

VFW Post 5140 at 80

FLORENCE—Florence Post 5140 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) of the United States will celebrate its 80th anniversary on December 11, chartered and active as of December 11, 1945. The first Post Commander was J.P. Phillips, and it was originally



located on North Pine Street in Florence. VFW Post 5140 moved into their current

location at 127 S. Royal Avenue in January of 1970. VFW Post 5140 has a proud tradition of providing service to the local community, our veterans, service members and their families, and to the nation.

In addition to helping veterans through our outreach programs, VFW Post 5140 also supports the ROTC Program at UNA, sponsors the Voice of Democracy, a patriotic audio essay contest for grades 9-12, as well as the Patriot's Pen, a patriotic essay writing competition for grades 6-8.

For more information about VFW Post 5140 or to become a member, please email us at vfwpost5140@gmail.com or message us on Facebook.

Graduation in 5 Events

FLORENCE – Winter commencement at the University of North Alabama is set for Friday and Saturday, December 12 and 13, in Norton Auditorium as part

See SHORTS... on Page 2

Volume 143 Number 7

December 10, 2025

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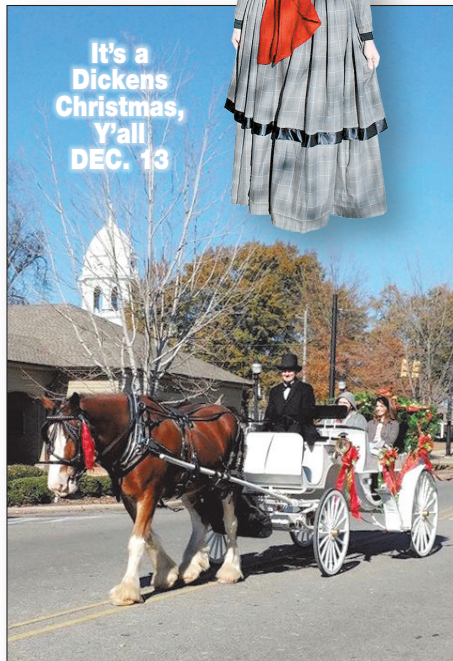
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Tuscumbia's Old Time Christmas Celebration

A Dickens of a Day

TUSCUMBIA—Scrooge, Marley and all the familiar faces from Charles Dickens' beloved holiday classic, *A Christmas Carol*, will return to downtown Tuscumbia on December 13 from 10am-4pm, joining merchants and townspeople to present "It's a Dickens Christmas, Y'all." In its 15th year, the town's signature holiday event adds a spirited touch to the season and brings a hint of "Merry Ole England," to this historic Alabama town. Dickens Christmas, centered along Main Street, is free.

The Clydesdale horses, Clyde and Pride, will return to provide the ever-popular carriage rides. Costumed Victorian characters, musicians and carolers will be strolling the streets.



It's a
Dickens
Christmas,
Y'all
DEC. 13

Expect to find snow falling in the pocket park. Visit with Santa Claus in his downtown sleigh. Browse for one-of-a-kind crafted gift items under the large market tent. The shops and eateries of Tuscumbia will offer holiday specials and food trucks will be on hand.

Kick off the morning for breakfast with kids and Rudolph, the Red-nosed Reindeer, at Superhero Chef's restaurant... or choose to visit with the Ghost of Marley and all the Dickens Ghosts at "Scones and Moans" in

Market on Main. Then throughout the day, festival goers may enjoy a Trolley Tour through the historic district,

See DICKENS... on Page 5

Take Advantage of These Tax Credits Before It's Too Late!

Shoals homeowners can claim up to \$2,000 in federal tax credits toward a HVAC system. AND - stack that credit with additional equipment rebates and EnergyRight cash incentives from TVA.

Federal tax credits end on December 31, 2025.

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Historic & Stunning Stops on the Tour

CaringPlace of the Shoals Tour of Homes Dec. 12-13
Locations listed inside this issue

SHOALS—CaringPlace of the Shoals adult day center will usher in the 2025 holiday season with an exciting new twist on its annual Holiday Tour of Homes. On Friday, December 12 from 5-9pm. and Saturday, December 13 from

1-6pm, tour ticketholders will be invited into 10 distinctive properties in Florence and Muscle Shoals:

For the first time in the history of this event, the CaringPlace Tour of Homes will open the doors to historically significant sites and some of the area's most stunning contemporary homes and venues.

See TOUR... on Page 7

INSIDE this Issue

Automotive Inside



Advance Auto Sales

• The Polar Express at the Ritz



• Guest Commentary
• Adopt-a-Friend

• Medicare Minute
• Ask the Attorney
• Dave Ramsey
• Your Letters
• Hocus Focus



• Hope's One Man Event for 1st Christmas
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• SIGNS of the PAST

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Take Advantage Credits Before

Shoals homeowners can claim
\$2,000 in federal tax credit for
HVAC system. AND
with additional equipment
EnergyRight cash in

Federal tax credit
December



2

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Community Notes

COMMUNITY NOTES may be submitted for non-profit, civic or church-related events and published free of charge AS SPACE IS AVAILABLE in the Courier Journal. Community Notes must be submitted in writing by 3pm Friday for consideration in the following week's issue. • Email to editor@courierjournal.net

Day by Day Annual Candlelight Remembrance Service - Sunday, December 14, 3:00pm, in Memory of Children, at Cross Point Church, 1350 Cox Creek Pkwy., Florence, AL. "Gone Is The Life, But Never The Light". First time Attenders need to email anita.watkins@comcast.net. Day By Day is a Grief Support Group for Bereaved Parents and Grandparents.

Pages and Paws - Tuesday, December 9, 3:30pm-4:15pm, at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, 256-764-6564. 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.

Florence Christmas Parade - Thursday, December 11, 7-9pm Downtown Florence North Court Street Florence. It will go from Court Street to Tennessee Street and up Seminary Street, ending at Wilson Park.

