

LAGNIAPPE WEEKLY

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GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

50 years ago, the USS Alabama welcomed its first guests at Battleship Memorial Park after a short but storied WWII commission manned by sailors including Bob Miller (pictured). Today, in a special Independence Day feature, learn 50 facts for the 50 years the Alabama has served as the sentinel of Mobile Bay.

By Tommy Hicks

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Ashley Trice
Co-publisher/Editor
atrice@lagniappemobile.com

Rob Holbert
Co-publisher/Managing Editor
rolbert@lagniappemobile.com

Steve Hall
Marketing/Sales Director
shall@lagniappemobile.com

Gabriel Tynes
Assistant Managing Editor
gabe@lagniappemobile.com

Dale Liesch
Reporter
dale@lagniappemobile.com

Jason Johnson
Reporter
jason@lagniappemobile.com

Eric Mann
Reporter
eric@lagniappemobile.com

Kevin Lee
Associate Editor/Arts Editor
klee@lagniappemobile.com

Andy MacDonald
Cuisine Editor
fatmansqueeze@comcast.net

Stephen Centanni
Music Editor
scentanni@lagniappemobile.com

J. Mark Bryant
Sports Writer
sports@lagniappemobile.com

Stephanie Poe
Copy Editor

Daniel Anderson
Chief Photographer
dan@danandersonphoto.com

Laura Rasmussen
Art Director
www.laurarasmussen.com

Brooke Mathis
Advertising Sales Executive
brooke@lagniappemobile.com

Beth Williams
Advertising Sales Executive
bwilliams@lagniappemobile.com

Misty Groh
Advertising Sales Executive
misty@lagniappemobile.com

Kelly Woods
Advertising Sales Executive
kelly@lagniappemobile.com

Melissa Schwarz
Editorial Assistant
events@lagniappemobile.com

Mary Burts
Distribution Manager
delivery@lagniappemobile.com

Contributors:
Asia Frey • Brian Holbert
Tommy Hicks • Ron Sivak
Jeff Poor • Ken Robinson
Holden Barnett

Cover: Bob Miller by Dan Anderson

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Finally stopped resisting

In 2008, my high school class of 1958 — Washington-Lee High School in Arlington, Virginia — held its 50th reunion. We had grown up living on land that, as my father would say, “Mosby and his raiders rode.”

Most of us had walked the many Civil War battlefields that were only a few hours’ drive away. We studied Civil War history in our Virginia history and government textbook, “Cavalier Commonwealth.”

This book was so biased that according to our government teacher, Mr. Smith, when you opened it Robert E. Lee “jumped out on Traveler and Dixie played.” The Civil War was referred to as “Virginia’s defense against invasion” and there were illustrations of “happy darkies” playing music and dancing.

Both our Virginia government and Virginia history teachers were World War II veterans and poked holes in some of the statements in the text book.

At our reunion, we spoke of what we thought was our most memorable moment. Was it Wayne Ballard kicking the last-minute field goal that won the Thanksgiving Day football game against our rival George Washington High School from Alexandria? Was it having 17 National Merit semi-finalists? No, it was the day we defied the governor of Virginia.

In January 1958, the new governor of Virginia, Lindsey Almond, stated that he would fight desegregation of public schools with “massive resistance.” He then proceeded to go around to selected high schools to proclaim, “There will be no forced integration in Virginia.” One of the high schools was Washington-Lee.

He chose to speak in our auditorium, and because it would only hold a limited number of students, only the 700-plus members of our senior class attended. As Gov. Almond got going with his “massive resistance” speech, slowly students in the back of the auditorium started walking out. Those in the front just looked on without any emotion. When he finished there were no cheers or clapping. This was not what he expected. The next year, schools in Arlington County were desegregated.

In 1963, governors around the south chose to place the Confederate battle flag on their state capitol buildings, again as a sign of “massive resistance” to the Civil Rights Movement. This is the history of the battle flag on state capitols and state capitol grounds. It has nothing to do with heritage, but everything to do with denying equality.

Bea Ishler,
Mobile

Don’t kick the can on flag

The Confederacy had basically three national flags. The first, the Stars and Bars, was adopted by the government of the Confederacy on March 4, 1861. As it resembled the flag of the United States, especially in battlefield conditions, it was replaced by the “Stainless Banner” on May 1, 1863.

That flag had the battle flag where the stars are located on the American flag. Otherwise the flag was white, and was also known as the second national flag of the Confederacy. However, on the battlefield it looked like a flag of surrender, so it was replaced on March 4, 1865, with the same design, but with a wide vertical red stripe opposite its battle flag. That was the third national flag of the Confederacy. However, the war was nearly over at that point.

Lee surrendered at Appomattox (Court House, Virginia) on April 9, and Mobile fell to federal forces three days later. In a raid that began March 22, Union forces took the Selma Arsenal on April 2 and 10 days later occupied Montgomery — the same day that Mobile fell.

During March and April, as the Confederacy was rapidly collapsing, did Mobile ever use the latest version of a national flag? I can find no credible reference to its having done so, and considering all that was happening, that is not surprising.

Despite the fact of its brief tenure as the Confederacy’s official flag, and its unlikely use in Mobile, it is one of the six flags that appears on our city’s seal today. As it is displayed, it looks very much like the now-controversial Confederate battle flag, which it replaced.

Flags are symbols, but of what? For many, remembering the Civil Rights struggle when the battle flag was the

emblem of violent resistance and racism. It has become a symbol that divides us and weakens the nation as we face today’s challenges here and abroad. Fr. Abram Ryan, the poet-priest of the Confederacy and pastor of St. Mary’s here in Mobile in the late 1870s, was famous for his poems, especially “The Conquered Banner,” which concludes with his directions for the treatment of the battle flag:

Furl that banner, softly, slowly!
Treat it gently—it is holy—
For it droops above the dead.
Touch it not—unfold it never ...

But times change and early in the 21st century, responding to objections from the African-American community and others, the city decided to replace the battle flag. A committee was assembled to discuss what should replace it. Within a few minutes we agreed that the first national flag, which had flown over the city for more than three years during the first years of the conflict, should be used. We thought the solution was obvious, but we were subsequently overruled by the city government.

I imagine it bowed to the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the United Daughters of the Confederacy and other groups wishing to keep the battle flag in some form. So Mobile kicked the can down the road and now we find it at our feet again.

If it is time for South Carolina to remove the battle flag, it is surely time for us to remove its look-alike replacement on our city’s official emblem.

Mike Thomason,
Mobile

POLICE DISPATCH

BY JASON JOHNSON/REPORTER | jason@lagniappemobile.com

Police capture man suspected of robbery, rape at local hotel

In line with a disturbing pattern of violent crime along the Interstate 65 service roads, a woman reported being robbed and sexually assaulted at knife point on June 7 at the Residence Inn in Mobile.

Authorities say the victim was assaulted at 4:40 a.m., when an unknown male armed with a knife sexually assaulted her and demanded cash. This week, authorities finally caught up with the man believed to have committed the crimes.

According to the Mobile Police Department, 23-year-old Gabriel O’Brien Neal was arrested in connection to the assault on Saturday, June 27. Other than the time of the arrest — 10:54 p.m. — no details were given about the suspect’s capture or the investigation that led authorities to him.

Neal was charged with first degree rape, first degree sodomy and first degree robbery related to the June 7 incident. However, he has been sought in connection to other crimes since last August.

Based on the records of the Mobile Metro Jail, those charges included theft of property, sodomy, robbery and unlawful imprisonment.

Neal has a criminal history dating back to 2012 that includes marijuana and drug paraphernalia charges in addition to minor traffic offenses.

Street narcotics team recovers ecstasy, codeine, PCP in recent drug arrests

Thousands of dollars worth of drugs were confiscated and taken off the street following a significant bust by the Mobile County Street Enforcement Narcotics Team (MCSSENT) last Thursday.

On June 25, MCSSENT concluded a narcotics investigation with the execution of a search warrant at a residence in the 5900 block of Sperry Road in Mobile. There police seized 358 ecstasy pills, several ounces of codeine syrup, cocaine, large quantities of marijuana, phencyclidine (PCP) and at least two firearms — one of which

was characterized by authorities as an assault rifle.

Three individuals were arrested at the residence in connection with the raid. As a result, Brandon Terrell Horn, 22; Keylon DeAnthony Gardner, 24; and Ray Anthony Parker, 24, were each arrested on six charges related to drug trafficking.

Of the three, Parker was the only one with a significant criminal history, with prior charges for possession of controlled substances and marijuana and trafficking cocaine.

As of Tuesday, all three were still being held at the Mobile County Metro Jail.

Woman shot in face at Midtown stoplight

A late-night shooting has left some Midtown residents concerned after a woman was shot in the face at a stoplight after being confronted by four men at an intersection.

According to police, the incident happened

at about 1:34 a.m. on June 28 at the intersection of Dauphin and Monterey streets. Police said the victim was sitting at a red light in her car when four unknown male subjects approached her vehicle on foot.

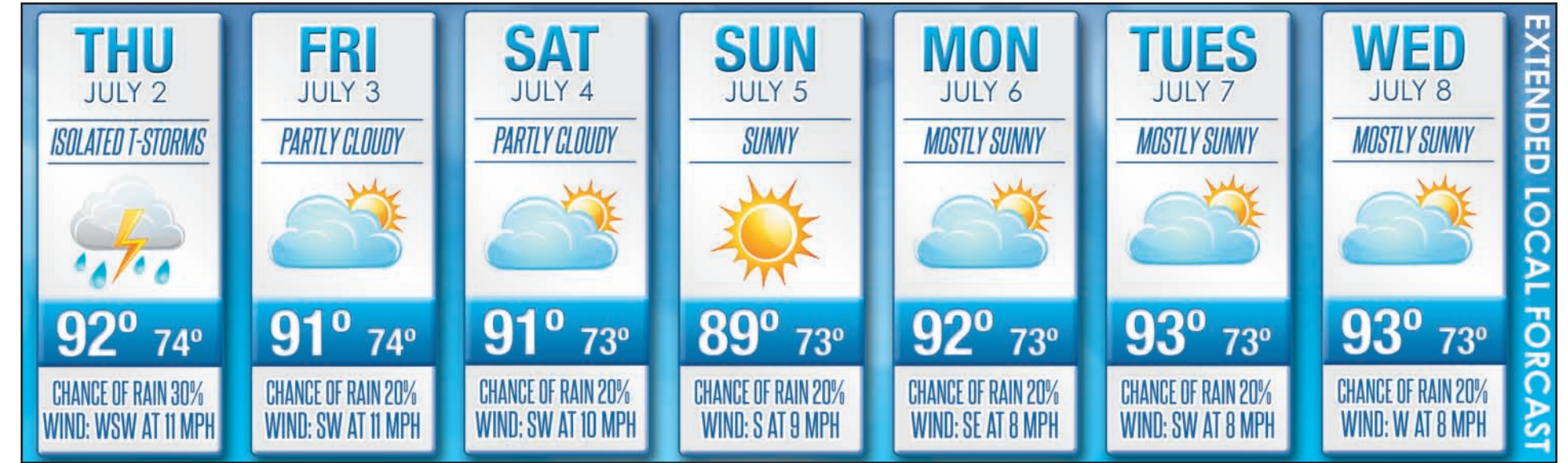
One of the subjects brandished a weapon and fired it through her window, striking her in the face.

Despite her injuries, the victim was able to drive herself to the Mobile Infirmary, where the Mobile Police Department was alerted to the incident.

According police reports, the 26-year-old victim has since lost the use of one eye, but was able to give authorities a brief description.

The suspects, described by investigators as black males in their early 20s, remain at large.

Anyone with information in this case is asked to call Mobile Police at 251-208-7211 or CrimeStoppers at 251-208-7000, or text Mobile Police Intel at CRIMES (274637) and include the keyword CRIME411.



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INSPIRED WORK

Mobile Police Explorers revamped after investigation

BY LAGNIAPPE STAFF

A Mobile Police Department (MPD) juvenile outreach program apparently beset by mismanagement has been restarted following an investigation thwarted by poor record keeping that left investigators with little evidence of malicious intent.

Both county and federal prosecutors declined to proceed with investigations involving the alleged mismanagement of federal funds connected to the Mobile Police Explorers program, Chief James Barber said in an unrelated interview earlier this year.

The Explorers program is designed to teach children about police work and tends to focus its outreach in impoverished areas of the city. Explorer posts are often linked with public housing projects in the city and organized trips to destinations including Denver, Washington DC, New York City and Gatlinburg, Tennessee, were paid primarily through federal grants or grants that came through the Mobile Housing Board, according to records.

An investigation Lagniappe led into the program in 2013 discovered that an internal MPD memo described its administration in a state of "complete disarray." Allegations had surfaced that MPD personnel used the funds to take friends and family members on the trips.

In February, Barber said a joint Federal Bureau of Investigation and MPD inquiry into the matter found very scant evidence to support the claims, but that was due to the program's practice of shoddy record keeping.

"That was an interesting case in that the lack of documentation and the lack of record keeping actually worked to their advantage because they left no paper trail," Barber said at the time.

The record keeping was such that it was hard for investigators to find out who connected to the program "stayed at hotels, who ate at restaurants, who rode a bus," Barber said. The record keeping also made it hard to figure out how the money was spent, he said.

At the time of the allegations, Barber was in a lower position in the department.

Trying to figure out whether the money came out of drug funds or federal funds or state forfeiture funds was also difficult, because of the poor record keeping, next to impossible, he said.

"I can tell you, drug money was used to fund ski trips and stuff, but being able to show that it was used with the intent to defraud or with criminal intent proved very difficult because we were never able to show exactly who was on these trips," Barber said. "I don't know if it was planned chaos or what but it has been more identified as gross mishandling of funds than of criminal intent."

He added that it was also nearly impossible to account for individuals on trips between 2008 and 2011.

"There [are] volumes of information but it said nothing," Barber said. "There were no waivers signed by parents, there were no rosters — it was incredible."

Lagniappe first raised questions about the Mobile Police Explorers program in 2012. The newspaper had to file suit against the police department and then-Chief Michael Williams for requested records related to a five trips taken by leaders in the program, from 2008 to 2011.

MPD and the city eventually released more than 6,000 pages of documents, many of them incomplete or duplicates held in various departments in both MPD and the city. While some documents clearly showed MPD employees and some city employees attending ski trips, the city and department would not identify whether children on the trips belonged to officers or employees. Address comparisons conducted by Lagniappe from the documents supplied did seem to positively show the children of some police officers routinely attended the ski trips.

At the heart of the issue is not only who attended the trips, but how they were paid for. The Mobile Housing Board often supplied money for trips, ostensibly for those Explorers who were involved with the program through MHB. Mayor Sam Jones' Office of Strategic Initiatives also supplied Weed & Seed grant money meted out by Donna Mitchell, who ran the office.

Mitchell and her OSI co-worker Barbara Wolfe attended at least a couple of Explorer trips, according to documents, even though they seemed to have little direct involvement in the program.

Records recovered show internal emails between MPD and city officials discussing the suspicion that some city employees, their children and spouses were improperly attending the federally funded trips.

According to a Sept. 7, 2011, document entitled "MPD Internal Analysis and Recommendations for MHB Explorers Program," problems with the Explorers trips first came to light a month earlier.

That analysis said the program was, "in complete disarray and warrants immediate action and correction." It went on to add, "There seems to be no internal or external controls governing the MPD Explorer Program and its staff that requires a complete overhaul of the program at this time."

Last week, Barber announced the department has restarted the program and has been recruiting at local high schools.

"Whereas the Explorers before was kind of used as a ... I don't know ... vacation method or whatever it was, now we're trying to get them interested in law enforcement," Barber said. "[We want to] get younger Explorers to flow into a cadet program that will eventually lead them to the police academy and to be police officers."

Barber said he hopes the revamped program, which began meeting again in February, will be able to touch more youth lives than before.

"The Police Explorer program, it's a youth program but it touches so few youths," he said. "So we have to do something far better than 25 to 35 kids at a time."

For more information about the MPD Explorers program, visit www.mobilepd.org/youth.php.

Reporters Dale Liesch and Jason Johnson contributed to this report.

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\$31.5M bond issued for capital improvements

BY JASON JOHNSON/REPORTER | jason@lagniappemobile.com

The Mobile County Commission voted 2-1 June 24 to approve a \$31.5 million loan for several capital improvement projects including funding for jail upgrades, road projects and additional funds for an Emergency Operations Center.

Despite being in the works for some time, the bond issue wasn't mentioned during the commission's conference meeting the week before. Nancy Johnson, Mobile County's public affairs and community services director, said at the time the county was still waiting on confirmation before placing the warrants on the agenda.

"The bond counsel had asked us to get this proposal validated, which is a court process that also takes place before we can actually issue the bonds," Johnson explained via email. "Meanwhile payments come due — such as the incentives (\$4 million) already approved for Airbus — so there was motivation for us to move expeditiously."

Altogether the county issued \$31.5 million in general obligation warrants, which are secured by the credit and taxing power of the county as opposed to revenue from a specific project. That process is part of the county's "dynamic structured debt service," which is designed to keep the county's level of debt payments the same from year to year.

During last year's budget hearings, Mobile County Finance Director Michelle Herman said the county has maintained around \$10 million in annual debt service in recent years, but that number did see a slight decrease in 2015. According to the agreement between Regions Bank and Mobile County, the bonds the county agreed to last week should be repaid by 2026.

"The process is that every two years bonds roll off and comparable borrowing is made to continue funding the capital budget, all the time with a level debt service," Johnson said, adding that Standard & Poor's has previously quantified that level as a "low overall debt burden."

Upgrades at EMA facility

The projects covered in the recent warrants were approved in 2012 as part of 10-year Capital Improvements Plan. The largest portion of the \$30 million available will be designated for upgrades to several public facilities.

Around \$4 million of compliance upgrades at the Strickland Youth Center were included in addition to renovations to the vacant seventh floor in Government Plaza, which will be used by the county's Public Works Department.

The largest portion of the \$14 million in facility upgrades is \$5.5 million set aside for the construction of a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC). An EOC is a centralized location used for the coordination of response and recovery processes during an emergency, and county commissioners have been working out how to fund the construction of a new facility for years.

Last December, Mobile County Emergency Management Agency Director Ronnie Adair said parts of the existing facility on Zeigler Boulevard were more than 60 years old.

"The size and operational capabilities of the current [Emergency Management Agency or EMA] facility fall far short of our needs for

disaster response," Mobile County Commission President Connie Hudson said in a statement to Lagniappe. "This is unacceptable in a hurricane-prone coastal area like Mobile County, where a fully functioning facility is critical for the safety and welfare of our residents."

So far, the EMA has received about \$2 million in federal grants for a new EOC, and spent nearly \$800,000 of that on a structural plan. The Mobile County Communications District has indirectly pledged around \$1.3 million to the facility as well.

Previously, the city of Mobile had offered to contribute \$7 million to the facility, but eventually pulled out of that agreement. Back in December, County Engineer and former EMA Board member Joe Ruffer told commissioners a new EOC would only require \$7 million from the county's capital improvement fund.

Adair has previously suggested the new facility would cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$14 million. However, Commissioner Jerry Carl said there had been some discussions of scaling back the project, but a fixed price remains to be determined.

Carl also cast the only vote opposing the recent capital improvements loan.

"I'm against the size and cost of it. Why do you want to spend that much money, when you can spend half of that?" Carl said discussing the EMA facility. "I don't think we have vetted the EOC well enough. The last meeting I was in they were talking about downsizing. Why borrow the money if we don't know what we're going to do with it? If we're going to downsize it, we'll borrow that amount of money when the time comes."

Other capital projects

The county funds the lion's share of road improvement projects through its Pay As You Go program, but some projects are tackled using capital funds. The recent CIP bond includes \$2.4 million for an extensive widening and resurfacing project on Gulf Crest Road and includes matching funds for improvements on Zeigler Boulevard from Tanner Williams Road to Schilling Road North.

About half a million dollars will also offset the costs of recent renovations at the Mobile Metro Jail including cell-door and lock upgrades. The first phase of the project was initially covered by a 2012 debt issue, according to the county.

Each of the three commission districts will also receive \$2 million for parks and recreation expansions — projects that weren't specified in any of the pricing details obtained by Lagniappe. Typically, each commissioner determines where and how their respective district funds are allocated.

There is also around \$2.6 million in funds that aren't earmarked for a specific project. According to a draft of the CIP allocations, the "projects to be funded from the unassigned balance will be determined by action of the county commission."

Neither Carl nor Hudson gave any indication of how those unassigned funds would be utilized going forward.

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Another working group examining coastal insurance ‘crisis’

BY ERIC MANN/REPORTER | eric@lagniappemobile.com

In a June 19 letter to State Sen. Trip Pittman and Rep. Joe Faust, Gov. Robert Bentley created the Coastal Insurance Work Group, which will be tasked with finding solutions to the high wind and homeowners insurance premiums imposed upon many of the state’s coastal residents annually. The work group is composed of 17 members, all but four of whom live in Mobile or Baldwin counties.

Along with Pittman and Faust, the work group includes State Sen. Bill Hightower, Alabama Center for Insurance Information and Research Director Dr. Lars Powell, insurance industry representative Steve Simpkins, Gov. Bentley spokesperson Suzanna Willis, Alabama Department of Insurance Deputy Commissioner Charles Angell, Fairhope City Councilman Jack Burrell, attorney Beth Lyons, Rev. Jerry Bergman and Hurricane Homeowners Insurance Initiative (HHII) representatives Michelle Kurtz, Dan Hanson, Earl Janssen, Jerry Doughty, A.C. Leggett, Cathy Odom and Charles Kettell.

Bentley asked the group to deliver recommendations by Dec. 31 focusing on policy, guidelines, possible multi-state framework and the next steps to promote justifiable homeowner and commercial property insurance in the state’s coastal counties.

The group’s creation is in response to a March 18 meeting when HHII members, Mobile and Baldwin county legislators, representatives from the Baldwin County Commission and city representatives met with Gov. Robert Bentley’s staff and the Department of Insurance to stress the need for a plan for “fair property insurance premiums, deductibles and availability” in Alabama.

HHII helped craft the Property Insurance Clarity Act of 2012, which requires insurance companies authorized to do business in the state to report the number of policies they write in each ZIP code, along with premiums collected and losses incurred. The first year of data, analyzed by HHII’s Earl Janssen, showed homeowners in coastal counties claimed an average of \$585 in damages per year, compared to \$703 in annual claims upstate. It also indicated that while Baldwin and Mobile homeowners consistently claimed less in damages each year, they paid, on average, about \$500 more

per policy annually over the last 10 years.

In contrast to previous committees and groups charged by the governor’s office to recommend similar solutions, Kettell said this is the first time a coastal homeowners insurance work group has comprised a majority of coastal residents.

Kurtz was among those advocating for a new work group after the previous groups failed to recommend solutions beyond home mitigation and catastrophic savings accounts, neither of which addresses the inequality of the Clarity Act’s data. Bentley’s letter instructs the group to avoid discussions of hazard mitigation and public education.

“Mitigation is wonderful and needs to be done, but if your budget is already tight you don’t have money for it,” she said.

Kurtz said previous groups like the Affordable Homeowners Insurance Commission only met once per month. Bentley’s letter put Pittman in charge of setting the first meeting, but HHII hopes the group will meet for the first time Aug. 3 and 4, followed by a pair of six-hour meetings each week until December. Ahead of those meetings, HHII and others in the group will discuss the definitions of risk and insurance, with the goal of reaching consensus on background.

HHII’s Dan Hanson said the group will seek solutions that may include two options. The first option is a multi-state coastal insurance band, which would comprise coastal areas from Maine to Mexico, including cities as far as 70 miles inland.

A second solution is to use the data collected from the Clarity Act to get the costs of losses spread more evenly statewide. Hanson said one way to do that is for the state to pass a law requiring premiums to be the same price for the same house value statewide, and if a company sells homeowners insurance in one part of the state, it must also sell the same policy in coastal counties.

“If our losses are no higher than the rest of the state, then our premiums shouldn’t be higher,” Hanson said. “If the state is paying \$950, then our premiums in coastal counties should be in the same area. The two big ideas are multi-state and ‘equality’ laws, then each one has multiple ideas within. I hope we work on multi-

state first, because we believe it has potential. Conversations about ‘equality’ regulations will likely be more contentious.”

Kettell, a Spanish Fort resident and HHII volunteer, said the coastal band model would not require participation from all coastal states. He said if just three or four other states were on board, it would work.

Kettell also said the state needs to look at the three classifications of insurance companies. The first two include companies located in Alabama and companies, like Allstate and State Farm, which are regulated by the Alabama Department of Insurance. A third classification, non-admitted companies, are not regulated by the state. Non-admitted companies pay higher state sales taxes, but may leave consumers at a greater risk of having claims unpaid if the company becomes insolvent, Kettell said.

Clarity Act data does not include information from non-admitted companies because they are not regulated by the Department of Insurance. HHII estimates approximately 20 percent to 30 percent of Mobile and Baldwin homeowners use non-admitted companies for coverage.

“A lot of the mainline companies have dropped or limited coverages in Mobile and Baldwin counties and the non-admitted companies came in to fill that void,” Kettell said.

Kurtz said high homeowners insurance premiums and deductibles are costing coastal residents far more than just extra cash on their mortgage each month. She said her deductible is \$7,000 and she has paid \$16,000 more than the state average in premiums over the last few years.

“That’s my son’s college money,” Kurtz said. “Everybody has their story about where they have to sacrifice to pay these premiums, but for some people it can mean bankruptcy or their house note. It is unjust. We need the governor and the Department of Insurance to stand in the gap and raise Cain.”

“I think we have a very good balance of people who want to fix the problem,” Hanson said of the group. “The insurance people who are on it, I have total respect for. I think the group is made up of intellectually honest and capable people.”

High-income Fairhope eyes HUD grants for poor areas

BY ERIC MANN/REPORTER | eric@lagniappemobile.com

If the City Council approves a proposal to apply for a Community Development Block Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), federal money could help revitalize certain areas and spark economic development in some of Fairhope’s low-to-moderate-income neighborhoods. The grant would provide \$64,000 per year for five years, with no city match.

According to 2010 U.S. Census data, Fairhope’s median household income is \$57,917 — \$15,000 above the state average — while its \$243,400 median home value is \$120,000 higher than the state average. But the data shows the city’s 2013 population estimate includes 8.3 percent of residents living below the federal poverty level.

“Fairhope has always been seen as having an above-average income and because of that we are way down on the list of getting those funds from [the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs],” Mayor Tim Kant said. “So now, since our population has increased to a certain level, we can get the money directly from HUD.”

The HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement program provides annual grants intended to revitalize neighborhoods, spur economic development and revamp community facilities and services. According to HUD, grantees must give priority to activities that benefit low-to-moderate income residents and target the prevention or elimination of slums or blight.

Fairhope is eligible to receive \$64,000 in 2016 and throughout the next five years, for a total of \$320,000. CDBG funding from HUD does not require a city match.

At the Fairhope City Council’s June 22 work session, Planning and Zoning Director Jonathan Smith said the city must submit a consolidated plan and analysis of impediments to fair housing before HUD will release federal money.

The consolidated plan must detail a five-year outline of projects, including a citizen participation plan, continuum of care pro-

cess, a housing and homeless needs assessment, a housing market analysis and a strategic plan. The strategic plan must include priorities and rationale for investment and obstacles for meeting underserved areas.

The city must also submit an action plan on a yearly basis, which will be reviewed and approved by HUD before annual funds are distributed. The initial consolidated plan will cost approximately \$30,000 and the analysis of impediments to fair housing would cost an additional \$10,000 to \$15,000, according to Smith.

“There is quite a bit of work that has to go into a consolidated plan that will have to be prepared prior to receiving these funds,” Smith said. “We have to have a well-defined, laid-out plan as far as what we might use the money for.”

The CDBG funds must be spent inside the city’s corporate limits, which could make it more difficult for Fairhope to find ways to spend it.

“In Fairhope there are no hard boundaries for low-to-moderate-income areas, so a neighborhood survey will have to be conducted to determine where this money can actually be spent,” South Alabama Regional Planning Commission Director of Governmental Planning Services Diane Burnett said.

City Council President Jack Burrell said many of the city’s needs lie just beyond its corporate limits.

“A very large portion of the needs we have are just beyond our city limits,” he said. “Not that we don’t have needs inside our city limits, but we have lots of needs right outside them.”

One way the city could use the funds to help those low-to-moderate-income residents on both sides of its borders is through stormwater management projects. HUD funds can be used for the construction of public facilities and improvements to water and sewer facilities, streets and neighborhood centers and the conversion of school buildings. Smith said stormwater and drainage is the issue most residents had expressed interest in during meetings about the possibility of receiving the grant.

“Stormwater does affect people who live outside the city limits, too,” Councilwoman Diana Brewer said June 22. “There is a lot of work that can be done inside the city limits that would really help some people outside the limits. We have real issues with stormwater all over the city.”

Some of the affected areas could eventually be annexed into the city limits, according to Smith.

“This is a long-term commitment, but if we get all these things in place, then in 10 to 15 years we will be in good shape to accept more funding as our city grows to the south and the east,” he said.

