

## Year's First is at Keller

SHEFFIELD—A flood of emotions overcame **Jose Duran** of Russellville on New Year's Day morning when saw his newborn daughter for the first time.

**Amelia Claire Duran** is Jose and **Emma Duran's** first daughter, and the first baby born in the Shoals in 2025.

She was born January 1 at 11:57am in Helen Keller Hospital. She's 19½ inches tall and weighs 6 pounds.

"There were so many emotions that came out after I first saw her," Jose said.

This is also Emma's first baby, and she said the pregnancy could not have gone smoother.

"The plan was to come to the hospital on New Year's Eve to be induced, but things progressed so well that they didn't have to," she said. "My water broke New Year's Eve night, so we came on in to the hospital."

The biggest fan of the birth of Amelia Claire without argument is her 6-year-old brother **Benjamin**, according to Jose Duran.

"He has not stopped talking about his baby sister since he found out that Emma was pregnant," Jose said.

(Photo page 2)

## First Baby at NAMC Jan. 2

FLORENCE – After waiting more than 38 hours for the first baby born in 2025, North Alabama Medical Center rang in the new year with its

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## Hero Park Ranger and Near-Victim Reunite



Photos: Dan Busey/Times Daily

by **Bernie Delinski**  
Times Daily Staff Writer

First published December 28, 2024.

FLORENCE — Tommy Stanfield dove to the bottom of Pickwick Lake near the harbor area.

The Florence City Park Ranger opened his eyes, but there was virtually no visibility underwater. He felt around but found nothing.

So, Stanfield surfaced, took a deep breath and dove again. Time after time, he repeated that, each time reaching the bottom in hopes of retrieving what he thought would be the body of a drowning victim.

Finally, as he was kicking off from the bottom of the lake to go up and get another gasp of air, his foot touched something.

"I felt her," Stanfield said. "I felt her hair. When my foot touched her head, it bobbed

See HERO... Page 6

**Sheila Littleton, left, and Tommy Stanfield take a portrait in Florence in December. Littleton, then 14-years-old, was pulled unconscious from Pickwick Lake in 1976 by Stanfield who was a City Park Ranger at the time.**



Student **Javan Davis** with one of the new books his class received through the ARI classroom library grant. SCS photo

## 50K ARI Grant in Sheffield

SHEFFIELD -- The Sheffield City Schools district is the proud recipient of a recent \$50,000 grant through the Alabama Reading Initiative for classroom libraries. All K-6 and K-6 Resource classrooms received approximately 400 books through the grant.

According to SCS

See GRANT...on Page 4

## INSIDE this Issue

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## Shorts...

### First Baby at NAMC Jan. 2

Continued from Page 1

first bundle of joy Thursday. Weighing four pounds and 8 ounces and measuring 18 ¼ inches, Evelyn Ray Butler was born to Brandon and Carley Butler on January 2 at 2:08pm.

"We are so thankful for everyone at NAMC," said Carley, who delivered at 34 weeks. "Having a premature baby can be stressful, but everyone was so kind and professional.

Evelynn was delivered by Dr. Mary Robbins. She joins her older sister, Ella, who was born at NAMC in July of 2021.

### Academic Records Fall

FLORENCE - The University of North Alabama Department of Athletics announced a record-breaking academic semester in Fall 2024, as 341 student-athletes combined for a 3.26 department-wide grade-point average.



**AT LEFT:** Parents, Emma, left, and Jose Duran, sit for a portrait with their newborn daughter, Amelia Claire, born January 1 at Helen Keller Hospital. Amelia Claire was the first local baby born in 2025.

Dan Busey/ Times Daily

**BELOW:** Brandon, left, and Carley Butler welcomed Evelyn Ray Butler into this world January 2 at North Alabama Medical Center. The proud sister, Ella, completes the family portrait. Courtesy photo

The 3.26 GPA marks the highest fall semester GPA on record for UNA. Of 341 student-athletes, 245 posted a 3.0 GPA or higher. This includes all 11 of UNA's fall graduates. Additionally, 50 student-athletes finished the semester with a 4.0 GPA.

UNA Athletics has finished with a combined 3.2 GPA or higher in nine of the last 10 semesters. This fall also marks the 18th consecutive semester above a 3.0 GPA.

The UNA beach volleyball program led all sports with a 3.77 GPA during the fall semester. Six other programs finished above a 3.5 GPA as a unit, including



women's cross country (3.64), men's golf (3.63), women's soccer (3.63), softball (3.58), women's basketball (3.58), and women's golf (3.57). "Breaking the highest fall semester GPA on record is a testament to our student-athletes and their commitment to excellence in the classroom," said Sherry Kennemer, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Student Success. "This achievement underscores the dedication and hard work of our student-athletes."

Stadium on campus in 2026.

The 2025 season begins at FBS (Div. 1-AA) football," said UNA head coach Brent Dearmon, who enters his third season at the helm. "In order to develop into a playoff contender, we have to play the best. Five teams on the 2025 schedule made the FCS playoffs this past season."

"We are excited to play one of the toughest schedules in FCS (Div. 1-AA) football," said UNA head coach Brent Dearmon, who enters his third season at the helm. "In order to develop into a playoff contender, we have to play the best. Five teams on the 2025 schedule made the FCS playoffs this past season."

The 2025 schedule includes five FCS playoff teams from this season, as well as a WKU team who will compete for the Conference USA Championship this Saturday. Five of those six games will be on the road.

### UNA Releases 2025 Football

FLORENCE - UNA and the United Athletic Conference made a dual announcement in December of the 2025 football schedule.

UNA is set to play seven road games and five home games at Braly Stadium. The 2025 season will be the final go-around for UNA at Braly Stadium, which has been home to the Lions since the restart of the program in 1949. UNA will transition to Bobby Wallace Field at Bank Independent

Of those playoff teams, Tarleton State, Illinois State and Abilene Christian all won first round games. The other two, Eastern Kentucky, and Southeast Missouri both lost tight games.

The Lions will visit six states, including Kentucky, Missouri, Illinois, Texas, Tennessee and Utah.

See SHORTS...on Page 4



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**Free Clothes - The Samaritan House**, 600 Geneva Ave., Muscle Shoals, gives away free clothing each Tuesday from 9-11am - except for every 5th Tuesday. Donations are accepted.

**Quad Cities Photography Club** Member Exhibition is on exhibit at the Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts through January 9.

Mon.-Sat. 9am-4pm, Sun. 1-4. The art center is located at 217 E. Tuscaloosa St. Florence, and can be reached by contacting 256-760-6379.

**Retirement Celebration** for Bro. Eric Goodloe on January 12, at 4pm at Everdale, MB Church, located at 1814 E. 16th St. in Sheffield. Sponsored by the Miracles of Joy, Determined Voices, and God's Servants. Everyone is welcome. William Burge is Pastor. For more information contact Dorothy Cooper at 256-335-7508 or Lula Watkins, 256-764-7037.

**Hi Neighbors of the Shoals** meets on Thursday, January 9 at 10:30am in the Florence Public Library. We are a women's social group that welcomes all ladies who are residents of the Shoals area. Contact Christina Dickinson, 262-930-7762, for further details.

**Colbert County 2025 New Year Kick-Off Concert**, Saturday, January 11, 7pm at the Cowboy Church of Colbert County, 3440 AL-157, Leighton.

**Batting Brigade Quilt Guild** - Monday, January 13, has hospitality at 9 a.m. the second Monday of the month, with a meeting at 9:30 a.m., at Edgemont United Methodist Church, Florence. For information, call Liz at 601-590-4367.

