

**A Grand Ole
St. Joe Opry**

ST. JOSEPH, TN.— A Grand Ole Opry/Tribute to the Stars and Dance Event is scheduled for 6pm Saturday, February

18 at the St. Joseph Civic Center, 10 Park Drive in St. Joseph, TN. If you like the music

and performances of Stars like Patsy Cline, Marty Robbins, Elvis, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Everly Brothers, The Judds, Roy Orbison,

The Platters, The Coasters and others, you'll love this show.

Dancers are invited. Admission is only \$10. You'll get your money's worth the first 15 minutes and the rest of the show is absolutely free. For more information, please call 256-762-7383

**Lauderdale
Bee Winners**

FLORENCE—The Lauderdale County Spelling Bee took place recently at Wilson Elementary School, the regular host School because it is centrally located. All area schools are encouraged to have a spelling bee, the winner of which participates in the Lauderdale County Spelling Bee. Each participant in the

See SHORTS... on Page 2



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Volume 139 Number 17

February 15, 2023

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MUSCLE SHOALS – Lionheart Youth Wrestling Club is proud to announce their state champions from the AYWO State Championships held recently at Thompson High School in Alabaster. Over 800 of the state's youth representing just over 50 clubs met for one final showdown of the season. After a grueling two-day tournament, Lionheart took 2nd place in the 8U team duals. Several Lionheart wrestlers came home with first-place finishes in solo competition, cementing their place among the best in

See LIONHEART... on Page 11

Spring '23 Sees Record Enrollment at Heritage

FLORENCE—Heritage Christian University is pleased to report the highest enrollment of credit students in the 55 year history of the university for the Spring 2023 semester. This semester marks an increase of 13% from a record-breaking Fall 2022 semester and an astounding 74% increase since the Spring 2020 semester. In addition, the historic numbers include 86 graduate students. This is another record for HCU.

Vice President of Student Services, Travis Harmon, who has been employed with HCU for over 25 years, leads the enrollment department's

efforts. "This is a very exciting time for Heritage Christian University. HCU is thriving and carrying out its mission," said Harmon. "The future is bright for ministers, the Lord's Church, and HCU!"

While 162 credit students is monumental for the university, this does not take into account the numerous students who choose to audit classes instead of taking them for credit. All HCU courses are available to be audited, either on campus or through the distance learning program. For more information, visit www.hcu.edu.



INSIDE This Issue

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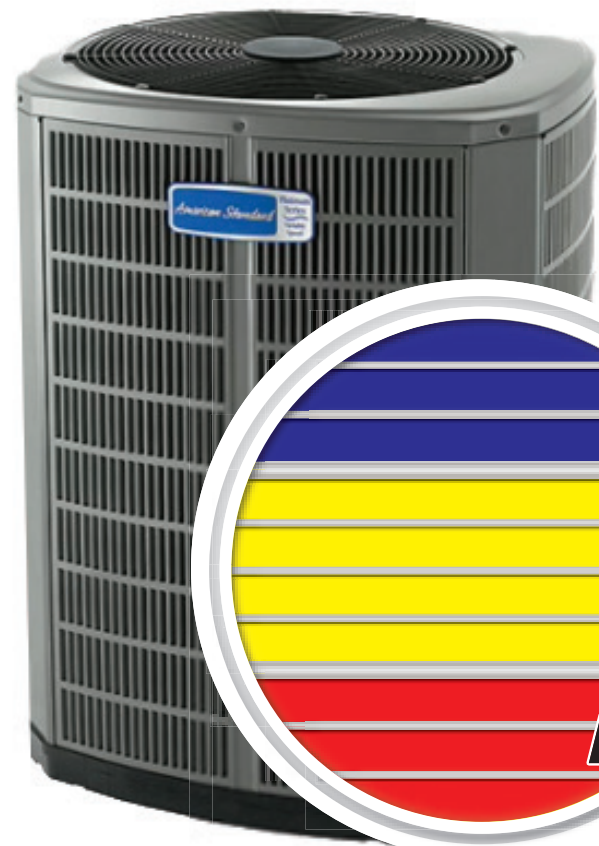
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Shorts...

Lauderdale Bee Winners

Continued from Page 1

county-wide Bee receives a recognition certificate for representing their school.

In addition, the county winner and second place recipient both received a trophy from Florence Trophy Company and a gift card from Lauderdale County Teachers Credit Union, sponsor of Lauderdale County Spelling Bee.

The Lauderdale County Spelling Bee Winner 2023 is **Kinley Scott** from Central School. Runner-up is **Gentry Bilyeu** from Shoals Christian School. Scott advances to the Alabama State Spelling Bee March 18 in Birmingham.

As the Lauderdale County winner, Scott will participate in the Alabama State Spelling Bee in March. All 67 counties from the state of Alabama are represented. The winner from each State Bee will participate in the Scripps National Spelling Bee which takes place annually on the Tuesday-Thursday after Memorial Day weekend.



Scott



Bilyeu

Courtesy photos

to the national program were acquired by the E.W. Scripps Company in 1941 and is hosted on a non-profit basis.

UCP Readies for Telethon

SHOALS-United Cerebral Palsy of Northwest Alabama is gearing up for its 59th Annual Telethon from 1-4pm on Sunday, March 5 on My8 TV.

"Just about every local civic group supports the telethon financially each year as well as so many of our local churches," said UCP Center Executive Director, **Alison Isbell**. "We could not be more grateful for the community's support."

"Florence High School produces our telethon each year," she added. "The teachers and students there do a wonderful job."

UCP provides free therapy and services to children in northwest Alabama who are developmentally disabled/delayed. They currently serve approximately 60 children who have various delays or disabilities such as cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, cleft palate, spina bifida, etc.

"Basically, if a child has a delay in their development, UCP can help," said Isbell. "Through a grant with the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect, UCP also provides money to families who have children who are developmentally delayed to help them pay for sitters."

UCP provides preschool services to children of all abilities through its WeeCare preschool program.

All money raised on March 5 will stay in northwest Alabama to help local children and their families.

UNA Building is Renamed

FLORENCE- A \$3.5 million gift from the estate of **Horace and Mary Jane Sanders** has

See SHORTS... on Page 7

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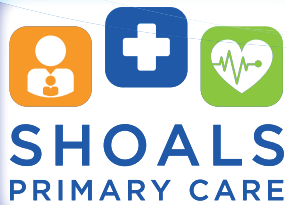
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Dr. Shah is also welcoming new patients.

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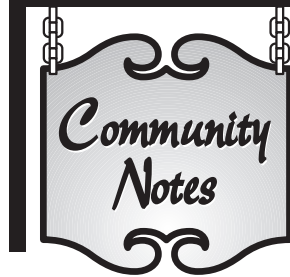
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- Email to editor@courierjournal.net;
- Look for "Submit News" on our website at www.courierjournal.net.
- Fax to 256-760-9618;
- Mail to 219 W. Tennessee St, Florence, AL 35630; or
- Bring in person.

All properly submitted Community Notes which are dated will be posted weekly at www.courierjournal.net. We do our best, however, there is no guarantee that this free information will be published each week in the paper. Visit our website for a complete list of community notes. If your item MUST appear in the paper a certain week, we suggest you also place a paid ad by calling 256-764-4268. That way it will be in at least one area of the paper. When your community note is published, your event will have coverage in two different locations.

Ryerson & Associates are hosting their 16th Annual Dentistry from the Heart, Friday, February 17, 7am-5pm, 1013 E. Avalon Ave, Muscle Shoals,

Patients will be seen on a first come, first serve basis. One procedure per patient: choice of filling, cleaning or extraction at no cost.

Registration starts at 6:30am. the first patient will be seen at 7am. The first 75 patients are guaranteed to be seen.

Shoals Artists Guild Meeting Friday, February 17, 10am-Noon at the Southall-Moore House, next to the Kennedy-Douglass Art Center, Downtown Florence. For more info, contact Carolyn Wear, 256-710-6854.

Utility Assistance for Elderly & Disabled Open Now - Community Action of Northwest Alabama. We will be accepting applications / appointments from Elderly (60 & Older) households, as well as Disabled households for the month of February. Come by the office at 745 Thompson St., Florence and pick up an application. Appointments will be open to the general public at a later time.

Songs of Praise will be singing at Hawk Pride Mountain Fire Department, Saturday, February 18 at 3pm. Everyone is welcome.

Northwest Alabama Beekeepers Association - Beginners Beekeeping Class at Helen Keller Library, Feb 18, 8am-3pm. Located at 511. N. Main St., Tusculumbia. \$65 to include lunch and a book (cash or check only). Contact Connie Casey 812-453-2324 or cnn_csy@yahoo.com to register.

Grand Ole Opry / Tribute to the Stars and Dance Event is scheduled for 6pm Saturday, February 18 at the St. Joseph TN Civic Center, 10 Park Drive, St. Joseph, TN. If you like the music and performances of Stars like Patsy Cline, Marty Robbins, Elvis, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Everly Brothers, The Judds, Roy Orbison, The Platters, The Coasters and others, you'll love this show. Dancers are invited. Admission is only \$10. You'll get your money's worth the first 15 minutes and the rest of the show is absolutely free. For more info call 256-762-7383

Lexington Senior Center Swamp John's Dinner - Monday, February 20, 4pm-7pm. Your choice of Shrimp, Fish or Chicken. Meal includes: Slaw, Fries Dessert and Drink. \$14 per plate.

Tusculumbia Park and Recreation Department - Deadline is Feb. 20. Taking registration for Tee Ball, Baseball and Softball. For more info, call 256-386-5655.

Florence Knights of Columbus Council 3989 - Fish Fry, Feb 24, March 10 & March 24 at Saint Joseph Catholic School, 115 Plum Street, Florence.

4:15-6:45pm.
 Adults \$15, Children (age 4-6) \$5.
 Catfish Fillets, Hush Puppies, Coleslaw, Baked Potatoes, French Fries & Dessert. Cheese Pizza available (Kids Only)
 All proceeds go to the Knights of Columbus Council 3989 Charity.

Saturday, March 10-11 at Florence-Lauderdale Coliseum on Veterans Dr, Florence.

March 10 from 6am-7pm and Saturday, March 11 from 6am-1pm. All proceeds are donated to child/family-focused organizations in the Shoals.

Florence Knights of Columbus - Annual Pancake Day Friday and See NOTES... page 8

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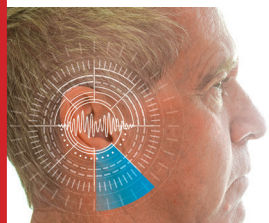
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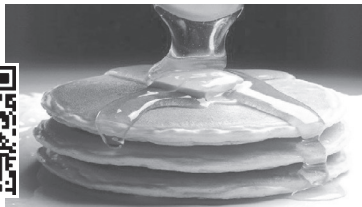


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Tickets are available from Florence Kiwanis members OR at these Florence locations:

- First Southern Bank (301 S Court Street) • Harris Elder Law Office (407 S Court Street)
- Progress Bank (230 E Tennessee Street) • <http://florencekiwanis.com/>

Shorts...

UNA Building is Renamed

Continued from Page 2

facilitated the renaming of the Sanders College of Business and Technology at the University of North Alabama. The naming was made official earlier this week after unanimous approval by the UNA Board of Trustees during a special-called meeting.

“Generous gifts such as this from the Sanders Family are meaningful on a campus of UNA’s size simply because they make a significant impact for generations of students and faculty to come,” said Dr. Ken Kitts, UNA President.

The couple owned and operated Russellville

Hospital from the late 1960s until 1973 when they sold the facility to Humana. They remained in Russellville for another decade.

“This gift is an opportunity to give back to the community where it all came from,” said their youngest son, Bill Sanders, the executor of his father’s estate. “The majority of the gifting my parents have made has been with Christian missions, but this was meeting a need in the northwest Alabama community.

“The College has the largest MBA program in the state. And when we learned of the years of funding issues that had plagued UNA, it made our gift even more significant,” Sanders said.

An Excellence Award at LCU

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) announced that Listerhill Credit Union will receive the prestigious 2022 TNCPE Excellence Award.

An organization recognized with the Excellence Award is an outstanding example of a high-performance organization and has demonstrated management excellence with superior results over time.

Listerhill Credit Union, headquartered in Muscle Shoals, is a nonprofit financial cooperative with a mission to improve lives in the communities it serves. The Excellence Award is the highest of

the state level awards, the others in assension being Interest, Commitment, and Achievement.

According to Brad Green, President and CEO of Listerhill, that mission drives the credit union toward continuous improvement every day. “Our employees have played a big part in our success,” said Green, who has served in the credit union’s leadership since 2008. “I’ve always hoped Listerhill would become an organization marked by excellence. I’m pleased that Listerhill is now a TNCPE Excellence Award Winner poised to begin our journey in pursuit of the national Baldrige Award.”

