

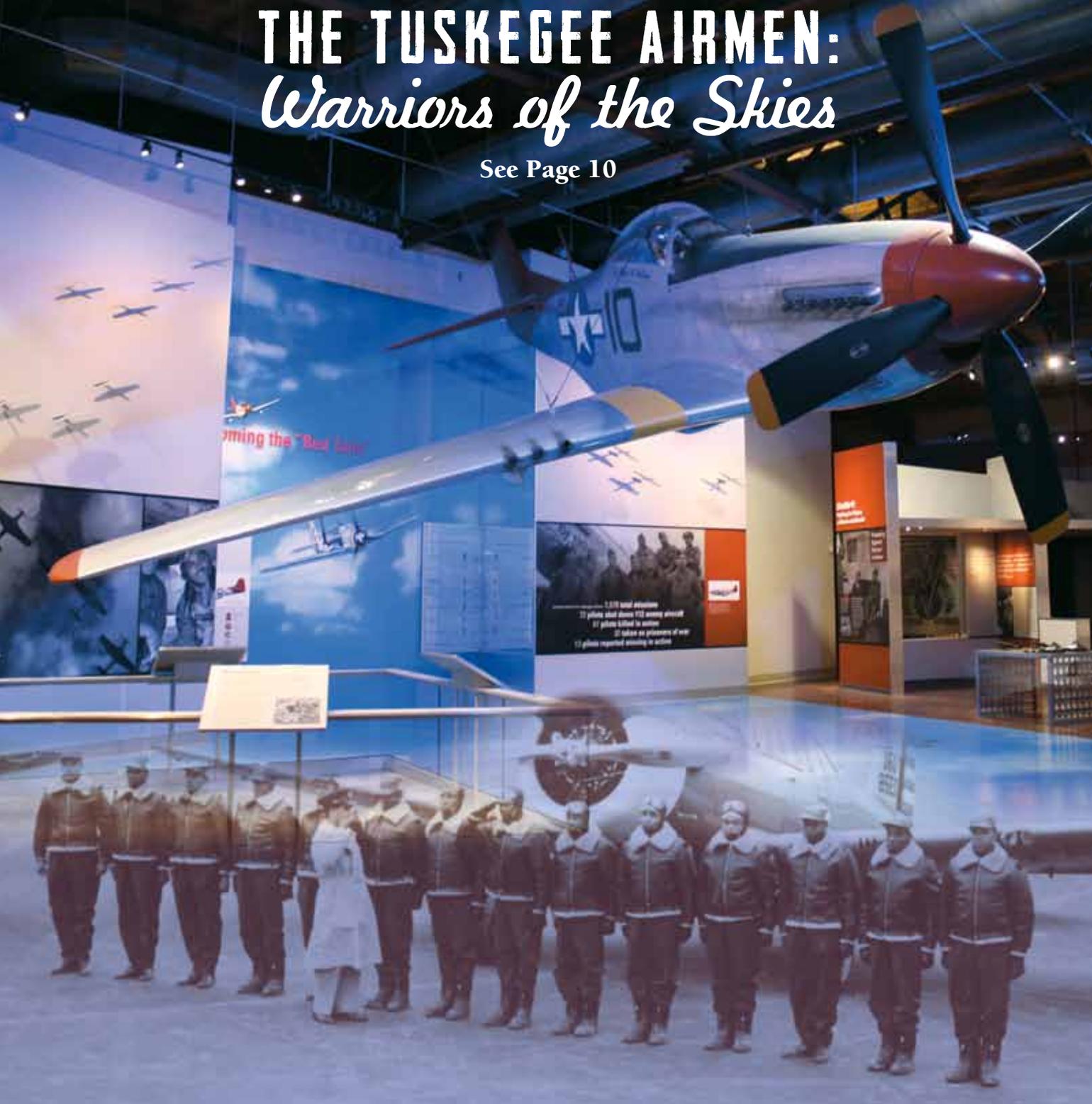
Alabama CURRENTS

Vol. XII No. 4 • July/August 2013

A Publication of the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority

THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN: *Warriors of the Skies*

See Page 10



A kilowatt saved is a kilowatt earned

In this age of technology, almost everything around us requires some amount of electricity. When you step into someone's house, you immediately see the machines and devices which require electricity: TV, radio, computer, oven, microwave, and on and on. So when the power bill arrives in the mail, most people are sorely disappointed that they did not pay attention to how much electricity they wasted. We all need to learn to observe and control how much power we use in our homes and businesses.



Once you begin to practice energy efficiency in your home and/or business, the money you save will surely put a smile on your face. Usually when you notice how much electricity you are wasting, it helps you to notice other things you are wasting as well.

The Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) and its Members continue to explore ways in which we can help you manage your electric bill. You have the power to control your electric bill. It's all about changing our behaviors.

Let's look at some machines/devices in your home which can have an impact on your electric bill:

- You've heard your parents tell you not to open the refrigerator door every five seconds. There's a reason for that. That peek can cost you more than you think. If you're just browsing around for food, you might want to reconsider opening that door.
- Your HVAC system is also one thing that keeps the bill running high. If it's during the summer, don't keep the air down to 50 just because you are tired of being hot. If you keep it set around 75, the house stays comfortable and you don't end up paying for it in higher energy costs.
- Other machines that use a great deal of electricity include the washing machine and the dryer. Watch out how many times you wash your clothes, and never use the dryer just to get those wrinkles out of your garments. If you cut back on these two things, you will be amazed by the difference in your bill.
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room. Keeping the lights off when you are not in the room will help to save you money in the long run.
- Same thing goes for TVs and stereos. They may not use that much electricity like the lights, but leaving them on when you are not in the room will cost you a pretty penny.

We encourage you to take advantage of Energy Depot® for Homes, which is located on all AMEA Member city/utility web sites. Energy Depot for Homes is a one-stop shop of online resources and tools to help you better understand and manage your home energy use and costs. Energy Depot allows you to analyze your energy bill and how energy is used in your home.

Unlike most other energy analysis tools, Energy Depot uses your actual bill and breaks out how energy is used within your home. The profile also gives you specific suggestions on how you can improve energy efficiency and use.

