

Alabaster

VOLUME I NUMBER 1

FEBRUARY 2013

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BUT
NEVER!

(SWISH)

Alabaster

A Word from the Editor & Publisher, Ted Vodde



Welcome to this premiere issue of the newly independent Alabaster Newsletter.

If the newsletter looks somewhat familiar, it's because for the past 10 years I've produced the monthly newsletter for the city.

Over this time I've enjoyed working with city officials helping them get the word out about the many fine public programs they offer, and we are happy to continue to inform the citizens of Alabaster about the news of the city and the details of their public programs the city offers.

After 10 years the city decided to explore alternate directions for the newsletter, so after much prayerful consideration I thought I'd do the same.

What does this mean? It means that the issue you hold in your hands is 100% funded by our wonderful advertisers.

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become like family, and we're happy to visit with them and help them successfully market their goods and services to our citizens. We look forward to working with them in the future to help them continue with their success.

As we look ahead, we pledge to continue to provide you with great stories and photography about what's going on the city.

That said, we're always open to your story suggestions, and I urge you to email me at tedvodde@gmail.com with any story ideas you may have.

We're kicking off a new website that is a companion to the newsletter - www.alabasternewsletter.com Each issue will be posted on the web site each month to give our advertisers added exposure on the web. We look forward to growing the web site and its capabilities over time to be a great companion to our publication.

That logo you see down in the corner is our company Mindstream Media, LLC, which was created to present you with the newsletter. We have relationships with a talented crew of graphic artists, writers, and photographers that excel in their craft and have had a key role in bringing you the newsletter for the past 10 years.

In this premiere issue, we're proud to lead off with a great story about the Thompson Warrior Basketball team and the hard work and training of these dedicated young men.

We also have our profiles of the city's teachers of the year. We'll also be keeping you up to date on the progress of the conversion to a city school system and all that entails.

The soccer season kicks off too, and you can read about it in this issue.

You'll find a profile of a new business that has located in our city, Legacy Credit Union. They have built a beautiful new building over at the Colonial Promenade South next to Dairy Queen. I urge you to stop by and visit with them. They're nice folks.

South City Theatre is featuring "Proof," a Pulitzer Prize winning play, during February.

You'll find the story in this issue. If you haven't seen one of their fine productions, please take the time to do it. These talented actors work very hard to bring quality productions to our area and have won statewide awards in the process.

It wouldn't be February without the Arbor Day Tree Giveaway. It's held at Veterans Park on February 23rd this year. It's always very popular. The Parks & Rec Dept. does a great job with this event each year.

Last but certainly not least, it's time for Valentine's Day.

There's a lot going on! Have fun! See you next month.....

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The Alabaster Newsletter Published Monthly Editor & Publisher: Ted Vodde
Contributors: John Brackin, Glenda Jones , Eric Starling, Danny Doyle & Dawn South
We welcome your comments, suggestions & story ideas. Call 620-5505 & e-mail at tedvodde@gmail.com

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TEACHERS OF THE YEAR HONORED

The Shelby County School System recently honored its most outstanding teachers of the year at an awards reception held at Oak Mountain High School. The reception was held Monday, Dec. 3 in recognition of the county's 40 Teacher of the Year recipients. It was sponsored by the Greater Shelby County Education Foundation.

From among this year's 40 school Teacher of the Year honorees, three overall winners were selected for the three different grade levels. This year's top winners were Ginger Aaron-Bush, Valley Elementary School; Virginia Lynn McLemore Cook, Montevallo Middle School; and Brian Copes, Calera High School.

The teachers honored from Alabaster schools included Jannel A. Clark, Creek View Elementary; Zipporah Leah Wilson, Meadow View Elementary; Sharon Powell, Thompson Intermediate School; Meagan Durock, Thompson Sixth-Grade Center; Ruth Byrd Ettinger, Thompson Middle School; and Chris Walker, Thompson High School.

Clark is a third-grade teacher who's been at Creek View for eight years. She's the third-grade PTO representative and a member of the Safety Committee. In her nomination essay, Clark said that she always wanted to be a teacher.

"Ever since I can remember, I always wanted to be a

teacher," Clark wrote. "As a little girl, I would line my dolls up along the wall in my bedroom to play school."

Part of Clark's teaching philosophy is to make the classroom a welcoming place for kids.

"Teachers need to provide a safe, comfortable, and sharing environment. The learning atmosphere should allow students to feel free to take risks and make mistakes," Clark wrote.

Wilson teaches third-grade special education at Meadow View. She's currently a School Leadership Team member, School Improvement Team member, and facilitator for the Culture/Hospitality

Committee. In her nomination essay, Wilson expressed her enthusiasm for working in special education.

"It is one of the most rewarding and selfless professions. Every day I wake up with new expectations for my kids. I view them as individuals, but I treat them and hold them accountable just as I do their typical peers. Every day is a rewarding challenge," Wilson wrote.

Powell is a fourth-grade teacher at Thompson Intermediate, where she's taught for the past nine years. She chairs the Parenting Day Committee and is a member of the Hospitality

(CON'T ON PAGE 21)

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FEATURE STORY

NET!



This year's Varsity Boys Basketball team at Thompson High School is in the midst of one of its best seasons in years. Currently sitting at 21-2 and sporting a No. 5 ranking in Class 6A, the Warriors are proving that hard work pays off.