Burnett stressed that the block grant funding is intended for capital projects and should not be spent on administrative or “soft costs,” but funding stormwater and drainage projects could help people on both sides of the city’s limits.

“You are allowed to spend 10 percent for administration and 6 percent for nonprofits, but the money is intended for capital expenditures,” she said. “It is intended to be something you can see when you drive through a community. It is not intended for soft costs.”

Kant said the city may host a community meeting, preferably in one of the proposed areas, as part of its required Citizen Participation Plan, which also requires a 30-day comment period.

“We will need to have a community meeting so that we can know what people say their needs are,” the mayor said. “We don’t want it to just be the mayor, or Jack Burrell or whoever, deciding what to spend the money on. The community will have to speak up.”

Smith said it would take a community-wide effort to secure the funds.

“We will have to have ‘buy-in’ from the community, the council and the mayor if we are going to go after these funds,” Smith said. “We are looking at getting around \$320,000 over five years. That could really benefit some of the areas around town that need some attention.”

Proposed soccer complex subject to Corps' 'give and take'

BY JASON JOHNSON/REPORTER | jason@lagniappemobile.com

Mobile County might have hit a minor speed bump in its attempt to secure permits through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for a proposed soccer and aquatic complex near the intersection of Interstates 65 and 10, as the possibility exists further studies may be necessary before the project can progress.

Last week Lagniappe requested from the county a "punch list" rumored to have been provided to the commission about the additional information the Corps needs to approve the permit, but the request was denied. A letter from county attorney Jay Ross stated "communications between the county of Mobile and United States Army Corps of Engineers, as it relates to the issuance of a permit for the Soccer and Aquatic Complex, is not considered a matter of public record."

Ross further explained the permit would indeed be public record once it was received, but suggested written communication and emails related to discussions about the permit are not open to the public because the permit has not been finalized.

However, District 3 Commissioner Jerry Carl, who has openly opposed the facility's proposed location and estimated expense, was able to confirm the Corps did in fact make a request for additional information about the complex.

According to the USACE website, Mobile County submitted its proposal for a standard permit to operate the facility on Feb. 2, 2015. However, Carl said a letter was sent June 12 specifically asking for more detail on the second phase of project, which includes proposals for an aquatic center and a "commercial recreation-al" waterpark.

The first portion of the project — estimated to cost \$20.7 million — would include the construction of 10 soccer fields in addition to parking accommodations, concession facilities and areas for equipment storage and team practice.

Specifics have yet to be released on the second phase of the proposal, including an exact cost, a design or a source of funding for the water park feature — though Commission President Connie Hudson has suggested it would be operated by a partner from the private sector.

According to Carl, there hasn't been much information released on the engineering details or environmental impact of those phases of the project.

"It seems the documentation for the permit we submitted did not include any engineering or environmental studies to back up the aquatic center portion of the permit," Carl said. "The Corps stated very clearly we will have to submit the missing information on the aquatic center, or take it out altogether. We could then resubmit the soccer center again by itself."

However, in light of Carl's concerns, Mobile County Environmental Services Director Bill Melton addressed the permitting process and said a back-and-forth between with the Corps of Engineers "is not uncommon."

"The Corps has to defend these permits they give out, and they usually ask for more informa-

The Corps has to defend these permits they give out, and they usually ask for more information. When you're seeking a federal permit, that triggers some work with other federal agencies.

—Bill Melton, Mobile County environmental services director

tion," Melton said. "When you're seeking a federal permit, that triggers some work with other federal agencies. Usually, you work with a historic commission. You have to do a cultural resources study, an endangered species study, wetlands, floodplains — you have to check for all these."

According to Melton, the recent \$48,000 study performed by Sports Facilities Advisory (SFA) provided the county with details about the water park component of the complex that should address some of the issues the Corps has identified. Commissioners approved the study 2-1 earlier this year, with only Carl voting against it.

As far as the permit process is concerned, Melton said the county is currently working on a cultural resources analysis, which he said would require some light excavation of the site. According to Melton, some bottles and the remnants of a structure were found, indicating the property may have been previously used as a dairy farm.

As a part of the normal permitting process, Melton said those discoveries were being investigated further. He also dispelled rumors that a second study would be required to move forward.

The county's information department said the engineering fee paid to Vittor and Associates would cover the excavation costs, but Carl said more expenses could be incurred depending on the findings of the cultural resource analysis.

While the punch list of the permit is being reconciled behind closed doors, the county will soon be looking at extending its purchasing option on the property for another 120 days. The county already approved up to \$36,000 for an agreement to the option of buying the \$2.9 million property.

"As of 10 July, our option will expire," Carl said. "According to the contract we ... will have to come up with an additional \$10,000 to get another 120-day extension. Again the Commission will have to approve moving forward with this additional expense."



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Council holds over appeal vote on sulfuric acid storage tanks

BY DALE LIESCH/REPORTER | dale@lagniappemobile.com

The Mobile City Council will hold off for at least six weeks on a vote to appeal a previous Planning Commission approval allowing ARC Terminals to convert up to eight petroleum storage tanks to store sulfuric acid instead.

Tuesday's agenda item brought a bevy of dissenters, from downtown residents to environmentalists, but councilors agreed to delay the vote for six weeks so ARC and local engineering firm Cowles, Murphy and Glover can hold a forum on the project to give residents more information.

The application passed the Planning Commission June 4 by a 6-4 vote. Attorney Doug Anderson told councilors during a pre-conference meeting the board found no credible evidence to deny the move. He said the commission took the terminals' proximity to residential property into account, but added that many of the concerns against the move were "based on fears."

Those speaking against the project included representatives from the three nearby historic neighborhoods of Africatown, DeTonti Square and Church Street East. A total of 14 residents spoke against the proposal.

Concerns from residents ran the gamut from health, safety and problems caused by natural disasters to an already-bad smell from the terminals on Blakely Island, across the river from downtown, which they fear will worsen.

"I know it's from there," Church Street East Neighborhood Association representative Greg Vaughn said of the smell. "I've driven past it."

In addition to the odor, Vaughn said sulfuric acid has known corrosive properties and can irritate eyes, nose and throat. He said the chemical is an explosion hazard as well.

Kelly Baker, president of the DeTonti Square Neighborhood Association, said residents are unaware of what future plans ARC has for the project, or what impact it could have on the community. In addition she mentioned two oil spills, one of which shut down the Mobile River for a day in 2011. She also reminded councilors of a fuel barge explosion in 2013.

"These were all caused by human error," she said.

Baker and Vaughn each asked for councilors to ask ARC to meet with citizens on the issue to give them more information.

Joe Womack spoke to councilors on behalf of the Africatown neighborhood. He said the community has redevelopment plans, which it plans to share with the city when they're finished. He asked ARC and other local business leaders planning to bring more industry into the area to present plans to the citizens to let them know what's going on.

"Share the information with everybody," Womack said. "Be proud of it. If you're not sharing it, you must not be proud."

Others spoke of concerns over whether the tanks in question are adequate to hold sulfuric acid. The tanks were originally designed for petroleum storage and built in 1975, "before sulfuric-acid storage tank design safety codes were created," resident and Mobile Bay Sierra Club member Carol Adams-Davis said.

"Because sulfuric acid is a very different material than petroleum fuel, handling and storing it requires a very different set of guidelines," she said. "The existing storage tanks are not adequately designed or constructed for the storage of sulfuric acid."

Other speakers questioned whether a clay liner was adequate



Photo/ Lagniappe

Oil and chemical storage tanks on the banks of the Mobile River have become a point of contention between residents and industry.

for sulfuric acid.

Gary Cowles, the engineer on the project and a representative for ARC, told councilors the project is, at this time, only asking for conversion of one petroleum tank and the application asked for more, so they could rotate between two tanks when an inspection is needed.

Cowles also told councilors that the geo-synthetic clay liner currently at the site would be adequate to keep a hypothetical leak from reaching groundwater.

Councilman Levon Manzie, who represents the neighborhoods nearest the project, asked Cowles how many residents would be affected by any vapor plume. Cowles responded that the nearest residential area is 5,300 feet from the site and that any vapor plume would dissipate in such distance.

Manzie also had questions regarding insurance in the case of an accident and others, but remarked about a member of the leadership of ARC not being in attendance.

Manzie made the initial motion that led to the six-week layover.

Soccer complex, park improvements

The council voted 5-2 to approve an agreement with the Mobile County Commission to allow the city to contribute to the purchase of property needed for a proposed soccer complex near the intersection of Interstates 10 and 65. Councilors Joel Daves and John Williams voted against the proposal.

An amendment to the proposal allows the city to recoup the \$1.5 million pledge, plus interest, if the county doesn't purchase the land within a year of receiving the money, Councilwoman Bess Rich said.

In addition, the council passed several contracts for design work to move forward with park improvements. The contracts were sponsored by Mayor Sandy Stimpson.

The improvements include a \$22,700 contract with Carlos Gant for design of bathrooms at Herndon Park, a \$13,480 design contract with Dell Consulting Inc. for Maire Park lighting and a \$33,500 design contract with The Architects Group for a dog park and restroom at Public Safety Memorial Park.

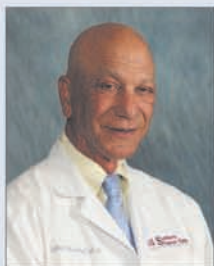
A \$27,700 design contract for the tennis pro shop at Medal of Honor Park was also on the agenda, but was held over by Rich. She initially tried to amend the item to allow for money stipulated for the contract to be earmarked instead for a design of new playground equipment, which she called a bigger priority for constituents. The item was held over after fellow councilors and the administration raised concerns over the idea.

Stimpson suggested Rich have council attorney Jim Rossler, who was absent from the meeting, verify the legality of such a request. Williams and Manzie said the money in question could be used immediately for improvements in both of their districts.

In other business

Despite hearing from multiple speakers on both sides of the issue, the council held over for a week a vote to replace the Third National Flag of the Confederacy with the Alabama state flag on the city seal. The proposal is in line with actions nationwide following the shooting deaths of nine members of a historic black church in Charleston, South Carolina.

The council also approved a \$215,586 contract with BPM Construction for renovation of the third floor of a city-owned building across the street from Government Plaza. The building, which already houses the city's 311 call center and probation offices, will be renovated to accommodate members of Mobile's I-Team. The I-Team, through a Bloomberg Innovation grant, will be focused on blight in the city.



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911 board suspends \$40M contract

BY JASON JOHNSON/REPORTER | jason@lagniappemobile.com

More questions have surfaced in regard to the \$40-million contract to overhaul the local 911 radio system since the Mobile County Communications District (MCCD) agreed to pay for an independent investigation into the contract earlier this month. Now — citing the potential for litigation — the board has agreed to suspend the contract completely.

During a special meeting called June 30, the commissioners of the MCCD agreed to suspend all payments and deliverables related to the contract it signed with Harris Corporation in 2013.

Up to \$10,000 more was also allocated to the continued investigation into the contract, which has already cost the board \$5,000. MCCD Commissioner Trey Oliver said the investigation shouldn't take more than six to eight weeks to complete.

The board also set rates for the six-person team of former auditors, private investigators and FBI agents currently investigating the pages and pages of documents and correspondence related to that contract. The names of those individuals and their rates of pay are available online at lagniappemobile.com.

"There were some issues we had discovered in the signing and the awarding of the contract," MCCD board member and Citronelle Police Chief Shane Stringer said. "We want to make sure everything was handled properly, and if it's not, we want to repair or fix anything done inappropriately."

In the past week, several revelations have come to light and been reported related to the contract with Harris, including a June 12, 2013, pricing summary showing the company had been involved with the project before it was competitively bid in August 2013.

MCCD Director Gary Tanner, who was just taking the reins of the 911 center at the time, said the early work can be attributed to the board's plan to use Harris as a sole-source vendor through Alabama's state bid list. The bid list includes several Harris radio products, Tanner said.

"Early on, in May, June and July 2013, Harris attempted to provide the radio improvements to Mobile County's [system] via Alabama State Contract pricing," Tanner said. "After review by MCCD's [former] attorney, Bill Wasden, it was determined the contract pricing would not be acceptable and instructed Harris that MCCD must use the competitive bid process."

However, documents from the time show there was also some specific price negotiations and near payments during the "early" period Tanner referred to. Documents and emails obtained by Lagniappe show a purchase order for almost \$5 million signed over to Harris on June 26, 2013.

The same purchase order was preceded by an email to Tanner from Mobile County IT employee Eric Linsley. That email said, "I have received the attached and I don't see any problems. I recommend issuing a PO for the radios."

Today, the radios referenced in the email have been sitting in a Mobile County warehouse for almost two years. They've been there long enough that their warranties are almost expired. According to Tanner, they arrived before the project was competitively bid. Asked for an explanation, Tanner deferred to Stephen Smith, a project manager for Harris.

Multiple calls to Smith were unreturned prior to this report being published.

Though the project was bid, it may not have

not been done so competitively, since Harris was the only company to submit a proposal for the project. However, the communications upgrade sought by the MCCD consisted of highly specialized work only a handful of companies are capable of providing.

Still, at least one other company tried to bid the job, but apparently did so in vain. According to documents, Harris' industry competitor Motorola wrote Tanner in August asking for a 60-day extension of the bid.

"Based on the magnitude of your project, we feel if given the opportunity, Motorola could potentially save the Mobile County Communications District millions on your project," the letter reads. "We respectfully request a 60-day extension of your bid due date and to give Motorola Solutions a non-biased and fair opportunity to earn your business."

For whatever reason, that extension was denied. Tanner wouldn't elaborate on the decision, but offered, "The Alabama State Statute has legislation that mandates that a project this size meet certain bid requirements. MCCD met all of those bid requirements."

In fact, the board questioned its own bidding process at the time. Wasden, who was still the attorney at the time, sought the legal opinion of local attorney Larry Wettermark as to whether the bid had circulated long enough in statewide newspapers to "cut the legal mustard."

Wettermark gave an opinion the bid was legal. He was also later hired as the MCCD board's attorney after Wasden left.

Regarding Motorola's request for extension, Tanner further said it was the board's desire "to encumber the funds before fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2013." At the time, a significant change was about to befall the emergency communications world in Alabama as statewide legislation passed the previous year was scheduled to change the MCCD's entire funding process.

In short, without encumbering additional debt, the board was facing the loss of a significant portion of its funding, which would then be assumed by a state 911 board and redistributed to other counties.

Because state law wouldn't allow districts to collect more money than they need to operate, taking on the \$39 million bond used to pay Harris was a quick way to increase the 911 board's debt obligations.

In fact, Harris played a crucial role in that process — working with the board to consolidate the seven-year plan to upgrade the communications system into a three-year plan. It's been stated in previous meetings that during the process, Harris helped write the specifications for the same bid it would later be awarded.

Despite their early involvement, Harris was still allowed to change the details of its project after the bidding process had begun. Earlier this month, Tanner sent a memo the board discussing those issues, which took place in 2013.

"Harris submitted a pricing sheet as part of their bid proposal, dated Aug. 22, 2013. Subsequently, Steve Smith, Harris representative, discovered that their radios were not equipped to meet the agreed requirements developed by MCCD. The radios were reworked to be in compliance with the specifications That re-work was completed prior to the deployment of any radios," the memo reads.

At this time, it's unclear if those same radios arrived prior to the bid being awarded. Almost half of the project's cost is derived from various types of radio equipment.

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COMMENTARY DAMN THE TORPEDOES

Change the flag but leave the history

BY ROB HOLBERT/MANAGING EDITOR | rholbert@lagniappemobile.com

In college I once watched a friend of mine tear up an old American flag and use it to wash his car.

I commented that it seemed disrespectful and I was sure there were some people who would beat him senseless for doing something like that. He argued it was just a piece of cloth and didn't really mean anything more than would an old towel or T-shirt.

I suppose there's always been two schools of thought on flags. Many people would be willing to punch my friend in the nose for "desecrating" Old Glory. However, there are those who burn it and say flags are just symbols that don't really have real meaning.

Following the murder of nine people in a South Carolina church two weeks ago by a nut job with a fascination for rebel flags and hatred of African-Americans, the importance of flags is suddenly front and center again. Specifically we're talking about whether the Confederate battle flag, which was co-opted by rednecks, racists and "The Dukes of Hazard" long ago, has any place on publicly owned property. And, as usually happens, the pendulum has swung crazily to the other side, to the point where there are discussions of removing all references to the Confederacy, whether it be flags, statues or street names.

The unthinkable massacre in South Carolina has the issue burning across the South like Sherman's army. In Alabama, Gov. Robert Bentley made the right move and quickly had the battle flag removed from memorials on the capitol grounds. In other states, debates rage on over whether to remove the flag from atop the capitol in South Carolina, Civil War monuments across the South or even from a portion of Mississippi's state flag. And Mobile isn't exempt from the argument either, as several members of the City Council don't want that battle flag peeking at them from the city seal any longer.

Quick, can you name all six of the flags on Mobile's official city seal? Probably more of us can now than could a couple of weeks ago.

Councilmen Fred Richardson and Levon Manzie have led the charge to make a change to the city seal, and I think they're right. The seal features the Third National Flag of the Confederacy, and the battle flag is a major component of that flag. I know it's not like tremendous numbers of people spend their days gazing at city seals, but I can certainly understand why many of Mobile's black citizens wouldn't want to see the battle flag on their city's seal.

But while I think removing the Third National Flag makes sense, the suggestion of replacing it in the city seal with the state flag does not — if the purpose of Mobile's six-flag lineup is to show the six different "countries" that at one time or another controlled the city. The simple solution seems to be just replacing it with the First National Flag of the Confederate States of America (CSA), which is never seen on a belt buckle, at a Klan rally or at a Toby Keith concert. I believe Councilwoman Bess Rich has proposed just that and they'll take up the issue next week.

But there is sentiment the CSA just simply shouldn't be represented at all because it was an inherently evil entity and something of which we should be ashamed. That's a huge

oversimplification of the issues that started the war, but more importantly it only serves to offend the many people who are fascinated by that time in history for reasons having nothing to do with owning other humans.

There are lots of Southerners who get excited reading about the military strategies, and who take pride in talking about the way the Confederate soldiers were able to hold their own, and often win, against much larger, better-financed armies. That's why some people dress up in miserably hot wool uniforms in the middle of the summer and have battle re-enactments. I'm sure to almost any of them, the war wasn't about slavery.

Of course the war was about slavery, and states' rights, and political power, and money. It was a horrible time in our history. Hundreds of thousands died. Some died defending or trying to stop slavery. Others died because they were drafted. And still others died because they were defending their homes and states from being burned. So it's complicated.

The Civil War and CSA are part of history, and shouldn't just be replaced because some people 150 years later don't like to think about it. Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it, right?

Perhaps the strangest irony of this whole debate is that every single flag on the city seal represents a government that allowed slavery while Mobile was under its control.

Britain, Spain and France didn't outlaw slavery until the 1800s, and all allowed it in their colonies far longer. The short-lived Republic of Alabama — whose flag features a

coiled rattlesnake under a cotton plant, along with Latin words saying "touch me not" — obviously allowed slavery before joining the CSA. And well, hate to say it, but even under Old Glory, Alabama was a slave state for many years.

So City Council, if the goal is to just get rid of the stigma that comes with the battle flag while still displaying the city's history, changing to a different CSA flag appears to be the way to go. If you want to purge anything connected to slavery at all, then it's probably time to get a whole new city seal. Perhaps some airplanes or litter floating in waterways.

I'm glad some of this is taking place. I grew up in Mississippi and that flag is an embarrassment to me personally and the state as a whole. Hopefully they will change it.

There are those who will explain why the battle flag is still honorable, but they lost that argument a long time ago when anti-segregationists adopted it as a symbol of resistance to civil rights. That said, the other side of the debate needs to be mindful of everyone else's feelings as well.

Ripping Robert E. Lee out of Lee Circle in New Orleans, tearing down busts of Southern generals and statues of soldiers, and renaming highways isn't going to stop racism and it's not germane to the murders that ignited this debate in the first place. Both sides should be willing to give a little to get a little.

In the end, flags, statues and city seals are only symbols of division if each side of the debate is more intent on winning than respecting the other.

THE GADFLY



The Mobile City Council has a new option to replace the Confederate flag adorning the current city seal.



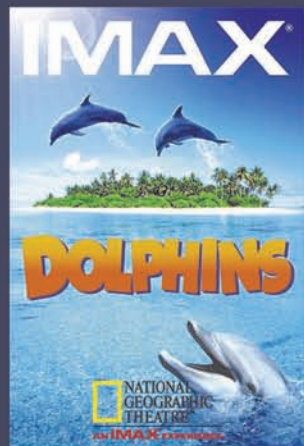
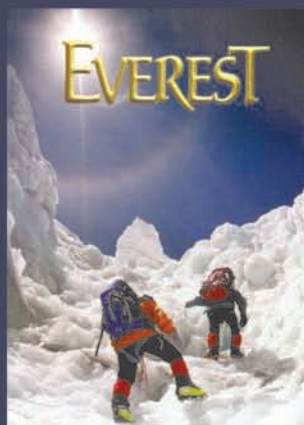
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Love will conquer all...eventually

BY ASHLEY TRICE/EDITOR | ashleytoland@lagniappemobile.com

"No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were. As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage. Their plea is that they do respect it, respect it so deeply that they seek to find its fulfillment for themselves. Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization's oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right. The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit is reversed. It is so ordered."

— Justice Anthony Kennedy

Last week the U.S. Supreme Court gave everyone in every state in this country the right to marry the person they love. This has been a decades-long struggle for gay and lesbian individuals and couples who simply wanted to be treated the same and afforded the same rights as their straight siblings, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Nothing more, nothing less.

As Justice Kennedy so eloquently stated in his closing opinion, "equal dignity" is all they asked for, and they will now receive that in the eyes of the law. And while I rejoiced with my gay friends for this victory over the weekend, a couple of days later I was reminded just how much further we have to go.

As I scrolled through my Facebook feed Tuesday morning to see cute pics of people's kids, recipes for shrimp and avocado salad, various views on the Confederate flag and news of Roger Federer's scorching first-round win over someone I have

never heard of at Wimbledon, I noticed a video of a sermon from a pastor at one of the largest and most respected churches in Mobile, in response to the court ruling. I was curious to see what his message would be, so I clicked on it, even though I had a pretty good idea what I was going to get.

Though I will say I think the pastor was actually trying to be moderate in his message (moderate, at least, for his particular denomination) to his congregation — saying the "church would stand with conviction, but with kindness," and that gays and lesbians are not "super villains" — he did also manage to make references to them being "animal like" and this being a "backward movement" and their love for each other was somehow equated to straight people who cheat on each other.

Their hearts are just "desperately sick," he said, and they are "ignorant" to God's word. And when they see the light, these "sexual-revolution refugees" will be welcomed at this church and they will be able to help them, unlike the churches who have been spewing hate and also like the churches who have "abandoned the Scripture" and welcomed them already. (I'm pretty sure he's talking to us, fellow Presbyterians, on that last one.)

Look, I am not about to launch into my own hateful tirade against this minister and his congregation. We have different beliefs and I imagine there is no way we would ever find common ground on this particular issue, as we each just fundamentally disagree on this to the very fiber of our beings. As another item in my Facebook feed has been reminding me over the last few weeks, "Hate has caused a lot of problems in the world but it's never solved one." You were and still are so right, Maya Angelou.

But when I was first listening to this sermon, tears literally welled up in my eyes as I envisioned how hurtful this would

be to my gay friends if they heard this — that their love for a partner they had been with for more than 20 years and raised children with was described as "animal like."

It's just so over-the-top ridiculous.

But in reality, I know they have heard this before — in fact, they have heard this their entire lives, as they grew up gay in the Bible Belt. Many of them were taken to church every Wednesday night and Sunday morning as we all were — probably some to this very church — and told the heart they were born with loved in the wrong way and they needed to change it. To many, the equivalent of being told the lungs you were born with didn't breathe air in the right way.

Can you imagine what that must have been like? I sure can't.

Polls show Americans' attitudes toward this matter have changed very swiftly and significantly in the last decade. A record 6 in 10 Americans believe same-sex marriage should be allowed, with nearly 80 percent of Americans under age 30 in favor of it. And in another decade it will probably almost be a non-issue.

And it's because the very people who were told they weren't livin' right had the tremendous courage to say, "NO! Enough is enough! I am proud of who I am and I am going to live my life as such, freely and openly." And then a funny thing happened. The world kept spinning and their fellow human beings realized, "Hey, well what do you know, these people are just like me. And so why would I want them to be treated any differently? Oh wait, I guess I don't."

I am so happy for my friends and I am so proud of them.

They have been granted "equal dignity" in the eyes of the law and I know eventually they will be granted such in the eyes and hearts of all.

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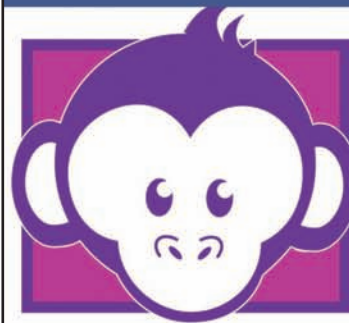


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Conservatives: Time for a new hobby horse

BY JEFF POOR/COLUMNIST | jeffreypoor@gmail.com

t's over. We lost.

Last week was perhaps the worst week for conservatives going back to the week of Nov. 8, 2008, the day Barack Obama was first elected president of the United States.

In the span of just a few days, the Obama White House scored a key legislative victory, with Congress granting the executive fast-track trade authority powers, and two huge court decisions — one on preserving federal exchanges in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (also known as “Obamacare”) and another declaring same-sex marriage bans by individual states to be unconstitutional.

For better or for worse, the two court rulings will fuel the fodder of the 2016 presidential race, especially on the Republican Party's side.

Do Americans want to hear Obamacare and same-sex marriage re-litigated over the next year and a half? Will debating these issues until we're blue in the face do anything to actually change them?

On marriage, so far there aren't many takers, with the exception of former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee on the GOP side of the slate. Huckabee said on Sunday he anticipates Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.-style civil disobedience. Meanwhile, the others have admitted despite their disappointment in the ruling, there is a reluctance to take on the fight.

Using this wedge issue worked for Karl Rove on President George W. Bush's behalf in 2004. It's not going to work in 2016.

On “Obamacare,” we've been hearing for the last five years that the Republican-controlled House of Representatives would work to repeal the law. There have been a few symbolic gestures, but other than a 2013 government shutdown, nothing serious.

Instead, we were told to wait and see what the Supreme Court has to say about the Obama administration's interpretation of the law. Both times, the high court disappointed conservatives.

“I guess we are going to have to learn one thing — Congress is going to have to rise up and the American people are going to have to help them,” U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Alabama) said on WAPI's Matt Murphy radio show in Birmingham immediately after the decision was announced. “Congress will have to rise up and do its duty and not sit around waiting on the courts to do things for them.”

Sessions is right. If anything could be done to “Obamacare,” it will have to happen through the legislative branch. He went on to lay out how he envisions this process going forward.

“We are in the process of developing, and the Supreme Court decision is not critical to that, but the Republican leadership are trying to produce legislation that we can pass — it would pass the House and would in effect repeal and replace ‘Obamacare,’” he said. “And because of the budget process and the reconciliation process — we will be able to pass that, maybe not everything we'd like, but under that maneuver we can pass a major reform and alteration of ‘Obamacare’ with a simple majority vote. And so with 54 Republicans, we need to get that done. I hope and believe we can.”

Sessions continued: “That would move that legislation to the president's desk. The general consensus is he will veto anything that changes one jot or one tittle in the law that he's been defending relentlessly. Not one change would be accepted. At that point, we would be involved in a presidential election and we're going to have to listen to the presidential candidates and we're going to have to look for somebody who won't veto that kind of reform and would actually lead to the establishment of a health care system that puts patients in control of their future, lets them choose their doctor and the health care systems they want to participate in.”

With all due respect to Alabama's junior U.S. senator, using the budget process to tear down aspects of the health care reform

law is a long shot. Sessions would have been better suited to act on this roadmap had he been chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, but that was a battle he chose not to fight when he stepped aside to allow Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyoming) to take over after serving as the committee's ranking Republican for four years.

It's to the point now that some of these things Republicans have made central issues for the last three federal election cycles have run their course. Like “Obamacare,” which is the law of the land. You lost this fight. You can say you're going to work to repeal, but you aren't.

Most Americans don't feel the impact of “Obamacare.” Until employers are unable to offer coverage, the whole debate is just background noise.

The fix is in. Some health care stocks and stock indices skyrocketed immediately after the decision was announced. The Standard & Poor's 500 Health Care Facilities index went up 35 percent. Those stocks have come back down to earth since then, but are still higher in the wake of the decision. It's clear big business likes some aspects of “Obamacare.” If we've learned anything from the trade bill and immigration fights, big business has a lot of sway in Washington, D.C.

To Republicans, sorry to come off as defeatist but if the country is going to vote Republican in 2016, it's not going to be because of a push for a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, or because of a fight over “Obamacare.” The same-sex marriage argument is officially done. Repealing “Obamacare” won't happen, based on past history. There is little reason to believe congressional Republicans have the testicular fortitude to band together and repeal it.