You can use Energy Depot to: complete a do-it-yourself home energy audit and receive a report online; quickly estimate the annual energy use and cost of home energy systems and appliances; receive a personalized energy profile with an estimate of your energy costs for each home energy system/appliance; learn specific things you can do to reduce energy usage and how much you can save; compare your heating and cooling systems or water heater to a range of new system; learn how soon you can pay for a new more efficient heating or cooling system or water heater through lower energy bills; use the Energy Library to answer your energy questions; get answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding home energy use; and much more.

After answering some multiple-choice questions and entering some information, you receive a personalized report detailing your month-to-month energy usage in terms of dollars and energy units, as well as an analysis of the cost of individual appliances over a year's time.

The Energy Depot web site also features an extensive Energy Library and set of Frequently Asked Questions on energy use in the home, ranging from insulation levels and venting, to home appliances and energy standards.

For more information on Energy Depot, contact your public power system, or go to www.amea.com, Hometown Connections, Energy Depot. Use the drop-down menu to select your utility.

We also encourage you to visit our web site for additional energy efficiency tips and resources.

When you start to think about ways in which you can be more energy efficient, just use good common sense. Remember, a kilowatt saved is a kilowatt earned

Lisa Miller

AMEA Manager of Communications
and Marketing

Alabama Currents
is a Publication of the
Alabama Municipal Electric Authority

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Alabama Currents

Volume XII, No. 4
JULY/AUGUST 2013

Editor
Lisa Miller

Designed by
Walker 360

Printed by
Walker 360

www.walker360.com

**Customers: Address changes
should be handled through
your local utility office.**

Alabama Currents is published
six times per year by the
Alabama Municipal Electric Authority
(AMEA), and is mailed to
the retail electric customers
of AMEA Member cities.

MISSION STATEMENT

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

Alabama CURRENTS

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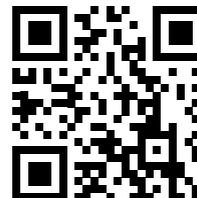
On the Cover

The Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site's purpose is to inspire present and future generations to strive for excellence by understanding and appreciating the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, through interpretation and education and the preservation of cultural

resources; and to commemorate and interpret the impact of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II; their training process, including the roles played by Moton Field, other training facilities and related sites; the African American struggle for greater participation in the United States Armed Forces and their significant role in defending this country.

Shown on the cover is the North American Aviation P-51 Mustang. This was the primary aircraft flown by the Tuskegee Airmen during bombing escort missions in World War II. For more information about the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, please visit www.nps.gov/tuai, or scan the mobile tag.

(NPS Photos by Christine Biggers, Tuskegee Airmen NHS Park Ranger)



Economic growth critical to economically stable communities



Local economic development organizations are critical in stabilizing our economy, as well as our future economic growth. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for the job that they do.



The Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) has a deep appreciation of the challenges and accomplishments of those working in economic development at the local level. We also recognize and appreciate the importance of local industries to our communities.

AMEA is committed to making a lasting impact on the communities we serve. We know that what is good for AMEA's Member cities is good for AMEA.

AMEA works with and supports the efforts of our Members by enhancing existing industries and bringing in new industry through various AMEA-funded programs and initiatives. AMEA also plays a vital role in

supporting statewide recruiting events and continues to build relationships with other utilities and groups to provide opportunities for AMEA Members and the state.

Throughout the past several years, we have worked closely with local economic developers to gain their input as to how AMEA can effectively support their initiatives to improve the quality of life and promote vibrant, active, economically stable communities. In 2011, their input led us to expand our economic development efforts by hiring Al Cook, a 30-year veteran in the economic development arena, to serve as a consultant to our Member city economic developers. This effort provides our Members just another "tool" in their "toolbox" of resources for learning, earning, working, and living in AMEA public power communities.

Al continues to provide great value for our Members in helping position AMEA on statewide and regional strategic initiatives, particularly with the Alabama Department of Commerce, the state's lead economic development organization.

Economic developers are the cata-

lyst for job creation. They are politically astute strategists who establish relationships, build networks, and generate resources to meet the needs of businesses. Their goal is to increase economic viability in their community. Most importantly, economic developers must be keen analysts, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy. They are responsible for monitoring and assessing the economy and the local business climate in order to be proactive and perform effectively.

Economic developers are also instrumental in helping to leverage finances from both the public and private sectors – funding that is critical to help communities attract new businesses, facilitate enterprise development, and assist existing business with expansion and troubleshooting.

Economic developers are key facilitators in creating public-private partnerships and coordinating activities and communications between different agencies, territories, and actors. It is their job to bring the different actors to the bargaining table, gather resources, mediate and match buyers with suppliers, and facilitate business partnerships.

We commend the work that our local economic development professionals do in AMEA Member cities. While current economic circumstances are challenging, the work they do has never been more important to the communities they serve.

AMEA and its Members will continue to support these professionals in their vigilant efforts to grow sustainable communities. We look forward to continued dialogue and partnerships as we seek to find ways to help them improve the quality of life in our public power communities.

Fred D. Clark, Jr.
AMEA President & CEO

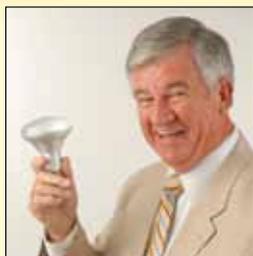
A TYPICAL ALABAMA SUMMER

As I watched the beautiful sunrise this morning, I thought of the old song that says, "And that lucky old sun has nothing to do, but roll around heaven all day." I told you in the last issue that it would be really hot when you received this column in July. And sure enough, the sun that provided the beautiful sunrise this morning will try to wilt me this afternoon. And just before I keel over, that same sun will provide me with a beautiful sunset. Well, let's just call it a typical Alabama summer, where that lucky old sun is trying to make us as miserable as possible and cost us more than we wish on our utility bills.

As I teach in my seminars and as you probably learned in school, all energy comes from the sun. There would be no rain, no wind, no trees, no grass, no animals, no food, no life, and no college football without the sun. We do have the sun, so we should be thankful for it, and use it as the Creator intended. During a cold cloudy winter week, we all look forward to even one calm sunny day where we can just get out and enjoy nature. Unfortunately when summer comes, we get more sun than we humans need and that brings us back to energy efficiency as it relates to a house.