Baldrige provides a framework to improve an organization’s performance for long-

See SHORTs... on Page 21

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My Grace Is Sufficient

There are basically three kinds of biblical condemnations. 1. **Self.** Titus 3:11 “Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” See also Matthew 12:37. 2. **Devil.** “1 Timothy 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”

See also: Jude 1:4. 3. **God.** Romans 5:16 “And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.” John 3:18

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” See also: 2 Thessalonians 2:12. Read: Romans 5:20 “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. (But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound).” The Apostle Paul prayed three times for God to remove a messenger of Satan from him and God replied: 2 Corinthians 12:9a “And he said unto me, (*My grace is sufficient for thee;*) for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

God’s answer for sin and suffering is (GRACE)! So many of you out there have been told: “you’re living in sin,” and “there’s no hope for you,” if you’ve had the misfortune of divorce and you’ve remarried and you’ve been **ALREADY** judged **BY MEN**, condemned to a devil’s hell. **The bible answer to that is (GRACE).** There is no sin (*except unbelief*) that God cannot forgive or suffering that God can’t carry you through and sustain you, but by His amazing grace! See James 4:6. Don’t give up on God! Jesus knows all about sin and suffering and hell, seeing He paid our sin debt with His blood, suffering, and death on the cross. But God raised Christ up from the dead. Believe God over false information. **God’s grace through faith in the blood of Christ is sufficient for your forgiveness and salvation.** Trust Christ and the words in the KJV. **Don’t let legalists use the law, (that they can’t keep,) to destroy the salvation by grace through faith in Christ’s blood, God has provided for you.** Call me for questions?

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Sunday services at 10am and 11am and 6pm

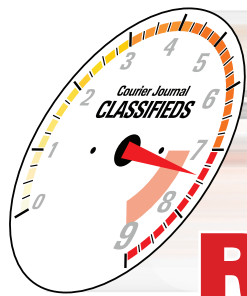
Visitors welcome!

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF ALABAMA, COLBERT COUNTY NOTICE OF ABANDONED AND UNCLAIMED MOTOR VEHICLES

Notice is hereby given that on **02/18/2023 at 11:00am** the following motor vehicles will be sold at public auction FOR CASH. The auction will be held at **Smitty’s Wrecker Service, 212 Industrial Dr., Muscle Shoals, AL 35661**. Smitty’s Wrecker Service will accept proof of ownership should anyone care to submit same, Monday through Friday the hours between 9am and 5pm until day of sale. **Vehicles may be viewed starting 02/16/2023 between the hours of 9am and 5pm.** ALL VEHICLES ARE SOLD AS IS PARTS ONLY. ALL SALES ARE FINAL. NO TITLES OFFERED!!

YEAR/MAKE/MODEL	VIN#	YEAR/MAKE/MODEL	VIN#
1996 Mercury Sable	1MELM51UXTA653736	2005 Chevrolet Silverado	1GCEC19V95Z353793
2000 Chevrolet Camaro	2G1FP22K3Y2162773	2007 Nissan Xterra	5N1AN08U97C546717
1994 Chevrolet 1500	2GCEC19K2R1282490	2001 Mercury Marquis	2MEFM75W91X712593
2006 Yamaha Motorcycle	JYAVM01E86A089447	1993 Chevrolet Camaro	2G1FP22P4P2137438
1990 Chevrolet Van	1GBEG25K1L7149380	1990 Dodge Ram	1B7FD14T1ES229114
2000 Chevrolet Malibu	1G1NE52J9Y6193597	2014 Chevy Cruze	1G1PC5SB3E7343085
2006 Lincoln	3LNHM26196R62952	2006 Ford Explorer	1FMFU63E46UA52393
2001 Ford Taurus	1FAFP53U21A293595	2009 Ford Fusion	3FAHP081X9R203945
2014 Ford Taurus	1FAHP2F89EG105812	2007 Hyundai Tiburon	KMHHM66DX7U259470
2016 Hyundai Sonata	KMHE24L15GA013810	2019 Mitsubishi Mirage	ML32F3FJ3KHF04576
2008 Honda Accord	1HGCP26838A040632	2007 Nissan Altima	1N4AL21E87C165195
2004 Hyundai Accent	KMHCG35C84U280029	2004 Ford Expedition	1FMFU17L14LA97603
2005 Nissan Altima	1N4BL11E95C111965	2002 Honda Accord	1HGCG22522A011089
1994 Ford Mustang	1FALP4044RF159994	1985 GMC Van	2G5EG25H4F4520460
2004 Honda 4-Wheeler		2004 Ford Taurus	1FAFP55214A187722
2010 Ford Ranger	1FTKR1AD9APA08239	2000 Pontiac Grand Am	1G2NF52T3YM868477
2011 Ford Crown Vic	2FABP7BV7BX176544	1997 Honda Accord	1HGCD5630VA146563
2007 Honda Civic	2HGFG12627H572045	2004 Cadillac Escalade	1GYEK63N14R226957
2002 Chevrolet 1500	1GCEC14V32Z183112	1998 Buick Le Sabre	1G4HR52K3WHSO8103
2004 Pontiac Grand Prix	2G2WP522441213369	1990 Dodge Ram	1B7GE16Y1LS754858
2000 Ford Taurus	1FAFP55S1YA209143	2004 Infinity	JNKCV51F04M704288
1998 GEO Tracker	2CNBJ13C6X6920598	2006 Hyundai Sonata	5NPEU46F06H011444
2001 Honda	JH2SC44021M106193		



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FAX - 24 HRS - Charge to Credit / Debit Card by faxing an ad to **256-760-9618**. Include exp. date. List how many weeks the ad is to run.

MAIL - Mail your written ad to address at right. Include your phone number. We will call to finalize your ad. List how many weeks the ad is to run.

OFFICE - Drop by our office at your convenience 8-5 Monday-Friday and write/submit it there.

ADVANCE PAYMENT IS REQUIRED in cash, check or Credit/Debit Card. Phone-in Ads MUST be Charged to Credit/Debit Card! NO EXCEPTIONS! NO REFUNDS!

DEADLINE: Friday 5pm

Private Party Rate 4 LINES Each additional line - \$1.50 - Prepay - NO REAL ESTATE - 1 item per ad - 4 Weeks/3 lines 1 ITEM \$16 Each additional line - add \$5	\$5⁵⁰ Week
Commercial Rate 4 LINES Each additional line add \$1.50 - applies to anyone engaged in sale of goods/services on a recurring basis or for profit, licensed or not - including pets. 6 Weeks \$36 - Each additional line - add \$7.50 total	\$8⁰⁰ Week
Real Estate Rate 5 LINES Each additional line add \$1.50 - applies to agencies, individual, developers and anyone engage in selling, renting, leasing structures and/or properties in Real Estate or General section. 6 Weeks \$36 Each additional line - add \$7.50 total	\$8⁰⁰ Week
Yard Sales 6 LINES Each additional line - \$1.50 YARD SALES - An exclusive listing of the area's better sales prominently placed	\$12⁵⁰ Week
Employment 6 LINES Each additional line - \$2.25 EMPLOYMENT - Looking for employment or Businesses looking for employees	\$15⁵⁰ Week
Private Party Auto Rate Up to 8 LINES for 4 weeks. Each additional line - \$2.00	\$17⁰⁰ 4 wks

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Please Print Ad Clearly. NOT RESPONSIBLE for illegible handwriting

Questions? Call our office at 256-764-4268.

Community Notes...

Continued from page 4

There is space for YOUR EVENT here, and plenty of eyes to read it. Email your information to editor@CourierJournal.net.

Riverhill School's Chili Cook-Off will take place on Saturday, February 25 from 2-6pm at Singin' River Live in downtown Florence. This is a family friendly event with delicious food, tasty beverages, excellent entertainment, and fun for all ages!

The energetic atmosphere created by the chili cooking teams will make for a great tasting by the guests. Cooking teams will vie for the approval of a small panel of judges and guests, alike, in the hopes of taking home an award for their winning chili recipe. While the sponsors and their teams focus on winning the chili contest, the attendees from across the Shoals area will enjoy the food, fun, and good-humored rivalry. Tickets are \$10 to taste them all. Kids under 12 enter free. The proceeds from this fundraiser event will benefit Riverhill School. For more information, visit riverhill-school.org/riverhill-chili-cook-off-2023/

pre-registration applications for the 2023-2024 School Year. Enrollment is open to all children four years of age on or before 9/1/23 who are residents of Alabama. (Children who are eligible for kindergarten are not eligible for pre-k.)

Pre-Registration Dates: Now - March 16, 2023. Pre-Registration Application: to pre-register, go online to <https://prek.alaceed.alabama.gov>

Acceptance into a First Class Pre-K program is strictly through a random drawing. Parent/Guardian does not have to be present at drawing. Email notices of acceptance will be sent in mid-April.

Random Drawing Details for Ekklesia Preschool: March 17, 2023 - 10:30 AM Ekklesia Preschool, Muscle Shoals Location.

Northwest Alabama Spay & Neuter Assistance - In honor of Spay & Neuter Awareness and World Spay Day, one of our supporters has agreed to match all donations received during the month of February, up to \$5,000. All donations received go directly towards spay/neuter surgeries.

Matching gifts: you donate, they match, double the impact. You can donate through our Facebook page, PayPal at donate@nasana.org, or through PayPal Giving Fund by clicking on the donate button on our website, www.nasana.org. You can also mail donations to: NASANA, 2701 Mall Drive, PMB 266, Florence, AL 35630.

Whether it's \$1, \$5 or \$10, or more, your donation to NASANA at any time in February will be doubled. Since we are a 510(c)(3) organization, every donation is tax deductible.

Florence Parks and Rec will be offering small group ballroom dance lessons on Thursdays beginning in January with Monica Patterson at the Royal Ave. Recreation Center. Beginner class 1-2pm, Intermediate class 2-3pm. Call 256-760-6425 for more information or to sign up. Space is limited.

Florence Parks and Rec will be offering individual / couple Ballroom Dance lessons. These lessons are perfect for weddings, formals, proms, lead outs, cotillions, etc. Call 256-760-6425 to schedule a lesson. Select times available.

Florence Parks and Recreation Department is conducting registration for Youth Baseball, Youth Soccer, and Youth Softball programs through February 24.

Youth Baseball is open to age groups 3-12. You may register online at www.FPARD.com. Registration Fee is \$35 per player. For more information, contact David Dolan at ddolan@florenceal.org or 256-718-5091.

Youth Soccer is open for boys and girls ages 4-13 years old. Registration is \$45 and includes a team shirt. You may register online at www.FPARD.com. For more information, contact Augie Erbe at erbe@florenceal.org or 256-718-5087.

Youth Softball is open for ages 5-12. You may register online at www.FPARD.com. Registration Fee is \$35 per player. For more information, contact Zach Tverberg at ztverberg@florenceal.org or 256-718-5054.

3rd Annual Underwood Youth Complex Car Show - Saturday, March 4. Calling all show cars, bikes and trucks! Come be a part of our park fund-raiser. Entry fee is \$20 per ride. Fee can be paid at the gate. There will also be a parts swap that day. Show starts at 10am with check-in at 9am! Our concession stand will be open to purchase drinks etc.

Come be a part of teh show and help raise money for the park to purchase needed supplies, etc. You can message the Underwood Facebook page for info.

LifeSouth is in emergency need for blood donors. This year continues to be difficult for LifeSouth and blood centers across the country with the impact of the pandemic causing a decrease in blood donations, while the need to help patients in local hospitals continues to increase.

Regular blood donors who have not given recently and first-time donors can make a major impact by donating. One donation can save up to three lives.

Donate at the Center, 307 Veterans Drive, Florence. Schedule an appointment, 256-765-7038. www.lifesouth.org. The hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-5pm; Tuesday and Thursday 9am-7pm; Saturday 9am-3pm; Sunday 1-5pm.

To find a donor center or mobile blood drive near you, visit lifesouth.org or call 888-795-2707. Blood donors must be at least 17 or 16 with parental permission, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be in good health. A photo ID is required. LifeSouth donors receive a complimentary cholesterol screening with each donation.

LifeSouth Blood Drive Dates

Wednesday, Feb. 15 Shoals Christian School, 10am-5pm, Florence.

Thursday, Feb. 16 Darby Doors 7am - 2pm, Florence

Friday, Feb. 17 Service One Transport Inc., 11am-5pm, Muscle Shoals.

Saturday, Feb. 18 Walmart, 10am - 4pm, Florence - Cloverdale.

Sunday, Feb. 19 Highland Park Baptist Church, 8am-1pm /Muscle Shoals.

Monday, Feb. 20 Applied Chemical Technology, 10am-4pm, Florence.

Tuesday, Feb. 21 Hackleburg High School, 7:30am - 4pm.

Wednesday, Feb. 22 Deshler High School, 7:30am - 4pm, Tuscumbia.

Thursday, Feb. 23 Amedisys Hospice, 10am-5pm, Hamilton.

Friday, Feb. 17 24 Big Star, 1am-6pm, Red Bay.

Saturday, Feb. 25 BAM, 10am-4pm, Florence.

Sunday, Feb. 26 Walmart, 10am-4pm, Muscle Shoals.

The Healing Place will host a support group, Tuesday, February 28 from Noon-1pm. Support group and information session for Grandparents Raising Grieving Grandchildren. We will offer light refreshments and provide information and discussion to participants. 2409 Wildwood St. in Muscle Shoals.

RSVP by calling 256-383-7133 or messaging us on Facebook/Instagram.

Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education, First Class Pre-K Alabama's Voluntary Pre-K Program Pre-Registration. First Class Pre-K Programs are accepting online



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Monday - Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm

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CLASSIFIED ADS - 5 pm Friday unless otherwise specified

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Fax: 256-760-9618

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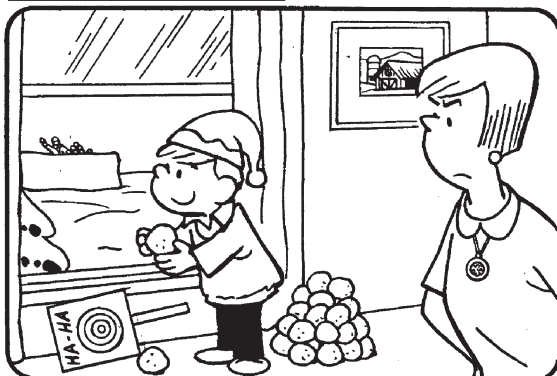
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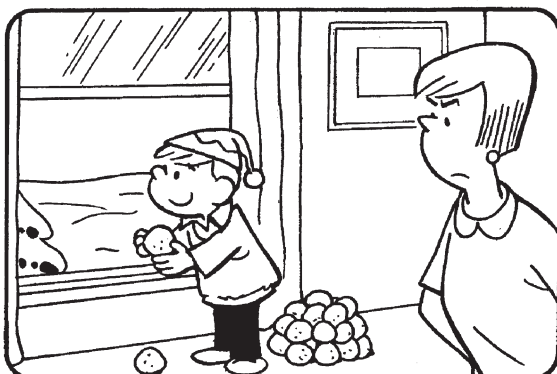
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Snow fort is missing. 2. Sign is missing. 3. Cap differs. 4. Snowball stack is smaller. 5. Picture is missing. 6. Pendant is missing.

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See NOTES... page 15

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COMBINATION/KEY SAFE, \$60 OBO, 256-686-1227 Decatur

CHEVROLET: ASTRO VAN, 1996 \$3,500, 115,415 miles, caged cargo bay, tool boxes, 256-942-4489 Florence

GMC: ACADIA DELILA EDITION, 2012 \$13,950. 1 owner, all-wheel drive, sunroof, leather, navigation, and DVD. White in color, just serviced. **Super Clean!** 256-527-2125.

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LionHeart...

Continued from Page 1

Alabama. This put the Shoals on the map as one of the teams to watch in the fastest growing sport in the southeast.

1st Place finishes were:

Gideon Standridge
Tuscumbia,
4-6 years, 50 lb. class

Colton Pearson Florence,
7-8 years, 70 lb. class

Jake Niswander, Killen,
11-12 years, 60 lb. class

CJ Bolding, Florence,
13-14 years, 220 lb. class

Other top finishes:
Luke Niswander 2nd
(7-8, 40lb.), Killen
Blaise Ludington 2nd (13-
14, 120 lb.) Tuscumbia
Ace Hand 4th
(7-8, 75lb), Central
Joseph Pezzatta 4th
(10-11, 103 lb.), Killen

"Our wrestlers have shown tremendous character and determination this season," said Coach Andrew Schoenherr. "It's a privilege to see these kids grow as individuals and as a team. I couldn't be prouder of all their hard work and accomplishments and the families and coaches that make it all possible."

Lionheart Youth Wrestling Club would like to thank the parents, coaches, sponsors, and community for their unwavering love and support. The club continues to welcome new members and aims to grow the sport of wrestling at home in the Shoals. Find them on Facebook @ LionheartYWC for more information

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MY LAST EXCITING INSTALLMENT INTRODUCED both of my readers to a strange new world of an artificial intelligence model called ChatGPT that is smart enough to write my article for me.

Okay, maybe that's not exactly a high bar of achievement, but it was smart enough to impress me.

So, what does this development mean for my job, your job, and the human race?

It's a question that humans have pondered since the dawn of computers. Growing up, something called the Turing Test was considered the gold standard for whether or not a



Jim Fisher

I DIDN'T WRITE THIS ONE, EITHER!

by "The Computer Skeptic"

computer was sentient. The idea was developed by Alan Turing in 1950 as a test for whether a computer possessed human intelligence. If that test is ever passed, our race will undergo rapid changes in every way imaginable. So, does ChaptGPT pass the test? Is it truly intelligent? To find out, I asked ChatGPT a series of questions to see how it responded.

Me: "What is your favorite food?" ChatGPT: "As a language model AI, I don't have personal preferences, but I have learned

that humans often enjoy pizza and burgers."

Well, that was a bit disappointing. It seems that ChatGPT is not much of a foodie. But perhaps it has better taste in music.

Me: "What's your favorite song?" ChatGPT: "As a language model AI, I don't have personal preferences, but I have learned that humans often enjoy songs such as 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by Queen and 'Imagine' by John Lennon." Okay, so it seems that ChatGPT is not really into personal

preferences. But perhaps it can hold a conversation.

Me: "Do you believe in aliens?" ChatGPT: "As a language model AI, I don't have personal beliefs, but I have learned that the possibility of extraterrestrial life existing is a topic of interest for many humans." Well, that's not exactly a scintillating conversation, is it? ChatGPT seems to be lacking in the charisma department.

So, the verdict is in. ChatGPT fails the Turing test with flying colors. It may be the most advanced language model AI to date, but when it comes to exhibiting human-like behavior, it falls short. It's clear that there is still a long way to go before we can truly say that AI has reached human-level intelligence.

In conclusion, while ChatGPT is an impressive piece of technology, it is not yet ready to pass the Turing test. But who knows what the future holds? Perhaps one day, we'll have AI that is truly indistinguishable from human intelligence. Until then, we'll just have to settle for chatbots that answer questions in a robotic and uninteresting way.

By the way, I only wrote the 1st paragraph of this article. ChatGPT wrote the rest. Isn't that amazing?

Jim Fisher owns *Excel Computer Services* in Florence. Reach him at www.ExcelAL.com

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Commentary

LeBrat Far Below Abdul-Jabbar

Last Tuesday as I was arriving home, I remembered that the NBA's Los Angeles Lakers were playing a night game at home in which its star player, LeBron James, had a chance to eclipse Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's all-time NBA individual scoring record. It was a chance to catch a little sports history.

In full disclosure, I have never liked LeBron James, from the first time he entered the NBA 20 years ago. As celebrated high-school talent, he was already above college talent level in his second pro season. In addition, I have never liked the Lakers, and for that matter have always disliked UCLA Bruin basketball (relevancy in a moment).

Admittedly a top all-time player, James is 6' 9" and 250 lbs so he was blessed with the physical gifts to dominate.

Other than being a generational talent, LeBron has never offered me anything to like. He was celebrated in high school, so he

See **LEBRAT-JABBAR...** on Page 34

Comments do not necessarily represent those of the Courier Journal staff, its advertisers, or its readers.

In A Few Words



TOM MAGAZZU
Editor

Courier Journal

in the *Shoals*

THIS WEEK

February 15, 2023

Happening
THIS WEEK



Backyard Bird Count

International Favorite Underway February 17

It's time for the annual Great Backyard Bird Count!

This grand event grew from simpler beginnings including feeder counts. However, over the past quarter century the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) has expanded into a worldwide birding celebration that takes place over four days in February each year. This year you can participate in the 26th annual GBBC anytime over President's Day weekend,

See **BIRD COUNT...** on Pg 32

The Bearer of the Morning

FLORENCE—The monthly Young Learners Series of programs at Florence Indian Mound Museum allows students to explore the early history of the Shoals through short lessons and hands-on learning exercises. The programs will explore 12 Native American figures through their biographies, contributions, hopes, and accomplishments.

Students are given a passport with the 12 figures and they receive a stamp for each program attended.



Te Ata
guerreirosioux.blogspot.com

YOUNG LEARNERS SERIES

Feb. 18 10am

See **TE ATA...** on Page 27

YOU ARE INVITED TO SHARE SOME TIME with "Spooklights" author, Wyatt Cox, on Saturday, February 18 beginning at 2pm at the



Florence/Lauderdale Public Library. For many decades something unusual has been going on

in the northwest part of Lauderdale County. many say something is still in the skies above. You are invited to share your memories and experiences with Spooklights, Orbs, Saucer Nests, and other sightings, or just come to hear Wyatt discuss what people have shared with him over the years. You don't have to contribute. Just come and listen in!

LEXINGTON SENIOR CENTER SWAMP JOHN'S DINNER - Monday, February 20, 4pm-7pm. Your choice of Shrimp, Fish or Chicken. Meal includes: Slaw, Fries Dessert and Drink. \$14 per plate.

NORTHWEST ALABAMA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION is hosting a Beginners Beekeeping Class at Helen Keller Library, February 18 from 8am-3pm. 511 N. Main St. in Tusculumbia. \$65 to include lunch and a book (cash or check only). Contact Connie Casey 812-453-2324 or cnn_csy@yahoo.com to register.

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YOUR Letters

Your Courier Journal welcomes tastefully presented typed or neatly written letters to be published as space allows. Letters may refer to timely matters of local, state, or national interest or any topic of concern or interest. **Letters must include name, address and phone number for verification.** (Only name and town will be published.) Letters are subject to editing. Please limit letters to 400 words. All letters become the property of the Courier Journal and may not necessarily reflect opinions of the Courier Journal staff, its advertisers, or a majority of readers.

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Poor Police Attitude

Editor:

On the evening of Friday, February 3, I was sitting in my living room when two St. Florian Police SUV vehicles chased a pickup truck up to my house (which is a quarter mile

They are using state authority in the name of freedom to muzzle discussion...



off County Road 24). That was not the problem.

The problem is that I asked them to turn off the blue lights after they searched the vehicle they were chasing. For around 30 minutes they left their blue lights flashing while on my private property.

Since I am 90 years old with health issues, neighbors started calling me and one another to make sure I was okay. That caused me and my neighbors unneeded stress.

When a Lauderdale County Sheriff's deputy arrived on the scene, I asked him and the St. Florian officers to turn their blue lights off. The Sheriff's deputy had a smart attitude about it.

Horace Gray
Florence

Was War Declared?

Editor:

Dept of Defense and Joe Biden: "These tanks are needed...because Ukrainian forces are working to defend the territory they hold and will be better prepared for additional counter-offenses. They need to be able to counter Russia's evolving tactics and strategy on the battlefield in the very near term. And they need an enduring capability to deter and defend against Russian aggression over the long term."

This was just part of the long response sent to me by Congressman Robert B. Aderholt, (R) Dist. 4 Alabama.

See **LETTERS...** on Page 18

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520031-1

Notes...

Continued from page 8

United Cerebral Palsy of Northwest Alabama is gearing up for its 59th Annual Telethon taking place from 1-4pm Sunday, March 5 on My8 TV. Florence High School produces our telethon each year.

UCP provides free therapy and services to children in northwest Alabama who are developmentally disabled/delayed. They currently serve approximately 60 children who have various delays or disabilities including children who have cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, cleft palate, spina bifida, etc.

All money raised on March 5 will stay right here in northwest Alabama to help local children and their families.

Two middle-school students who live in Alabama House District 18 will receive scholarships to attend a special Space Camp program free of charge. A male and female student living in House District 18 (Jamie Kiel-R) of Colbert and Franklin counties will receive a scholarship to attend SALSA, which promotes science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education along with leadership skills.

Students ages 12 to 14 may apply at www.spacecamp.com/salsa or through their school counselor. Representative Kiel has notified all school systems in District 18 and they have the information needed to apply.

Applications will be accepted through Friday, March 31. The camp will take place in July 2023. Each scholarship includes tuition, room and board for the Space Academy program. Travel to and from the U.S. Space & Rocket Center is not included.

The Gerald Williams Cooperative Garden Program is administered each year through Community Action Agency of Northwest Alabama. It offers FREE vegetable garden supplies to help qualifying local residents wishing to grow their own gardens.

This year's sign-up period is from February 21- March 25.

Participants in the program must:

- Reside in Lauderdale, Colbert, or Franklin Counties
- Must not exceed monthly gross (prior to take-out see below) Maximum Monthly Incomes

- Single-person household - \$1,699
- 2-person household - \$2,289
- 3-person household - \$2,879
- 4-person household - \$3,469

For each additional person add \$590. Call 256-248-1921 from 1-4pm Monday-Friday.

The Cooperative Garden Program is a partnership of the Community Action Agency NW-AL, TVA retirees, Bicentennial Volunteers Inc., Southwire, and many others.

Registration Open — The Muscle Shoals Parks and Recreation Department is taking registration for Youth Track and Field through March 10. This is for ages 7-12 and the age cutoff date is June 1. Fee: \$35. For information, call Lee McIntyre, 256-386-9270.

The deadline for entry in Artistic Renderings of Youth is March 10. This is a juried exhibit of artwork open to 7th through 12th grade students from Colbert, Franklin, and Lauderdale counties. The exhibit runs March 20 - April 28 at Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts in Florence.

The exhibit and competition are coordinated by area art teachers. Schools may participate or students can enter on their own. Each student can enter up to three works. Entries are juried and, if accepted, are eligible for ribbons awarded in different grade level groupings. Works must be original and can be in any medium. All 2-dimensional entries must be matted or framed. Framed pieces and canvases must have hanging wire attached on the back.

See NOTES... page 31



Savvy SENIOR

How Much Do You Have to Make to File Taxes?

Dear Savvy Senior,
What are the IRS income tax filing requirements for retirees this tax season? My income dropped way down when I retired in 2022, so I'm wondering if I need to even file a tax return this year.

Recently Retired

Dear Recently,
Whether or not you are required to file a federal income tax return this year will depend on how much you earned last year, as well as the source of the income, your age and filing status.

Here's a rundown of this tax season's IRS tax filing requirement thresholds.

For most people, this is pretty straightforward. If your 2022 gross income – which includes all taxable income, not counting your Social Security benefits, unless you are married and filing separately – was below the threshold for your filing status and age, you may not have to file. But if it's over, you will.

- **Single:** \$12,950 (\$14,700 if you're 65 or older by Jan. 1, 2022).

- **Married filing jointly:** \$25,900 (\$27,300 if you or your spouse is 65 or older; or \$28,700 if you're both over 65).

- **Married filing separately:** \$5 at any age.