Christmas at Belle Mont - Belle Mont Mansion, Dec. 11-20, 1569 Cook Lane, Tuscumbia, will be decorated with live, authentic fresh greenery Guided tours from 10am-4pm Wednesday -Saturday to experience a Christmas celebration of the past.

The Tennessee Valley Art Association presents its 6th Annual Winter Art Market from Now - December 24, from 10am-5pm This thoughtfully curated seasonal showcase about 40 local and regional artisans exhibiting distinctive fine art, jewelry, pottery, and gifts. Admission is \$5. 511 N. Water St. For more information, please call 256-383-0533.

Nowhere - To - Run Wrestling Fundraiser for the Sheffield Bulldog Football Team, Saturday, December 13 at Sheffield Recreation Center, 2800 E. 19th Ave, in Sheffield - across from the school. Doors open at 6pm, Bell time 7pm. Floor Seats \$20 - Bleachers \$10.

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.

The 6th Annual Christmas Cantina presented by Bethel Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 408 E. Alabama St. in Florence, takes place Sunday December 14 at 4pm. Theme: From Manger to Majesty. The presentation is directed by Dr. android more and Oliver James Roy. Dr. Laurentis Barnett is Master of Ceremonies. Everyone is welcome.

"Sweeney Todd" - Cypress Moon Studios, 1000 Alabama Ave., Sheffield, will host the musical, with performances at 7 p.m. Dec. 11-13, and matinee shows at 2 p.m. Dec. 7 and Dec. 14. 256-335-6961

See NOTES... page 4

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WE BUY CARS, TRUCKS, VANS, SUVs, and MOTORCYCLES, running or not. Must have titles, send a pic, get a price. 256-275-2276

Shorts...

Graduation in 5 Events

Continued from Page 1

of five ceremonies that will feature two speakers, both of whom are outstanding UNA alumni. **Melissa Armstead**, Chief Nursing Officer at North Alabama Medical Center, will speak at the 5pm and 7:30pm ceremonies on Friday. **John Briggs**, owner of Briggs Entertainment and an entertainment industry consultant, will provide the comments at the 9am, 11:30am, and 2pm ceremonies on Saturday.

Armstead joined the leadership team at NAMC in June, having served most recently as the CNO for Southern Tennessee Regional Health System, a Lifepoint Health facility in Lawrenceburg, TN. She has a Master of Business Administration degree and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from UNA, and she has a Certificate for Professionals in Patient Safety.

Briggs has more than 40 years of experience in the music industry and is Vice President of Membership for ASCAP, the largest performing rights organization in the world. He launched Briggs Entertainment in 2010 to capitalize on the wealth of opportunities available within the digital and visual mediums. Briggs has a bachelor's degree in Commercial Music from UNA.

against 19 other bands from across the region. Band Director **Chad Kennington** praised the students for their effort and perseverance throughout the marching season. "These students have poured their hearts into every performance," hesaid.



"We're incredibly proud of what they've accomplished." The Deshler High band continues to uphold a proud tradition of excellence and teamwork, representing their school and community with true Tiger pride.

Toy Drop at Our Office

SHEFFIELD — The Courier Journal / TimesDaily office is an official drop-off point for the annual Toys for Tots drive in the Shoals.

We are located at 219 West Tennessee St. in downtown Florence. The public can drop off new unwrapped toys safely in our lobby from 8am-5pm Monday-Friday.

Ornament is the Museum

TUSCUMBIA – The 2025 Tuscumbia Civitan Christmas ornament is now available, featuring the Tennessee Valley Museum of Art. This is the 30th annual ornament produced by the club, marking a milestone! When the first Tuscumbia Civitan ornament was sold in 1996, the club hoped it would be something that might have a run of about 12 years. Due to the popularity and collectability of the landmark ornaments, the demand has far surpassed that initial desire!

Club president **Fred Joly** said that the museum was the unanimous choice of club members. These members hold

See SHORTs... on Page 4

Deshler High Band Honored

TUSCUMBIA – The Deshler High School "Pride of the Tigers" marching band made some waves this season with outstanding performances at two major competitions. At the Alabama Marching Band Championship, the band's dedication, and musical excellence shone through, earning the 4A Runner-Up title, and proudly bringing home the coveted Red Map trophy. The band also competed at the US Bands Southeastern Championship, where they initially tied for first place in their division, which led them to an additional performance



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 <p>Boneless Chicken Breast \$2.49 Lb.</p>  <p>Chicken Whole Wings \$2.49 Lb.</p>	 <p>Chicken Leg Quarters 10 Lb. Bag \$7.99</p>  <p>Farm Raised Catfish Fillet 4 Lb. BOX \$18.99</p>	 <p>Whole Rabbits \$15.99 Lb.</p>  <p>Goat Meat (5-way cut) \$5.99 Lb.</p>	 <p>Whole Corn 50 Lbs. \$9.00</p>  <p>Deer Draw 50 Lbs. \$14</p> <p>Tasty 10 50 Lbs. \$9.00</p> <p>5-Way Scratch 50 Lbs. \$12</p>

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Holiday Fine Art Sale

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FORD: MUSTANG, 1999 \$2,800. 35th Anniversary GT, Good body, paint is peeling. Needs Intake or-ings. Text me at 938-216-4213 more info and photos.

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ROGERSVILLE/ELGIN: CHRISTMAS GARAGE SALE
931 Co. Rd. 581 Dec. 11th, 12th, and 13th 8am-3pm Green faux Christmas wreaths and small trees, rocking horse, ornaments, gifts, cookie cutters, glassware, womens clothing and accessories, Luggage, purses, shoes, PartyLite candles, Pfaltzgraff stoneware "Heritage" 50 pc. set, Noritake china, craft items and more.

CLOVERDALE YARD SALE, 12101 Hwy. 157, Old Cloverdale School Gym, Sat., Dec 13th. Sun., Dec 14th, 7am-5pm, Lucy's Poems, Handmade Bracelets, Handmade skin products. Lots of vendors and food trucks, baked goods, games. Take selfies with Santa from 12-2pm.