In the last issue, I listed every major component of a house, from the ground up to the peak of the roof. I also gave you my energy-efficiency recommendations for each component. Basically, the main purpose of energy-efficiency items is to either keep the unwanted heat (which was produced by the sun) out of the house in the summer or to keep the wanted heat (which was produced from some energy source such as coal or gas) in the house in the winter. I have always suggested that the first step toward having an energy-efficient house is to either build a new house or improve your existing house to my energy standards so that it needs very little heating and cooling, period. Then decide on what type and size heating and cooling is best for the house.

It's about this time of the year that I start receiving calls from folks with high, and in some cases super high, electric bills. It usually only takes me a few minutes to ask the caller a few questions and to hear their answers about their house



to know why the bills are high. The answer will nearly always relate to one of the energy-efficiency recommendations listed in the last issue.

I can understand, and am glad to help folks who live in a house that, for whatever reason, is not energy efficient. What I don't understand is why we keep building new houses with the same energy problems as the houses with the high bills. I have known for years, but still don't understand why, it is so difficult to get adults to change to something better. I don't have space to list all of my concerns here, but as I was driving through a new subdivision recently, I couldn't help but notice how many houses have the cooling duct work located in the hottest possible location, the attic. I also noticed that almost every outdoor AC unit was setting near a brick wall where the air temperature will be over 120 degrees on most summer days.

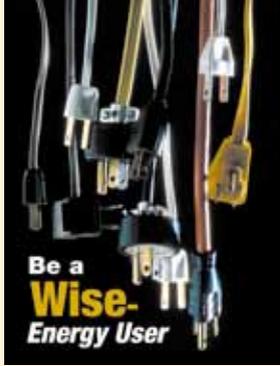
I often ask folks this question, "How would you like to have to sit in your attic or sit by that brick wall and turn the handle to make homemade ice cream on a hot summer day?" Well, like me, you would probably keel over before the ice cream was ready.

If you will go back to the May/June issue of *Alabama Currents*, you will find the answer for the hot attic, but since we are talking so much about the sun, let's look at how the sun can help with our heating and cooling systems.

In my opinion, the best answer by far is a geothermal heat pump system. Let me keep this really simple. To the best of my knowledge, a geothermal heat pump unit is the most energy-efficient heating and cooling system available. A geothermal system has no outdoor unit, and therefore operates using the constant year round in-ground temperature of about 58 degrees. Using the 58-degree earth environment rather than an Alabama 100-degree day temperature, a geothermal system can provide cooling at super high efficiencies. In the heating mode, geothermal is 400 percent efficient. If you buy one unit of electric heat, Mother Earth will donate three units of solar heat for free. Geothermal heat is 75 percent solar but requires no solar panels. You may qualify for a federal tax credit of 30 percent of the total cost of a new geothermal system for your new house or existing house. I have helped many thousands of folks obtain geothermal for their home and I will be glad to help you.

See you next time when your typical Alabama summer will nearly be over and we can talk some football.

Doug Rye, an Arkansas architect, is known as the 'King of Caulk and Talk' and 'America's Energy Expert'. Doug has helped thousands of homeowners save money on their utility bills. He hosts the popular "Home Remedies" radio talk program, which has been on the air for over 20 years and has aired in 19 states. He has conducted energy-saving seminars in almost every state, and averages over 100 per year. Have a question for Doug? Contact him at (501) 653-7931, or www.dougrye.com.



Reduce energy bill by reducing the time your air conditioner operates

The trick to reducing your summer air conditioning costs is to reduce the amount of time that your air conditioner runs. There are three basic ways to reduce operating hours.

The first is to make sure your system is running properly with good maintenance and service. The second is to increase your thermostat setting either manually or automatically. And the third is to employ low-cost cooling methods.

Your system's filters and coils should be cleaned periodically. A dirty system deteriorates air conditioning performance and increases operating time. Ask your service technician how to change filters and how to clean your outdoor coil. The filters should be changed every one to three months and the outdoor coil should be cleaned every year. You will probably find that you can easily change the filter yourself.

If your home is vacant for part of the day, use a programmable thermostat to turn the temperature up before you leave and down before you return. You will need to experiment with different time settings to test how long it takes the system to recover from the higher temperature.

By the way, closing registers in unused rooms doesn't usually help to reduce operating hours and may reduce your system's efficiency.

For low-cost cooling methods, try these effective improvements to reduce air conditioning operating hours.

- Set your thermostat up 4 degrees and run room fans to move the air and cool your family by the wind chill effect. Fans can counteract the higher thermostat setting.
- Install shades, blinds, awnings, sun screens, or window films on your sunny-side windows.
- Insulate your attic to the maximum practical depth of insulation.
- Line-dry your clothes if possible.
- Don't use your oven on hot days.
- Install compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) in the fixtures you use the most. Old-fashioned incandescent lamps produce 10 percent light and 90 percent heat.

For more energy-efficiency tips and resources, visit www.amea.com, Energy Efficiency.



Don't let electrical hazards keep you from having a fun and safe summer

Whether you're relaxing by the pool or taking your boat for its maiden summer voyage, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) offers these vital safety tips to ensure that an electrical hazard doesn't interrupt your fun in the sun.

Pool and Spa Safety Tips

- All outdoor receptacles should be covered to keep them dry. This is especially important around pools, spas and other summer water activities.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) for electrical devices used outside to help prevent electrocutions and electric shock injuries. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.
- Make sure all electrical equipment used for swimming pools, including the cleaning equipment, is grounded.
- Electrical devices and cords should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources such as pools and spas. When possible, use battery operated electrical devices outside.
- Never handle electrical devices when you are wet – either from water activities or from perspiration.
- Make sure there are no power lines over a swimming pool.
- Do not swim during a thunderstorm.