Conservatives may have lost some battles, but don't lose the war. It's time to focus on something new, be it immigration, national security, tax reform — those might be places to start.

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Above all, Confederacy represents division

BY KEN ROBINSON/CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Americans, like most societies, have reveled in their history. The deeds and events we take pride in are legion, from the 18th century and the colonists' radical break with Great Britain, represented by the profound and inspiring justification of rebellion and listing of grievances proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, to the improbable victory against — at that time — the world's mightiest superpower. The Constitutional Convention and resulting Constitution saved our fledgling nation from unraveling due to the ineffectiveness of the Articles of Confederation. The U.S. Constitution has inspired countless and served as a model for nations the world over.

Deeds and events all the way up to the 20th century, like the exploits of what's known as our "Greatest Generation" — those who endured the ravages of the Great Depression and played a pivotal role in the victory over tyranny and oppression in World War II. As Americans we often, and rightly, look back with pride. Symbols and objects that give honor to these past great deeds, events and documents inspire, motivate and rally us to this day.

But we also, rightly, look back and feel shame. Shame at the fact that though the nation was born of ideals that espoused liberty, freedom, equality and justice, these were not given to all willingly. One of the bloodiest and most painful periods in the country's history, the Civil War, tested whether America's vision of liberty would be an inclusive one, or one that rang hollow because of the subjugation of a race of people seen as cursed by God, not worthy of being viewed as truly human, but only as beasts of burden and objects of derision. The latter did not stand, and the cause that was dedicated to the preservation of a societal and economic model that had at its basis the enslavement of blacks was defeated. The flag of the Confederacy was supplanted throughout the South with that of the victorious Union.

Objects and symbols do have meaning. They communicate

values, beliefs and a people's priorities. Charleston, South Carolina, radio personality and writer Jack Hunter, also known as the ultra-conservative "Southern Avenger," recently stated, "I argued the Confederate flag wasn't about race. I believed it. Millions of well-meaning Southerners believe it too. I was wrong. That flag is always about race. Whatever political or historical points the flag's defenders make, there will never be a time, and never has been a time, in which millions of Americans have looked at that symbol and not seen hatred. We can argue for the rest of time whether this is fair or not. And for the rest of time, that symbol, will be seen in an overwhelmingly negative light ..."

Hunter goes on to make a profound point which, to me, goes to the heart of this issue: "I am here to say there is something at stake far more important than this symbol. Heritage may not be hate. But battling hate is far more important than anyone's heritage, politics or just about anything else. We should have different priorities. I now have different priorities. Dylann Roof is a reminder of what's at stake."

As the push for the end of Jim Crow segregation swept the South during the Civil Rights movement, Confederate battle flags were raised at state capitols across Dixie. The flag flew as a symbol of defiance, as a symbol that the society that many whites in the South saw as the natural order of things — whites in control, and blacks in subjugation — would not be supplanted by what was to them the totally abhorrent and "communist" ideas of black equality and integration with whites. Times have changed, but those symbols have remained. This should not be.

Without a doubt, not everyone who has or likes the Confederate flag is a racist. Yet, the flag has been and is readily co-opted by racist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and twisted racist individuals like Dylann Roof because it represents an antebellum society that was unapologetically and unashamedly racist. The Confederate flag symbolizes a movement that had at its core the

right of states to maintain and perpetuate the inhumane servitude of blacks.

Did every Confederate soldier rally to the cause of slavery and black subjugation? No, they didn't. Many simply fought for their homes, family and state that they loved. But did the architects of Southern secession and rebellion have this as a principal motivation? Yes. Why? Because slavery made them rich — incredibly rich. Prior to the first shots being fired in Charleston, South Carolina, igniting war between the North and the South, cotton was America's leading export. Most of the world's supply of cotton came from the American South. The sweat and labor of black slaves produced that cotton. The Southern aristocracy was not about to let their economic model, based on human servitude, be restrained or upended. The Confederate States of America was the result.

That's why, far from bending to political pressure or political correctness, those leaders who are trying to remove, or have removed, the Confederate flag from state capitols and municipalities get it. The Confederate flag is not a representation of what unites us, but of what divides us. As we continue to try and craft "a more perfect union," the flag coming down helps facilitate that effort, just as continuing to let it stand impedes it. Will it end racism and hatred? No. Will it show that we are trying to overcome it? Yes. Preserve it, but don't promote it.

This Fourth of July weekend, yards, streets, office buildings, government buildings and the like will be covered with all manner of symbols and objects commemorating our nation's birth. This Saturday night, while staring up at breathtaking exploding fireworks, Americans of every hue and age will be waving replicas of our nation's flag, reminded of the privileges and promise that it represents. We owe a debt to imperfect men who nevertheless left us with noble ideas and an inspired purpose. Our symbols remind us of that. What represents us matters.

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Violent racism not reciprocated by black community

BY CLYDE FOSTER/CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Shortly after this paper went to press a couple of weeks ago with my commentary on the Rachel Dolezal scandal, a man walked into Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and attended a prayer meeting before pulling out a handgun, making racist comments and opening fire. Nine people were killed — nine souls who, in the hour before their death, embraced and shared fellowship with their killer.

At the end of my Dolezal commentary, I predicted a new “it” story concerning racism in America that would once again break our attention spans, forcing us to have an opinion on yet another issue of no real consequence. In this case, my prediction was only half right.

Yes, the church shooting is yet another “it” story involving racism, but the consequences felt more real than most.

I’m not going to talk about the terrorist who committed this act. In fact, I will not bother to mention the coward by name. His name has been cemented in the mainstream’s collective consciousness already.

I also will not elaborate on the fact that the coward was brought into custody by the same police force that has been accused of killing people of color for far less serious crimes. I will not explore the difference in the depiction of black criminology vs. white criminology. I will not talk about the Confederate flag that still waves over Charleston, as well as mostly every other Southern city, while we are being told we live in a “post racial America.”

While these are proactive topics that could very well garner attention for a writer, they will garner none of mine. A

close friend of mine, poet and artist Baron Amato, once told me “always give your energy to the greater than” and that’s exactly what I plan to do.

On Sunday morning, June 22, less than a week after the domestic terrorist attack that took place within its walls, Emanuel AME Church continued with its regular Sunday morning service. Of all the angles that have been taken to view this tragedy, none sums up the underlying, yet most important theme throughout all of this: the resilience of the black spirit.

The truth is, the murder that took place June 17 was different from other racially motivated murders that have come to light in the past couple of years. Not to be dismissive of the other incidents, but this one is a beast of a different nature.

If the suspect’s intent was solely to take black lives, there are numerous places where black people exclusively gather. But I believe this was a direct attack on black spirituality.

The intent was to make a place most sacred in the hearts of many African-Americans — the church — and taint it. This coward attempted to replace sanctity with fear, joy with anger and God with hate. As the church doors opened the following Sunday morning, however, one thing was immediately apparent: he failed.

Being a black Christian is not an easy thing these days. Every day, there seems to be a new religion that is more “in line” with our ancestors’ beliefs. There is the pain of reconciling with the church’s misdeeds in the past. There are criticisms from the “conscious” black crowd that you are

worshiping the God of your slavemasters (although Christianity predates the European slave trade), or that you worship a blonde-haired, blue-eyed, white Jesus (even though Revelations 1:15 says different).

And then there are situations like this, those that mirror the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham of 1963, where cowards allow their hatred and cowardice to spill blood against people who would probably offer the least resistance in the form of violence (I suspect there is a good reason why hateful men do not try the same antics at a Nation of Islam mosque).

The general, yet uneducated, consensus is that the black connection to the Christian church had its conception during slavery. Even so, it only highlights the fact that we are not the monsters we are fighting against.

The thing that probably has and continues to anger racists to this day is that, regardless of what horrors they may put us through, we are not them. Time and time again we fail to reciprocate the hate acted upon us throughout the span of hundreds of years.

While the world may view it as weak, I view it as possibly the most godly trait a people can have. God bless the families of those slain on June 17. God bless Emanuel AME Church as they pick up the pieces and continue to praise him. And to the bastard who committed the atrocity and to anybody who may sympathize with him or his reasoning, let me make one thing clear if it hasn’t been made clear through the centuries: WE ARE NOT YOU.

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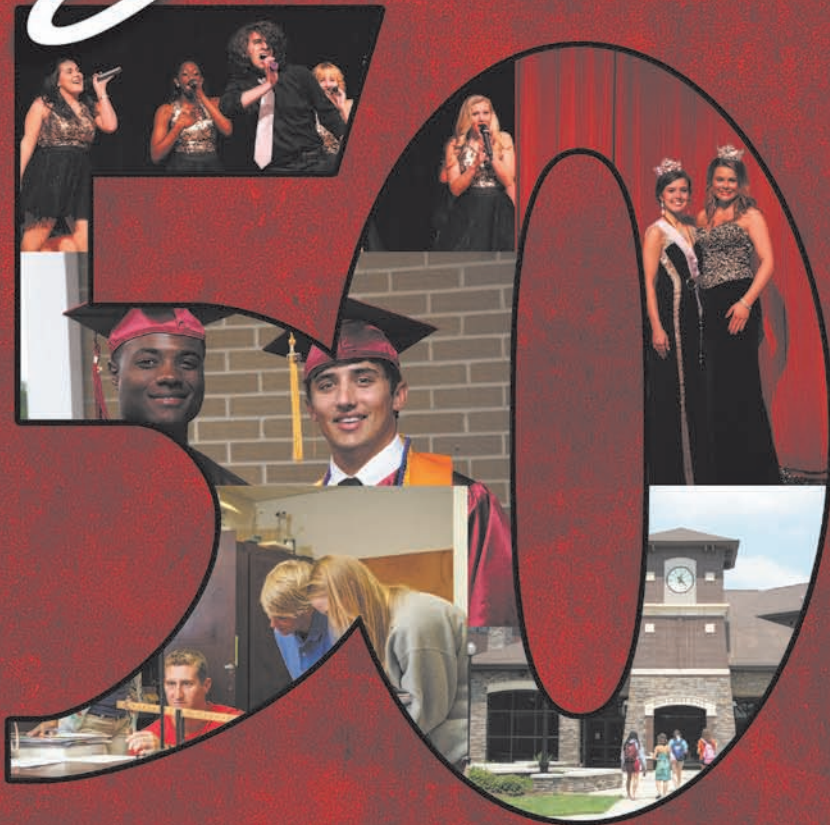
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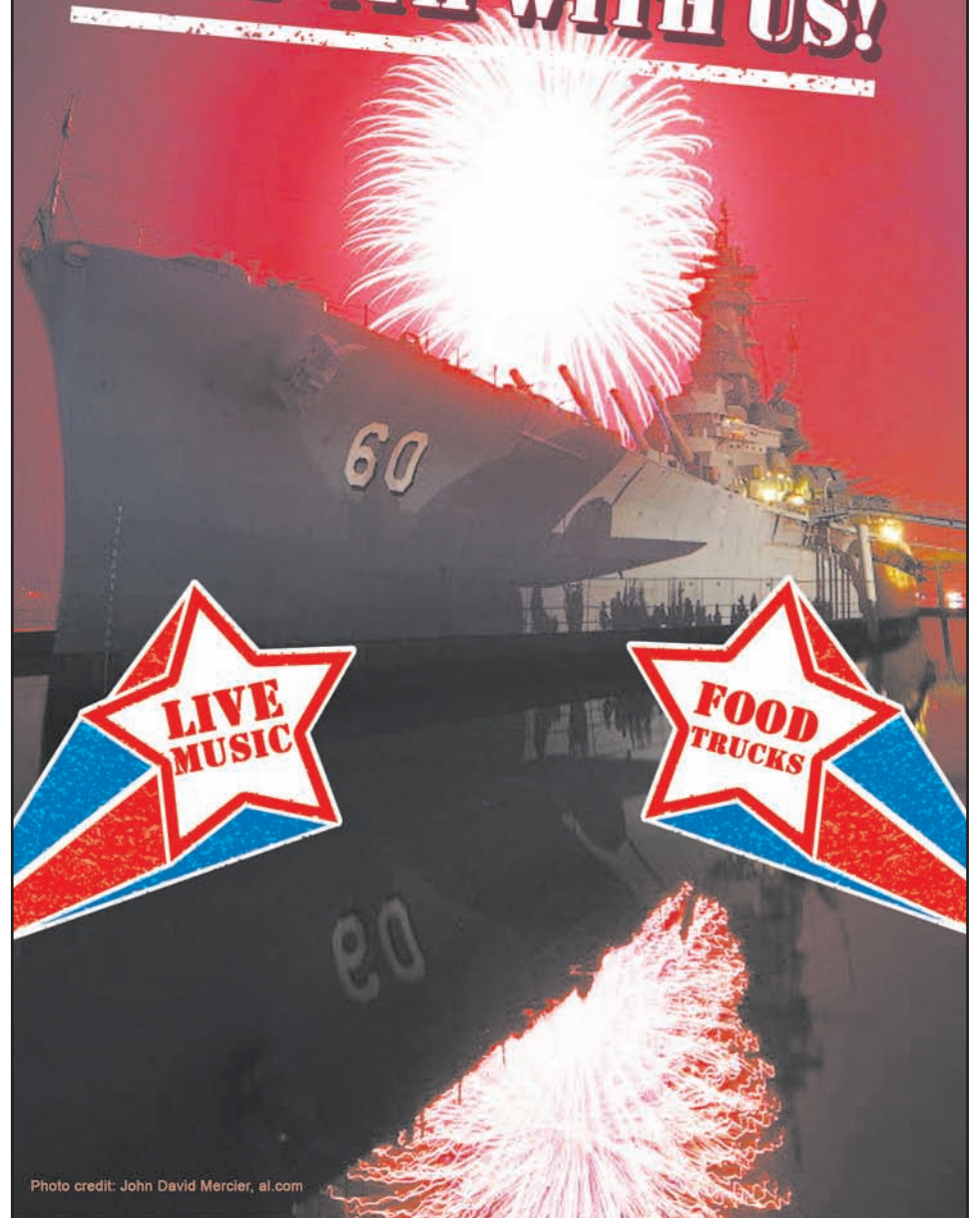


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Addressing large-scale, 'buy local' dilemma

BY RON SIVAK/COLUMNIST | business@lagniappemobile.com

Dr. Donald Epley, director of the University of South Alabama (USA) Center for Real Estate and Economic Development (CREED), recently spoke at the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce about the local economy and its future economic growth. Of particular interest to Epley is the economic impact of the "importing" of resources from outside the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Epley produced data-driven projections based on the Mobile Business Activity Index (MBAI), current employment and payroll figures, and consumer investment in home purchases. According to the results of his analysis, the MBAI showed a projected increase of 2 percent over the next 12 months, indicating a more productive year compared with 2014.

But a startling statistic from his presentation was the amount of imports the area uses to produce local goods and services. According to Epley, roughly 63 percent of production among the top 20 MSA industries was generated using imports from non-local suppliers. In monetary terms, this equates to more than \$21 billion in spending out of the area.

Lagniappe recently sat down with Epley to get his take on the best way to tackle this "buy local" dilemma in large-scale terms.

Lagniappe: "Buy local" is an idea that has been promoted by local small businesses for years. Do you think success will be found by hammering home the message upmarket to major job-generating industries in the region?

Epley: Yes. Decision-makers need to know the magnitude of the numbers and the potential impact made relative to the size of other expenditures in the area. To the best of my knowledge, these figures have not been seen in Mobile. Also, buying local relies only on local decisions. We do not need to look to Washington or Montgomery for help in stimulating the economy.

Lagniappe: If successfully heard, what number or percentage do you think would be realistic in regard to lowering the average amount of dollars spent importing goods and services outside the region from the current \$21 billion deficit?

Epley: A projection is difficult. If this analysis were redone in a year, and the import number had dropped by \$1 billion, I would be thrilled.

Lagniappe: Of the top five job-producing

industries in the region, one (other services) is below the 2015 family poverty-level guidelines, while another (retail) is barely above it. What, if anything, can be done to raise the average salary in these industries?

Epley: There are three ways to increase the overall economic activity. Increase jobs, increase wage income and increase jobs with an increase in wages. Existing firms must see a positive change in profits to change wages or income. Buying local should reduce transportation costs, which increases profit. Thus, increased profits provide industries with the opportunity to employ, raise wages or both. Reducing imports asks local firms to provide more products and/or create new firms as needed.

Lagniappe: Final thoughts?

Epley: My action plan only shows a group such as the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce assembling all of the 20 industries in the Convention Center and asking each to review their purchases, and determine among their own expenditures what can be bought in local markets. Another interesting implication of these numbers is that many of these purchases are subject to the local sales tax, which is a major source of government revenue. It could be used to simulate various potential sales tax levies.

More information about Epley's reports can be found at CREED's website.

BugMaster celebrates 40 years

Founded in 1975 by Mobile native Frank Alardo, BugMaster Exterminators Inc. is celebrating 40 years of service to the Mobile and Baldwin counties. According to a news release, the company is launching a "Summer of '75 Contest," giving away iconic 1970s-era trinkets, such as pet rocks and mood rings, to commemorate its founding.

BugMaster also plans to give away prizes in conjunction with other local business partners, including the Crescent Theater and Bluegill and River Shack restaurants, along with four \$100 gift cards for pest control services and a grand prize of an annual Sentricon termite contract valued at more than \$1,000. The contest is open to current and new residential customers. Prizes will be given away weekly, with the grand prize drawing Sept. 1. Registration is via the BugMaster website.

Insurance Professional of the Year

The Insurance Professionals of Mobile, the local association for the International Association of Insurance Professionals (IAIP) for Mobile and Baldwin counties, recently awarded the 2015 Anna S. Loding Insurance Professional of the Year Award to Allen Chapman during the association's annual Industry Night held at Mobile's Mardi Gras Museum.

The award is presented annually to a member of the association who has shown dedication to the advancement of the insurance industry.

With more than 14 years' experience in the industry, Chapman is an executive vice president with HUB International Gulf South Limited, a leading insurance brokerage firm with offices in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. He also is an active board member at Christ United Methodist Church and for the Senior Bowl. Chapman holds a bachelor's degree from The University of Southern Mississippi.

New Horizon names development director

Kasie Tanley Irby was recently hired as business development director for New Horizons Credit Union in Mobile. Irby joins from Army Aviation Federal Credit Union, where she held a similar position for more than four years. Prior to that she was employed at Am-South/RBC as a senior relationship banker.

Irby originally hails from Huntsville and graduated from Athens State University with a bachelor's degree in secondary education. She currently serves on the board of the Mobile chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management and is the 2015 conference chair. She also serves on the board of the American Red Cross, Alabama Gulf Coast Chapter.

Irby is an ambassador with the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce and also serves on the Chamber's Military Affairs and Business Retention and Expansion committees. She is a member of the Public Relations Council of Alabama, the Women's Council of Realtors and South Alabama Financial Crimes Task Force, and is active in the Mobile chapter of the Southeastern League of Credit Unions.

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Incontinence is an incredibly common condition that thousands of Americans suffer with each year. While it can occur in both men and women, for a variety of reasons women comprise the overwhelming majority of urinary incontinence patients. Loss of bladder control can take on of several forms and can be caused by a number of different issues; each one of these is treated differently using measures ranging from biofeedback and medications to minor and sometimes moderate surgical procedures. The pivotal and vital key to successful management is accurate assessment and diagnosis.

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An authentic slice of Mexico in Tillman's Corner

BY ANDY MACDONALD/CUISINE EDITOR | fatmansqueeze@comcast.net

Steve Varnes has been a good friend of mine for a long time. We've played music together sporadically for over a decade and his band, The Deluxe Trio, kills it every Wednesday at Callaghan's. I occasionally get to sit in with these monsters. On the surface, Steve and I are nothing alike. But when you dig a little deeper there are more similarities than he'd care to admit.

We're both avid Tom Waits and John Prine fans. We both know our share of off-color jokes. And most importantly, we have a similar passion for food. I know, I know. Everyone is passionate about food. Steve and I just place a higher importance on the same things. And the main thing is authenticity. So when Steve talks about food, I listen.

"You have to review these guys," I recently heard him say. He was speaking of San Jose #1 in Tillman's Corner. He rattled on and on about what makes this strip-mall taqueria so special, so I had to investigate. For a Mexican investigation, I needed Agent 549.

San Jose #1 can be a bit of a challenge to find if you don't have GPS capability. It's over by the Winn-Dixie. There's a lingerie shop next door, and you can even get a phone card two doors down. This is a place you must hear about. There isn't much on the Internet that can point you in its direction. I like that. And when we entered the facility, I knew we were in for an authentic experience.

We walked into a fairly busy weeknight and sat ourselves at an open two-top. In broken English we were asked what we wanted to drink. I chose a Jarritos grapefruit soda. Agent 549 politely asked for water. "We no have water. We out." I swear this actually happened. They told us they were out of water,

so it was a strawberry Jarritos for 549. I knew this was going to get good.

With Mexican food, I have found the bigger the language barrier, the better the food. I once convinced a Brooklyn restaurant to feed the band at 5:15 a.m. and it was amazing. I was hoping for a similar experience in Tillman's Corner. So we fumbled with the menu at San Jose #1 and here is what we came up with.

I was here for the **tacos (\$1.75 each)**. These beauties are served on a double layer of corn tortillas and adorned with fresh cilantro and chopped cucumbers. The waitress brought a three-sided caddy with a red sauce, a green sauce and pickled onions with peppers. Things were getting serious.

The first taco I tried was the wonderful **pork belly**. These are more like cracklings with a certain crunchiness to the meat. A touch of the verde sauce enhanced the flavor, and you can bet I will be having one of these again.

Taco al pastor is a pork favorite of mine. For this one I decided to try the onion-pepper mix. I placed a spoonful on the succulent white meat and dug in for a wonderful bite. This bite was followed by a stinging sensation, leading me to believe the peppers were habanero or better. It almost ruined my meal. Almost. I enjoy a strong amount of heat, but was surprised by this one. Once the flames settled, I could notice how good it really was.

Straight-up **chorizo** was ground sausage, as was the chorizo and beef mixture. For these I played it safe with the red sauce and found them enjoyable.

Agent 549 had a **chicken burrito**. I thought this would be boring, but it was anything but. The sizable burrito came with

Mexican yellow rice and beans. It looked like your everyday entrée, but tasted like a four-star burrito. The chicken was perfectly done and the juiciness blew my mind when I stole a bite.

Chips and salsa were not complimentary, so we ordered some. The chips were good, but we literally paid for a handful. The salsa was lacking. You may think I'm complaining. I didn't care one bit. The tacos and burrito completely overshadowed any shortcoming the menu may have presented.

If you'd like to try your hand at preparing your own tacos, San Jose sells all of their meats by the pound. It's a bit of a grocery store and butcher shop (carniceria) with a few more things than just meat. This place is the real deal. It's cash only. There were no to-go menus, no itemized receipts, no fuss. We ate, we paid and we got out.

Authentic ethnic food can be hard to find. This was no Americanized version of anything, and it was exactly what I needed. I'm not saying you should try San Jose #1. I'm saying you have to try it. If you're friends with Steve Varnes, you know what I'm talking about when he gets that gleam in his eye. Whether it's about music, a good joke or something culinary, I listen closely. I always benefit from those conversations. Thanks for the tip, Steve. Give me a call. Maybe we can discuss the stock market.

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Bistro Escoffier teams with John Weichman for wine dinner

BY ANDY MACDONALD/CUISINE EDITOR | fatmansqueeze@comcast.net

Things are shaping up at Bistro Escoffier. Chef Lee Thompson is knocking it out of the park with a refined daily menu. As if his skills aren't enough, Thompson is teaming up with guest chef John Weichman to present "A Summer Celebration of Wine and Food." This event will be held Friday, July 17, at 7 p.m. and is worthy of some serious attention.

The courses begin with shrimp Napoleon and crab and lobster cream sauce paired with a Chalk Hill Estates sauvignon blanc, followed by a mango-citrus and walnut spring mix. Weichman is bringing his popular scamp almandine with a meuniere sauce and summer squash, paired with a fruit-forward Chalk Hill chardonnay. Pork tenderloin supreme medallions are done in a cherry-pinot noir reduction with potatoes Boulangere, along with the lively Argyle pinot noir from Willamette Valley, Oregon. The evening will be capped off with grilled peaches and fresh berries with toasted pecans, paired with the heavily anticipated Sophra sparkling rose from New Zealand.

Reservations are required, so call 251-450-2030 to get a jump on the limited seating. Cost is an all-inclusive \$65 per person. Bistro Escoffier is located at 1714 Dauphin St.

Food Truck Fest benefits Mobile Baykeeper

Any excuse to pull a bunch of food trucks together is a good one. The Bay Bites Food Truck Festival provides such an excuse. Wednesday, July 8, from 5-8 p.m. at least 10 grub vehicles will be congregating at Cooper Riverside Park on Water Street for a tasty event that will have you wishing you could try everything.

Sample the wares of Mobile's most popular dining cars such as Bacon My Day, Grits and Grub, Von's Food Truck, Geaux Boy, Ben's Burga Caboose, Frio's Gourmet Pops, Kona Coastal Alabama, Chill Yogurt Café, Pita Pit and Saucy Q Barbecue.

Advance tickets are \$10 and \$15 at the door. The price gets you into the event and includes three beer tickets for those of age. Once in the event, you'll be able to purchase food from these excellent vendors. Kids 12 and under get in free. Purchase tickets at www.mobilebaykeeper.org.

Cream and Sugar adds new menu items

George and Savannah in the OGD is getting a little tastier, with six new menu items at Cream and Sugar. The Buffalo chicken wrap is a hit, but many are going crazy for the spinach and artichoke grilled cheese. Lunch is better with a new spinach salad and a Cobb salad, but the fruit and cottage cheese plate would be just as great as a breakfast item as it would at lunch.

The new vegan taco soup has black beans, fresh corn, roasted tomatoes, and garbanzo and kidney beans. There's another vegan option in the vegan panini, with spinach, roasted peppers and portabella mushrooms.

Don't forget they have Cammie's Old Dutch Ice Cream and Frios Gourmet Pops plus yogurt smoothies!

Tilmo's opens at old Foosackly's location

We told you weeks ago it was happening. The day finally arrived. Last week Tilmo's Barbecue opened to an enthusiastic crowd making it "one for the books," as put by sibling owners David and Ryan Tillman. With the popularity of their downtown restaurant Cotton State Barbecue, no one expected anything less than early success for the Brothers Tillman in their latest venture at Dauphin and Interstate 65.

The former Foosackly's location is set up for barbecue on the go as they sling the smoky stuff through the drive-thru window. The simple menu consists of pulled pork, chicken, brisket

and chicken salad served in a sandwich, on a potato, or atop a salad. Banana pudding is a regular dessert at any Alabama barbecue institution, but the welcomed surprise of Sno Biz shaved ice treats places them as the closest thing to a snow cone stand near my house.

There is also a kids' menu, so you have no excuse to not grab some 'cue on the go Monday through Saturday from 10:30 a.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Benjamin's closes a door and opens a window

You heard it here when Benjamin's closed down. Then the eatery at the loop reopened with some hours that were hard to keep. Now they have shut the doors to their eclectic Midtown restaurant and are solely focusing on serving food through the window of their Burga Kaboose trailer. While the brick-and-mortar restaurant's Facebook page is still up and running with sporadic updates, fans of the crazy burgers you came to love should follow the new page for the food truck.

Downtowners transitions to Pizzeria Delfina

Fans of Italian food should be happy to know that the former Downtowners location will soon become Pizzeria Delfina. This prime spot near Royal St. is in good company across from Pannini Pete's and a hop, skip and a jump from other hot spots such as Dumbwaiter, Noble South and the Haberdasher.

Expect more than just pizzas from owner Richie Gambino. Traditional Italian fare and new favorites are a part of the plan. A hard opening has not been set but things are getting close to being finalized. We will let you know as soon as there is something more concrete, but diners should be excited about a new Italian option in LoDa.

Happy Fourth! Recycle!

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Mayor drawing new model for arts and cultural organizations

BY KEVIN LEE/ARTS EDITOR | klee@lagniappemobile.com

Last week's Artifice found us at a table with Mayor Sandy Stimpson's Chief of Staff Colby Cooper discussing the History Museum of Mobile. Cooper became de facto cultural administrator for a scattering of Mobile institutions when the new administration eliminated the Office of Cultural Development in 2013.

Among the subjects broached was the state of Mobile's cultural scene as a whole, the issues it faces and possible solutions based on what's worked in other towns. The possibilities sounded familiar yet new.

Though not a Mobile native, Cooper has managed to grasp some of the area's longtime difficulties. Many have historical precedent, such as Mobile's constant issues with capital.

"We all recognize that in Mobile, until we have an outlier situation where someone of exorbitant wealth moves into this area, there is only a certain amount of benevolent money in the city of Mobile every year," Cooper said. "And all we do is cannibalize from one organization to another, and city government is also one of the biggest benevolent-giving organizations every year."