"It's been a fun year so far," said Head Coach Patrick Davis. "We've got a good group of guys that have really bought into what we're doing. We've got some good senior leadership. We start four seniors and have seven seniors on the team that have been in the program and understand what we're trying to do and have really worked at getting better."

In December, the team captured its third-straight Shelby County basketball tournament title with a 51-41 victory over Shelby County. The team also beat Pelham 51-49 in a thrilling OT game on Dec. 7.

According to Davis, the team plays an exciting, pressure-oriented style of defense that doesn't allow opponents to get comfortable. Beyond that, he says that the players have demonstrated great character all throughout the season.

"They're just really unselfish, and they've embraced that from the very beginning of the year," said Davis. "They really share the ball. They don't care who scores. They just care about getting a win, so it's been fun to see them embrace that as the year's gone on."

The Warriors are currently undefeated in Area competition and are hoping to secure the top seed for the Area Tournament. The first round of the Area Tournament is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 8.

"It's a four-team Area. If you win your regular-season Area, not only are you the one-seed for the Area Tournament but you get to host the tournament. Then the top two teams out of the Area Tournament go on to the playoffs," said Davis.

The success of this year's team has inspired great support among the Warrior fans. The students have turned out in droves, creating a fun and energetic home-court atmosphere.

"Our student section is known throughout Birmingham as being one of the best student sections in the state. They take a lot of pride in that," said Davis.

On Dec. 14, the team was able to inspire support beyond the basketball court as well, as it hosted its annual Autism Awareness Night. This year's efforts raised over \$3,800 for Mitchell's Place, which is an autism support organization in Birmingham.

This year's starting five for the Warriors are Rashad Strother (sophomore point guard), Marcus Lewis (senior guard), Caleb Johnson (senior guard), Duke Thomas (senior forward), and DeAndre Gamble (senior forward).

They play at home on Friday, February 1 against Calera. The Boys Varsity is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. For more information, go to THSBasketball.com.



THE NEW YEAR PRESENTS NEW OPPORTUNITIES

By Senator Cam Ward

Every New Year presents challenges and opportunities. As a people we invariably take stock of the accomplishments and setbacks of the previous year, and take the time to count the many blessings we have, including living in the greatest state in the greatest nation on God's green earth.

As legislators, our minds turn to the yearly drama presented to us by the upcoming Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature. As a legislator, I begin my year thinking of how we can help improve the lives of Alabama's citizens. Can we help people susceptible to fraud and abuse? Can we make our roads and high-

ways safer? Can we make courts more efficient and cost effective? Can we shrink state government and reform or repeal outmoded and outdated business regulations - freeing up capital and putting people to work?

I believe we can. Representative Paul DeMarco, my counterpart in the House Judiciary Committee, and I have already pre-filed a bill to make Elder Abuse a crime in our state. Abuse, neglect and defrauding of our senior citizens is a serious problem, and it deserves its own category in our legal canons to let people know we will not stand for that sort of thing in Alabama. I also plan to introduce a bill to crack down on unlicensed driv-

ers - the amount of damage done by, and the amount of money lost by the state because of this problem approaches the ridiculous.

There are also some very systemic changes we need to make in state government. We also need to work to find common sense, conservative ways to reduce the size of The General Fund Budget. Currently, Medicaid and Corrections make up 65% of our state's non-education spending. At current growth rates and projections these two departments will gobble up our entire budget. That is unsustainable, and I hope we can find the political will to tackle these tough problems.

I plan to continue my work as Chairman of The Senate Energy Committee to find new and creative ways we can encourage innovation

in the energy sector in our state. One area of energy efficiency is to reduce the size of our state automobile fleet.

While much of my agenda is pro-active, I want to assure the people that I am also here as a bulwark against bad legislation. I will not allow the dilution of our 2nd Amendment rights through ill-conceived gun control legislation. Public safety is important but piling more laws on top of laws that are already not enforced is not the answer.

The promise of the New Year, and a new legislative session is upon us - I plan to make the most of both in 2013, and I hope you do, too!

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Alabaster PROFILE

ERIC STARLING

Local photographer Eric Starling is well known for shooting Thompson High School sporting events, but some may not know that for the past six

time with each of the schools and the players, documenting their time in the Birmingham area as well as the bowl game itself."

Starling's experience



Eric Starling also works as a photographer for ESPN. He recently took photos for them at the BBVA Compass Bowl

years he's also covered the college football bowl game in Birmingham.

Working with the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame and ESPN Regional, Starling has provided photos of the two collegiate teams attending events throughout the week of the game.

"I've done that all but the first year, so six years between the PapaJohns.com Bowl and the BBVA Bowl," said Starling. "It's just a really neat experience to spend

shooting sports actually dates back to his college days, when he worked part-time for a newspaper in Cleveland, Tenn. He started off covering Friday night football, but the job eventually gave him an opportunity to shoot college sports as well.

"While I was there, I did a lot of UT football games, UT-Chattanooga basketball, and UT basketball as well with Pat Summit. This was back in the days when Wade Houston was coaching up there," said Starling.

Starling said he was able to shoot UT-Chattanooga football games when future NFL great Terrell Owens was there. He also got to shoot the national championship game in 1991 between Georgia Tech and Nebraska.