DAY by DAY

Grief Support Group for Bereaved Parents/Grandparents

Annual Candlelight Remembrance Service

Sunday, Dec. 14
In Memory of Children
3:00 pm

Cross Point Church
1350 Cox Creek Pkwy., Florence, AL

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But Never The Light"*

First time Attenders need to email
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DEADLINE: Friday 5pm

Notes...

Continued from page 2

Marketing Beef Directly to Consumers - Wednesday, December 10, 3pm-7pm at the Northwest Alabama Livestock Auction, AL HWY 243 South, Russellville,

This program will cover topics of cattle nutrition, local beef marketing, tackling farmers markets and a panel discussion. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator, employer, and provider. If you need a reasonable accommodation or free language access services, contact Ali Gotcher at 334-752-1718 or acg0134@aces.edu by 11/19/2025. Address: Northwest Alabama Livestock Auction 14330 AL HWY 243 South Russellville, AL 35654 Contact: Ali Gotcher acg0134@aces.edu (334) 752-1718 Register Online View this event online: <https://www.aces.edu/event/marketing-beef-directly-to-consumers/>

The 2025 Stuff the Bus Toy Drive in the Shoals will continue through Sunday, Dec. 14 at 7pm. The Shoals Now and Singing River Media Group Radio Stations will be accepting toys for kids from kindergarten through high school. We will have (2) locations for your toy drop-offs this year: Florence Walmart on Hough Rd. and Muscle Shoals Walmart located on Avalon Ave.

LifeSouth Bloodmobile Dates:
Tuesday, December 9 Shoals Christian School - 301 Heathrow Dr., - Florence 9:30am - 4pm
Wednesday, December 10 Russellville Hospital, 10am - 5pm

Thursday, December 11 Sheffield High School - Cheer, 8:30am - 2:30pm
Friday, December 12 North Alabama Ink - 1226 N. Wood Avenue, Florence 1pm - 6pm

Saturday, December 20 Austin's Shoes - Florence, 10am - 4pm
Tuesday, December 23 AT&T - Russellville, 10am - 4pm
Saturday, January 3 Foodland - Rogersville, 10am - 4pm

Community Breakfast - The Underwood-Petersville Community Center, 840 County Road 7, Florence, is bringing back the Community Breakfast

beginning Dec. 13. The breakfast will be 6:30-11 a.m. The cost for the event will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for children younger than 10. Cash only, check nor credit cards will be accepted. The breakfast will be the second Saturday of each month. Call 256-764-1388, or follow the Lauderdale County Solid Waste Department's Facebook Page.

Photos with Santa - Natchez Trace Harley-Davidson, 595 Highway 72 W., Tuscumbia, will have Photos with Santa 1-5 p.m. Dec. 13. Bring camera for photos with Santa. Refreshments provided.

Teen Tech Club - Saturday, December 13, 1:30-3:30pm at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, 256-764-6564.

Calling all of our tech savvy teenagers! We'll learn how to bring ideas into the real world with 3D printing and electronics, make interactive art with coding and animation and see where our curiosity takes us. Let's explore ways to be creative with technology! Registration is required. Email teens@fjpl.org to reserve your spot.

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Shorts...

Ornament is the Museum

Continued from Page 2

a process each year to nominate and select the site to feature.

Since 1962, the Tennessee Valley Art Association has drawn artists from across three counties and has been offering opportunities for the artists to exhibit their work. The Tennessee Valley

Museum of Art was built in 1972 to serve these purposes, taking its place on the historic Commons of Tuscumbia. Today it is the site of visual art exhibits, special programming, and is headquarters for performances at the Ritz Theatre in Sheffield.

The ornaments are \$20 each and are available at the Tennessee Valley Museum of Art, Coldwater Seed & Supply, Helen Keller Library, Fiddledee D! gift shop, and at local financial institutions in the town.

The Civitan ornaments will also be available at the Tennessee Valley Museum of Art during the "Winter Art Market", November 29 - December 23 which features the handmade goods of approximately 34 artisans.

Purchases of ornaments may also be made using PayPal, by sending an email request to Tuscumbiacivitan@gmail.com. Remaining stock from previous years may also be purchased at a reduced price of \$15 at the library or at Fiddledee D!

Joly added, "It also wouldn't be Christmas without fruitcake!" Traditional Claxton Fruitcakes, made available during the holiday season by the Civitan Club, may be found at various local grocery stores.

Proceeds from all sales benefit local charities supported by the Tuscumbia Civitan Club. For more information, call 256-710-1440, contact Helen Keller Library at 256-383-7065, or Fiddledee D! at 256-383-9797.

Holiday Show at the HOF

TUSCUMBIA - The Shoals Holiday Concert, an annual favorite, is back for another year, bringing a delightful blend of holiday cheer and exceptional music to

the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in Tuscumbia.

The Tuesday, December 16 concert will spotlight Grammy-nominated artists **Mark Narmore**

and **Bobby Tomberlin**, along with **Tess Frizzell**, a rising star from one of country music's most legendary families. Tess is the granddaughter of the iconic **Dottie West**, the first female country singer to win a Grammy, and niece of **Lefty Frizzell**. Tomberlin, best known for writing the hit "One More Day" recorded by Diamond Rio, has deep connections to the Shoals music community, where he lived and worked before his successful Nashville career. Mark Narmore, a Muscle Shoals native, is celebrated for writing the chart-topping hits like "That's What I Love About Sunday," and "Moon Over Georgia," solidifying his place in country music history. Together, these artists promise an evening filled with great music and heartfelt stories.

"Having our local musicians perform during the holidays brings so much joy to our community," said **Susann Hamlin**, President of the Colbert County Tourism and Convention Bureau. "Mark, Bobby, and Tess deliver a truly memorable show, and we're grateful to see so many people make this concert a cherished holiday tradition."

Doors open at 6pm and the music starts at 6:30. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the Alabama Music Hall of Fame, Colbert County Tourism, or online at <https://square.link/u/Mjm55876>. For inquiries, call 256-383-0783.

