

Alabama CURRENTS

Vol. XIII No. 5 • September/October 2014

A Publication of the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority



3rd Annual Alabama Festival of Flavor – *A Celebration of Culture and Cuisine*
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Habitat for Humanity builds dreams

I am constantly encouraged by citizens who join together to lend a helping hand to each other in times of need. AMEA communities have a reputation of caring for neighbors who have not been as fortunate, and lending a hand up to get people back on their feet so they can contribute to the next neighbor in need.

Through the work of such organizations like Habitat for Humanity, thousands of low-income families have found new hope in the form of affordable housing. Churches, community groups and others have joined together to successfully tackle a significant social problem decent housing for all. Today, Habitat has helped build or repair more than 800,000 houses and served more than 4 million people around the world.

Habitat for Humanity has been building houses in partnership with low-income families in the United States for more than 30 years. More than 300,000 families have constructed their safe, affordable homes from the first shovel of groundbreaking to the last finish nail, paying their mortgages, and funding the construction of additional safe, affordable homes. The Habitat model has been proven to work.

Habitat, founded by Millard and Linda Fuller, and whose most famous volunteer is former President Jimmy Carter, is a public-private partnership dedicated to building and renovating houses and making them available to low-income people on affordable terms. In the words of Habitat's mission statement, we want to put "decent houses in decent communities in which people can live and grow."

As a non-profit, ecumenical Christian ministry that builds with people in need regardless of race or religion, Habitat welcomes volunteers and supporters from all backgrounds.

Habitat has more than 1,500 local affiliates in the United States and more than 70 national organizations around the world.

Decent, stable housing provides more than just a roof over someone's head. It provides stability for families and children; a sense of dignity and pride; health, physical safety and security; and an increase of educational and job prospects. If you have a decent home, you are likely to be healthier and more productive. And that means it is critical to creating thriving communities and generating stronger economies.

Affordable Habitat for Humanity homeownership contributes to families becoming happier and healthier, and enjoying improvements in their children's well-being and school performance.

- In the United States, 48.5 million people are living in poverty. If we are to succeed in the fight against poverty, we must support the expansion of housing both as policy and as practice.
- Habitat for Humanity has helped more families than ever improve their living conditions. Behind every door of every home built, rehabilitated or repaired, there is a story of perseverance, of inspiration, of lives transformed.

In all 50 U.S. states and more than 70 other countries around the world, Habitat is constantly finding new ways to help people break the vicious cycle of poverty through shelter solutions.

Beyond building homes, Habitat offers countless new tools to help make homeownership a reality for low-income families. When families have a safer, healthier home, their chances of improving their livelihoods soar. Children can focus on getting educated and carving out their own futures. Entire communities grow stronger and more resilient.

We salute Habitat for Humanity programs throughout our communities as they continue to transform lives around the world.



Lisa Miller

AMEA Manager of Communications and Marketing

2015 AMEA Scholarship Program in full swing



Will you be graduating from high school in the spring of 2015? Do you receive your electricity from a public power utility in Alabama? Then if your answer to these questions is "yes," you could be eligible to receive a scholarship from the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) and its 11 Member cities/utilities.

Since 1992, AMEA and its Members (Alexander City, Dothan, Fairhope, Foley-Riviera Utilities, LaFayette, Lanett, Luverne, Opelika, Piedmont, Sylacauga and Tuskegee) have provided scholarships to area high school seniors through the AMEA Scholarship Program. Scholarships, totaling approximately \$82,500, were awarded in the 2014 program.

Each year, AMEA and its Members make available 33, \$2,500 scholarships, which include regular and technical school scholarships. To be eligible for either of AMEA's scholarships, a student's family must receive electric service from a Member's electric utility and the student must attend an Alabama college or university.

Applications are currently available from school counselors in these Member cities, or you can go online to the AMEA web site, www.amea.com, Scholarship Program.

Applications are reviewed and winners are selected by an independent panel of Montgomery area college guidance personnel. Application deadline is **Monday, Feb. 2, 2015**.

For more information on the program, contact your school counselor or Pamela Poole, AMEA's Scholarship Program Coordinator, (334) 387-3504, (800) 239-2632, Ext. 110, or pam@amea.com.

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Alabama Currents

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Lisa Miller

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MISSION STATEMENT

AMEA's mission is to provide for our Member communities a reliable and economical source of electric power, enabling them to preserve and enhance the benefits of municipal utility ownership for their citizens and the electric customers they serve. We strive to offer services that our Members need and can adapt to provide the best value for their communities and customers.

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On the Cover

The City of Foley is ramping up for the 3rd Annual Alabama Festival of Flavor, which is set for Saturday, Oct. 18, in the streets of historic downtown Foley.

The Alabama Festival of Flavor features one of Alabama's greatest treasures, our abundant fresh, local fare. Guests can sample food prepared during cooking competitions, learn about traditional Southern recipe secrets from our locally famous chefs, attend a food and wine pairing or acquire tips on creating your own organic garden at home. Stroll through the streets of historic downtown Foley exploring artisans and crafters or catch the relaxing sounds of regional jazz performers.

The Alabama Festival of Flavor is presented by Riviera Utilities.

For more information, visit www.southbaldwinchamber.com.

(Photos courtesy of Chef Ron Stone of Wolf Bay Lodge and Global Marketing Solutions)

Hometown public power is an American institution



Public Power Week • October 5-11, 2014



Public Power Week is an annual national celebration that recognizes the economic, social and environmental contributions of our hometown electric utility, one of more than 2,000 across the nation that collectively serves 47 million Americans. Public Power Week also honors the democratic tradition of community decision-making and participation that led to the founding of the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) in 1981.

For more than 130 years, public power has been a tradition that works across the nation on behalf of its communities and customers. More than 2,000 cities and towns in the United States light up their homes, businesses and streets with public power – electricity that comes from a community-owned and -operated utility. Each public power utility is different, reflecting its hometown characteristics and values, but all have a common purpose: providing reliable and safe, not-for-profit electricity at a reasonable price while protecting the environment.

Public power today is an important, contemporary American institution. From small towns to big cities, wherever public power exists, it is an expression of the American ideal of local people working together to meet local needs. And many of the public power systems in Alabama have been providing electricity long before the investor-owned utilities and the rural electric cooperatives.