Additional Dates: Monday, February 10, 9am; Monday, March 10, 9am; Monday, April 14, 9am

**DivorceCare starts on Tuesday, January 14** at First Baptist Church Center Star and meets each Tuesday night from 6-7:30pm in the youth building. We meet for 13 weeks. Each week is on a different topic.

Join at anytime. DivorceCare is a place to find Love and encouragement within a Christian group. For more information or to register, visit [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org) or contact Beverly Henderson at 256-762-6431.

**Self-Care Tuesdays - January 14**, 4-5pm at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library

Teen life can be stressful, but we have a program for that! Join us for Self Care Tuesdays where we come together with our on-site social work intern to have fun, learn how to manage our emotions, and create take home activities to remind us what we learned!

Registration is required. Email teens@fpl.org to reserve your spot and email socialwork@fpl.org if you have any questions!

**LifeSouth Bloodmobile Dates:**  
**Tuesday January 7**, Lawson's Clothing and Shoes + OUTDOORS, 536 N Military St. Loretto, TN, 11:30am - 5:30pm

**Thursday January 9**, Lauderdale County Court House, 9am - 3pm

**Saturday January 11**, Walmart - Hwy 43 - Russellville, 10am - 4pm

**Sunday January 12**, Foodland - Killen, 10am - 4pm Schedule

**Monday January 13**, Florence Police Department, 10am-4pm

**Tuesday January 14**, Whitesell Corporation - Gargis Lane, Tuscumbia, 7am-2pm

**Wednesday January 15** Allen Thornton Career Technical Center, 7275 US-72, Health Room, Killen, 8am - 2:30pm

**Friday January 17**, Jar & Co., 269 Cox Creek Parkway S., Florence, Noon -6pm., Florence, Noon -6pm

**Tuesday January 21**, Listerhill Credit Union - Main Office, 4790 E 2nd St., Muscle Shoals, 10am - 4:30pm

**8-9-10, Thursday, January 16**, 3:30pm-4:15pm, at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library.

Are you 8, 9, or 10 and looking for something fun to do after school? Join us for crafts, games, and more!

Additional Date: Thursday, January 23, 3:30pm-4:15pm

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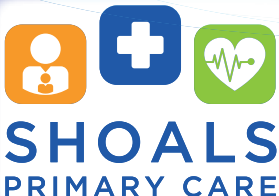


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## Shorts...

### UNA Releases '25 Schedule

Continued from Page 2

Texas will get two visits from the Purple and Gold next season.

For the first time since 2016, UNA will host West Georgia when the Wolves come to Florence on Nov. 8. The last time these two former Gulf South Conference rivals met in Florence, both were nationally ranked, and the Lions won 24-23 on a missed field goal at the final horn.

UNA's final road trip

will be to Texas for a showdown with Tarleton State set for November 15. The regular season finale, and perhaps UNA's final game at Braly Stadium, will be November 22 against Southern Utah.

Times and special events will be announced later.

Tickets will be available in the coming months. For more information, call 256-765-5466.

For more information on North Alabama Athletics, visit [www.roarlions.com](http://www.roarlions.com).

### 2025 University of North Alabama Football Schedule



Aug. 30	@ Western Kentucky
Sept. 6	@ Southeast Missouri
Sept. 13	OPEN DATE
Sept. 20	Northeastern State
Sept. 27	@ Illinois State
Oct. 4	@ Abilene Christian
Oct. 11	Central Arkansas
Oct. 18	Eastern Kentucky
Oct. 25	@ Austin Peay
Nov. 1	@ Utah Tech
Nov. 8	West Georgia
Nov. 15	@ Tarleton State
Nov. 22	Southern Utah



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## Grant...

Continued from Page 1

Curriculum Director, Heather Collum, the books are filling a great need in classrooms as "teachers generally have to create libraries for their classrooms out of their own pockets."

Collum said the delivery of the books in early December created an even more festive atmosphere in the remaining days of school leading up to Christmas break.

"We're so very appreciative of this grant that allowed us to meet a great need in our district," she said. "For these students, it was like Christmas came early."

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## A CONVERSATION WITH PASTOR KIKI Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

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diversity of the congregation, which includes people of all ages, races, and backgrounds.

North Wood UMC's food pantry is a cornerstone of its community outreach. Every week, the pantry provides assistance to approximately 30 families experiencing food insecurity, offering vital support to those in need.

North Wood United Methodist Church is a welcoming community where the mission of "Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors." is lived out every day. This guiding principle, coined by the United Methodist Church in 2001, remains a cornerstone of North Wood UMC's identity in today's post-disaffiliation era. The church opens its doors to people from all walks of life, creating a space of inclusivity, connection, and faith.

Sunday worship services at North Wood UMC offer a unique blend of traditional and contemporary elements. Whether it's the historic pipe organ or the inspiring melodies of the contemporary worship band, Salt and Light, each service reflects the vibrant

Wood UMC, you'll find Florence's only public dog park. This space welcomes members of the community and their furry companions to come together, play, and connect in a friendly and open environment.

For those seeking deeper spiritual growth and fellowship, North Wood UMC offers small group gatherings. These groups meet on Tuesday mornings and Thursday evenings, providing meaningful opportunities for connection, learning, and support.

At North Wood UMC, the mission is simple yet profound: to unite people in Christ and in life. For more information, contact nwoodumc@aol.com or call 256-764-2111.

You can also follow the church on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NorthWoodUnitedMethodistChurch>

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# Hero from 1976...

Continued from Page 1

a little bit, and her hair wrapped around my foot. Good thing she had long hair."

So, Stanfield reached down and retrieved 14-year-old Shelia Littleton from the bottom of the river and took her to shore, and she was rushed to the hospital.

In all, he searched for 8 minutes, but Littleton had been in the water much longer.

Those at the scene tried to find Littleton but couldn't locate her, so they swam to shore, went to a nearby business and contacted authorities, who contacted Stanfield at McFarland Park.

He arrived at the harbor and saw the yellow float Littleton had been knocked off, which had made its way to O'Neal Bridge by then.

He believes she could have been underwater for 25 minutes or longer in all.

That July day in 1976 was the first and last time he saw Littleton.

"I hadn't seen her since she got out of the water," he said.

That is, until a few weeks ago.

Littleton miraculously survived and still lives in Florence today under the caretaking of her nephew, James Asher.

Recently, Asher was at Broadway Recreation Center with Littleton, where he had gone to play pickleball, and he shared the story of what happened to her with some fellow players.

It just so happened that Stanfield's nephew, Eddie Stanfield, was there, Asher said.

"He said, 'The ranger who saved her, was his name Tommy Stanfield?' and my aunt immediately

said 'Yes,' Asher said. "He said, 'That's my uncle.'"

So, they arranged a reunion and had lunch at the house of Asher's mother.

They have gotten together since then, as well, including a gathering during which Littleton shared what she remembered from that day.

She said she did not know how to swim, and the wake from a passing boat had knocked her off the float she had been using.

"I was under the water but couldn't get up," she said. "It felt like somebody got a hold of my foot."

The next thing she remembered was waking up in the hospital months later.

Asher said some family members were in the hospital room with her, and someone commented, "Momma cooked the food," and Littleton repeated it, surprising everyone.

Being underwater for such a long time caused some mental challenges for Littleton, including short-term memory problems. She can talk but has trouble getting the words out that express what she wants to say.