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Gregg Scott
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GRAPHIC COORDINATORS

Russell Roden
Andrea L. Gray

OFFICE STAFF/CLASSIFIED

Erin Gilbert

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Tina Hill

CIRCULATION

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Your Courier Journal is published for total saturation, direct-mail delivery every Wednesday to **51,892** Shoals area and surrounding homes. It is Alabama's Largest Weekly-Mailed Direct, and enjoys a larger circulation than all local subscriber based newspapers combined.

EDITORIAL POLICY: Your Courier Journal accepts a variety of news releases, photos, stories, Letters to the Editor and upcoming community, church or civic events for publication as space permits. Please submit all materials in written form to:

**219 W. Tennessee St.
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well in advance of the planned event. The Editor reserves right to shorten, edit, reword or omit submissions as seen fit. All information submitted for publication becomes property of the Courier Journal. Information published does not necessarily reflect an opinion or endorsement by the Courier Journal, members of its management, or its staff. Advertisers are responsible for all content and claims in their advertising.

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Dickens...

Continued from Page 1

"Poetry and Music" at St. John's Episcopal Church, and "A Holiday Tea" at the historic Winston Home at Deshler High School (advance tickets required). Events appealing to the younger set include cookie decorating at the law office of Denise Green and "Milk and Cookies with Tiny Tim", including a reading of A Christmas Carol, at Emily Cooper Gallery. Visit Helen Keller Library where you may make your own Victorian Christmas Ornament. Dress in "Dickens Style" to join the fun or simply bundle up and "come as you are." (Please refer to the Dickens schedule for detailed timings.)

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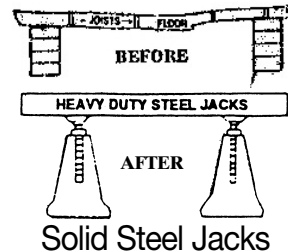
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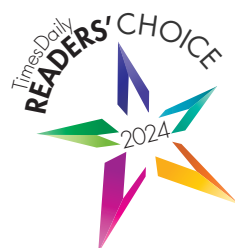
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Sheffield Utilities will be accepting applications for the position of AMI Analyst

beginning Monday, December 8, 2025, until the position is filled. Sheffield Utilities offers an excellent benefit package including RSA state retirement and advancement opportunities. Visit <https://www.sheffieldutilities.org/employment> to download the full job description.

You can email your resume to apply@sheffieldutilities.org or mail it to Sheffield Utilities, P.O. Box 580, Sheffield, AL 35660, Attention HR Dept. You may also hand-deliver your resume to our main office located at 300 N. Nashville Ave., Sheffield, AL 35660 during office hours. *Sheffield Utilities is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

Administrative Sales Assistant / Event Coordinator

The TimesDaily has an immediate opening for a full-time Advertising Administrative Sales Assistant / Event Coordinator

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Scheduling advertising insertions
- Assisting with training staff on computer ticket entry
- Interacting with customers and other departments on a regular basis
- Assisting management with scheduling special sections
- Filing daily newspapers
- Answering phone calls and emails
- Helping service all walk-ins
- Event Coordinator, plans, organizes and oversees all aspects of an event to ensure it runs smoothly and meets objectives, from initial planning to execution and breakdown.
- Completing various other administrative duties

The ideal candidate for this position is highly organized, has strong attention to detail, and Must be able to multitask, prioritize deadlines, and keep information strictly confidential. We are looking for someone with a desire to go the extra mile.

This position requires a high school degree or equivalent, administrative assistant experience, and proficiency with computers, phones, and office equipment.

The job will require availability Monday – Friday and is 37.5 hours a week plus commission.

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The TimesDaily is seeking a printing press operator to join our northwestern Alabama printing facility.

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- Performing standard set up of printing press
- Operating the press
- Making adjustments to maintain quality control
- Performing preventative maintenance and repairs.

Hands-on experience with a Goss Urbanite or DGM 850 is a plus, but not required. We are ready to hire and will train for the position.

This position offers benefits including:

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- Disability Insurance
- Additional Insurance Coverage Options
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- Paid Time Off (Vacation, Holidays, Sick Time)

Qualified candidates will be available to work nights and weekends.

Applications are available at the TimesDaily Office 219 W. Tennessee St., Florence, AL 35630 Questions or resumes may be emailed to: **Kevin.Blurton@timesdaily.com**

The Colbert County Commission will be accepting employment applications for a

TAG CLERK

Starting pay is \$28,210.90/year plus health insurance and other benefits

Job Description and Application are available at the **Alabama Career Center** 500 South Montgomery Ave., Sheffield

MUST HAVE ACCOUNT WITH CAREER CENTER AT: alabamaworks.alabama.gov

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- Good written and verbal communication skills
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- Ability to multitask and stay organized
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Tour...

Continued from Page 1

Also new to the 2025 Tour will be a live online auction for seven of the 12 Christmas trees fashioned by prominent Shoals area designers and florists that will be on display at Mapleton in Florence.

FLORENCE

- **Historic Mapleton**
420 S. Pine St.
- **Frank Lloyd Wright - Rosenbaum Museum**
601 Riverview Dr.
- **CaringPlace-Shoals**
216 Marengo St, Ste 1
- **The Loft at Ryan Piano Company**
207 E. Tennessee St.
- **Rhodes Landing**
6400 Highway 157

MUSCLE SHOALS

- **Home of Rickey and Lana Boatwright**
1802 Pleasant Dr.
- **Home of David and Kara Sams**
110 Brooke Dr.
- **Home of Terry and Alicia Cochran**
163 Carron Ln.
- **Home of Joey and Kellie Poss**
156 Carron Ln.
- **Home of Will and Emily Kelley**
260 Stone Ridge Dr.