A public power utility has many distinct characteristics that benefit the consumers of the individual community it serves. These benefits include:

- Efficient service – lowest cost consistent with reliability, community goals and sound business practices
- Quick response from crews located in the community
- Responsiveness to customer concerns
- Emphasis on long-term community goals
- Greater portion of revenues stay in community
- Local employment
- Promotes local economic development
- Tax payments, payments-in-lieu-of-taxes, and / or transfers to the community's general fund
- Opportunity for efficiency through integrated utility operations (e.g., operation with electric, water, sewer, garbage, gas, cable, telecommunications)

- Local management and operations bring added community leadership for innovation and development
- Recognized commitment to conservation, safety and the environment
- Local control over the electric distribution system aesthetics and design
- Local control that allows matching local resources to local needs
- Innovative techniques and technology to meet energy needs

While the vast majority of public power systems are owned by cities and towns, a number of counties, public utility districts, and even a handful of states have public power utilities. Most — especially the smaller ones — are governed by a city council, while others are overseen by an independently elected or appointed board. Public power utilities are directly accountable to the people they serve through local elected or appointed officials.

Some of the nation's largest cities – Los Angeles, San Antonio, Seattle, Austin, Memphis, Nashville, Huntsville and Orlando – operate publicly -owned electric utilities, but many public power communities are small with their utilities serving 3,000 or fewer customers.

To celebrate and honor this American tradition, public power systems across the country will recognize Public Power Week, Oct. 5-11, which is a national, annual event sponsored in conjunction with the American Public Power Association (APPA) in Washington, D.C. APPA is the service organization for community- and state-owned electric utilities.

Along with APPA, we advocate for public policy that will increase our energy independence and security, care for the environment, and make energy use more efficient:

- We support comprehensive legislation to address climate change, but urge Congress to create environmental regulations that ensure a reliable and affordable energy supply without negative impact on consumers and the economy.
- We support policy that ensures effective competition in wholesale electricity markets for the benefit of consumers, businesses, and the economy.
- We seek balanced legislation on grid security that encourages industry-government information sharing and allows for local decision-making and flexibility.
- We seek preservation of tax-exempt financing for public power utilities and advocate for access to tax-exempt bonds.

The 11 Members of AMEA are hometown public power electric utilities – not-for-profit, community enterprises. From that morning cup of hot coffee to the late-night television news — and all the hours in-between — they keep the power flowing.

Public power is an American tradition which has helped build this great nation. You can take for granted that AMEA and its 11 Members will continue to provide low-cost, reliable electricity — and deliver it to you instantaneously, day and night.

Fred Clark

AMEA President & CEO

Help for the mobile home

Back on January 28, I watched several TV programs which showed the terrible winter mess that was occurring in Georgia and Alabama. Many highways were closed due to ice and snow, and hundreds were stranded for hours, and even days for some folks. As I was watching that terrible event take place, I was also preparing a list of topics that I wanted to write about in the 2014 *Alabama Currents* issues.

As I watched, the thought that kept coming to me was, "What can we do to help folks who live in mobile homes?" I have been around for a lot of years and I know that many who live in mobile homes receive really high utility bills during both the cold winter and the hot summer months. How do I know this to be true? Well over the years, I have conducted hundreds of seminars, written hundreds of columns, and broadcast over 1,000 radio programs, all of which were relating to energy efficiency. And during those years, hundreds of folks have asked me what they could do to have lower utility bills in their mobile homes. I must confess to you that until recently, I have not had a really good answer to their question. The reason being is that mobile home type construction does not lend its self to making energy-efficiency improvements. Let's look at those construction techniques as they relate to energy efficiency and see what I have found.

Floor: Typically, a mobile home is constructed on a heavy metal trailer frame with wheels for transportation purposes. In most cases, the floor insulation and the heating and cooling ductwork are installed as part of the floor assembly. If adequate insulation is installed and the ductwork is properly sized, installed, and protected from damage, there should never be reason to worry about the floor. If damage occurs, repairs may be difficult, expensive, and may not be feasible.



Doug Rye
Host – "Home Remedies"
Radio Talk Show

Placing skirting around a mobile home will help the looks but will not make much difference in energy usage.

Exterior Walls: If there is any insulation in the walls, it is probably not feasible to add insulation. If there is no insulation in the walls, it is feasible in some cases to have cellulose insulation blown into the existing walls, but trained installers may be hard to find. Of course, most all of the exterior walls would benefit from energy-efficient caulking to stop air infiltration.

Windows: Mobile homes with single pane windows would greatly benefit by installing new double or triple-glazed windows. As relating to heating and cooling, the existing windows might be the biggest energy problem in the mobile home. However, new windows may be costly and sometimes difficult to install, so it may or may not be feasible to replace the windows.

Roof: I have known for years that the roof is the biggest problem on most mobile homes. Most likely the mobile home roof has very little insulation between the ceiling and Mother Nature and it may not be possible to add insulation. In the summer, the sun is creating unbearable heat on that roof. If we could just shade that roof, it would be so much better. In jest, I have told many folks that they should plant a 100-year-old shade tree by their mobile home. Since that is impossible, some have constructed a shed-type roof over the mobile home roof to provide shade. And while that would really help in the summer, it would not help much in the winter when the wind chill temperatures are chilling the roof.

About mid-February, I was reading a magazine and noticed a small ad that read, "Mobile Home Super Insulated Roof Over System with a 40- Year Warranty". I am aware that talk is cheap and I don't believe everything I read. But I very much wanted to find a good dependable and feasible solution to help lower the utility bills on mobile homes, so I called the phone number. Well, the rest is history. I received a package of material that explained the system and a list containing several hundred references. I contacted some of those on the reference list and all were happy with their roof over system. They said that the system solved leak problems, sound problems, comfort problems, lowered utility bills, and looked great. I really do think that I have found the answer for mobile home high utility bills.

I suggest that you search for this type system in your area, or you can call me at (501) 653-7931 for more information. See you in November.

Doug Rye, an Arkansas architect, is known as the 'King of Caulk and Talk' and 'America's Energy Expert.' Doug has helped thousands of homeowners save money on their power bills. He hosts the popular "Home Remedies" radio talk program, which has been on the air for 15 years in 14 states. Doug speaks annually at American Institute of Architects meetings to hundreds of other architects on energy efficiency. He conducts over 150 energy-saving seminars per year all across the U.S. Have a question for Doug? Contact him at (501) 653-7931, or www.dougyre.com.



"the roof is the biggest problem on most mobile homes"

Easy way to get benefit verification

Need verification of your Social Security benefits? There's no need to visit or call an office to get the verification you need. Simply visit www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.