The reference stirred memories of the widespread outcry a year ago when the administration's proposed 2015 budget disappointed several arts organizations. The shrinking or disappearing financial support provoked public outcry by groups like Mobile Arts Council, Mobile Opera and the Gulf Coast Exploreum.

The chief of staff is quite aware of the factionalism that often works against arts groups and sees room for a new approach.

"One of the things Mobile could possibly explore — other great cities have used this model very effectively — is essentially an arts and culture commission, which, if you look at a San Diego, or a Charlotte or a New Orleans, you have an umbrella organization whose sole responsibility is the promotion and advocacy of the arts and cultural entities," Cooper said. "They work hard to streamline them both in a functional role, accessibility,

not necessarily programming because you leave that up to the independent organizations, but then they really work hard to coordinate fundraising."

Cooper mentioned "fundraising capability with large-scale national grants," which sounded like a governmental version of the Mobile Arts Council. If locals are as bent toward streamlining as they seem to be, wouldn't resistance be a likely result?

"The question is, is that resistance worth it because it's actually making it better?" Cooper said. "Right now, who is the advocate for the arts and cultural entities in the city of Mobile?"

Cooper thinks with such an entity Mobile could be a cultural epicenter for the region. He said the administration is passionate about the goal but would need the city council and community to share that zeal.

"Arguably you want to create a buffer from government so that you don't have the political skepticism that often surrounds decisions made within government. Then you get the right people, meaning people who know the industries, who know how to [raise funds], who know how to do development, who have networks that stand all across this country and this world to bring in the resources."

He readily admits investments in museums are an investment in quality of life with no real hope for financial remuneration of the typical sort. Making the city a place that keeps its best citizens and attracts even more, along with better business, is the return.

Cooper's vision also includes some type of "quality control." When government has no restraint on growth, he emphasized, it becomes too adversarial.

"In performance contracts, it's us versus 80 organizations out there and you could really do some good if there was a filter of sorts, not a filter to make it easier, a filter that makes it better," Cooper said. "What is that empowering mechanism that



Photo/ Facebook/ Mobile Arts Council

The Stimpson administration is exploring the possibility of an arts and cultural commission modeled on successful organizations in other cities.

says, this year Organization X, because of their programming, deserves this and you have a liaison out there that can work with these organizations rather than doing what government has done de facto, they just level fund and they've done it for 20 years."

Since administration of the Mobile History Museum has been handed to its board of directors, Cooper has at least cleared enough of his plate to possibly make plans toward that end. With the amount of change in the air, it wouldn't be the most surprising thing.

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ARTART GALLERY



Traditional Independence Day on the bluffs

BY KEVIN LEE/ARTS EDITOR | klee@lagniappemobile.com

For many area residents, nothing fits the bill for a nostalgic Fourth of July like the celebration in the Eastern Shore hamlet of Fairhope. The small town with the long pier will hold its annual Independence Day festivities in the picturesque setting of Henry George Park on the bluff overlooking the pier and Mobile Bay.

The Baldwin Pops Band will crank up the music at 7 p.m. under direction of Dr. Roger Jones. On the program are "Big Band Signatures" by John Higgins, "Centennial Tribute March" by Roger Jones, Duke Ellington's "Come Sunday," "Fantasy on American Sailing Songs" by Clare Grundman and a salute to the U.S. Armed Forces. Minister of Music of First Baptist Church of Fairhope John Baldwin will sing "God Bless the U.S.A." by Lee Greenwood and "You Raise Me Up" by Brendan Graham and Rolf Løvland.

There will be a children's parade with flags and an award for the most interesting picnic arrangement. Bring chairs or blankets and a picnic supper.

A fireworks display coordinated by the Fairhope Volunteer Fire Department will begin at approximately 9 p.m. WABF 1220 AM will broadcast the Baldwin Pops concert live for those who are unable to make it to the park.

The north end of Fairhope Municipal Park will be open throughout the day and remain open until parking spaces are filled. The south end of the beachfront park and Knoll Park will also be available to spectators. Handicapped parking will be available near the fountain but will be limited; those wishing to utilize it should plan to arrive early and depart soon after the fireworks.

For more information, call 251-929-1466 or 251-987-5757.

Mobile Opera 'Night of Song' follows holiday

Mobile Opera stages a monthly "Night of Song" in an intimate setting where fans can appreciate voices normally heard from afar. July's event will take place Tuesday, July 7, 6:30 p.m. at Café 615 (615 Dauphin St.) downtown.

Admission to the cabaret is free, but inquiry or reservations can't hurt. For more information, call Mobile Opera at 251-432-6772. For reservations, call Café 615 at 251-432-8434.

Annual musicians' camp gets new name in memoriam

For 16 years now, the Gulf Coast Ethnic and Heritage Jazz Festival (GCEHJF) has brought some hot opportunities to an already scorching Mobile summer. The annual multi-day event features a celebration of spoken word and poetry, a free summer instruction camp for aspiring jazz musicians and a free concert on the first Saturday in August.

This year's event comes with an honorary twist, set for unveiling. The aforementioned camp will be renamed in memory of Marcus Johnson, the leader of the Bay City Brass Band who passed away Dec. 20, 2014, at age 44. Music education was a constant drive of Johnson's and his presence was a big part of the annual event.

Also emerging this year will be a scholarship fund for Johnson's twin sons, Markel and Markes. Both young men are juniors at Murphy High School and musicians to boot.

The kickoff for the scholarship fund will be held with a musical event July 9, 6:30 p.m. at The Temple, at the intersection of North Claiborne and St. Francis streets downtown. Live music is planned and the public is invited.

Checks to the scholarship fund can be made payable to: Marcus Johnson Scholarship Fund; Commonwealth National Bank; P.O. Box 2326; Mobile, Alabama 36652-2326.

GCEHJF has also announced its lineup for an Aug. 1 free concert at The Temple. Featured acts are the Bay City Brass Band, the E.B. Coleman Big Band, Gino Rosaria, Janell Richardson and headliner Eddie Shaw. The show begins at 3:30 p.m.

There will be vendors' booths, and food and drink will be available for purchase.

Stay tuned for more announcements as the month proceeds.

In case you missed it ...

If you happen to be someone who doesn't start at the front of the paper and go through it page by page, then get ready to back up. The saga at the History Museum of Mobile has taken another turn.

On Friday, June 26, the entirety of the museum's staff was notified their positions are going to be terminated. This follows a nearly year-long dispute with Mayor Sandy Stimpson's administration over the exact terms of administrative control, and it would appear the mayor has decided to cede the fight to the board for now.

At question will be how this might affect attendance. The mayor waived admission fees last October against the board's wishes and since then visitor flow has increased some 60 percent over the previous five years.

At the heart of the contention is the administration's argument that without a lease agreement, the board holds no administrative powers. Specifics about leasing details or arrangements, and the performance contract that will come from the city, were not available at the time of this writing.

Only five of 24 employees are said to be retaining city employment through transfer to other departments.

For more details on this latest and boldest development in the ongoing saga, check out the story in the Bay Briefs section toward the front of this issue of Lagniappe.

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USS Alabama Memorial Park celebrates 50 years

BY TOMMY HICKS/CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It started with a small Associated Press story in the Mobile newspaper, noting that the World War II battleship USS Alabama was among the warships in the U.S. Navy’s fleet scheduled to be scrapped. William Robert “Bob” Miller, who had served aboard the Alabama, read the story and believed something should be done to save it.

So he wrote a letter to his state senator petitioning that the battleship be saved. Miller wasn’t alone. Soon, others across the state became involved in not only saving the USS Alabama from destruction but to bring it to the state where it could be displayed for all to see. Stevens Croom and Jimmy Morris were among the Mobilians who played an active role.

This year, the USS Alabama Memorial Park is celebrating its 50th year. And few are prouder of the anniversary than executive director Bill Tunnell, with the probable exception of Miller and the surviving crew members of the World War II battleship.

“She’s a beauty,” Miller said of the battleship during a recent visit to the park.

Miller, 87, a retired veterinarian who resides in Summerdale and is photographed on the cover of this newspaper, said the crew members aboard the USS Alabama were proud of their service aboard the battleship, which played an important role in the U.S. efforts in World War II.

“We took care of each other,” he said.

Looking toward the battleship as it sits today for visitors at the park, Miller pointed to one of the 20-millimeter guns on the port side of the Alabama.

“That was my gun,” he said.

He talked about his time on the battleship and noted that one of the most memorable moments of his service was when the Alabama was twice caught in the middle of Pacific typhoons.

“That rocked the ship pretty good,” he said.

Following his military service, Miller was a vet and also a professor, teaching at Auburn University for more than 20 years as well as a couple of years at Purdue University. He left teaching and took a job in the Mobile area where he and his wife remained ever since.

The close proximity to the park allows Miller to visit the Alabama often and he is a regular attendee when the battleship crew holds its annual reunions in Mobile — revisiting the battleship, keeping in touch with each other and rehashing stories of their days onboard.

Tunnell, who has worked at the park since Veteran’s Day 1991 and has served as executive director since May 1997, agrees.

“This has been the dream of a lifetime,” he said. “I was one of those kids in 1964 who raised money (to bring the battleship to Mobile) ... It touches everybody all around the state. Everyday is a new pleasure unto itself.”

The battleship has been tagged the state attraction of the year.

“This has always been one of the anchor attractions for Mobile and we’re probably the most known and most visible symbol in the state of Alabama because we get more than 20-plus million cars that go by here every year,” Tunnell said. “You look up and there’s the battleship and [people say], ‘We must be in Mobile.’ We are Alabama. It’s nice to be known by so many.

“People can come in here and live history,” he continued. “What we’ve tried to convey with everything here — the ship, the boats, the planes, the tanks, everything like that — is that it’s all very personal. They’re just pieces of steel. It’s the people inside them, the people that flew the planes and named the guns, that makes this place so special.”

In honor of the 50th anniversary, Tunnell came up with 51 facts about the USS Alabama and the park.

1. The USS Alabama battleship, according to Tunnell, has had an economic impact, based on admission charges alone, of more than \$800 million.

2. The USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park represents all the branches of the U.S. military — Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard. “We represent Alabama and her citizens who have kept America free,” Tunnell said.

3. The USS Drum submarine, which is also on display at the

park, is the oldest Gato-class, WWII-era museum submarine. A reunion of the Drum’s crew was held last month at the park and four members attended. The youngest was 87 years old.

4. The first patrol by the USS Drum resulted in the sinking of a seaplane surrounded by destroyers that responded with depth charges in an attempt to sink the submarine.

5. The aircraft pavilion, which houses many planes and other artifacts, was built to house eight planes but now houses 14. Tunnell said he hopes to soon have an addition to the building or a separate new building for educational programs.

6. The USS Alabama was called the “Lucky A” because during World War II it lost no American lives due to enemy fire. The battleship was also known as the “Mighty A.”

7. Coffee in the morning required four 80-gallon pots to make 320 gallons of coffee for the crew.

8. The Alabama shot down 22 planes.

9. The Alabama was armed with four types of guns and a total of 129.

10. The average age of Alabama’s 2,500-man crew was just 21. That remains the average age of battleship crewmates in the U.S. Navy today.

11. It took 140 men to operate each of the big gun turrets, which were five levels deep on the ship.

12. Each of the 16-inch big guns could shoot a 2,700-pound shell up to 21 miles.

13. When the big guns were firing, more than 58,000 pounds (29 tons) left the battleship every minute.

14. The Alabama was only used for 37 months during World War II and was relatively new — having logged just 218,000 miles — when it was retired.

15. The Alabama cost approximately \$80 million to build in 1942.

16. Cooks had to prepare more than 7,500 meals per day, more than 50,000 meals per week and more than 2.5 million per year.

17. The initial fundraising campaign to bring the Alabama to Mobile was one in which school children in the state donated and raised money — sometimes pennies at a time — producing \$100,000 in 1964. Approximately \$800,000 was produced by a professional fundraising group but it wasn’t enough. Three Mobile banks — First National, Merchants National and American National — loaned the money for the remaining funds needed.

18. Karen Tunks, a professor at the University of South Alabama, is in the process of writing a children’s book about the fundraising project by school children. The cover illustration will feature the battleship floating on nickels, dimes and quarters.

19. The park opened on Jan. 9, 1965, which happened to be the day the Senior Bowl was played. A tribute to the battleship was featured at halftime. The battleship had been decommissioned and taken out of service on Jan. 9, 1947, so that date held meaning.

20. Another Jan. 9 note: Damage from Hurricane Katrina in 2005 forced closure of the park for more than four months. It reopened on Jan. 9, 2006.

21. Katrina caused \$7.1 million in damages to the park, including the loss of four planes and major damage to 17 others. Additional spending was needed to repair the planes. The ship, which is bogged down in sediment, moved for the first time since 1964.

22. The park’s location was selected because when traveling west on the Causeway it can be seen from miles away.

23. To bring the ship in, the channel was dredged for 11,000 feet in length, 32 feet deep and 125 feet wide — displacing a total of 2.9 million cubic yards of material at a cost of \$255,000.

24. The first 75 acres of the park were created from the dredged matter.

25. The Alabama was towed from Bremerton, Washington, to Mobile — at 5,600 miles, the longest ton-per-mile tow in history, according to Tunnell.

26. The Alabama was brought to Mobile through the Panama Canal, which is 110 feet wide; the battleship is 108 feet, two inches wide. The Alabama spent two weeks moored in the Panama Canal as two storms churned through the Gulf.

27. A total of 6,322 men served on the USS Alabama, with 2,500 aboard at one time. Fewer than 300 of the 6,322 are alive today, the youngest being 87.

28. Crew members of the USS Alabama hold a reunion in Mobile every April.

29. More than 15 million people have visited the battleship.

30. Vincent Murphy, the duty officer who was manning a telegraph machine and relayed the message, “THIS IS NO DRILL,” as the attack on Pearl Harbor began, was one of the skippers of the USS Alabama.

31. The Alabama is also known as BB-60, the naval identification for battleship No. 60.

32. When the big guns on the ship were fired, it took 540 pounds of black gunpowder (six 90-pound bags for each shot) and the guns could shoot at least once every 30 seconds.

33. It required 3,000 people working 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 30 consecutive months to build the USS Alabama. The task was completed nine months ahead of schedule.

34. The Alabama weighs 40,000 tons (80 million pounds) today. When fully loaded during WWII, the ship weighed 90 million pounds.

35. The Alabama is 194 feet high.

36. The battleship’s first captain, George Barry Wilson, went on to help plan the D-Day invasion.

37. The Alabama won nine Battle Stars.

38. The USS Drum won 12 Battle Stars.

39. At full speed, the Alabama could travel at 32 miles per hour (28 knots).

40. In 2003, four million gallons of water was pumped out so the ship’s hull could be repaired.

41. A total of 28 planes from the past seven decades are featured in the park, including an A-12 Blackbird, a CIA spy plane that could fly more than five times the speed of sound (3,000 miles per hour).

42. National Baseball Hall of Famer Bob Feller served on the USS Alabama.

43. The crew of the USS Drum consisted of just 72 people — seven officers and 65 enlisted men.



Photo/ Lagniappe

Each of the USS Alabama's 16-inch guns could be fired every 30 seconds, shooting a 2,700-pound shell up to 21 miles.

- 44. The keel of the Alabama rests 22 feet beneath the sand of Mobile Bay.
- 45. The big gun turrets on the battleship could turn up to 270 degrees but were not attached to the ship in any way.
- 46. The picnic area at the park is modeled after a typical South Pacific village.
- 47. The park's Vietnam river patrol boat, on display in the pavilion, went faster than 40 miles per hour and could turn 180 degrees in its own length of less than 40 feet.
- 48. The park's Wall of Honor inside the Medal of Honor pavilion honors the 9,583 Alabama citizens who have died for their country since World War I.
- 49. The aircraft pavilion honors the 30 Alabama citizens who have received the Medal of Honor.
- 50. Vietnam veterans designed, financed and built the Alabama Vietnam Veterans Memorial located in the park. It honors the 1,213 Alabamians who died in Vietnam.
- 51. The Korean War Veterans Memorial, located next to the Vietnam memorial, was dedicated June 25, 2002, and remembers 752 from the state who died in that war.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Plans for the annual Fourth of July celebration at the USS Alabama Battleship Park have been set. The park will be open on Independence Day from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., its regular hours, allowing visitors to tour the battleship and the other displays available. The park will close for regular visitation at 5 p.m., when it will open for the Fourth of July celebration. Cost is \$5 per car.

The show band Emerge will play a variety of music, including patriotic tunes, from 7-9 p.m. The annual fireworks show, produced by the city of Mobile, is scheduled to begin at 9 p.m. The first half of the fireworks show will feature a "Red, White and Blue" tribute to area veterans, with the finale dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the opening of the USS Alabama Battleship Park.

Food trucks will be on site and The Galley, the park's snack shop, will sell concessions. Those attending the holiday celebration are encouraged to bring blankets and lawn chairs, but grills, alcoholic beverages and fireworks are not allowed.

The Mobile Police Department will handle traffic control and boaters seeking a close view of the fireworks show are asked to adhere to safety rules, especially as it relates to space requirements for the fireworks barge that will be in use. For further information about the Fourth of July plans at the battleship, phone 251-433-2703. For more information at USS Alabama Battleship Park visit its website at www.ussalabama.com.

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- A) Ashland Midtown Pub
B) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
C) Callaghan's Irish Social Club
D) Garage E) Hayley's F) Brickyard

BEST BARTENDER

- A) Alex Daniels - Plow
B) Christopher Spencer - Noble South
C) Jacob Merritt - The Garage
D) Randy Jennings Sidecar Lounge
E) Stoney Boatman - The Garage
F) Zack Sutherland - Country Club of Mobile

BEST BARTENDERESS

- A) Avril McRae @ Firehouse Wine Bar
B) Cheryl Shifflet @ Callaghans
C) Lindsey Bembry @ Garage
D) Michelle Tallant @ Royal Scam
E) Miranda Thomas @ Baumhower's Wings Mobile
F) Rachael Norris @ Hayley's

HOTTEST BARTENDER

- A) Christopher Spencer - Noble South
B) John Miller - Garage
C) Josh Giraldo - O' Daly's
D) Rickey Slayton - Gabriel's
E) Ricky Havens, Pour Baby
F) Zack Sutherland - Country Club of Mobile

HOTTEST BARTENDERESS

- A) Amanda Motes - Ollie's
B) Avril McRae @ Firehouse Wine Bar
C) Haley Williams @ Veet's
D) Kerri Bryant @ Baumhower's Wings Mobile
E) Lindsey Bembry @ Garage
F) Margie White at JUDY'S

BEST NEW BAR

- A) Alchemy Upstairs Bar B) Fins Bar

- C) Midnight Rodeo D) Pour Baby
E) Shenanigans F) Sidecar Lounge

BEST DIVE BAR

- A) Blues Tavern B) Hayley's
C) Candy Store D) Garage
E) Top of the Bay F) Veet's

BEST E-SHO BAR

- A) California Dreaming
B) Fairhope Brewing Company
C) McSharry's Irish Pub D) Plow
E) Pour Nelson's F) Top of the Bay

BEST WEMO BAR

- A) Cockeyed Charlie's
B) Heroes USA C) Midnight Rodeo
D) Montego's
E) Pour Baby F) Stir

BEST MIMO BAR

- A) Ashland Midtown Pub
B) Butch Cassidy's
C) Mellow Mushroom
D) Red or White E) Silver Horse
F) Legacy Bar and Grill

BEST LODA BAR

- A) Alchemy Tavern B) Firehouse Wine Bar
C) LoDa Biergarten
D) O'Daly's E) OK Bike Shop
F) Garage

BEST SOMO BAR

- A) Barnicle Bill's B) Fins Bar
C) Pelican Pub
D) Pelican Reef E) River Shack
F) Zebra Lounge

BEST BEACH BAR

- A) Flora-Bama B) Lulu's C) Pink Pony
D) Pirate's Cove E) The Gulf
F) Hangout

BEST WINE BAR

- A) Firehouse Wine Bar

- B) Kitchen on George
C) Legacy Bar and Grill
D) Pour Baby E) Red or White
F) Southern Napa

BEST FANCY DRINK BAR

- A) Kitchen on George
B) Legacy Bar and Grill
C) Ruth's Chris Steakhouse
D) Sidecar Lounge E) Haberdasher
F) Noble South

BEST AFTER-HOURS BAR

- A) Alchemy Tavern B) Boo Radley's
C) Gabriel's D) Hayley's
E) Top of the Bay F) Veet's

BEST HAPPY HOUR BAR

- A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Buffalo Wild Wings
C) Kitchen on George D) Pour Baby
E) Garage F) Wintzell's

BEST E-SHO HAPPY HOUR

- A) California Dreaming
B) McSharry's Irish Pub
C) Moe's BBQ D) Plow
E) Pour Nelson's F) Top of the Bay

BEST SPORTS BAR

- A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Buffalo Wild Wings
C) Butch Cassidy's D) Heroes
E) Island Wing Company
F) Touchdown Tavern

BEST COLLEGE BAR

- A) Boo Radley's B) Heroes USA
C) O'Daly's D) Pat's E) Picklefish
F) The Bar

BEST WATERFRONT BAR

- A) Bluegill B) Flora-Bama Yacht Club
C) Pirate's Cove D) Sunset Pointe
E) The Gulf F) River Shack

BAR WHERE YOU ARE MOST LIKELY TO GET LUCKY

- A) B-Bob's B) Boo Radley's
C) O'Daly's D) Candy Store
E) Garage F) Veet's

BAR WHERE YOU ARE MOST LIKELY TO PICK UP A COUGAR

- A) Cockeyed Charlie's B) Hayley's
C) Legacy Bar and Grill
D) Candy Store E) Garage
F) Veet's

BAR WHERE YOU ARE MOST LIKELY TO PICK UP A SUGAR DADDY

- A) B-Bob's B) Cafe 615 C) Brickyard
D) Candy Store E) Garage F) Veet's

BEST FREE CRAWFISH BAR

- A) Boo Radley's B) Hayley's
C) Silver Horse D) The Bar
E) Brickyard F) Garage

BEST PLACE TO SHAKE YOUR BOOTY

- A) B-Bob's B) Boo Radley's
C) Midnight Rodeo
D) Saddle Up Saloon
E) Studio 5'4 F) Veet's

BEST GAY BAR

- A) B-Bob's
B) Flip Side
C) Gabriel's
D) Midtown Pub

FAVORITE CRAFT BEER

- A) Abita Andygator
B) Abita Strawberry
C) Back 40 Truck Stop Honey Brown Ale
D) Fairhope Brewing Company Lil Poison Brown Ale
E) Fat Tire Amber Ale
F) Sweetwater 420

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2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

FAVORITE IMPORT BEER

- A) Beck's B) Guinness Draught
C) Heineken D) Killian's
E) Newcastle F) Stella Artois

FAVORITE BEER TO DRINK ON THE BEACH

- A) Abita Strawberry B) Blue Moon
C) Bud Light D) Corona
E) Michelob Ultra F) Miller Lite

BAR WITH BEST TAP BEER SELECTION

- A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Island Wing Company
C) LoDa Biergarten
D) Mellow Mushroom E) Montego's
F) Top of the Bay

FAVORITE CASINO

- A) Beau Rivage B) Golden Nugget
C) Hard Rock Biloxi D) IP Casino
E) Palace F) Windcreek Atmore

BEST BAR BATHROOM

- A) Fairhope Brewing Company
B) Moe's BBQ C) O'Daly's
D) Pour Baby E) The Bar
F) OK Bike Shop

BAR BATHROOM FROM HELL

- A) Hayley's B) Silver Horse
C) Soul Kitchen D) Garage

BEST JUKEBOX

- A) Alchemy Tavern B) Fins Bar
C) Hayley's D) Silver Horse
E) Garage F) Waffle House

BEST MARGARITA

- A) Fuego B) Island Wing Company
C) La Cocina
D) Mellow Mushroom
E) Texas Roadhouse
F) OK Bike Shop

BEST BLOODY MARY

- A) Ashland Midtown Pub
B) Brick & Spoon Orange Beach
C) Cafe 615 D) Kitchen on George
E) Moe's BBQ F) T.P. Crockmiers

THE PERFECT MARTINI

- A) Kitchen on George
B) Legacy Bar & Grill C) Royal Scam
D) Royal Street Tavern Battlehouse
E) Ruth's Chris Steakhouse
F) Sidecar Lounge

BEST BUSHWACKER

- A) Flora-Bama B) Moe's BBQ
C) Pirate's Cove D) River Shack
E) Tacky Jack's
F) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar

BEST GENTLEMAN'S CLUB

- A) Cookies and Crème
B) Diamonds C) Lionz Den
D) Candy Store

SHOPPING/SERVICES

BEST HAIRSTYLIST

- A) Julia Liller
B) Julie Calloway C) Julie Rhames
D) Mitch Carter E) Phrankey Lowery
F) Sarah Morris Poiroux

BEST SALON

- A) Genesis Salon B) Salon West 5400
C) Studio PH
D) Tami's Mask & Mirror Studio
E) Sanctuary Salon F) TMACS

BEST BARBER

- A) Billy Helton
B) Charlene @ Mayo's
C) Dallas Jones
D) Johnny Sullivan E) Mayo's Barber Shop
F) Royal Street Barbers

BEST MAKEUP ARTIST

- A) Alexa Kiss B) Courtney McDonald
C) Gabriella Cernolev
D) Julie Calloway E) Stephanie Starkie
F) Valorie Floore'

BEST HOOHA WAXER

- A) Cecelia Heyer @ Cecelia's Wax Pot
B) Crystal Quattrone @ Pimp Day Spa
C) Jessica @ Wax'd Day Spa
D) Leah Jeffreys @ The porehouse
E) Stephanie Starkie @ Tami's Mask & Mirror F) Vivian's Nails

BEST PLACE TO GET A MANI

- A) Brenda's Nails B) Mally's
C) Royal Nails & Spa D) Spoil Me Nails
E) Tami's Mask & Mirror Studio
F) Vivian's Nails

BEST PLACE TO GET A PEDI

- A) Mally's B) Royal Nails and Spa
C) Spoil Me Nails
D) Tami's Mask & Mirror Studio
E) Venetian Nail Spa
F) Vivian's Nails

BEST ESTHETICIAN

- A) Amberjoy Medspa at the Park
B) Courtney Jones, Massage Envy Spa
C) Crystal Quattrone, Pimp Day Spa
D) Gabriella Cernolev, Dr. Vick/Premier Medical
E) Leah Jeffreys, The Porehouse
F) Stephanie Starkie, Tami's Mask and Mirror

BEST DAY SPA

- A) Battle House Spa
B) Medspa at the Park
C) Momentum Massage
D) Nou Veau Salon and Day Spa
E) Tami's Mask & Mirror Studio
F) Martin Center

BEST MASSAGE THERAPIST

- A) Denise Walker B) Hannah Summersell
C) Joanna Jennings
D) Rebecca Havard
E) Tina Collins F) Zach Babineaux

BEST HOOHA DOCTOR

- A) Dr. Glen Gallaspy, III
B) Dr. Lauren Lambretch
C) Dr. Margaret McGrath
D) Dr. Max Rogers E) Dr. Susan Vance
F) Dr. William Urquhart

BEST BOOB DOC

- A) Dr. Charles Dyas
B) Dr. Christopher Park
C) Dr. James Koehler
D) Dr. Kitti Outlaw E) Dr. Randy Proffitt
F) Dr. Stephen Sheppard

BEST FACELIFT DOC

- A) Dr. Christopher Park
B) Dr. Henry Barber
C) Dr. Kimberly Donnellan
D) Dr. Michael B. Lyons
E) Dr. Randy Proffitt F) Dr. Stephen Martin

BEST DERMATOLOGIST

- A) Dr. Scott VanLooke B) Dr. Amy Morris
C) Dr. Kathryn Dempsey
D) Dr. Roberta A. Swain
E) Dr. Ryan Ramagosa
F) Dr. Thomas Bender

BEST WEIGHT LOSS DOC

- A) Alabama 1
B) Dr. Jardine @ Medi Weightloss Clinic
C) Dr. Lawrence Carpenter @ Mobile Weightloss Center
D) Dr. Ruth Shields @ Healthy Weight 4 Me
E) Dr. William Urquhart @ Medi Weightloss Clinic
F) Rejuvenate Alabama



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2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST "DOC IN THE BOX" CLINIC

- A) Compass Urgent Care
B) Eastern Shore Urgent Care
C) Greater Mobile Urgent Care
D) Hillcrest Urgent Care
E) Immediate Care of the South
F) Urgent Care by the Bay

BEST DENTIST

- A) Dr. Richard Noblet
B) Dr. Russ Brandau C) Dr. Shaun Small
D) Grelot Dental
E) Northcutt Dental F) Parker Dental

BEST GYM

- A) Bodies By Cindy Health & Fitness Center
B) Planet Fitness
C) Pro Health
D) Signature Training Studios
E) Sportplex F) Via

BEST PERSONAL TRAINER

- A) Chris LaSonde
B) Emily Powell C) Josh Foster
D) Josh Mosner
E) Roshiki Carlos Letherwood
F) Shoshana Treichel

BEST VETERINARIAN

- A) Courtney Grijalva
B) Duke Animal Clinic
C) Jennifer Eiland
D) John Courtney
E) Mary Katherine Cross
F) Theresa Williams

BEST PET GROOMER

- A) Aborable Do's
B) Groomingdale's
C) Jeremy Henderson
D) Katrina Neece
E) LoLa Bells
F) Melanie Sleeman

BEST FLORIST

- A) Barrett Greer, LLC B) Beckham's
C) Belle Bouquet D) Cleveland
E) Elizabeth's Garden
F) Zimlich Bros

BEST WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER

- A) Chad Riley Photography
B) Jeff Tesney Photography
C) John Rapier Colonial Photography
D) K Rae Photography
E) Photography by Miranda
F) SLR Photography

BEST YOGA STUDIO

- A) Alabama Healing Arts
B) Soul Shine Yoga C) Sterling Hot Yoga Works
D) Synergy E) Fit Nest F) Via

BEST YOGA INSTRUCTOR

- A) Annette Porter-Ham
B) Brooke Nesbit C) Irene Callaway
D) Missy Calvery
E) Shoshana Treichel
F) Teddy Ward

BEST MECHANIC/AUTO SHOP

- A) Griffith Service Station
B) Lucus Goodrum C) Mark McGugin
D) Milton's Honda Shop
E) Red's Automotive
F) Shane's Automotive

BEST CARWASH/DETAIL

- A) Alabama Auto Clean
B) Bebos
C) Rich's Car Wash D) Scott Miller
E) Ultra Car Wash F) Zippy's

BEST LAWYER IF YOUR SPOUSE IS A HO (DIVORCE)

- A) Alison Herlihy B) Claude Boone

C) Donald Briskman

- D) Gary Fillingim E) Jerry Pilgrim
F) Larry Hallett

BEST LAWYER TO KEEP YOU OUT OF PRISON (CRIMINAL)

- A) Bucky Thomas B) Dennis Knizley
C) Jeff Deen D) Lee Hale, Jr.
E) Sid Harrell F) Tom Walsh

BEST LAWYER TO SUE THE PANTS OFF SOMEONE (TRIAL)

- A) Cunningham Bounds
B) Daniel Rhames
C) David J. Maloney
D) Desi Tobias E) Greene & Phillips
F) Vince Kilborn

BEST REAL ESTATE FIRM

- A) Bay View Realty
B) Bellator Real Estate & Development
C) Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Cooper & Co
D) LLB&B E) Roberts Brothers
F) Sam Winter & Co.

