

Scholarships: Our best investment in tomorrow

Ask a student, or a professor, or a parent, and he or she will likely tell you that scholarships do make a difference. For some people, receiving scholarship money made the difference between finishing school on schedule or taking time off to save money, or between attending our first-choice school or settling for a more affordable institution. Many times, graduates will tell you that without the support of a scholarship, college or a technical school would have been impossible.



We must continue to make smart investments in our children. Alabama has always ranked high in economic competitiveness. That kind of news is important to those of us calling Alabama our home, and it brings a certain responsibility to you and me personally, as well as the business community.

The business community has a vested interest in lending support to the education of its community. The Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) and its 11 Members are committed to investing in the children of the communities we serve through such initiatives as the AMEA Scholarship Program. AMEA and its Members are helping enrich the lives of students throughout the state, and the benefits of the AMEA Scholarship Program will have a long, lasting effect on many young lives.

For the past 19 years, AMEA and its Members have demonstrated our commitment to education by providing scholarships to the graduating high school seniors who receive their electric service from AMEA Members, including Alexander City, Dothan, Fairhope, LaFayette, Lanett, Luverne, Opelika, Piedmont, Riviera Utilities (Foley), Sylacauga and Tuskegee. Granted only to graduating high school seniors, the student must attend a four-year college, a community college, a technical school or vocational school within the state of Alabama.

Each year, AMEA and its 11 Member cities make available 33, \$2,500 scholarships, which include regular and technical school scholarships. In 2011, AMEA and its Members awarded \$82,500 in scholarships to students throughout the state.

If you have a student who might qualify for this program, we encourage you to go to the AMEA web site, www.amea.com, Scholarship Program, and download one of the scholarship applications. Application deadline for the 2012 program is Monday, Feb. 6. To learn more about the program, read the article on this page.

We take our role as a good corporate citizen seriously. That's why we, along with our Members, support education initiatives that contribute to making our state economically competitive. Together, we can all help the next generation of leaders by giving them the support and experiences they need today to make sound decisions in the future.

Happy New Year!

Lisa Miller

AMEA Manager of Communications and Marketing

2012 AMEA Scholarship Program deadline is fast approaching



You still have time to apply for the 2012 Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) Scholarship Program. The deadline of **Monday, Feb. 6, 2012** is just around the corner.

Will you be graduating from high school in the spring? Do you receive your electricity from a municipal electric system in Alabama? Then if your answer to these questions is "yes," you could be eligible to receive a scholarship from AMEA and your public power system.

For the past 19 years, AMEA and its 11 Member cities (Alexander City, Dothan, Fairhope, Foley, LaFayette, Lanett, Luverne, Opelika, Piedmont, Sylacauga and Tuskegee) have provided scholarships to area high school seniors through the AMEA Scholarship Program. Scholarships, totaling approximately \$82,500, were awarded in the 2011 program.

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

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

Applications are reviewed and winners are selected by an independent panel of Montgomery area college guidance personnel.

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

Alabama Currents
is a Publication of the
Alabama Municipal Electric Authority

P.O. Box 5220
Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5220

804 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

www.amea.com

Fred D. Clark, Jr.
President & Chief Executive Officer

Board of Directors

Chairman	Don McClellan
Vice Chairman	Gary Fuller
Secretary/Treasurer	Tim Kant
Dale Baker	Mike Dugger
Taylor Barbaree	Henry Osborne
Morris Tate	Lee Young

Alabama Currents

Volume XI, No. 1
January/February 2012

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

Inside This Issue

- 2 **2012 AMEA Scholarship Program deadline is fast approaching**
- 6 **\$7.1 million awarded to help low-income families with heating bills**

News From AMEA Members

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| 6 | Sylacauga | 12 | Piedmont |
| 7 | Riviera Utilities | 12 | Dothan |
| 8 | Lanett | 13 | Luverne |
| 9 | Fairhope | 14 | LaFayette |
| 10 | Alexander City | 15 | Utilities Board of Tuskegee |
| 11 | Opelika | | |

Features

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----|--|
| 2 | From The Editor | 5 | Doug Rye |
| 4 | In My Opinion | 16 | Places To Go & Things To Do |

On the Cover

The City of Lanett held a Veterans Day service on Nov. 11, 2011 in the city's Veterans Memorial Park, which is located across from L.B. Sykes Elementary School in Lanett. Some 100 people were on hand for the special event.

As part of a park dedication in May 2011, a statue commemorating fallen soldiers was unveiled at one end of the park. The statue shows a pair of soldier's boots with a rifle propped up between them and a military helmet sitting on top. During the Veterans Day service in November 2011, a second statue was unveiled at the opposite end of the park which honors prisoners of war and those missing in action.

Several enhancements have been made to the park including landscaping, benches, and a special walkway with bricks featuring the names of Chambers County and West Point area residents who have served in the military. The bricks can be purchased by a veteran or family member for inclusion. For more information on the bricks, contact the Lanett City Hall.

A third phase of the park will include a memorial wall similar to the memorial in Washington, D.C., that displays the names of locals who died during service.

Photos by Photographer Steve Winslett

I want to wish you a very Happy New Year as we begin 2012. My hopes and prayers are that 2012 will be brighter than in recent years.

As you have read in my previous *Alabama Currents'* articles, electric costs over the last 10 years have been driven by mandated Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations. It is clear that EPA's intent is to shut down existing coal-fired electric generation. My primary concern is the electric utility cost escalation as a result of these new far-reaching regulations. The result of this action will be electric rate increases.

EPA will have a busy 2012, proposing, finalizing, implementing and defending one rule after another, right through Election Day. Here are some of EPA's activities slated for 2012:

- On Jan. 1, the agency's rule governing air pollution that blows across state lines will take effect, amid a flurry of paperwork in a massive lawsuit driven by 45 petitioners. The lawsuit was brought by states beholden to more stringent requirements and utilities that will have to implement them. The EPA is joined in the case by downwind cities and states that will benefit from the new air pollution limits, along with environmentalists and some other utilities.
- April 3, the EPA will finalize air standards for wells that use hydraulic fracturing to access natural gas and for oil and natural gas processing plants.
- The EPA will set greenhouse gas emission standards for fossil-fueled power plants and petroleum refineries.
- Under review at the White House Office of Management and Budget are rules to reconsider air emission standards at chemical manufacturing plants, and a review of risk and technology for emission standards for shipbuilding and ship repair.
- The EPA plans to decide during the summer how to regulate coal ash — the byproduct that is often reused in housing products but has been the subject of national attention after some dangerous spills from huge retention ponds.
- In July, the agency also will finalize a rule for water discharge permits for cooling towers that keep power plants and manufacturing facilities from overheating. Such towers pull water from rivers and streams, posing dangers to fish and fish eggs that become caught in intake screens. The issue prompted a Supreme Court ruling that says the EPA may consider costs and benefits in its regulations because the Clean Water Act does not explicitly forbid it.
- The EPA has agreed to judicially mandated deadlines for acting on plans to cut haze-causing pollution from



coal-fired power plants in 45 states. The deadlines run from December 2011 to November 2012.