"I spent a whole week in Florida with the Georgia Tech team shooting them and the events they did," said Starling. "For me that was big time back then."

These days Starling's photography has grown to include much more than just sporting events. He contributes regularly to the Alabaster Newsletter and also provides photography for special events and portraits. That might mean a small family get-together or even a large wedding.

"Basically I do senior portraits, family portraits, event photography, weddings, just about anything that you might want documented," said Starling.

In addition to his photography, Starling also works as a district operations manager for H&R Block, where he's now in his 20th year. He and his wife Ellen have three children, Kayla, Candace, and



Eric Starling is a Photographer for the Alabaster Newsletter

Gregory. Kayla and Candace both graduated from Thompson, while Gregory is currently a freshman at Thompson. Starling said he often includes his family in some of his photography assignments.

"My son attends all the sporting events with me and my daughters actually shoot for me when I need extra photographers," he said.

For more information about Starling's photography, visit him online at Starling-photography.com.



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BUSINESS PROFILE

LEGACY COMMUNITY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

For folks who are interested in joining a credit union, now is the perfect time to get started. The first week of February, Legacy Community Federal Credit Union will be opening a new branch in Alabaster at the Colonial Promenade North.

Legacy Credit Union isn't a traditional bank, but rather a not-for-profit financial institution that's actually owned by its members. Because of the unique structure, it's able to provide members with attractive rates on loans and other financial services.

"Because we're a not-for-profit financial institution, our earnings are returned to our members in the form of increased services, high dividend rates, low loan rates, and reduced fees for services," said Director of Marketing and Business Development Michelle Arena.

Like a bank, Legacy provides the full spectrum of financial products, ranging from auto, personal and mortgage loans to



The Legacy Community Federal Credit Union will be opening its new branch in Alabaster at the Colonial Promenade North the first week in February.

credit cards, CDs and checking accounts. Legacy's Premier Checking, for example, is a free checking account that pays monthly dividends and refunds ATM fees automatically up to \$20 a month. They also offer free mobile banking and online bill pay.

"Our Premier Checking is one of the best around," said Arena. "We also have two different credit cards to meet members' needs with no annual fees, low rates and no fee balance transfers."

Legacy Credit Union, which is headquartered in Birmingham, has been serving Birmingham residents since 1955. It originally opened as University Credit Union to serve mem-

bers of the UAB community and has since grown to include residents in seven counties across the Greater Birmingham Metropolitan area. In 2006, it changed its name to Legacy Community Federal Credit Union.

Membership is open to anyone who lives, works, worships, or attends school in one of the following area counties: Jefferson, Shelby, Blount, St. Clair, Walker, Chilton, and Bibb. The process to join simply requires opening a \$5 share (savings) account, which can be done online at www.legacycreditunion.com.

"Once you're a member, you're eligible to apply for any of our products and services. Our Switch Kit makes it simple to move to Legacy from your current financial institution. Complete one form and we'll switch all of your automatic drafts for you," said Arena.

At the end of February, Legacy will offer their "Swap & Drop" 1.9 percent APR deal for qualifying



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members who refinance their current loan from another lender or get a new loan at Legacy. That promotion will run through April 30.

The new Legacy branch will be located at the Colonial Promenade shopping center beside Dairy Queen. A grand opening is being scheduled for sometime later in the spring. For more information, go to Legacycreditunion.com.

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Alabaster THS SOCCER SEASON KICKS OFF

The Thompson High School Soccer programs are kicking things off this year with a stadium cleanup on Saturday, Jan. 26, and a Referee Clinic on Saturday, Feb. 2.

"We're doing the stadium cleanup on Jan. 26, where all the parents go and clean the bathrooms and make sure the field's ready for the soccer season," said THS Soccer Boosters President Amy Mizell.

The Stadium Cleanup is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. The following week, the Referee Clinic is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m.

"We do a clinic for the referees so they can get their hours in, and our team also

gets a little bit of practice," said Mizell, whose son Andrew is a senior on the Varsity Boys team.

The 2013 team schedules are posted on the Thompson High School website, along with a link to the THS Soccer Boosters website. The high school has four separate teams including the Boys Varsity and Junior Varsity teams and the Girls Varsity and Junior Varsity.

The Boys Varsity opens the season at Shades Valley on Feb. 12 at 7 p.m. It plays its first home game against Brewbaker Tech on Feb. 14 at 6 p.m. The JV Boys open their season on Feb. 11 on the road to take on Chelsea at 5 p.m. They then head to

Shades Valley the next day for a 5 p.m. contest.

The Girls Varsity opens on Feb. 12 with a home game versus Hoover at 7 p.m. The JV Girls kick things off that day at 5 p.m. against the Hoover JV.

According to Mizell, the Soccer Boosters still have sponsorship opportunities available for the season. They have very affordable rates for both stadium banners and the team program, which will be distributed at the games.

"We'll have a program that we'll give out free at every game," she said.



"It'll have the schedule in it."

Interested businesses can contact the Boosters by email at Thompson.soccer@gmail.com.

The THS Soccer

Boosters encourage folks to come out and support the Warriors this season. Games are held at Larry Simmons Stadium, and ticket prices are very affordable.

"It is \$5 for adults," said Mizell. "Youth soccer players, if they wear their jerseys, get in for free."

