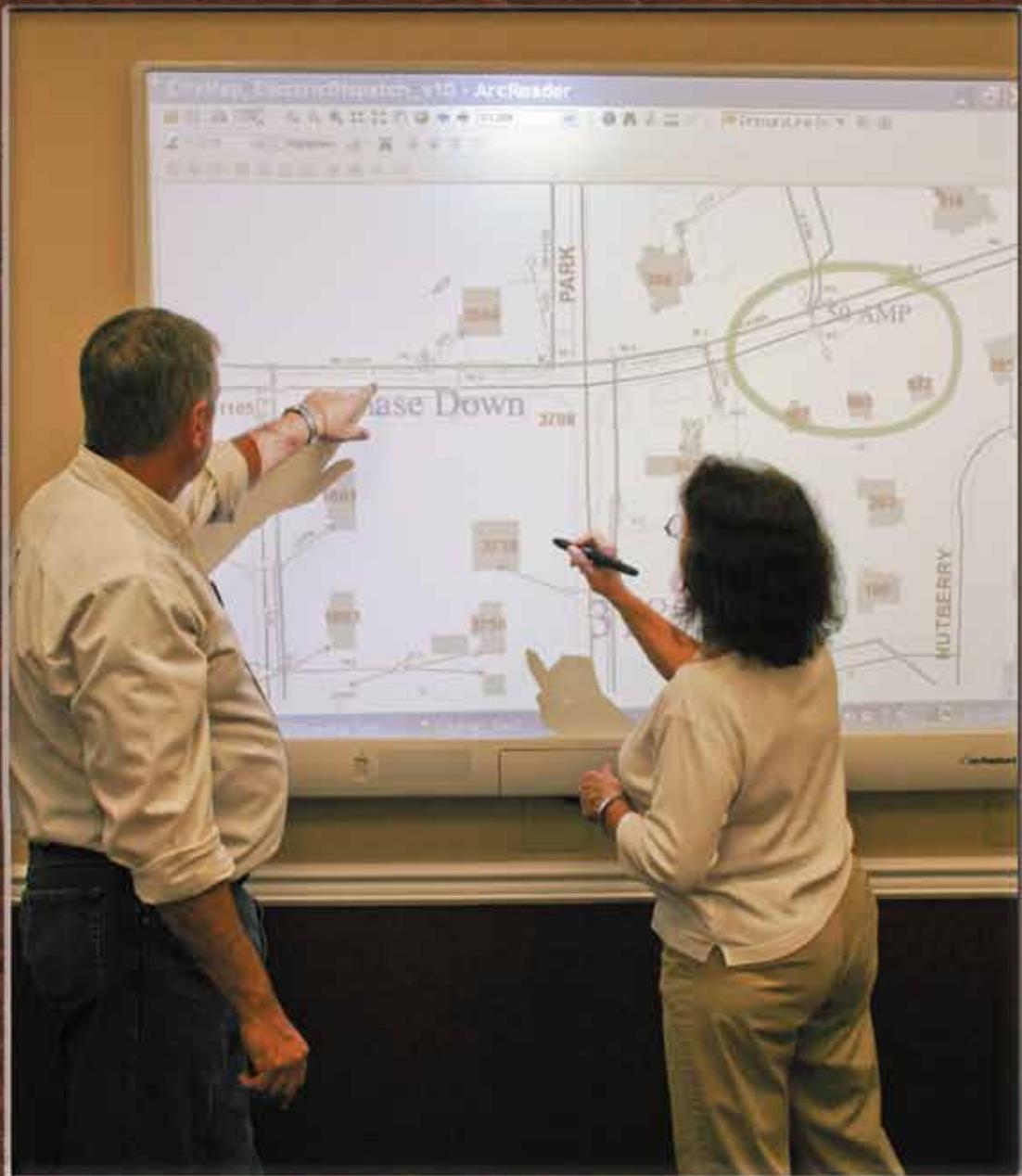


# Alabama CURRENTS

Vol. XI No. 3 • A Publication of the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority • May/June 2012



**Dothan Utilities utilizes technology to effectively coordinate power restoration**

### Respect the power of electricity all year long

Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, electricity has been constantly changing the way people live and work. Methods for generating and utilizing electricity have also evolved over the years. Technologies that were considered “emerging” just a few years ago, such as plug-in electrical vehicles and solar power generation systems, are now readily available for installation in homes and businesses.