There are a number of reasons you may need written verification of your Social Security benefits. You may need to provide it to an energy assistance program or for subsidized housing. Perhaps you're ready to make a major purchase, and you're trying to get a loan from a bank or financial institution. Or maybe you're applying for state benefits or moving into a new apartment or home. You can use this benefit verification letter for any reason that someone requires proof of your income.

In addition to offering proof of income, the letter is an official document that verifies your Medicare coverage, retirement or disability status, and age. If you need verification that you have applied for benefits but have not yet received a decision, it also serves as proof that you applied.

Whatever your reason, if you need verification of your income from Social Security, obtaining it is easy and convenient.

Create a "my Social Security account" and you can instantly get your benefit verification letter online and obtain one anytime you need it. You also can use your account to manage your benefits, check your benefit amount, or change your address, phone number, and direct deposit information. Millions of people have already opened their accounts. In fact, someone opens a new my Social Security account about every six seconds!

You can also get a benefit verification letter mailed to you by calling (800) 772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). However, for most people, getting the verification online is the most convenient way to get what they need. Get your benefit verification letter by registering today for a "my Social Security account" at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.



10 tips for hiring a heating and cooling contractor

1. Study up — Find out about license and insurance requirements for contractors in your state. And before you call a contractor, know the model of your current system and its maintenance history. Also make note of any uncomfortable rooms. This will help potential contractors better understand your heating needs.

2. Ask for referrals — Ask friends, neighbors, and co-workers for contractor referrals. You can also contact local trade organizations for names of members in your area.

3. Call references — Ask contractors for customer references and call them. Ask about the contractor's installation or service performance, and if the job was completed on time and within budget.

4. Find special offers — A heating and cooling system is one of the largest purchases you'll make as a homeowner. Keep your costs down by checking around for available rebates on energy-efficient ENERGY STAR®-qualified heating and cooling equipment. Begin your search at www.energystar.gov.

5. Look for ENERGY STAR — ENERGY STAR-qualified products meet strict energy-efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and offer significant long-term energy savings. Contractors should be able to show you calculations of savings for ENERGY STAR heating and cooling equipment.

6. Expect a home evaluation — The contractor should spend significant time inspecting your current system and home to assess your needs. A bigger system isn't always better; a contractor should size the heating and cooling system based on the size of your house, level of insulation, and windows. A good contractor will inspect your duct system (if applicable) for air leaks and insulation and measure airflow to make sure it meets manufacturers specifications.

7. Get written, itemized estimates — When comparing contractors' proposals (bids), be sure to compare cost, energy efficiency and warranties. A lowest price may not be the best deal if it's not the most efficient because your energy costs will be higher.

8. Get it in ink — Sign a written proposal with a contractor before work gets started. It'll protect you by specifying project costs, model numbers, job schedule and warranty information.

9. Pass it on — Tell friends and family about ENERGY STAR. Almost one-quarter of households knowingly purchased at least one qualified product last year, and 71 percent of those consumers say they would recommend ENERGY STAR to a friend. Spread the word, and we can all make a big difference.

10. Get the ENERGY STAR Guide — For complete information on keeping your home comfortable year-round, get the ENERGY STAR Guide to Energy Efficient Cooling and Heating at www.energystar.gov, or call 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937).

Know how to stay safe after storms

Severe thunderstorms, tornadoes and flooding can leave more than damage in their wake— they can leave hidden dangers as well. Safe Electricity advises everyone to be mindful of the electrical hazards that storms and flooding can leave behind.

Stay away from downed power lines and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Treat all downed or hanging power lines as if they are energized and dangerous. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live. Warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility.

Never step in to a flooded basement or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water. Never turn off your breaker box if you must stand in water to do so.

If you are cleaning up, do not use electric yard tools if it is raining, the ground is wet, or you are standing in water. Keep all electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces.

Do not use water-damaged electronics or appliances until a professional has verified that they are safe.

If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away, and contact emergency personnel or the electric utility. Never drive over a downed line. A downed line causes other things around it to become potentially hazardous.

For more safety tips, visit www.safeelectricity.org.



WATTS NEW IN LaFayette

LaFayette plays host to Native American festival

By Chris Busby

Coming this October, LaFayette will play host to a multi-cultural Native American Pow Wow and Festival, the first ever event of its kind in the city's history.

The city is partnering with the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission and the Greater Valley Area Chamber of Commerce to put on the event, which will take place Oct. 17 and 18. It will feature a celebration of Native American culture with entertainment, demonstrations, and educational activities.

During the day on Friday, Oct. 17, the Pow Wow and Festival will be open only to students from area schools as an educational field trip. Then Friday evening and continuing all day Saturday, Oct. 18, the festivities will be open to the general public.

Some highlights of the Pow Wow and Festival include an “East meets West” display that offers a comparison of Eastern Woodland Indians and Western Tribes demonstrated through lifestyle displays and performances.

Demonstrator displays will show how Native Americans made tools, musical instruments, primitive weapons and other necessities of life. There will be demonstrators showing and explaining Native American skills and techniques such as flint knapping and flute playing.

Several dancing activities will take place throughout the weekend. A “Luck of the Draw” dance competition will take place Saturday morning in which dancers of all ages, skill levels and styles compete in social and category dances for the chance to win up to \$1,000 in prize money. Saturday afternoon will feature a Competition Dance in which dancers compete in specific categories for a chance to win a prize of up to \$4,000. For both the “Luck of the Draw” and Competition Dance, participants must dress in full Native American regalia.

A social dance will be held as well, in which the general public will be able to join native dancers in the dance circle. It's open to anyone regardless of age or skill, and native dancers will assist those wishing to learn the appropriate steps.

The festival will feature several stage performances throughout the weekend, as well as drum circles and an abundance of Native American foods to sample and purchase. Several Native American vendors will also be on hand offering authentic Native American products.

The Native American Pow Wow and Festival will be held at the Chambers County Agricultural Park, which is located on Highway 431 in north LaFayette. The Friday school visits will take place from 9 a.m. CST to 1 p.m. The festival will open to the general public that evening from 4:30 until 8 p.m. Saturday's festivities will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m.

Chris Busby is a staff writer for The LaFayette Sun.