See PARK... on Page 9

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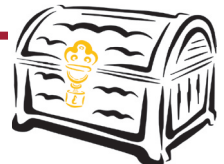
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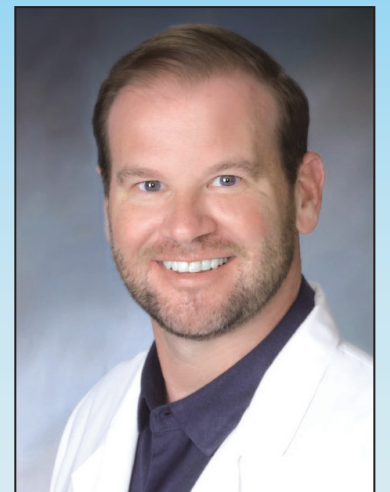
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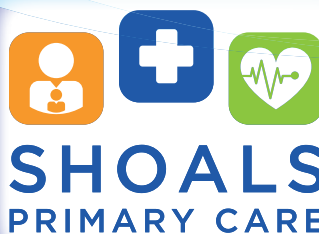
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## Commentary

# Penny's Verdict Enables Rescuers

**T**he significance of the recent not guilty verdict in a Manhattan court room cannot be overstated. The failed efforts by the Manhattan DA to convict Daniel Penny in the May 1, 2023, death of Jordan Neely while he was being restrained on the subway may have salvaged a degree of safety for the public, however temporary. Had he been convicted on any associated charge, coming to anyone's assistance during a threat or assault may have become a bit of nostalgia.

Neely was a homeless drug addict with a long rap sheet who pried open a closing subway door in New York City to get on and started yelling several aggressive statements to riders before being restrained by Penny. He used a leg lock and head lock held until police could respond, some 6 minutes later according to reports. The term loosely bandied about is "chokehold."

"I don't give a damn." "I will kill a m\_\_\_\_r f\_\_\_\_r..." "I'm ready to die..." "I don't care if

See **PENNY'S VERDICT...** on Page 18

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

# THIS WEEK

# in the Shoals

January 8, 2025

**Happening THIS WEEK**

Special Presentation Looks at

# The Creek Removal

The forgotten people from the 'Trail' numbered 23,000

FLORENCE— Dr. Christopher Haveman will deliver a presentation on the Removal of the Creek Indians at 2pm on Sunday, January 12 at the Florence Indian Mound Museum. While most people are familiar with the Cherokee "Trail of Tears," fewer know that approximately 23,000 Creek Indians were also forced from Alabama and Georgia to Indian territory located west of the Mississippi River from 1827-1849. This public discourse will explain how federal officials relocated the Creek people (including removing those who fled to the Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Seminole Nations) and discuss their experiences as they traveled

over dusty roads and along frozen rivers to present-day Oklahoma.

Haveman is associate professor of

See **CREEKS...** on Page 17

**William McIntosh was a Creek Indian Chief.**

*GeorgiaEncyclopedia.org*



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN CENTER STAR WILL HOST A DIVORCE CARE SERIES** every Tuesday night starting January 14 in the church's youth building. The 13 week series will focus on a different topic each week. The time is from 6-7:30pm. Join at anytime. DivorceCare is a place to find Love and Encouragement within a Christian group. For more information or to register, visit [www.divorcecare.org](http://www.divorcecare.org) or contact Beverly Henderson at 256-762-6431. First Baptist Center Star is located at 6620 Highway 72 east of Killen.

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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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219 W. Tennessee St., Florence, AL 35630
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## Great Experience

Editor,

On December 3, my husband had a heart attack. We went to Helen Keller Hospital presenting with chest pain. The clerk recognized the distress, and got us back to the doctor within five minutes. They immediately did an EKG, called the doctor at NAMC, gave my husband medication, and called the ambulance. He was enroute in less than 10 minutes.

At NAMC, the doctor and cath lab were waiting for him.

The cath lab nurses kept us well informed and Dr. Mishra talked to us as soon as completed. One stent, minimal amount of heart damage due to rapid response.

... Kids want happiness, belonging, friends, achievement, two parents, a warm and safe bed, food, clothing, health. . .  
Do you get the picture, Jericka? . . .

”

We were so pleased with the quick response at both hospitals. Both worked together for the good of the patient.

I think we are so fortunate to live in an area where we have access

to two wonderful hospitals, multi-skilled and highly educated doctors and nurses. We thank you again Helen Keller Hospital and NAMC, Dr. Mishra, and all the wonderful nurses and personnel.

**Randall and Martha Hester**  
Muscle Shoals

## Cultivated Meat

To the editor,

I think most people know on some level that the way we treat animals, particularly those we eat, is wrong. What they may not be aware of is an emerging technology that will make

See **LETTERS...** on Page 10



# Injured in a Wreck?

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## Park Ranger...

Continued from Page 6

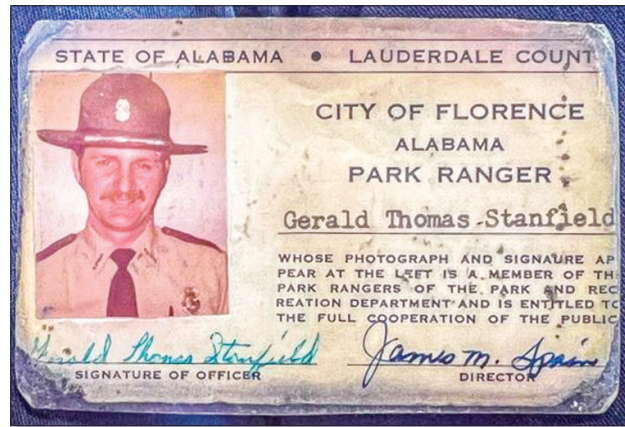
Sometimes, she succeeds, like when she replied to a comment Stanfield made recently when he joked that she should not try to get on a raft in the river again. “Hey, don’t worry,” Littleton told him.

When Littleton and Stanfield reunited, they immediately hugged.

“We patted each other,” Littleton said, adding, “Glad you came. Thank you for saving my life.”

“I told her she was part mermaid or fish to get through that,” Stanfield said.

Looking back, he remembers that he arrived at the park an hour earlier than he was scheduled to start work. That was a good thing,



because the incident happened during that hour and the ranger he relieved did not know how to swim.

“Fortunately, it worked out that way,” Stanfield said. “God sent me to her.”

**Tommy Stanfield reported to work early the day he pulled 14 year old Sheila Littleton from the bottom of Pickwick Lake in 1976.**

*Dan Busey/Times Daily*

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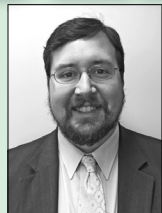


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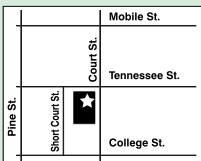
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## Letters...

### Cultivated Meat

Continued from Page 8

aligning our values and actions much easier. I'm talking about cultivated meat, which is grown from livestock cells without slaughter.

Although the new protein has earned regulatory approval in the United States, it remains too expensive to mass produce. Compassionate politicians can help change this by supporting increased public funding for cultivated-meat research. Of course, there are environmental and public-health benefits to protein as well.

**Jon Hochschartner**  
Granby, CT

### Born Blind, Dumb, & Deaf

Dear Editor,

*CBS Weekend* anchor Jericka Duncan closed a recent broadcast with, "Hopefully all the children got exactly what they wanted for Christmas."

Unless you and your colleagues were born blind, dumb, and deaf, you know that what is happening in poor and minority areas of America, let alone under the rubble and in the streets of Gaza, Sudan, or Ukraine, is the opposite of what kids want.

