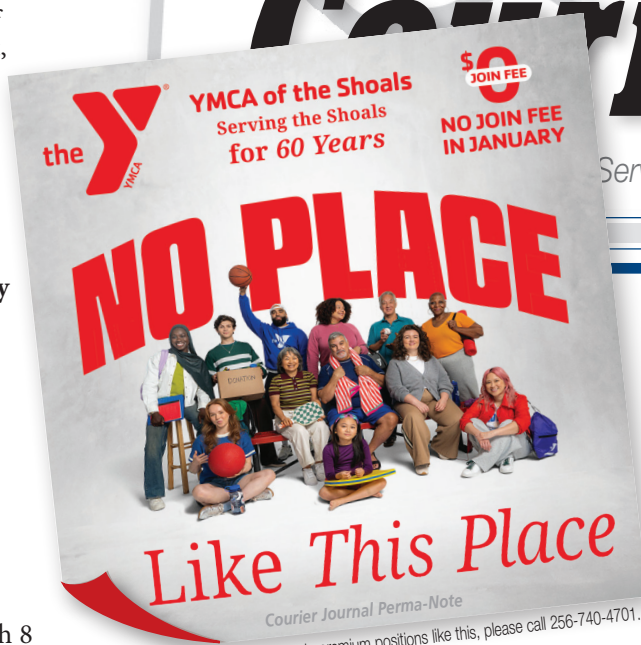


# Wynkoop's 1st 100 Years

FLORENCE — Maria Wynkoop, formerly of Plainville, Connecticut, celebrated her 100th birthday with local family members, extended family, and friends on Saturday, January 3. Members of the Perez/McCaney families were honored to welcome their beloved mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother as the Shoals area's latest Centenarian. She now resides in Florence with 8 children, 18 grandchildren, 34 great grandchildren, and 19 great-great grandchildren spread across the United States. The community joins her family in celebrating this remarkable milestone and wishing Ms. Wynkoop a Happy 100th Birthday.



Wynkoop



**Freshman NWSCC Patriots softball pitcher, Briana Oliver, poses in her Hatton Volunteer Fire Dept. turnout gear at Patriot Park.**

## B'Ball Nights at Lost Pizza

FLORENCE – For the second straight season, the UNA men's and women's basketball programs will host a weekly radio show — UNA Basketball Night on Mondays at Lost Pizza Co. Shoals in downtown Florence.

Broadcasts will continue live at 7pm from Lost Pizza and on

See SHORTS... on Page 2



## UNA First in NCAA to Field Rubberized LED

FLORENCE – Growth and advancements associated with LED technology in athletics has come at a stirring pace, yet some outdated installation methods remain. Traditionally, video displays have been installed behind nets, fences, plexiglasses, or on distant walls. This setup compromises the crisp images of the LED display with glare, netting, or metal bars, and leaves players exposed to potential injury from sharp edges and hard surfaces.

Uber Displays, a producer of custom LED signage, knew that teams wanted a product safe enough for players to interact with

See RUBBERIZED LED... on Page 7

## INSIDE this Issue

### Automotive Inside



Advance Auto Sales



- Ask the Attorney
- Medicare Minute
- Dave Says
- Fine Free January



- Guest Commentary
- Better Hearing
- Computer Skeptic
- Adopt-a-Friend
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- Your Letters
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### Online Only:

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Volume 143 Number 11

January 7, 2026

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## Diamond&Drafts

Oliver balances Patriots softball and service as a volunteer firefighter

MUSCLE SHOALS -- When the dispatch call comes in, Brianna Oliver trades her softball glove for fire gear without hesitation.

Oliver, a freshman softball pitcher for the Northwest Shoals Community College Patriots, also serves as a volunteer firefighter with the Hatton Volunteer Fire Department. This is a role she does not take lightly and one she

has witnessed since she was a little girl.

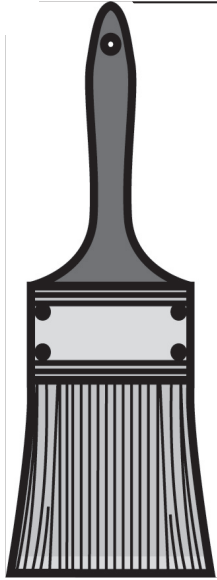
Service is in her blood. Her mother served 12 years as a volunteer firefighter, and her father dedicated 17 years to the department. Growing up, Oliver watched them drop everything, racing out

See FIRE... on Page 4



NWSCC photo





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## Do the affairs of today's world worry you?

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In Matthew 11:28-29 Jesus says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

At Jacksonburg Church of Christ, we are a family of God who loves the Lord and one another. We welcome visitors who need the Lord and a family who will love them.

If you are broken-hearted and weary, come and with the Lord's help, together we will help you find peace! We hope to see you Sunday for worship or Wednesday evening for Bible study.

## Jacksonburg Church of Christ

414 County Road 28, Florence

- Bible Study 9am
- Morning Worship 9:45am
- Afternoon Service 1:30pm
- Wednesday Bible Study 7pm

## Community Notes

COMMUNITY NOTES may be submitted for non-profit, civic or church-related events and published free of charge. **ASSPACE IS AVAILABLE** in the Courier Journal. Community Notes must be submitted in writing by 4pm Friday for consideration in the following week's issue. • Email to [editor@courierjournal.net](mailto:editor@courierjournal.net)

**The 'Hi Neighbors of the Shoals' women's social group** meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month (January 6) at 10:30am in the Florence Public Library, 256-764-6564. The group welcomes all ladies who are residents of the Shoals. Come join us!

**Cane Creek Canyon Trail Care** — Join the **Cane Creek Land Stewards** for a trail care session at Cane Creek Canyon from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Jan. 9, Jan. 10, Jan. 17 and Jan. 25. Participants will assist with various tasks, including building natural steps and water control features, updating trail markers, and clearing debris. No prior experience is necessary, but attendees should wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes and bring their own water, snacks, and work gloves; however, extra tools and gloves will be provided. Registration is required for each individual, and guardians must sign waivers for participating minors. For additional information, call 256-936-0117.

**The Underwood-Petersville Community Center** is open and available. Let us host your event. Contact us at 256-764-1388 or by email [UPCC.Info@yahoo.com](mailto:UPCC.Info@yahoo.com)

See NOTES... page 4

## Shorts...

### B'Ball Nights at Lost Pizza

Continued from Page 1

93.9 FM The Score. Fans are encouraged to attend the live show from downtown Florence or listen locally or worldwide on 939thescore.com. The stream will also be available on all Roar Lions Productions platforms.

Each week, women's basketball head coach **Candi Whitaker** and men's basketball head coach **Tony Pujol** will join the show and will be accompanied by select players. Whitaker will take the first 45-minute segment, followed by Pujol for the final 45 minutes. The show will be hosted by "Voice of the Lions" **Benjamin Ray** and **Mike Ezekiel**.