WATTS NEW IN Alexander City

Recycling facility receives grant

By Tracy Kendrick

The recycling facility at the City of Alexander City Public Works was approved for a grant for new recycling equipment. Amanda Thomas, Public Works Administrative Assistant, said the \$40,000 grant money will be used to purchase a new pick-up truck, a mesh recycling trailer, and a new recycle bin.



With these new items, the city will be able to increase its recycling efforts inside the city limits as well as in the surrounding communities.

Currently, Russell Lands has partnered with the city for their recycling program. The City of Alexander City has established a recycling team and volunteers within the departments to increase recycling awareness and efforts.

According to Mrs. Thomas, the recycling facility has accepted 880 pounds of aluminum cans, 1,681 pounds of tin cans, 11 tons of metal, 37 tons of cardboard, 46 tons newspaper, 20,684 pounds of plastic, and 13,935 pounds in electronics in 2014.

The facility is open Monday – Friday from 7 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., and it is open 24 hours a day for unassisted drop-offs. Currently, the facility accepts cardboard, #1 and #2 plastic, magazines, newspaper, mixed white paper, and electronics. A recycling electronics event is held on the second Thursday of every month.

The City of Alexander City is working hard to create a more green and prosperous city by promoting and providing a green recycling facility.

The facility is located at the Public Works Department, 824 Railey Road, Alexander City. All materials can be dropped off behind the green storage shed.

Please contact Terry Bishop at (256) 409-2020 for more information or questions regarding recycling.

Tracy Kendrick is Administrative Assistant for the City of Alexander City Light and Power.

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE IN ALEXANDER CITY:

Day Time (256) 409-2080,

After Hours/Holidays – Call Police Dept. (256) 234-3421

Please do not call 911

WATTS NEW IN Dothan

Gearing up for the 5th Annual



Wiregrass Economic Resource Summit

By Cassandra Milton

The 5th Annual Wiregrass Economic Resource Summit will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 17 at the Dothan Civic Center from 7:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Formerly called the Economic Summit on Jobs, the Wiregrass Economic Resource Summit strives to “Sell, Sustain, and Strengthen the Wiregrass Economy Through Dialogue, Information and Resources.”

Participating citizens will select to join one of five teams that fit their area of interest: Small Business, Entrepreneurship, Downtown Revitalization, Quality of Life, and Workforce Development. Each team will foster a dialogue that focuses on the challenges of the specific team issue, while also identifying strategies that will improve and/or solve the issue.

This year's summit will feature two new components. The first is the Wiregrass Shark Tank competition. This friendly competition will give one entrepreneur the opportunity to walk away from the summit with an actual cash prize. The second new aspect of the summit is the Resource Fair, which is designed to showcase the local resources available for individuals who want to start a business or are looking for ways to progress their existing business.

The guest speaker for this year's Summit is Travis Perry, inventor of the Chord Buddy. Perry is a Dothan native with a booming entrepreneurial idea that exemplifies hard work and success.

There is no cost to participate and breakfast will be provided. Please visit our website at www.economicsummitonjobs.com to register online, view the agenda, submit an entry for the Wiregrass Shark Tank competition, or review descriptions of the five teams.

This is an exciting time for Dothan and the Resource Summit provides an opportunity for all citizens to be part of the discussions and the development of strategies for future business growth and development. This is a community effort and success is dependent upon participants who are willing to work towards a common goal.

The 5th Annual Wiregrass Economic Resource Summit is hosted by the City of Dothan, the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, and Troy University's Sorrell College of Business. For more information, please contact Thad Taylor (334) 615-3405 or Kellie Littlefield (334) 615-4415.

Cassandra Milton is Community Relations Specialist for the City of Dothan.



WATTS NEW IN Fairhope

“Fall Into Fairhope” the first weekend in October

By D. Fran Morley

Mark your calendar for a big weekend of fun and festivals, as we “Fall Into Fairhope.” The first full weekend of October brings the combined fun of the Grand Festival of Art, the Grand Festival of Books, Alabama Coastal BirdFest, the Mullet Run, a concert by the Baldwin Pops, and the regular First Friday Artwalk. More than 20,000 people are expected to enjoy the weekend’s activities. For information on all of the activities, visit Fall into Fairhope on Facebook.

The big news this year is that the Grand Festival of Art, the Grand Festival of Books, and BirdFest’s Bird & Conservation Expo all take place on the grounds of Faulkner State College in downtown Fairhope. From one end of campus to the other, you can view and purchase fine arts and crafts, learn about birds and our incredible natural wildlife, and enjoy hearing from some of your favorite authors. One festival will lead right to the next, so come early, stay late, and enjoy everything in one place on the Faulkner campus.

Saturday’s events start early with the Mullet Run, a 5K race and one-mile run/walk. Runners can register in advance at www.FairhopeMulletRun.com or on the day of the race from 7:15–8:15 a.m. at the Mullet Run fountain at the Fairhope Museum of History on Bancroft Street. Winners receive a unique fine art award. Race founder Ameri’ca Jones says runners will like this year’s t-shirt with new logo and the post-race party, with fish and grits by Rebecca’s Restaurant and live music. The race supports Bay Art Project, which provides opportunities for young artists to engage in the process of making public art.

Alabama Coastal BirdFest opens with a reception at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center in Spanish Fort on Wednesday, Oct. 1, and then launches into a full schedule of guided bird and nature excursions by foot and on boat Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, exploring sites along the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail and beyond. New this year is a Northbound Adventure trip into the Delta that can be combined with an excursion to Bottle Creek Indian Mounds. There are walking trips, kayak paddles, and two sunset cruises. On Saturday, the Bird & Conservation Expo has hands-on fun for all ages on the Faulkner campus in Fairhope with live raptors and other birds, snakes, sea creatures, and more. The Expo is free. Trips and evening events require advance registration.



Learn more at www.AlabamaCoastalBirdFest.com.

The Grand Festival of Books presents readings, signings, and other activities for book lovers young and old. The Good Life Foundation’s “Hook ‘em and Keep ‘em” event features best-selling young-adult author T.A. Barron, author of *Atlantis Rising*, the *Merlin Saga*, the *Heartlight Saga*, and non-fiction books on nature. To encourage kids to read, 1,200 books will be given away to 5th grade students on the Eastern Shore. For more information, see www.pageandpalette.com.

The Grand Festival of Art celebrates its 32nd year, bringing more than 70 local, regional, national, and international artists to the Faulkner campus on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 4 and 5 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The show features works in blown glass, painting, ceramics, woodworking, jewelry, sculpture, photography, and more in fine art and fine craft. Admission to the show is free. BRATS will provide shuttle service to the campus from lots on Greeno Road. For more information, visit www.esartcenter.com or call (251) 928-2228.