Boating Safety Tips

- Sailboats often have masts of 30 or more, which are dangerous when they come into contact with overhead power lines. Keep masts and other objects at least 10 feet away from overhead lines to help prevent electrical accidents.
- Consider tides when determining overhead clearances. Overhead clearances that are adequate for your vessel at low tide may not be adequate for your vessel at high tide.
- Make a habit of looking up to check for lines before moving or rigging your vessel.
- When fishing onboard, make sure to check for overhead power lines before casting your line.
- Make sure to keep all drying sails and sheet lines from blowing into power lines.
- Check navigation charts for the location of submarine cables. Don't take the chance of disturbing these cables by anchoring your boat near them.
- All the AC outlets on board should be three-prong with appliances plugging directly into them.
- As within the home, extension cords should be used only for temporary purposes on a boat.
- Ensure that all electrical connections are inside a panel box to avoid contact.
- Never interconnect the AC and the DC systems on the boat.

For more summer safety tips, visit ESFI's website at www.esfi.org.

Dothan Utilities participates in Houston County Groundwater Education Day

By Amy Geddings and
Corrie L. Collins

Each year, Dothan Utilities, a department with the City of Dothan, partners with the Houston County Extension Office to present the Houston County Groundwater Education Day. In April, approximately 1,100 fourth grade students from Dothan City and Houston County Schools received the opportunity to learn where their drinking water comes from, how to protect it and how to keep it clean now and for future generations. The goal of this event is to motivate students to develop an overall general environmental awareness and stewardship ethic to help protect related natural resources such as storm water, surface water, wetlands, forestry and wildlife.



Jackson Collins, Hidden Lake Elementary School

The students participated in three hands-on learning activities that included Edible Aquifer, Filtration and Recycling.

The Edible Aquifer class allowed students to learn about groundwater and build an aquifer out of edible supplies. In the Filtration Class, the students were shown how chemicals, dirt and other contaminants are removed from ground water after being retrieved from an aquifer. The final class was Recycling. Students learned how long it takes for different items to decompose, teaching them the importance and benefits of recycling rather than sending all waste to a landfill where it would sit for years before decomposing.

“As a recognized leader in our community and because of our interest in the community education programs for youth, Dothan Utilities and the City of Dothan are proud to have taken part in such a meaningful day of learning,” said Billy R. Mayes, Director, Dothan Utilities.





Staff gardener Isaac Jennings picks vegetables at the “Sylacauga Grows” community garden. The summer crop includes berries, squash, carrots, beets, beans, cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes and much more. All produce is distributed to local families in need. (Photo by Emily Adams).

Garden ‘growing’ to meet community needs

By Emily Adams

Since its founding in 2008, the “Sam H. Wright Sylacauga GROWS” community garden at SAFE Family Services Center in Sylacauga has been nourishing much more than just the physical hunger of the city’s residents.

Joining fresh produce with volunteerism and education, the roughly four-acre patch provides community service opportunities and, with the addition of new outreaches starting this year, teaches healthy habits to future gardeners.

“At its inception, the garden was a response to an identified need amongst individuals who had lost employment and the ability to meet basic needs for themselves and their families,” said SAFE Director Margaret Morton. “Initially, the goal was to provide access to food, but the garden and Sylacauga GROWS has become so much more than that.”

Recently renamed after Sam H. Wright, a late former mayor who promoted community involvement and put in many hours at the garden himself, Sylacauga GROWS has

expanded from a small variety of vegetables in its early days to include a fruit orchard, a large array of vegetables, a greenhouse, compost pile and several bee hives. It has developed from one organization’s experiment into a true community undertaking, which is only fitting since 100 percent of the food it produces is distributed back to the citizens through the Sylacauga Care House and local soup kitchens.

Along with a few staff gardeners and some dedicated volunteers, citizens and organizations can get involved by growing their own food in one of 30 raised beds or dedicating a fruit tree in memory or honor a loved one or organization. In addition, public housing residents’ are able work off debts or fines by putting in volunteer hours at the garden.

“It’s amazing how people’s attitudes will change from the time they show up to the time they leave, especially the people who come to work off a debt,” said lead gardener Bill Roberts. “By the end, they really like doing this kind of work, and I think that comes from being part

of something sustainable. They can bring their kids or grandkids here one day to see a tree they planted, and that makes the work worthwhile.”

The garden is also spreading beyond its plot of land into area schools as part of an initiative to teach not only students, but their parents, the importance of a healthy lifestyle. A number of local elementary schools have already started gardens, including Sycamore, Salter, Indian Valley and Pinecrest and Fayetteville schools, where students watch vegetables grow and taste the fruits of their labor during their school year. Also, Sylacauga GROWS recently began hosting gardening and nutrition workshops for students and was included in a research grant from the University of Alabama at Birmingham that supplied Pinecrest Elementary with a “tower garden,” a 4-foot vertical garden that can produce a fourth an acre of food. If it is successful, towers will be added at more schools.

With long-term ambitions to start a city nursery and nurseries at each school, Sylacauga GROWS is forwarding its mission to facilitate a culture of wellness throughout the city.

“The garden has become an integrated system of

support that has been the catalyst for growing not just produce, but human capacity – the human capacity for eating and living well, making healthy life choices, as well as the capacity of the community to support its children and families in an effort to eradicate obesity, diabetes and other diseases, to the capacity of a community to end food insecurity and hunger,” Morton said.

With a different crop planted every season, Sylacauga GROWS fed at least 325 families last year and distributed more than 1,700 pounds of produce to people in need. It hosted 20 outreach events, had 360 students participate in educational workshops and logged well over 1,000 volunteer hours from 60 volunteers.

“We are teaching; we are learning; and we are growing our future generations through this community-based initiative that began with a production garden and a belief that we can take care of our own,” Morton said. “The churches, the city, SAFE and volunteers from virtually every sector of the community have created Sylacauga GROWS and it literally keeps on growing.”

Emily Adams is a staff writer for The Daily Home in Sylacauga.