BEST REALTOR

- A) Angela Locklier B) Bill Hinton
C) Erica Davies D) Missy Hayes
E) Peggy M. Rice
F) Sam Winter

BEST NEW CAR DEALER

- A) Joe Bullard B) Mullinax
C) Palmer Toyota D) Sandy Sansing
E) Springhill Toyota
F) UJ Chevrolet

BEST USED CAR DEALER

- A) Colony Motors Daphne
B) Ethan Hunt C) Keith Kingan
D) MCD Motors E) SKCO
F) Walley's Auto Sales

BEST CPA

- A) R. Andrew Cook
B) Bob Clements
C) John Bedsole D) John Jeffries
E) John Shields F) Karen Simmons

BEST LANDSCAPER

- A) Bradley Davis @ AllTurf
B) Bay Landscaping C) Live Oak
D) Southern Style
E) Sprinklers & More F) Turfmaster

BEST CONTRACTOR/HOMEBUILDER

- A) Bo Wilder Contracting
B) Cochran Investments, Inc.
C) David Thorne D) Heritage Homes
E) Pro 1 Painters, LLC F) Truland Homes

BEST INTERIOR DESIGNER

- A) Alice Cutright B) Angela Grady
C) Carolyn Pritchett D) Jeanelle Clark
E) Mary Jo Matranga
F) Samantha Dougherty

BEST HARDWARE STORE

- A) Andrew's Ace
B) Blankenship's Universal Hardware
C) Carwie's Ace
D) Fairhope Hardware
E) Springhill Ace F) Wigman's Hardware

BEST PEST CONTROL

- A) AFCO B) Bugmaster
C) Cook's D) Kelly's
E) Knockout Pest
F) Redd Pest Control

BEST PET STORE

- A) B & B
B) Pet Smart
C) Pet Supermarket
D) Pet Supplies Plus E) Petco
F) Waggy Tail

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THE FINALS
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST ANTIQUE STORE

- A) Antiques at the Loop
B) Charles Phillips C) Cotton City
D) Brothers Gallery
E) To Arms Antiques F) Yellow House

BEST MEN'S CLOTHING STORE

- A) D&K B) Dillard's
C) East Bay Clothier D) G Harvell
E) McCoy's F) Metzger's

BEST LINGERIE/NAUGHTY SHOP

- A) Gift Spot B) Lovin' Mood
C) Lucy's Love Shop
D) NT Lingerie and Video
E) Victoria's Secret

BEST WOMEN'S BOUTIQUE

- A) Been There B) Dragonfly
C) Hemline D) Metzger's
E) Polish F) U & I

BEST CLOTHING CONSIGNMENT STORE

- A) Abigail's Closet B) Hertha's
C) Pepe's D) Plato's E) Rave Reviews
F) Seasons Consignment, Crafts, & Gifts

BEST DEPARTMENT STORE

- A) Belk's B) Dillard's C) JC Penney
D) Kohl's E) Sears F) Stein Mart

BEST ACCESSORIES/AFFORDABLE JEWELRY

- A) Carter and Co.
B) Charming Charlie's
C) Christina Lynn's
D) Francesca's E) Knot Just Beads
F) Versona

BEST FINE JEWELRY

- A) Claude Moore B) Elliot's Jewelry

C) Friedman's Fine Jewelry

- D) Gold Art E) Goldstein's
F) Karat Patch

BEST DRY CLEANERS

- A) Gulf City Cleaners B) Jaguar Cleaners
C) Kelly Cleaners
D) Master Cleaner E) Paragon
F) Waite's

BEST HOME CLEANING SERVICE

- A) Clean Reflections
B) Maids a la Mode C) Merry Maids
D) Rosa's Housekeeping
E) The Maids F) Two Gals & A Mop

BEST STATIONERY STORE

- A) Gwin's B) It's Inviting
C) Judy's Hallmark
D) Paper Jubilee
E) Soiree Signatures Invitation Studio and Calligraphy

BEST OUTDOORS STORE

- A) Academy
B) Alabama Outdoors C) Bass Pro
D) Gander Mountain
E) McCoy's F) Spoke N Trail

BEST LOCAL PHARMACY/MEDICAL SUPPLY

- A) Christopher Pharmacy
B) McConaghy Drug Store
C) Midtown Pharmacy D) Newman's
E) Semmes Pharmacy
F) Springhill Pharmacy

BEST SHOE STORE

- A) Dillard's B) DSW
C) Gallery Shoe Boutique
D) McCoy's
E) Shoe Station F) Shoefly

BEST GIFT SHOP

- A) Carter and Co.
B) MA Simons
C) Marcie n Me D) Meggie B's
E) Ivy Cottage F) Urban Emporium

BEST HOME FURNISHINGS STORE

- A) Atchison Imports B) Bronstein's
C) Designer Collection
D) Fowler Lighting
E) J & J Furniture
F) Sarah B. Atchison's

BEST FURNITURE CONSIGNMENT SHOP

- A) All Around the House
B) Divine Consignment
C) High Cotton
D) Kaglen's E) Something Special
F) The Shop Around the Corner

BEST VAPE SHOP

- A) Cloud 9 B) Deep South Vape
C) Vapor Hut D) Vapor Bros
E) Vapor Dreamz
F) Want2Vape

BEST BANK OR CREDIT UNION

- A) Bank of the Ozarks
B) BBVA Compass
C) First Community Bank
D) New Horizons Credit Union
E) Regions Bank F) Wells Fargo

BEST THRIFT STORE

- A) America's Thrift
B) Goodwill @ Azalea
C) Goodwill @ Schillinger & Cottage Hill
D) Open Doors Methodist Thift Shop
E) Penelope's Closet
F) Wilmer Hall Thrift Store

KIDS

BEST KIDS' CLOTHING STORE- NEW

- A) GiGi and Jay's
B) Little Monkey Toes
C) Sweet Cheeks D) Holiday
E) Tiny Town F) Tippy Toes Dance Wear & Studio Gear

BEST KIDS' CONSIGNMENT STORE

- A) Carousel Kids B) Kids Wearhouse
C) Kidz Klozet D) Peek A Boutique
E) Sweet Cheeks Boutique
F) Wee Exchange

BEST KIDS' ROOM FURNISHINGS

- A) Babies R Us B) Funky Monkey Market
C) Just Baby Designs
D) Polka Tot Designs E) Rooms2Go
F) Siegel's Baby's Room

BEST SUMMER CAMP

- A) Broadway Bound at BBS!
B) Broadway South Dance
C) Camp Beckwith D) Dayspring Day Camp
E) House of Bounce
F) Silver Lining Farm

BEST DAYCARE

- A) Beck's
B) CDC Moffett Road Baptist Church
C) Dauphin Way Baptist CDC
D) Dauphin Way United Methodist CDC
E) Springhill Baptist CDC
F) Westminster Presbyterian Church CDC

BEST PRESCHOOL

- A) ABC Kindergarten
B) Ashland Place Preschool
C) Springhill Baptist
D) St. Mary's Preschool
E) St. Paul's Early Education Center
F) Westminster Presbyterian Church



2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST MOTHER'S DAY OUT

- A) Ashland Place
B) Christ United Methodist Church
C) Springhill Presbyterian
D) Springhill Baptist
E) St. Luke's Episcopal
F) Westminster Presbyterian

MOST KID FRIENDLY RESTAURANT

- A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Bluegill C) Chick-fil-A
D) Island Wing Company
E) Moe's Southwest Grill F) Hungry Owl

BEST BIRTHDAY PARTY PLACE

- A) Charming Teacup
B) House of Bounce
C) Knot Just Beads D) Pump it Up
E) Smilz n Stylz F) Spa Tea Da!

BEST PARK/PLAYGROUND

- A) Fairhope Community Park
B) Lavretta Park
C) Medal of Honor Park
D) Municipal Park
E) Public Safety Memorial Park
F) Tricentennial Park

MOST KID FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD

- A) Chateauguay B) Llanfair
C) Midtown D) Oakleigh Garden District
E) Ravine Woods F) Ridgefield

BEST KID-FRIENDLY LOCAL ATTRACTION

- A) 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center
B) Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo
C) Bellingrath Gardens and Home
D) Eastern Shore Center Splash Pad
E) Gulf Coast Exploreum
F) USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park

BEST DANCE STUDIO

- A) Brandy Brown Studio

- B) Broadway South Dance Studio
C) Debbie's School of Dance
D) Gale's Studio of Dance
E) Robinson's School of Dance
F) Sheffield School of the Dance

BEST PEDIATRIC DENTIST

- A) Gaines Thomas B) Lauren Moore
C) Marion McMurphy, Jr.
D) Maureen Baldy
E) Stephen Greenleaf
F) Trey Fellers

BEST ORTHODONTIST

- A) Brian Oliver B) Hicks and McMurphy
C) Hillcrest Orthodontics
D) James B. Donaghey
E) Keith Harvey
F) Todd Bennett

BEST PEDIATRICIAN

- A) Dr. Alfred Shearer
B) Dr. Elizabeth Weinacker
C) Dr. Karen Calametti
D) Dr. Matthew Cepeda
E) Dr. Nancy Wood F) Dr. Robin McNair

BEST KID PHOTOGRAPHER

- A) Capturing Life Photography
B) Chad Riley Photography
C) Janie Long Photography
D) LA Fotographee E) Laura Cantrell
F) Lyn Taylor Photography

BEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

- A) Baker High School
B) Clark-Shaw Magnet
C) Davidson High School
D) Mary B. Austin E) Murphy High School
F) Phillips Prep

BEST PRIVATE SCHOOL

- A) McGill-Toolen Catholic High School
B) St. Pius

- C) St. Luke's Episcopal School
D) St. Mary's E) St. Paul's Episcopal School
F) UMS-Wright Preparatory

COOLEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

- A) Alizabeth Irwin, Rockwell Elementary
B) Becky Anderson Parker
C) Ellen England Marston, St. Mary's
D) Michelle Lynd, Indian Springs Elementary School
E) Mindy Kirksey, North Mobile County School
F) Sarah Gross, St. Paul's Episcopal School

COOLEST MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER

- A) Brooks Walton, Phillips Prep
B) Christina Ricks, Bayside Academy
C) Kelly Poole, Lott Middle School
D) Kevin Balus, Semmes Middle School
E) Mary Fountain, Semmes Middle School
F) Nicole White, Clark Shaw Magnet

COOLEST HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

- A) Allison Miller, Mary G Montgomery
B) Joseph Moody, Mary G Montgomery
C) Phil Proctor, McGill- Toolen
D) Stephanie Tashbin, Baker High School
E) Tyler Lynd, Murphy High School
F) William Hurd Finnegan, Davidson High School

CITY LIFE

BEST MOBILIAN EVER

- A) E.O. Wilson B) Hank Aaron
C) Jimmy Buffett
D) Joe Cain

- E) Lonnie Johnson F) Rapahel Semmes

BEST MOBILIAN RIGHT NOW

- A) Chief Slac IV B) Craig Roberts
C) Joe Ringhoffer D) Leo M. Bullock III
E) Mayor Sandy Stimpson
F) The Prancing Elites

MOST ELIGIBLE BACHELOR

- A) Andy Newton B) Chris Wilson
C) Christopher Spencer
D) Colton Bradford
E) Mark Bodiford
F) Nguyen Hoang

MOST ELIGIBLE BACHELORETTE

- A) Ashley Douglas B) Courtney Parker
C) Jennifer Ritter D) Lisa Hokanson
E) Paige Morse F) Rachel Howat

COOLEST NEIGHBORHOOD-MOBILE

- A) Delwood B) Downtown
C) Lamplighter Woods D) Midtown
E) Oakleigh Garden District
F) Old Dauphin Way

COOLEST NEIGHBORHOOD – ESHO

- A) Brookhaven
B) Fairhope Fruit N Nut C) Lake Forest
D) Magnolia Springs E) Stillwater
F) Timbercreek

COOLEST UP-AND-COMING HOOD – MOBILE

- A) Brookwood B) Dauphin Island Pkwy
C) De Tonti D) Downtown
E) Historic Houston Street F) Midtown

COOLEST UP-AND-COMING HOOD – ESHO

- A) Aaronville B) Brookhaven
C) Burkhardt Estates D) Celeste
E) Daphmont
F) Firethorn



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2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST ANNUAL EVENT

- A) Mardi Gras B) Bayfest
C) Magic Christmas in Lights
D) Hangout Festival
E) Greater Gulf State Fair F) Greek Fest

BEST ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT

- A) American Cancer Chili Cook Off
B) Festival of Flowers
C) Junior League of Mobile's Christmas Jubilee
D) Downtown Cajun Cook Off
E) The Fuse Project's Dragon Boat Race
F) Woofstock

BEST PLACE TO HOLD A RECEPTION/SPECIAL EVENT

- A) 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center
B) Azalea Manor C) Gallery 450
D) Richards DAR House
E) Ezell House F) The Pillars of Mobile

BEST MARDI GRAS PARADING SOCIETY

- A) Conde Cavaliers
B) Crewe of Columbus C) Infant Mystics
D) Mobile Mystics E) Mystic Strippers
F) Order of LaShe's

BEST MARDI GRAS MARCHING SOCIETY

- A) Dauphin Street Drunks
B) Joe Cain's Mistresses
C) Joe Cain's Merry Widows
D) Mystic Soul Mates
E) Skeleton Krewe
F) Wild Mauvillians

BEST MARDI GRAS BALL

- A) Crew of Columbus
B) Fifty Funny Fellows
C) Maiden Butterflies
D) Mystic Strippers E) Mystics of Time
F) Order Of Osiris

BAND YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE AT BAYFEST 2015

- A) Alabama Shakes B) Linkin Park
C) Maroon 5
D) Red Hot Chili Peppers
E) Vomit Spots

BEST GOLF COURSE

- A) Robert Trent Jones Magnolia Grove
B) Timber Creek C) Azalea City
D) Heron Lakes Country Club
E) Lakewood F) Mobile Country Club

BEST BLOCK/STREET PARTY

- A) Blacklawn B) Dexter Ave.
C) Lafayette Street Party
D) North Monterey St.
E) South Lafayette St. F) South Monterey

COOLEST CHURCH OR HOUSE OF WORSHIP

- A) All Saints
B) Christ United Methodist Church
C) City Hope Church
(formerly Bay Community)
D) Dauphin Way United Methodist
E) Harvest Church
F) Praise Family Church

BEST PLACE TO TAKE OUT-OF-TOWNERS (ATTRACTION)

- A) USS Alabama Battleship Park
B) Strange Journeys Walking Tour
C) Richards DAR House
D) Carnival Museum
E) Bellingrath Gardens and Home
F) 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center

BEST PLACE TO TAKE OUT-OF-TOWNERS (RESTAURANT)

- A) Callaghan's Irish Social Club
B) Felix's Fish Camp
C) Kitchen on George D) NoJa

- E) Bluegill F) Wintzell's

BEST COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

- A) Spring Hill College
B) The University of South Alabama
C) University of Mobile

BEST JUNIOR COLLEGE/TRADE/TECHNICAL SCHOOL

- A) Faulkner State Community College
B) Remington College
C) Bishop State Community College
D) Blue Cliff
E) Columbia Southern University
F) Virginia College

COOLEST APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOBILE

- A) Charleston Apartments
B) Cypress Cove Apartments
C) D'Iberville Apartments
D) Plantations @ Hillcrest
E) South Monterey Place
F) Stone Ridge @ Somerby

COOLEST APARTMENT COMPLEX - ESHO

- A) Ashley Gates
B) Spanish Fort Town Center Apartments
C) The Vinings @ Spanish Fort

BEST MOVIE THEATER

- A) Carmike 16 B) Carmike Wynnsong
C) Cobb @ Gulf Shores
D) Premiere Cinema 14 Eastern Shore
E) Rave @ Jubilee Square
F) Crescent Theater

BEST LOCAL COMPANY TO WORK FOR

- A) CPSI
B) Cypress Employment Services
C) Midtown Mortgage

- D) Premier Medical Group
E) Providence Hospital F) Regions Bank

MUSIC

BEST LOCAL BAND

- A) Grits and Pieces
B) Infant Richard and The Delta Stones
C) The Mulligan Brothers
D) The Ric McNaughton Band
E) The Volks
F) Underhill Family Orchestra

BEST NEW LOCAL BAND

- A) 31 South Band B) Eleanor
C) Infant Richard and The Delta Stones
D) Pompeii Day E) The Stereo Dogs
F) The Volks

BEST BAND NAME

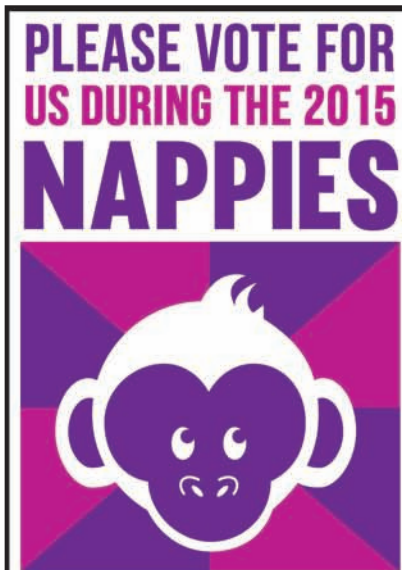
- A) Grits and Pieces
B) Infant Richard and The Delta Stones
C) The Stereo Dogs
D) The Handsome Scoundrels
E) The Volks
F) Turbo Crab

BEST PARTY/WEDDING/MARDI GRAS BAND

- A) 31 South Band
B) Crowned Jewelz Band
C) Grits and Pieces
D) Infant Richard and The Delta Stones
E) Super Funk Fantasy
F) The Tip Tops

BEST CLUB TO SEE LIVE MUSIC

- A) Bluegill
B) Callaghan's Irish Social Club
C) Plow
D) Soul Kitchen
E) Brickyard
F) Top of the Bay



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2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST OUTDOOR BAR TO SEE LIVE MUSIC

A) Bluegill B) Flora-Bama
C) Hangout D) Happy Harbor
E) O'Daly's F) The Bar

BEST VENUE TO SEE LIVE MUSIC (NON-BAR)

A) Bayfest
B) Frog Pond @ Blue Moon Farm
C) Mobile Civic Center
D) Saenger Theatre
E) The Wharf

BEST SOLO MUSICIAN

A) Eric Erdman B) Kristy Lee
C) Lisa Mills D) Phil Proctor
E) Ryan Balthrop F) Tim Kinsey

BEST JAZZ MUSICIAN

A) Blake Nolte B) Chip Herrington
C) Chris Spies D) Gerry Gambino
E) Jack Pritchett F) Justin Fobes

BEST HIP HOP ARTIST

A) Beamin B) Korbin Burke
C) Mr. Bigg D) Phunk Blue Moon
E) SB da G F) Sonny Bama

BEST MUSIC/RECORD STORE

A) Andy's Music B) Bay Sound
C) Dr. Music D) FYE E) Mobile Records

BEST LOCAL RECORDING STUDIO

A) Admiral Bean Studio B) Blue Magic
C) Day 6 Entertainment Group
D) Fade Out Entertainment E) Jada
F) Studio H2O

BEST GUITAR PLAYER

A) Brad Lane "The Volks"
B) Harrison Myles C) Mark Willis

D) Patrick Ramsey
E) Paul McDonald F) Ric McNaughton

BEST AREA SINGER/VOICE

A) Holli Mosley B) Jessica Head
C) Jonesy Jones yo Jonesy
D) Kristy Lee E) Neill Robertson
F) Simone French

BEST AREA DRUMMER

A) Daniel Clements
B) Dillon Winstanley
C) Josh McNaughton
D) Rick Perry E) Travis Patch
F) Zach Lynd

BEST AREA BASSIST

A) Carl Gates B) Christian Heiden
C) Jamie Newsome
D) John Palensky E) Julian Truxillo
F) Rodik Newsome

BEST DRAG QUEEN PERFORMER

A) Jawakatema Davenport
B) Miss Cie C) Miss Venus Shante DaVis

BEST DJ (MIXIN', MASHIN'UP KIND)

A) DJ Blayze B) DJ Clary
C) DJ M-Bezzle
D) DVDJ Lynch (Brannon Lynch)
E) KC Karaoke and DJ Services
F) Wermzer

BEST AREA MUSIC FESTIVAL

A) Aerofest B) BayFest C) Funkfest
D) Gulf Coast Ethnic & Jazz Festival
E) Hangout Festival F) South Sounds

ARTS

BEST LOCAL PAINTER

A) Aaron Hunt B) Amber Ivey Lane
C) Devlin Wilson D) Jenn Meador

E) Julie Rhames
F) Lucy Gafford

BEST LOCAL SCULPTOR

A) Aaron Hunt B) Bruce Larsen
C) Casey Downing Jr.
D) Harlan Toole Schwall
E) Rene Culler F) Shawn Berdux

BEST LOCAL GRAPHIC DESIGN ARTIST

A) Amanda Pritchard
B) Ashley Rice Lieb
C) Courtney R Smith D) Johnny Gwin
E) Katie Vogtner
F) Viv-Vah-Chey Designs

BEST MIXED MEDIA ARTIST

A) Amber Ivey Lane
B) Holly Carrigan C) Jenn Meador
D) Julie Rhames
E) Mateo F) Whitney Vittor

BEST ART GALLERY

A) Amber Ivey Gallery B) Ashland Gallery
C) Cathedral Square Gallery
D) Gallery 450 E) Lyon's Share
F) Robertson Gallery

BEST MUSEUM

A) Carnival Museum B) DISL's Estuarium
C) Historic Oakleigh House Museum
D) Mobile History Museum
E) Mobile Museum of Art
F) Richards DAR House Museum

BEST THEATRE GROUP

A) Chickasaw Civic Theater
B) Eastern Shore Repertory Theater
C) Joe Jefferson
D) Mobile Theater Guild E) Playhouse
in the Park F) Theater USA

BEST PLAY OR PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR

A) Aida B) Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
C) Into the Woods
D) The Addams Family Musical
E) The Music Man
F) Twelfth Night

BEST LOCAL ACTOR

A) Brandon M. Caten
B) Christopher Spencer
C) Isabella McCormick
D) James Boykin
E) Kelly Danielle Houk
F) Ron Goleman

BEST ARTS EVENT

A) ART Works - The Throwdown
B) Arts Alive! C) Fairhope Arts and Crafts
D) LODA Artwalk
E) Mobile Museum of Art Night Market
F) Mobile Symphony Orchestra Season

EATS AND DRINKS

BEST LOCALLY OWNED RESTAURANT

A) Butch Cassidy's B) Noble South
C) NoJa D) Osman's E) The Bull
F) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar

BEST NEW RESTAURANT - FINE DINING

A) Bistro Escoffier
B) Half Shell Oyster House
C) Pour Baby D) Dumbwaiter
E) The Melting Pot

BEST NEW RESTAURANT - CASUAL

A) Bob's Downtown
B) Hurricanes Bar and Grill
C) Island Wing Company
D) Micheli's Café
E) Ralph and Kacoo's F) Sunset Pointe

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2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST CHAIN RESTAURANT

A) Bonefish Grill B) Carrabba's
C) Chick-fil-A D) Foosackly's
E) Mellow Mushroom F) Moe's BBQ

BEST EASTERN SHORE RESTAURANT

A) Dragonfly B) Jesse's
C) Master Joe's D) Sunflower Café
E) Tin Top F) Wash House

BEST BEACH RESTAURANT

A) Cobalt B) Cosmos
C) Fishers @ Orange Beach Marina
D) LuLu's
E) Tacky Jacks F) The Gulf

BEST CHEF

A) Bill Briand @ Fisher's Orange Beach
B) Chakli Diggs @ NoJa
C) Chef Gillian Clark @ Kitchen on George
D) Chris Rainosek @ Noble South
E) Josh Lear @ Pour Baby
F) Sam McLeod @ Cobalt

BEST SERVER

A) Miranda Machen
B) Christopher Spencer
C) Mark Radoslovic
D) Nikki Scozzafava
E) Emily Muncaster
F) Zack Sutherland

BEST ATMOSPHERE

A) Fisher's @ Orange Beach Marina
B) Half Shell Oyster House
C) Kitchen on George
D) Pour Baby E) Rock n Roll Sushi
F) The Bull

BEST FIRST DATE PLACE

A) Felix's B) Mirko C) Pour Baby
D) Red or White E) Melting Pot
F) Noble South

BEST CHEAP DATE PLACE

A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Bob's Downtown C) Dew Drop Inn
D) Moe's BBQ E) OK Bike Shop
F) Blind Mule

MOST UNDERRATED RESTAURANT

A) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar
B) Bob's Downtown C) Blind Mule
D) Delish's Desserts E) Briquette's

MOST INNOVATIVE MENU

A) Dragonfly Foodbar B) Dumbwaiter
C) Kitchen on George
D) Noble South E) NoJa
F) Pour Baby

BEST OUTDOOR DINING

A) Bluegill B) OK Bike Shop
C) Boudreaux's D) Sunset Pointe
E) Thyme by the Bay F) The Gulf

BEST SWEET TEA

A) Chick-fil-A B) Foosackly's
C) Heroes D) McAlisters
E) Moe's BBQ F) Spot of Tea

BEST BISCUITS

A) Biscuit King B) Bob's Downtown
C) Cracker Barrel
D) Dick Russell's BBQ E) Hardees
F) Popeye's

BEST HOME COOKIN'/SOUL FOOD

A) Big Time Diner B) Judy's Place
C) Mama's D) Mary's
E) Time To Eat F) Via

BEST SERVICE

A) Felix's
B) Kitchen on George
C) Mirko D) NoJa E) Ruth's Chris
F) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar

BEST DESSERT

A) Cream and Sugar
B) Delish's Desserts C) Felix's
D) Kitchen on George
E) Ruth's Chris Steakhouse
F) Melting Pot

BEST RESTAURANT WINE LIST

A) Fisher's @ Orange Beach Marina
B) Half Shell Oyster House
C) Legacy Bar and Grill
D) Pour Baby
E) Red or White
F) Ruth's Chris Steakhouse

BEST WINGS

A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Buffalo Wild Wings C) Butch Cassidy's
D) Island Wing Company
E) Moe's BBQ F) WeMo's

BEST CHICKEN FINGERS

A) Foosackly's B) Moe's BBQ
C) PDQ D) Raising Cane's
E) WeMo's F) Zaxby's

BEST ICE CREAM/YOGURT/GELATO

A) Cammie's Old Dutch
B) Chill C) Cold Snap
D) Frios Gourmet Pops
E) Marble Slab Creamery F) Serda's

BEST LUNCH SPOT

A) Cafe 219 B) Dauphin Street Café
C) Montego's D) Panini Pete's
E) Regina's F) Stevie's Kitchen