Despite these significant advancements, electricity remains uniquely unforgiving if not used safely. Each year, too many lives are disrupted by electrical fires and too many families mourn the loss of a loved one who is fatally injured by electricity.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, which is sponsored annually by the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to raise awareness about potential home electrical hazards and the importance of electrical safety.

In addition to the overarching campaign theme of emerging technologies and the electrical hazards associated with them, ESFI is reminding consumers about the importance of home safety devices that provide safety enhancements without requiring major renovations. This includes the installation of arc fault circuit interrupters that prevent fires by detecting hazardous arcing conditions, ground fault circuit interrupters that prevent shocks, and tamper resistant receptacles that replace standard wall outlets to protect children from shocks and burns.

In the United States, home electrical failures or malfunctions cause more than 50,000 fires each year, resulting in 450 deaths, nearly 1,500 injuries, and over \$1.5 billion in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association. To help prevent electrical fires and incidents, it is vital that consumers know the ins and outs of their electrical system and understand the safety concerns associated with the latest residential technologies before bringing them into their homes.

AMEA and its Members are committed to keeping you safe around electricity. That's why we feature safety articles in each issue of *Alabama Currents*. For additional safety resources, go to [www.amea.com](http://www.amea.com), Publications, Safety Resources.

Electrical safety awareness and education among consumers, families, employees, and communities will prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities. Public awareness and safety go hand-in-hand. Electrical safety is a 24-7, 365-day-a-year responsibility for all of us. We want you to be safe all year long.



*Lisa Miller*

AMEA Manager of Communications and Marketing

### AMEA and its Members announce 2012 scholarship winners



Thirty-three high school seniors will be enrolling in a four-year university or two-year college this fall with help from the Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) and its 11 Members through the 2012 AMEA Scholarship Program.

AMEA has provided scholarship assistance since 1992.

Approximately \$82,500 will be awarded in this year's program. AMEA received 154 scholarship applications in the 2012 program.

To be eligible for the AMEA scholarship or technical school scholarship, a student's family must receive electric service from a Member's electric utility and the student must attend an Alabama college or university.

“We are very pleased with the response to this year's program and we congratulate the winners,” said Pamela Poole, AMEA Scholarship Program Coordinator. “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 this program will have a long, lasting effect.”

Ms. Poole said AMEA will begin marketing the scholarship program to schools within its Member cities and also on the AMEA web site, [www.amea.com](http://www.amea.com), Scholarship Program, this fall.

This year's winners are:

#### 2012 AMEA Scholarship

**Savanna N. Winslett**, Benjamin Russell High School, Alexander City

**Jaylan H. Reynolds**, Benjamin Russell High School, Alexander City

**Hagan R. Pemberton**, Benjamin Russell High School, Alexander City

**Carly M. Sowell**, Dothan High School, Dothan

**Brittany L. Allums**, Headland High School, Dothan

**Eric M. Layer**, Providence Christian School, Dothan

**Carly T. McRae**, Fairhope High School, Fairhope

**Lauren E. Bowling**, Fairhope High School, Fairhope

**Jacqueline C. Jones**, Fairhope High School, Fairhope

**Harold B. Lampkin**, Spanish Fort High School, Riviera Utilities (Foley)

**Anna C. Raley**, Fairhope High School, Riviera Utilities (Foley)

**Tanner M. Shaw**, Fairhope High School, Riviera Utilities (Foley)

**LaKeitha T. Seroyer**, LaFayette High School, LaFayette

**Evan M. Tucker**, First Baptist Opelika Christian School, LaFayette

*Continued on page 5*

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**Alabama Currents**

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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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2012 scholarship winners**

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## On the Cover



The City of Dothan recently acquired and installed an interactive white board in the Dothan Utilities dispatch center. The white board assists dispatchers in identifying and better coordinating power restoration.

The interactive screen can pull from various databases showing outage areas allowing dispatchers to initiate repairs directly on the board. Mark Kight, General Line and Service Supervisor, and Becky Hornsby, Service Order Dispatcher, highlight and review an affected area in order to appropriately assign electrical crews.

For more information on the capabilities of the white board, see Page 11.

## IN MY OPINION

**E**ach March, public power participates in a Washington legislative conference held by the American Public Power Association (APPA) to focus on issues impacting electric customers.