Lost Pizza Co. is located at 201 North Seminary Street in downtown Florence.

### Vaughn Local Baby Miss

MUSCLE SHOALS—Ava Grayce Vaughn, the 1 year old daughter of **Theo** and **Katie Vaughn** of Muscle Shoals, was recently awarded the title of "Baby Miss Muscle Shoals" for America's Best Pageants.



Vaughn

She will be advancing to the America's Best National Pageant, which will take place on September 11-13 in Nashville where she will be representing Muscle Shoals. America's Best Pageant promotes community involvement and good citizenship. Her parents say that Ava Grayce hopes to bring home the title for her community.

### Appeals Board Going Active

FLORENCE—The City of Florence is taking steps to activate its Board of Appeals, a body established by ordinance in 2003 with the adoption of the Building Code,

to ensure a fair and transparent appeals process for building and property maintenance code enforcement actions.

Although the Board was legally created, it has remained inactive due to a lack of appointed members. The City Council is now moving forward with appointing members so the board can begin fulfilling its intended role under the City's adopted codes, including the International Property Maintenance Code.

"The Board of Appeals is an important part of ensuring fairness and accountability in how the City enforces its building and property maintenance codes," said Mayor **Ron Tyler**. "Reactivating this Board strengthens our ability to protect neighborhoods, address unsafe conditions, and serve our residents responsibly."

The Board of Appeals will hear appeals of decisions made by the Building Official, review alternative compliance methods that meet life-safety standards, and provide an avenue for property owners to challenge enforcement actions. The board will also support the city's ability to respond to imminent danger situations involving unsafe structures and hazardous living conditions.

The Board will consist of five regular members and two alternates, appointed by the City Council. Members are selected based on experience or technical knowledge in construction-related fields such as building, engineering, architecture, or related trades. There is no residency requirement. Initial appointments will be staggered, with all subsequent terms serving three years.

There is no budget impact associated with activating the Board.

Individuals interested in serving on the Board of Appeals are encouraged to apply through the City's Boards and Commissions application at: [https://florenceal.org/city\\_boards\\_commissions/](https://florenceal.org/city_boards_commissions/)

See SHORTS... on Page 5



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# BETTER HEARING

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## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

(That Can Change Your Life)

As someone who was born and raised right here in Florence, I know how important connection is in our community. Whether it's conversations at church, dinner with family, or catching up with friends around Muscle Shoals, staying engaged with the people and moments that matter is what makes life rich.

That's why, as we step into a new year, I encourage you to consider a resolution that often gets overlooked: prioritizing your hearing health.

At Alabama Hearing Associates, I regularly see patients who didn't realize how much hearing loss was affecting their daily lives until they finally addressed it. Difficulty following conversations, missing parts of dialogue in group settings, or constantly turning up the TV are common signs. Because hearing loss often happens gradually, many people dismiss these changes or adapt without realizing how much they're missing.

Making hearing health a priority in 2026 can lead to meaningful improvements in your quality of life. When hearing is clearer, conversations feel easier, social situations are less

exhausting, and confidence naturally returns. Patients often tell me they feel more present, more connected, and more like themselves again.

A comprehensive hearing evaluation is a simple and non-invasive first step. It allows us to understand exactly what's happening and talk through options tailored to your needs, lifestyle, and listening environments. Today's hearing technology is more advanced than ever, offering natural sound quality and comfortable, discreet solutions that blend seamlessly into everyday life.

As you set goals for the new year, consider the impact better hearing could have on your relationships, your confidence, and your overall well-being. Taking that next step now can help ensure a more vibrant, fulfilling life ahead.

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## Notes...

Continued from page 2

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church still has a few open spots remaining for its FREE CPR TRAINING CLASS on January 10. If you would like to gain these valuable, life-saving skills, please register. This class is completely free, offered by the church as a service to our community. 10am Saturday, January 10 at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall (basement), 630 N Poplar St. in Florence. Free and open to the public. Child Care: Provided on-site at no cost. Registration Link: <https://warriorcprfa.enrollware.com/enroll?id=12288846>

The Batting Brigade Quilt Guild has hospitality at 9am the second Monday of the month, (January 12) with a meeting at 9:30am, at Edgemont United Methodist Church, Florence. For information, call Liz at 601-590-4367.

Muscle Shoals Sounds Studio hours in 2026 will still be 10am-4 pm, Tuesday-Saturday with guided tours 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30. Tours last 45 minutes.

Prices maintained for 2026: \$25 for adults, children 5 and under free. Special discounts for military and senior citizens.

The studio is available for rental for private events, weddings and is a pet friendly attraction.

Tours can be purchased online at [www.muscleshoalsoundstudio.org](http://www.muscleshoalsoundstudio.org) or in the gift shop. 256-978-5151. 3614 Jackson Highway, Sheffield

**Community Breakfast - The Underwood-Petersville Community Center**, Saturday, January 10, 840 County Road 7, Florence. 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 is the second Saturday of each month. Call 256-764-1388

Additional Dates: Feb. 14, March 14

**Otis Walker Band - Friday, January 9, 7pm** at Champy's Famous Fried Chicken, 120 W E 2nd St., Muscle Shoals. Otis comes back to the Shoals where he called home back when he played with Local Legends The Iguana Party. Come out to See and Otis and Rob Malone trade 8's as they bring a blend of southern funk to the stage.

**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.

See NOTES... page 7

## Fire...

Continued from Page 1

the door to help neighbors in need.

"I want to continue where my parents left off and help my community," Oliver said. "There are not many people close to my age serving, and I want to encourage others to serve their community."

Balancing athletics and emergency service isn't easy. A typical week for Oliver includes early-morning workouts, classes, afternoon practices, and calls whenever she is available. Oliver has officially been serving as a volunteer firefighter since July of 2025, but she has been on approximately 80 calls.

According to Oliver, the most rewarding part of being a volunteer firefighter is being able to help someone on what might be the worst day of their life. "Knowing that I might be able to save someone's life, help an elderly person in my community they may have fallen, or even rescue a personal item from burning that is really sentimental, that makes it all worth it."

Patriots head softball coach Angel Brown says Oliver knows what it means to stand in the line of fire.

"As a pitcher, Bri (Brianna) faces every inning with the same courage and composure that define a firefighter - calm in chaos, quick to decide, and fearless when the pressure is highest," Brown said. "No matter the situation on the field, she sacrifices her body without hesitation for her team. The traits she's built on the mound mirror the ones needed as a volunteer firefighter: strength, resilience, and the heart to step forward when others step back."

Oliver hopes her journey encourages young girls in her community to chase big dreams.

"I want them to know they can do it all," she said. "You can be an athlete. You can be a firefighter. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise."

As she continues her studies and her softball career at Northwest Shoals, Oliver is not sure what her career will look like, but she does plan for it to include being a volunteer firefighter.