How do you close out a wonderful fall weekend in Fairhope? With beautiful music from the Baldwin Pops on the bluff. Sunday, Oct. 5, bring your chairs, blankets, and picnic baskets and enjoy music from the talented members of this all-volunteer organization while the sun sets over Mobile Bay. For more information: www.BaldwinPopsBand.com.

D. Fran Morley is a contributing writer for the City of Fairhope.

WATTS NEW IN **Lanett**

Good things happening in the Lanett City School System

By Wayne Clark

Things may be starting to turn around for the Lanett City School System. There's an encouraging trend of the enrollment numbers being up at the lower grades. This reverses a trend that's been in place since the early 1990s.

Starting with the downsizing of the local textile industry some 25 years ago now, the system saw a steady drop in enrollment. In the early 1990s, for example, Lanett High School (LHS) was graduating around 100 seniors every year. Those numbers fell through the ensuing years and hit a low point of only 38 seniors in the Class of 2014.

"We're having a lot of growth in the lower grades," says City Superintendent Phillip Johnson. "We have 100 kindergarten students this year and 95 first grade students. The good news for us is that we are seeing a continuing growth pattern."

The students reported for their first day of class on August 13 and the school district appears to be off to a smooth start. Something new this year is a pre-K program. Chosen by lots, a total of 24 students make up the inaugural class.

The program is being managed by the Alabama Office of School Readiness, which is part of the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs. The office of Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley oversees this statewide program.

Lanett's new pre-K program, says District Administrator Christy Carpenter, provides high quality early

learning experiences. "This is beneficial in preparing the students of life-long learning and school success," she said. "Studies have shown that children, who attend pre-kindergarten, are more likely to succeed."

According to Johnson, plans have been finalized to expand the school district's career-technical offerings to include a pre-engineering course that will be housed in a new, state-of-the-art career-tech teaching center at Lanett High.

"This new 20-center lab will offer additional online coursework opportunities in addition to the existing programs," he explained.

LHS students will continue a partnership with the Chambers County Career Technical Center in LaFayette. This will allow them to pursue certification in various career strands, Johnson said.

"In addition, Lanett has expanded opportunities for more Valley High students to participate in our JROTC program," he added.

As its system enrollment has increased, some classroom renovations have been taking place. These include upgrades to secondary classrooms and physical education facilities.

"Technology upgrades include the equipping of all pre-K through 12th grade classrooms with Promethean boards to promote interactive teaching and learning," Johnson says. "In addition, new student computers have been added to various classrooms throughout the district in an effort to increase centers focused on technology integration."

For the 2014-2015 school year, the Odysseyware online curriculum will provide secondary students with additional options for career-tech, enrichment, remediation and individualized learning.

Odysseyware, said Carpenter, is a research-based, core and elective curriculum program. "This online opportunity makes pertinent information available to students in an engaging, multimedia format," she said. "Teachers are able to customize the learning experience so that students gain the most benefit possible from time spent working in the program."



Bound for Auburn – In August, approximately 140 employees of the Lanett City School District boarded four city school buses en route to the East Alabama Regional Inservice Center in Auburn to hear "America's Educator" Ron Clark. A two-time New York Times best-selling author and a Disney American Teacher of the Year, Clark delivers a message of hope, dedication and the never-say-never attitude required to achieve goals and dreams. Everyone from custodians to administrative staff made the trip. "Lanett teachers in grades three through eight have toured the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta," Superintendent Phillip Johnson said. "The Academic Academy at W.O. Lance Elementary uses strategies learned from Ron Clark and the teachers at Lanett Junior High implement his concepts." Shown are (L to R): James Wise and Chip Seagle of Lanett High and Chelcia Goss, special education; Shana Arrington, first grade; Brandi Burrows, kindergarten; Annie Arrington, kindergarten; and Whittany Nolen, reading coach, all at W.O. Lance. (Photo by Wayne Clark)

Johnson says that the school district is ahead of the curve in many areas of technology-based learning.

“Andalusia City Schools sent a team to visit our STARS program this summer to see, among other things, how a technology focus is integrated into an after-school setting,” he said. “From pre-K to career training, Lanett City Schools is tightly focused on meeting the educational needs of today’s students and tomorrow’s workforce.

Organized in 1898, the Lanett City School District has been educating the city’s children for 116 years. It consists of three schools: W.O. Lance Elementary, Lanett Junior High and Lanett High. The district is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/AdvanceEd.

Each school offers rigorous curriculums with adequate access to technology to help students become academically successful, Johnson said.

“We believe that all students can learn in our clean, safe and well-maintained school buildings,” said Johnson. “There’s a nurturing, challenging, stimulating environment that’s conducive to teaching, working and learning.”

Computer labs are located at the junior high school and the high school.

Lanett High offers Advanced Placement classes. This has been a popular move - the number of students taking AP courses has increased each year.

Lanett High School is an Alabama math and science technology site and is a TEAMMATH site. W.O. Lance Elementary is an Alabama Math, Science and Technology site as well as a TEAMMATH site.

Lanett Junior High School is a TEAMMATH site.

The school system boasts of a state-recognized gifted-enrichment program that’s offered to third through eighth grade gifted students.

Its special education program meets the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The STARS After-School Program at Lance Elementary is one of the most popular programs at the school. An acronym for students, teachers, administrators reaching success, the STARS goal is to help increase student test scores.

The program is held Monday through Thursday from 3:30 until 6 p.m. and on Fridays from 3:30 until 5 p.m. There’s no charge for students to be in the program.

Lanett City Schools also continue to provide fine arts programs, including music and art, for its students.

Lanett students began wearing uniforms about six years ago. Johnson says this has made a difference.

“Administrators and teachers have told us that the uniforms have made a big difference in student discipline and self-esteem,” he said. “We rarely have dress code infractions anymore. The organized, disciplined environment is always noted when we have guests at any of our three schools. Parents like the uniforms, too. Its cost efficient for a family budget and it helps streamline the morning routine in getting ready for the school day.”

Wayne Clark is the News Editor of *The Valley Times-News* in Lanett.

WATTS NEW AT Utilities Board of Tuskegee

UBT nears completion of major projects

By Gerald B. Long

Work is quickly approaching completion on the lift station projects that are underway on the Tuskegee wastewater system. This work is part of a multi-million dollar project designed to transfer flow from



Crew members work on lift station number 2.