Kids want happiness, belonging, friends, achievement, two parents, a warm and safe bed, food, clothing, health. . . Do you get the picture, Jericka? And they rarely get any of it, whether before, during, or after Christmas, except in propaganda broadcasts like yours that don't reflect reality.

On Christmas night you are going to be telling parents, "It's a wonderful life," or "May all your days be merry and bright," or "If you wish upon a star . . ."

I get it, though. You don't care how ridiculous you sound if you get your paycheck.

**Kimball Shinkoskey**  
Woods Cross, Utah

## Medicare Minute

### "Signing up for Medicare Part 1"

The most common way to qualify for Medicare is when you are turning 65. You will have a specific time period, set by Medicare, to enroll in Part A and Part B Medicare. This is known as the Initial Enrollment Period (IEP).

If you are qualifying for Medicare by turning 65 you will have a 7 month window to enroll in Medicare. This window is based off of the month you turn 65. It starts 3 months prior to the month you turn 65 and extends 3 months past the month you turn 65. For example, if you are turning 65 in September your IEP begins in June and extends all the way through the month of December. If you are eligible, you may not have to pay a premium for Part A, but Part B will have a premium.

For those electing to sign up for Part B after their IEP a late-enrollment penalty may be assessed. This penalty can last as long as you have Part B and there may be a gap in your health coverage. However, one exception to this rule is being employed and having coverage through your company's group health plan. If this applies to you check with your benefit coordinator, Medicare or contact our office.

In most cases, if you are already drawing your Social Security or Railroad Retirement Board benefits you should automatically be signed up for Part A and Part B. If you are not drawing your Social Security or RRB benefits and want to sign up for Medicare you can do so by signing up online at [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov), visit your local Social Security office or give our office a call and we can help direct you.

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](mailto: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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**Quaker INSTANT OATMEAL**  
8-12 Oz.

**Quaker OATMEAL**  
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**\$3.49**



**General Mills BUGLES OR CHEX MIX**  
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**Nature Valley BARS Or GM CEREAL BARS**  
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5-8 Ct.



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**Betty Crocker FRUIT SNACKS**  
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6-10 Ct.



**Golden Flake PORK SKINS**  
3-5 Oz.



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**Golden Flake, UTZ Or Zapp's POTATO CHIPS**  
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<b>Eckrich BOLOGNA</b> Regular Or Thick		<b>Oscar Mayer Deli Fresh ASSORTED LUNCHMEAT</b>	
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## BEER & WINE

<b>High Life BEER</b> 12 Pk. Cans Or Btls.		<b>Michelob Ultra BEER</b> 18 Pk. Cans Or Btls.	
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# Moments in Time



• On Jan. 6, 1975, "Wheel of Fortune," one of American television's longest-running syndicated game shows,

debuted on NBC. Created by Merv Griffin, it was hosted for decades by Pat Sajak and Vanna White, the latter of whom often

contributed her own puzzles and was noted as apparently never wearing the same gown twice in more than 6,000 episodes.

• On Jan. 7, 1785, Frenchman Jean-Pierre Blanchard and American John Jeffries flew from Dover, England, to Calais, France, in a gas balloon, becoming the first people to cross the English Channel by air, though they almost crashed into it along the way due to excess weight from objects that had to be jettisoned.

• On Jan. 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act into law, which created new standards and goals for America's public schools and applied tough corrective measures for failure to meet them. Nowadays, however, it is largely regarded as a failed experiment.

• On Jan. 9, 1887, nearly an inch of snow fell every hour for 16 hours on the western American plains, impeding the ability of already starving cattle that "staggered through village streets and collapsed and died in dooryards" to find food. Millions of the animals were lost, sending hundreds of ranchers into bankruptcy and ending the era of the open range.

• On Jan. 10, 2008, Tata Motors introduced the small, bubble-shaped Nano, billing it as the world's cheapest car with an anticipated price of about \$2,500, thanks

to its lack of amenities including radio, airbags, air conditioning, even a second windshield wiper.

• On Jan. 11, 2010, Miep Gies, the last survivor of the small group that helped hide Anne Frank, her family and four others from the Nazis during World War II, died in the Netherlands at age 100.

• On Jan. 12, 1995, Malcolm X's daughter Qubilah Shabazz was arrested for conspiring to kill Louis Farrakhan, who she believed was responsible for her father's assassination. After she admitted her "responsibility," though not guilty, the government accepted a plea bargain.

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The falls were quiet for a while until the pumps could be replaced and the Falls flow again. Daily over 4 million gallons of water cascade over the 2000 tons of sandstone making this the largest man-made waterfall in Alabama.

~ Courtesy David Currott ~ author of Historical Markers & other "Signs of the Past"

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# Cat & Kids

by Cathy Turner

## Honoring the Aunties

### Part One - Memory-Makers

When our children were little, their Christmas gift to the family came in performance or crafting. It was my hope to instill gratitude and gift-giving into their hearts. One time, they made the table's centerpiece by making, painting and decorating Christmas trees by folding in the corners of Reader Digest magazines and gluing them together. Another time, the centerpiece was a big gingerbread house that the children and I made together on Christmas Eve. Several Christmas Eves there were living room piano recitals and/or poetry readings, or performances.

One Christmas soon after the original "Lion King" came out, the children reenacted scenes from that movie. I was so proud of their sweet preparation. During the performance, however, someone tripped over something right as Simba (our then toddler Randall) was about to be held up to be presented. I remember the chaos and I remember hearing something about bleeding and I remember saying something to the effect that he would be alright - "Keep going!" One of my sisters stopped the show to check on the hurt kid.

I always loved those times, but our children grew up. This year, however, since my oldest sister conquered pancreatic cancer and my middle sister turned 70, our children revived their Christmas Eve performance tradition. They honored their aunties in a Christmas Cafe with such sweet words of poetry, that I want to share our experience with you for the next couple of weeks. Family is the best! Randall, our youngest now 31, was the first presenter of the evening with a childhood review through a nostalgic, original, slam poetry poem. An ode to his uncle's long-lasting GMC Jimmy SUV:

*in the service of childhood.  
Rumbling across the Blue Ridge*

*The faint smell of gasoline and asphalt lingering  
Bilstein shocks squeaking  
4.3 L Vortec 4300 V6 engine humming*

*4-speed 4L60-E automatic transmission whirring*

*And, all the while, the backseat Redwall, Narnia, and Lemony Snicket's secret files Raindrop races and a thousand imaginary empires*

*An impromptu drive to Orlando Pokemon for the first time And memories for a lifetime*

*A lifetime warranty  
And guaranteed*

*Tangential parenting  
A coach and a firefighter*

*In red and white  
Imparting insights*

*In the mountain twilight  
Summers meandering through Appalachia*

*From football fields to Coastal cottages*

*The Jimmy rumbled along  
With its seemingly indestructible GMT330 frame*

*And hundreds of thousands of miles of durability*

*And, all the while, the backseat*

*Similarly indestructible  
The invincibility of youth*

*And the unbreakable bonds bound up in*

*Paintball plotting and Comic book conspiracy*

*Trading card tactics and Fantasy fanaticism*

*Fueled by the work of wise hands*

*And careful plans  
Of worldly men*

*Who we all commend  
For pinning up the pretend*

*And making innocence available*

*All on the back of sterling resolve*

*And an undying ethic  
Much like the Jimmy itself*

*Multiple generations  
But unchanged in construction and design*

*And enduring beyond expectation*

Consistent good times and a lifetime of insights and memories from elders that love him. Blessed.