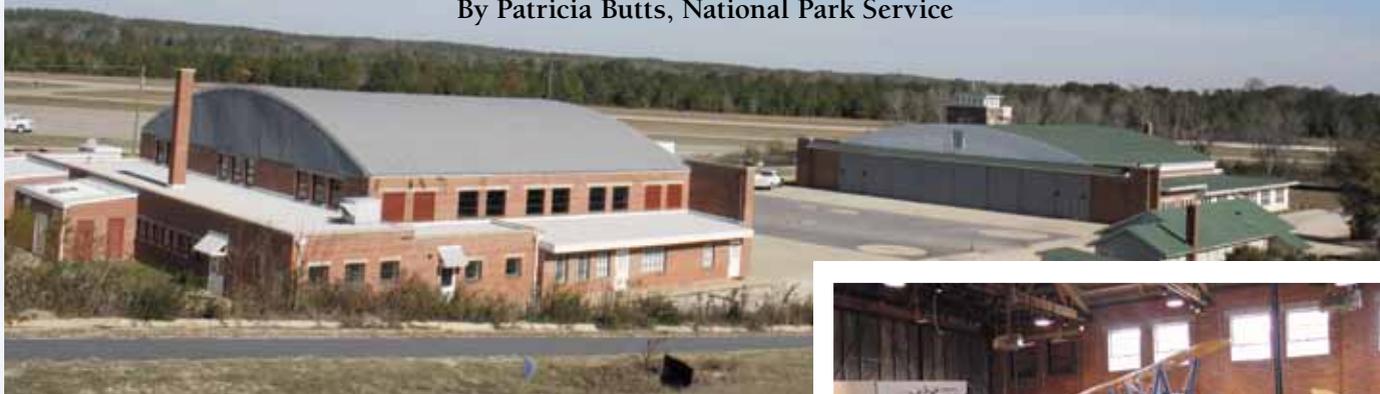


Michele Colabrese with the Institute for America's Health shows Pinecrest Elementary students how a tower garden works. The four-foot vertical garden produces the equivalent of one-fourth an acre of food. (Photo by Mark Ledbetter).

WATTS NEW AT
**Utilities Board
of Tuskegee**

*Uncommon: The Airmen of Tuskegee
Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site*

By Patricia Butts, National Park Service



We often marvel at comics and the silver screen for depicting cape-wearing heroes who save the world with super human strength and extraordinary powers. The Tuskegee Airmen, dressed with integrity, character and courage, are the real thing. The Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, established in 1998 at Moton Field in Tuskegee, tells the stories of the Tuskegee Airmen and their heroic actions during World War II.

The military selected Tuskegee to train pilots because of its commitment to aeronautical training and its local climate conducive to year-round flying. Moton Field was the place where young African-American men learned to fly, to become pilots and officers, and ultimately make history. From this training ground, one of the most highly respected of all African-American fighter groups of World War II emerged — despite segregation and prejudice. Also known as the “Red Tails,” the Tuskegee Airmen, together with the men and women who supported them, cleared the path for full integration of the U.S. military.

Join us for a visit. Your indoor and outdoor exploration spans over 41 acres, including several historic structures, cultural landscapes, and exhibits. Upon arrival, a scenic overlook offers a panoramic view of the entire historical core. This area is perfect to relax, reflect, walk, or enjoy lunch. As you make your way to the property’s core, you’ll find strategically placed exhibits to help guide you as you explore the park at your own pace.

The core consists of framed replicas of the Cadet House, an Army supply building, and the physical plant/engineer’s office. Other standing structures include two airplane hangars, the Skyway Club, an auxiliary storage shed, the bath and locker house, and a warehouse/vehicle storage building.

Hangar No.1, completed in 1941, was the center of operations. Along its perimeter were briefing rooms, administrative offices and maintenance shops. Today, the space contains two main visitor areas, an orientation room and museum. As you enter the orientation room, you’ll find knowledgeable staff who can answer many of your questions. A four-minute video introduces viewers to the Tuskegee Airmen. The museum area houses replicas of two World War II era training aircraft. The room is filled with re-creations and period furnishings of maintenance operations, as well as the sights and sounds of 1940s Moton Field.

Hangar No. 2, completed in 1944 in response to expanding operations, was designed to include the control tower and parachute packing area. After renovation, it will offer contemporary exhibits that focus on the broader story of the Tuskegee Airmen. Visitors will find additional artifacts, a feature film, and oral histories of several pilots. The building will reopen in late 2013.

Whenever you visit, you’ll find park staff to answer questions and enhance your experience. You’ll leave with a better understanding of these heroes — these warriors of the skies who fought for freedom and equality at home and aboard. Prepare to be inspired. Come fly with us. No cape required.

For more information, call (334) 724-0922, or visit www.nps.gov/tuai.



Summertime events planned in Opelika

By Jan Gunter



Summer Swing Concerts in the Park every Tuesday night

Summertime means Summer Swing in Opelika every Tuesday evening in the Municipal Park all summer long. This wonderful series of family fun begins at 7 p.m. and is free. It includes a wide variety of musical entertainment, including Gospel, Jazz, R&B, Oldies, Country, Big Band Sound, Swing and so much more.

And, as an added bonus, the Opelika Band Boosters will prepare hamburgers and hotdogs in the park for a nominal fee, and serve them between 6:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., which makes for an ideal family picnic time. And to top it off, PNC Bank of Opelika will provide complimentary lemonade during the concerts.

The Rocky Brook Rocket, Opelika's vintage train with a long, rich history, has been restored and is back on the tracks for complimentary train rides during the concerts.

So why don't you come out early, bring the whole family, and a quilt or lawn chair, and just relax on the bank of Rocky Brook Creek for an evening of musical fun, fellowship and great food. Come see one of the many entertaining reasons Opelika residents just love calling Opelika home.

Farmers Market on Courthouse Square

If fresh veggies and wonderful baked goods are foods you love, then Opelika Main Street's summertime Farmers Market is the place for you to go. This wonderful event takes place every Tuesday throughout the summer – and sometimes into the early fall season – between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m. at the Courthouse Square in downtown Opelika. The produce comes from area gardens and is so fresh and good.

Freedom Celebration in Opelika

With the Opelika High School and its surrounding areas undergoing major construction this summer, folks have wondered where (or if) the City of Opelika will be hosting its annual Freedom Celebration, which is always a favorite summer happening. Well, you can relax. Opelika's annual Freedom Celebration is on once again this year on Wednesday, July 3, and will feature all of the same great activities it always has. But, instead of having the celebration at OHS, we're moving it across the street to Southern Union State Community College. Activities will begin at 6:30 p.m. (including skydivers and inflatable games), and the fireworks show will begin at dark. There will be live musical entertainment by Muse. And of course, food vendors will be on hand, serving your favorites like hamburgers, hotdogs and popcorn. Of course, you are welcome to pack your own family's picnic dinner and lawn chairs or blankets. But do join us for a great family fun-filled Freedom Celebration.