There will be several good home games in March, and on April 19, Pelham comes to town for a big rivalry game. The JV Boys play at 4:30 that day, followed by the Girls Varsity at 6 p.m. and the Boys Varsity at 7:30 p.m.

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FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

Every Wednesday
10:15 am Outreach Stories at area daycares.
3:30 pm Tunes & Tales for all ages in the meeting room

1st Thursday 1:00 pm Friends of Library Bookmenders
Every Friday 10:30 am Toddler Tales (2s, 3s) 10:30 in the meeting room.

FEBRUARY ADULT PROGRAMS

Adult Computer Classes Call or come by to sign up. 664-6822

Wednesday, February 6, 2013. 10 am - Microsoft Word I

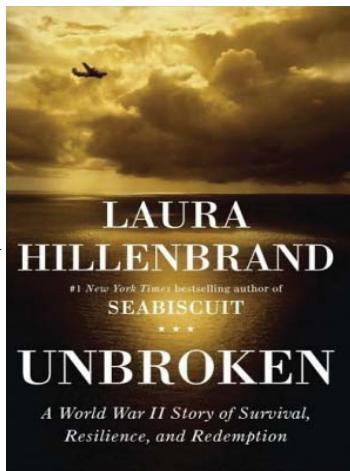
Wednesday, February 20, 2013. 10 am - Microsoft Word II

Library Book Group - Thursday, February 21, 2013. 7 pm

- Join us in our discussion of Unbroken by Lauren Hillenbrand. Relates the story of a U.S. airman who survived when his bomber crashed into the sea during World War II, spent forty-seven days adrift in the ocean before being rescued by the Japanese Navy, and was held as a prisoner until the end of the war. Program takes place in the meeting room.

Free AARP Tax Help for Seniors (February through early April).

Available by appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Call or come by the Albert L. Scott Library to sign up. 664-6822.



Positive Maturity Resume Workshop - Wednesday, February 13, 2013. 10 am - 12 noon.

Positive Maturity Interviewing Skills Workshop - Wednesday, February 27, 2013. 10 am - 12 noon.

FEBRUARY KIDS ACTIVITIES

Monday, February 4, 11, 18, 25 American Sign Language Basics 6:15pm-7:15pm Families and individuals can attend this four (4) week workshop with expert Darrell Revel. The ASL training for people aged 8 years old and older will focus on learning beginning manual communication skills: the manual alphabet, counting, vocabulary, frequently used phrases, and the grammatical use of 'classifiers.' It will also include an overview of deaf culture and etiquette. All instructional materials will be provided. Class is limited to 25 individuals. Sign up and attendance at all four sessions are required. Meets in the meeting room.

Tuesday, February 5 Lego League NEW TIME! 6:00pm-6:45pm Kids of all ages can play with Legos of all sizes! Meets in the meeting room. Children 6 years old and younger must be with an adult.

Friday, February 8 American Girls Club 4:00pm Girls 7 years old and older can mark African American History Month and learn about Addy's World by acting in a reader's theatre. No memorizing, we'll have scripts to read. Come with or without a doll, and your family and friends can come be in the audience! Please sign up. Meets in the meeting room.

Monday, February 11 Valentine's Craft 4:00pm Kids 5 years old and older can sign up to make a card for someone special on Valentine's Day. Meets in the meeting room. Children 6 years old and younger must be with an adult.

Tuesday, February 12 The BIG Event: Good-Times Traveling Theatre with Safiya Johnson 6:15pm "That Trickster Brer Rabbit and His Mischievous Buddies" will be presented for everyone who loves folktales. Meets in the meeting room. Children 6 years old and younger must be with an adult.

Tuesday, February 19 Alabaster Book Blasters Keats 6:00pm Session 2 of our book club is called Goody for Goggles! We'll be reading and discussing the Ezra Jack Keats book Goggles and making a craft inspired by the story. Kids 6 years old to 10 years old can sign up. Meets in the meeting room. Children who are 6 years old must be with an adult.

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Be a Friend! The Friends is a group of dedicated booklovers that wants everyone to know the benefits the library offers, and how members can increase its effectiveness.

We have occasional fundraisers such as semi-annual book sales, and promotions in cooperation with local merchants to raise funds for special books and activities such as the Summer Reading Program and the Storyline for Children.

We also maintain several areas at the library where books can be purchased at bargain prices. These are books that have been donated, so here's an option for those books you no longer want in your private library.

For as little as \$10 a year you can be a Friend and support the library. There are several levels of membership, and always opportunities for a few hours of volunteering.

Be a Friend! Application forms are available at the Library or at www.cityofalabaster.com/friends-of-the-library/

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CHESS TOURNAMENT MARCH 2

Alabaster's young chess enthusiasts can look forward to another chess tournament this spring, as Caesar Chess has announced plans for the fifth annual Alabaster Scholastic Chess Tournament. This year's tournament will be held on Saturday, March 2, at Thompson Intermediate School.

The tournament is organized by Caesar Lawrence, the president and director of Caesar Chess. Caesar Chess produces scholastic chess tournaments all around the state.

According to Lawrence, the Alabaster Scholastic Chess Tournament is open to kids in grades K-12. He also emphasizes that it's not strictly for public school students.

"Public, private and home-school kids get to participate," said

Lawrence. "They all are eligible."

The tournament will be organized into three different sections, including two rated sections: Open (K-12), Middle (K-6) and Novice (K-5/Beginners). The Novice section is for unrated players.