"I plan on doing this as long as I can. At the end of the day, I just want to make a difference," she said.

**Courier Journal**

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Let's be honest: by February, that new exercise equipment will be a fancy clothes hanger and your kale smoothie will have somehow transformed into a latte. But what if this year, you made a few promises that didn't require sweatbands or wilting greens? It's time for your 2026 TECH RESOLUTIONS! a gentler, arguably more impactful path to self-improvement, focused on the technology we struggle with every single day.

Your phone is probably the first thing you see in the morning and the last thing you hold at night. As I write this, I want to encourage you to break this habit, charge your phone in a different room. I'm not your



Martin Dean



relationship guru but let's start there. Now, if that is too much of an ask, shouldn't the relationship between you and your phone be a little healthier? Start small. Open your photo gallery. See those 14,000 pictures? A solid 8,000 are duplicates, blurry shots of your feet, or screenshots of recipes you'll never make. Declaring "photo bankruptcy" is a real option, but just spending ten minutes a week deleting the obvious garbage is a victory. It's like cleaning out your car's glove compartment; you won't believe

the weight it lifts.

While you're in there, take a close look at your notifications. Every app is screaming for your attention like a toddler who found a kazoo. Do you need a "ding" every time someone you went to highschool with "likes" a meme? Be ruthless. Turn the notifications OFF. Some of us remember when we had to wait to call someone. Of course there are emergencies, but constant contact is wearing on your brain. You can reclaim your focus and discover a shocking new phenomenon: silence.

Now, let's talk about security. Your password cannot be "Password123," and "Fido's Birthday" isn't much better. Now is the time to let a password manager do the heavy lifting. Think of it as hiring a very short, very obsessive bodyguard for your digital life. Two-Factor Authentication is a must everywhere. Yes, it's an extra step. But this is the reason you upgraded your PC to Windows 11 (you HAVE upgraded to Windows 11, right?)

The true magic happens when you make tech work for you. Set up automatic backups. Use hardware or the pesky cloud we keep talking about. Use smart plugs to control, well, everything. No more getting halfway to a destination and wondering if you left an appliance on. Log in, turn it off. Automate a tiny transfer to your savings account every week.

All of this is like having a tiny, invisible butler.

Lastly, and this is as much for me as you, remember I do this for a living. At the beginning of this piece, I encouraged you to charge your device in another room. Turn it up, and charge it elsewhere. Check your weekly stats on how much screen time you are using, mindfully whittle it down. You do not need the latest news update first thing in the morning.

I hope you all have a wonderful and prosperous New Year.

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## Shorts...

Continued from Page 1

### RTHP Funds Approved

MONTGOMERY – Governor Kay Ivey last week announced that Alabama has officially received its award figure from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for the federal Rural Health Transformation Program (RTHP), formally approving Alabama's plan and unlocking \$203,404,327 in first-year funding. The five-year program is part of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, with legislation that looks to help improve healthcare access, quality, and outcomes in the state. Funds will be administered by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs

(ADECA).

Congress passed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act in July and was signed by the President Trump. Shortly after the law's passage, Governor Ivey directed state agencies to begin developing a comprehensive rural health strategy to ensure Alabama was prepared for the launch.

"After the passage and signing, Alabama got to work preparing for this program so we could hit the ground running once our state's new comprehensive rural health strategy was approved," Ivey said.

The plan includes 11 initiatives:

- Collaborative Electronic Health Record (EHR), IT and Cybersecurity Initiative
- Rural Health Initiative
- Maternal and Fetal

#### Health Initiative

- Rural Workforce Initiative
- Cancer Digital Regionalization Initiative
- Simulation Training Initiative
- Statewide EMS Trauma and Stroke Initiative
- EMS Treat-In-Place Initiative
- Mental Health Initiative
- Community Medicine Initiative
- Rural Health Practice Initiative

It was developed with the input and collaboration of the Governor's Office, ADECA, the Alabama Department of Finance, the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the Alabama State Health Planning and Development Agency, along with dozens of stakeholders, healthcare experts and lawmakers.

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1 VISIT

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Applications are available at the TimesDaily Office  
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Florence, AL 35630  
Questions or resumes may be emailed to:  
[Kevin.Blurton@timesdaily.com](mailto:Kevin.Blurton@timesdaily.com)

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## Rubberized LED...

Continued from Page 1

directly on the field that could handle impacts from a baseball and maintain the visual quality that fans love about LED. So, they set out to move technology forward.

Rubberized is our answer. Our patented rubberized mask preserves an impressive 126° horizontal viewing angle that ensures great visibility from nearly any seat and can withstand baseball impacts of up to 80 mph. Additionally, when players do make contact with the LED display, the soft, pliable mask significantly reduces the risk of injury.

Rubberized is currently installed at two Minor League ballparks—Durham Bulls Athletic Park (home of the Durham Bulls) and Cheney Stadium (home of the Tacoma Rainiers).

Rubberized will make its debut in NCAA baseball at the University of North Alabama at Mike Lane Field in 2026.

"The new, state-of-the-art facilities will benefit

from our cutting-edge technology of rubberized displays and best in industry customer service," said Andrew Rice, Uber Displays Chief Revenue Officer.

By becoming the first NCAA program in the nation to feature Rubberized in their ballpark, UNA is sending a clear message about its commitment to player safety and the overall game-day experience.

"We expect this facility to set a new standard for college baseball venues at our level," said UNA Director of Athletics, Dr. Josh Looney. "By becoming the first program in the nation to feature this advanced technology, North Alabama Baseball will offer a videoboard experience comparable to what fans see in MLB and Triple-A ballparks, creating one of the most dynamic gameday atmospheres in college baseball."

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

## Notes...

Continued from page 4

**Heritage Preservation, Inc. (HPI)** will host its annual public meeting at 2pm Sunday, January 18 in the conference room on the ground floor of the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library. Lee Freeman, Director of the Local History/Genealogy Department at the Library, and Billy Warren, Florence City Historian, will present, through slides and narration, a virtual historic tour entitled "A Sense of Place." The tour will share the history of Wilson Park and its surroundings.

Admission is free to this afternoon event that is designed to promote pride in and appreciation for the City of Florence, which is just 42 years younger than America itself.

For further information, contact Billy Warren at 256-718-5020 or at [brwarren@florenceal.org](mailto:brwarren@florenceal.org)

**Rivertown Soup Kitchen open to anyone who wants a hot meal.** January 25, 11am-2pm, 117 N. Seminary St., serving Red Beans & Rice with Drip Coffee. Donations Accepted on Venmo@rivertowncoffee

**LifeSouth Bloodmobile Dates:**  
**Wednesday, January 7** Russellville Utilities, 721 Jackson Avenue S. 9am - 4pm

**Thursday, January 8** North Alabama Medical Center, Veterans Drive, Florence, 8am - 4pm

**Saturday, January 10** Marco's Pizza - 3250 Florence Blvd., Florence, 10am - 4pm

**Sunday, January 11** Walmart - Hough Road - Florence, 10am - 4pm

**Monday, January 12** Liberty Finance of Athens, 800 US Hwy. 72 W J, 9am - 4pm

**Thursday, January 15** Collinwood High School, 401 N Trojan Blvd., Collinwood, TN 8am - 3pm

**"The Diary of Anne Frank" - Thursday, January 15-17** 7:30pm, Sunday, January 18, 2pm. At Shoals Community Theatre, 123 N Seminary St., Florence, 256-764-1700.