BEST EASTERN SHORE LUNCH SPOT

A) Dragonfly
B) Panini Pete's
C) Sweet Olive
D) Sunflower Café
E) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar
F) Windmill Market

BEST ICE

A) Foosackly's B) Zaxby's
C) Momma Goldberg's
D) Heroes E) Pollman's
F) Bob's Downtown

BEST WINE/GOURMET SHOP

A) Andre's B) Domke Market
C) Food Pak D) Red or White
E) Rouse's F) Southern Napa

BEST BEER SELECTION – RETAIL

A) Rouse's B) Cottage Hill Package
C) Bebo's Springhill Market
D) Greer's Market
E) Publix F) Fresh Market

BEST ANNUAL FOOD EVENT OR COOK-OFF

A) ACS Chili Cook Off
B) Fairhope Steak Cook Off
C) Food Truck Friday
D) Greek Fest E) Gulf Shores Shrimp Fest
F) Downtown Cajun Cook Off

BEST FOOD TRUCK

A) Bacon My Day
B) Geaux Boy
C) Grits and Grub D) Hungry Owl
E) Smoking Gringos F) Von's

BEST GUMBO

A) Felix's B) Geaux Boy
C) Half Shell Oyster House
D) R & R Seafood
E) Stevie's Kitchen F) Wintzell's

BEST PO BOY

A) Boiling Pot B) Half Shell Oyster House
C) Market by the Bay
D) R&R Seafood
E) Roshell's
F) Wintzell's



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LAGNIAPPE WEEKLY

2015

READERS' CHOICE AWARDS



2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST SUSHI

A) Bamboo Fusion **B)** Chef Sake
C) Fuji San
D) Ichiban Japanese Steak House
E) Liquid **F)** Master Joe's

BEST BAKERY

A) Bake My Day **B)** ellenJay
C) Flour Girls **D)** Katy's **E)** Pollman's
F) Publix

BEST WEDDING CAKES

A) Cakes by Judi **B)** Couture Cakes
C) Flour Girls **D)** Katy's
E) The Pastry Shop
F) Pollman's

BEST CATERER

A) Bay Gourmet **B)** Chef Rob
C) Sean @ Creative Catering
D) Georgia Roussos
E) Naman's Catering
F) Tyner's Catering

BEST BURGER

A) Butch Cassidy's
B) Callaghan's Irish Social Club
C) Five Guys **D)** Heroes
E) Mug Shots **F)** Roshell's

BEST STEAK

A) Briquette's **B)** Longhorn
C) Osman's
D) Ruth's Chris Steakhouse
E) Texas Roadhouse
F) Union

BEST SEAFOOD

A) Ed's Seafood **B)** Felix's
C) Half Shell Oyster House
D) Original Oyster House
E) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar
F) Wintzell's

BEST BRUNCH

A) Ashland Midtown Pub
B) Benjamin's at the Loop **C)** Cafe 615
D) Callaghan's Irish Social Club
E) Kitchen on George
F) Sunflower Cafe

BEST ETHNIC RESTAURANT

A) 7 Spice **B)** Bangkok Thai
C) Jerusalem Café
D) Mediterranean Sandwich Co.
E) Ollie's **F)** Yak

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT

A) Azteca's **B)** Fuego
C) La Cocina **D)** Los Rancheros
E) San Miguel's **F)** Taqueria Mexico

BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT

A) Mirko **B)** Via Emilia
C) Gambino's **D)** Roma Café
E) Pinzone's **F)** Guido's

BEST PIZZA

A) Ashland Midtown Pub
B) Buck's Pizza **C)** Mellow Mushroom
D) Papa Murphy's **E)** Picklefish
F) Red or White

BEST COFFEEHOUSE

A) Carpe Diem **B)** Cream and Sugar
C) Mokas **D)** Satori **E)** Serda's
F) Starbucks

BEST EASTERN SHORE COFFEEHOUSE

A) Barnes and Noble **B)** Coffee Loft
C) Fabled Brew **D)** Latte Da
E) Mr. Gene's Beans **F)** Starbucks

BEST LOCAL GROCERY STORE

A) Greer's Market
B) Cain's Piggly Wiggly **C)** Chasing Fresh
D) Food For Less **E)** Food Pak **F)** 7 Spice

BEST GROCERY CHAIN

A) Publix **B)** Rouse's **C)** Winn Dixie
D) Walmart **E)** Greer's Market
F) Fresh Market

BEST GOURMET GROCERY

A) Domke Market **B)** Greer's Market
C) Publix **D)** Rouse's **E)** Fresh Market
F) Windmill Market

BEST PLACE TO GET LOCAL PRODUCE/FOODS- MOBILE

A) Greer's Market
B) Market on the Square
C) Old Shell Market **D)** Rouse's
E) Saraland Produce
F) Ted and Nancy's Fruit Stand

BEST PLACE TO GET LOCAL PRODUCE/FOODS - BALDWIN

A) Allegri's **B)** Bee Natural Farm
C) Burris Farm Market
D) Chasing Fresh **E)** Hazel's Market
F) Windmill Market

BEST BARBECUE RESTAURANT

A) Dick Russell's BBQ **B)** Dreamland
C) Meat Boss **D)** Moe's BBQ
E) Saucy Q **F)** Brick Pit

BEST BARBECUE SAUCE

A) Cotton State BBQ **B)** Dreamland
C) Meat Boss **D)** Moe's BBQ
E) Saucy Q **F)** Brick Pit

BEST RIBS

A) Dreamland **B)** Moe's BBQ
C) Meat Boss **D)** Sonny's
E) Dick Russell's BBQ **F)** Zea

BEST RAW OYSTERS

A) Bluegill **B)** Felix's
C) Fisher's Dockside
D) Half Shell Oyster House

E) Tin Top Restaurant & Oyster Bar
F) Wintzell's

BEST TAKE AND BAKE

A) Bay Gourmet **B)** Chive Talkin
C) Jamie Roussos's Foods
D) Micheli's Café **E)** Papa Murphy's Pizza
F) Rae's Kitchen and Catering

BEST CUPCAKE

A) Bake My Day **B)** ellenJAY
C) Flour Girls **D)** Pollman's
E) Simply Sweet Cupcake Boutique
F) Twist

BEST SEAFOOD MARKET

A) DIP Seafood **B)** Mudbugs at the Loop
C) Rouse's **D)** Skinner Seafood
E) Southern Fish and Oyster
F) Market by the Bay

BEST DRUNK FOOD

A) Waffle House **B)** Geaux Boy
C) Mediterranean Sandwich Company
D) Krystal **E)** Callaghan's Irish Social Club
F) LoDa Biergarten

BEST HANGOVER FOOD

A) Baumhower's Wings Mobile
B) Callaghan's Irish Social Club
C) Five Guys **D)** Foosackly's
E) Blind Mule **F)** Waffle House

MEDIA

FAVORITE RADIO STATION FM

A) 92.1 ZEW **B)** WABD 97.5
C) WKSJ 94.9
D) K-Love 98.3 **E)** 106.5 FM Talk
F) 107.3 Hit Music Now

FAVORITE RADIO STATION AM

A) WNTM 710 **B)** Archangel 1410
C) WABF AM1220
D) WERM 1480

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BEST YOGA TEACHER



2015 NAPPIES

THE FINALS READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BEST LOCAL DJ

- A) Gene Murrell @ WZEW
B) Matt McCoy @ WRGV
C) Nikki D Marks @ WDLTD) Pablo @ WZEW
E) Sean Sullivan @ FMTALK
F) Shelby Mitchell @ WKSJ

BEST DJ TEAM

- A) Dan Brennan & Shelby Mitchell
B) John & Johnna C) John Boy & Billy
D) Matt McCoy & Gossip Greg
E) Sean Sullivan & Wayne Gardner
F) Tim & Leeann TLC in the Morning

BEST MORNING SHOW/DJ

- A) Dan & Shelby B) John & Johnna
C) Lex & Terry D) Sean & Wayne
E) Tim & LeeAnn TLC in the Morning
F) Uncle Henry

DJ WHOSE VOICE LEADS YOU TO BELIEVE YOU MAY WANT TO SEE HIM NAKED

- A) Colton Bradford B) Gene Murrell
C) Gossip Greg D) Matt McCoy
E) Sean Sullivan F) Uncle Henry

DJ WHOSE VOICE LEADS YOU TO BELIEVE YOU MAY WANT TO SEE HER NAKED

- A) Johnna Farmer B) LeeAnn Waters
C) Lindsey Marie D) Mystic Marge
E) Shelby Mitchell

BEST TALK RADIO HOST/SHOW

- A) Bill Finch B) Clark Howard
C) Elvis Duran D) Rush Limbaugh
E) Uncle Henry F) Wayne & Sean

BEST SPORTS RADIO HOST/SHOW

- A) Lee Shirvanian B) Mark Heim
C) Pat Greenwood
D) Paul Finebaum
E) Randy Kennedy
F) Scooter Eastburn

BEST LOCAL EVENING TV NEWSCAST

- A) WALA Fox 10 B) WKRG 5
C) WPMI Local 15

BEST LOCAL MORNING TV NEWSCAST

- A) WALA Fox 10 B) WKRG 5
C) WPMI Local 15

BEST ANCHOR

- A) Bob Grip B) Darwin Singleton
C) Devon Walsh
D) Greg Peterson
E) Mel Showers
F) Rosanne Haven

BEST METEOROLOGIST

- A) Alan Seals B) Derek Beasley
C) Jason Smith D) John Nodar
E) Kelly Foster F) Michael White

BEST TV INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

- A) Andrea Ramey
B) Darwin Singleton C) Kati Weis
D) Modupe Idowu
E) Peter Albrecht F) Renee Dials

BEST SPORTS COVERAGE

- A) Paxton Boyd @ WPMI Local 15
B) Michael Brannon WALA Fox 10
C) Randy Patrick @ WKRG 5

SEXIEST LOCAL TV NEWSMAN

- A) Darwin Singleton B) Jason Smith
C) Mel Showers D) Michael Brannon
E) Paxton Boyd F) Peter Albrecht

SEXIEST LOCAL TV NEWSWOMAN

- A) Avery Cotton B) Chasity Byrd
C) Devon Walsh D) Kelly Jones
E) Kym Thurman F) Lenise Ligon

FAVORITE LAGNIAPPE WRITER

- A) Gabe Tynes
B) Andy MacDonald C) Kevin Lee

D) Steve Centanni

- E) Mark Bryant F) Tommy Hicks

FAVORITE AL.COM CONTENT CREATOR

- A) Cassie Fambro B) Dave Holloway
C) J.D. Crowe D) John Archibald
E) Michelle Matthews F) Mike Herndon

FAVORITE GLOSSY MAGAZINE

- A) Access B) Alabama Magazine
C) Ant Farm Mobile
D) Mobile Bay Monthly
E) Mobile Bay Parents
F) Mobile Mask

FAVORITE LOCAL WEBSITE OR BLOG

- A) A Rich Interior Life by Danielle Juzan
B) Arrested in Mobile
C) Drick's Rambling Café
D) Mod Mobilian
E) The Southern Rambler
F) Toulouse and Tonic by Suzanne Fleet

BEST LOCAL TV AD

- A) Bishop State
B) David J. Maloney C) Eland and Ritchie
D) Greene & Phillips
E) Greer's Market F) I Am Joe Bullard

POLITICOS

HARDEST WORKING OFFICIAL - CITY OF MOBILE (ELECTED OR APPOINTED)

- A) Sandy Stimpson, Mayor
B) James Barber, MPD chief
C) 311 Department
D) Colby Cooper
E) Diane Irby
F) George Talbot

HARDEST WORKING MOBILE CITY COUNCILPERSON

- A) Bess Rich B) Gina Gregory
C) Levon Manzie

HARDEST WORKING ELECTED OFFICIAL - MOBILE COUNTY

- A) Ashley Rich, DA
B) Connie Hudson, Commissioner
C) Don Davis, Probate Judge
D) Jerry Carl, Commissioner
E) Merceria Ludgood, Commissioner
F) Sam Cochran, Sheriff

HARDEST WORKING ELECTED OFFICIAL - EASTERN SHORE

- A) Charlie Houser, Mayor of Magnolia Springs
B) Dane Haygood, Mayor of Daphne
C) Kevin Boone, Fairhope City Council
D) Mike McMillan, Spanish Fort Mayor
E) Robin LeJeune, Daphne City Council
F) Tim Kant, Mayor of Fairhope

HARDEST WORKING ELECTED OFFICIAL - BALDWIN COUNTY

- A) Chris Elliott, Commissioner
B) Frank Burt, Commissioner
C) Hallie Dixon, DA
D) Hoss Mack, Sheriff
E) Skip Gruber, Commissioner
F) Tucker Dorsey, Commissioner

HARDEST WORKING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER - MOBILE

- A) Donnie Stringfellow
B) Dr. Reginald Crenshaw

HARDEST WORKING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER - BALDWIN

- A) Cecil Christenberry
B) David Cox C) Shannon Cauley

HARDEST WORKING LOCAL STATE LEGISLATOR

- A) Rep. Chris Pringle
B) Rep. Napoleon Bracy
C) Rep. Victor Gaston
D) Sen. Bill Hightower
E) Sen. Rusty Glover
F) Sen. Vivian Davis-Figures



**FINALIST
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LAGNIAPPE WEEKLY**

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(Amberjoy McLean)



Best Boob Doc
(Dr. Christopher Park)

Best Facelift Doc
(Dr. Christopher Park)

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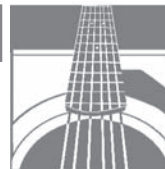
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'Renaissance woman' Kaplan loads The Crystal Pistol

BY STEPHEN CENTANNI/MUSIC EDITOR | scentanni@lagniappemobile.com



Band: The Crystal Pistol

Date: Friday, July 3 at 10 p.m.

Venue: Fins Bar, 1600 Bienville Blvd.

Dauphin Island, 251-861-2561

Tickets: \$10 at the door

Hometown drummer Blair Shotts will bring his explosive sounds to Fins Bar on Dauphin Island July 3 along with local keyboardist Chris Spies, bassist Chris Severin (Dr. John, Allen Toussaint, Irma Thomas) and percussionist Ameenah Kaplan — a combo known collectively as The Crystal Pistol.

Kaplan is taking time out of a very hectic schedule to perform the gig. Boasting experience in acting, choreography and percussion, Kaplan was tapped as Best Choreographer in the 2014 NAACP Theatre Awards for her work on “The Royal.” Many will recognize her from her acting roles, including the character Val from the U.S. version of “The Office.” For Kaplan, balancing a versatile lineup of artistic projects comes naturally, but percussion is her first love. She recently offered Lagniappe readers a peek into her busy life.

Stephen Centanni: You’re definitely a modern Renaissance woman. Between acting, music and choreography, what do you like to focus on more?

Ameenah Kaplan: Well, I think you said it better when you said I’m a Renaissance woman, I guess. Like DaVinci, I don’t have to choose. The guy was an engineer. He was an artist, and he was a scientist. So, we love him for everything he did and contributed. Sometimes, you can’t separate it like that. I don’t separate them. What I’ve done is try to consolidate them and make them work together. So, the stuff I do usually tends to involve all three, you know.

Centanni: With such a diverse background and resumé, how do you decide on your projects? Do you just wake up in the morning and say, “I think I’ll focus on acting for awhile”?

Kaplan: I think I kind of boiled it down the idea that if I could have been just an actress, then I would’ve been. I sure did try and go out to L.A. and do nothing but act. As we all know, acting and this business is about so much more than your desire and your talent and your looks. It’s a combination of many different factors that make the working actor. Rather than wait tables and do something else that I wasn’t so keen on, I wanted to make my living in the arts. I know how to play drums. So, that world opened itself up to me. It was more like that. When I wasn’t acting, maybe a drum project would come up. If drumming wasn’t paying enough or I wasn’t getting enough of those gigs, my dance background allowed me to do choreography for people. It was more of a relay race more than me getting up and picking something out. One of them takes center stage naturally.

Centanni: Of all of your different projects and accomplishments, which one are you most proud of?

Kaplan: I think it’s the drumming. I think I’ve been doing drumming longer than the other things. I started dancing around 10 years old. I have memories younger than that of me beating on



Photo/ fanpix.com

You may recognize her from a role on “The Office,” but Ameenah Kaplan is also an accomplished choreographer and drummer. She’ll perform with The Crystal Pistol at Fins July 3.

things. I put it around age 9. Who knows, maybe I was beating on things before that. Drumming is the thing that tends to come and save me. It feeds my soul. It requires me to be humble, because it’s so much better than me. The art of drumming is so much better than I will ever be at it. It’s constantly challenging me to get better. I just always did it more so than dance. I’m not as proficient a dancer as I am a choreographer. With that, there’s a little block in me of fear. With drumming, not that I don’t have any fear, [but] it’s the thing I’ve always done. It’s like church for me.

Centanni: You’re going to be performing down here with Crystal Pistol.

Kaplan: Yeah! It’s going to be fun!

Centanni: How did you get involved in this project?

Kaplan: Blair and I work together a lot. I’m always trying to combine my skill set. So, if I’m directing a show, drumming will be there. Blair and I met as just drummers on the scene. He was such a solid individual. Anytime I have something that I’m doing, I’m going to call that guy. If there’s something that I can’t do and need a number one go-to person, I’m going to call Blair. Blair has been trying to get me to come down to Mobile for a few years now. It’s just now working out this year. So, it’s more that connection.

Centanni: You’ve done rock and hip-hop. What is Crystal Pistol’s focus?

Kaplan: I think it’s going to be a combo. We all come from such diverse backgrounds that I think it’s going to be the funk/rock soup with some Latin. Blair and I both like Latin percussion a lot. There will be a heavy, heavy Latin influence in the music as well.

Centanni: Your members are all over the place. Spies is down

here. Blair is in L.A. You’re in Atlanta. How are y’all getting ready for the show down here?

Kaplan: That’s why I think it’s going to be that [laughing]. Blair and I have played together so much that we read each other. We both beat drums. We both speak the same language. Chris Spies and I have jammed together before. Blair, Chris and I have all jammed before. So, there’s definitely a level of professional trust that if you speak the same language, then we’ll let it fly and see where the day takes us, which is always the most fun.

Centanni: What are you most looking forward to with this show?

Kaplan: I gotta say I am really, really looking forward to being in the city of Mobile. I’m so excited. I’m originally from the South, but I’ve lived away from the South for 20-plus years. I’m just so excited to be immersed in the culture that is the South and the freedom there is and the connection to nature. I’m looking forward to making good ol’ dirty Southern rock ‘n’ roll with a mixture of funk with my friends and eating some crawdads. I’m just looking forward to being in Mobile.

Centanni: Is Crystal Pistol a one-time thing or do you plan on doing it some more in the future?

Kaplan: Since it’s going to be my first time doing it and the first time I’m getting the opportunity in my schedule, I’m 99.9 percent positive that I’m going to be back, and we’re going to do it again, especially since I’m back in Atlanta and closer. I will answer that question again after that event, and we’re like, “we’re doing it again for sure!” Blair probably has big plans, but for me right now, I see the event ahead of me, and I feel for sure that we’ll do it again. I want to get this under my belt first.

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Wes Loper heads home

BY STEPHEN CENTANNI/MUSIC EDITOR | scentanni@lagniappemobile.com

Band: Wes Loper
Date: Friday, July 3 at 6 p.m.
Venue: Lucy Buffett's LuLu's, 200 E. 25th Ave., Gulf Shores, www.lulubuffetts.com
Tickets: Free

Original country music is a rare commodity in the Mobile area, so many local country fans were understandably sad when Wes Loper left the area. Loper established his reputation in Mobile through solo, duo and full-band performances. His Gulf Coast style of country earned him a healthy local following.

Loper eventually followed in the footsteps of many country hopefuls and decided to give Nashville a try, but he's always kept home close to his heart. Loper spends most of the year in the Volunteer State, but when summer comes, he returns to the Gulf Coast to spend time with local fans and his family. This promising country up-and-comer makes the most of every visit, performing live shows along the Coast.

Loper has been playing the Nashville music game admirably. While he has the occasional "downtown" gig, he mainly sticks to the venues surrounding Music Row. He's also gotten into the publishing side of things, writing songs with such notables as Jim McCormick (Jason Aldean, Luke Bryan) and Dan Couch (Kip Moore).



Photo/ Facebook.com/wesloper

Profane in the membrane

Band: The Big Earl Show
Date: Saturday, July 4 at 5:30 p.m.
Venue: The Flora-Bama, 17401 Perdido Key Drive, Perdido Key, www.florabama.com
Tickets: Call 850-492-0611 for more info

With the Fourth of July falling on a Saturday, many locals and tourists will be flocking to the coast. The Flora-Bama has become a tradition for many celebrating this holiday. In fact, this beach-side roadhouse traditionally holds its annual Miss Firecracker pageant on this weekend. Before the fireworks light up the night sky, Jack Robertson (aka Big Earl) will be lighting up the stage with his truly unique performance.

The Big Earl show is not for the faint of heart or those easily offended. Big Earl shows no mercy for his audience with his collection of hilarious, politically incorrect tunes. While swinging sex toys above his head, Big Earl breaks the limits of good taste with songs such as "Titty Bar at the Waffle House," "She Keeps Bringing Up Ole Shit" and "Poontang on the Pontoon." The Big Earl Show is guaranteed to be one of the most original musical spectacles on the Gulf Coast.



Photo/ youtube.com

'The Voice' contestant live

Band: Jordy Searcy
Date: Friday, July 3 at 8 p.m.
Venue: The Listening Room, 78 St. Francis St., www.thelisteningroommobile.com
Tickets: \$10 at the door

While many Mobilians may celebrate America's independence at the beach, there are still options for those who choose to stick around town. Before the barbecues and fireworks begin, The Listening Room is offering an intimate, relaxing evening of musical entertainment. This venue has quickly built a local reputation for providing a pristine listening environment and bringing a diverse lineup of performers to its stage.

Friday, July 3 at 8 p.m., Jordy Searcy will showcase his vocal skills on The Listening Room's stage. This Alabama native's appearance on NBC's "The Voice" pushed him into the national spotlight. Searcy's duet with Taylor Phelan on the show received more than one million views and vastly expanded his fan base. Since "The Voice," Searcy has been recording his newest EP with Nashville producer Brent Milligan, known for his work with the Backstreet Boys and TobyMac. As always, The Listening Room will provide an intermission/meet and greet.



Photo/ nbc.com



JULY 2 - JULY 8

THUR. JULY 2

Alchemy— Bryant Gilley, 9p
Baumhower's (OBA)— Destiny Brown
Beau Rivage— Yaye, 7p
Bill's by the Beach— Damien Lamb, 6p
BLUEGILL— Matt and Sherry
Blues Tavern— George Eberlein Trio, 8:30p
Captain's Table— Jerry Squires, 7p
Felix's— Jimmy Lumpkin
Flora Bama— Brittany Grimes, 2p// Rebecca Barry & Justin Fobes, 5p// Steve Wilkerson, 5:30p// Dave & Joe Show, 6p// Mark Sherril, John Joiner, Mel Knapp & Neil Dover, 6p// Lee Yankie & Hellz Yeah, 10p// Rollin' in the Hay, 10p// Adam Doleac, 10:30p
Hard Rock (Center Bar)— The Flying Steinway Brothers
The House— Eric Erdman
IP Casino— Merle Haggard, 8p
Legacy— Ryan Balthrop, 7:30p
Listening Room— The Budz, 8p
Live Bait— DJ Nick
Lulu's— Adam Holt, 6p
Tacky Jacks (Orange Beach)— Mac Walter, 6p
Sun Set Fest at the Wharf— Willie Stragline

FRI. JULY 3

Baumhower's (OBA)— Double Dee
Bill's by the Beach— Lisa Zanghi & Scott Koehn, 6:30p
Bimini Bob's— Destiny Brown
Blind Mule— The Hallers and Jaguarundi, 10p
BLUEGILL— Dale Drinkard, 11a// Al and Cathy, 6p
Blues Tavern— Ric McNaughton Band, 9p
Captain's Table— Jerry Squires, 7p
Cockeyed Charlie's— MT Pockets, 10p
Felix's— Blind Dog Mike
Flora Bama— J. Hawkins Trio, 1p// LeaAnne Creswell, John Joiner, Darrel

Roberts, 2p// Shawna P & Curtis Lance, 3p// Jack Robertson Show, 5:30p// Jezebel's Chill'n, 6p// Rollin' in the Hay, 7p// Davis Nix, 10p// Smokin' Elvis', 10p// Casey Jamerson, 10:30p
The Grand Mariner— Brett LaGrave, 4p
Hard Rock (Center Bar)— Radio, Inc.
IP Casino— Colt Ford, 8p
Legacy— Gregg Fells, 7:30p
Listening Room— Jordy Searcy, 8p
Live Bait— Miss Used
Lucky's Irish Pub— Bryant Gilley, 9p
Lulu's— Wes Loper, 6p
Main Street Cigar Lounge— Matt & Sherry Neese, 8p
Moe's BBQ (Mobile)— Doubleshot, 6:30p
Moe's BBQ (Daphne)— Charlie Wilson Band, 8p
O'Daly's— Gene Murrell, Tony Edwards and David White, 10p
Old 27 Grill— Mitch Johnson, 6:30p
Tacky Jacks (Orange Beach)— Jimmie Lee Hanniford, 6p
Tropics— John Law Band
Soul Kitchen— Sneaker Stop & Sak Religious Present: Shy glizzy, 9:30p
Windmill Market— Honey Boy and Boots, 11a// Fat Man Squeeze, 6p

SAT. JULY 4

American Legion Post 88— Bill and Aaron
Baumhower's (OBA)— Ronnie Presley
Beau Rivage— Yaye, 3p//7p
Bill's by the Beach— Barstool Surfers, 7p
Bimini Bob's— Sid Moore
BLUEGILL— Eric Erdman, 11a// Fat Lincoln, 6p
Blues Tavern— 4th of July Blowout, 3p// 61/49, 9p
Captain's Table— Jerry Squires, 7p
Cockeyed Charlie's— DJ Chill, 10p
Felix's— Jamie and Andy

Flora Bama— Jay Williams Band, 11a// Steel Drums, 12p// Jezebel's Chill'n, 1p// LeaAnne Creswell, John Joiner, Darrel Roberts, 2p// Nick and the Ovorols, 2p// Jack Robertson Show, 5:30p// Hotel Oscar, 6p// J. Hawkins Trio, 6p// Smokin' Elvis, 7p// Brian Hill Trio, 10p// Davis Nix, 10p// Casey Jamerson, 10:30p
The Grand Mariner— Cary Laine
Hard Rock (Center Bar)— Radio, Inc.
Live Bait— Miss Used
Lulu's— Cadillac Attack, 6p
Moe's BBQ (Mobile)— Bruce Smelley, 6:30p
Pirates Cove— Rhythm Intervention, 6p
Tacky Jacks (Orange Beach)— Chris Bryant, 11a
Tropics— Stereo Dogs

SUN. JULY 5

Beau Rivage— Yaye, 3p//7p
Bimini Bob's— Destiny Brown
BLUEGILL— Dale Drinkard, 11a// Tip Tops, 6p
Callaghan's— Rosco Bandana
Felix's— Brandon and Bailey
Flora Bama— Dave and Joe Show, 1p// Johnny Barbato Trio, 2p// Whyte Caps, 5p// Big Muddy, 5:30p// Perdido Brothers, 6p// Rebecca Barry Duo, 6p// Hung Jury, 10p// Wes Loper, 10p
The Grand Mariner— Red House, 1p
Hard Rock (Center Bar)— Tomplay
Legacy— John Cochran and Rebecca Barry, 11a// Stereo Dogs, 5p// Eric Erdman Band, 7p
Live Bait— Miss Used
Lulu's— Jimmy Lumpkin, 6p
Pinzones— Ross Newell, 5p
Tacky Jacks (Orange Beach)— Jonsey Gambino, 11a
Tropics— Al and Cathy

MON. JULY 6

Beau Rivage— Yaye, 7p
Blind Mule— Comedy Whatever ft. April

Richardson, 8p
Felix's— Brittany Grimes
Flora Bama— Brittany Grimes, 3p// Destiny Brown, 5:30p// Cathy Pace, 6p// Whyte Caps, 10p
Lucky's Irish Pub— Marcus
Lulu's— Brent Burns, 6p

TUE. JULY 7

American Legion Post 88— Mark and Gary
Beau Rivage— Yaye, 7p
BLUEGILL— Jimmy Lumpkin
Butch Cassidy's— Andy MacDonald
Captain's Table— Jerry Squires, 6p
Felix's— Bryant Gilley
Flora Bama— Ryan Conner, 3p// T. Bone Montgomery, 5:30p// Perdido Brothers, 6p// Rebecca Barry Duo, 10p// Robert Wayne Band, 10p
Lulu's— Lefty Collins, 6p
Martini's— Hip Hop Week (qualify for the finals)
Moe's BBQ (Mobile)— Tim Kinsey, 6p

WED. JULY 8

Beau Rivage— Yaye, 7p
Bimini Bob's— Al & Cathy
Blind Mule— Black Titan and Ex-Bastards, 10p
BLUEGILL— Eric Erdman, 6p
Blues Tavern— Band Audition
Bucky's Birdcage (Grand Hotel)— Adam Holt Piano Show, 8p
Callaghan's— The Secret Sisters with Deluxe Trio
Captain's Table— Jerry Squires, 6p
Cockeyed Charlie's— Ryan Balthrop, 10p
Felix's— Bobby Butchka
Flora Bama— Neil Dover, 3p// Johnny Barbato, 5:30p// Smokin' Elvis', 6p// Brian Hill, 10p// Robert Wayne Band, 10p
Legacy— Lee Yankie and John Cochran, 7:30p
Lulu's— CoConut Radio, 6p
Tacky Jacks (Gulf Shores)— Nigel, 6p

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Callaghan's keeps it all in the family

BY STEPHEN CENTANNI/MUSIC EDITOR | scentanni@lagniappemobile.com

Mobile's favorite neighborhood pub will welcome patrons home from their Independence Day celebrations with another landmark show July 8, when Callaghan's Irish Social Club hosts Secret Sisters for a healthy dose of Americana, with Mobile's Deluxe Trio opening.