"We've got the Open section for the strongest players. Anybody can play at that one," said Lawrence.

Caesar Chess hosts tournaments every few weeks throughout the year to make sure that Alabama kids have the opportunity to practice the "royal game."

"I want to give kids a chance to get some experience," said Lawrence.

Other tournament locations this winter include the University of Alabama at Huntsville (North Alabama Open, Jan. 26), Oak Mountain Intermediate School (Super Bowl

Scholastic, Feb. 2), Auburn University at Montgomery (Queen of Hearts, Feb. 16-17), and Maxwell Air Force Base (Maxwell AFB Championship, March 9).

In addition to organizing tournaments, Lawrence also teaches chess classes to students at several schools in the area, including Thompson Intermediate School.

"I'm at three Shelby County schools. I have players at Deer Valley Elementary School in Hoover, and I'm starting two classes next week in Birmingham City Schools," said Lawrence.

Advance registration is preferred for the Alabaster Scholastic tournament. Check-in is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Trophies and medals will be presented to the top performers in each section. United States Chess Federation (USCF) and Alabama Chess



Federation (ACF) memberships are required to play in the rated sections. Concessions will be for sale onsite.

For more information, email Lawrence at CaesarChess@yahoo.com. Tournament details, including registration forms, can also be found online at www.caesarchess.com.

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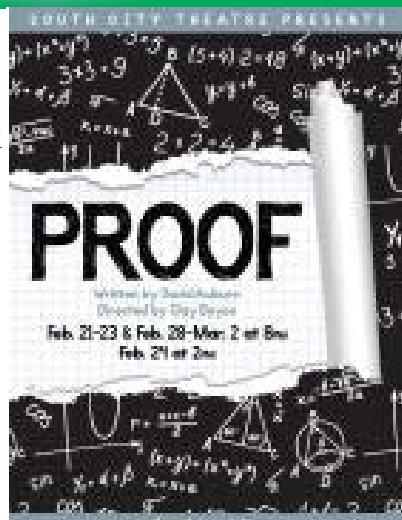
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AWARD WINNING PLAY

South City Theatre presents "Proof"
"Proof" is a 2000 play by American playwright David Auburn. Premiered Off-Broadway in May 2000, it transferred to Broadway theater in October 2000. The production closed in January 2003 after a total of 917 performances.

The play won the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and Tony Award for Best Play.

The play concerns Catherine, the daughter of Robert, a recently deceased mathematical genius in his fifties and professor at the University of Chicago, and her struggle with mathematical genius and mental illness. Catherine had cared for her father through a lengthy mental illness. Upon Robert's death, his ex-graduate student Hal discovers a paradigm-shifting proof about prime numbers in Robert's office. The title refers both to that proof and to the play's central question: Can Catherine prove the proof's authorship? Along with demonstrating the proof's authenticity, the daughter also finds herself in a relationship with 28-year-old Hal. Throughout, the play explores Catherine's fear of following in her father's footsteps,



both mathematically and mentally and her desperate attempts to stay in control.

Evening Time: Feb 21, 8pm to Feb 23, 8pm

Feb 28, 8pm to Mar 2, 8pm

Matinee Time: Feb 24, 2 pm

Performances are at 8 pm. Tickets are \$15. Student, senior and groups of 10 or more are \$12.

The new South City Theatre is located on County Road 26 approximately 3.5 miles past the Camp Branch Civic center. To get there, take Highway 31 south and simply turn left at County Road 26. The theatre will be on the right.

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www.southcitytheatre.com on Twitter (@SouthCityTheatr)

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BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

Baseball/Softball Observations

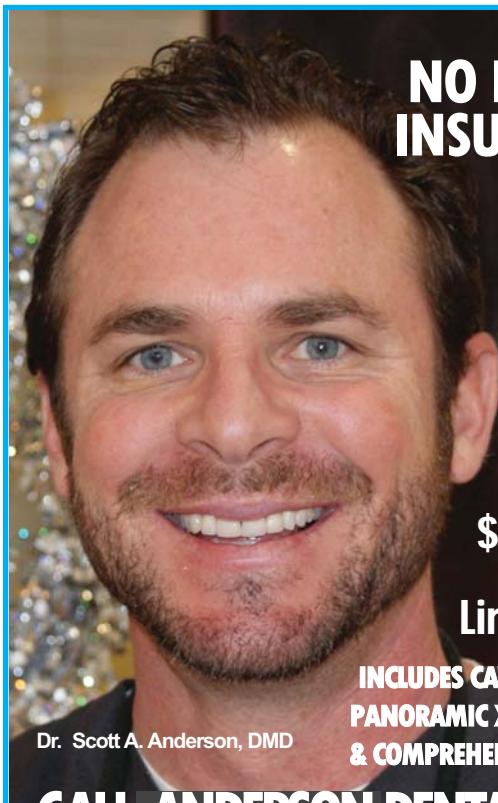
Baseball: All will be at THS Baseball Field Saturday Feb.2
 8:30am- Farm(Machine Pitch)
 10:30am- T-Ball 5, Coach Pitch and Metro
 12:30pm- Minor and Major
 Softball: All will be at Warrior Park at 1pm. Field assignments will be given out when you arrive
 Feb. 11th -16th- Uniform fittings at Buck Creek
 Feb 17th- THS Softball Clinic at THS softball field. Cost is \$25 for early registration and \$30 for walk ups. Camp will be from 1pm to 4pm Feb 25th- Fields open for practice

ARBOR DAY TREE GIVEAWAY

Arbor Day Tree Giveaway will be held Saturday, Feb. 23 at Veterans Park. Registration will begin at 8am at the maintenance shop, we will start handing out trees at 9 am.