See NOTES... page 22

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## Guest Commentary

# 8 Political Winners and Losers of 2025

**T**o call 2025 a tumultuous year would be an understatement. It already feels like January was about five years ago, and I expect the rest of President Donald Trump's second term will move at a similarly breakneck pace.

That said, it helps to take a breather and reflect on what happened and what it means for American politics today and in the future.

Without further ado, here are the biggest winners and losers of 2025.

### LOSER: The Left's Nonprofit Industrial Complex

The federal government has long contracted with leftist nonprofits in the name of justice or helping other countries, but the funding ballooned in the Biden administration, and the Department of Government Efficiency represented a historic attempt to expose and shatter this ideological piggy bank.

Before DOGE, I investigated the woke groups that infiltrated and advised the Biden

See **POLITICAL LOSERS...** on Page 14

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



Tyler O'Neil

## Courier Journal

in the *Shoals*

January 7, 2026

# THIS WEEK

## Bring 'em Back

FLORENCE—The Florence-Lauderdale Public Library has announced a "Fine Free January," which allows patrons to return late items any day during the month without paying a fine.

Library Executive Director Abby Carpenter said this allows everyone to open the new year with a clean slate.

"Start off the year fine free so that you can enjoy all of our programs and services," she said.

See **FINE FREE...** on Page 13



"Fine Free January" is the message on this sign last week at the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, as Taylor Darwin works at her desk.

Bernie Delinski  
Times Daily



preserve.nature.org

## Trail Care at Cane Creek

TUSCUMBIA—The Cane Creek Land Stewards will host trail care sessions on several mornings in January at Cane Creek Canyon Nature Preserve, 251 Loop Rd. in Tuscumbia. The times are from 9am-noon on Friday and Saturday, January 9 and 10, Saturday, January 17, and Sunday, January 25.

Participants will assist with various tasks, including building natural steps and water control features, updating

See **TRAIL CARE...** on Page 13

## Happening THIS WEEK

**THE OTIS WALKER BAND** will play at Champy's Famous Fried Chicken in Muscle Shoals on Friday, January 9 from 7-9pm. Frontman Otis Walker comes back to the Shoals, the place he called home back when he played with local legends, Iguana Party. Newest member, Rob Malone, joins them as they bring their blend of southern/New Orleans funk, Delta blues, southern soul, and roots rock to the stage- 120 W E 2nd St.

**THE UNDERWOOD-PETERSVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER** will host a Community Breakfast on Saturday, January 10 from 6:30-11am. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 10. Cash only, no check or credit cards will be accepted. The breakfast is on the second Saturday of each month, which includes February 14 and March 14. The center is at 840 County Rd 7, Florence. Call 256-764-1388 for more info.

**OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH** still has a few open spots remaining for its Free CPR Training Class on Saturday, January 10 at 10am. If interested in gaining these valuable, life-saving skills, please register. This class is offered by the church as a service to our community. It's in the Fellowship Hall (basement), 630 N Poplar St. in Florence. Child Care is provided on-site at no cost. Registration Link: <https://warriorcprfa.enrollware.com/enroll?id=12288846>

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## YOUR Letters

Your Courier Journal welcomes tastefully presented typed or neatly written letters to be published as space allows. Letters may refer to timely matters of local, state, or national interest or any topic of concern or interest. Letters must include name, address and phone number for verification. (Only name and town will be published.) Letters are subject to editing. Please limit 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](mailto:editor@courierjournal.net)
- FAX- 256-760-9618

## Grants for Future

Editor,

A U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program is helping rural communities with resources for feasibility studies, preliminary design, and technical assistance on proposed water and waste disposal projects.

USDA Rural Development's Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households (SEARCH) program was designed for communities in rural areas of 2,500 or less with limited financial resources. By covering predevelopment costs, the program ensures that communities aren't left behind simply because they can't

## YOUR OPINION Matters Too!

Where is YOUR letter?

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afford the first steps.

The Village of Walthill in Nebraska recently took advantage of SEARCH and made important steps toward modernizing its water and wastewater systems.

Like many other rural communities, Walthill is facing the challenge of updating its old infrastructure. Issues such as leaks, faulty valves, and older

water lines are prevalent.

The SEARCH grant was substantial enough to cover the cost of an engineering planning study that identified the weakest parts of the system along with a cost estimate for repair and replacement.

This study was crucial as many state and federal funding opportunities require detailed preliminary engineering reports before a village can move forward with its application.

Community leaders say this award will be a step in the process of creating a safer, more reliable, and more efficient water system.

Is your community in need of updating its drinking water or waste disposal systems? SEARCH may be a program to consider.

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



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# STRANGE but TRUE

• In 1997, a woman from Louisville, Kentucky, left actor Charles Bronson all of her money, a total of about \$300,000, in a handwritten will. She didn't know him, but it can be deduced that she was a fan.

• The Woolsey Hall auditorium at Yale contains an extra-wide seat built to fit alumnus and former professor William Howard Taft.

• The corpse flower was the official flower of the Bronx for 60 years.

• Adults typically produce about 2 pints of gas each day, in an average of 14 farts. However, it's apparently quite normal to pass gas up to 21 times per day.

• At his inauguration, Teddy Roosevelt wore a ring with a lock of Abraham Lincoln's hair.

• In 1866, Cathay Williams became the first African American woman to serve in the U.S. Army. Women were barred from joining the military at the time, so she enlisted as a man under the pseudonym William Cathay.

• Crime novelist James Patterson co-wrote the

famous "I'm a Toys 'R' Us Kid" jingle.

• The American Psychiatric Association's DSM-5 handbook classifies caffeine withdrawal as a mental disorder.

• Because Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is home to a large Amish population, Costco constructed a livestock parking stall for customers arriving via horse and buggy, with a rail for the animals and a roof to shield them from bad weather.

• When that "inner voice" speaks in your head, it triggers small muscle movements in your larynx.

• Michelangelo may have accidentally left a thumbprint on a wax sculpture's butt.

• Sometimes it snows on Mars, but the snowflakes are made out of carbon dioxide rather than water. The flakes don't fall, but create a fog-like effect.