- **Head of household:** \$19,400 (\$21,150 if 65 or older).

- **Qualifying widow(er) with dependent child:** \$25,900 (\$27,300 if 65 or older).

To get a detailed breakdown on federal filing requirements, along with information on taxable and nontaxable income, call the IRS at 800-829-3676 and ask

them to mail you a free copy of the "1040 and 1040-SR Instructions for Tax Year 2022," or you can see it online at [IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040gi.pdf](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040gi.pdf).

Check Here Too

Be aware that there are other financial situations that can require you to file a tax return, even if your gross income falls below the IRS filing requirements. For example, if you earned more than \$400 from self-employment in 2022, owe any special taxes like an alternative minimum tax, or get premium tax credits because you, your spouse or a dependent is enrolled in a Health Insurance Marketplace plan, you'll need to file.

You'll also need to file if you're receiving Social Security benefits, and one-half of your benefits plus your other gross income and any tax-exempt interest exceeds \$25,000, or \$32,000 if you're married and filing jointly.

To figure all this out, the IRS offers an online tax tool that asks a series of questions that will help you determine if you're required to file, or if you should file because you're due a refund. It takes less than 15 minutes to complete.

You can access this tool at [IRS.gov/Help/ITA](https://www.irs.gov/Help/ITA) – click on "Do I Need to File a Tax Return?" Or you can get assistance over the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

Check Your State

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be

very different. Check with your state tax agency before concluding that you're entirely in the clear. For links to state tax agencies see [Taxadmin.org/state-tax-agencies](https://www.taxadmin.org/state-tax-agencies).

Tax Preparation Help

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can free file through the IRS at [IRS.gov/FreeFile](https://www.irs.gov/FreeFile) if your 2022 adjusted gross income was below \$73,000.

Or, if you need some help, contact the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (or TCE) program. Sponsored by the IRS, TCE provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit [IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep](https://www.irs.gov/freetaxprep) to locate services near you.

You can also get tax preparation assistance through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service. Call 888-227-7669 or visit [AARP.org/findtaxhelp](https://www.aarp.org/findtaxhelp) for more information. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

Send your senior questions to:

Savvy Senior,
P.O. Box 5443,
Norman, OK 73070,
or visit [SavvySenior.org](https://www.savvysenior.org).
Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.



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The Colbert County Commission

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Part Time Groundskeeper
IN THE MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

Starting pay is \$12.50 per hour
No benefits and will work 30 hours per week

Job Description and Application are available at the
Alabama Career Center

500 South Montgomery Ave., Sheffield
Deadline for applications is March 3, 2023

Colbert County Commission is an equal opportunity employer.

CITY OF MUSCLE SHOALS – JOB OPPORTUNITY LABORER STORM DRAINAGE

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Applications may be downloaded from our website,

www.cityofmuscleshoals.com

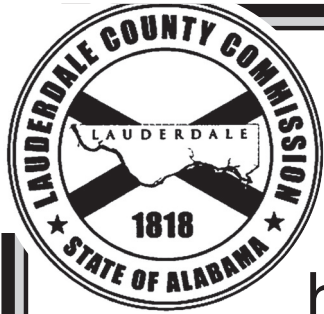
RESUMES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED IN LIEU OF APPLICATIONS.

Application Deadline Date: Friday, Feb. 24, 2023, 4:30PM

A current job description is available at city hall and the website which details essential functions of the job as well as knowledge, skills, abilities and physical requirements necessary for successful job performance. Any offer of employment is conditional based upon the successful applicant's satisfactory completion of a job related physical examination, drug and alcohol testing.

The City of Muscle Shoals participates in E-Verify, in compliance with a federal law to verify the identity and employment eligibility of all persons hired to work in the United States.

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Lauderdale County Courthouse

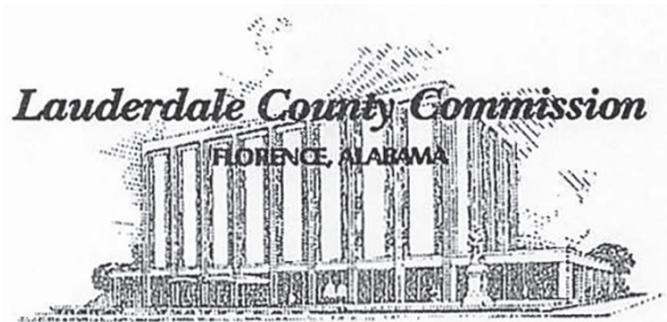
has the following positions available:

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- **Truck Driver (Solid Waste Dept)** \$33,500
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CLASSIFIED FORM ON PAGE 6

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Letters...

Was War Declared?

Continued from Page 14

However, what I asked him was simply if Congress had declared War on Russia.

Anita Boudoin
Florence

Thanks Mr. Fuller

Editor:

The Valdosta Green Wave family wants to thank Mr. Jason Fuller of the Tuscumbia City School System.

During the football field renovation, the flagpole planter and plaque (donated by the players, cheerleaders, coaches, and parents) were removed to the east end of the stadium.

Thanks to the present Supervisor, Jason Fuller, the project had been completed. Mr. Fuller and I consulted A.D. Mr. Smith and agreed on a relocation

spot. Mr. Fuller suggested putting the Memorial in front of the Athletic training center on North commons, across from the stadium. This was a great idea because of the daily exposure to students and parents alike.

The planter and plaque honor and remember hundreds of girls, boys, coaches, parents and volunteers of the Valdosta Green Wave Youth football and cheer leading program.

The memorial was paid for with money generated by the program and my mother and father, Sue and Doyle Lewis.

Again, thanks Jason for your cooperation in completing this project!

Larry Lewis and the Valdosta Green Wave Family!
Tuscumbia

Unsung Heroes

Editor:

I have never witnessed so many now-hiring signs in front of so many

businesses. Service is delayed because of a lack of help. Often when we have a breakdown of equipment in our homes, it is days or weeks before help is available. The same is true when you order anything via the internet.

Too often we spend so much time looking at what is wrong that we fail to see what is right. There are many businesses that are doing a great job of getting the job well done in an amazing time frame.

When we get our monthly utility bill, we probably only think of how much it costs. Do we ever stop to think about the service we receive?

A large tree fell over and destroyed the transformer bank and pole at the Singing River Church of Christ building on Wednesday, January 25. The Florence Electric Department was on the job in a very timely manner, and they were well-organized. The foreman was overseeing tree cutting and clean up, environmentally safe cleanup from transformers and installing a new pole and transformers. The

parking lot was blown and swept clean.

The foreman was concerned about our equipment at the church building, so before he reconnected the power, he contacted us to have someone there, so we could make sure everything was properly connected and operating correctly.

We had Wednesday night Bible Study on time. It was as if it never happened.

With the storms across our country recently, we have witnessed many of these unsung heroes. They are exposed to all kinds of weather conditions. Many departments come together to help each other during these times. May we never forget how blessed we are to have such dedicated men and women.

Although this event was not an emergency as many across the country were, it was treated as such.

Thank you Florence Electricity Department for a job well done.

Dickey Howard
Florence

More LETTERS... Page 26

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Shorts...

An Excellence Award at LCU

Continued from Page 7

term results in areas of Manufacturing, Service, Small Business, Education, Health Care, and Nonprofit/Government.

Green added, "Excellence is now officially our expectation at Listerhill. It's a journey toward always being our best. We can celebrate successes, build on strengths, and learn from failures in order to make ourselves better."

The 2022 TNCPE

Excellence Award will be accepted by representatives in March as part of the 2023 TNCPE Excellence Conference and Awards Celebration.

Spirit of the Shoals Awards

FLORENCE — The Shoals Chamber of Commerce will host its 2023 Spirit of the Shoals Best of Business Awards event at 6pm March 10 in Norton Auditorium.

Award winners will be selected from five finalists in each category including: emerging business, best small

business (1-10 employees), best small business (11-50 employees), best small business (51-plus employees), retailer of the year, and restaurant of the year.

Tickets are \$30 each, \$50/couple and are available online at <https://business.shoalschamber.com/events>

Series Merge for Feb. Event

FLORENCE – Jason Mott, the winner of the National Book Award for Fiction, will be the presenter for the combined University of North Alabama Writers' Series and Black History Month Speaker Series. Mott's presentation will be February 21 from 11am-12:15pm Performance Center of the Guillot University Center. This event is free and open to the public.

As part of the event, Mott will read samples of his work and participate in a Q and A session after the reading. There will also be a book signing at

the conclusion.

"This year, we've decided to combine the UNA Writers' Series with the Black History Month Speaker Series, and Jason Mott is a super addition to the list of writers who have been part of each series," said Jason McCall, Assistant Professor in the Department of English. "Jason Mott's writing is equal parts humorous and heavy, equal parts literary and relatable. Anyone who attends the event will have a chance to listen and learn from a writer who has remained rooted in his communities while also achieving success as a bestselling and award-winning writer."

In addition to Mott's reading, the Actors from the London Stage will be performing William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* February 24 at 7pm and February 25 at 2pm. Both performances will be in the GUC Performance Center. Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$5 for students, faculty, and staff.

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Our next Medicare Class is Thursday, Feb. 16th 11am-Noon @ Alabama Health Guidance 885 Florence Blvd. Florence, AL



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Our **"Third Thursday" Medicare Education Classes**, offered each month, allow you the opportunity to learn more. Call to register now to attend one of these classes!



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The Latest Internet Scams and How to Avoid Them

By **George Kamel**
Dave Ramsey Network

Online scammers have gotten so sneaky lately that it's not just your elderly grandparents at risk—boomers, millennials and even Gen Z-ers can get taken advantage of if they're not careful. That's because these shady weirdos keep switching up their scamming tactics based on current events and our constantly changing digital culture.

But the good news is, if you keep your guard up and follow these tips, you'll be way more likely to spot the scam and hold on to your hard-earned money. Here are five of the biggest internet scams to be aware of right now.

CRYPTOCURRENCY SCAMS

Crypto continues to be a trendy thing for the people who enjoy the thrill (and anxiety) of losing money at any given moment. And much like gambling, it can be addictive—a fact that scammers take advantage of. Cryptocurrency scams can happen in all kinds of ways. Scammers might set up fake websites that look like popular crypto sites in an attempt to get innocent people to send them money. They might also prey on people's fears of missing out on an investment with massive returns by creating a fake early investment opportunity and pitching it to people online.

STUDENT LOAN FOREGIVENESS SCAMS

Scammers know people are desperate to get their loans forgiven, and they'll often make fake forgiveness application

sites in hopes of stealing people's social security numbers, bank account info and cash. And because these people have absolutely no shame, these sites are often paired with urgent phone messages or emails trying to convince broke college grads it's their last chance to apply.

ROMANCE SCAMS

Nothing can make you broke like the fluttery feelings of love—and with the growing popularity of online dating, this kind of scam is becoming more and more common. Someone creates a fake dating profile, reels in an unsuspecting victim, steals their heart with witty banter, and asks them to send money or buy them stuff due to some weird circumstance. This sucks because the poor scammer (that's what I'm calling someone who was scammed—just go with it) loses out on cash and a chance at true love.

ONLINE PURCHASE SCAMS

If you buy something online and it never shows up, you might be a victim of this type of scam. Scammers will often "sell" stuff on sites like Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace, or set up fake online storefronts, take your money, then never deliver what you ordered. Don't get me wrong, I love Facebook Marketplace as much as the next guy, but you have to be extra careful.

APP SCAMS

Scammers have figured out how to make almost identical copies of certain popular apps in order to get your money via in-app purchases.

They'll even create apps that steal your personal info once you download them. Triple-check that you're getting the legit version of well-known apps, and think twice about downloading apps you're unfamiliar with.

Also, beware of payment apps, like Zelle. Recently, there have been some situations where scammers claim to be the bank's fraud department and call or text you to walk you through the problem. They'll tell you to fix it by sending yourself money, but the money goes to their account instead, with little to no way of preventing it on your end.

Okay, so we've talked through a few internet scams you need to be aware of. Now let's talk about four keys to steering clear of them:

CHANGE YOUR PASSWORD

It's a good idea to change passwords for important accounts (like email, social media, bank accounts, etc.) every 90 days. And make them hard to guess by using combinations of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and special characters. Even better, make your password a phrase and switch up some of the letters and characters. For example, I might pick the phrase Dog Dad Life, but in password form that could be D0gDadL1fe!

Also, if you ever get notified about a data breach, that means your password could've been leaked and you should change it immediately to be safe. While you're at it, set up two-factor authentication on every possible password—this creates an extra layer of security and makes it way harder for scammers and hackers to get your personal info.

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR EMAILS

Take a close look at the email subject line and sender before opening an email. And if you get an email from an address you're unfamiliar with, don't click on any links until you know more about where it came from—especially if you're being told you



won \$2 million. Be extra cautious of people asking for personal information or anything money-related. When in doubt, mark it as spam.

CHECK YOUR ONLINE BANK ACCOUNT EVERY DAY

Most banks will let you know if they see any suspicious activity in your account, but in case they miss anything, it's still super important to log in every day to make sure there aren't any weird charges. You're in charge of your money, so think of yourself like your own personal armored guard with those aviator sunglasses. You can even pretend you have a cool van and everything.

TRUST YOUR GUT

If something or someone online seems off to you, listen to that Spidey-Sense. That goes for websites, iPads you might've won, and potential spouses. When in doubt, don't click on or agree to anything that seems suspicious. And if you're having a hard time telling if something's a scam or not, have someone else weigh in. Better safe than sorry!