Email comments or suggestions to [CatnKids1@gmail.com](mailto:CatnKids1@gmail.com)

The GMC S-15, colloquially known as the Jimmy, is a badge-engineered compact SUV first constructed in 1983, but perfected in the late nineties and early naughts

# Food Outlet

This Ad Good January 8-14, 2025

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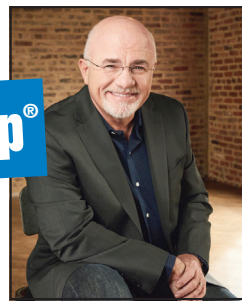
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Lee

*Lee,*  
 Buying a business can either be one of the greatest purchases of your life, or one of the biggest mistakes you've made. And I'm going to do my best to keep you from making a mistake.

I want you to think seriously about a few things and keep some questions in mind. Then, at the end, if you still think buying is a good idea by the end of this article, you might be in business.

Imagine waking up on a Monday morning one year from now. Are you still enthusiastic about this line of work? Your vocation needs to be a vacation. Otherwise, running a business is too much work. If you're only in it for the money, you're setting yourself up for failure, because there isn't enough money in the world to make you work as hard as you'll have to work running a small business.

Think about spending some time around the business. Sit in there for a week to see how it operates, and learn all the ins and outs. Then, if you're truly invested and passionate about this new business opportunity, move on to my next question—what's the business worth?

A business is only worth the income it creates. It doesn't matter if it's in a really great location, or if it's a well-known brand name. Those things have no value if they're not creating income, so figure out the net profit of this business.

Notice that I said net profit, not just sales. When determining the business's worth, you need to focus on all three areas—gross revenue, expenses and the profit it generates as a result. Become an expert on the business's financial performance. Ask to see their past three years of financial statements, so

you know what you'd be getting yourself into. Once you've done that, ask what you'll make on your money. You can make about 12% with a good mutual fund, so if you're going to take the risk of buying a small business, you'll want to make at least 20% on it.

Another number to look at is the book value. If you collected all the receivables, and you sold all the equipment and the inventory and closed the business, what would you have in your pocket? That's the book value. If the business currently has \$40,000 in inventory, \$30,000 worth of equipment and \$30,000 in receivables, the book value of that business is worth \$100,000. Somewhere in between net profit and book value is a fair price. If the net profit of this business is \$60,000 and they're asking \$185,000 for it, then that's a pretty good buy. But you need to really get into their books and make sure their numbers are real.

And even if you're great with numbers, it's a good idea to find a financial expert to help you through this process. It's an extra set of eyes to review and verify all the documents and give you an unbiased opinion on the deal.

Next, what are the costs of running the business? As you're researching what the business is worth, you'll come across the costs of keeping the business running while you're researching what the business is worth. But your homework doesn't stop there.

Take time to really examine the business and understand everything that goes along with keeping it afloat. This includes

employee payroll and benefits, insurance, taxes, contracts, inventory, leases, cash flow—and anything else that helps run the business. Take time to think about the future, too. Do you want to keep the business where it's at, or grow it? What are your five-year goals for this business? Are there any expenses you may need to factor in to get there?

Finally, what's included? When buying a business, you need to find out exactly what's included in the asking price. How are they deciding the value of their business? Does the price include current inventory? Office equipment? Furniture? Get a list of everything that's included from the seller and what kind of condition it's in. And don't just take their word for it. Go check out their stuff yourself. It's also important to know all the baggage that might be included in this buy. Are there any debts or liens involved? You don't want to buy a business only to find out you bought someone else's problems.

One of the best benefits of buying an established business is that customers are included. The business should come with at least something of a reputation (hopefully a good one) and customers already in place. But be aware, many sellers will try to exaggerate how much their reputation and customer base are worth in finding their selling price. That's why studying their books and knowing their customer satisfaction is so important.

So, how're you feeling about things now, Lee?

*\* Leadership and small-business expert Dave Ramsey is the CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored eight national bestselling books, including "EntreLeadership," and he's a host of "The Ramsey Show" and "The EntreLeadership Podcast."*

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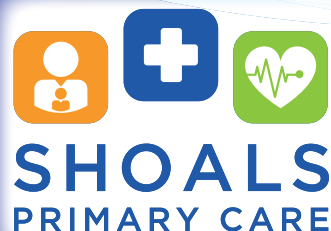
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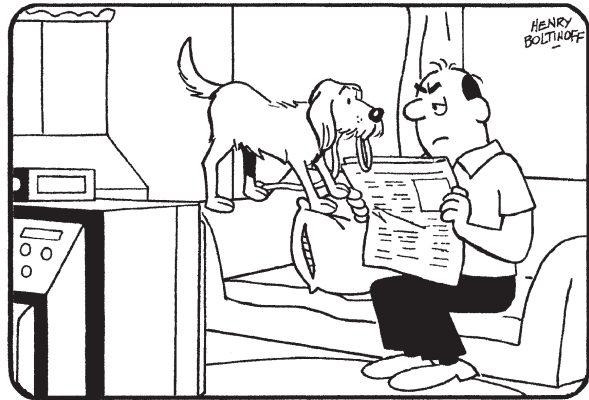
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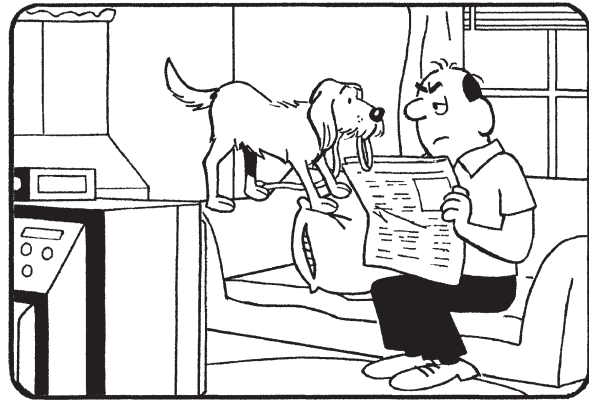
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Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Tail is moved. 2. Window is different. 3. Fingers are not showing. 4. Ear is larger. 5. Blinds are added. 6. Laces are added to shoe.

**Creeks...**

Continued from Page 8

history at the University of West Alabama and the author of *Rivers of Sand: Creek Indian Emigration, Relocation, and Ethnic Cleansing in the American South* and *Bending Their Way Onward: Creek Indian Removal in Documents*. Haveman earned his Ph.D. from Auburn University in 2009. He grew up in Bellingham, Washington, and graduated from Western Washington University before receiving an MA from Marquette University.

The lecture is a part of the Draughon Seminars in State and Local History sponsored by the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University. The series is funded by the Kelly Mosley Endowment in honor of Dr. Ralph B. Draughon, president of Auburn University from 1947 to 1965. Draughon was a historian with a deep commitment to

both state history and public education. For more information about Draughon Seminars and the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities, please visit [auburn.edu/cah](http://auburn.edu/cah).

This program is free and is sponsored by the City of Florence Department of Arts and Museums and the Alabama Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association. The Florence Indian Mound Museum is located at 1028 S. Court St. Florence, AL, and is open Tuesday - Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Call 256-760-6427 for more information

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## Commentary

# Penny's Verdict...

Continued from Page 8

f...r..." "I'm ready to die..." "I don't care if I die. I don't care if I go to jail." Those were among his threats.

Neely eventually stopped squirming and fighting back when he realized those efforts were fruitless.

Neely was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital after being transported by paramedics.