*Thought for the Day:*  
"The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance."  
-- Aristotle

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**FORD: TAURUS, 2013 \$7,500.** 2013 Ford Taurus SHO, Twin Turbo V6, AWD. This car is in very good condition inside and out, and has been very well cared for. • Mileage: 144,772 • PTU recently replaced (common issue taken care of) • It has very nice features such as remote start, heated and cooled seats (both front and rear), massaging front seats, automatic high beams and a few more features that I was very surprised to see it have. It runs perfect.



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## A Great Bible Truth

This message is primarily to saved, born-again, children of God who by faith trusted and received Christ and His finished work on the cross. Sin is result of spiritual and natural death. **"There is victory for the saved in physical death."** James 1:15 "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" The spiritual problem is fixed at salvation. The physical body is not saved and must return to dust, or if the person is saved AND ALIVE, be changed at the catching up of the saints, soon to come. Paul, the Apostle explains it perfectly in his epistles. Romans 7:20 "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Romans 7:24 "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul answers: **Romans 7:25** "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." When the saved pass, the battle with sin is over! **1 Corinthians 15:57** "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

BUT, when the lost pass, their trouble has just started. **Hebrews 9:27** "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" Different judgments for the saved and the lost. Knowing and studying, and complying with the KJV will greatly improve your judgment! You can ignore this, BUT eventually your sin will find you out. See Numbers 32:23. God demands accountability! **Romans 14:12** "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

**Revelation 20:15** "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." **Hebrews 2:9 a & d** "But we see Jesus; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." **Romans 10:13** "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." That means you!

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Continued from Page 8

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Library Public Affairs  
Coordinator Sherhonda  
Allen said more than  
75,000 books were  
checked out or renewed  
for checkout in 2025, and  
that just applies to adults.

"That's fiction,  
nonfiction, eBooks and  
audiobooks combined,"  
Allen said. "And there  
were almost 3,000 new  
cards issued to our patrons  
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Those included 1,758  
for adults, 719 for those  
younger than 18, and  
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"We are so fortunate to  
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said. "We look forward to  
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the coming year."

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## Trail Care...

Continued from Page 8

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## Guest Commentary - Tyler O'Neil

**Political Losers...** Continued from Page 8

administration, and my research uncovered not only that these groups received federal grants but that many of them sued the Trump administration to block his policies — particularly to keep the gravy train flowing. I testified in Congress about this research twice, and the Dao Prize honored me for it by designating me as a finalist.

The Trump administration cut off the funding streams for immigration groups that moved illegal aliens across the country. The Environmental Protection Agency clawed back extravagant grants to climate alarmist groups. The State Department shuttered the U.S. Agency for International Development. Congress finally cut off funding for National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting Service.

After Scott Walter and I highlighted the leftist nonprofits that worked with Arabella Advisors, Microsoft founder Bill Gates withdrew his

foundation's entanglement with them, and Arabella Advisors purportedly dissolved, leading to the emergence of new entities.

Contrary to leftist fearmongering, civil society remains strong. Americans remain free to contribute to causes they believe in, we just aren't being forced to do so with our tax dollars anymore.

**LOSER: Transgender Ideology**

Candidate Trump campaigned on protecting children and bringing back sanity on gender. He has delivered on this promise in spades.

Trump's executive order declaring the basic truth that human beings are male and female corrected major abuses of the Biden administration.

In May, the Department of Health and Human Services published a review of the science, finding extremely weak evidence for the claim that “sex-rejecting procedures” — grotesque medical interventions that trans activists refer to as

“gender-affirming care” — have any positive effects. A peer-review process confirmed this finding and highlighted why transgender activists seek to silence their opponents, rather than engaging with them.

HHS ended the year by announcing six major policy moves against “sex-rejecting procedures,” which will prevent your tax dollars from funding “treatments” that leave kids stunted, scarred, and infertile.

In June, the Supreme Court upheld Tennessee's right to protect kids from these procedures.

**LOSER: The Fourth Branch of Government**

The president hasn't just been cutting back government spending — he's also paring back the unaccountable bureaucracy.

Trump has cleaned house at federal agencies, and he is now forcing the Supreme Court to consider, once and for all, whether there are parts of the executive branch

that fall outside of the president's control.

While the Constitution clearly vests all executive power in the president, Congress has established so-called independent agencies. In *Humphrey's Executor v. United States* (1935), the Supreme Court upheld the Federal Trade Commission as an agency not subject to the president's Article II authority because it engaged in “quasi-legislative” and “quasi-judicial” functions. Now, the court seems on the verge of rightly reversing that ruling and returning executive power to the people's elected president.

**WINNER: Border Security**

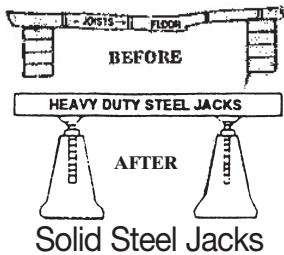
Former President Joe Biden repeatedly insisted that he needed new laws to address the border crisis, but Trump effectively solved the issue on Day One with executive orders, finally directing the feds to enforce the laws on the books.

An estimated 10 million

**See WINNERS... Page 16**

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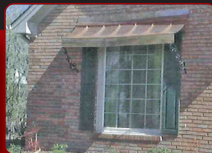
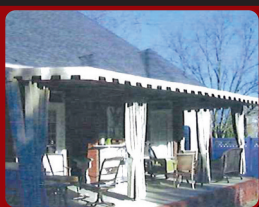
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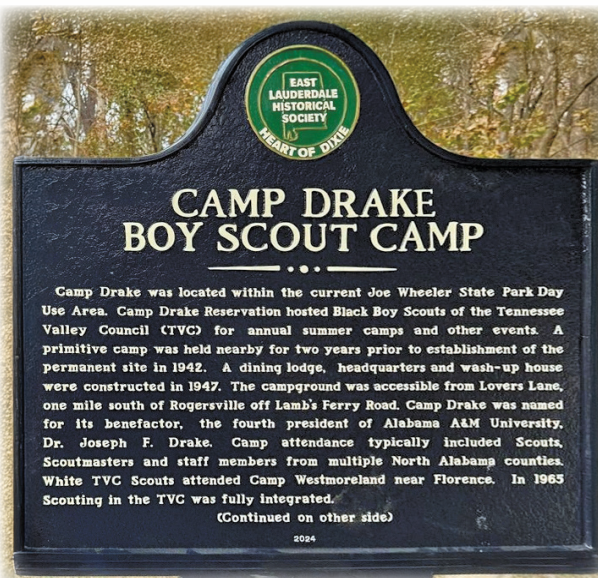
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Before integration, Camp Drake was a summer camp for African-American Boy Scouts located in, what is now, Joe Wheeler State Park. It is a stark reminder of the pervasiveness of segregation in all areas of Negro life before the landmark Civil Rights Laws of 1964.

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

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**Guest Commentary (2) - Tyler O'Neil****Winners...** Continued from Page 14

illegal aliens entered the country on Biden's watch, but border crossings hit record lows this year and remain a tiny fraction of what they were under the former president.