Construction of one additional aeration basin.

our South Wastewater Treatment Plant, which will be decommissioned, to the Utilities Board of Tuskegee’s (UBT) North Plant which is being expanded to handle the extra flow coming from the South Plant. The North Plant expansion includes the upgrade of two aeration basins that the Utilities Board of Tuskegee (UBT) currently has on line and the construction of one additional basin.

On the electric side of the business, UBT crews are replacing 14 old wooden poles on our 44kV system with new concrete poles and cross-arms. This work is expected to last into the 2015 fiscal year.

One of the key components to UBT’s continued success is reinvesting in the utility’s infrastructure so that as development comes, UBT will be able to handle the growth without any problem. The wastewater system upgrade is being funded through a bond issue, and the upgrades to the electric system are being internally funded.

Gerald B. Long is the Assistant General Manager of the Utilities Board of Tuskegee.



UBT crews replace 14 old wooden poles on 44kV system with new concrete poles and cross-arms.

City of Opelika highlights campaigns to help those in need

By Jan Gunter



(L-R) Megan Bennet, Director Susan Delmas, and Jim Allen, Lions Club representative



Jim Allen and June Owens, OPS Manager, Marketing and Communications



Jim Allen and Billy Jackson, Sportsplex Center Supervisor

Recycle for Sight Campaign

The City of Opelika has joined several private area businesses in the community to help the Lions Club in their Recycle for Sight campaign to collect prescription eye glasses, and prescription and nonprescription sunglasses for those in need.

The program is an easy one to become involved with. And very simple. And, it only requires you to find those old pairs of eyeglasses you no longer use and drop them off at a Lions Club drop off location. They don't have to be fancy glasses or fashionable. The frames can be plastic or metal. The Lions club accepts them all.

The drop off boxes for the City of Opelika can be found at four locations:

- The front entrance area of the Opelika Sportsplex & Aquatics Center, located at 1001 Andrews Road
- The front lobby area of the Opelika Power Services Center, located at 600 Fox Run Parkway
- The front lobby area of the Lewis Cooper Jr. Memorial Library, located at 200 South 6th Street
- In the main downstairs lobby area of City Hall (by the elevator), located at 204 South 7th Street

The City of Opelika hopes you will join us in helping our local Lions Club gather glasses for this worthy project. It's free to you, but priceless to someone else. And just think...the glasses you donate to the Recycle for Sight project just might change one person's life by opening up a whole world of possibilities for them.

Opelika Project Share Campaign

Opelika Power Services (OPS) continues with its Project Share campaign as a way for neighbors to help neighbors who are truly in need of help with their power bills. The Intention of Opelika Share is to assist qualified individuals (elderly or disabled individuals) facing financial challenges with the payment of an OPS electric bill. Those who qualify may seek assistance with payments of their power bills once during the winter and once during the summer for up to \$150 maximum assistance per season.

Those wishing to give to this "neighbor helping neighbor" project can do so easily. With your next power bill, simply check the box indicating how much you would like to give. You can give as little as \$1 per month or make a one-time gift.

All potential recipients of assistance through Opelika Share are screened by the Lee County United Way Agency and must meet the qualifications established for the program.

For more information on giving to Opelika Share, simply call OPS Customer Service, Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at (334) 705-5170.

For more information on receiving assistance through the Opelika Share program, simply call the Lee County United Way offices at (334) 745-5540.

Jan Gunter is Community Relations Specialist for the City of Opelika.

WATTS NEW AT Riviera Utilities

Riviera Utilities' linemen compete for the first time in a lineman's rodeo

By Miles McDaniel



Something many of us strive for in our jobs, careers, hobbies or other passions: to be able to prove that our skills are better than or comparable to our peers. Our recognition could be through award ceremonies, car shows, ag shows or through direct competition. For linemen, it's called a rodeo, although there is no bronc or bull riding. Ropes are used, but not for lassoing livestock.

Approximately 100 electric linemen throughout the Southeast region displayed their skills during the 17th Annual Tennessee Valley Lineman's Rodeo in Bowling Green, KY, in June.

During the two-day competition, the linemen showcased the skills they rely on to restore electricity under grueling conditions — stifling heat, freezing cold, torrential rain and high wind.

Representing Riviera Utilities in the apprentice lineman category were Robby Ray and Blane Cordova. Representing Riviera Utilities in the journey lineman category were Richard Sanspre and Scott Jantz. Greg Wenzel and Justin Frasier also represented Riviera Utilities as judges for the different rodeo events.

"This is something we've never done," said Jody Johnson, Riviera Utilities' Line Crew Supervisor. "Our four guys competed against the best in the Southeast region, and I'm so proud of how they did and how they handled themselves under the pressure. This type of competition builds character and our guys did outstanding."

The linemen competed in some of the following categories: written test, a simulated rescue of an injured co-worker from a 40-ft. power pole, jumper replacement, phase swap, cutout and arrestor charge, primary insulator replacement, and crossarm relocation. Each event is judged for safety, work practice, neatness and ability, equipment handling and timely completion of the event. Any miscue results in a deduction from the total score.

"This is the first time Riviera Utilities has fielded a team in a lineman's rodeo," said Miles McDaniel, Manager of Public Affairs, Riviera Utilities. "I couldn't be more proud of our guys and how they performed. These men are dedicated to their profession and it's physically demanding work that most people cannot do or would not do, and our guys performed at a top level."

Miles McDaniel is Manager of Public Affairs for Riviera Utilities.



Representing Riviera Utilities at the 17th Annual Tennessee Valley Lineman's Rodeo were (L to R): Justin Frazier, Robby Ray, Blane Cordova, Scott Jantz, Richard Sanspre, Greg Wenzel and Jody Johnson.

WATTS NEW IN Sylacauga

Sylacauga runs to be tobacco free

By Christa Jennings

Many from Sylacauga came out on Saturday, July 12, to help kickoff the inaugural “Running to be Tobacco Free” 5K run.

This event was co-sponsored by Cheaha Regional Mental Health Center in Sylacauga and the American Cancer Society. For a first time event, the run had a good turnout with approximately 70 in attendance and 20 runners participating.

The evening’s run included music, fun, inspiration, food and a “kid’s korner” featuring a bounce house, in addition to the “wonder twilight color run.” Participating runners had blue, pink, purple and green colored powder thrown on them during different stages of the race marking their progress through the 5K run.