There will be several other events and fun things to do (not listed here) at the Opelika SportsPlex and Aquatics Center and Lewis Cooper Jr. Memorial Library all throughout the summer, so be sure to visit our website (www.opelika.org) and Facebook pages often so you don't miss out on any of the fun things being offered this summer.



★ WATTS NEW AT Riviera Utilities



AMEA/Riviera Utilities award 2013 scholarships

By David Horton

Riviera Utilities hosted an awards ceremony recently at its main office in Foley for the 2013 AMEA/Riviera Utilities scholarship recipients. Mike Dugger, General Manager, Riviera Utilities, presented plaques and congratulated the seniors for their selection to receive the prestigious \$2,500 scholarship awards. This year's recipients are very well qualified and are top students in their respective schools.

The students are: Griffin A. Fisk, Daphne High School; Austin E. Jones, Spanish Fort High School; and Matthew C. Collins, Spanish Fort High School.

Fisk plans to attend Auburn University and major in Engineering. Jones will attend the University of South Alabama and major in Mechanical Engineering. Collins plans to enter Faulkner State Community College in Bay Minette and study Automotive Manufacturing. All of these students are active in sports and each volunteer their own time in their communities where they live. Each student is involved in special projects in their own communities and they are all leaders in their respective schools. The students are judged on their grades, ACT or SAT scores, financial need, community involvement and work experience. The applications for the students are judged by an independent panel of Montgomery area college guidance personnel and college professors.

"We are very proud of these selected students and wish them well in their endeavors," said Dugger. "Riviera Utilities and AMEA take great pride

in assisting young people in becoming productive citizens and scholars. Our desire is for them to get their education and come back to Baldwin County to work and be a part of our community. We believe in the educational process and are happy to become a part of their lives by contributing to help them help themselves. We look forward to seeing how well they do and what they do with their lives. We wish them all the best in their efforts."

"It is interesting to see how well the students who receive our scholarships do in their respective schools," said David Horton, Manager of Public Affairs. "I am impressed with how

they have already chosen their career path and have goals set for themselves. We are proud to be able to help these students and look forward to them becoming a great influence at their chosen school and in their field of study. Today's jobs require people with more skill and more education. The job a person could get 30 years ago with only a high school diploma now requires some kind of post-secondary education. The business community has a vested interest in giving support to the education of its community and we are proud to be a part of that support."



Mike Dugger (far right), General Manager, Riviera Utilities, poses with the 2013 AMEA / Riviera Utilities scholarship recipients at a recent recognition gathering at the Riviera Utilities office in Foley. Recipients include: Austin Jones, Spanish Fort High; Griffin Fisk, Daphne High School; and Mathew Collins, Spanish Fort High School.



★ WATTS NEW IN **Fairhope**

Fairhope selected to participate in Alabama Communities of Excellence program

By D. Fran Morley

One of six communities statewide named to participate in this year's Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program, Fairhope sees an opportunity to make a great city even better and take a proactive approach to growth, said Mayor Tim Kant.

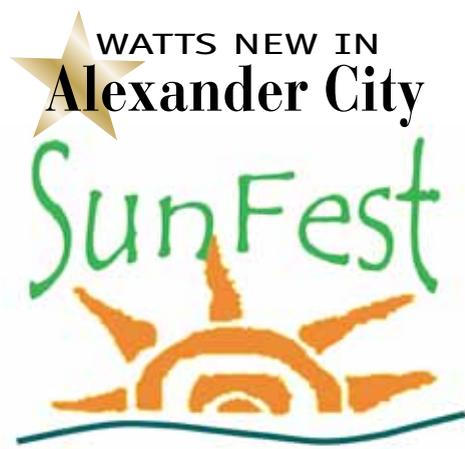
"Growth is inevitable, and by participating in this program, we ensure that we have plans in place: a comprehensive plan that spells out what we need to grow orderly, and a strategic plan that involves all segments of our community — elected officials, city employees, and citizens — to make it happen."

According to a statement from the City Planning staff, the program is a chance to both learn from others and share what works well for Fairhope. "Fairhope has always been forward thinking and open to new ideas. Participating in the ACE program will create an avenue for the City of Fairhope to enter into discussion with neighboring cities and bring the same cutting-edge concept to our economic viability. Completing the program (a multiphase process) also will aid the City in grant applications."

Among the challenges that the City will address with the program include keeping up to date with technological infrastructure and working with the City's changing demographics. "The City has an increasing younger population with a rise in the 40- to 50-year age range and their children, in the 5- to 9-year old age range). This has been particularly evident in Fairhope's expanding school population and sports programs," the staff report said.

Community involvement is vital to the program, Mayor Kant noted. "This is a very positive way to keep citizens involved and give them the sense of ownership of the City's plans. Plans for growth are never finished: as the city grows and changes, we have to change with it, and we need to train new people to pick up the torch and carry on."

For more information on the ACE program, visit www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org.



Something for everyone at SunFest 2013

By Tracy Kendrick

The Alexander City Chamber of Commerce is organizing a week-long festival packed with activities for all ages, called SunFest. SunFest will begin on July 20 and continue until July 27. All activities will be free or at a low cost so that everyone can enjoy the festival. A wide range of events are planned from a beauty pageant to Jo Dee Messina and a county-wide Medallion Hunt.

SunFest will come to a close on the 27 with a concert event. Cheri Edwards, Sid Phelps and Rexton Lee will all perform before Jo Dee Messina takes the stage. The concert will be at the Charles E. Bailey Sportplex Football Stadium. The gates will open at 5 p.m. and the concert will start at 6 p.m. The Russell Lands Firework Show will follow Jo Dee Messina. Tickets are available now at www.alexandercity.org.

Pie in the Sky, a medallion hunt, will have you thinking in riddles. Listen daily for riddles that could lead you to a \$200 medallion on Kowaliga Country 97.5 and Good Morning Lake Martin. The riddles will be available in The Alexander City Outlook. The daily winners will also be entered in a drawing for \$1,000.