**WINNER: Trump  
Peace Deals**

Trump has taken credit for ending eight wars.

While his celebration on this might seem premature, Trump has indeed brokered agreements to stop fighting and taken decisive action that ended conflicts.

For example, the brief war between Israel and Iran ended after the U.S. bombed Iranian nuclear sites in a show of force and

after Trump urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to immediately secure peace with Iran following the strikes.

Although India downplayed Trump's role in securing peace between New Delhi and its long-time rival Pakistan, the Pakistani prime minister nominated the American president for a Nobel Peace Prize.

Trump achieved a historic ceasefire and hostage release deal between Israel and Hamas this fall, securing the release of the final living Israeli hostages from Hamas.

While the war between Russia and Ukraine rages on, and Trump's strikes on drug boats off the coast of Venezuela may lead to a conflict, the President can rightly take credit for securing many peace deals.

When the Nobel Committee refused to award Trump the Nobel Peace Prize, the FIFA World Cup awarded him its inaugural peace prize.

**WINNER: Political  
Violence**

This year saw an alarming increase in political violence, particularly from the Left.

Many on the Left raised money to help the alleged murderer of a health care CEO.

In May, a gunman yelling, "Free Palestine," shot and killed a Jewish couple outside the National Jewish Museum in Washington, D.C.

In June, a man allegedly murdered former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman, her husband, and shot state Sen. John Hoffman and his wife, both of whom survived. A few days after the assassination, a Democratic Party lobbyist reportedly sent text messages to a former friend of an opposing political viewpoint. The lobbyist wrote, "Excited to have my gun at the capitol and blow somebody's f--- face off."

On August 27, a man who legally changed his name to affirm a transgender identity shot and killed two children and injured thirty others at a school mass at the Church of the Annunciation in Minneapolis.

On September 10, a man in a relationship with another man who identifies as transgender allegedly murdered Turning Point USA founder Charlie Kirk. Many on the Left celebrated Kirk's death. A church celebrating Kirk faced an arson attempt, and many Kirk memorials faced vandalism.

**WINNER: Affordability  
Messaging**

The president has rightly called Democrats' attempt to blame him for cost-of-living struggles a "con job," because the root of most recent inflation is the excessive government spending during the COVID-19 pandemic.

That said, "affordability" clearly resonates with voters, and that helps explain the Democrats' victories in November. Americans want to see lower prices and higher wages, and Vice President JD Vance addressed the issue earlier this month.

Trump's policies have addressed some drivers of the affordability crisis—such as an all-of-the-above energy strategy that drives down energy prices—and many Americans may look forward to tax cuts in the "One Big, Beautiful Bill."

Expect affordability to remain a political issue, at least in the near term.

**WINNER: Conservative  
Media**

Trump opened the White House briefing room to alternative media, including new conservative outlets. While *The Daily Signal* has long had a presence in the White House, Biden briefly excluded *The Daily Signal* and other journalists. Trump, by contrast, has

opened the briefing room to new outlets, allowing increased transparency.

The Trump administration has also bucked the trend for Washington Republicans. For too long, Republicans in D.C. would go to left-leaning outlets like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* with exclusive stories, hoping to curry favor. Now, the Trump administration has worked with outlets like *The Daily Signal*.

My colleague, White House Correspondent Elizabeth Mitchell, has become a scoop machine, and FBI Director Kash Patel gave me the scoop on the bureau swearing off the Southern Poverty Law Center.

*Tyler O'Neil is senior editor at The Daily Signal and the author of two books: "Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center," and "The Woketopus: The Dark Money Cabal Manipulating the Federal Government."*

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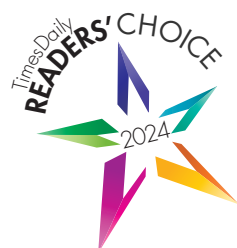
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**Week of December 31 winner is**  
**George Barnett of Tuscumbia**  
who correctly guessed  
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## Letters...

### Grants for Future...

Continued from Page 8

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**Val Ankeny**  
Policy Associate  
Center for Rural Affairs  
Lyons, NE

### Frozen to Death in the 21st Century

Editor,

How can we have heated streets for cars, but not heated homes for babies? How can we build heated bus shelters for people waiting fifteen minutes, but not for families waiting a lifetime for housing? In Gaza today, life has become a battle against the elements, against hunger, and against despair. Among the ruins of bombed-out homes and flooded streets, a two-week-old baby named Muhammad Khalil Abu al Khair FROZE TO DEATH.

Is there any excuse, any justification, that can explain a baby dying of a cold in a world with central heating, charity drives, and holiday fundraisers?

We have the technology to alert a phone when a package is left in the rain, but no alarm bell rings when a child's core temperature plummets in a city of millions. We deliver hot food to our doorsteps in minutes. Why is delivering basic warmth to a doorstep a logistical impossibility? We have weather satellites that can track a storm forming over an ocean. Do we not have the moral foresight to track the storm of deprivation gathering over a human being? We build submarines that can explore the crushing depths of the Mariana Trench and rovers that photograph the dust of Mars. But we claim it is a "complex challenge" to deliver a solar-powered heater and a tarp to a family sleeping in a rain-soaked tent.

Our priorities are not flawed: They are corrupt.

Yes! Little Khalil did not "die." He was murdered by the policy of a blockade that values the security of a border more than the life of a child. He was murdered by a vote in a parliament that funded more weapons but choked off medicine. He was murdered by the cowardice of every world leader who calls for "restraint" while children freeze to death. His autopsy would list hypothermia, but the truth is murder by political decision.

We have air-conditioned dog kennels and data servers that never dip below 70°F. But we lack the basic humanity to guarantee that a human child does not succumb to

the elements. Explain that hierarchy of compassion. Name one justification. Go ahead. Try to explain why a box of donated blankets sat undistributed while a newborn froze.

There is none. Only evil.

**Yumna Zahid Ali**  
Karachi, Pakistan

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**Zades**

**Zades** is a happy, people-loving boy with a big smile and an even bigger heart. He's friendly, outgoing, and always ready to greet you with tail wags and excitement. Zades would thrive in a home where he can get love, attention, and time to play. He has the kind of personality that makes every day brighter and would make a loyal companion for an active or affectionate family.

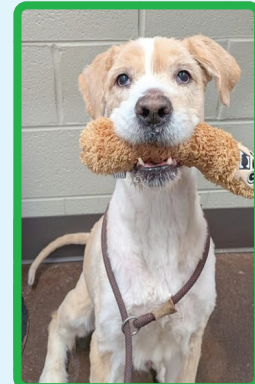


**Apollo**



He's smart, eager, and full of potential to become an amazing lifelong best friend.

**Dancer**



**Dancer** is a sweet, gentle soul with a playful side—especially when toys are involved! He loves to show off his favorite stuffed friends and enjoys calm affection just as much as fun. Dancer would be perfect for someone looking for a loving, loyal companion who enjoys both playtime and cuddle time. He's the kind of dog who will steal your heart quietly and forever.