One of the biggest reasons it's important to protect yourself against scams is because scammers can take this one step further by trying to steal your whole identity and use it for their own personal (and financial) gain.

George Kamel is a personal finance expert with a countercultural approach to money. He's the host of The Fine Print podcast and The EntLeadership Podcast on the Ramsey Network. Since 2013, George has served at Ramsey Solutions, where his goal is to help people spend less, save more, and avoid consumer traps so they can make the most of their money. Follow George on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook or find out more about him online at ramseysolutions.com/personalities.



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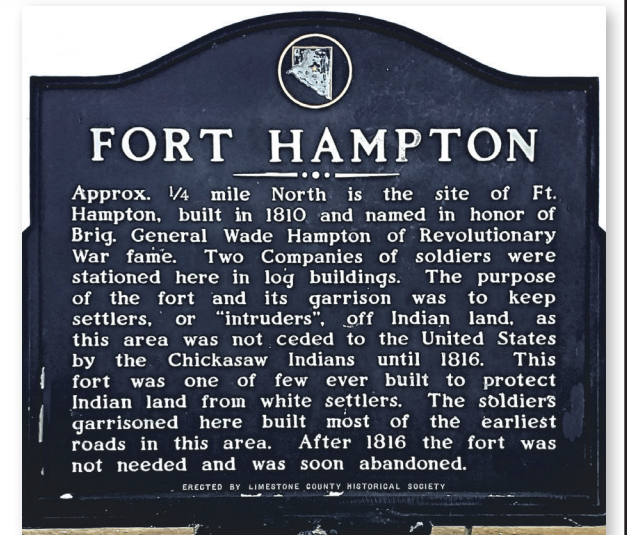
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~ Courtesy David Curott ~ author of "Signs of the Past" and "More Signs of the Past"

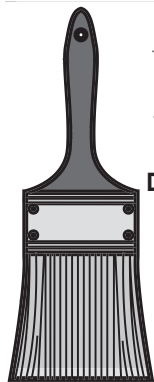
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 the Sheffield Housing Authority will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 10:00 AM** at the main office located at **505 N. Columbia Ave., Sheffield, AL 35660**

The purpose of this hearing is to solicit public comment on the Annual PHA Plan, the Moving to Work Supplement and the Capital Fund Five Year Action Plan. This hearing is open to all citizens of Sheffield. Any citizen with a physical disability or other special need may contact the Housing Authority at 256-383-4773 so that we can make arrangements to get you there. In addition, effective with the publication of this notice, the Public Housing Agency Plan will be available for public review prior to the Public Hearing at the Housing Authority main office.

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Weekly Quiz • Islands

1. When this game launched in 2007, Poptropica had how many islands?
A) 1 B) 2 C) 3 D) 4
2. How many main islands make up the state of Hawaii?
A) 10 B) 9 C) 8 D) 7
3. Great Britain is the largest island of Europe.
True or False
4. Madagascar is a larger island than Britain.
True or False
5. Which country is known as the "spice island" in the Caribbean?
A) Bonaire B) Santa Cruz C) Grenada D) Cuba

Answers: 1) C 2) C 3) True 4) True 5) C

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• On Feb. 19, 1473, **Nicolaus Copernicus** was born in Poland to a prosperous merchant family. Originally designed for a career in church law, he is considered the father of modern astronomy and was the first European scientist to propose that Earth and other planets revolve around the sun.

• On Feb. 16, 1894, **gunslinger John Wesley Hardin** was pardoned after spending 15 years in a Texas prison for murder. Reputed to have fatally shot one man merely for snoring, Hardin likely killed more than 40 people, and while he became an attorney after his release, the following year he took a bullet in the back himself in a revenge shooting.

• On Feb. 18, 1937, **severe dust storms** hit five western states, resulting in a dozen deaths within a few days. Citizens were advised to plug their window sills and door jams, and hang wet sheets over their doors and windows. They could taste dirt and dust in their food, and the clouds of it were so thick that they blocked the sun.

• On Feb. 15, 1953, **17-year-old Tenley Albright**, of Boston, became the first American female to win the world figure skating championship at an outdoor rink in Davos, Switzerland, with all

Moments in Time



seven judges giving her a first-place vote. Three years later, at the Winter Olympics, she also became America's first female skating gold medalist.

• On Feb. 14, 1962, **Jacqueline Kennedy led a virtual tour** of the White House's state rooms, which she had recently refurbished. Wearing a red wool dress and pearls, she described the mansion's antiques, furnishings and historic portraits to a wide TV audience at home, earning both critical praise and an honorary Emmy.

• On Feb. 13, 1974, **the Symbionese Liberation Army**, which had kidnapped 19-year-old heiress Patricia Hearst, demanded a ransom in the form of \$70 worth of food to be given to every needy Californian -- an exchange that could cost as much as \$400 million.

• On Feb. 17, 2007, **customs officers in Sydney, Australia**, freed Sylvester Stallone after holding him for several hours and confiscating items from his staff members' suitcases. Officials claimed X-rays revealed banned products but refused to give any further details, and Stallone called the incident "a misunderstanding." The actor was in Australia to promote his Rocky Balboa character.

• On Feb. 25, 1570, **Pope Pius V declared England's Queen Elizabeth I** a heretic and excommunicated her from the Roman Catholic Church by way of a papal bull releasing Catholics from any loyalty to her and calling upon them to remove her from the throne.

• On Feb. 22, 1879, **Frank Winfield Woolworth** opened the

Great 5 Cents Store (later Woolworth's) in Utica, New York. Originally promising that nothing would cost more than a nickel, the chain expanded over the next 50 years to 1,000 stores, but retail market changes eventually forced the last U.S. shop to permanently close in 1997.

• On Feb. 20, 1962, **the NASA spaceship Friendship 7**, named and piloted by Marine Lieutenant John Glenn, was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, in the first complete orbit around Earth made by an American astronaut.

• On Feb. 21, 1933, **Miriam A. "Ma" Ferguson**, who made history by becoming the first woman governor

of Texas, announced that Feb. 26 through March 4 would be officially known as "Texas Week." The state's Independence Day, March 2, falls in this period.

• On Feb. 26, 1951, **American novelist James Jones** published "From Here to Eternity," about the U.S. Army in Hawaii before the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. It was later memorably adapted into an Academy Award-winning movie featuring such Hollywood luminaries as Deborah Kerr, Burt Lancaster, Donna Reed and Montgomery Clift.

• On Feb. 23, 1997, **the three-and-a-half hour Holocaust drama "Schindler's List"** aired commercial-free on the NBC television network. Seen by 60 million people, it was the first film to display TV Guide's rating of TV-MA (unsuitable for children under 17), due to scenes of violence and brief nudity, which also sparked some political controversy.

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Speaking The

Truth

Ephesians 4:15

In Love

Questions & More Questions

Often in the Bible we find questions being asked: "What will you have me do? What must I do to be saved? To whom shall we go?" and many others.

May I encourage YOU to answer the following questions, based on the Scriptures that follow pertain to that inquiry.

Do you believe in God in heaven? Genesis 1:1; John 3:16.

Do you believe God has spoken to us today through His Son? Hebrews 1:1-2; John 14:26.

Do you believe all Scripture is from God?

2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Do you believe you have an eternal soul? Genesis 2:7; Deuteronomy 10:12; Job 12:10; Psalm 6:4; Ezekiel 18:20.

How valuable is your soul? Matthew 16:26.

Do you believe you have an appointment with death and judgment? Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Will the words of Christ

(The New Testament)

judge us? John 12:48.

Will we be judged according to our works? Romans 2:6.

Do you believe there is a real place called HELL? Matthew 25:46; 25:30; 25:41; Luke 16:22-26; Revelation 20:10/

Do you believe there is a real place called HEAVEN? Revelation 21:4, 23-25; John 14:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:1.

Does God want anyone to be lost eternally? 2 Peter 3:9.

How many eternal places did Jesus say existed, as He preached the sermon on the mount? Matthew 7:13-14.

Is it left up to man to determine what to do to please God and be saved? Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; Deuteronomy 30:19.

What has God the Father and God the Son and God the Spirit done to help us to be saved in heaven eternally? John 3:16; Luke 19:10; John 14:26; Matthew 11:28-30; 2 Peter 3:9-10.

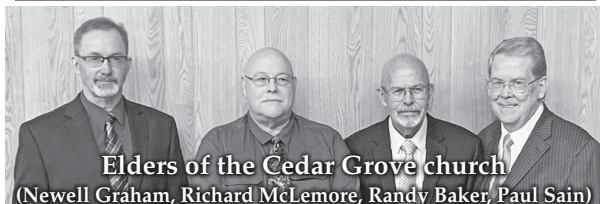
What must we do to be saved? Hebrews 5:8-9; Acts 5:29; Matthew 7:21.

Friend and neighbor, it is our fervent desire to go to heaven after we leave this earth. It is ALSO our desire for YOU to be saved eternally. We must understand that God has provided THE WAY that leads to paradise and we must obey and follow that way. Let us prove our love for God (John 14:15; 15:14) and do ALL He commands.

Searching The Scriptures...

Can we know what we must do to be saved?

(Answer: YES! Read the accounts of conversion in the book of Acts. Almost a dozen obeyed (took steps to be saved. Do what they did to be saved.)



Elders of the Cedar Grove church (Newell Graham, Richard McLemore, Randy Baker, Paul Sain)

Questions, comments, or criticisms are welcomed. Responses may be sent to:

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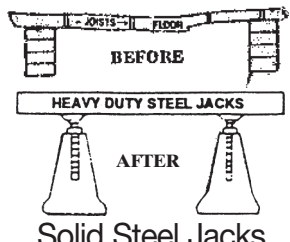
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Letters...

Continued from Page 18

Resentment Surfaces

Editor:

The *Times Daily* recently reported the return of the “divisive concepts” House Bill in the upcoming Alabama legislative session. An editorial rightly criticized the bill as unnecessary and an impediment to understanding history.

Republicans such as Gov. De Santis decry Black history courses and “divisive concepts” to make themselves more popular with the party base. The apparent intent in Florida and Alabama is to provide white residents with a version of history with which they can be comfortable, regardless of whether it is true. They are using state authority in the name of freedom to muzzle discussion.

A new book titled *Freedom's Dominion* - A Saga of white resistance to federal power features George Wallace and Barbour County to demonstrate the link between racism and loathing of government.

The book covers the fierce tide of migration that destroyed native Creek homes and crops - and the ‘freedom’ to oppress and brutalize under slavery and neo-slavery of convict labor, sharecropping, Jim Crow efforts to nullify civil rights reforms, etc.

Wallace capitalized on whites’ sense of grievance over the voting rights act that became an animating principle of conservative politics conspiracy theories.

De Santis’ invocation of ‘freedom is here to stay’ reflects these resentments. He claims that the state has unfettered authority to muzzle its professors in the name of freedom. A judge slammed that portion of the “Stop WOKE” law calling it “positively dystopian”.

We need to let our children learn our whole true history - without indoctrination or whitewashing.

Dan Waterman
Killen

Poor State of Our Union

Editor:

In Joe Biden’s State of the Union address last week, it was one lie after another.

In Proverbs 12:22, lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.

In First John 1:6, If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

While you have your Bible open, look at Psalm 34:13, Proverbs 14:5, and Proverbs 17:7. Marjorie Taylor Greene called him a liar when he said Republicans wanted to cut Social Security and Medicare. Speaker McCarthy said repeatedly it was off the table.

Biden lied about the spy balloon. It should have been brought down in Alaska when it entered our air space, and not in salt water after it spied over our defense systems.

Biden has lied about our southern border being closed. The first day Biden took over he reversed Trump’s border policy and stopped building the wall. Over the last several months 8,000 human smugglers were caught bringing in 23,000 pounds of fentanyl.

Biden said the greed of the oil companies was the cause of the high gas prices, but he will not let them drill for more oil in our country. The jobs he bragged about were mostly teenagers working in fast food places. The State of our nation is not very good.

Rogers Kimbrell
Florence

The Corrupt Jackpots

Editor:

Am I the only one who believes that the way the Powerball and Megaball Lottery numbers come up are suspiciously corrupt? Computers are smarter than the people who buy tickets.

A representative of the lottery commission announced some years ago that they had to build bigger jackpots to attract

more people to buy more tickets. Well, it looks like they have accomplished that. Hmmmmm, just look at the way the numbers come up constantly.

Paul Sabatino
Florence

Two Justice Systems

Editor:

The tale of two different justice systems: one justice system, in the case of a Republican former President, held a 4am raid with 30 armed FBI agents refusing to allow the Republican attorneys access to the search area, but notified news media who came there and were flying overhead. Instantly, everyone in the world knew about the raid on Mar-a-Lago. All the documents were in a padlocked room along with Secret Service details on the premises 24-hours a day. Then came “leaks” from the DOJ with photos and timelines about hundreds of classified documents they claimed to have confiscated.

The other justice system secretly allowed the Democrat sitting President to have his own attorneys search his home for documents after his former workplace turned over classified documents left behind by him with no explanation how they got there in the first place and for what purpose. The first of these documents appeared on November 2, 2022 (before the election) but the public was not advised until early January, 2023. A full two-month delay is in stark contrast to the initial case listed here. Was it for political reasons? Oh, hell yes! Now, it appears classified documents were found in at least three locations - all unsecured and tied directly to the sitting Democrat President. There are no leaks in this case by the DOJ as in the other case. As a matter of fact, many requests for information have been made by Congressional members and news outlets and no one is saying a word, unlike the other case.