- Meanwhile, several rules are caught up in an ongoing lawsuit over EPA's climate "endangerment finding" in which the agency determined that carbon dioxide emissions threaten public health and the environment. The finding became an underpinning of EPA climate regulations. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hear oral arguments for that case Feb. 28-29, and many expect that the case will be decided in the summer.

The EPA has said many of the rules are scheduled at the same time to allow regulated entities, such as power plants, to make more coordinated planning decisions about upgrades. But the timing also has inspired accusations of EPA over-regulation.

Many other rules are beholden to judicial timelines because courts overturned Bush-era rules, setting schedules for the EPA to act. Those include the utility mercury rule, the Cross State Air Pollution Rule, the boiler rules, rules governing cement manufacturers and air standards for particulate matter.

Clearly, the desire for clean air and a clean environment is fundamental to all of us. But it is also important that we aim for a balanced approach between protecting the environment and the impact of potential costs to you, the customer.

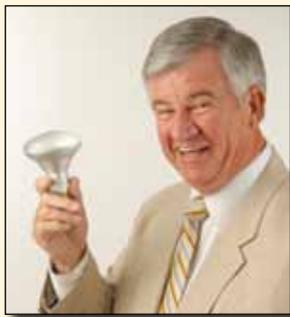
AMEA is watching EPA actions very closely. We are working with members of Alabama's Congressional delegation as well as consumer advocacy groups to try to protect our way of life. We are committed to working with Congress to establish climate and energy policies that will help protect the environment, while at the same time ensuring a reliable source of low-cost energy. It is critical to do so in a way that does not impose additional burdens on our struggling economy and put manufacturers in the United States at a competitive disadvantage.

We are hopeful that the U.S. Congress and EPA will take a realistic look at the enormous impact of all the regulations they are considering and how those regulations affect families and businesses.

I will be in Washington, D.C., in March to speak to our Congressional members, as well as meet with the American Public Power Association on these issues. As the 2012 political year gets underway, we will be watching the activities in Washington and we will monitor the issues that have an impact on you. Be assured that we will keep you informed on all fronts as we continue the mission of providing you with a reliable and economical source of electric service.

Fred D. Clark, Jr.
AMEA President & CEO

Happy New Year



I am totally serious when I tell you that it seems like I just wished you a Happy New Year just a short time ago. Is it unbelievable how fast we went through 2011? Most of you know exactly what I am saying.

I wrote six articles for this magazine last year and I know that they helped many of you because you have called my office and told me so. I have given lots of thought to how I can help you even more this year. In December, and as it gets colder, I start receiving lots of calls about adding attic insulation and the question of R-value nearly always comes up. Most ask, “How much R-value is needed and do I need more?” Before I answer the caller’s question, I always explain to them why I don’t pay much attention to R-values. So let me give you my opinion about published or printed R-values that you see on insulation products.

Basically the R-value number is how much resistance a certain product has to heat flow. The greater the number, the greater the product should stop heat movement. Technically speaking, there is no such thing as cold but rather an absence of heat. Heat always tries to move toward a cooler area. Therefore one would like to keep the heat out of the house in the summer but would like to keep the heat in the house in the winter. Well, I certainly agree with that. However, it is my opinion that R-values, which are determined in a laboratory, do not necessarily reflect the same R-values of that same product when placed in a different environment. A certain product may perform very well in a controlled laboratory setting but perform totally different in a house on a cold winter day with a 30 mph wind blowing. It has been my experience that some insulation products perform much better than others during extreme weather conditions, even though they may all have similar R-value ratings.

I first started to question R-values about 25 years ago. I got up one cold November morning to go deer hunting. I packed a couple of sandwiches and filled my Thermos bottle with hot chocolate and headed for the woods. About six hours later, I decided that I needed that hot chocolate. I unscrewed the big lid which I used as a cup. Then I removed the stopper and immediately steam came out of the bottle. After six hours, the hot chocolate was still hot. I thought to myself, “That Thermos bottle has no insulation, practically

no R-value, and yet my drink is still hot after six hours in the woods. How can that be?”

Sometime later in life, I purchased a cup of coffee at McDonalds. The coffee was so hot that I couldn’t drink it without burning my mouth. As I sat there, I noticed that I could see how much coffee was in the foam cup by looking through the side of the cup. I was holding a very thin foam cup that had almost no R-value, contained 160-degree coffee, and it was not burning my hand. I wondered again, “How can that be?”

By this time, I am really beginning to question the validity of R-values. I am also learning from actual construction that cellulose insulation is outperforming the typical fiberglass insulation even though they have similar R-values. So my eyes are wide open and my ears alert for more examples that can help me decide if R-values really mean anything.

Sometime later I am on a jet plane and the pilot gives us a weather report for our destination. He also tells us that the temperature outside the plane is minus 50 degrees F. I look out the window and notice the plane’s wall is only about two inches thick. My brain is busy trying to understand how a two-inch thick wall, which has maybe an R-value of 7, can be the only thing between me and minus 50-degree air and the wall isn’t even cold. I have used this example on many flights when the person next to me wants to talk about building a new house.

Then I thought about camping in a tent. That canvass has very little R-value, but you can heat the tent with a small heater if you zip up the window and door. By now some of you know where I going with this story. We then learned how important it is to stop the air infiltration. Think about it for a moment. If you open the door on the tent, you lose the heat. If you open the window on the jet plane, you really lose the heat and on and on. Now you know why I write about caulking and using insulation that stops air in so many of my articles. Simply stated, air sealing a house might be just as important as insulation.

In answer to the original question, if you have about 12 inches of insulation in your attic, it probably isn’t feasible to add more. As always, you may call me at (501) 653-7931 if you have questions. And I really do want you to have a Happy New Year.

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

\$7.1 million awarded to help low-income families with heating bills

Gov. Robert Bentley recently awarded \$7.1 million in grants to assist low-income Alabama families with their energy bills.

The grants will be issued to 22 community service agencies throughout the state and awarded to low-income families based on need. Funds will be used to help families heat their houses this winter.

The grant is being made available through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and is aimed at helping eligible low-income households afford the energy required to heat their houses. Applications for assistance are being taken at local community service agencies. Eligibility requirements are based on income, family size and available resources.