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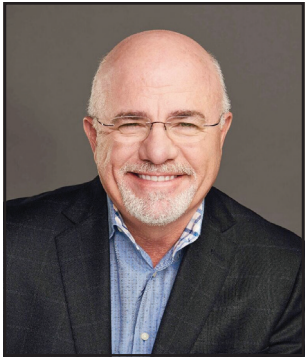
by DAVE RAMSEY

## BE A BLESSING TO HER

Dear Dave,  
Our daughter is 30, and she used to live a completely irresponsible lifestyle. This irresponsible behavior extended into the way she handled her finances, too. While she was in college, she took on \$20,000 in student loan debt against our advice. About a year ago, she was in a bad car accident. She has recovered, but the experience really changed her. Her outlook on life, her finances and spiritual matters, in particular, are so much more mature. We were thinking about paying off the remainder of her student loans, just as a way to help and celebrate her big turnaround. What do you think?

Richard

Dear Richard,



Sometimes the best gift you can give a person is to let them wallow around for a while in the mess they made. Being forced to work your way out of bad decisions and irresponsible behaviors is a great remedy in lots of cases.

But in this situation, coupled with the fact that she's now being more responsible with money, behaving like an adult and making better life choices, I'd want her to be as free as possible as she enters this new phase of her life. So, if I were in your shoes, and I had the means to pay off her student loan debt without putting myself at risk financially, that's exactly what I'd do.

Right now, I hope you two will take every opportunity you have to be

a blessing to your daughter. She's a lot like the Prodigal Son at this point. She has experienced some bad things, come around in her thinking and she realizes now what's right and what really matters.

I hope both of you will give her the biggest hugs she has ever had, and tell her you love her and that you're proud of her. Then, throw a big party and write a check to knock out the rest of that student loan debt!

— Dave

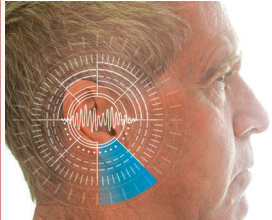
\* Dave Ramsey is a nine-time national bestselling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and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

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Differences: 1. Band around hat is wider. 2. Brims are different. 3. Chart is different. 4. Plant is taller. 5. Briefcase handle is missing. 6. Thumb is moved.





# Medicare Minute

## Qualifying for Medicare

When I began working with Medicare health plans a few years ago it became obvious to me that people aging into Medicare were joining a health insurance program that they really didn't understand. Although the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) do all they can to educate Americans about the benefits of Medicare it still isn't enough for them to fully understand what they have as far as medical coverage through the federal government. Over the next few weeks we're going to discuss the basics of and what is covered under Medicare. But first let's look at how Medicare started.

On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the bill, Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, which led to the establishment of Medicare. The original bill included Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Part B (Medical Insurance). Today we know these 2 parts as "Original Medicare". In the beginning Medicare was created to provide health insurance to people 65 years of age and older, regardless of income or medical history.

Over the past five decades changes have been made as to who qualifies for Medicare. In addition to people over the age of 65, Medicare now covers people under the age of 65 who are permanently disabled and have been receiving Social Security Disability Insurance for 24 months. Also anyone at any age can receive Medicare if they have End Stage Renal Disease or ALS.

Although Medicare provides medical coverage for those who qualify it is not 100% coverage!! We often hear "once I go on Medicare my medical insurance worries are over." Medicare has deductibles and coinsurance that the Medicare beneficiary is responsible for unless the beneficiary has additional coverage to supplement Medicare.

If you have any questions about this or any other aspect of Medicare feel free to call us at 256-648-5710 or visit our office at 885 Florence Blvd. Alabama Health Guidance is an independent insurance agency and does not represent Medicare or any other government agency.



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**Courier Journal Community Notes**

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# Notes...

Continued from page 7

**LifeSouth is in emergency need for blood donors.** This year continues to be difficult for LifeSouth and blood centers across the country with the impact of the pandemic causing a decrease in blood donations, while the need to help patients in local hospitals continues to increase. Regular blood donors who have not given recently and first-time donors can make a major impact by donating. One

donation can save up to three lives. Donate at the Center, 307 Veterans Drive, Florence. Schedule an appointment, 256-765-7038. [www.lifesouth.org](http://www.lifesouth.org). Hours: 307 Veterans Drive, Florence, 256-765-7038 Hours of Operation: Monday: 9am – 5pm, Tuesday: 9am – 7pm, Wednesday: 9am – 5pm, Thursday: 9am – 7pm, Friday: 9am – 5pm, Saturday: 9am – 3pm and Sunday: 1 – 5pm

**Tuesday night Social Dance** at The Club/ Florence Senior Center, 450 Country Club Drive, in Florence. \$6. Doors open at 6pm.

Dance from 6:30-8:45pm. Texas two step, waltz, line dance, fox trot and more! The Browns provide the music from across the decades!

**Game Day - Thursday, January 15, 1-3pm** at Bartholomew's Church, 1900 Darby Drive, Florence, every third Thursday of each month. Games provided or bring some. 678-372-3526

Additional 2026 Dates: February 19, March 19, at Bartholomew's Church, 1900 Darby Drive, Florence.

**Shoals Artists Guild Meeting** Every 3rd Friday of the month, (January 16),

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

**The Freedom Hills Freeze Out Ride** gets started at the RaceTrac in Tuscumbia (503 Highway 43 S) at 9am on Saturday, January 17. This event is open to all street-legal 4x4 vehicles and features a route consisting of both gravel and pavement. The ride will travel along parts of the Natchez Trace and includes a scheduled stop for a packed lunch at the historic Coon Dog Cemetery. Participants are encouraged to dress

warmly, especially if choosing to ride with tops or doors removed. While the exact duration is not set, expect a scenic journey that lasts several hours with stops as needed.

**The Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts is pleased to present** Threading the Past: Vintage Quilts from the Glenn Rikard Collection January 18-March 5. This exhibition features select 1850s-1940s quilts from Tuscumbia collector and quilt enthusiast, Glenn Rikard. Inspired by the beautiful and intricate patterns made and quilted by his own family, Rikard began collecting quilts, patterns, and fabric by

other artisans. His collection now numbers more than 150 quilts.

**The exhibit runs concurrent with the exhibit, A Look Within: Hiram & KD at the Turn of the Century.** The public is invited to a reception from 2-4pm on Sunday, January 18 at the KD Art Center. The KD Art Center is at 217 E. Tuscaloosa St, in Florence. Call 256-760-6379 for more information.