Tickets are \$50 each and can be purchased at Kennedy-Douglass Art Center, Sheffield Public Library, and First United Methodist Church of Florence. Each ticket allows ticketholders one visit to each tour stop during the event and stops can be made on one or both days of the event.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors and property owners, ALL proceeds from ticket, tree, and basket sales will go to CaringPlace of the Shoals, a 501(c)3 nonprofit.

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Two Main Signs

Both are ignored most of the time. **#1 death!** Trying to look young and hide the truth by daily patching the washouts and potholes proves the point. Ignoring death will not make it disappear. Ample time is usually given by God to prepare for that moment. Lifestyles and lifetimes differ greatly according to our choices we make. The looks on our faces have a lot to do with the way we lived. We must reap what we sow. We always reap more than what we sowed. Compared to eternity, any lifetime is extremely short. God has set folks in our paths to warn us of impending death then judgment. Here's yours! **Hebrews 9:27** "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." **Acts 17:31** "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead." **Romans 3:4a** "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." Whether you believe it or not, you will be judged!

Is Christ in your heart or not? You choose now, eternal joy in heaven or eternal burning and pain in hell fire. After death, it's too late. Ask Christ to forgive your sin and save you today and be ready!

#2. Sign of Christ's coming! The Heaven and Earth abound with biblical signs almost daily. **When we read Luke 21 and Matthew 24**, the prophesied events in the text are deliberately ignored by the churches and the preachers! **Luke 21:25&26** "distress of nations with perplexity", **V26** "men's hearts failing them". **Matthew 24:7** "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." **v24:** "there shall arise false Christ's and false prophets." It's Happening now. Read the texts! This world isn't going to return to order until the King returns and with a "rod of iron" forces it to. Read the book! Playing church or ignoring God times are just about over. Get your house in order!

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Guest Commentary

A College Student Gets Failed for Her Faith

University of Oklahoma student Samantha Fulnecky wrote a reaction essay not long ago to a scholarly article in psychology class and received a zero on the assignment. The academic article in question discussed

A University of Oklahoma undergrad was given a zero on an assignment by her gender-confused professor because she cited the Bible when addressing gender norms.

gender norms in society and how they are enforced. Fulnecky's job was to write a short 650-word essay reacting to this very politically and ideologically loaded paper. Unfortunately for her, the adjunct professor, William "Mel" Curth, is a grad

student who is gender-confused. In her essay, Fulnecky explained why she believes that gender roles should be reinforced. Namely, she believes that God created people male and female, He knitted

See **FAILED FOR HER FAITH...** on Page 16

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



Emmy Griffin
PatriotPost.us

Courier Journal

in the *Shoals*

THIS WEEK

December 10, 2025

Happening
THIS WEEK

He is Our Hope

A One-Man Inspirational Stage Message through Biblical Text on the Birth of Our Savior

FLORENCE – A legendary local stage and directing personality will perform his one-man Christian drama, "Emmanuel, God with Us!" at 6pm on Wednesday, December 17 at Woodmont Baptist Church in Florence.

Taken from the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John, David Hope will bring the scriptures to light this Christmas season with a rare, live retelling of the events surrounding the miraculous birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Starting in the months before with the Angel Gabriel's message to Zachariah that his wife, Elizabeth, was going to conceive the child to be known as John the



Hope Courtesy photo

See **SAVIOR...**
Pg 14

ALL SAINTS COLLEGE MINISTRY PRESENTS "A CHRISTMAS STORY" at The Shoals Theatre, Friday, December 12, 7pm 123 N Seminary St., Florence, 256-764-1700.

Based on the humorous writings of author Jean Shepherd, this beloved holiday movie follows the wintry exploits of youngster Ralphie Parker (Peter Billingsley), who spends most of his time dodging a bully (Zack Ward) and dreaming of his ideal Christmas gift, a "Red Ryder air rifle." Frequently at odds with his cranky dad (Darren McGavin) but comforted by his doting mother (Melinda Dillon), Ralphie struggles to make it to Christmas Day with his glasses and his hopes intact. Tickets are \$5. Concessions will be available.

THE 2025 GREEN HILL CHRISTMAS PARADE will take place on Saturday, December 13 with lineup time at 1pm and parade beginning at 1:30pm. It will take the same route as the Rogers homecoming parade. Floats, antique cars, 4 wheelers, Razers, and Horsers are welcome. If you would like to be in the parade, please contact Ricky Johnson (cell), 256-262-7058. Everyone is welcome to be in this parade.



Ritz Hosts The Polar Express

SHEFFIELD – Rebecca Hovater State Farm is sponsoring two days of magic at the Ritz Theatre in Sheffield, all themed around the holiday classic The Polar Express!

Saturday or Sunday, December 13-14 you'll get to enjoy a trolley ride with Santa starting at 4pm, enjoy hot cocoa and cookies, make

See **POLAR...** on Page 17



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DECEMBER 15
7PM
at Alabama A&M
in Huntsville

NORTH ALABAMA



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DECEMBER 14
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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 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.

- **by Mail, in Person, or Mail Slot**
Editor-Courier Journal
219 W. Tennessee St., Florence, AL 35630
- **e-mail: editor@courierjournal.net**
- **FAX- 256-760-9618**

Support for Dearmon

Editor,

In recent days, the UNA Athletic Director, Josh Looney, has posted information concerning the status of Head Football Coach Brent Dearmon. Included in the post was the comment that under Coach Dearmon's leadership, the student athletes have achieved record academic success, and our Academic Progress Rate Benchmarks have been met. This is excellent, but why didn't the post include GPAs? What was the academic success level prior to Coach Dearmon? What was the rate prior to Coach Dearmon?

The post included the following statement: "President Kitts and I

believe in Coach Dearmon, his vision, and his ability to restore UNA football." Dearmon has one year left in his contract. Based on the noted statement. I believe Dr. Kitts and Dr. Looney should have also stated that Dearmon's contract has been extended to 2028 or 2029! Just think about advantages of recruiting!

For additional information please see the *TimesDaily* article entitled, "UNA's aim to end 'insanity' continues," written by sportswriter David Glovach.

