention of wealthy philanthropists who can raise the \$6 million needed to kick researchers into finding a cure for the rare disease. In the 12 months since Davenport received the Shoals Woman of the Year award, she and her husband Kyle have moved to California where Kruz has not only received his mother's stem cells, but one of her kidneys as well. Paizlee is being prepped to receive the same from her father. Keep abreast on these remarkable children and their parents through Jessica Davenport's Facebook page or the Kruzn for a Kure Foundation Facebook page.







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