Listed below are the community service agencies in the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) service area (AMEA's 11 Member cities) that were awarded grants, areas served and the amount of the grants:

- Community Action Committee Inc of Chambers-Tallapoosa-Coosa (Chambers, Coosa and Tallapoosa) - \$155,109;
- Alabama Council on Human Relations Inc. (Lee) - \$210,366;
- Macon-Russell Community Action Agency (Macon and Russell) - \$174,695;
- Organized Community Action Program Inc. (Bullock, Butler, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Lowndes and Pike) - \$418,601;
- Human Resources Development Corp. (Barbour, Coffee, Geneva, Henry and Houston) - \$345,693;
- Community Action Agency of Talladega, Clay, Randolph, Calhoun and Cleburne Counties (Calhoun, Clay, Cleburne, Randolph and Talladega) - \$344,211;
- Community Action Agency of South Alabama (Baldwin, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Marengo, Monroe and Wilcox) - \$503,031.

Bentley awarded the grants from funds provided to the state by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs is administering the grants.

WATTS NEW IN Sylacauga

Local hospital foundation hosts Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Extravaganza

By Vanessa Green

Coosa Valley Medical Center Foundation hosted its Second Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Extravaganza this past November at J. Craig Smith Community Center in Sylacauga with over 325 in attendance.

Coosa Valley Medical Center's Chief Executive Officer, Glenn C. Sisk, introduced special guest for the event, Barbara Dooley, wife of legendary SEC football Coach Vince Dooley. But most of all, Mrs. Dooley is a six-year cancer survivor. It was an evening filled with lots of laughter and a few tears.

Mrs. Dooley began the night with many fun, personal stories about life with Vince Dooley and her family experiences of being a mother of four.

The real story was delivered with strength, inspiration and from the heart of Mrs. Dooley as she told of her breast cancer journey. Mrs. Dooley shared the "10 Best Things About Having Breast Cancer" with 10 being "you don't have to cook" or "clean the kitchen" and 9 as "you don't have to comb your hair or shave your legs" and the list continued from there.

Mrs. Dooley's breast cancer was found by a routine mammogram. Having breast cancer was the last thing on her mind when her doctor told her she had cancer. "Let me tell you those words will take your breath away," she said.

Mrs. Dooley's message was about being unafraid while she kept her experience funny and light-hearted. It was also real as she shared how she met cancer face to face.

"I thought, what am I afraid of?," she said. "I am a Christian, so if I die, I get Jesus. If I live I get Dooley." She then led the crowd in a version of *I Just Called to Say I Love You* by Stevie Wonder.

The evening was quite glamorous as the J. Craig Smith Community Center sparkled with lights, tents, and chandeliers all in pink. One of the highlights of the evening was a pink golf cart that was given away. Congratulations went to Hoyt Picklesimer of Chelsea who won the golf cart. A special tribute was given to all cancer survivors as Chris Phillips from the First United Methodist Church of Sylacauga performed, *I'm Going to Love You Through It*.

Sisk said that while the purpose of the event is to bring awareness and to promote annual check-ups and mammograms in support of early detection and saving lives, this event brought even more as we watched our community come together in celebration and honor of all those that walk the journey everyday.

"Whoever said that winning isn't everything, obviously wasn't fighting breast cancer," said Sisk.



Barbara Dooley

★ WATTS NEW AT Riviera Utilities

Vernie Heard is Riviera Utilities' 2011 Employee of the Year

By David Horton

Vernie Heard was named Riviera Utilities 2011 Employee of the Year in December 2011. Heard is one of those rare individuals who comes along in your lifetime and you know there is something special about him.

"When you meet Vernie, you can feel and see the goodness in his heart," said David Horton, Manager of Public Affairs, Riviera Utilities. "He is a person you want to listen to and hang on to every word he says. Vernie is one of the nicest guys you could ever meet. He loves his God, family, job and country."

That is the type of individual the Riviera Utilities' Employee of the Year demonstrates and lives each and every day.

Heard has been around the world, literally. He is the Human Resources Coordinator in the Foley office. He was completely shocked when he was chosen Employee of the Month in July, but no one else was. He is the perfect role model for our younger employees and is committed to Riviera, the community and his country.

Heard began his career with Riviera in 1988 as a meter reader, and in 2007 he was promoted to the Supervisor of the Meter Department. Then in 2010, he was promoted to his current position in the HR Department. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Resources from Faulkner University, which he earned while attending school at night.

Everyone at Riviera knows that Heard served in the National Guard, reaching the rank of 1st Sergeant. He has been to Korea three times...once while working security at the Seoul Olympics.

Does anyone remember the bombing at the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta in 1996? Heard was there working Olympics security and coordinating communications. He worked directly for the person who became the primary suspect for the bombing. Shortly after his work at the Olympics, he obtained a top security clearance.

In 2003, he was the single individual chosen from the state of Alabama to work for then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at the Pentagon for 11 months. While he was in

Heard is shown with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at a high school graduation ceremony in Talladega in 2009.



Heard poses with Mike Dugger, General Manager, Riviera Utilities, after being named the 2011 Employee of the Year.

Washington, the war in Iraq began. He returned home and was mobilized with his guard unit for a one-year tour of duty in Iraq. His job in Iraq was coordinating communications (phones, radios, laptops) for the Signal Network.

Recently, Heard was invited to attend a retirement ceremony in Washington for U.S. Brigadier General Renwick Payne, who became a friend while he was working there. Heard dined one evening at the White House and played golf the next day at Camp David with some well-known dignitaries. How would you like to have these men for your golfing partners? Donald Rumsfeld, former Secretary of Defense; Robert Gates, former Secretary of Defense; and Leon Panetta, current Secretary of Defense and former CIA Director? It's true and amazing. And he doesn't even play golf. Heard said he didn't mind hanging around with such a prestigious group of men. What an honor for him to be invited to participate in such a wonderful event.

"I have known Vernie for quite a few years and I appreciate his outstanding character and the values he lives by," said Mike Dugger, General Manager, Riviera Utilities. "He is an unbelievable individual, a tremendous role model for us all and has served Riviera and his country well for a lot of years. I am proud to say that he is our Employee of the Year."

Heard grew up in Foley with three brothers and one sister. His father, Vernie Heard, Sr., still lives in Foley. Heard lost his precious wife, Linda, suddenly a year and a half ago. They have two sons, Sharod and Vernie Heard, III, who attend Foley High School. His two nieces, Vanessa and Laila, are a special part of his life, too. When he is not working or serving on one of the various local city boards, he enjoys playing basketball with his friends.

In our minds, he is the perfect person for the 2011 Riviera Utilities' Employee of the Year.