Roar Lions!

Bill Smoak
Florence

... Our state is the only state in the southeast that does not have a lottery to benefit our schools ...



Why It Was Funded

Editor,

If you aren't my age, you won't remember why the federal government funded education. Books were not free. Class fees ate

See **LETTERS...** on Page 20

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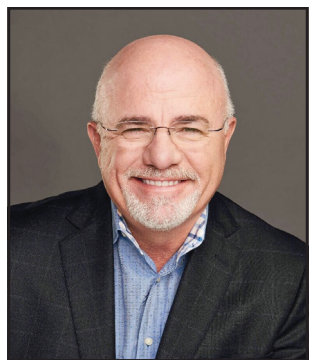
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DAVE Says

by DAVE RAMSEY

REWARDS, RESPONSIBILITY AND TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Dear Dave,
Our son is a freshman in high school, and he has the opportunity to take a school-sponsored, week-long trip next year with the rest of his class. The student fee is \$500. Over the past couple of years, he has started making money mowing lawns and doing odd jobs around the neighborhood. We've always taught him that money comes from work, and he has always been very focused on being smart with the money he earns. Do you think we should cover the entire \$500, or should he have



to contribute something?
Patrice

Dear Patrice,
When it came to making these kinds of decisions at our house, my wife and I would always take a look at a few things. Is the kid behaving? Are they getting good grades? You know, just basic things that can reasonably be expected from most teenagers. Most of the time, if they were living like well-behaved, responsible young people, we'd pay for things like this as a reward.

But, there's a good argument to be made for a kid having some skin in

the game at that age, too. If you and your husband can pay for it without causing yourselves any financial stress—and your son is fulfilling his responsibilities at school and at home—there's nothing wrong with you paying the fee. Then, here's an idea. If you want to make this a teachable moment, another learning experience, you could require him to work, and save up his own spending money for the trip.

I'm glad you and your husband are thinking of your teenage son as an adult in training. I know you love him, but it's also a parent's job to teach their children what they need to know for that moment when you send them off to college, trade school or even their own apartment and their first real, full-time job. Trust me, you don't have to be a finance professor to teach your child how to save money and wisely manage their finances.

Patrice, I'm so impressed with the young man you're raising. To have that kind of

drive and maturity at his age is a testimony to him, and to how well you and your husband have taught and guided him throughout the years. I have no doubt your son will be well-prepared to take on the world one day. In the meantime, I hope

he has lots of fun on his upcoming trip!
— Dave

Dave Ramsey is a nine-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.



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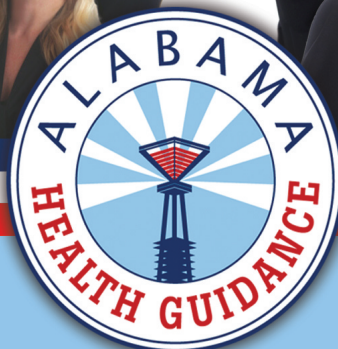
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Savior...

Continued from Page 8

Baptist, Hope will tell the story through scripture and music for this community that is so dear to his heart.

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"There are a lot of musicals around the holidays, but no one telling the Christmas story," Hope added. "This promises to be a very special evening, and one your entire family will talk about throughout this Christmas season."

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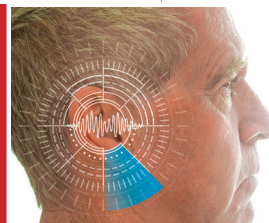
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23 and Me

When I was in law school I worked for a law firm in Birmingham. One of the attorneys there, Bill Gladden, was a really good trial lawyer with a big personality. He was an inspiration. He loved cars.

One day Mr. Gladden called me to his office and told me he needed me to drive him to the Porsche dealership to pick up his new car. He showed me a Car & Driver magazine with a Comet Gray Porsche 911 on the front cover with the caption

"Therapy Through Wretched Excess". Mr. Gladden had bought it and in 1986 it was an astronomical \$42,000.00.

He took me for a ride in that Porsche, first one I had been in. I have never forgotten that car.

Since that time, I have had 23 Porsches. I started out with the 944s, then a 944 Turbo (4-cylinders) and then moved to the 911s, but after having a 911 Turbo, very few cars compare (even Ferraris). Porsches are engineered for excellence, and their technology is always improving. I still drive one to this day. The beauty of the 911 is that it is the only car that has continued to evolve (since 1964). Porsche raced them, found the flaws, and improved them. For example, during a race the shiny-windshield wipers created a reflection in the driver's eyes and from then on, all Porsche windshield wipers are non-reflective black. Once you fall in love with a brand, you become familiar with it and learn the history. Probably the best one I ever had was a RUF 993 air-cooled turbo, which I traded for a newer convertible turbo. That car is worth well over a million today.

Some days, the most fun I had was driving to and from work!

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Guest Commentary- Emmy Griffin

Failed for Her Faith...

Continued from Page 8

them for a purpose, and He gave each gender certain gifts and strengths with which to carry out that purpose here on Earth. She did use some emphatic language, saying (accurately), "Society pushing that there are multiple genders and everyone should be what they want to be is demonic."

In response, Curth asserted that Fulnecky's article was ideological and demanded empirical evidence. Ironically, he exposed his own ideological bias.

Curth claimed that gender norms are reinforced by religious pressure and that, when writing a reaction paper, Fulnecky should use empirical evidence from scientific articles across disciplines such as biology and sociology. He concluded by exhorting her to use more perspective and empathy in her critiques and to avoid using ostensibly offensive language.

NotTheBee.com published Fulnecky's essay in full. She tries to convey very philosophical ideas, though it's not a very well-written essay. If Curth's complaint was merely about that, then perhaps he had some standing. However, to give her a zero was extremely malicious.

Joel Abbott articulated Fulnecky's beliefs with this very incisive observation:

"As a math professor once told me, even in mathematics, you will come to different answers with different starting premises, even though mathematics is empiricism in its truest form."