Why are these two cases

See LETTERS... Page 39

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Front Row: Courtney Bowen, MD • Jeremy Thompson, MD • Amber Olsen, DO

Back Row: Joshua Vacik, MD • Robert Dickson, DO • Anthony Horton, DO • Brad McAnalley, MD

Te Ata...

Continued from Page 14

Students who collect 6 or more stamps will receive an award.

The program at 10am on Saturday, February 18 is about Chickasaw storyteller Te Ata. Born Mary Thompson Fisher near Emet, Oklahoma in 1895, she later took the stage name "Te Ata" which means "Bearer of the Morning." A citizen of the Chickasaw Nation, Te Ata was an accomplished actor and teller of Native American stories.

She received her early education in Tishomingo, and she eventually went to the Oklahoma College for Women. While she was in college, it became evident Te Ata had a natural talent for drama. Her career as an actor and storyteller spanned more than 60 years. She worked as a storyteller to finance her acting career. Te Ata would help preserve Chickasaw stories, legends, myths, and chants, including performing rituals in native regalia.

Te Ata attended the Carnegie Institute of

Technology in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for one year. From there, she moved to New York City, where she met and married Clyde Fisher.

In the prime of her career, Te Ata performed in England and Scandinavia, at the White House for President Franklin Roosevelt, for the King and Queen of Great Britain, and on stages across the United States.

Although Te Ata worked as an actor and drama instructor, she is best known for her artistic interpretations of Indian folklore, and for the children's book she co-authored on the subject.

This program is free and is sponsored by the City of Florence Department of Arts and Museums and the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area. The Florence Indian Mound Museum is located at 1028 S. Court St. Florence, AL and is open, Tuesday - Saturday from 10am-4pm and Sundays from 1-4pm. Call 256-760-6427 for more information.

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Soap Opera Preview

DAYS OF OUR LIVES Alex was forced to hide when Chanel came home to make up with Allie. Gabi gave Wendy advice about Johnny. Sonny was stunned by Leo's news. Jack and Jennifer faced off against Xander and Gwen. Stefan made another move against E.J. Jada and Eric shared an awkward moment. Chad spent Valentine's Day with Stephanie and his kids. Gabi was hopeful when Stefan invited her to a romantic dinner. Kayla reached out to Steve from the great beyond. Tripp stuffed his feelings when he learned that Johnny and Wendy had reconciled. Gabi and Stefan's romantic evening went awry. Eric and Sloan had an awkward Valentine's dinner with E.J. and Nicole. Kate, Marlena and Kayla prepared to plead their case, but they were thrown a curveball at the last minute. Roman, John and Steve put their plan to kill Orpheus into action. Will was set to leave town, but Sonny had a surprise for him. Allie made a life-changing decision. Marlena made a deal with the Devil. *Wait to See: Kate tries to make contact with Roman, to stop him from making a huge mistake. At Statesville, Orpheus*

becomes suspicious of Lucas' charade. John and Steve make their move.
GENERAL HOSPITAL Sam and Dante came up with a new plan. Spencer lost his cool. Michael found himself in a bind. Liesl confronted Carly. Portia felt conflicted. Stella received an unexpected visitor. Portia made her final decision. Trina had a hunch. Ryan saw through Heather. Dante and Sam followed a new lead. Ryan made a bold move. Laura overheard some distressing news. Sam and Dante got a break in their case. Trina's suspicions deepened. Ava briefed Nina. Later, Nina and Joss had words. Austin and Ava were interrupted. Finn tried to distract Liz.

Mac reassured Felicia. Sonny was called away on mob business. Spencer was alarmed. Victor issued some urgent orders. *Wait to See: Anna and Valentin grow concerned. Laura is gobsmacked. Mac gets a chilling reception.*

THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS Victor revealed his plans for Adam. Ashley returned home to chaos. Jack took a big step with Diane. Victor and Nikki recalled their epic love story. Daniel made a shocking discovery, and Nick confides in Victoria. Tucker shared a secret with Ashley. Diane made a power move. Phyllis tried to make amends with Summer. Victoria and Nate mixed business with pleasure. Daniel's past caught up with him. Tucker asked Ashley for a second chance. *Wait to See: Victor puts Jeremy Stark on notice. Adam plots to undermine Victoria. Phyllis shares some surprising news with Jack.*

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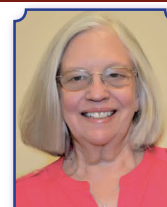
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Meet **HUGO**, he is 4 years old and 55 pounds. This handsome boy is looking for a home to play and be loved. Hugo does well with other dogs and has a wonderful outgoing personality. This amazing dog would add a lot of love and laughter to your home. **THE ADOPTION FEE IS \$85** and includes heartworm test, current vaccines, spay/neuter and microchip. Please call or come by Florence Lauderdale animal services 256-760-6676 to meet this amazing dog.



Meet **AARON**, a 10 month old male lab mix. Aaron still has a lot of puppy in him and is ready to find a home and family to be loved. This sweet pup would love a big yard to run in and active outdoor family. **THE ADOPTION FEE IS \$85** and includes heartworm test, current vaccines, spay/neuter and microchip. Please call or come by Florence Lauderdale animal services 256-760-6676 to meet this handsome boy.

Meet **FRODO**, a 1 year old male lab mix. He has a very different color and coat that makes him different and stunning. This sweet boy would love to play, go on long walks or just snuggle with you on the sofa. Please open your heart to this amazing dog. **THE ADOPTION FEE IS \$85** and includes heartworm test, current vaccines, spay/neuter and microchip. Please call or come by Florence Lauderdale animal services 256-760-6676 to meet this amazing pup.



Meet **TRUNKS** is a 8 month old male mix breed. His facial features are very stunning. This medium sized dog is full of fun and personality. Trunks would love for you to meet him, foster him or take him for a doggies day out. **THE ADOPTION FEE IS \$85** and includes heartworm test, current vaccines, spay/neuter and microchip. Please call or come by Florence Lauderdale animal services 256-760-6676 to meet this handsome dog.

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Medicare Minute


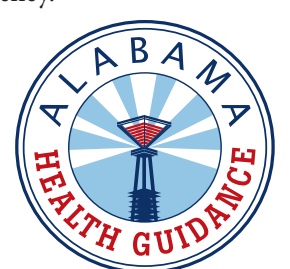
“Medicare Part B”

Before we begin talking about Medicare Part B I would like to clear up something that was in last week's article concerning Medicare Part A. As I stated in the article Part A has a deductible of \$1,600 per benefit period. I also stated that if you paid into Medicare for 40 quarters that Part A was free to you. I was referring to the fact that you would not have to pay a premium to Medicare for Part A, not that it would exclude you from paying the deductible.

Medicare Part B is the part of Medicare that is billed when you receive services as an outpatient by a Medicare approved provider, such as your primary care physician (PCP) or specialist. Although a visit to your doctor is the primary way that you will use Medicare Part B, it also covers many other services. We will discuss the other services in next week's article.

If you are turning 65 in 2023, Medicare Part B will have a premium of \$164.90/mo. Because there is a premium attached to Medicare Part B this coverage is optional. This means you are not required to enroll in Medicare Part B. There are two important things to remember about Part B being optional. First, if you opt out of Part B you will have no coverage under Medicare for your outpatient services. Second, if you decide at a later date to enroll in Part B there can be a late enrollment penalty applied that will last as long as you live and have Part B. There are exceptions to the late enrollment penalty that we will discuss in future articles.

If you have questions regarding any aspect of Medicare or Medicare health plans feel free call us at Alabama Health Guidance (256-648-5710), stop by our office at 885 Florence Blvd (Four Lane Shopping Center) or email me at ikey@alabamahealthguidance.com. Alabama Health Guidance is an independent insurance agency and is not affiliated with Medicare or any other government agency.





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Notes...

Continued from page 15

For more details on entry rules, call Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts 256-760-7379 or email: connect@florencealmuseums.com

The Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts is located at 217 E. Tuscaloosa St. Florence and can be reached by calling 256-760-6379.

Through popular demand, Heritage Preservation, Inc. (HPI), the local non-profit organization in Florence that sponsors the shield-type metal plaques for individual historic houses in Florence and Lauderdale County, is pleased to announce that the plaques are available once again.

The plaques have the same classic background design that appears on existing plaques, and each one is personalized with the name of the house or building and its date of construction.

An individual plaque cost is \$100 each in pre-sold lots of 50. When as many as 50 have been sold, the local manufacturing company will create them for immediate distribution. The goal is to place the first order of 50 or more with the manufacturer by July 1, 2023, if not before.

All proceeds go directly into projects that promote the preservation of local historic structures, sites and documents.

For further information, contact: Billy Warren, Chairman Heritage Preservation, Inc. (bwwarren@florenceal.org); 256-718-5020

Clay to Bronze Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts, 217 E. Tuscaloosa St., Florence, will have an exhibition by Huntsville sculpture Everette Cox from now - March 10. There will be a meet-and-greet at 2pm January 29. The center is free and open to the public from 9am-4pm Monday-Friday and 1-4pm Sunday. 256-760-6379.

Avant: Five Contemporary Voices will be on view Now - March 11 at the Tennessee Valley Museum of Art in Tusculmbia.

The work of five contemporary artists, are each exploring innovative ideas and form through the mediums of drawing, textile, painting, collage, and sculpture.

Melinda Crider, Dariana Dervis, Tracie Noles-Ross, Miriam Omura, and Chiharu Roach are all currently based in Birmingham, but bring experiences from throughout the American South, as well as from Japan and the UK.

Exhibition hours are Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm and Saturday 10am-5pm. Admission to the TVMA is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students, and free for members of the Tennessee Valley Art Association.

Florence Camerata is launching its 17th year as an accomplished volunteer community chorus serving the Shoals area. "It's a Grand Night for Singing" is the theme of this concert, and will feature songs from Broadway, the movies, and other show venues.... but music choices will not be limited to only this genre.

Rehearsals will continue on Thursday nights at 6:30pm in the choral room at UNA, with the concert being planned for Thursday, March 23.

Please visit our Facebook page for

up to date information, or call 256-810-9512.

The Annual Lauderdale County Sports Hall of Fame Banquet and Induction Ceremony will take place at 6:30pm on Saturday, March 18 at the Marriott Shoals Conference Center. It is a special event for visiting with old friends, sharing memories, and recognizing the names and athletic accomplishments of some of Lauderdale County's best. The 2023 class includes Daniel Almon, Jason Beckman, Patrick Hughes, Venita Perkins, Robert Koonce, Deidre Rowell King, Ashley Newsome, Ray Hester, Mark Toner, and Lisa Branscome Smith.

Tickets are \$40 and are available at area high schools or may be reserved by calling Steve Harrison at 256-810-3460 or Dennis Hargett at 256-762-9056.

Rogersville United Methodist Church will host it's indoor yard/ bake sale on Saturday, March 4 at the church from 7am-Noon. Reservations are currently being accepted to reserve a space (\$12) or table (\$5).

Contact John Ezell at 256-247-0931 to reserve a spot. Leave a message if there is no answer.

Rogersville Unites Methodist is located at 51 Turner Lindsey Road, Rogersville.

Born Ready University hosted by Ekklesia Preschool and partnership with Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education is a four session program that will provide parents, expecting parents and other caregivers for unborn

See NOTES... page 35

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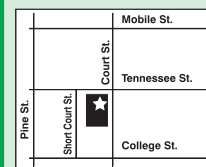
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Bird Count...

Continued from Page 14

birding as often and as long as you wish from February 17-20. It's free, enjoyable, and easy for people from all walks of life to participate. This helps to identify and counting birds for a real time mid-winter snapshot of bird populations. This event provides valuable information for biologists, conservation leaders, and anyone interested in birds.

Last year birders from 192 countries reported approximately 3/4 of the world's bird species. This included 7,099 species of birds identified by 384,641 estimated global participants in 192 countries who submitted 359,479 eBird checklists and shared 141,990 photos.

Everyone is invited to get involved, ranging from first-timers to expert



Red Tail Hawk David Lauter

birders. You can provide information about the birds you see at your feeding station, yard, or your neighborhood. It's also a great opportunity to join with others, including members of your household, a

birding club, or a group of students. The Great Backyard Bird Count is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Birds Canada, and the National Audubon Society, along with the founding sponsor, Wild Birds Unlimited.

You participate for 15 minutes or as many hours and days you prefer. By birding during the GBBC, you join the worldwide brotherhood of birders with the common goal of documenting and better understanding winter bird populations, winter ranges, and changes over years.

You may add your GBBC information if you are birding solo or with others, and you may participate anywhere you find birds:

THE PROCESS: Observe birds for 15 minutes or more at least once from February 17-20. Identify all the birds



Bearded Woodpecker

Herb Fechter
Herb Fechter 2022

you see or hear. Post your species counts by using your computer, or by using the Merlin app on your smart phone. If you already contribute to eBird, just continue what you are doing - all eBird entries made during the 4-day count period are automatically added to the GBBC tally.

You may also refer to the official GBBC directions at <https://www.birdcount.org>

2022 IN A SNAPSHOT:

- 7,099 species of birds identified
- 192 participating countries
- 359,479 eBird checklists
- 298,208 Merlin Bird IDs
- 141,990 photos added to Macaulay Library
- 384,641 estimated global participants



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STRANGE but TRUE

• **A Calvin and Hobbes comic from 1992** referred to the start of the universe as the "Horrendous Space Kabloolie" because they thought "The Big Bang" was too boring.

• **The cable car** is the only moving National Historic Monument in the world.