Other employees who were selected Employee of the Month during the year were: Wes McKenzie, December 2010; in 2011, Steve Brooks, January; Leighanne Stewart, February; Doug Ewing, March; Dan Davis, April; Lori Young, May; Bob Freitag, July; Brad Brewer, August; Cameron Paulk, September; James Wallace, October; and Kevin Switzer, November.

Honoring Chambers County veterans

By Jennie Gunnells

The City of Lanett's Veterans Park on First Street just keeps improving with the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority's generous grant dollars. It is probably my favorite place in Lanett. One can go there and reflect on just what our veterans from all branches of the service have done for this great country.

This is a true story from long ago for our Chambers County area. My father, Paul Aaron Johnson, came from a large family, including three Johnson brothers: O'Neal (Navy), Paul (Army), James S. "Sherman" (Army). A younger brother, Phillip I. Johnson, served in the Korean War.

This is a letter to the Shawmut War Service Center, World War II, from my father, Paul A. Johnson, Philippines: "Sorry I haven't written you sooner, but I've been moving around lots lately. I've been receiving your letters but haven't gotten the paper since I left the states. I guess they will catch up with me now. Hope all of you are well and happy. I'm fine myself. I was in on the invasion and things were quieter than we expected, and we were very glad. Tell everyone hello for me."

My Daddy was a fantastic storyteller and started his life outside LaFayette, near Ripville, which was a beautiful local swimming area with waterfalls and huge rocks. The rest of the family moved to Plant City when Daddy was 12. He stayed with his oldest sister and her husband since he did not want to give up his dog, Sam, or his wild country ways. He moved when school started.

Daddy and his brothers and sisters walked two miles to a one-room schoolhouse in the country. So when they moved and attended Shawmut School, they thought they were in high cotton. To this day, this area has red dirt roads and dense woods on both sides of the road. He told me stories about a black

panther and from the looks of things, there just may be panthers still there.

Sherman was two years younger than Daddy and they were close. Daddy and Sherman were good athletes.

I am fortunate to have an aunt and uncle who have provided me with some information and pictures about that time. How I wish I had asked my Daddy more questions. There was also the family of Mary Terry Fetner and Roy H. Terry, another of those large families in the Cotton Mill Town of Shawmut, who lost a sibling in WWII.

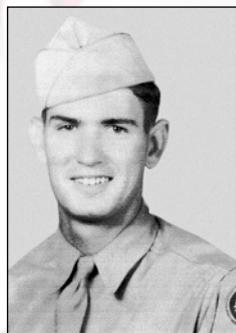


John Dennis Terry

I met with Roy H. Terry, an Air Force veteran of the Korea and Vietnam Wars, who was in security as a Special Agent, and Mary Terry Fetner. They lost a brother in WWII as did the Johnson family. So these families had a lot in common.

Sgt. James Sherman Johnson was killed in a foxhole in Italy and had just turned 20. He was born Jan. 24, 1924 and was killed Feb. 18, 1944. His body was never recovered. A buddy wrote the family that Sherman never knew what hit him. A coffin was sent home with a military escort, which stayed with the coffin at all times.

John Dennis Terry was also killed in action. John Dennis Terry was home



James Sherman Johnson

for Christmas and their father drove him to the airport in Atlanta for him to return to service. When Mr. Terry returned home, he sat down and began crying saying, "I'll never see my son, Johnny, alive again." This was a premonition as he was killed a little while later and none of them ever saw him again.

I have heard Daddy say many times that his mother, Mary Lou Phillips Johnson, died of a broken heart. She told Mrs. Terry that she was the only woman in Shawmut that knew how she felt.

Betty Johnson Parrish and Phillip I. Johnson provided me with copies of letters that Mama Johnson wrote to him and letters that Sherman wrote back. She had nine children and she was fair with blue eyes. Thomas E. Johnson had black hair and black eyes.

These letters, knowing the history of what is going to happen, are heart breaking. My Daddy was handsome with black hair and ice blue eyes that could freeze your very soul, but Sherman was movie star handsome. Bet says that when he walked up the street every woman, regardless of her age, came out and spoke to him. I never met or knew him but I was told many stories.

I just have to give you a glimpse of those letters. In this day and age of instant communication, it is so hard to imagine going days without any news. I also never heard my Daddy say he was in the invasion in the Philippines. He told me stories about how he went from the tropical climate of the Philippines to Japan's cold climate. He said they almost froze. Bet as the youngest was 12 years younger than Daddy. He used to babysit with her and run the bases carrying her.

The families in this area were notified by letter and this is what the letter said:

Department of Alabama Veterans of Foreign Wars U. S., 320 Bell Building Montgomery, Alabama

Dear Mr. Johnson:

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States want to express to you and your family our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of your hero in giving up his life for his country and the principles for which we stand. We are the

men who went overseas as he did, but were fortunate enough to get back.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that the Veterans of Foreign Wars, as a veteran's organization, stand ready to help you to carry out the last tribute to him by volunteering our services. If you should need any assistance or desire a military funeral for him, we are ready and willing to furnish the honor guard upon your request.

Should you desire this service, we request that you notify Sam Calhoun, Jr. of Langdale, Alabama, who is the Post Commander of the VFW Post nearest to you, immediately after the Government notifies you of the time of arrival, he will be glad to make all arrangements in furnishing this military funeral, or any other assistance.

If for any reason you don't get the assistance you need, please notify this office, or call 3-5797 in Montgomery, and we will give every effort we can in helping you. We feel that your loved one would have been a member of this organization had he lived, because he became eligible when he went overseas.

Yours sincerely,
T. H. Walker, Adjutant-Quartermaster

I barely remember Mama Johnson as she died when I was around 4 years old, but I remember her being sick. She died young and the family always felt it was from a broken heart.

Phillip I. Johnson never remembers Sherman saying a bad thing about anyone. He says of all the men he knew, Sherman and Paul were good role models.

This is to honor the memory, dedication of all our WWII veterans, and indeed all veterans. What a supreme sacrifice to defend your country. Most of these WWII veterans never hesitated to enlist or be drafted.

Hey, Daddy, this one is for you. You were my hero all my life. Your generation truly was "The Greatest Generation." Thanks to all of our veterans and God bless America.

Mayor Oscar Crawley, City Council members and employees of the City of Lanett wish you a Happy New Year.

★ WATTS NEW IN Fairhope

The City of Fairhope encourages parents and children to safely walk more

By D. Fran Morley

Walking to school just got a lot easier and safer for students in Fairhope thanks to new crossing signals on a busy street a few blocks north of the elementary school. Charlene Lee, programs director for Smart Coast, an organization that supports and encourages smart growth throughout the Alabama Gulf Coast region, says the new signage is a perfect example of a responsive government.