The Muscle Shoals duo consists of actual sisters Laura and Lydia Rogers. With a firm grasp on musical tradition and a batch of warm harmonies, the Rogers sisters quickly gathered a national audience after their self-titled debut, which was produced by the iconic T Bone Burnett. Mesmerized by their sound, Jack White brought the duo into his studio to collaborate on covers of "Big River" and "Wabash Cannonball."

"Put Your Needle Down" is the Secret Sisters' second release, also produced by Burnett. Released in 2014, the album sold 3,700 copies and reached the No. 1 spot on Billboard's Heatseekers chart. Their homespun charm and polished delivery should make this one of Callaghan's biggest shows of the year. Mobile's Deluxe Trio will provide support.

Tickets are on sale at Callaghan's for \$30, and only 50 will be sold. Local music lovers shouldn't wait until the last

minute to purchase tickets for this show; act now.

D.R.E.A.D. gains Northeast foothold

Mobile metal band D.R.E.A.D. has been traversing the nation lately and made a pit stop at Jupiter Records in Wilmington, Delaware, to introduce the store to its album "Test of Time." Store owners apparently liked what they heard, and offered to feature "Test of Time" in its inventory.

Locals can welcome D.R.E.A.D. back to the Azalea City when they open for Psychostick on Thursday, July 30, at Alchemy Tavern.

Slog to Birmingham for Sloss Fest

Many locals will be traveling upstate for the two-day Sloss Music and Arts Festival, July 18 and 19 at the Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark in downtown Birmingham. The extensive lineup includes Modest Mouse, The Avett Brothers, Primus, Band of Horses, St. Paul & the Broken Bones, Sturgill Simpson, Cage the Elephant, Young the Giant, Lord Huron and many more. Tickets are still available through the festival website, slossfest.com.



Photo/ secretsistersblog.com

The Secret Sisters will rattle the bones of 50 ticket holders at Callaghan's July 8.


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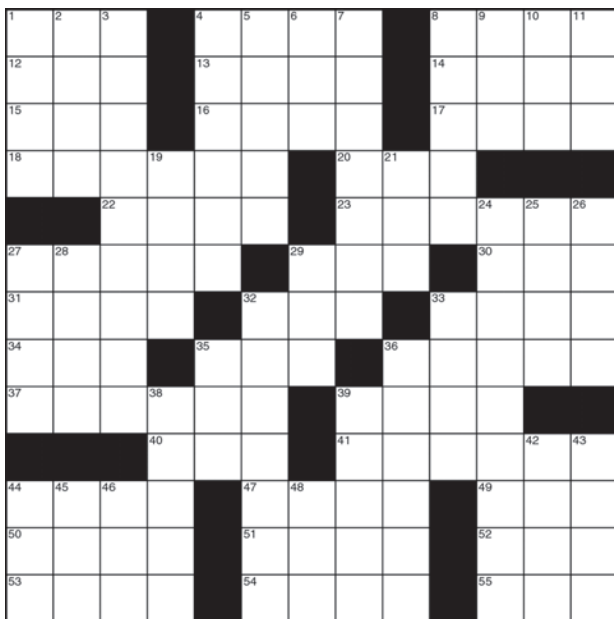


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ACROSS

1. Realm of Mars
4. Adventurer's tale
8. Quite a while
12. Bad thing to invoke
13. Orchestral reed
14. Tool for a duel
15. Spill guard
16. Hobby shop inventory
17. Copper coin
18. Gently applied
20. Common intensifier
22. Render a verdict
23. "The Far Side" creator
27. Toque wearers
29. Like fresh paint
30. Chinese brew
31. Bakery purchase
32. "Cat's in the Cradle" narrator
33. It goes with circumstance
34. Animal in some of Aesop's fables
35. Henhouse raider
36. By no means long-winded
37. Micromanager's concern
39. Defy waterproofing
40. Stage light coating
41. Red shade
44. Checkers do it
47. "Immediately!"
49. Circus cries
50. Breathing space?
51. Highly collectible
52. Time out?
53. Mall conveniences
54. Hordeolium
55. Hardly forward



DOWN

1. Like jokers, sometimes
2. Diva's moment
3. Robin ____
4. Country folk
5. Stomach
6. Spoil
7. Tucked away
8. Designer's focus
9. Dr. Zaius, for one
10. Japanese capital
11. Collector's quarry
19. Straw-colored
21. Bit for a stable diet?
24. Saharan stingers
25. Resistance units
26. Scruff
27. Dressed
28. Runs ruin them
29. Car wash option
32. Bucks
33. Jury member?
35. Giant syllable
36. Crow's home
38. Moviedom's Moore-head
39. Menacing
42. Bygone Mideast leader
43. See in a crowd
44. Belgian city
45. Barracks sight
46. Pitcher's asset
48. Used chairs

ANSWERS ON PAGE 63

Legacy

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Sundays July

- July 5th Stereo Dogs 5-7 **ERIC ERDMAN BAND 7-10**
 July 12th Eric Erdman & Les Hall 5-7 **DELTA REIGN 7-10**
 July 19th PEEK 5-7 **RUMOR MILL 7-10**
 July 26th Lee Yankie and Hellz Yeah 5-7
HONEY ISLAND SWAMP BAND 7-10

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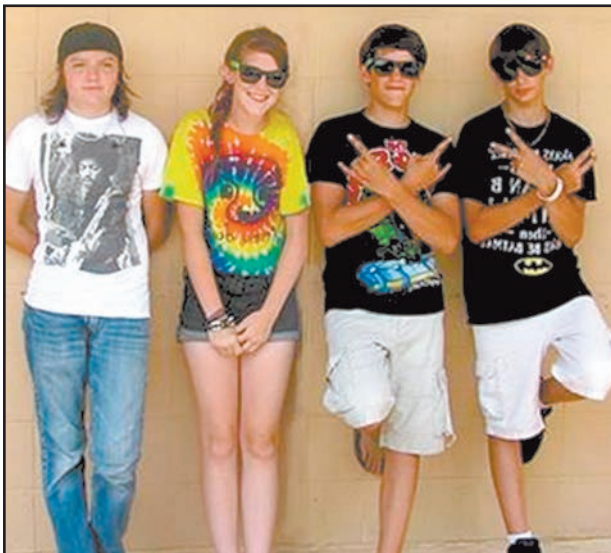
INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION: MOBILE

**WHERE: USS ALABAMA BATTLESHIP
MEMORIAL PARK**
WHEN: JULY 4TH, 5-9 P.M

Celebrate America's birthday on the Fourth of July on the grounds of USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park from 5-9 p.m. You can enjoy an afternoon of great music, good food and true patriotic spirit. Gates open at 5 p.m. and the fireworks spectacular begins at 9 p.m. The spectacular will begin with a red, white and blue salute to our area Veterans, and the finale will honor the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park's 50th anniversary. Admission is \$5 per car.



Photo/ www.facebook.com/USSALABAMABattleshipMemorialPark



Photo/ www.facebook.com/Stereo-Dogs

July 2

Campo Santo Summer Concert Series

Come enjoy live music in Cathedral Square from 5 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays through July 16. Local and regional bands will perform. This installment features Stereo Dogs. The concert series is sponsored by the Downtown Mobile Alliance, the city of Mobile Office of Special Events and Blue Moon Brewing.

Kids' Day in Bienville

Bring the kids to Bienville Square from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. today for summertime fun and enjoy live entertainment, arts and crafts, and visits with representatives of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, the Mobile Police and Fire-Rescue departments and much more! If you have questions, please call 251-208-1550.

Summer Outdoor Market

The city of Fairhope will host a Summer Outdoor Farmer's Market from 3 to 6 p.m. on Thursday evenings through July 9. The market will be set up behind the Fairhope Public Library on Bancroft Street downtown and will feature local farmers, bakers, fresh Baldwin County produce, fresh-cut flowers, local honey, plants, baked goods and more. The Fairhope Public Library will hold story times and children's activities at 4 p.m. each Thursday at the market. For general information or for information about becoming a vendor, call 251-929-1466.

Market on the Hill

An outdoor market of locally grown produce, seafood and soaps is being held at Lavretta Park (Old Shell Road and Parkway Street West) every Thursday through July 30. The Market on the Hill runs from 3 to 6 p.m. For more information, please call 251-208-1550.

Thursdays at the Museum

Every Thursday from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m., the Mobile Museum of Art offers free admission to all visitors. Join MMofA each week to experience the museum in new and exciting ways throughout the year. No reservations are necessary. MMofA is at 4850 Museum Drive.

July 3

Red, White & Boo Tour

Strange Journeys presents its "Red, White & Boo Tour." Join us for an evening stroll through the Church Street Historical District as we explore some of the strange and unusual history of Mobile, with an Independence Day twist! The tour meets/starts in the rear parking lot of the Ben May Mobile Public Library at 701 Government St. Tickets are \$20 each. For more info go to www.sjmtours.com or call 251-644-1664.

First Friday Art Walk

The Eastern Shore Art Center returns with new art and music. Come check out the new exhibits and live pottery demonstrations while enjoying refreshments and live entertainment by The Sound Carpenters. The art walk begins at 6 p.m. at the Eastern Shore Art Center, 401 Oak St., Fairhope. For more information contact Adrienne at 251-928-2228, ext. 103.

Ark of India

"Ark of India: An Alabama Artist Explores Southern Asia" is an exhibit about personal discovery and exploration. It's an account of late 19th and early 20th century India as seen by Alabama artist Roderick D. MacKenzie, using his paintings, drawings, sculptures and, most importantly, photographs and writings. The exhibition is organized by the History Museum of Mobile, 111 S. Royal St. On view until Sept. 1. Admission is free.

Hatching the Past: The Great Dinosaur Egg Hunt

"Hatching the Past" features 100 real dinosaur eggs and 100 replica eggs at The Exploreum. The multimedia experience for all ages invites visitors to touch real dinosaur bones and reconstructed nests, dig for eggs, experience hands-on exploration stations and view animated video presentations featuring well-known dinosaur experts. The Exploreum, 65 Government St., is open daily. For more information visit www.exploreum.com.

July 4

Fourth at the Wharf

Celebrate Independence Day with an all-American family outing to The Wharf in Orange Beach. This July 4, The Wharf will have a number of plans designed to provide a safe, fun environment for the whole family, including live music, street performances, the SPECTRA Sound and Light Spectacular with shows starting at 8:30 p.m., 9 p.m., 9:30 p.m. and 10 p.m., and fireworks over



Photo/ www.alwharf.com/

Main Street starting promptly at 8:45 p.m. For more information, please visit www.alwharf.com.

Independence Day Celebration: Mobile

Celebrate America's birthday on the Fourth of July on the grounds of USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park from 5-9 p.m. You can enjoy an afternoon of great music, good food and true patriotic spirit. Gates open at 5 p.m. and the fireworks spectacular begins at 9 p.m. The spectacular will begin with a red, white and blue salute to our area Veterans, and the finale will honor the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park's 50th anniversary. Admission is \$5 per car.

Fourth of July Fireworks Display: Dauphin Island

Join Dauphin Island in celebrating Independence Day, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Elementary School/Public Beach (1011 Bienville Blvd.) will be the Mobile Pops Concert followed by fireworks at 8:45 p.m. For more information or questions, please call 251-861-5525.

Fairhope's Fourth of July Festival

The city of Fairhope will host its annual Fourth of July Concert and Fireworks display in Henry George Park and the Fairhope Municipal Pier. The Baldwin Pops Band Independence Day Concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the park. A variety of patriotic music will be played before and during the fireworks display. The fireworks display will begin at approximately 9 p.m. The north end of Fairhope Municipal Park will be open throughout the day and will remain open until no parking is available. As a reminder, this is an alcohol-free event and no personal fireworks are permitted. For more information on Fairhope's Fourth of July festival and fireworks display, call 251-929-1466

'SLAVERY BY ANOTHER NAME' DOCUMENTARY

WHERE: HISTORY MUSEUM OF MOBILE, 111 S. ROYAL ST.
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, JULY 8 AT NOON

The History Museum of Mobile will host a viewing of the award-winning documentary "Slavery by Another Name," which recounts the post-Civil War system of peonage and forced labor that kept hundreds of thousands of African Americans in bondage until the beginning of World War II. In 2013, two librarians from the Marx Library received a film grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities/Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History to screen this film and three others as part of a national initiative entitled "Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle." Program begins at noon. For more information, contact Howard McPhail, curator of minority history, at 251-208-7557 or howard.mcphail@cityofmobile.org.



Photo/ www.pbs.org/slavery-by-another-name

Fort Morgan's Salute to America

Historical interpreters, dressed in period uniforms of the U.S. Army from different eras of the fort's occupation, will conduct special guided tours of the fortification throughout the day. Also, artillery, small arms, and other demonstration will show the complexities that have faced the military garrisons at Fort Morgan. Festivities start at 9 a.m. Fort Morgan is located at 51 State Highway 180 West in Gulf Shores. For more information, call 251-540-7127.



Photo/ www.facebook.com/MarketsInMobile

Market on the Square

Please note there will be no market on Independence Day, July 4. Shopping for the freshest crops every Saturday through July 25 at Cathedral Square in downtown Mobile will resume July 11. This time of year is our favorite because you can buy locally grown tomatoes, potatoes, sweet corn, cantaloupes, watermelons, plants and flowers as well as seafood, baked goods, pastas, casseroles, pies, handcrafted goods and much more. Stay for live music on the green. For more information, call 251-208-1550.

July 5

Open Studio

Come enjoy complimentary mimosas as artists work at the Cathedral Square Gallery, 612 Dauphin St. Works by more than 60 area artists also will be on display. For more information call 251-694-0278.

July 6

Mobile County Republican Executive Committee Quarterly Meeting

Join the Mobile County Republican Executive

Committee for its quarterly meeting, which will focus on public safety. Mobile's "Top Guns" will be the guest speakers: Chief of Police James Barber, Sheriff Sam Cochran and District Attorney Ashley Rich. The meeting is free and open to the public. It will begin at 6 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church (at the corner of Airport Boulevard and Sage Avenue). For more information, call 251-342-3046.

Ballroom Dance

The Moonlight Chasse Ballroom Dance Society hosts dance classes with professional instructors at 7 p.m., followed by dancing from 7:30 to 10 p.m. Admission is \$10. There will be a cash bar and no need to bring a partner. Beginners are welcome. Fitzpen Place, 11247 State Highway 31, Spanish Fort. For more information, email Cassie Fishbein at Cassief13@aol.com.

Top Cats Toastmasters

Are you terrified at the idea of public speaking? We were. We got over it. Top Cats Toastmasters invites you to join us. We meet every Monday from noon to 1 p.m. at the Red Lobster near the southeast corner of Airport Boulevard and Azalea Road in Mobile. You can practice your speaking and listening skills and learn to think on your feet in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Dues are \$43 twice a year, and lunch must be purchased. Toastmasters International is a worldwide organization. For further information, call 251-344-2938.

July 7

Addiction Counseling

Narconon would like to remind families that the use of addicting drugs is on the rise. Take steps to protect your family from drug use. If you know anyone who is struggling with drug addiction, get them the help they need. Call for a free brochure on the signs of addiction for all drugs. Narconon also offers free screenings and referrals. Call 1-800-431-1754 or visit DrugAbuseSolution.com.

Teen Tech Tutor Program

The Baldwin County Library Cooperative recently implemented a Teen Tech Tutor program at the Robertsedale Library. This program is designed to match high-school-age students who have strong technological skills with adults and seniors who are unfamiliar with basic laptop computer technology. The free program is available Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at 18301 Pennsylvania St., Robertsedale. An appointment is required; call the library at 251-970-4010.

July 8

Retired Registered Nurses' Association meets

The Retired Registered Nurses' Association will hold a luncheon meeting at the Mars Hill Cafe located at 1087

Downtowner Blvd. at 12:30 p.m. Ryan Parazine, general manager of Mars Hill, will be the guest speaker. For further information, call 251-661-092.

Learning Lunch: "Slavery by Another Name"

The History Museum of Mobile (111 S Royal St.) will host a viewing of the award-winning documentary "Slavery by Another Name," which recounts the post-Civil War system of peonage and forced labor that kept hundreds of thousands of African Americans in bondage until the beginning of World War II. In 2013, two librarians from the Marx Library received a film grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities/Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History to screen this film and three others as part of a national initiative entitled "Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle." The program begins at noon. For more information, contact Howard McPhail, curator of minority history, at 251-208-7557 or howard.mcphail@cityofmobile.org.

Gardening with succulents

Join Sherry Melton and Molly Dickson from Zimlich's Patio Shop for a discussion on gardening with succulents and how to use them to create wreaths, picture frames and other works of art. This event is part of Bellingsrath's Wonderful Wednesdays series in July. Time: 10:30-11:30 a.m. Admission is \$12.50 for adults, \$7 for children ages 5-12; and free to Bellingsrath members and to ages 4 and younger. Visit www.Bellingsrath.org to see the full schedule and register for your favorites. Bellingsrath Gardens is located at 12401 Bellingsrath Gardens Road, Mobile.

Downtown Toastmasters

Are you interested in gaining more confidence in your public speaking ability? The Downtown Mobile Toastmasters Club 2815 invites you to join us for our weekly educational lunch meeting at T.P. Crockmiers, 261 Dauphin St., from noon until 1 p.m. Practice your speaking, listening and leadership skills in a relaxed, friendly environment. Lunch must be purchased. Our dues are \$42 twice yearly. Toastmasters International is a worldwide organization. For more information, call 251-404-3924.

Little Discoveries at the Exploreum

Little Discoveries is a weekly series in the Exploreum's Wharf of Wonder for children 6 and under. Lessons will fuse science, technology, engineering and math with creativity, art and reading. Each session will begin with a story reading that will serve as the launching pad for the day's hands-on activities. Wednesdays 10 to 11 a.m. and Thursdays 2 to 3 p.m. at Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center, 65 Government St. For more information, call Josh Holland at 251-208-6893 or email jholland@exploreum.com.

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JULY 18TH RYAN DYER 4-7
JULY 19TH BRUCE SMELLEY 3-6
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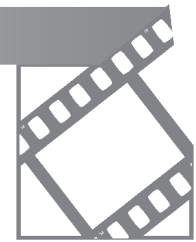
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FILM THE REEL WORLD

Summer films to make you feel the heat

BY ASIA FREY/FILM CRITIC | afrey@lagniappemobile.com

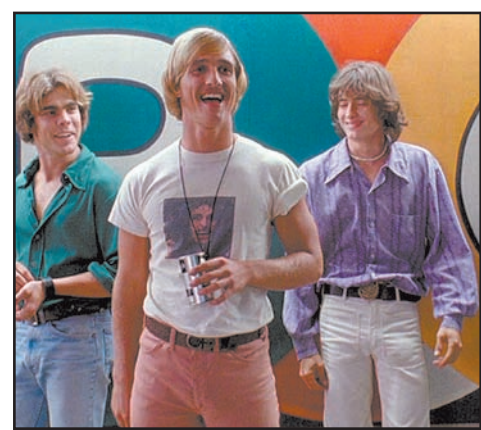


A saw a young guy riding around in a tank top on a bicycle at high noon in the terrible heat this week, and it reminded me of "The Way, Way Back," which made me want to list movies about summer that really capture the eyeball-searing drudgery, where your feet melt into your flip flops and you can see your bright red sunburned nose like a peripheral beacon between your eyes, no matter what you're trying to do (like write something).

Boredom and summer heat lead to all manner of adventures in "Rear Window," a completely undiminished and timeless Hitchcock classic. Some Hitchcock films seem sort of dated and hokey when you watch them now, but "Rear Window" relies on a strong and fascinating premise instead of special effects or gimmicks and, as such, is still completely wonderful.

James Stewart plays a roguish photographer confined to a wheelchair because of a broken leg. Bored and restless, he watches his neighbors from his own apartment window as they look for love, host raucous parties, get married and above all, try to escape the blistering summer heat. When he suspects one neighbor of murder, he must rely on help from his gorgeous girlfriend, played by Grace Kelly, who he has always underestimated, as well as the magnificent and savvy Thelma Ritter, who makes every movie better. If you know someone who doesn't "get" Alfred Hitchcock, show them this.

"Jaws," on the other hand, does have hokey special effects, or rather, one hokey special effect, the titular shark, but it is employed so judiciously that this movie has not diminished in its glory, either. Just think about it the next time you're swimming in the Gulf; I defy you not to curl up your toes a bit.



Photo/ Gramercy Pictures

The great thing about summer movies is as you get older, they stay the same age.

From the opening scene when that poor inebriated girl gets yanked around in the ocean, to the most memorable and sun-soaked beach scene with the frantic Chief Brody, it's what you don't see that makes this movie so suspenseful. And it is the great buddy chemistry between Brody (Roy Scheider) and ocean scientist Hooper (Richard Dreyfuss) that gives the film so much more than just scares.

As two rather unlikely heroes who are then mixed in with the insane bravado of the salty sea captain, Quint, their final battle with a big rubber shark is so much more exciting than the digital thrills we get today.

Summer camp is a rite of passage for many kids and "Wet Hot American Summer" is a cult classic full of people who are probably your

favorite actors and comedians now, including Amy Poehler, Bradley Cooper, Paul Rudd and Elizabeth Banks. It's a comedy in the purely ridiculous vein, unsullied by a hint of drama or romance. It is pure unadulterated silliness, and as such has a devoted following. I think this is one of those love-it or hate-it films; it strikes you as either brilliant hilarity or inane nonsense.

"Dazed and Confused" is another cult classic that takes place on the last day of school and into the wee hours of the first day of summer. It's about the glorious promise of the future, specifically summer, and since summer is a concept that really concerns people in school who get a vacation, maybe this is the most important summer flick of all. We remember the carefree fantasy of summer long after we actually get to experience it, and, as these students in "Dazed and Confused" move forward through high school, the wistful impermanence of these days hangs in the air, alongside the haze of pot smoke and classic rock soundtrack, of course.

"The Way, Way Back" is a recent film that captures the bittersweet nature of growing up through a season that is so well defined we feel its passage most acutely. Summer is the most seasonal of seasons. The teenaged protagonist of this film reluctantly tags along with his divorced mom and her boyfriend to his vacation house.

Unwilling to play nice with the overbearing boyfriend, Duncan finds solace at a water park, where he secretly gets a part time job and finds a father figure in the wise slacker that runs the place, Sam Rockwell. Working on his tan and his self-esteem all summer, Duncan grows up and repairs his relationship with his mom. This is a particularly pleasant coming-of-age movie that takes on just enough of a character arc to deliver.

NEW IN THEATERS



Photos/ imdb.com

MAGIC MIKE XXL
On the road to their final show, Mike and the guys learn some new moves and shake off the past in surprising ways. All listed multiplex theaters.



TERMINATOR GENISYS
The year is 2029 and John Connor, leader of the resistance, continues the war against the machines. He learns he must fend off an attack from both the past and the future. All listed multiplex theaters.

NOW PLAYING



Photo/ River Road Entertainment

LOVE AND MERCY Regal Mobile Stadium 18	JURASSIC WORLD Crescent Theater. All listed multiplex theaters.	MAD MAX: FURY ROAD All listed multiplex theaters.
MAX Eastern Shore Premiere Cinema 12, Cobb Pinnacle 14	SPY All listed multiplex theaters.	PITCH PERFECT 2 Regal Mobile Stadium 18
TED 2 All listed multiplex theaters.	INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 3 All listed multiplex theaters.	AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON All listed multiplex theaters.
DOPE Carmike Wynnsong 16, Regal Mobile Stadium 18, Cobb Pinnacle 14, Carmike Jubilee Square 12	SAN ANDREAS All listed multiplex theaters.	PAUL BLART: MALL COP 2 All listed multiplex theaters.
INSIDE/OUT All listed multiplex	POLTERGEIST All listed multiplex theaters.	FURIOUS 7 All listed multiplex theaters.
	TOMORROWLAND All listed multiplex	

AREA THEATERS	CARMIKE CINEMA'S Wynnsong 16 785 Schillinger Rd. S. (251) 639-7373	HOLLYWOOD STADIUM 18 1250 Satchel Paige Dr. (251) 473-9655	CARMIKE CINEMAS 23151 Wharf Ln. Orange Beach (251) 981-4444	EASTERN SHORE PREMIERE CINEMA 14 30500 Alabama 181 #500 Spanish Fort, Al (251) 626-0352
	CRESCENT THEATER 208 Dauphin Street (251) 438-2005	RAVE MOTION PICTURE JUBILEE SQUARE 12 6898 U.S. 90 Daphne, (251) 626- 6266	COBB THEATRES PINNACLE 14 3780 Gulf Shores Pkwy Gulf Shores (251) 968-7444	Information accurate at press time; please call theaters for showtimes.

THE LOADED QUESTION

IF YOU WERE TO
CREATE A NEW SEAL
FOR MOBILE, WHAT
WOULD YOU BE SURE
TO INCLUDE?

ASKED DOWNTOWN

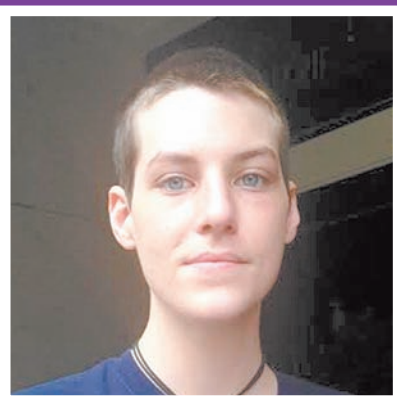


"I would definitely exclude
the Confederate flag and
emphasize our waterfront."
-Renea Burns

"I would include a sail boat."
-Pete Burns



"I would include a Mardi
Gras mask."
-Andrew



"I would add trees, we seem
to have more trees compared
to a lot of other cities."
- Kevin

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Insiders think cuts are coming to al.com

BY ROB HOLBERT/MANAGING EDITOR | rholbert@lagniappemobile.com

The ranks of those who worked during the Press-Register's time as a daily newspaper keep thinning as longtime reporter Brendan Kirby has confirmed he is leaving the P-R/al.com for a new venture.

Kirby couldn't say a lot about his new gig yet — only that he will be a senior political reporter for a website called LifeZette. The online publication Politico reported earlier this year that LifeZette is the brainchild of conservative commentator Laura Ingram, and it will be branded as "a cultural and political web destination for conservatives and independents."

Kirby, who has worked for the P-R since 2000 and covered a wide variety of beats, including state and federal courts, said his last day at al.com will be July 10. Though his new employer will cover national issues, he said he and his family have no immediate plans to relocate.

Kirby is well regarded among other journalists locally and one former P-R reporter described his departure as a big loss for the paper.

"Brendan is one of the last capable beat reporters," he said.

LifeZette has been in the works for months, according to Politico, and has recently begun gathering journalistic talent. Former Daily Caller reporter Neil Munro is one name that has been reported and he will serve as the site's political editor.

Ingram is a radio host, Fox News contributor and also a contributor to ABC's Sunday morning public affairs program "This Week."

Cuts coming?

Kirby's departure may have come at a good time if reports from al.com insiders bear out. Some currently with the company say they are expecting layoffs once al.com and NOLA.com are completely brought together under the leadership of former Press-

Register publisher Ricky Mathews.

Mathews oversaw severe cutbacks at the Press-Register prior to being moved by Advance Publications to run the Times-Picayune and NOLA.com in New Orleans. His arrival there was quickly followed by the announcement that the T-P, as well as all of Advance's Alabama newspapers, would reduce publication from seven-days-a-week to just three. The T-P, which had not endured the rounds of cuts that took place in Alabama, was shocked by very deep layoffs that saw many seasoned journalists at one of the country's premier newspapers cut loose.

Shortly after it was announced last month that a reorganization was underway for the company's Louisiana and Alabama operations and that they would all soon work under the name Southeast Regional Media Group, it was made public that more rounds of layoffs would be coming to the T-P and NOLA.com.