Jo Dee Messina and Pie in the Sky are not the only exciting events happening at SunFest. Alexander City will be buzzing with activities for all ages. Some of those activities include events for kids like tumbling, safety demonstrations, field day games, sports and swimming. Other events include quilting, car shows, canoeing, movie and concerts. You will have the opportunity to meet local high school mascots and dance the decades away with *Decades in the Park*.

Be on the lookout for the SunFest 2013 Magazine, which will provide you with everything you need to know about all the events planned. The magazine will include events, times and locations. The magazine will be available at Tallapoosa Publishers, Lake Magazine and Alexander City Chamber of Commerce.

For more information about the festival or SunFest magazine, contact the Chamber at (256) 234-3461.

Mark your calendars for this year's SunFest in Alexander City. It's a festival you will not want to miss!



Farrar bids farewell to Lanett Senior Nutrition Center

By Jennie Gunnells

Jane Farrar, Lanett's Senior Nutrition Center Manager, is retiring this month. Farrar has held this position since August 1977. She has been a fixture at the Senior Center since the center opened. She came to the center from the Lanett Housing Authority.

"I love my job because it helps so many people who would otherwise be forgotten, and by helping them, I help myself," said Farrar.

She has been involved in the Master Games for many years. She has encouraged the seniors to participate in all the activities, including the Master Games, dominoes, Rook, checkers and Wii bowling. She has also encouraged them to use the computers that are available at the Senior Center.

She has mastered many skills since beginning at the Senior Center, including her work on the computer.

Throughout her career, Farrar has worked tirelessly in acquiring grants for the center.

She has been on many trips with the seniors, including Biloxi, Montgomery, Callaway Gardens, and many other places. She and the seniors really enjoy traveling on the bus trips and playing games while traveling.

Farrar and her husband, Richard, have three boys, Kelly, Joe and Michal, and a beloved dog, named Little Girl. She stays busy at her church, Long Cane Methodist.

The City of Lanett wishes her the very best as she enters this next phase of her life, retirement.

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE IN ALEXANDER CITY:

Day Time (256) 409-2080, After Hours/Holidays – Call Police Dept. (256) 234-3421

Please do not call 911

Places to Go & Things to Do

Alexander City

July 4, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Annual Patriotic Boat Parade. Decorate your boat and join in the fun as boats of all sizes, shapes and decoration will 'parade' from Kowaliga Marina to Children's Harbor and back. For more information, call (256) 329-0835 or visit www.russelllandsonlakemartin.com.

July 4, Russell Lands Annual Fourth of July Concert and Fireworks Display. Music begins at 6 p.m. and fireworks at 9 p.m. Gates open at 5 p.m. for the concert featuring *Eat A Peach* and *Nationwide Coverage*. Call (256) 329-0835 or visit www.russelllandsonlakemartin.com for more information. Fireworks free.

July 13, Alexander City Horse Riding Club (ACHRC) event. ACHRC Arena. Visit www.achrc.com for details. Times approximate.

July 20-27, SunFest 2013. A week-long festival of events throughout town with scavenger hunt, block parties, antiques, ending with the Jo Dee Messina SunFest Concert on July 27 at the Sportplex Football Stadium. Call the chamber for additional details, (256) 234-3461.

July 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Tennessee Militia at Horseshoe Bend National Military Park. Volunteers portray Tennessee Militia circa 1814 with musket and cannon fire demonstrations. Behind the Visitor Center. Call (256) 234-7111 for more details.

July Wednesdays, 10:30-12 p.m. Mamie's Place Children's Library. Weekly story time. All children welcome. For details, call (256) 234-4644.

July Saturdays, 7-11:30 a.m. Welcome back MainStreet Alexander City's Farmer's Market. Local growers, craftsmen/craftswomen present their goods. Call ahead for weather-related changes, (256) 329-9227, or visit www.mainstreetac.org.

Aug. 1-4, 127Connect Yard Sale. Connecting our local communities to the World's Longest Yard Sale. Follow our 100-mile route through Tallapoosa, Clay, Talladega and Calhoun counties for the 2nd Annual 127Connect event. Call the Alexander City Chamber at (256) 234-3461, or check the website, www.127connect.com.

Aug. 3, 2-5 p.m., Alexander City Horse Riding Club (ACHRC) event. ACHRC Arena. Visit www.achrc.com for details. Times approximate.

Aug. 10 and 11, 2013 Bowhunters of Alabama State Championship. Archery Range at the Sportplex. Hosted by the Alexander City Archery Club. Competitors from across Alabama will participate. Call Chris for information, (256) 794-5541.

Aug. 10, 2 p.m., East Alabama Horseman's Association (EAHA) Youth Club event. Alexander City Horse Riding Club Arena. Visit www.achrc.com for details.

Aug. 17, 2 p.m., East Alabama Horseman's Association event. Alexander City Horse Riding Club Arena. Visit www.achrc.com for details. Times approximate.

Aug. 17, 6-10 p.m., MainStreet Auction. Aliant Bank Main Branch. Annual MainStreet Alexander City Auction begins at 6 p.m. with art show and silent auction, followed by live auction. Call (256) 329-9227 or visit www.mainstreetac.org for more information.

August Wednesdays, 10:30-12 p.m. Mamie's Place Children's Library. Weekly story time. All children welcome. For details, call (256) 234-4644.

August Saturdays, 7-11:30 a.m. Welcome back MainStreet Alexander City's Farmer's Market. Local growers, craftsmen/craftswomen present their goods. Call ahead for weather-related changes. Call (256) 329-9227 or visit www.mainstreetac.org for more information.

Dothan

On-going Summer Camp Registration. Day camps for kids ages 4-11. Registration required. Camps run for one week each. View the schedule at <http://landmarkpark.com/events.html>.

Fridays in July, 10 a.m. and 12 p.m., Animal Adventures. Interpretive Center Auditorium, Landmark Park. Learn about native and exotic animals with guest presenters. Ages 5 and up. Registration required. Free with paid gate admission.