"A Fairhope Elementary parent alerted me to the problem at that corner," Lee explained. "The stop-light is designed so that it stays green unless a car approaches from the side streets. Parents and children who needed to cross had to either wait for a car on the side street or dodge busy traffic to run across. That's not a great example to set for their children."

Lee contacted the City of Fairhope and spoke with Electric Superintendent Scott Sligh.

"I thought it was a good project, as part of a broader effort to encourage children to walk to school," Sligh said. "We had some extra poles from when we redid that intersection with LED lights. The City purchased the signals and we completed all of the work in house. Programming the controller to work with the new signals was new territory for us, so we had to figure it out as we went along. Jimmy Cluster who maintains an IMSA certification (International Municipal Signal Association) and Jeremy Morgan did the bulk of the work."

Smart Coast encourages education, research, and dialog among government entities, developers, and the public on topics such as quality housing for all income levels, mixed land usage, sustainable agricultural use, and walkable neighborhoods.

"This project showed the importance of cooperation, coordination, and communication," Lee said. "The parent who first contacted me is new to our area and from a city where more people walk their kids to school; she expected to safely be able to do that here. It's imperative that we do all we can to encourage parents and children to walk more. The new light makes it easier and safer for people on bikes to cross the street, too."

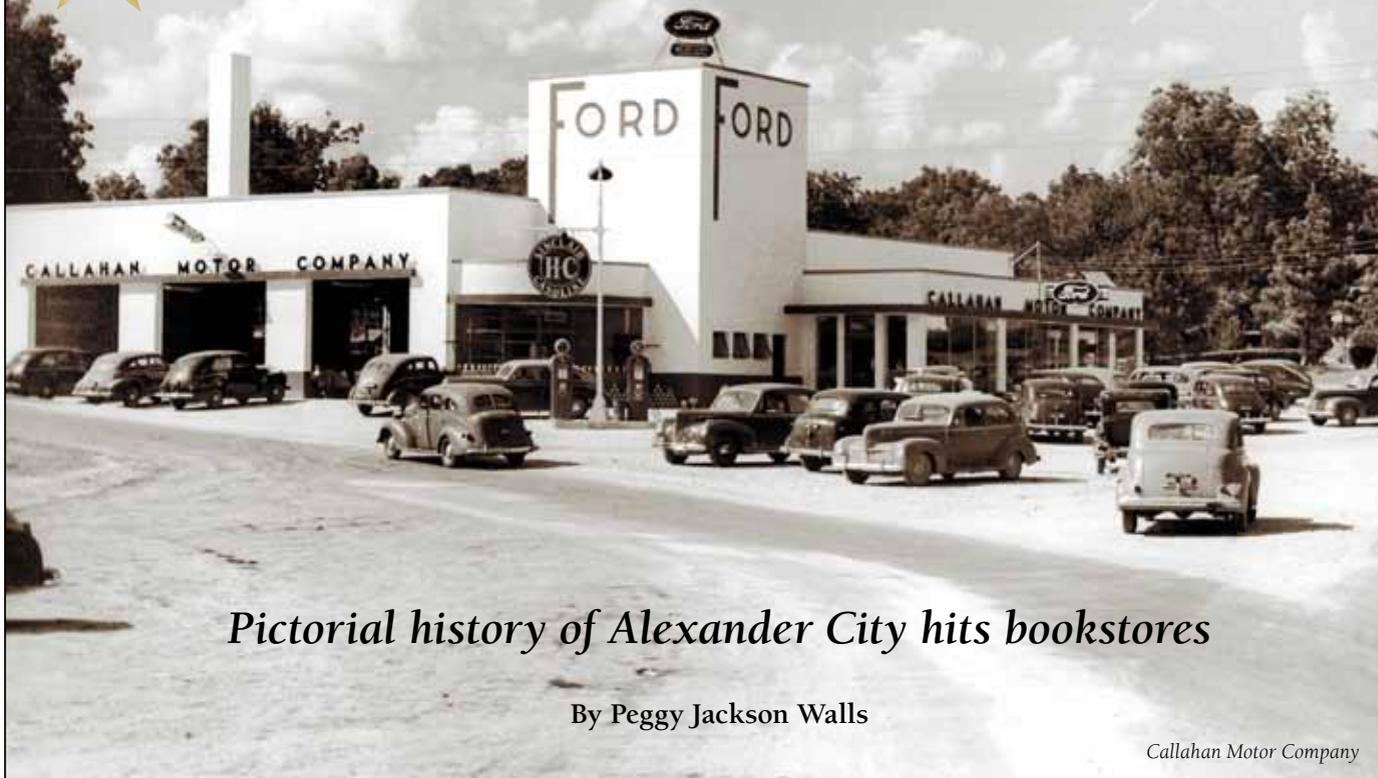
Smart Coast is the organizing force behind local 'Walk to School' programs and has supported the City of Fairhope in its "Complete Streets" program and efforts to expand sidewalks and bike paths around town.

Fairhope Mayor Tim Kant also is pleased that the City was able to quickly rectify the problem. "We want to do all we can to encourage children and adults to walk more or ride their bikes, and having a safe way to cross a busy street on a school route is very important."



Jeremy Morgan, City of Fairhope Electric Department, installs new crossing signal.

WATTS NEW IN Alexander City



Pictorial history of Alexander City hits bookstores

By Peggy Jackson Walls

Callahan Motor Company

Arcadia Publishing Company released a pictorial history of Alexander City in December 2011. With over 200 pictures and narrative captions, the book chronicles the history of the town beginning with the Native Americans. Highlights of the town's history include the coming of the railroad in 1874, the establishing of businesses and churches, followed by the tragedy of a fire in 1902 that burned the entire town, part of the railroad, and a number of nearby homes. But within weeks, with the help of neighboring communities, the town was rebuilt.

A few classic old pictures that have appeared in previous histories appear with the large number of treasured pictures that local people pulled from their family albums to share. The book features pictures from the Robert Graves photography collection making it possible for the present and future generations to see old businesses such as the Callahan Motor Company that once had a thriving business, where Boone Publishing is now located.

Two major associations traditionally are connected with Alexander City – the textile mills, Russell and Avondale, and Lake Martin. Numerous pictures feature important events surrounding those corporations and workers engaged in textile tasks. How the mills began, where workers came from, and how they lived are illustrated in the pictures and recorded in the captions.

Authors of the pictorial history are Laura Dykes Oliver, who grew up in Bevelle Village, worked as secretary at Radney Elementary School, and now serves as executive secretary to Alexander City Mayor Barbara Young, and Peggy Jackson Walls, who grew up in the rural community of Hackneyville. She taught at Benjamin Russell High School and Central Alabama Community College and now teaches online for the University of Phoenix.