Winners were announced based on age categories and genders, with winners receiving medals or trophies, or in some cases both.

In the 19 years old and under cat-

egory, first place went to Ben Wesson, second place to Benito Rodriguez and third place to Isabella Rodriguez

In the 20 to 29 years old category, Landon Williams won first place in the male group while Ashley Waldrop won first place in the female group.

Winners of the 30 to 39 year old male category were John Wesson with first place and Philip Cosper with second place.

For ages 30 to 39 in the female category, Nikki Cosper won first place, Kerri Anderson came in second place, and Lisa Bailey placed third.

Finally, there were also two winners in the 50 and above age category. Diann Garner won first place, and Debi Tubbs came in second place.

While there were numerous partners from across the community helping make the event a success, Cheaha Regional Mental Health Center wanted to especially thank Grace Baptist Church, Cadence Bank, ABC 33/40, Coosa Valley MRI, Don Smith, Scott Hamlet, Auto Trim, Ricky Deason, Allen Oil, and the Sylacauga Chamber of Commerce.

A special thanks also goes to Walmart of Sylacauga, The Sanctuary, Coosa Valley Medical Center and Truth Recovery Ministries.

Attendees enjoyed the musical talents of Roger Vines and Teresa Yager, along with the special talents of Pastor Short-Tee.

Guest inspirational speakers included Brenda Ladun, news anchor with ABC 33/40; Pete Key; and Jon “Huggy” Ray.

Proceeds from the run were split between Cheaha Mental Health and the American Cancer Society. With a total of \$1,565 raised through the event, that will be \$782.50 for each organization.

Richard Bonds, prevention specialist with Cheaha Mental Health, said they hope to have the run annually. However, he said perhaps next year they will have it in a cooler month.

Christa Jennings is the senior staff reporter for The Coosa County News in Rockford.



Kerri Anderson gets dusted in green powder just as she finishes the race in second place for her age category.



Lisa Bailey wipes colored powder from her face after being doused in green powder upon completing the race.



Benito and Isabella Rodriguez take a moment to catch their breath after completing the 5K run.

Places to Go & Things to Do

Alexander City

Story Time. Wednesdays in September and October. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Mamie's Place Children's Library. All children welcome. For details, call (256) 234-4644.

Senior Activity Center. See all the senior activities planned for the September and October at <http://www.acpr.me/senior-activity-center.php>.

Saturdays: Farmers Market 7:00am – 11:00am at Broad St Park with local produce, fruits, relishes, jams, jellies, baked goods, USDA Heritage Pork and more. For more information, please call 256-329-9227.

Sept. 11 and Oct. 9, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., RECYCLE Electronics. Public Works Department, behind Darwin Dobbs. CE&E Solutions will be accepting electronics for recycling and they are ADEM certified. Contact Sabrina Wood at (334) 429-8832 or Amanda Thomas at (256) 409-2020. Sponsored by the City of Alexander City and the Middle Tallapoosa Clean Water Partnership.

Farmers Market. Saturdays in September and October. 7-11 a.m. Broad Street Park. Local produce, fruits, relishes, jams, jellies, baked goods, USDA Heritage pork and more. For more information, please call (256) 329-9227.

Oct. 11, Annual Oktoberfest. Charles E Bailey Sportplex. Music, food, crafts, antique auto show, dancing and more. Call (256) 329-6736 for more information.

Daphne

Sept. 27 and 28, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. each day, 26th Annual Jubilee Festival. Welcome to the 26th Annual Jubilee Festival, an Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce event. The Jubilee Festival is an Eastern Shore tradition that offers fine art, crafts, great entertainment and great food in Olde Towne Daphne (Scenic 98). No admission. For more information, call the Chamber at (251) 621- 8222, or visit www.eschamber.com.

Dothan

Sept. 26 and 27, Third Annual Oktoberfest and Barbecue Competition, PorktoberQue. Houston County Farm Center in Dothan. The event is open Friday, Sept. 26 from 5 until 10 p.m. and again Saturday Sept. 27 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. The event features BBQ teams competing for \$7,700 in prize money under KCBS (Kansas City Barbecue Society) sanctioning and also promotes a German-style Oktoberfest. There are two stages featuring both polka music and contemporary music, an indoor biergarten, a "man cave" with TVs for watching your favorite football games, a cornhole tournament, free bounce houses for the kids to play on, shopping with vendors and many food-related activities. Admission is \$3 per person with children 6 and under free. Proceeds benefit the Houston County Land Water Rescue, the Houston County Farm Center, and nearly a dozen local non-profits who are also participating in PorktoberQue as a fundraising project. The event also offers free booth space to local non-profits who want to offer information or sell a product as a fundraiser. For more information, to become a vendor or to see the entertainment schedule, visit www.PorktoberQue.com or call (334) 699-1475.

Oct. 4, 7:30 a.m., Alzheimer's A Walk to Remember. Westgate Park. The perfect way to honor and/or remember loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and their families. For information about this annual event sponsored by the Alzheimer's Resource Center, call (334) 702-2273, visit www.wesharethecare.org, or e-mail alzheimier@graceba.net.

Elberta

Oct. 25, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Original Elberta German Sausage Festival. Held at the Elberta Town Park (Hwy. 98 E). The best German sausage you have ever tasted! Made from a secret recipe developed by the founding fathers of Elberta, AL. This is the only place you can get the real thing. Arts and crafts, live music, carnival rides, baked goods and more. Contact us at [festival@elbertafire.com](mailto:elbertafire.com).

Fairhope

Sept. 5 and Oct. 3, 6-8 p.m., First Friday Art Walk. Begins at Fairhope Art Center. Stroll through downtown Fairhope visiting art galleries and listening to music. For information, call (251) 928-2228.

Sept. 20, 8 a.m.-12 p.m., 27th Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup. The Alabama Coastal Clean-Up is part of an international effort to remove debris from coastal waters. Starting at Fairhope Municipal Pier and Park.

Sept. 25-Nov. 6, Fairhope Fall Farmers Market. Open 3 p.m. until sundown. Behind Fairhope Public Library. For information, contact (251) 929-1466.

Oct. 2-5, "Fall into Fairhope." A cultural, four-day event in Fairhope. Visitors have the opportunity for trips and evening events with the Alabama Coastal Birdfest; a 5K or one-mile Mullet Run; and an outdoor art festival with over 70 fine art artists from all over the country.