Sundays in July, 3 p.m., Heritage Forums. Landmark Park. Programs about state and local history. Free with paid gate admission. Continuing Education/Professional Development Units will be offered.

July 6 and Aug. 3, 9:30 a.m., Wiregrass Woodturners. Ag Museum, Landmark Park. Open to the public. Free with paid gate admission.

July 6 and Aug. 3, 1 p.m., Landmark Dulcimer Club. Must have a dulcimer. Classroom. Free with paid gate admission.

July 11 and 25, 7:30 p.m., Music By Moonlight. Gazebo lawn at Landmark Park. Bring a picnic and enjoy music under the stars. *The Moonlighters*, July 11; and *Troy University Community Band*, July 25. Free admission

July 14 and Aug. 11, 4 p.m., Reptile Feeding. Interpretive Center Classroom, Landmark Park. Watch park staff feed the snakes and learn why these animals are important to the environment. Free with paid gate admission.

July 27, 10 a.m., Watermelon Tasting. Sample several varieties of watermelons grown at Landmark Park. Free with paid gate admission.

Saturdays in August, 10 a.m., Science on Saturdays. Interpretive Center Auditorium, Landmark Park. Programs about the magic of science. Free with paid gate admission. Schedule at <http://landmarkpark.com/events.html>.

Calling All Photographers. Landmark Park will host a photo contest with the help of the Southeast Alabama Photography and Adventure Club. There will be several categories available for participants. Photos must have been taken in 2013 to be eligible for entry so make sure you pack your camera the next time you visit the park. More details coming soon.

Calling All Quilters. Mark your calendars for Landmark Park's annual Quilt Show, Oct. 25-27. Antique and contemporary quilts may be entered in the juried show and special exhibit. More details coming soon.

Continued on page 16

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Places to Go & Things to Do *Continued from page 15*

Fairhope

July 4, City of Fairhope Annual Fourth of July Concert and Fireworks Display. Henry George Park and the Fairhope Municipal Pier. The Baldwin Pops Band Independence Day Concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Henry George Park. A variety of patriotic music will be played before and during the fireworks display. The Fairhope fireworks display will begin at approximately 9 p.m. Also this year the band, *Doc Rogers and Rock Dodgers Band*, will perform in the South Beach Park at 3 p.m. This group, made up of senior high school students from all over Alabama, has performed at Fourth of July celebrations on Lake Martin, in Panama City, Demopolis and Huntsville. They will perform a variety of patriotic music and some classic light rock. For more information on Fairhope's Fourth of July Festival and Fireworks Display, call (251) 929-1466.

July 5 and Aug. 12, 6-8 p.m., First Friday ArtWalk. Begins at Fairhope Art Center. Stroll through downtown Fairhope visiting art galleries and listening to music. For information, call (251) 929-1466.

Aug. 17, Fairhope Museum of History Elderberry Festival. For information, call (251) 929-1471.

Fairhope Museum of History Bus Tours. Ride around Fairhope and learn more about the unique history of our area. Tours leave the museum at 9 and 11 a.m., and 1 and 3 p.m. \$10 tickets go on sale the week of July 4. For information, call (251) 929-1474.

Foley

Aug. 1-3, 8 p.m., Jennifer Claire Moore 16th Annual Professional Rodeo. City of Foley Horse Arena. Pre-rodeo activities each night at 7 p.m. From bareback bronco riding and barrel racing to children's activities, the rodeo is fun for the whole family. The horse arena is located off Highway 59, south of South Baldwin Regional Medical Center. For more information, contact rodeo@jenniferclairemoorefoundation.com, or call (251) 971-3633.

Luverne

Aug. 24, 7 a.m., Peanut Boil 5K Run/Walk. Tom Harbin Center, Airport Road, Luverne. For an application or for more details, call (334) 335-4468.

Aug. 31, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Fourth Annual Peanut Boil Festival. Highways 10 and 331, Luverne. Car show, arts & crafts, entertainment, beauty pageants, kids rides, and great food. For vendor application or more information, call (334) 335-4468

Opelika

July 3, 6:30 p.m., Freedom Celebration. Southern Union Community College, Opelika. Activities, food, music and fireworks at dark.

July 5, First Friday. Visit historic downtown Opelika the first Friday of each month for after-hours shopping, live street-corner entertainment, and many delicious dining options.

Opelika Main Street Farmers Market. Every Tuesday through (at least) the end of August, 3-6 p.m. Courthouse Square in downtown Opelika (across the street from the Lee County Courthouse on South 9th Street).

Summer Swing. Every Tuesday night through Aug. 13, 7 p.m. Municipal Park, Opelika. Concerts: July 2, *Soul Coalition* of East Alabama; July 9, *Kidd Blue*; July 16, *Fedoras*; July 23, *Muse*; July 30, *Martha's Trouble*; Aug. 6, *Fred Jones*; and, Aug. 13, *Route 66*.

Aug. 2, First Friday. Visit Historic downtown Opelika the first Friday of each month for after-hours shopping, live street-corner entertainment, and many delicious dining options.

Sylacauga

For the month of July, the Isabel Anderson Comer Museum will feature an exhibition of oil and watercolor art work by the husband and wife team, Ken and Elma Schablow. A reception will be held on July 11, 6:30-8 p.m.

July 13, The Miss Talladega County Pageant and the Miss Talladega County Outstanding Teen Pageant. B. B. Comer Memorial High School. For additional information, contact Sylacauga Today at (256) 245-8899 or syltoday@gmail.com.

For the month of August, the Isabel Anderson Comer Museum will host a wood carving exhibit by local artists. A reception will be held on Aug. 15, 6:30-8 p.m.

Statewide

Alabama 2013 "Back-to-School" Sales Tax Holiday. Beginning at 12:01 a.m. (CST) on Friday, Aug. 2, 2013, and ending at 12 midnight on Sunday, Aug. 4, 2013, Alabama will hold its Eighth Annual Sales Tax Holiday giving shoppers the opportunity to purchase certain school supplies, computers, and clothing free of state sales or use tax. Local sales and use tax may apply. For more information on participating cities and counties, visit the Alabama Department of Revenue web site, <http://revenue.alabama.gov/salestax/STholiday.cfm>.