The book, which is dedicated to the local 214th Military Police Company, can be purchased at local retailers, Barnes and Noble, and Books-A-Million. Books also may be purchased directly from Arcadia or from either of the authors. Ms. Walls can be reached at (256) 409-9159. Contact Ms. Oliver at (256) 329-8931, after 5 p.m.

A book signing is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 9, at Adelia Russell Library, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

**TO REPORT AN OUTAGE IN ALEXANDER CITY: Day Time (256) 409-2080,
After Hours/Holidays – Call Police Dept. (256) 234-3421 DO NOT CALL 911**



Opelika Light & Power becomes Opelika Power Services in anticipation of expanded services

By Jan Gunter

In October 2011, Opelika Light & Power officially changed its name to Opelika Power Services (OPS) through an ordinance by the Opelika City Council. The move was made in anticipation of the expanded services the city will be able to offer its residents and businesses within the next couple of years.

Currently, crews are busy laying fiber optic cables throughout the city. If they haven't made it to your neighborhood yet, do not worry. Crews will be laying fiber optic cables in every neighborhood throughout the City of Opelika. This process will take a while to be accomplished in the entire city, so please be patient with us.

In the meantime, architects are busy designing a new facility that will accommodate all current power services as well as future fiber services, which will include cable television, internet and telephone services. This will enable OPS to offer customers a "one stop" location for all of their service needs. While we don't have any actual groundbreaking or completion dates on the new facilities as this article is being written, we will have that information for the public shortly after the first of the New Year.

Currently, OPS continues to use the logo it has used for years; but soon, there will be a new logo for OPS, as well as a new web site, which will be launched to help keep the public informed of all the changes, including new services. As work progresses, be on the lookout for more information on the city's web site, www.opelika.org.

OPS garners favorable ratings in 2011 survey

The City of Opelika received the results of a survey conducted by SDS Research for the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority's 11 Member cities which summarizes customer satisfaction. SDS conducted a total of 193 residential and 45 commercial telephone interviews for Opelika during the months of June through August 2011.

The survey addressed customer attitudes and opinions on topics such as overall customer satisfaction with OPS service, responsiveness, value, communication, problem resolution, interaction with utility staff, and general utility performance. Opelika Power Services received a very favorable report.

According to the 2011 survey results (compared to the 2009 results), the overall opinion of OPS is up 12 points for the residential survey and is up 38 points for the commercial survey. OPS value ratings for both residential and commercial are well above the SDS industry benchmark by 28 points and 61 points, respectively. The high value ratings OPS received is a considerable achievement – one that seems to be driven by what our customers determine as high quality service and reliability.

Independent verbatim comments from respondents were recorded as well – both positive comments and those which offered up respondents' desires for having things "done differently." We want our customers to know that we appreciate and welcome all of your comments, ideas and suggestions. All of them will definitely be studied so that OPS can continue to improve on our services to all of our customers.

While our name has changed, and our services will soon expand, our goal remains the same...to deliver you with the absolute best service that we can.

★ WATTS NEW IN **Piedmont**

Weatherize your home for energy savings

By Ben Singleton

- First, test your home for air tightness. On a windy day, hold a lit incense stick next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, ceiling fixtures, attic hatches, and other locations where there is a possible air path to the outside. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak that may need caulking, sealing, or weatherstripping.
- Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows that leak air.
- Caulk and seal air leaks where plumbing, ducting, or electrical wiring penetrates through exterior walls, floors, ceilings, and soffits over cabinets.
- Install rubber gaskets behind outlet and switch plates on exterior walls.
- Look for dirty spots in your insulation, which often indicate holes where air leaks into and out of your house. You can seal the holes by stapling sheets of plastic over the holes and caulking the edges of the plastic.
- Install storm windows over single-pane windows or replace them with double-pane windows. Storm windows as much as double the R-value of single-pane windows and they can help reduce drafts, water condensation, and frost formation. As a less costly and less permanent alternative, you can use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the cold winter months. Remember, the plastic must be sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.
- When the fireplace is not in use, keep the flue damper tightly closed. A chimney is designed specifically for smoke to escape, so until you close it, warm air escapes—24 hours a day!

For new construction, reduce exterior wall leaks by either installing house wrap, taping the joints of exterior sheathing, or comprehensively caulking and sealing the exterior walls.

Visit the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) web site, www.amea.com, Energy Efficiency, to learn more about the Alabama Weatherization Assistance Program. The Alabama Weatherization Assistance Program provides home weatherization funding for low-income families in our state. Weatherization reduces energy costs for low-income families by improving energy efficiency in their homes. You will find a copy of the Weatherization Assistance Programs and contact information on the AMEA web site.

★ WATTS NEW IN **Dothan**

Neighborhood children design their dream playground

By Cassandra Milton

Most kids will say that they love playing on the playground, but few can say that they got to help design one. This past December, an excited group of parents and children gathered with the City of Dothan's Leisure Services Department for a chance to help design their own dream playground. The playground will be located at 900 West Powell Street and children, ages 5-11, residing within a half mile of the playground site were invited to the design meeting.



Armed with paper, crayons, and vivid imaginations, participating children drew colorful depictions of how their dream playground would look. Along with the drawing session, children were also asked to look at photos of various types of playground equipment and discuss which ones they favored having the most. The dream playground is scheduled for construction in March 2012 as part of a Community Playground Build in which volunteers will assemble the playground in one day.

The playground is being funded through a \$20,000 Let's Play grant from KaBOOM! and a \$10,000 grant from the Wiregrass Foundation. The City of Dothan is contributing an additional \$10,000 to pay for site work and improvements.

KaBOOM! is a national non-profit that is dedicated to providing children with a safe, fun place to play and encouraging them to spend time outside engaged in physical activity. The Wiregrass Foundation is a private foundation in Dothan that promotes philanthropy and a spirit of giving in the local community.

Dothan was selected as one of 20 Playful City USA communities to receive a Let's Play Playground Construction grant among the 151 communities that earned Playful City USA status in 2011. Playful City USA is a national recognition program created by KaBOOM!, which honors cities and towns that make play a priority and use innovative programs to get children active, playing, and healthy.

Through successful partnerships with KaBOOM!, the Wiregrass Foundation, and local parents and children, the City of Dothan is realizing its goal of "putting a playground within walking distance" of every child in Dothan.



WATTS NEW IN
Luverne

Luverne Mayor Joe Rex Sport and Thomas R. Odom are shown with the new anti-tank gun in Veterans Memorial Park.