Oct. 2-4, 11th Annual Alabama Coastal Bird Fest. For more information, visit <http://www.alabamacoastalbirdfest.com/Schedule.htm>.

Oct. 4 and 5, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 32nd Annual Grand Festival of Art. Takes place in downtown at the Fairhope Faulkner State Campus. Admission is free. The show features more than 70 local, regional, national and international artists with more than 20,000 visitors expected. Visitors will find woodworking, blown glass, painting, ceramics, jewelry, sculpture, photography and much more fine art and fine craft. Children's activities can also be expected.

Oct. 11-18, Fairhope FETE. Founded to celebrate Fairhope's fashion community. The week-long event will feature local, regional and national fashion to promote and inspire the latest fashion trends. Fairhope Fete benefits Point Clear Charities, Inc. Since 1988, Point Clear Polo has raised millions of dollars that benefited cancer research, local non-profit organizations, and children's charities. For more information, contact (251) 928-9704.

Oct. 25, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Downtown Fairhope Trick or Treat. Children are invited to wear their Halloween costume and trick or treat in downtown Fairhope. Just look for the pumpkin sign in the window to see who is participating. Parents drop by the Welcome Center for pictures and don't forget your camera. For more information call (251) 929-1466.

Oct. 25, Polo at the Point. Celebrating its 26th anniversary. Sonny Hill-Clearwater Polo Complex in Point Clear. Tickets range from \$10 to \$150. For more information, visit www.poloatthepoint.com, or call (251) 928-9704.

Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, Rileigh & Raylee Angel Ride & Concert. Featuring *Wet Willie*, *Mustang Sally*, *Lynyrd Skynyrd* and more. For more information, visit www.angel-ride.org.

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Alabama Municipal Electric Authority

804 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

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Places to Go & Things to Do

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Foley

Oct. 4, Creek Crawl. Graham Creek Nature Preserve and MOB event.

Location: 23460 Wolf Bay Drive, Foley. Can you run, climb, crawl and slide through 25 obstacles over a five-mile rugged course in the woods? Join the fun and compete in the ultimate obstacle race. Open to teams of three to six members and individuals. 5K Fun Run also available with 15 obstacles. After party to all participants. Proceeds benefit the Nature Preserve. For more Information, call (251) 952-4011.

Oct. 18, 3rd Annual Alabama Festival of Flavor. Held in the streets of historic downtown Foley. Alabama Festival of Flavor features one of Alabama's greatest treasures, our abundant fresh, local fare. Guests can sample food prepared during cooking competitions, learn about traditional Southern recipe secrets from our locally famous chefs, attend a food and wine pairing or acquire tips on creating your own organic garden at home. Stroll through scenic Heritage Park exploring artisans and crafters or catch the relaxing sounds of regional jazz performers.

Gulf Shores

Oct. 2-4, 11th Annual Alabama Coastal Birdfest. Come meet the fall migration on the beautiful Alabama Gulf Coast. For more information, visit <http://www.alabamacoastalbirdfest.com/index.htm>.

Oct. 9-12, 43rd Annual Shrimp Festival. Held at the public beach access in Gulf Shores where Hwy. 59 ends and intersects with Hwy. 182. For more information, contact (251) 968-6904 or <http://www.myshrimpfest.com>. The festival attracts over 250,000 people, featuring over 250 vendors that offer fine art, arts & crafts, a retail marketplace, outdoor world, and of course, shrimp! Two stages offer continuous musical entertainment while the little one's attention is captured in the Children's Activity Village.

Opelika

Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 3-6 p.m., Opelika Main Street/ Opelika Lions Club Downtown Farmers Market. Local produce, baked goods and more. Visit www.facebook.com/OpelikaMainStreetFarmersMarket

Sept. 5 and Oct. 3, First Fridays. Downtown Opelika. Stores stay open until at least 8 p.m. After-hours shopping, live street-corner entertainment. Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OpelikaMainStreet.

Sept. 11, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Senior Adult Health Fair. Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center. Ages 55+. Free flu shots and health screenings and so much more.

Sept. 12, 26 and Oct. 3, 6-9 p.m., Little Bull Dawgs Swim Night. Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center. Ages 6-12. \$4/child.

Oct. 10, 6-11 p.m., On the Tracks Bi-annual Food and Wine Event. Enjoy a night of wine tastings, eating locally at restaurants, shopping late and listening to live music. For more information, please visit www.onthetracks.org.

Oct. 24, 6-8 p.m., The Great Pumpkin Splash. Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center. Ages 6-12. \$3/person. Pick your pumpkin from a floating pumpkin patch in the Sportsplex pool. Kids may also enjoy Harvest Relay Races, the pumpkin roll, prizes and much more.

Oct. 28, 5:30-8:30 p.m. (new extended hours), Fall Festival and Children's Carnival. Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center. Children 12 and under. Hayrides, games, prizes, rides, entertainment and so much more

Halloween Trick or Treat Night – to be announced by the end of September. Check the City of Opelika website, www.opelika.org, or the City of Opelika Facebook page.

Silverhill

Sept. 20, The Town of Silverhill Annual Heritage

Day Festival. Vendor booths open at 9 a.m. and close at 4 p.m. Arts and crafts, food, entertainment and parade at 10 a.m. Call Town Hall for more information, (251) 945-5198 or (251) 945-3251.

Sylacauga

Sept. 17 (kickoff), B.B. Comer Library's Brown Bag Series, "Lest We Forget." Bring your lunch and join the series on Wednesdays at 12 p.m. Sept. 24 will feature Wayne Flynt, "Truman Capote: Monroeville's Other Muse"; Oct. 1, Pat Cunningham Devoto speaks on "My Last Days as Roy Rogers: Life in a Small Southern Town During the Last Polio Summer"; Oct 8, Nimrod Frazer speaks on "WW1 Fighters-Rainbow Division"; Oct 15, Jim Day and Norman McMillan's theme is "Coal Mining in Alabama"; Oct 29, "Alabama's Monuments Man: Capt. Robert K Posey and the Quest for *The Mystic Lamb*." See www.bbcomerlibrary.net for more details.

Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m., Photography Competition and Awards Reception. Isabel Anderson Comer Museum.

Sept. 16, 6 p.m., ARC Art Auction. Isabel Anderson Comer Museum. Preview begins at 5 p.m.

Oct. 23, 6:30 p.m., Clay Greer will be exhibiting his art. Isabel Anderson Comer Museum . Artist Reception.