• **During Spain's colonial period, the builders of Filipino churches** used millions of egg whites in the mortar to make the structures more durable. This also accounts for why Filipino desserts often use lots of eggs: Many of the recipes were developed to use up all those leftover yolks.

• **In 2013, Belgium created five limited edition stamps** that smelled and tasted like chocolate.

• **According to the American Kennel Club,** dogs will fake a sneeze for play

and communication purposes.

• **Iceland has the largest population of green-eyed people** in the world.

• **Modern negligence law resulted** from a 1932 Scottish court case, *Donoghue v. Stevenson*, aka the "Snail in the Bottle" case, in which Mrs. May Donoghue sued beer manufacturer Mr. David Stevenson after she drank a bottle of ginger beer with a dead snail in it and became ill.

• **Nintendo was founded in 1889** as a playing card company.

• **Garbage collectors in Turkey** have filled their own library entirely from books thrown away by residents. Originally destined for landfills, around 6,000 tomes are now safely housed on shelves, waiting to be reread -- or discovered -- by the public.

• **Gray cats** are frequently the result of a diluted black fur gene.

• **The World's Largest Collection of the World's Smallest Versions** of the World's Largest Things is a museum in Lucas, Kansas, created by Erika Nelson. It consists of miniatures created from photos of the world's largest objects.

• **On May 9, 1945, reports that Nazi Germany had surrendered** to the USSR triggered a 22-hour celebration that caused the country to temporarily run out of vodka!

• **An Arizona man didn't realize he was a big winner** at a Las Vegas slot machine because its lights and buzzers never went on. Fortunately, an investigation by the Nevada Gaming Control Board resulted in a happy ending and the bestowal of the gentleman's \$230,000.

• **Not only can you be right-handed or left-handed,** you can be right or left eared and eyed.

• **A service operated in several Chinese cities** that we'd like to see replicated in America is that of "jam busting." Drivers stuck in traffic snarls who urgently need to be somewhere make a phone call and two people show up on a motorbike. While one stays with

the driver's car, the other transports the frustrated driver to their destination.

• **"Tartle" is a Scottish word** referring to the feeling of hesitation or panic you experience when unable to recall another person's name.

• **Though heavy metal music originated** in the U.S. and the U.K., Finland has the most metal bands per capita, with Sweden and Norway tying for second place and Iceland coming in third.

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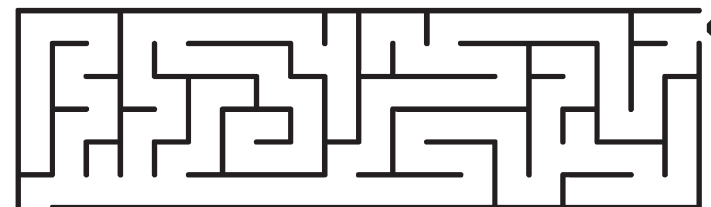
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Kids' Maze



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Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1. Silly laugh | G _ _ _ _ _ | Squirm | W _ _ _ _ _ |
| 2. Explosion | _ L _ _ _ _ | Monster | _ E _ _ _ _ |
| 3. Subsequent | _ F _ _ _ _ | Modify | _ L _ _ _ _ |
| 4. Shamrock | _ _ O _ _ _ | Cunning | _ _ E _ _ _ |
| 5. Idaho's capital | B _ _ _ _ _ | Racket | N _ _ _ _ _ |
| 6. By one's self | _ _ N _ _ _ | Breathtaking | _ _ V _ _ _ |
| 7. Hypnotic state | T _ _ _ _ _ | Pierre's country | F _ _ _ _ _ |
| 8. Forest opening | _ _ _ D _ _ | Stare intently | _ _ _ R _ _ |
| 9. Playful sea creature | O _ _ _ _ _ | Speak | U _ _ _ _ _ |
| 10. Like Orion | _ _ _ T _ _ | Long for food | _ _ _ G _ _ |

WORD LADDERS

Can you go from SMASH to CLUMP in 6 words? Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

smash

clump

Answers on Page 38



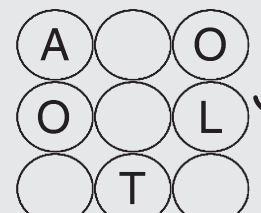
Puzzle Whirl

MINI SUDOKU

6	1		5		4
	5	3			6
		1			3
			6		2
5	3			6	
1					

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 6-box square contains all of the numbers from one to six.

WORD SPIRAL



Fill in the missing letters to reveal the nine-letter word that starts at one of the four corners and moves clockwise around the perimeter before ending in the center.



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Commentary

LeBrat-Jabbar...

Continued from Page 14

has always felt special.

James put off marrying his long-time girlfriend until 2013, ten years a pro and well after she gave birth to their second child. (The couple now has three children.)

The four-time MVP and four-time NBA champion has always been coddled by the press. The serial whiner craves all the attention he can get. LeBron loves all things LeBron and rarely deflects praise. Yet, he laments the fact that he and his family can't go to a Target store like 'regular people'.

LeBron is the first to cry out about social justice, equity, and mistreatment in America, and he does so often, especially on social media. However, he won't touch the forced child labor policies in China's clothing factories that for many years has enriched the NBA brand by the billions and benefitted LeBron personally for \$32 million/year.

LeBron parlayed that selfishness and good business sense into a multi-billion brand, but success doesn't mean class. At times LeBron doesn't demonstrate class. Maybe that's because he doesn't have to. Many of his fans don't know about class, either. The sports media can't climb deep enough into his back pocket, so they don't care.

I flipped on the TV just seconds after James had set the record in the 3rd quarter. The game was stopped, and crews were preparing for a quick in-game ceremony to recognize the milestone which had been previously set by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar 36 years earlier. Abdul-Jabbar, now 71, and also a Laker for most of his career, was in attendance.

Abdul-Jabbar recognized racial injustices as far back as his teen years in the 60's when he was known as Lew Alcindor. He has emulated those with a deliberate, yet calm and peaceful demeanor for the almost 60 years since. It's clear that the mentoring of his former college coach at UCLA, the late John Wooden, resonated well. Both men

have been the definition of character.

In Alcindor's day, the NBA did not allow players to come into the league right out of high school. They had to be the equivalent of a college graduate, so he lost four years of potential NBA production right there. In addition, the NCAA did not allow freshmen to play on the varsity teams. Yet, Abdul-Jabbar was still a part of three NCAA titles, six NBA titles, and was the NBA MVP six times.

One other impressive point is that the NCAA outlawed the dunk after Alcindor's sophomore season - specifically to prevent his domination.

Just before James spoke at last week's in-game ceremony, Abdul-Jabbar walked over to James and symbolically passed the torch, a basketball with his palm underneath. James accepted it from the top, embraced Jabbar, and then spoke for just over a minute, recognizing Jabbar with his first few words. Thanked fans, family, friends, "my boys", and others, but never mentioned teammates. He closed this history-making pause in play with an F-bomb. ... "F.. man, thank you guys."

Immediately after his F-bomb was the perfect time to mention for an ESPN announcer to comment on how out of place, careless, juvenile, or even surprising the use of that word was. Can you imagine Kareem Abdul-Jabbar EVER using that word, much less using it in that setting, with all those young eyes on him? In several pans over to Jabbar afterward his empty expression seemed to show his disappointment.

James may have the scoring record to himself with all the glory that it involves for the future unanimous Hall of Fame inductee.

However, when it comes to dignity and class, and earning the respect, admiration, and appreciation of others, anyone worth their salt knows that LeBron James will never be on the same court with Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

ASK THE ATTORNEY



Thomas McCutcheon

Ask the Attorney is sponsored by local attorneys, McCutcheon & Hamner, PC, as a service to the residents of NW Alabama.

What Are The Steps In A Personal Injury Case?

First, the facts. Then we investigate and gather all of the evidence we can. Sometimes this involves accident reconstruction experts or sometimes cellular phone analysis. This assists in knowing the full extent of the responsibility on the part of the other driver. Often, even when it seems clear, versions of the same event differ. We need information about the extent of your damages and losses so that we can determine the value of your claim.

If the insurance company disagrees about the facts or damages, a lawsuit may need to be filed. Lawsuits are normally filed in the county where the incident occurred. A copy of the lawsuit is then served to each defendant, who then has time to hire a lawyer who will file an answer to the lawsuit, always denying the claim. Well over ninety percent (90%) of claims that are made are settled without going to trial.

Even when a lawsuit has been filed, there is still the possibility of settling your claim at any time. Joel and I do everything possible to properly prepare and present your case whether it goes to trial or is settled out of court.

Here are a couple of things we need our clients to remember during this process. Do not sign anything without talking to either Joel or myself. We need to check and review any papers before they are submitted. Tell us about any changes in your family situation, employment, lifestyle, address, telephone number, and especially your medical progress. We know that this sounds like a burden, but a simple phone call to our office is well worth the trouble.

Advice which you may receive from well-meaning people is often wrong and it can create needless problems and concern on your part. Any time you have questions about your case, do not hesitate to raise them with us, and we will respond based upon our experience and training.

Buckle up, drive safely, and as always, your referrals are appreciated! 256-764-0112

Please send the questions to: "Ask the Attorney,"

P. O. Box 38, Florence, Alabama 35631 or visit our website at: www.mhatty.com

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We will not print your full name in the article. We will not be able to return any written or preprinted items which are submitted. No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality legal services performed by other lawyers.



MCCUTCHEON & HAMNER
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Notes...

Continued from page 31

children and children ages birth to 5 the information and support necessary to bring up happy and healthy children who enter school ready to learn.

Topics to be covered: Child Development, Child/Social-Emotional Development, School Readiness, and Health & Safety environment. Sessions will be from 9am-noon on February 4, 2023, February 18, 2023, March 11, 2023, and March 18, 2023 at 3007 Hatch Blvd., Sheffield.

Incentives include: Free breakfast & lunch, \$25 VISA gift cards each session, age appropriate books, car seats, strollers, pack & play, back cribs, school readiness toolkits, Leapfrog Leap Pad Learning Tablets, and more.

It is free to attend the event with only 20 spots available. For enrollment and questions, please contact Ms. Lisa Slusher at 256-314-1700.

Woodmont Baptist Church's Single Adult Ministry is holding a Catalyst Event for all single adults in the area on March 3rd, 2023 at 6:30pm. This event will be led by Dr. PJ Dunn and TableForOne Ministries from Atlanta, GA and will be held in Woodmont's gym. There will be a small snack supper, worship, table group discussion, and a wonderful word from PJ Dunn about being complete in Christ. Childcare will be provided and you can register for this free event at woodmontbaptist.org. Woodmont Baptist Church is located at 2001 Darby Dr, Florence, AL.

Florence Kiwanis Club - Annual Pancake Day Friday and Saturday, March 10-11 at Florence-Lauderdale Coliseum on Veterans Dr, Florence.

March 10 from 6am-7pm and Saturday, March 11 from 6am-1pm. All proceeds are donated to child/family-focused organizations in the Shoals area.

Advance Tickets \$8; Ten tickets or more \$7 ea; Children under age 12 \$5; All tickets at the Door \$10.

Advance tickets can be purchased from any Florence Kiwanis member and at any of the following locations:

- First Southern Bank (303 N Pine Street, Florence location only)
- Harris Elder Law Office (407 S Court Street, Florence)
- Progress Bank (230 E Tennessee Street, Florence)

For more information, see <http://florencekiwanis.com/> or Kiwanis Club of Florence, AL on Facebook.

The Tusculumbia Kiwanis Club will have their Annual Pancake Day on Friday and Saturday, March 17-18 at the Multipurpose Center on North Commons, near Dasher Middle School. Kiwanis Clubs focus on helping children and, 100% of what they make on Pancake Day goes to the charities that they support. In 2022 the club supported over 25 local charities. Members also participate in hands-on activities, such as helping build beds for Sleep In Heavenly Peace, a local charity that provides beds to children in need. "There are a lot of local charities doing important work", member Kathy Hayes said, "and the community's support of Pancake Day allows us help them with funding."

Hours are 6am-1pm on Friday and 7-10am on Saturday. Tickets are available for \$6 from club members or \$8 at the door.

Public Notice and Opportunity to Comment - The Lauderdale County School System is attempting to locate any child with disabilities, ages 0-21, who may be living in the Lauderdale County School District and who are not currently in a school program.

Anyone knowing of a child, who may be in need of Special Services, is asked to contact Mrs. Kim Meeks, Director of Special Education at 256-760-1324 between the hours of 8am and 4pm, Monday-Friday. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

1972 3000 FORD TRACTOR, gas, 256-387-0022 for details

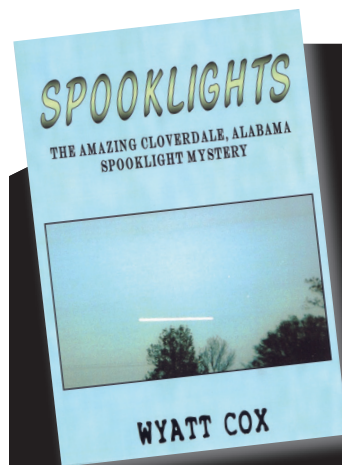
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Wyatt Cox

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Florence/Lauderdale Public Library

Public is invited - Share your experiences with Spooklights, Orbs, Saucer Nests, and other sightings, or just listen in!