Luverne dedicates new anti-tank gun in Veterans Memorial Park

When Thomas R. Odom went before the Luverne City Council in 1989 to ask for a veteran's memorial be placed in the city, he didn't realize that his dream of memorializing Crenshaw County's veterans would become a reality in such a big way some 22 years later. Today, the one-acre site is home to the memorial Odom so desperately wanted, as well as a new anti-tank gun.

On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2011, the City of Luverne dedicated a refurbished Army M-1 anti-tank gun in the City's Veterans Memorial Park on U.S. Highway 331. Because Luverne's National Guard unit was activated in the Korean and Vietnam Wars as part of an artillery battalion, Luverne Mayor Joe Rex Sport and Odom wanted a small artillery piece in the park which would pay tribute to the local guard unit.

In 2008, Sport began his quest for a small artillery piece to add to the park. He completed the paperwork to request the unit and received the approval from the Army Donations Office in Warren, Michigan, in July 2011. Sport and William Baker, owner of Baker Salvage of Luverne, traveled to Ashland, AL, to pick up the anti-tank gun.

Sport said Odom, a Vietnam veteran, played a key role in the artillery piece being placed in the park in time for the Veterans Day service. Once the City acquired the gun, Odom worked tirelessly to refurbish it. The City poured the slab in the park for the unit to be placed in time for the Veterans Day ceremony.

During the Veterans Day ceremony at the park, Sport, along with leaders from Luverne, Brantley, Dozier, Glenwood, Pe-trey, Rutledge and Highland Home, paid tribute to those fallen veterans of wars past, as well as to those who continue to serve our country. At that time, the newly refurbished M-1 anti-tank gun was dedicated.

Also during the service, Odom was presented a Resolution of Appreciation from the City of Luverne for his hard work and efforts on the Veterans Memorial Park. Odom raised the funds for the monument, flag poles and flags in the park in the early 1990s. Today, Odom continues to maintain the park. Many times, passersby can see Odom working in the park. He says it's his way of honoring the veterans of Crenshaw County.

"I was wounded twice in the Vietnam War. I made it home. This park is for those veterans who never made it home," Odom said.

Keep more money in your pocket each month with these energy-saving tips

Cutting back unnecessary energy use is an easy way to keep your hard earned money in your pocket. The City of LaFayette Electric Department offers some suggestions you can do at home, at absolutely no cost to you.

- Let the sunshine in. Open drapes and let the sun heat your home for free (get them closed again at sundown so they help insulate).
- Rearrange your rooms. Move your furniture around so you are sitting near interior walls - exterior walls and older windows are likely to be drafty. Don't sit in the draft.
- Keep it shut. Traditional fireplaces are an energy loser - it's best not to use them because they pull heated air out of the house and up the chimney. When not in use, make absolutely sure the damper is closed. Before closing the damper, make sure that you don't have any smoldering embers. If you decide not to use a fireplace, then block off the chimney with a piece of rigid insulation from the hardware store that fits snugly into the space (dampers don't shut fully without some leaking).
- Eliminate wasted energy. Turn off lights in unoccupied rooms. Unplug that spare refrigerator in the garage if you don't truly need it - this seemingly convenient way to keep extra drinks cold adds 10-25 percent to your electric bill. Turn off kitchen and bath-ventilating fans after they've done their job - these fans can blow out a house-full of heated air if inadvertently left on. Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning to prevent up to 8 percent of your furnace-heated air from going up the chimney.

- Shorten showers. Simply reducing that lingering time by a few minutes can save hundreds of gallons of hot water per month for a family of four. Showers account for 2/3 of your water heating costs. Cutting your showers in half will reduce your water heating costs by 33 percent.
- Use appliances efficiently. Do only full loads when using your dishwasher and clothes washer. Use the cold water setting on your clothes washer when you can. Using cold water reduces your washer's energy use by 75 percent. Be sure to clean your clothes dryer's lint trap after each use. Use the moisture-sensing automatic drying setting on your dryer if you have one.
- Put your computer and monitor to sleep. Most computers come with the power management features turned off. On computers using Windows, open your power management software and set it so your computer goes to sleep if you're away from your machine for 5 to 15 minutes. Those who use Macintosh computers look for the setting in your Control Panels called "Energy Saver" and set it accordingly. When you're done using your computer, turn it off (see next tip). Do not leave it in sleep mode overnight as it is still drawing a small amount of power.
- Plug "leaking energy" in electronics. Many new TVs, VCRs, chargers, computer peripherals and other electronics use electricity even when they are switched "off." Although these "standby losses" are only a few watts each, they

add up to more than 50 watts in a typical home that is consumed all the time. If possible, unplug electronic devices and chargers that have a block-shaped transformer on the plug when they are not in use. For computer scanners, printers and other devices that are plugged into a power strip, simply switch off the power strip after shutting down your computer. The best way to minimize these losses of electricity is to purchase ENERGY STAR® products.

Every home is different. With a quick trip to your local hardware store, you have even more choices at hand.

- Choose ENERGY STAR® products. Replace incandescent light bulbs with ENERGY STAR compact fluorescent light bulbs, especially in high-use light fixtures. Compact fluorescent lights use 75 percent less energy than incandescent lights.
- Plug your home's leaks. Install weather-stripping or caulk leaky doors and windows and install gaskets behind outlet covers. Savings up to 10 percent on energy costs.
- Install low-flow showerheads. If you do not already have them, low-flow showerheads and faucets can drastically cut your hot water expenses. Savings of 10-16 percent of water heating costs.
- Wrap the hot water tank with jacket insulation. This is especially valuable for older water heaters with little internal insulation. Be sure to leave the air intake vent uncovered when insulating a gas water heater. Savings up to 10 percent on water heating costs.

★ WATTS NEW AT Utilities Board of Tuskegee

U-STOP supports going green

By Karin Hopkins

The Utilities Board of Tuskegee (UBT) is preparing to introduce biodiesel fuel to its customers and the community at-large. Potential cost-savings and environmental advantages were incentives for establishing this biodiesel program that recycles used cooking oil collected from residential and commercial kitchens.

UBT approached this project with meticulous planning and careful forethought.

UBT dedicated a warehouse for biodiesel manufacturing, sent key staff away to study several successful biodiesel operations, utilized UBT electrical personnel to install the equipment, developed a logistical plan for collections and an operational plan for processing, tested the product on UBT vehicles, and is now ready for public participation.

In early 2012, UBT will launch “U-STOP,” a grease reduction program with a name that embodies important messages. It is a call to action admonishing consumers to stop pouring used grease down the drain of their kitchen sinks. The name also clearly identifies the “stops” set up as consumer drop-off locations.