**Readers of the Lost Ark Book Club,** 10am, third Wednesday, (January 21) at Helen Keller Public Library, 511 Main St., Tuscumbia. [nancy537481@yahoo.com](mailto:nancy537481@yahoo.com)

STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LEA Financial System							Exhibit F-II-A
Combined Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances All Governmental Fund Types and Expendable Trust Funds For Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2025							
192 - Sheffield City Schools	GOVERNMENTAL			FIDUCIARY			
	General	Special Revenue	Debt Service	Capital Projects	Expendable Trust	Total	
Revenues							
State Sources	\$9,569,311.46	\$0.00	\$71,964.90	\$236,911.10	\$0.00	\$9,878,187.46	
Federal Sources	\$680.00	\$2,952,402.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,953,082.65	
Local Sources	\$4,183,203.27	\$255,827.74	\$25,799.01	\$29,209.00	\$1,138,441.14	\$5,632,480.16	
Other Sources	\$73,031.29	\$21,083.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$94,114.29	
Total Revenues:	\$13,826,226.02	\$3,229,313.39	\$97,763.91	\$266,120.10	\$1,138,441.14	\$18,557,864.56	
Expenditures							
Instructional Services	\$7,472,931.97	\$900,843.90	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$69,471.41	\$8,443,247.28	
Instructional Support Services	\$2,815,465.50	\$622,043.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$128,989.81	\$3,566,498.43	
Operation & Maintenance Services	\$2,288,385.12	\$53,225.23	\$0.00	\$9,557.00	\$3,908.71	\$2,355,076.06	
Auxiliary Services	\$273,845.08	\$1,156,357.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,430,202.76	
General Administrative Services	\$1,185,654.62	\$176,915.42	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$49,253.66	\$1,411,823.70	
Capital Outlay	\$276,116.41	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$27,142.48	\$303,258.89	
Debt Service	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$56,802.90	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$56,802.90	
Other Expenditures	\$439,800.43	\$281,878.54	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$208,120.26	\$929,799.23	
Total Expenditures:	\$14,752,199.13	\$3,191,263.89	\$56,802.90	\$9,557.00	\$486,886.33	\$18,496,709.25	
Other Fund Sources (Uses)							
Other Fund Sources:	\$63,862.69	\$56,905.91	\$200,000.00	\$0.00	\$20,400.00	\$341,168.60	
Other Fund Uses:	\$24,168.57	\$43,788.91	\$0.00	\$200,000.00	\$55,536.28	\$323,493.76	
Total Other Fund Sources (Uses):	\$39,694.12	\$13,117.00	\$200,000.00	(\$200,000.00)	(\$35,136.28)	\$17,674.84	
Excess Revenues and Other Sources Over (Under) Expenditures and Other Fund Uses:	(\$886,278.99)	\$51,166.50	\$240,961.01	\$56,563.10	\$616,418.53	\$78,830.15	
Beginning Fund Balance - October 1:	\$5,297,621.79	\$442,645.24	\$2,132,940.85	\$284,916.39	\$6,157,850.23	\$14,315,974.50	
Ending Fund Balance - September 30:	\$4,411,342.80	\$493,811.74	\$2,373,901.86	\$341,479.49	\$6,774,268.76	\$14,394,804.65	

Week 17 -  
Dec. 20 Winner:  
**JO LYNN TAYLOR**  
of Florence

Week 18 -  
Dec. 30 Winner:  
**BRIAN MILLS**  
of Nolensville, TN

# GAME DAY SCORE CARD

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# ASK THE ATTORNEY NOT A HAPPY CAMPER



**Thomas McCutcheon**

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

The Alabama Workers Compensation Act (found at Alabama Code §25-5-1) makes for a lot of unhappy campers. I had a gentleman come in last week who just could not come to terms with the rules that Alabama workers who are injured on the job have to follow. I completely agree that they are unreasonable. I'm sure that 98% of the judges in Alabama think that the workers compensation act is deeply flawed. It's not their job to fix it, it's their job to apply it.

The gentleman was completely unhappy with the scarring that resulted from the surgery he had because he was injured on the job. Completely understandable, but also not worth any money under the law. Now in a different kind of personal injury case, a jury could and likely would compensate a person for scarring.

Here's an example: If a person is injured on the job and has surgery and that surgery has a great result with no impairment rating, meaning that the full range of motion and strength was restored, and they were able to return to their job at the same wages and hours, their case is worth \$0.00. Now, you should have been paid two-thirds of your usual wages, and all your medical bills should have been paid. Still, no one in their right mind would go through an injury and surgery for money, much less for free.

That is absolutely unfair. Every judge I've ever met agrees with that, but there is nothing they can do about it. And there's two sides to the story. Employers don't think it's fair that they have to pay if someone gets hurt on the job, regardless of whose fault it was. Employers don't like having to pay workers compensation premiums that go up when someone gets hurt. The amount of the workers comp insurance premium for employers in the building trades like roofers, can make the difference between profitability or the inability to win a bid.

There are many ways that a good personal injury lawyer can help an injured person. Knowing the law and putting the client first is a great place to start. That said, understanding limitations of the law can streamline the process. Hire a lawyer you trust and listen to their advice.

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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or visit our website at: [www.mhatty.com](http://www.mhatty.com)

facebook: McCutcheon and Hamner, P.C.

We will not print your full name in the article. We will not be able to return any written or preprinted items which are submitted.



• **On Jan. 5, 1914**, Henry Ford made the welcome announcement that he was doubling his assembly-line employees' pay. However, there was a perhaps not-so-welcome catch -- home inspections to check for alcohol consumption and untidy living quarters.

• **On Jan. 6, 1996**, snow began blanketing Washington, D.C., and the eastern seaboard in a blizzard that killed 154 people and ended up costing more than a billion dollars in damages before it ended.

• **On Jan. 7, 1891**, future novelist and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston was born in Notasulga, Alabama. Though she would eventually publish more books than any other Black woman in America, by the time she died in 1960 she'd failed to gain a mainstream audience and was poor and alone in a welfare hotel. Today she is considered one of the most important Black writers in American history.

• **On Jan. 8, 1963**, Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece, the Mona Lisa, was exhibited for the first time in the U.S. at Washington, D.C.'s National Gallery of Art. More than 2,000 dignitaries, including President John F. Kennedy, came out to view it. The exhibit opened to the public the following day.

• **On Jan. 9, 1984**, Angelo Buono, one of the Hillside Stranglers, was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the rape, torture and murder of 10 young women in Los Angeles. His cousin and partner in crime, Kenneth Bianchi, testified against Buono to escape the death penalty himself.

• **On Jan. 10, 1863**, the London Tube, the world's first urban underground railway, opened. Since its first tunnel ran under the River Thames and had no ventilation, it was always filled with smoke.

• **On Jan. 11, 1775**, Francis Salvador, the first Jewish person to hold an elected office in the Americas, took his seat on the South Carolina Provincial Congress. In July he earned the nickname the "Southern

Paul Revere" when he rode 30 miles to warn of a Cherokee attack on backcountry settlements, and just a month later he became the first recorded Jewish soldier to be killed in the Revolutionary War.  
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