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Soccer Observations: Observations will be held during the THS camp. All will take place at Municipal Park 3 acre field
 Feb. 4th- U6 7pm
 Feb. 5th- U8, U9 girls and U9 boys at 7pm
 Feb. 7th- U10 girls and Boys
 Feb. 8th- U11 girls and Boys
 TBA- U12 and up Girls and Boys
 Fields will open for practice on Feb. 18th



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ARBOR DAY TREE GIVEAWAY FEBRUARY 23

The City of Alabaster Parks and Recreation Department will celebrate Arbor Day this year with its annual tree giveaway on Saturday, Feb. 23. The event will begin early that morning at Veterans Park with registration starting at 8 a.m., followed by the tree giveaway at 9 a.m.

"We will hand them out until 12 noon if supplies last," said Alabaster Parks and Recreation Director Tim Hamm.

People will be given numbers in the order in which they arrive. Only City of Alabaster residents are eligible to receive the free trees.

In past years, the give-away has included an assortment of beautiful trees, ranging from the Florida flame maple and Brandywine maple to the

dynamite crape myrtle and Jane magnolia. Hamm said he expects a similar variety this year.

"We'll basically have the same order that we had last year," said Hamm.

Last year's giveaway included 170 trees, along with 400 seedlings. The idea for the giveaway is to simply encourage local residents to beautify their yards, and there's no simpler way to do that than to plant a tree.

The City of Alabaster, in fact, is one of 80 communities in Alabama that's a member of the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program. The Tree City program is organized in coordination with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. The Arbor Day Foundation itself is a

nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of planting and nurturing trees.

The Arbor Day tree giveaway will be held in the maintenance building at Veterans Park (7305 Highway 119). The maintenance building is located at the right end of the front parking lot to the left of the



walking trail. The event will be held rain or shine.

For more information, contact the Alabaster Parks and Recreation Department at 664-6840.

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TROOP 287 EARNS BRONZE AWARD

Troop 287 members Jessie Edwards, Molly Willis, Abbi Olliff, Gillian Baker, Shelby Stafford, Alyssa O'Rear, Isabelle Godsby, Abby Bowden and Emily Hill from Thompson Intermediate School; Hannah Drolet from Calera Intermediate School; Jerica Snowden and Madison Phifer, both home-schooled, recently earned the Girl Scout Bronze Award. The



Girl Scout
Shelby Stafford

girls helped a younger troop earn its Forever Green patch by going to Meadow View Elementary School weekly and teaching the girls how

to live "green." The girls also made recycle bins for the students.

The Girl Scout Bronze Award is the highest award a Girl Scout Junior can earn. This award recognizes that a Girl Scout Junior has gained the leadership and planning skills required to fol-



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Girl Scouts Jessie Edwards & Hannah Drolet

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TEACHERS OF THE YEAR HONORED

(CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

Committee. In her nomination essay, Powell said her views on education were influenced by one of her own teachers, a high school math instructor.

"He was, and still is, my favorite example of a 'teacher.' He made learning enjoyable. He helped us believe that we could learn because he believed it. Today, with my students, I find myself teaching math incorporating many of his methods and terminologies," Powell wrote. "I try to incorporate an excitement and energy with my teaching, not only in math, but with all of my subjects."

Duchock teaches English at the Sixth-Grade Center, where she's also department head, technology coordina-

tor, and a sponsor for the literary magazine. In her nomination essay, Duchock said that one of the biggest issues in education today is keeping up with technology.

"Technology is the future not only of education, but of everyday life," Duchock wrote. "Not all students have access to computers or other devices at home. Our public schools may be the only place these students have an opportunity to learn how to use applications and Internet. As educators, it is our responsibility to see that these students obtain these skills and become career-ready."

Ettinger is a seventh-grade math and pre-algebra teacher at Thompson

Middle School. She's math representative for the School Leadership Team, grade level math department chairperson, and a teacher mentor. Ettinger's teaching involves exploration activities designed to help students better understand the rules they're studying.

"I believe that true understanding comes about through discovery and exploration," Ettinger wrote. "Middle school students need to have the ability to explore and discover if we ever hope that they will be abstract thinkers and problem solvers."

Walker teaches 10th grade U.S. History at Thompson High School. He's also the department chair, an assistant ninth-grade football coach and an assistant baseball

coach. Walker was appreciative of his selection for Teacher of the Year.