Kenneth Sinclair is in charge of the program and he says it’s still in the infant stage. However, he is optimistic about the future.

“Someday we hope to have enough used cooking oil to run all UBT vehicles that can be powered by this type of fuel. And beyond that, somewhere down the line we have goals of even being able to provide biodiesel for city, county and school vehicles. We have high hopes but it’s going to take time.” He adds that biodiesel fuel is an environmentally-friendly and cheaper alternative to gasoline.

When the program officially kicks off, public awareness will be a key component. UBT needs all cooks, whether they are at home or in a restaurant, to earmark their used cooking oil for recycling.

The process is simple. UBT will provide free one-gallon containers. After filling them with used cooking oil, customers should leave the jugs at any of the conveniently located drop-off points around town. Sinclair says the places will be very familiar, “The fire department, major grocery stores and places like that.”

The ritual is different for commercial businesses, Sinclair explains. “We’ll go to those businesses and pump the oil out. We’ll bring it back to our facility and pump it into our settling bins. The oil has to sit for about 24 hours so the

minerals and deposits can separate. We want only the good oil and not the bad stuff on the bottom because it could clog up our processors.”

When the time is right, chemical additives are mixed with the used cooking oil. After the ingredients are processed, a byproduct is drained off. That substance is glycerin, which can be used as a degreaser or soap. After more processing, a finished product emerges called B-100.

In the beginning, UBT will concentrate on building the “feed stock” (biodiesel supply) to cut down on gunk going into sewage pipes and to produce a consistently growing amount of biodiesel. The goal is at least 100 to 150 gallons each week but consumers must first change a bad habit. It will be a challenge to get people to stop improperly disposing of used cooking oil. UBT feels the rewards of becoming green and clean are worth the effort.

U-STOP

A GREASE REDUCTION PROGRAM

UTILITIES BOARD OF TUSKEGEE



Kenneth Sinclair, UBT Business Services Manager

Alabama Municipal Electric Authority

804 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Presort Std
US Postage
PAID
Montgomery, AL
Permit No. 275

Places to Go & Things to Do

Alexander City

Jan. 16, 10-11:30 a.m., Dementia Support Group for Family and Caregivers. Russell Medical Center Community Room. Call (256) 329-7177 for more information.

Jan. 20, Alexander City Parks and Recreation. Senior Activity Center hosting a Good New Year Brunch starting at 10 a.m. RSVP (256) 329-2910

Jan. 20, Alexander City Parks and Recreation. Senior Activity Center hosting a Friday Night Dance starting at 6 p.m. Cost per person \$5

Jan. 26, Alexander City Parks and Recreation. Senior Activity Center hosting a monthly luncheon starting at 11 a.m. \$2 per person and bring a side dish or dessert.

Adelia M. Russell Library. Both libraries offer varied books, DVDs, audios, public access computers, periodicals, newspapers and databases. The Adelia M. Russell Library year-long Library Exhibit Series encompasses poetry readings, musical presentations and book signings. Special exhibits in the past have included the Smithsonian Exhibit, Vietnam Memorial Exhibit and Vintage Garments and Unique Quilt Displays. Instructional tours for classrooms and social clubs are available. Also there are movies, games and art activities for various groups. Special events, author series and seasonal activities are planned for the Children's Library. There is an emphasis on Summer Reading at Mamie's Place with many fun and interesting programs. Check the library website, www.alexandercityonline.com/library.htm, look for posters and advertisements or call for upcoming events at both libraries. Adelia M. Russell, (256) 329-6796 and Mamie's Place, (256) 234-4644.

The Senior Activity Center in Alexander City offers on-going program including: Rook, Mexican Train Dominoes, Canasta Hand & Foot, Bridge, Quilting, Land Fitness, Art Class, Bowling, Square Dancing, and Cribbage. Call the Senior Activity Center at (256) 329-2910 to receive a copy of the monthly newsletter. The Activity Center is located at the Charles E. Bailey Sportplex.

Feb. 14, Alexander City Parks and Recreation. Senior Activity Center hosting a Valentine's Dance starting at 6 p.m. Cost per person \$5

Feb. 14, 7:30-10 p.m., The Official... "Blues Brothers Revue." BRHS Auditorium. The greatest show ever and the only Belushi-approved Blues Brothers Revue. Wayne Catania and Kieron Lafferty, a.k.a. Jake and Elwood, began touring in 1998. They were picked up for an A & E film, after being seen in a "Legends in Concert" tour in Toronto and the film "Lost in Vegas" which aired across North America during prime time to critical acclaim. Presented by Alexander City Arts. Inc. Ron Morgan, (256) 234-9806.

Feb. 20, 10-11:30 a.m., Dementia Support Group for Family and Caregivers. Russell Medical Center Community Room. Call (256) 329-7177 for more information.

Feb. 23, Alexander City Parks and Recreation. Senior Activity Center hosting a monthly luncheon starting at 11 a.m. \$2 per person and bring a side dish or dessert.

Alexander City Parks and Recreation Senior Activity Center hosting a November 2012 Southern Caribbean cruise from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Call (256) 329-2910 for more information.

Sylacauga

The Winter 2012 Brown Bag series, Another Place in Time, will begin in January. The series will be held at 12 noon in the Harry I Brown Auditorium at the BB Comer Memorial Library. Refreshments will be offered beginning 11 a.m. in the Hightower Room. The programs to be offered are: Jan. 18, Jerry Elijah Brown, *Alabama's Mitchem's Wars*; Jan. 25, Phil Koerper, *The Wit and Wisdom of Our Presidents*; Feb. 1, Ed Bridges, *LaFayette's Trip through Alabama*; Feb. 8, Jim Griffin, *Southern Museum of Flight*; Feb. 15, Chris Carden, *Anatomy of a Small Town Police Force*; Feb. 22, Chris Phillips, *Alabama's Black Musicians and Their Impact*; Feb. 22, Harry Reeder, III, *Lee and Leadership*; March 7, Dolores Hydock, *Novel Destinations: Stories of Side Trips and Speed Bumps*.

The Isabel Anderson Comer Museum will host a photography exhibit by Jeff Ethridge, Director of Photographic Services at Auburn University. The reception will be held on Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 23, 6 p.m., Sylacauga Arts Council's Annual Dinner Theater presents *Viva Las Vegas!*. The program will be held at the J. Craig Smith Recreation Center. Tickets are \$25 each and tables are also available.

The Isabel Anderson Comer Museum will present *Down Home Jubilee*, an Alabama authors and songwriters exhibition. Cabot Barden is assisting the museum with the organization of this program. There will be book signings and performances scheduled throughout the month. The reception will be held on Feb. 16 at 6:30 p.m.