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Internal Medicine

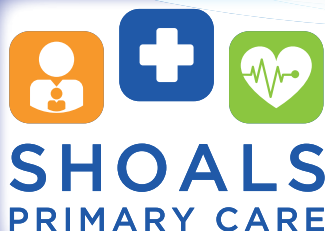
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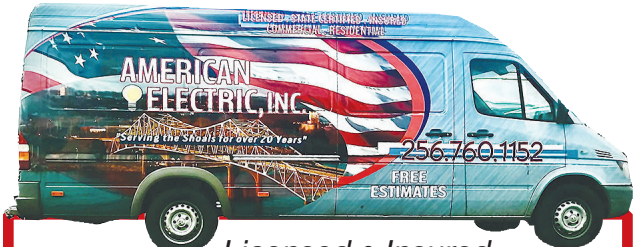
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See NOTES... page 36

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Notes...

Continued from page 35

Want to list your event in Community Notes? Email your information to editor@CourierJournal.net.

Free! Fun! Stretch and Tone Exercise class. Tuesday and Thursday 9-10am. Killen Senior Center, 227 J.C. Mauldin Hwy. Killen, 256-757-1792.

Food Pantry at North Wood Methodist Church, North Florence. Call for appointment, 256-764-2111

The Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group meets at the Florence Lauderdale library at 2pm every 3rd Monday of each month. All caregivers are welcome. We all need encouragement.

The Batting Brigade Quilt Guild meets every 2nd Monday at 9:30am at Edgemont Methodist Church, 1330 Eauclaire Ave in Florence. Everyone interested in Quilting is welcome - from beginners to expert

60 or older? Join us for lunch Monday thru Friday at 11am for a one dollar donation. Our hours are 8:30am -12:30pm. Also if you would like to join Bingo every Tuesday and Thursday bring a small one dollar gift to play. Killen Senior Center, 227 J.C. Mauldin Hwy. Killen, 256-757-1792. See you soon!!

Come Travel with The Club (Florence Senior Center), Diamonds in the Rough. 256-760-6642. Our trips are open to the general public.

Mackinac Island, May 14-20, 2023, \$775 double rate per person, add \$219 for private room. \$75 deposit on signing up. Final payment 3/7/23.

Mount Rushmore, the Badlands & Black Hill of South Dakota, Sept. 30-Oct. 8, 2023. \$999 double rate per person, add \$286 for private room. \$75 deposit on signing up. Final payment 7/23/23.

Activities at The Club (Florence Senior Center):

9am-3:30pm. Games: Rook, Chicken Foot, Mexican Train, Rummycubes, LRC, etc. Square Dance Monday 6-8pm. Social Dance Tuesday 6:30-8:45pm. Joints in Motion, (chair exercise class) Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 9:30am. BINGO, Wednesday 10:15-11:15am. Lunch 11:30 Monday-Friday, for 60 years and older, donation \$1, Inspiration Rock Painting Friday 10:30-noon. Fishing Days at Deibert Park. Pool Room at Fairground. Masters Games are back! Fantastic Friday, BBQ meal \$15, music, dancing, games,

Trips: 2023 Mackinac Island, Memphis, Nashville, Mount Rushmore.

For more information on the fun at The Club, call 256-760-6420. This is an Alcohol, Drug, Tobacco, and Firearms-Free facility.

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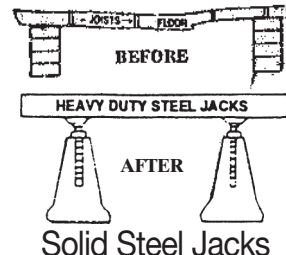
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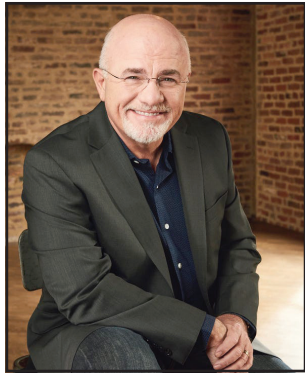
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DAVE Says

by DAVE RAMSEY



HOW BIG IS THE BURDEN?

Dear Dave,
My parents are both in their seventies. They have been healthy and active all their lives, but in spite of them both having good jobs they neglected to plan and save for retirement. Is it my responsibility now to provide them with financial help in their old age?

Reagan

Dear Reagan,
It sounds like you might be a little irritated that your parents haven't been responsible with their money. The way you described the circumstances, it's understandable—to a point. But in my mind, there's a bigger question when it comes to helping your folks. How big is the burden?

Let me ask you a few things. Do you have the money to help? Now, can you provide this help without your own family suffering or going without? If both answers are yes, I think your question may be a little more about your own aggravation with your folks than any ethical or moral obligation.

A few years ago I spoke with a guy who was in really good shape financially. He made over \$1 million a year, and he had plenty set aside in savings and retirement accounts. His father was in poor health and had never handled his money wisely. The son asked me if he should help out his dad by giving him some money every month.

In my mind, there's no question the right answer was yes. And that's what I told him. If you're making millions, but don't want to help out your sick dad, there's something wrong with you. There's something missing inside you that money just won't fix. However, if you and your family are barely getting by—let's say you bring home \$3,000 a month—you're not morally required to help a parent who was irresponsible with money their entire life.

I'm not sure what your situation is, Reagan, but I hope you'll look at things with a little grace and reason. It's a tough situation to be in, because it sounds like your heart is being pulled in different directions. My advice, above all else, is to pray about it. And, if you have a spouse, talk to them about everything, and make sure the two of you are in agreement on what should be done before moving forward.

God bless you, friend.
— Dave

Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national best-selling author, personal finance expert, and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 18 million listeners each week. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today Show, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business, and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people regain control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions.

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Notes...

Continued from page 36

Audiences are invited to "Ease on Down the Road" to Florence Middle School Theatre to see *The Wiz, Jr.* on April 11 and 14 at 6:30pm at the Florence Middle School Theatre, located at 648 N. Cherry St. in Florence). Tickets are \$10 and are available at [gofans.com](https://www.gofans.com).

Students from both Florence Middle School and Hibbett Intermediate School will perform this delightful 60-minute interpretation of Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. This family-friendly fresh take on Dorothy's heroic journey home features pop, gospel, and blues inspired music. Featuring FMS Dance Director, Chynna Boddie's, original funk-jazz influenced choreography, audiences will enjoy dance inspired by Louis Jonson, original choreographer for *The Wiz*, film version. Hibbett Theatre teacher Vanson Clendenin, a graduate of Troy University, will be making his directorial debut in Florence, working collaboratively with musical director, Andrew Mills, FMS Choral Director, composer, and former assistant conductor for the Gordon

College Children's Choir and professor for Gordon College's Secondary Music Methods course.

The Little Ryman — Gospel, Bluegrass, country, oldies and open mic. Every Friday 6-8:30 p.m. No dancing or alcohol, and free admission. 18210 Hwy. 72 W., Tuscumbia. 256-810-5866

Alabama Music Hall of Fame — Star Player exhibit will be on display at the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, 617 U.S. 72, Tuscumbia. Rotating exhibits at the hall of fame highlight accomplishments of area music achievers. Details: 256-381-4417.

Did you know that 22 Americans die each day waiting for organ transplants? Most of them for kidneys? The good news is that MatchingDonors.com is helping to change that. Linking organ donors with people in need of kidney and other transplants. And now you don't need to donate a kidney to save a life. Donate your boat, car, or real estate, and get a great tax deduction while helping to save lives. Visit [MatchingDonors.com](https://www.matchingdonors.com) or call 800-385-0422.

Kratom is becoming more common in the world of drugs. Drug tests typically don't test for it, so it can easily go unnoticed as a drug someone may be using. Kratom produces similar effects as opiates and stimulants and is an herbal substance. Kratom can be found at gas stations, head shops, and even online. It is easily accessible, and the FDA has not approved any uses for it. Yet people are using it and getting addicted because it is easy to find and legal.

If you or a loved one are struggling with Kratom, reach out for help. Narconon helps people all over the US find treatment to end the web that traps those in addiction. To learn what to look for visit: [Narcononnewliferetreat.org](https://www.narcononnewliferetreat.org)

Pay it Forward: Donate to Educate. Shoals Scholar Dollars is an Education Foundation raising money to pay tuition at Northwest Shoals Community College and transfer scholarships to the University of North Alabama for Lauderdale and Colbert County students who meet certain criteria. Donate to Scholar Dollars at any participating financial institution the second Friday of each month.

The Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts in Red Bay — The

annual membership and sponsorship drive will begin soon. If interested in being either, contact any board member, message BTCPA through Facebook, or contact Scotty Kennedy at 256-356-8758 or email at scottydk@aatt.net.

"A Bad Year For Tomatoes" — The Bay Tree Council for the Performing Arts in Red Bay will present "A Bad Year For Tomatoes" Feb. 9-12 at the Weatherford Center in Red Bay. Tickets will go on sale Jan. 30.

The Help Center - 621 South Court Street, Florence. A cooperative ministry of local churches in Lauderdale County serving our neighbors in need with utility, food, clothing, prescriptions, and dental.

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and 4th Saturday of each month 8:30am to 12pm.

Please bring a photo ID and proof of address.

If you have questions or need assistance call Help Center at 256-766-7663 or come by our Florence location during open hours.

If you are interested in volunteering at Help Center come by during open hours to see which department you would like to serve. Come by and get plugged in!

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Picking On The Israelites



Drew Edwards
Evangelist

As they say, hindsight is 20/20. That means those of us who look back at history usually have a much clearer vantage point because we can see what people did right or wrong. However, "they" also say that those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it.

That's why it is important that we know and understand the history of the Israelites in the Bible. We see them develop toward the beginning of Exodus into a great people, but one under slavery and persecution. God allows them to be delivered because of His promises to Abraham (Gen. 17:1-8). He gives them a leader (Moses) and laws to live by under His covenant.

Throughout their history, we see the Israelites continually fall away from God and reject the prophets He sends to them (Acts 17:52). Wanting to be like the nations around them, they ask for kings and eventually fall into division, idolatry, and ultimately captivity. When they are allowed to return to their land and establish a new temple, we see them again fall away into self-righteousness, hypocrisy, and then apostasy. They even reject the Messiah sent to them as the Savior from their sins.

It's so easy for us to be critical of the Israelites, but when we bring things up to the twenty-first century, we should easily be able to see that we are not much different. How so?

As Christians, we often forget that we have been delivered from the slavery of sin (Rom. 6:17), looking back to spiritual Egypt and longing for those "good 'ole" days. We reject sound preaching because we want to be like the compromising churches and idolatrous people around us. We constantly fall away, needing to suffer through terrible events only to realize that we need to get back to serving God. We stop teaching our children the ways of the Lord (Deut. 11:18-21) and substitute the godless practices of those we believe to be wise (Rom. 1:22). We even reject the words of the Lord and His authority by establishing our own traditions and practices that have no basis in His covenant! Thinking we are God's "chosen people," we often act like anything but His.

Before we start pointing fingers at the Israelites, we need to look at ourselves first (Matt. 7:5) and learn from their mistakes!

-Drew Edwards


Midway church of Christ 6000 US Hwy 43
Florence

Puzzle Whirl Answers

Even Exchange answers

- Giggle, Wiggle
- Blast, Beast
- After, Alter
- Clover, Clever
- Boise, Noise
- Lonely, Lovely
- Trance, France
- Glade, Glare
- Otter, Utter
- Hunter, Hunger

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WORD LADDER

Answer

SMASH, SLASH, CLASH,
CLASP, CLAMP, CLUMP

Word Spiral

Answer

ABOLITION

MINI SUDOKU

Answer

6	1	2	5	3	4
4	5	3	1	2	6
2	6	1	4	5	3
3	4	5	6	1	2
5	3	4	2	6	1
1	2	6	3	4	5

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Letters...

Two Justice Systems

Continued from Page 26

handled so differently by the DOJ? Is it because the Democrats are in control of Washington and no Democrats ever get prosecuted like Republicans do? We all know Republicans get charged with crimes, are prosecuted, and are sitting in jail as we speak. So, hundreds visited the U.S. Capitol on January 6 and have been sentenced to jail by a Democrat-appointed judge who is hearing the cases.

Apparently, someone changed the definition of INSURRECTION and didn't advise the Republicans.

Bill Jones
Alta Loma, CA

Education an Equalizer

Editor;

It is the unfortunate byproduct of modern racial politics that even something meant to uplift and unify - like Black History Month - can appear divisive.

I've run across too many people who look

at Black History Month as something exclusive to the African American community, but that misses the point. This is a month that celebrates a key part of the American experience, but the operative word there should be "American."

Thus, rather than using this time to air grievances or advance divisive teachings like critical race theory, we should be emphasizing the universality of the lessons one learns from great Black leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

He is, after all, the man who taught us that content of character should matter, and not skin color.

That's why I want to celebrate Black History Month in a way that is honors the courage and wisdom of our country's Black leaders. It does so in a way that advances their goal of making America a better place for all regardless of skin tone.

I cannot think of a more appropriate way to do so than through school choice.

The value of education as a great social equalizer is a common theme in Black History. The creation of our nation's proud Black colleges and universities is a testimony to our belief

that everyone deserves a quality education.

That might be why school choice has always resonated as an issue within the Black community. The idea that geography alone can force someone into a failing school is anathema to our philosophy. In fact, school choice may be one of the most pressing civil rights issues of our day.

That's why we will continue to promote choice in education and parents rights in public schools as part of CAAP's Mission Education initiative. Not only is that the best way to preserve Biblical values in our schools and prevent indoctrination, but it also lifts up children and gives them a better future. In this way, we will oppose the left's Marxist agenda while honoring the values of our civil rights forefathers.

I hope you will stand with us as we make our stand for educational freedom!

Dr. Deborah Owens
The Coalition of African American Pastors
Fulshear, TX

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