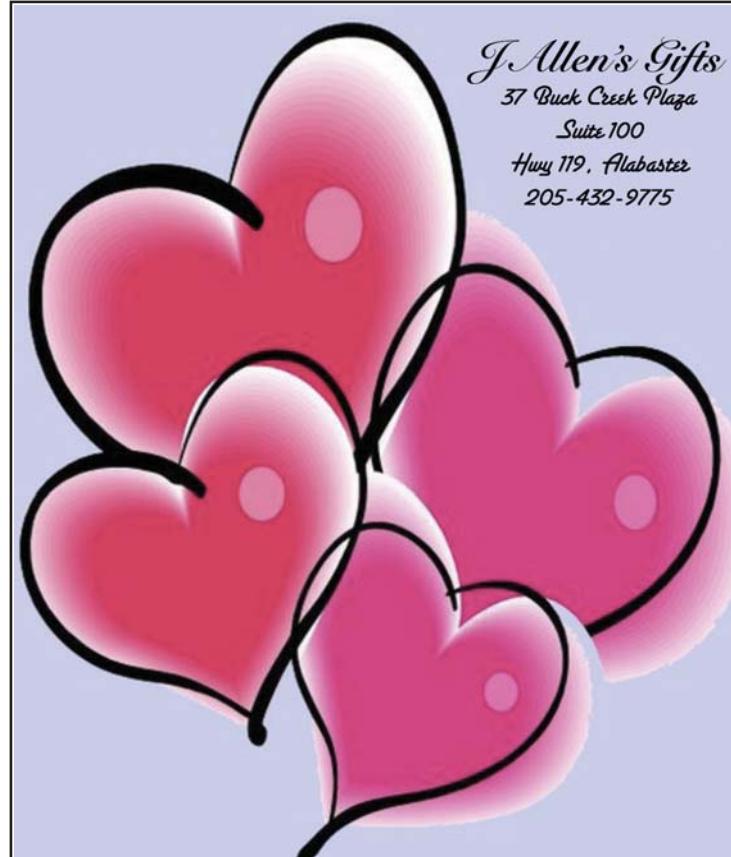
"There is no greater honor than having the teachers at THS elect me as their representative for Teacher of the Year," Walker wrote. "After the announcement was made that I won, two students ran to my classroom, and they couldn't wait to congratulate me. That was an honor."

In addition to the Teacher of the Year honorees, six teachers were recognized for earning National Board Certification, the highest level of certification a teacher can earn.

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DAY PROGRAM GETS A NEW HOME IN NEW YMCA BLDG.

Alabaster's YMCA Family Branch is putting the finishing touches on its new building, but it's not just YMCA members that will be enjoying the benefits. Thanks to an agreement with the YMCA, the DAY Program will be using the new building as well.

"We are very excited," said Kathy Miller, the executive director of the DAY Program. "It's going to be great."

The DAY Program (Developing Alabama Youth) is a longstanding youth program in Shelby County that provides educational and clinical services to at-risk students. The program will occupy the second floor of the new YMCA building.

"We'll have six class-

rooms and six counselor offices," said Miller. "In addition to that we'll have a conference room, a testing room, and a large kitchen, which will be more of a break room."

According to Miller, the plan is to be able to hold classes in the new building on Jan. 25.

"The second floor is done. They're now just finishing up the first floor, which is the Y, and the parking lot and the pool, getting a fence around the pool," said Miller.

Miller said they planned to hold a moving day for new furniture and desks on Jan. 19 with assistance from the Rotary Club. After that, they planned to spend the fol-

lowing week moving things from the old classrooms and offices.

For many years, the DAY Program was based in an old brick building near the Siluria mill site. According to Miller, the building was estimated to be around 90 years old in some parts.

"I think it was a doctor's office for many years," she said. "There was an old mill here, and I think it was a doctor's office for those mill employees."

The DAY Program serves Shelby County students who might be at risk for dropping out of school. It consists of grades 7-11. The program has been very successful in helping kids get back on track. In 2012, it celebrated its 30th year anniversary.

"We take kids who are academically behind or who have been involved with the court," said Miller. "They can be referred here, and then we try to catch them up to their grade level and send them back."

The program currently has about 60 students. Moving into the new building will allow the program to grow, possibly to as large as 90 students.

"It will allow us to serve more kids," said Miller.

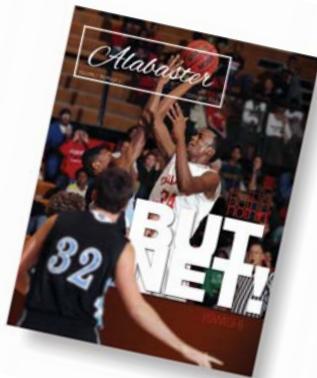
The YMCA Family Branch is located at 117 Plaza Circle in Alabaster. For more information about the DAY Program, go to thedayprogram.com.

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SENIOR ACTIVITIES FOR FEBRUARY

Day Trip to Social Circle, GA.....Thursday March 21, join us as we take a relaxing trip to historical Social Circle, GA. We will eat a southern buffet style lunch at The Blue Willow Inn Restaurant. We will travel to Covington, GA, "The Hollywood of the South". We will enjoy a walking tour of Worthington Manor, an antebellum home built in the 1950's. Following the walking tour, we will be joined by a step on guide to show us many of the beautiful antebellum homes in the City of Covington. Cost includes motor coach transportation, admission to tours and lunch: \$65 for the first 25 Alabaster senior residents and \$75 for all other Shelby County seniors. Stop by the Senior Center to reserve your spot. Space is limited!

NEW Beginner Spanish Conversation Class. Will meet from 10 am-11 am on February 20th and 27th. The class will cover basic conversational Spanish as

well as basic vocabulary. There is no charge for this class, but please call to reserve your spot!