After interviewing

numerous witnesses to the incident and Penny himself, the NYPD saw no ill intent on Penny's part, agreeing that he was trying to defuse a potentially volatile situation. Only after intense racially pointed pressure in the following weeks was Penny charged with second degree manslaughter by the DA's office. And with that, New York

authorities signaled that they are more concerned about social justice than genuine justice and public safety.

One subway rider said she was "scared s...tless" when hearing Neely's rant on the uptown F Train.

Another witness said she immediately put her stroller between her 5-year-old and the unhinged Neely who was hurling his threats in all directions.

One said she was "shocked" to learn Neely was pronounced dead at the hospital minutes after being transported from the scene. Another said it didn't seem like Neely's breathing was in distress while Penny had him immobilized on the floor of the train car.

After the jurors declared themselves deadlocked on the second-degree manslaughter charge, the DA, Alvin Bragg sent them back to deliberate a lesser charge of criminally negligent homicide. Penny was unanimously acquitted on the latter.

As is to be expected, reactions to the verdict were typically along racial lines, that is, apart from the jury. The mixed group of seven women and five men included three 'straphangers' (those who traditionally stand and ride in the aisles) who say they've been harassed on the rail system, and nine New Yorkers who had personally witnessed someone having an "outburst" on the subway.

It is a good thing that the prosecution was not successful at keeping all subway riders off the jury. Those were among the peers - of both Penny and the thousands of others who are intimidated and victimized on the greater NYC subway system annually.

Riders know the safety risks - regardless of race. They are thankful that someone - white, black, or otherwise, came to the public's defense and they were not going to punish him for heroism.

The circumstances surrounding the charges were dubious at best, but remember we are talking about Manhattan and DA Alvin Bragg. This wasn't

an issue of someone protecting HIMSELF from a dangerous situation using a firearm. He was protecting others by engaging a perceived threat with his bare hands and holding him until police arrived. Never mind that records show Neely with 44 arrests - assaults, indecent exposure, drugs, other minor arrests, and in 2015, attempting to kidnap a 7-year-old girl. He had also been diagnosed with severe schizophrenia. Not surprisingly, Neely's supporters called the verdict, "a systemic failure."

The systemic failure is with our deteriorating mental health system and the lack of attention and concern Neely was afforded by his own family during his life. They had dismissed him for years. Suddenly, when he's gone, they claim his life was important. However, we need not worry. His father plans to pursue civil charges against Penny in hopes that a windfall of cash will make everything better.

Penny's case exposed the judicial hypocrisy that DEI policies create. A decent man had to intervene because authorities are unable to deal with street crime. Yet those same authorities tried to make him the criminal.

When an honest law-abiding individual steps up, ignoring potential personal peril, to help others in a moment of crisis, he will be punished if skin colors don't align correctly. Therefore, we risk good, law-abiding people who will soon decide to do nothing, so as not to get involved.

We can't imagine what lawless situations a guilty verdict in this case would have created on the streets if any rescuer could now be convicted of inflicting injury or death on an aggressor with simple restraint.

Thankfully, Americans everywhere still possess a shred of public safety, and concerned citizens can intervene when needed.

Soon after the verdict, Penny, a former Marine, said that he stood by his actions on a New York City subway,

despite enduring years of harsh criticism. In an interview afterward Penny said he would endure "a million court appearances and the hatred and name-calling that comes with them" if it meant preventing even one person from coming to harm. While that statement is obviously a stretch, it supports the idea that Penny's actions included a concern for others.

Violence there is commonplace. Several other violent incidents took place on the New York City subway in the days before Christmas '24, including a woman who was lit on fire by an assailant while she was apparently sleeping on the train. She later died from her injuries. Videos emerged from the incident showing the woman being consumed by fire while the suspect in the attack literally fans the flames. No one came to her aid, including several who were recording the incident complete with video commentary.

On Christmas Eve, two people were stabbed at Grand Central Station, one was cut across the throat. These incidents took place within hours of NY Governor, Kathy Hochul, touting how she was making subways "safer."

Yet, all we hear from the media is how, in recent years, crime is plummeting.

Some people push the narrative that regardless of situations and circumstances, people of color are always victims of racism, oppression, and centuries worth of societal transgressions, a mindset intent on creating a never-ending system of judicial restitution.

Until we rid our court systems and government bureaucracies of the social justice warriors who currently infect so many aspects of our lives, and who prioritize race over reason, we can rest assured that these types of accusatory situations will have no end.

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## The Scourge Of Procrastination

My father-in-law gave me one great analogy of life: "people really know don't how to live until it's time to die." How many people have busted hell wide open thinking: "when I get old, THEN I'll think about dying and eternity," but they never make it! The Bible warns us: **Ecclesiastes 12:1** "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;" Don't wait until your lust and sin plays out and sin kills you, THEN it's too late. The lost person's sin catches up with them in hell, and they live with that reminder forever. NOW THAT'S HELL! The world's sin was put upon Jesus Christ ~2000 years ago on that cross, and when Jesus died and went to hell, He dumped them there, and if you die WITHOUT CHRIST, you will be re-united with your sin in hell! NOT A PRETTY PICTURE, IS IT?

The Bible warns us again: **Proverbs 27:1** "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Remember the old adage: "don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today." That's great advice since you have no assurance of tomorrow! Life and health are God's business!

There's a day coming that contains your last breath. Yours could be today. **1 Samuel 20:3D** "there is but a step between me and death." **Acts 17:25** "Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;" **Hebrews 4:7** "Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." God is warning you through this message, don't trust tomorrow, deal with Christ about your salvation today. Right now, ask Christ to forgive your sin, come into your heart and save your soul. Jesus cannot fail!

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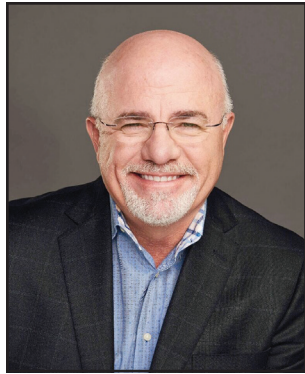
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# DAVE Says

by DAVE RAMSEY



don't accidentally spend it on the wrong thing. I'm not really concerned with making money in a savings scenario, so things like setting money aside for an emergency fund or vacations fall into this category.

Investing, on the other hand, is when you're going to leave the money alone for a bare minimum of five to 10 years to grow it. Things like college planning and retirement fall into this category. In these instances, I recommend good, growth-stock mutual funds that have stable track records of at least 10 years.

I hope this helps, Angie!  
— Dave

*\*Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national bestselling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions.*

## THE GAME'S NOT FOR EVERYONE

Dear Dave,  
I'm 38, and after looking and waiting for years, I think I've found a rental property scenario I like. My plan is to take \$30,000 out of my retirement account, and use it as a down payment on a property. My loan payment would be \$1,400 a month, but I could easily rent the place for \$1,800 a month. What are your thoughts?  
Colin

Dear Colin,  
No offense, but I can tell you've never been a landlord before. Bringing in nearly \$1,800 a month, while paying out \$1,400 may seem like a nice place to be. But you've left one very important factor out of your equation—risk. Rental properties just sit there empty sometimes. And this happens to all rental properties. You'll also have repairs to contend with, renters who don't pay and other expenses. See what I'm saying? You won't be able to count on an easy

\$400 in your pocket every month.

Now, I love real estate. I understand the excitement and allure. But what you're really saying is you want to cash out part of your retirement, get hit with a penalty and take on debt, all to buy an investment property. This is not a good plan.

My advice is to save up, and pay cash for one small, decent rental property to see if the landlord game is really for you.