This is true for everything in all of life. Science is science, but how that data is interpreted does not, as much as the secularists like to preach, rely on empirical evidence alone.

Empiricism teaches that we can understand everything through observation, and yet the Founding Fathers did not run tests to conclude the "truths we hold to be self-evident." Their conclusion that "all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights" was based on the rationalistic idea that we have an innate nature and can

deduce things based on inner common sense."

The quality of the essay is beside the point, though. Frankly, unless this is a senior-level English class, it's reasonable to have low expectations for such an essay. Fulnecky articulated her beliefs coherently enough while calling out her fellow students who would likely conform to the beliefs held by her professor so they "don't step on people's toes."

She has a point. Most students lie to or exploit their Marxist professors to get a good grade.

For its part, the University of Oklahoma is addressing this controversy. Curth has been placed on administrative leave, and Fulnecky's bad mark will not count toward her overall grade in the class.

Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt also weighed in on the controversy.

"The 1st Amendment," he posted, "is foundational to our freedom & inseparable from a well-rounded education. The situation at OU is deeply concerning. I'm calling on the OU regents to review the results of the investigation & ensure other students aren't unfairly penalized for their beliefs."

While it's not surprising, even in deep-red Oklahoma, to find that a public university has a gender-confused professor teaching a class on "Lifespan Development," it's nice to see that the university is taking steps to address Curth's partisan actions. Perhaps nature is truly starting to heal.

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Emmy Griffin is a Chicago native who now resides in the South. As a former educator, she has had the opportunity to teach all grade levels K-12. The passion that drove her during teaching — the love of her students and the people they are becoming — is the same drive behind her writing for *The Patriot Post*. She is a mother, avid reader, and podcast listener who is always striving to learn.



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Polar...

Continued from Page 8

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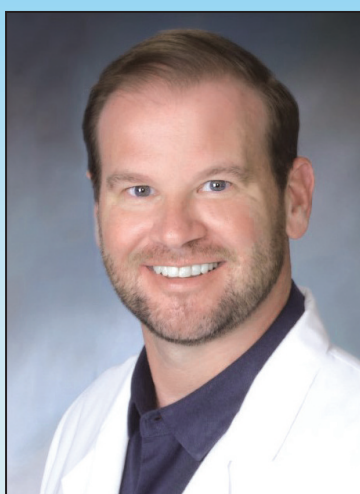
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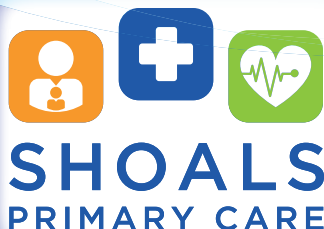
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Medicare Minute Prescription Drug Plans 3

Last week we discussed prescription drug plan premiums, deductibles and coinsurance. This week we will continue to look at Medicare prescription drug plans by looking at copays, formularies and provider networks. When choosing a prescription drug plan these six things are very important to consider.

A copay is a fixed amount you pay for each individual prescription. Copays can vary depending on the tier of your prescription. Typically the lower the tier, the lower the copay. A tier 1 drug usually has a lower copay than a tier 2 drug, tier 2 drugs have a lower copay than tier 3, etc. Because different plans may categorize drugs in different tiers it's a good idea to know how your plan treats your prescriptions.

The prescription drug plan's formulary will tell you two important things. First, it will tell you if the prescription you are taking is covered under the plan. Second, it will tell you the tier of the prescription. Knowing the tier of your prescription is important in determining the copay. For example, Plan A may list your prescription as a tier 2 whereas, Plan B may have it as a tier 3. This should tell you that Plan A will have a lower copay on your prescription than Plan B. It will also tell you if your drug will fall in the deductible phase of the plan.

The plan's provider network is a list of pharmacies that accepts the plan. All pharmacies do not accept all plans so if you have a particular pharmacy you would like to use check to make sure they accept your plan. You can do this by simply asking your pharmacist. Also, pharmacies are listed as "preferred" and "standard" under some plans. In this case a "preferred" pharmacy may have lower copays than a "standard" pharmacy.

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.



Ikey Fowler

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Notes...

Continued from page 4

"Home Alone" — The Ritz Theatre,
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holiday classic at 6pm on December 12.

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See NOTES... page 22

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Letters...

Why It Was Funded...

Continued from Page 8

through the budget of a family of four. Teachers were grossly underpaid. Class size was doubled, and they had very few benefits. There wasn't any curriculum that was the same across the state. High tuition fees. No path for college... or even junior college. SAT scores were feeble. Graduating classes were small. No special education for anyone. No advanced classes.

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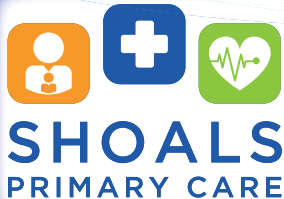
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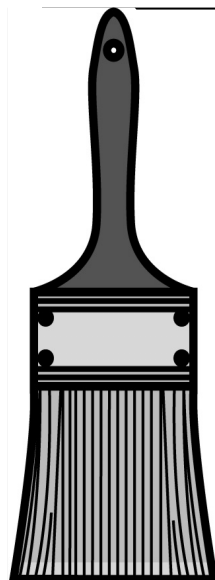
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Notes...

Continued from page 19

Lego Build - Tuesday, December 16, 3:30pm-4:15pm, at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, 256-764-6564. Thousands of Legos and your creativity make this program FUN!

The Singing River Literacy Council will host storyteller Dolores Hydock in Tusculumbia at 11am Dec. 13 as part of the "It's a Dickens Christmas, Y'all" festival. She'll present "No Humbug: The Surprising Story Behind the Creation of A Christmas Carol" at the Tusculumbia Utilities Auditorium, 202 E. Sixth St. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased on Eventbrite (with a small service charge) or at Colbert County Tourism.