Insiders at the P-R/al.com have told Lagniappe there have already been a couple of layoffs and that more announcements may be coming in a "couple of months."

Mea Culpa II

We have to apologize again for the lingering issues we've had with lagniappemobile.com over the past week. There was so much more voting for the Nappie Awards — more than half a million votes so far — that it overwhelmed our web host and crashed our site pretty hard.

I'm not technically adept enough to tell you what happens when a site crashes like ours did, but I do know it's taken several people far more technically savvy a lot of time to get it back up and running. But even as I write this, things have been a bit testy.

The voting has continued unabated, though, as it is hosted at another site, and the breakdowns have been short-lived. Hopefully by the time this hits the street it will all be back 100 percent.



While the Nappies have caused our website a few problems, at press time we had received nearly 600,000 votes. Voting will continue through July 13.



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Local athletes earn recognition

BY J, MARK BRYANT/SPORTS WRITER | sports@lagniappemobile.com | Twitter @goulaguy

Three hometown heroes recently collected some impressive honors. Baseball standout Jordan Patterson was selected for a minor league baseball all-star team, while prep stars Sean Collins and Lacey Sumerlin have been named among the state's top athletes.

- USA didn't have to look far to sign one of the nation's best high school track athletes. The Jaguars only had to drive down Old Shell Road to McGill-Toolen Catholic High School to find Sean Collins.

The 2014-15 Gatorade Alabama Boys Track and Field Athlete of the Year will bring his high-flying act to USA after signing a scholarship. The statewide honor not only recognizes his athletic excellence, but also his academic achievements (3.66 GPA). He has volunteered on behalf of St. Mary's Home, which assists children who have been abused, neglected or abandoned.

The 5-foot-9, 150-pound Collins is now eligible for the national Gatorade award. He stands a good chance, thanks to his 17-foot, 3.25-inch effort in April at the Mobile Challenge of Champions. This was a state record and the fifth best in the United States. Collins recorded a 17-foot vault in May to win the Class 7A state title.

The pole vault is not his only event. At the state meet, he compiled 6,103 points to finish second in the decathlon. He was just 57 points behind teammate Chris Taylor, who has also signed with USA.

During the indoor season, Collins reached a height of 16 feet, 6.5 inches, the seventh-best in the nation. He also won the state indoor title in February.

"Sean is an outstanding competitor," USA track coach Paul Brueske said. "He's a local guy. I've known the family for many years; and his brother, Charles, is a junior javelin thrower for us. We're real excited about having him stay in town and help us win a Sun Belt Conference championship."

"We believe Sean can help us continue to grow as a program, and that having him on the team is going to help us attract more top-flight student-athletes, which will allow us to build the program into a perpetual contender every year for a conference title," Brueske added.

- Lacey Sumerlin led Baker to the Class 7A state girls softball title and a 50-6-1 record last season, earning the 2014-15 Gatorade Alabama Softball Player of the Year honor.

The 5-foot-11 shortstop and right-handed pitcher was a team leader for the Honeybees. She compiled a .435 batting average, with 12 home runs and 68 runs batted in. On the mound, she was 22-1 with a 1.35 earned run average. A first-team all-state selection and the Coastal Alabama Player of the Year, she picked up 16 doubles, five triples, 30 stolen bases and 71 runs scored.

In the classroom, Sumerlin maintained a 3.89 GPA. She volunteers locally on behalf of nursing home and youth sports programs.

"Sumerlin is a phenomenal athlete," said Brenda Box, head coach at Mary G. Montgomery High School. "Her offensive stats speak for themselves, and at shortstop she is extremely quick and

has a great arm. She started pitching as a senior and became a powerhouse there, too."

Sumerlin will carry her skills into the Southeastern Conference next year, having signed a scholarship with the University of Georgia.

- Local sports fans have followed Patterson's career for quite some time. He lettered four seasons in baseball, basketball and football with the Baker Hornets.

The 6-foot-4, 215-pound slugger stayed close to home to play for the University of South Alabama (USA). He continued to shine for the Jaguars as the Sun Belt Conference Player of the Year in 2013, and went on to be a Colorado fourth-round draft pick.

Patterson just finished the first half of this season with the Modesto Nuts, the Class Advanced A affiliate of the Rockies. He leads the California League in triples (10), is fourth in slugging percentage (.568), fifth in batting average (.314), plus sixth in runs scored (48), doubles (20) and on-base percentage (.387).

Patterson was named Player of the Month in the South Atlantic League last season as a member of the Asheville Tourists. He was promoted to Modesto before the start of this year.

Read an extended interview with Patterson in this week's feature by Tommy Hicks.

College notes

- USA has announced it will play a football team from the Pac 12 Conference for the first time. The Jaguars will travel to the historic Rose Bowl stadium to play UCLA on Sept. 17, 2022.

This will be the fourth California school USA has faced. The Jags played UC-Davis in 2010 and Cal Poly in 2011, and will face San Diego State the next two seasons.

Head coach Joey Jones continues to take on teams from power conferences. USA has already played Mississippi State, South Carolina, Tennessee and North Carolina State. They will travel to Nebraska on Sept. 12, and have future dates with Oklahoma State, LSU and Ole Miss.

- There have been several staff changes at local colleges.

Matt Luther has been named the women's golf coach at USA. He has spent the last two seasons as assistant coach at Oklahoma, which included a fourth-place finish at the NCAA Championships. A former club professional, he was head coach of the men's and women's teams at St. Thomas College in Texas.

Spring Hill College has announced two administrative staff changes. Craig Kennedy has been hired full-time as Compliance Coordinator while Badger softball head coach Alison Sellers-Cook has been promoted to assistant athletic director/senior woman administrator.

After spending two seasons as a graduate assistant on the USA soccer program, Jo Chubb has been promoted to assistant coach for the 2015 seasons. A former North Alabama star, Chubb helped guide the last two Sun Belt Conference freshmen and offensive players of the year.



Photo/ Twitter

Baker High graduate Lacey Sumerlin, the Gatorade Alabama Softball Player of the Year, will be taking her talents to the University of Georgia.

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WHO IS READING LAGNIAPPE WEEKLY?*

Readership

The latest Scarborough Research shows Lagniappe Weekly had 92,082 readers each issue, and 163,124 readers over 6 months, for the time period of October 2014 to March 2015. That is a 14% readership gain for each issue and a 24% gain over 6 months.

Age of Readers

Lagniappe Weekly's average reader is 46 years old, with the average in Mobile and Baldwin County being 48 years old.

Gender

53% of Lagniappe Weekly readers are women, 47% are men.

Occupation

Lagniappe Weekly readers' occupations are 41% white collar, 27% blue collar. 68% of our readers are employed.

Education

60% of our readers have some college education or above. 12% have college degrees and 5% have post-graduate degrees.

Race

74% of our readers identify themselves as White, 24% as Black/African American, and 2% as belonging to another race.

Marital Status

68% of Lagniappe Weekly readers are married, and 19% are single/never married. 6% classify themselves as divorced or legally separated, and 7% are widowed.

Income

Our readers have an average household income of \$82,218, more than \$18,000 above the average income in Mobile and Baldwin Counties. 28% of Lagniappe households earn \$100,000 or more annually.

Home Ownership

83% of Lagniappe Weekly readers own their own homes, and 12% rent their residence. Our readers' average home value is \$204,190, above the market average by over \$20,000. Our readers spent an average of \$3000 in the last year on home improvements.

Dining

Lagniappe Weekly readers love restaurants. 98% went to a restaurant in the last month. 87% have been to a sit down restaurant in the last 30 days, and are much more likely than average to eat at a fine dining restaurant.

Entertainment

Music and entertainment are very important to our readers. 74% have visited area casinos in the last year, for gambling, shows and meals. Lagniappe Weekly readers are also 55% more likely to pay for concert tickets regularly, and 90% more likely to go to nightclubs to listen to live music. They are also twice as likely to visit a sports bar.

Lagniappe Weekly readers also:

- Spend an average of \$157 per week on groceries
- Are twice more likely to have a college savings plan
- Are 89% more likely to have refinanced their home
- Are 52% more likely to own stocks or stock options

(*Scarborough Research, CSA, Release 1, October 2014 – March 2015)

LAGNIAPPE WEEKLY

Mobile's Patterson adjusting to minor leagues

BY TOMMY HICKS/ CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Life is good for Mobile's Jordan Patterson. "Playing baseball every day, wherever it may be, that's a blessing in itself," the former South Alabama baseball standout said this week. "I just enjoy every day and enjoy playing the game. One day it's going to be over, so I just really enjoy playing and I enjoy being with a good group of guys. Things are good."

Patterson, a fourth-round pick by the Colorado Rockies in the 2013 draft, is currently with the Rockies' Class A Advance team, the Modesto Nuts. The 6-foot-4, 215-pounder is enjoying a strong season at Modesto, entering the second half of play as the California League's leader in triples (10). The left-handed hitter is also fourth in the league in slugging percentage (.568) and OPS (.954), fifth in batting average (.314), sixth in runs scored (48), doubles (20) and on-base percentage (.387), and is tied for ninth in total bases (130). He has accomplished all that in just 59 games.

His play earned him a spot on the California League all-star team and in last week's game against the Carolina League all-stars. Patterson was 1-for-4 at the plate with a run scored in the Cal League's 9-2 victory. Patterson said the experience not only was fun, but valuable.

"They really put on a pretty cool event for the all-star game," he said. "They treated us first class, so it was really fun going there and playing with those guys. The season is going pretty good so far. There's always things that you can do to get better, but making the all-star game is a blessing. Just to be recognized as an all-star in that league, with all the talent that's in the league, is pretty cool in itself. I never put too much into all the numbers and who's an all-star and who's not, but it was pretty cool to be part of that group. It was the first all-star game I've made (as a professional). I just need to stay consistent and try to improve every day."

Patterson appears to be following that script. He played 60 games with the Rockies' Rookie League team in Grand Junction, Colorado, after being drafted in June 2013. The following season he was promoted to the organization's Rookie League team in Asheville, North Carolina, to play in the Sally League. This season he made the jump to Modesto.

"Obviously your ultimate goal is to play in the majors and you want to take a step forward every year and that's what I've been doing," he said. "I do what they tell me and come to the park ready to play every day. So far it's been going well."

Baseball fans in Patterson's hometown remember him as a three-sport athlete at Baker High School and later as a standout player for the Jaguars' baseball program. At South Alabama, Patterson was named the Sun Belt Conference Player of the Year in 2013 and his name appears several times in the Jags' record books. He is tied for second all-time for doubles in a season (25) and has a lot of spots for career marks, including 17th in games played (176), tie for fifth in doubles (51), 12th in at-bats (661), ninth in hits (212) and 13th in runs batted in (125).



Photo/ University of South Alabama Athletics

Mobile native Jordan Patterson was recently named a minor league baseball all-star.

He was also known for his versatility. With the Jags he played outfield, first base and pitched. As a pro player, he has spent most of his time as an outfielder, though he has occasionally played first and has also served as a designated hitter at times. It seems he is destined to be an outfielder with the Rockies.

"If I'm going to be in the majors, it's going to be as an outfielder, whether it's right or left (field)," Patterson said. "I can play first. but now I'm pretty much an outfielder. I played outfield my whole life; I played center field growing up. My whole sophomore year at South I played in the outfield and I played some after that. It wasn't that big of an adjustment because I was pretty much used to it."

What he wants most of all is to be a healthy player. He spent a little time on the disabled list this season, shortly after ending a 12-game hitting streak. But when he returned to the lineup he picked up where he left off. Now, he hopes to carry that solid play into the second half of the season and, hopefully, to a promotion to Class AA or better later in the year or next season.

"I just want to finish out with a healthy season and do well

and help the team win a championship," he said. "The first half didn't go as well as we would have liked, so we'd like to play better in the second half and win some ball games and maybe a championship."

In his three minor-league seasons thus far, Patterson carries an overall .291 batting average and has collected 60 doubles, 10 triples, 30 home runs, 161 runs scored, 131 RBI and 260 hits while posting a .372 on-base percentage and .482 slugging percentage. It would appear he has adjusted well to the move from the college game, with its aluminum bats, to the pro game, where hitters use wooden bats. He admits the adjustment has taken some time.

"Getting used to playing every day and staying consistent in what you do" has been the biggest adjustment required, Patterson said. "In college, you play Friday, Saturday and Sunday, maybe some other days, but you always had days off. Here, you play every day. You have to come to the ballpark every day and flush the day before, no matter what kind of game you had. You have to stay consistent and remain who you are."

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Scorpio sells soul for soccer

BY DR. ZODIAC/ASTROLOGY GUY

Cancer (6/22-7/22) — Moonchild that you are, you'd think having two full moons this month would make you happy, but you find yourself inexplicably in a blue funk, finding even blueberries at \$1 per pint at Winn-Dixie fails to cheer you up. Instead, the concentration of impending lunar energy fills you with a sense of foreboding you just can't explain. Then you remember the second full moon in a month happens just "once in a blue moon," and content yourself with throwing peanuts at the blue jays in your yard.

Leo (7/23-8/23) — You're settling into your part-time job rather nicely when it dawns on you how much older you are than everyone else in the office and you begin worrying about your image. You can't hope to compete with the young fashionistas, since wearing tall wedges would send you tumbling down the stairs. And cursing with the guys might make them fear you have cougar intentions. After checking your horoscope, you decide to just be yourself and hope they aren't laughing behind your back, confident that one day you will amaze them by being able to name the 13th Floor Elevators' only hit record.

Virgo (8/24-9/22) — You'll learn the true meaning of freedom after spending the Fourth of July weekend in the Mobile Metro Jail for public intoxication. Apparently, the shallow waters off the causeway are considered "public" and two cases of Coors Light and a taste of Crown Royal may render you "intoxicated." But it was with the spirit of the founding fathers that you incoherently declared independence from sobriety — and from your own swimming trunks — as you momentarily basked in the warm waters of Mobile Bay.

Libra (9/23-10/22) — Based solely on the fact that your Facebook posts about politics are generally well received and get a handful of "likes" and "shares," you'll decide to run for local office. You have no experience in business or politics, but people always say they want new faces. Your platform, pushing for the four-day workweek and free candy bars for all, will secure you

second place in the next race for Fairhope mayor.

Scorpio (10/23-11/21) — When your town council declines to appropriate funds for a new soccer complex, you decide to build your own backyard field of dreams. Sure, you'll have to clean out your savings account and meager 401(k), but the kids in town need a place to play. After wiping out your kids' college fund, you'll be disappointed when the local soccer league chooses to play at Foley's Blue Collar sports complex instead.

Sagittarius (11/22-12/22) — Hours after sharing a breaking news story from al.com, you'll be surprised to notice the headline has morphed drastically from what you intended to share. After only an hour, the headline that once read "Wild boars invade city hall, fatally injure mayor" will be subsequently changed until it simply states "Cat isn't too happy about his bath time." Thankfully, a BuzzFeed reporter will be on hand to point out the continuing and changing coverage of the event that never was.

Capricorn (12/23-1/19) — On June 30, time scientists added an additional second to the clocks of the world to adjust for the planet's slowing rotation. Almost a week later, you'll still be adjusting to the difference, your entire routine thrown off by a moment. On Friday, you'll miss the bus, but that's only the beginning. The next day you'll brush your teeth too long, causing a skin abrasion to irritate your already-sensitive gums. Over time, the small irritation grows into full-blown gingivitis, which contributes significantly to your impending divorce.

Aquarius (1/20-2/18) — You feel suspicious about the slightly older lady who recently assumed a part-time role at the office. Discussing your concerns with the guys in the kitchen, the consensus is she's either genuinely cool or has some veiled cougar intentions. Extending an invitation for a few drinks after work one day will likely clarify any ambiguity, but you remain perplexed by her reaction to an obscure song on the jukebox screaming something like, "You're gonna wake up one morning as the sun greets the

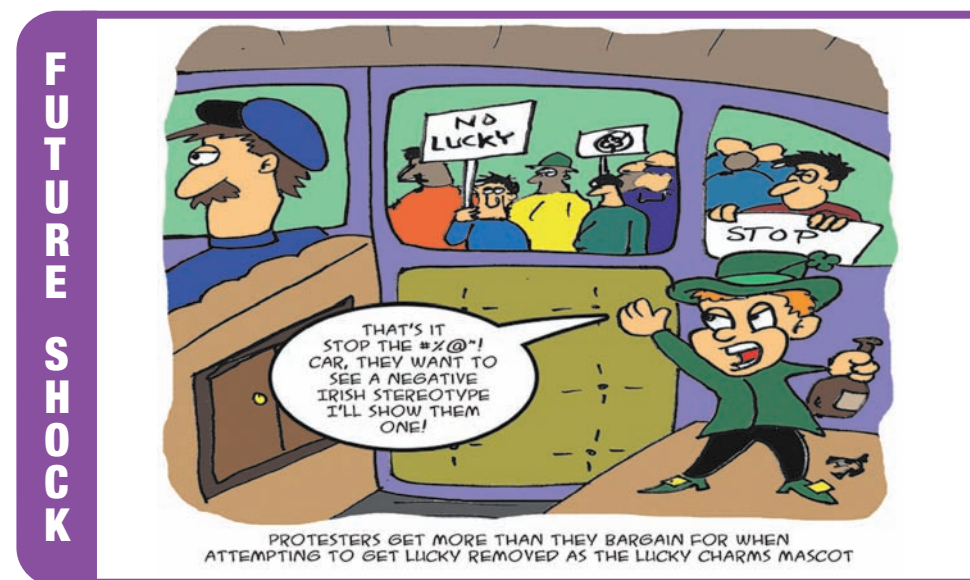
dawn ..."

Pisces (2/19-3/20) — With the Supreme Court striking down a security blanket last week, commitaphobes will simultaneously break up with their significant others in unison. The broken-hearted masses will soon find out the liberal "I'm not getting married until same-sex couples can" stance was just a ploy to avoid a long-term commitment. It will also be discovered those same people simultaneously decided recycling was too hard and will stop. A new political party will rise, known as the Convenient Democratic Party.

Aries (3/21-4/19) — You'll find an old bottle of Michael Jordan cologne in a dusty box at your parents' house over July Fourth weekend. You'll immediately begin wearing it because — like in eighth grade — you want to smell like a sweaty, successful basketball player. Once you spritz yourself, you'll demand everyone call you the greatest of all time. God help the poor soul who even mentions the name LeBron.

Taurus (4/20-5/20) — Your support of rational thought and discussion in this modern age will be put to the test next month when liberals and conservatives argue the finer points of the next big political offering on social media. You've never been one to make vitriolic statements, but the debate will force you to unfollow most on your friends list. You'll be left with only one friend, your 85-year-old grandmother., and you'll soon find out she's a Donald Trump supporter. No, gamma, no!

Gemini (5/21-6/21) — Although you generally disagree with U.S. foreign policy, knee-jerk social policy-making and broad domestic surveillance practices, you've always appreciated your life, liberties and the pursuit of happiness. July 4 for you has always been about the good life, and the opportunity to blow off someone's lip with unregulated explosives while listening to "The Bottlerocket War" on your old Pain CD. For good luck until next year, drink a Sam Adams and memorize the Fourth Amendment.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

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P	N			R	A	R		E	P	O	R
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LOCAL FIRST

LAGNIAPPE

WEEKLY

Cycling groups looking to make local roadways safer

BY HOLDEN BARNETT/CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To combat automobile-related bicycle accidents in the Gulf Coast region, several organizations have been formed to promote cycling awareness and advocate policy change. One such group is Team Share the Road, a nonprofit organization based in Mobile.

Team Share the Road was founded in May 2011 by Mobilians Doug Sims, Deena Tyler and Jessica Melton in response to “a need for improving both cycling and pedestrian safety and education in our area.”

John Blanton, a Selma native and current vice-president of Team Share the Road, said their number-one goal is to educate not only cyclists but pedestrians and motorists. Blanton first became involved in cycling and, consequently, Team Share the Road two years ago when he was injured while playing basketball.

“I realized I could not play forever with my injured knees and was looking for a sport with less negative impact on my body. I dusted off the old bicycle in my closet but abruptly realized how dangerous it is around here to ride solo. That is when I got involved with group rides, as there tends to be safety in numbers,” Blanton said.

As the number of Mobilians involved in cycling increases, Blanton said, the urgency of the need for “decent infrastructure ... such as segregated bicycle lanes, safe intersections, adequate bike parking, and showers and lockers for commuters” increases as well.

“Cycling is no longer a niche activity,” he said. “Four out of five Americans own a bicycle. It is now phenomenally mainstream.”

Beyond serving as a source of leisure, cycling plays an invaluable role in the daily transportation of many Mobilians.

“Poverty means many people in our area and elsewhere depend on the bicycle to survive ... Many more people would cycle but for fear for their safety due to the lack of infrastructure and lack of education for both motorists and cyclists,” Blanton said.

The League of American Bicyclists currently ranks Alabama last among the 50 states and Mobile last among the cities within the state of Alabama. This is partly due to problems caused by Mobile’s long history.

“The difficulty in a 300-year-old-plus city is that existing infrastructure, such as sewers and live oak trees, limits where you can add a bike path,” Blanton said.

The current number of bike paths in Mobile is severely deficient. At the moment, the only streets that have them are sections of Hillcrest Road and University Boulevard, and these are only two feet wide.

Despite the lack of sufficient infrastructure, Team Share the Road has made significant progress since its creation.

“We educated the local governments in Mobile and Baldwin counties regarding drafting 3-foot ordinances. Mobile, Chickasaw and Daphne passed the ordinances. We are continuing to work with other municipalities,” Blanton said.

Team Share the Road has also worked with city and county officials on the Safe Routes to Schools and Complete Streets policies.

“There has been a push — in cities like Indianapolis, Chicago, Memphis, New York — to have separated bike lanes from the traffic so the pedestrian feels protected from the automobile,” Blanton said.

Following the example of this national trend, Team Share the Road has successfully secured the addition of a 10-foot-wide bike path alongside S. Ann Street and McGregor Avenue between Dauphin Street and Airport Boulevard.

They have also advocated for segregated bike lanes to be added alongside the Interstate 10 bridge, Montlimar Creek and Three Mile Creek. Additionally, they have pushed for the construction of Down by the Bay Path, a bicycle and pedestrian path that would follow the Arlington Bridge down to the Dog River Bridge area.

In addition to cyclist security, one benefit that these bike paths would bring to Mobile would be improvement in public health. Obesity would decrease as more people would exercise and Mobile’s carbon footprint would diminish as fewer people would travel by automobile.

Another benefit that is perhaps less apparent is economic.

“Local businesses benefit from cycling,” Blanton said. “Studies show the likelihood of a cyclist stopping in to shop is higher than

the automobile when the infrastructure is in place.”

Team Share the Road hosts numerous events in order to not only promote cycling awareness but to help the community as well.

“We have hosted children’s safety classes, bicycle maintenance classes, bicycle rodeos and bicycling events such as the Joy to Life Ride, Sunny South Criterium, the Tour de Bay Criterium and the Rides of Silence, and assisted Mobile Infirmary with their duathlons,” Blanton said. “We have also held clinics for local indigents, repairing bicycles and fitting those bicycles with lights.”

Team Share the Road is not the only organization in Mobile dedicated to cycling awareness.

Mobilians on Bikes was started as a Facebook group by local cycling advocate Nik Hallberg. The goal of the page is to use social media to bring together people in the Mobile cycling community for rides, news and events. It is now the largest Facebook cycling group in Alabama.

Another effort by Blanton, Ben Brenner and Jeff Mroz was to create a website (www.bicyclemobile.org) for all things cycling related in Mobile and Baldwin counties.

“We needed another instrument to share cycling-related news and organize group rides and petitions that was more comprehensive and robust than a Facebook page. There are limits to what you can do on Facebook,” Blanton said.

About two months ago, members of the Mobile cycling community created a Mobile chapter of Black Girls Do Bike, a national organization based in Washington, D.C., that encourages African-American women to cycle.

“In many of our group rides, we had a number of black men that rode with us but virtually no black women. We want to be inclusive and get that sector of the community involved,” Blanton said.

Overall, Blanton is hopeful things will improve.

“The growth of cycling has not escaped notice from the current city and county administration and the Metropolitan Planning Organization. There has been fantastic support behind the scenes to improve all aspects of cycling for Mobile. It does take time and money but the framework is in place.”

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Saenger hits the right notes with recent shows

BY BOOZIE BEER NUES/SOCIAL BUTTERFLY

And I am proud to American, where at least I know I'm free! And I won't forget the men who died who gave that right to me! Sing it, Lee!

Happy 4th of July weekend, err'body! I hope everyone has fun watchin' fireworks, eatin' barbecue and remembering we do live in the best country in the whole wide world. Even if you think it sucks right now for whatever reason, at least you have the freedom to express those views or annoy your friends on Facebook with you endless rants. And isn't that what America is all about?

Anyway, I hope you all have a safe and happy holiday! But before you start eating and drinking things made with red, white and blue food coloring that is probably banned in every other developed nation, please devour these tasty little tidbits I have prepared for you this week. A little Independence Day amuse-bouche, if you will. Dig on in!

Indigo Girls honor local gay rights heroes

The night before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled same-sex marriage was legal across the country, The Indigo Girls and Kristy Lee played the Saenger Theatre downtown. I am told the crowd was pumped not only for the ruling everyone expected to come the next day but also to enjoy the beautiful harmonies of these ladies.

Both local favorite Lee and the Indigo Girls took time to recognize local gay rights heroes Cari Searcy and Kimberly McKeand, whose battle to adopt their child ended up with U.S. Judge Ginny Granade ruling to make same-sex marriage legal in the state. Eventually, a stay was put in place for Alabama until the Supreme Court ruling, but that did come the following day as expected, and same-sex marriage became the law of the land. We hear many thanks were given to the local couple for their efforts by the concert goers.

Delly Mac still has it

The next night, Delbert McClinton played to a fun but slightly different Saenger crowd. Our spy said, "Let's just say there were a lot of older ladies having a really good time, who really think Delbert McClinton is still a pretty enticing piece of man candy."

Well, what do you expect for a man who "gives it up for you love."

Opener Jamell Richardson, aka the "Gulf Coast Blues Boy," continues to dazzle local audiences with his soulful sounds. I hear he is one you better catch locally soon before he makes it big and we don't get to see him around these here parts anymore.

The Saenger has some more great shows scheduled, with Seinfeld, Floetry, John Hiatt, The Mulligan Brothers and Todd Rundgren all on their calendar, not to mention the Nappie Awards.

DI dancing queen

My spies said they received quite a show down at a watering hole on Dauphin Island last weekend, as one lovely lass transformed from a beach beauty into a dancing queen to the tunes of local musician Ryan Balthrop. We hear this lady, clad in nothing but bikini bottoms and a T-shirt, spent much of her time on the dance floor shaking her stuff with various dance partners.

The only hiccup of the night was when another lady asked for "Brown Eyed Girl" to be played. Record scratch. Yikes, ma'am. I think that has finally surpassed "Freebird" as being the worst song to ask musicians to cover, although I hear "Wagon Wheel" is also well on its way.

Well kids, that's all I got. Just remember, whether rain or shine, dramatic or scandalous, or just some plain ol' unfortunate "Brown Eyed Girl" lovin', I will be there. Ciao!



Photo/facebook.com

McClinton dazzled the ladies at the Saenger last week.

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WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE JULY 23 ISSUE OF LAGNIAPPE AND RECOGNIZED AT THE NAPPIE AWARDS CEREMONY FRIDAY, JULY 24 AT THE SAENGER THEATRE.

OFFICIAL RULES

- ON THE ONLINE BALLOT, YOU MAY VOTE ONCE PER HOUR. NO REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED DURING THE FINALS PERIOD.
- THERE IS NO MINIMUM AMOUNT OF CATEGORIES YOU HAVE TO VOTE IN FOR YOUR VOTE TO COUNT. IN OTHER WORDS, IF YOU JUST WANT TO VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE HOO-HA DOCTOR EVERY HOUR ON THE HOUR, YOU CAN.
- THE PRINT BALLOT WILL BE IN THE JUNE 18, JUNE 25, JULY 2 AND JULY 9 ISSUES OF LAGNIAPPE. ON THE PRINT BALLOT, ONLY OFFICIAL BALLOTS CUT OUT FROM THE PAPER WILL BE COUNTED. NO PHOTOCOPIES OF THE BALLOT WILL BE COUNTED. ALL PAPER BALLOTS MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE LAGNIAPPE OFFICE BY 2 P.M. FRIDAY, JULY 10. IN AN EFFORT TO HELP US KEEP UP WITH THE OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF ENTRIES, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEND IN BALLOTS AS THEY ARE COMPLETED, RATHER THAN WAITING TO THE DEADLINE TO DELIVER THEM ALL AT ONCE. PLEASE HELP OUR COUNTERS OUT. THE LAGNIAPPE OFFICES ARE LOCATED AT 1100B DAUPHIN ST. MOBILE, AL 36604. YOU MAY ALSO MAIL THE BALLOTS TO NAPPIE AWARDS, P.O. BOX 3003, MOBILE, AL 36652. PACKAGE MUST BE POSTMARKED BY JULY 10.

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