— Dave

## THE SAFEST PLACE?

Dear Dave,  
Where is the best place to keep my savings?  
Angie

Dear Angie,  
In my mind, when it comes to savings, the idea is to park the money in a safe place—like a money market account or basic savings account—and keep it separate from the rest of your cash, so you

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STATE OF ALABAMA						Exhibit F-II-A
For Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2024						
192 - Sheffield City Schools	GOVERNMENTAL			FIDUCIARY		Total
	General	Special Revenue	Debt Service	Capital Projects	Expendable Trust	
<b>Revenues</b>						
State Sources	\$9,332,155.66	\$0.00	\$71,981.15	\$631,741.74	\$0.00	\$10,035,878.55
Federal Sources	\$258.00	\$4,628,872.51	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,629,130.51
Local Sources	\$4,214,805.40	\$236,622.39	\$32,481.58	\$31,879.00	\$939,689.39	\$5,455,477.76
Other Sources	\$464,061.86	\$25,763.69	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$489,825.55
<b>Total Revenues:</b>	<b>\$14,011,280.92</b>	<b>\$4,891,258.59</b>	<b>\$104,462.73</b>	<b>\$663,620.74</b>	<b>\$939,689.39</b>	<b>\$20,610,312.37</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>						
Instructional Services	\$6,135,895.05	\$1,858,676.36	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$134,976.13	\$8,129,547.54
Instructional Support Services	\$2,414,920.51	\$832,666.52	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$126,344.06	\$3,373,931.09
Operation & Maintenance Services	\$1,688,701.34	\$31,309.10	\$0.00	\$9,417.00	\$6,557.27	\$1,735,984.71
Auxiliary Services	\$151,348.49	\$1,180,474.70	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,331,823.19
General Administrative Services	\$921,535.01	\$133,482.05	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$22,117.68	\$1,077,134.74
Capital Outlay	\$852,966.05	\$600,000.00	\$0.00	\$380,072.89	\$10,997.97	\$1,844,036.91
Debt Service	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$56,819.15	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$56,819.15
Other Expenditures	\$417,948.32	\$389,294.05	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$59,668.47	\$866,910.84
<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$12,583,314.77</b>	<b>\$5,025,902.78</b>	<b>\$56,819.15</b>	<b>\$389,489.89</b>	<b>\$360,661.58</b>	<b>\$18,416,188.17</b>
<b>Other Fund Sources (Uses)</b>						
Other Fund Sources:	\$50,061.28	\$10,743.61	\$200,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,974.85	\$266,779.74
Other Fund Uses:	\$12,728.96	\$18,011.68	\$0.00	\$200,000.00	\$7,074.31	\$237,814.95
<b>Total Other Fund Sources (Uses):</b>	<b>\$37,332.32</b>	<b>(\$7,268.07)</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>	<b>(\$200,000.00)</b>	<b>(\$1,099.46)</b>	<b>\$28,964.79</b>
<b>(Under) Expenditures and Other Fund Uses:</b>	<b>\$1,465,298.47</b>	<b>(\$141,912.26)</b>	<b>\$247,643.58</b>	<b>\$74,130.85</b>	<b>\$577,928.35</b>	<b>\$2,223,088.99</b>
<b>Beginning Fund Balance - October 1:</b>	<b>\$4,305,006.65</b>	<b>\$399,678.12</b>	<b>\$1,885,297.27</b>	<b>\$210,785.54</b>	<b>\$5,582,921.88</b>	<b>\$12,383,689.46</b>
<b>Ending Fund Balance - September 30:</b>	<b>\$5,770,305.12</b>	<b>\$257,765.86</b>	<b>\$2,132,940.85</b>	<b>\$284,916.39</b>	<b>\$6,160,850.23</b>	<b>\$14,606,778.45</b>



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# Notes...

Continued from page 3

**Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 5140 meets** - Thursday, January 16, 6:30pm the 3rd Thursday of every month at 127 South Royal, Florence. For more information contact vfwpost5140@gmail.com

Additional Dates: Thursday, February 20, 6:30pm and Thursday, March 20, 6:30pm

**A Winter's Day with Quilts** - The Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts, 217 E. Tuscaloosa St., Florence, will have "A Winter's Day with Quilts" exhibition through January 16. Traditional and contemporary quilts from a private family collection will be on display. The center is open to the public free of charge 9am-4pm Monday-Friday and 1-4pm Sunday.

**Anime Club - Thursday, January 16,** 4-5pm at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library. Do you love watching Anime/reading Manga? Are you looking for a place to meet other Anime lovers or to discuss your favorite manga? Come to one of our club meetings, and enjoy Anime/Manga related activities with fellow Anime lovers!

Ages 14-18. Registration is required. Email teens@fpl.org to reserve your spot.

**Secret Detectives Club Wednesday, January 15,** 3:30pm-4:30pm at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library.

Are you an incredible sleuth looking for a mystery to solve? Come to our Secret Detectives Club where we'll solve a new mystery every week! One day we might play Mafia, and the next we might be cast into roles for a murderous Dinner Party. Whatever we solve, it's going to be fun!

Registration is required. Email teens@fpl.org to reserve your spot.

**Covered Dish Lunch And Program** - Thursday, January 16, 11:30am at Zip City Community Center

Free - Please bring a covered dish. Additional Dates: Thursday, February 20, 11:30am; Thursday, March 20, 11:30am; Thursday, April 17, 11:30am

**The Shoals Community Clinic** will be hosting a dental clinic beginning at 7am Friday, January 17. Dr. Shipp will be seeing patients for tooth extractions. To be seen, patients MUST be at the clinic by 7am for paperwork and X-rays. Only tooth extractions are performed. Cost due at the time of the procedure at the clinic will be \$60 for first extraction and \$20 for each additional extraction. This fee covers the extraction, x-ray, consultation and medications. Patients must be in line when the doors open to be seen. Patients are seen on a first-come basis. Dentists providing services are subject to change, depending on availability.

For more information, call the clinic or visit their website at: shoalscommunityclinic.com.

**The St. Joseph, TN Artifact & Collectables Show** takes place Saturday January 18 from 8am-3pm at the St. Joseph Civic Center at City Park/Spring Street. Admission is free. On display will be arrowheads and tools made by early inhabitants of the Americas, along with displays of Civil War artifacts, bottles, coins, pocket knives, fossils, and other collectables. There will be people displaying from all over the southeast as well as local collectors. Concessions will be available.

**Zodiac Players Season** - The Zodiac Players have the following plays scheduled: "Steel Magnolias" Jan. 16-19, 2025, directed by Dylan Bales; "South Pacific the Musical" April 17-20, 2025, directed by Jacob Adams. The plays will be at Shoals Theatre, 123 N. Seminary St., Florence. For ticket information, or to become a patron, call 256-764-1700 or go to theshoalstheatre.org.