Polar Express at the Ritz Theatre, 111 W. Third St., Sheffield, will host two days of holiday magic themed around the classic "The Polar Express." Events begin at 4 p.m. Dec. 13-14, with the movie screening at 5:30 p.m. Tickets: \$18 (plus tax). 256-383-0533

"Joy Gift" - First Presbyterian Church, Sheffield's Chancel Choir will present its "Joy Gift" Christmas Cantata

at 6 p.m. Dec. 14. The church is at 130 E. Fifth St., Sheffield. No admission. Pastor, Jaina Glaze; choir director, Barry Rickard; and accompanist, Elizabeth Counts.

Eric Essix Southbound at the Shoals Theatre - Thursday, December 18, 7pm. 123 N. Seminary St., Florence 256-764-1700. For an incredible night of music that you won't want to miss! Tickets are on sale now! Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/mtue6a6u>

Nationally known storyteller, Tim Lowry, will perform Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library Friday, December 12 at 7pm. The program is free and open to the public.

Q&A with Eric Essix - Friday, December 19, Noon at the Sheffield Public Library, 316 N. Montgomery Ave. 256-386-5633. A special question and answer session with guitarist Eric Essix. Program is FREE.

"A Taste of the Nutcracker Ballet" - The Ritz Theatre, 111 W. Third St., Sheffield, will experience the holiday favorite, with a curated adaptation of the classic played by a live orchestra. Performances will be 7 p.m. Dec. 18-20 and 2 p.m. Dec. 21. 256-383-0533, tennesseevalleyarts.org

Game Day - Thursday, Dec. 18, 1pm-3pm at Bartholomew's Church, 1900 Darby Drive, Florence, every third Thursday of each month. Games provided or bring some. 678-372-3526. Additional Dates: Thursday, January 15, 2026, February 19, March 19, at Bartholomew's Church, 1900 Darby Drive, Florence.

"Soul Jingle Jam" from 7-11:30 p.m. Dec. 19 - Cypress Lakes Golf & Tennis, 1311 E. Sixth St., Muscle Shoals, will host a night of music, dancing and holiday cheer at the Live performance by Ed Jones and The PC Band. Advance tickets are \$45, or \$60 at the door. 256-710-9454, 256-349-3882

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Darby Drive. Dec. 19, 20, and 21, 6-8pm. Free Event - Drive through or Walk through - Hot Cocoa and refreshments available. 256-766-0471

Shoals Artists Guild Meeting will NOT TAKE PLACE on Friday, December 19 this month, due to the holidays.

Lost Pizza Co. Shoals presents "Christmas Vacation" movie at The Shoals Theatre, Friday, December 19, 7pm. Tickets are \$5. Concessions will be available.

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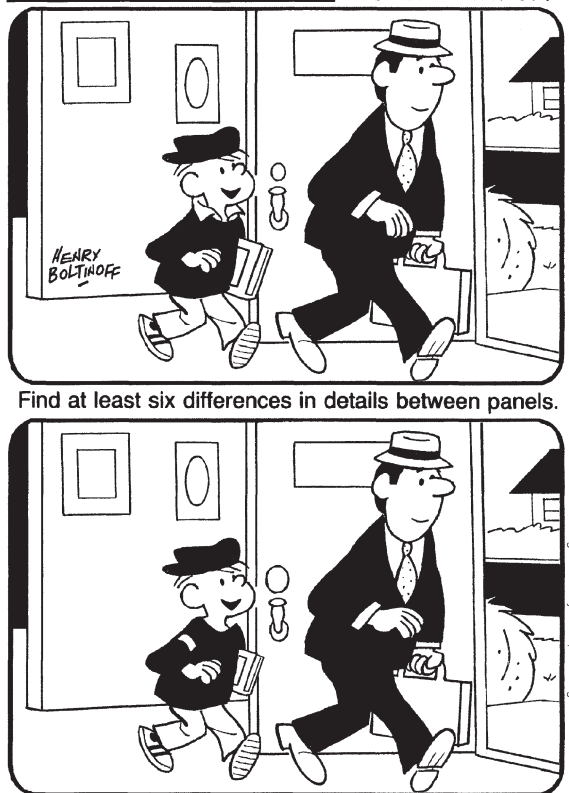
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BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Picture frame is higher. 2. Door knob is larger. 3. Hand is moved. 4. Collar is missing. 5. Stripe is added to sleeve. 6. Book is smaller.

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WEEK 14
Saturday, Nov. 29
Winner:
SABRINA SEAL
 of Muscle Shoals
 wins the
\$50 Gift Card!

GAME DAY SCORE CARD

BEST ENTRY WINS

A \$50 GIFT CARD TO

Lost Pizza Co.

Other than Army-Navy, there are no games of note this week.

Games Return Next Week

with some College Bowl Games and the First Round of the 12 team College Football Playoff!

Courier Journal





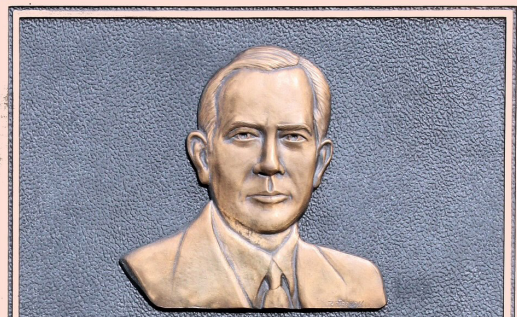








SIGNS OF THE PAST



Edward Asbury O'Neal, III

Serving 16 years as president of the American Farm Bureau Federation (1931-1947), Mr. O'Neal developed major New Deal farm policies in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration.

INDUCTED 2007
CITY OF FLORENCE
WALK OF HONOR

Location: 34.8063°N, 87.6314°W
River Heritage Park, Florence

Grandson of Alabama governor Edward O'Neal and nephew of governor Emmet O'Neal. As president of the AL Farmers Federation, he aided Alabama farmers during the Great depression. Born 1875, Died 1958, buried in Florence Cemetery.

~ Courtesy David Curott ~ author of
"Historical Markers and Other Signs of the Past"

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, January 6, 2026 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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