Cooking Demo with Birmingham Bake and Cook Company on Wednesday, February 6 at 10 am. Stop by and join the fun.

Soft Pastels Workshop: Wednesday, February 13 from 12 pm-3 pm. Mary Liz Ingram teaches pastels by applying the colors in layers on a sturdy textured surface, to create a rich, vibrant piece that looks much like a painting. Cost is \$25 -supplies not included; or \$55 -supplies are included. Space is limited.

"Preserving Family Memories Through Scrapbooking" taught by C.D. McKinnon.

Ever wonder what to do with all of those shoeboxes full of pictures and "stuff" you saved? Join us for a scrapbooking crop and learn how to turn those treasured memories into beautiful scrapbooks that tell your family's story. In each class, you will learn a new tech-

nique to help you create beautiful family albums. Class will be held Monday, February 11 from 12 pm-3 pm. Bring \$5 cash to each class. You will need to bring your own pictures and supplies. Some supplies will be available to purchase.

New Drumming Circle-starting on March 5 at 10 am. Benefits of drumming-improve mood, increase circulation, low impact exercise, and creativity. You won't want to miss this class. Sign up at the Senior Center.

Crochet class- join us every Wednesday at 9 am to learn how to crochet; or, if you are experienced, stop by and fellowship with friends.

Storytelling/Writing Class-join us to share your own ideas and start the process of documenting "your story".

Mary DeLoach will be leading this class on February 19th at 10 am. Stop by and share your ideas.

Free Blood Pressure Checks on Tuesday, February 12th at 9:30 am with Comfort Care Hospice.

Special Thanks to New Beacon Hospice for their support and donations at the Annual Christmas Dance and the Neil Diamond Show.

You won't want to miss all the activities at the senior center:

Men's Social Group- 1st Monday of each mo. 9 am
Wii Bowling -Tues. 12 pm
Zumba Gold (exercise)-Wednesdays 1 pm

Beginner/Inter Line dancing - Thursdays 9:30 am
Beginner Line Dancing - Thursdays 10:30 am
Tempo exercise - Fri. 10 am
Zumba Gold Toning-Fridays 1-2 pm

Bridge- Thursdays 12-3 pm
Rook- Wednesdays 9:00 am
Mexican Train Dominoes-Wednesdays 10 am

Timeless Treasures (singing) - Monday 10 am
For more information concerning senior programs, please contact Alabaster Senior Center at 663-1307 or

awalters@cityofalabaster.com

ALABASTER-PELHAM ROTARY CLUB

Meets weekly on Thursdays at noon in Suite 100, Physicians Building, Shelby Baptist Medical Center, 1000 1st Street North, Alabaster. If you would like to learn more about Rotary, please join us for lunch to see our involvement in the community and see what Rotary International is doing worldwide. For any questions or information contact us at 982-2664 or stop by on any Thursday.



" My first love was a little girl with glasses. I don't know what happened to her but hey, I still love glasses! Come see us! We've got the best selection of eyewear anywhere. Happy Valentine's Day!!"

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Our Vision

Our vision is to be a Spirit-filled community, always seeking a closer and authentic connection to God and each other and to live out our faith in Christ.



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Christian Education 9:30 am

Join us for meaningful worship, engaging education and a welcoming community.

858 Kent Dairy Road, Alabaster
www.holyspirit-al.org **205-621-3418**

February, 2013

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RESIDENT OR BOXHOLDER OR POSTAL PATRON

Calendar of Events

Feb. 4 City Council Meeting 7 pm Annex
 Feb. 6 Municipal Court 9 am & 2 pm Annex
 Feb. 7 Public Safety Committee 6pm Annex
 Feb.11 Water Board 7 pm Annex
 Parks & Rec Bldg. (The Depot)
 Feb.12 Housing & Abatement Board 5:00pm Annex
 Feb.13 Municipal Court 9 am & 2 pm Annex*
 Feb. 14 Finance Committee 5:30 pm City Svcs. Bldg.
 Feb.18 City Council Meeting 7 pm Annex
 Feb.19 Driving School 7 pm Annex
 Feb.21 Public Works Committee 5 pm Annex
 Economic Development Committee 5:30 pm
 Feb. 25 Board of Adjustments 6:30 pm Senior Center
 Feb.26 Planning & Zoning 7 pm Annex
 Feb.27 Municipal Court 9 am & 2 pm Annex
 Sewer Committee 6 pm City Hall

Municipal Annex located behind City Hall at 127 1st Street SW just across the RR track. The City Services Building is located in the Gardner House just down from the Depot.

~ February 2013 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	1	2
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

CITY DEPARTMENT PHONE NUMBERS • Non-emergency Police matters 663-7401 • Animal Control 664-6761
 • Personnel Dept 664-6838 • Code Enforcement 664-5907 • Revenue/Business License Dept 664-6844
 • Alabaster Water Board 663-6155 • Garbage/recycling bins 664-6800 • Alabaster Parks & Recreation 664-6840



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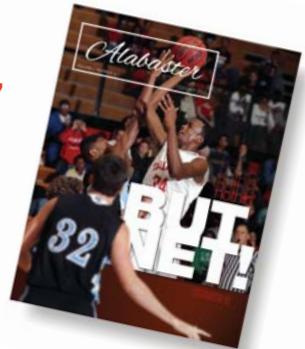
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