See NOTES... page 22

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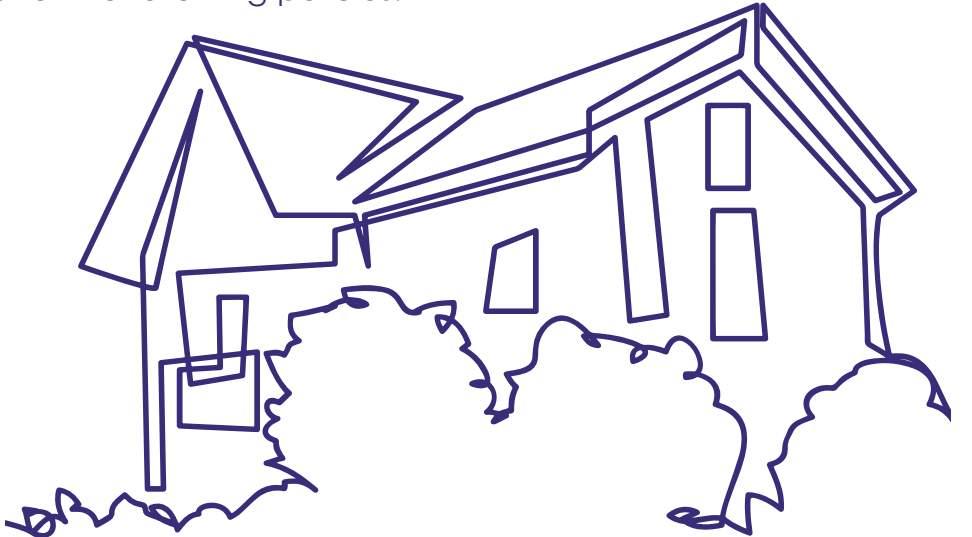
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# Community Notes...

Continued from page 20

**Creative Crafters wanted.** This is a craft group for adult friends who draw, craft, paint, sew, quilt, embroider, crochet, etc (all artisans welcome). meeting at the Killen Library once a month. Bring your project to work on and come join the fun! 2025 dates for this winter are Saturday, Jan. 18, Saturday, Feb. 15, and March 15 from 9-1pm. All adults welcome.

**Shoals Writers Guild meetings** will resume on Saturday, January 18 with the Free Kindle Direct Publishing Workshop hosted by author Gary H. Miller at 10am at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, 350 N. Wood Avenue in Florence. Membership dues are \$40/year with a

\$5 discount if paid in full. For more information email: shoalswritersguild@gmail.com

**Central Community Center Breakfast** - Saturday, January 18, 7-9 a.m. the third Saturday of each month, at 4130 Lauderdale 6, Florence  
Additional Dates: Saturday, February 15; Saturday, March 15; Saturday, April 19

**D&D Tuesday, January 21, 4-5pm** at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library. If you're looking for a beginner D&D campaign, this is for you!

For our nerdy teens who want a consistent campaign, join us for our Spring sessions where we continue to

explore our love for all things fantasy. We will be meeting at 4:00 PM every other Tuesday and Thursday.

Please only pick ONE session to attend each week as spots are limited. Ages 13-18.

Registration is required. Email teens@fpl.org to reserve your spot.

**Maker Meet-Up, Wednesday, January 22, 3:30pm-4:30pm** at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library

Join fellow creative minds for a fun and relaxed hangout where you can share your latest art projects, crafts, or any creative ideas you're working on! Whether you love painting, writing, building, or crafting, this is the perfect space to express yourself, exchange ideas, and get inspired by others.

Ages 11-14. Registration is required. Email teens@fpl.org to reserve your spot

**Game On! Saturday, January 25, 2-3:00pm** at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library

Nothing like some great board games and video games to bring some friends together! If you like either of these, come join us at Game On where we'll bring out our Switch or Monopoly to kick back after a long week.

Registration is required. Email teens@fpl.org to reserve your spot.

**Board at the Library, Tuesday, January 28, 3:30-4:15pm** at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library

The library is never boring, especially when we have our favorite board and card games out and available to play. Stop by Youth Services Desk to choose your game.

Additional Dates: Tuesday, February 25, 3:30-4:15pm; Tuesday, March 25, 3:30-4:15pm; Tuesday, April 22, 3:30-4:15pm

**Disabled American Veterans** in Sheffield meets every fourth Tuesday of each month. (January 28) at 1409 W. 11th St. in Sheffield - 256-381-8229. Dinner at 6pm - Business at 7pm. Veterans Serving Veterans. Open Monday-Wednesday 9am-1:30pm.

**Misfit Quilters Wanted** - This craft group is for adult friends who draw, craft, paint, sew, quilt, embroider, crochet, etc. (all artisans welcome). Bring your project to work on and come join the fun! The group will meet at the Florence Lauderdale Public Library (in the Board Room) monthly - Sundays, January 12,

February 9, and March 9 from 1-4pm All adults are welcome.

**Pages and Paws** - Tuesday, January 14, 2025 , 3:30pm-4:15pm. Florence-Lauderdale Public Library.

Drop by the library, pick out a good book, and find the perfect spot to read. Our friend, Olaf, with Alliance of Therapy Dogs will stop by to listen to you read.

Additional Dates  
Tuesday, February 11, 3:30pm-4:15pm  
Tuesday, March 11, 3:30pm-4:15pm  
Tuesday, April 08, 3:30pm-4:15pm

**Babytime Storytime (Birth to 18 months)** - 10:30am - 11:30am. Every Friday at the Muscle Shoals Public Library. Caregivers must remain with children for all programs.

**Toddler Time Storytime (Ages 18-36 months)** - Every Tuesday at the Muscle Shoals Public Library. Join Ms. Amy for songs, stories, and age-appropriate activities. Caregivers must remain with children for all programs.

**Joints in Motion, chair exercise class**, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at The Club (Florence Senior Center), 9:30am. No charge. BINGO Wednesdays 10:15am until our 11:30am lunch (w/ \$1 lunch donation)! If you are 60+ you can join us for lunch and games. 256-760-6420.

**Florence Parks and Recreation/ The Club** hosts the Florence Singing River Squares dance every Monday from 5:30-7:30pm at The Club/Florence Senior Center, 450 Country Club Drive in Florence (excluding any state or federal holidays) 256.760.6420 for more information. fdavis@florenceal.org. New class will begin July 8 at 5:30pm. No experience necessary. Drug, alcohol, tobacco & weapon free facility. Fran Davis at 256-760-6420 or fdavis@florenceal.org

**Officer Eudy - Saturday, February 1, 7:30pm** at The Ritz Theatre, Sheffield, Kevin Eudy never intended to become a social media star. Eudy was just a small-town police officer with a couple of children and a sense of humor. Because of that sense of humor, a couple of friends suggested he try to do a few videos on the social media platform, TikTok which has now led to filling clubs and theaters across North America. Go to bandsintown.com for tickets.

# ASK THE ATTORNEY

## Distracted Driving



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Over the past several years, distracted driving has been one of the leading causes of car accidents throughout the United States.

Using a phone while driving is the most prevalent distracted driving activity that motorists engage in, but there are also other ways in which drivers are distracted such as eating or drinking, grooming themselves, and using entertainment systems.

If you are texting and driving down the highway at 55 mph, that's like traveling the length of a football field with your eyes closed. You can only drive safely when your full attention is on the road. Any activity that isn't related to driving is a potential distraction and increases your risk of a collision.

Distracted driving accidents are always preventable. Driving can become mundane at times, but it's important to distract yourself safely so that no one gets hurt. For example, listening to podcasts or music so that your primary focus is on driving.

If you are a parent, it is critical that you avoid distracted driving at all times, but especially in front of your children. Children will pick up on your actions much quicker than your words.

It's important to practice safe habits behind the wheel. You want to make sure that your passengers know how serious you are about driving without distractions. One of the most effective ways to lead is through example. Be a good example for your friends and family by avoiding driving while you're distracted.

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



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

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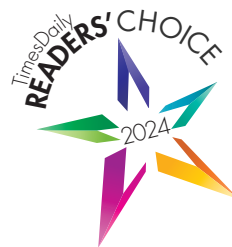
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