The Alabama Municipal Electric Authority (AMEA) participates with Electric Cities of Alabama in congressional visits to focus on issues which impact the electric rates our customers ultimately pay for electric service.

Alabama public power utilities were fortunate to have personal visits with both of Alabama's Senators, as well as six of Alabama's seven House members.

In recent years, our focus has been on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements on coal-fired generation plants.

In its aggressive attempt to shutdown coal-fired generation, EPA's timeframe for electric utilities to implement newly-mandated requirements does not square with actual industry experience for how long it takes to site, permit and install environmental controls. Most coal-fired power plants will have until early 2016 to install baghouses, scrubbers, or other equipment to reduce their emissions.

Public power utilities own approximately 200 coal-fired units with an aggregate generating capacity of 31 gigawatts. Based on a survey of its members, APPA has determined

that public power utilities will need 77 months, or about six and a half years, to comply with these requirements. EPA's timeframe for compliance is unrealistic and unreasonable.

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 continues to work 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 you, the customer.

We want to thank the entire Alabama congressional delegation for their support of our positions for many years. Each member of Congress has worked closely with us as we stand up for fairness for our customers. As we have in the past, we will continue advocating for you in the halls of Congress.

*Fred D. Clark, Jr.*  
AMEA President & CEO



(L to R): Rick Dearborn, Chief of Staff for U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions; Senator Sessions; Jeffrey Wood, Counsel on Environment, Energy and Transportation for Senator Sessions; Jonathan Hand, Executive Director, Electric Cities of Alabama; and Fred Clark, President & CEO, Alabama Municipal Electric Authority. (Photo courtesy of Andrea Salvador, Electric Cities of Alabama)

## 2012 Scholarship Winners

Continued from page 2

**Timishiyee J. Walker**, Lanett High School, Lanett

**Alexis N. Boyd**, Lanett High School, Lanett

**Brendan W. Hermeling**, Luverne High School, Luverne

**Yeon S. Park**, Luverne High School, Luverne

**Loren C. Sanders**, Luverne High School, Luverne

**Mercedes J. Menefield**, Opelika High School, Opelika

**Andrew T. Overstreet**, Opelika High School, Opelika

**Stephen A. Shirley**, Ballard Christian School, Opelika

**Mariah L. Gowens**, Piedmont High School, Piedmont

**Christa D. Smith**, Piedmont High School, Piedmont

**Connor A. Minton**, Alabama School of Mathematics & Science, Piedmont

**Shannon C. House**, Sylacauga High School, Sylacauga Utilities Board

**Samuel L. Jackson**, Sylacauga High School, Sylacauga Utilities Board

**Alexis N. Brown**, Booker T. Washington High School, Utilities Board of Tuskegee

**Terry L. Dallas, Jr.**, Booker T. Washington High School, Utilities Board of Tuskegee

**John J. Bradford**, Saint James School, Utilities Board of Tuskegee

## 2012 AMEA Technical School Scholarship

**CanShavia S. Zachery**, LaFayette High School, LaFayette

**Ericeiyah T.Z. Darden**, Lanett High School, Lanett

**Brien A. Szczypinski**, Sylacauga High School, Sylacauga Utilities Board

## Now what?

Well, I just wished you a happy springtime in the last issue, and almost immediately it is hot. Time does fly and the summer utility bills are arriving. Some of you are somewhat pleased and others of you are disappointed at the amount of the bill. I think that it is safe to say that all of us would like a lower summer utility bill. As you know by now, this article is all about lower utility bills.

Almost every week, I get a call from a male person who says, "I want you to help me get 'off the grid.'" I usually tell him that if he wants to get off the grid really fast, he should just call his electric company and request to be disconnected. And then I tell him that if he doesn't pay his electric bill for two months, he will automatically be taken off the grid. Then I remind him that he can't watch the Final Four or the Super Bowl if he is off the grid. There is usually a quiet pause before he tells me, "That is not what I mean." Then I ask him what he means. He tells me that he is tired of paying high utility bills and he has heard and read that he can generate his own electricity with solar and wind and get off the grid. I ask him if he has lots and lots of money. He tells me no and I tell him that it is not going to happen. We then talk for several more minutes as I tell him the facts about solar and wind generation. It is a great idea but simply not feasible for the average homeowner. Let me give you information on this matter.

At recent home shows, where I have been a guest speaker, I have had the opportunity to visit with several vendors that were showing and selling residential wind turbines and solar systems. The phrase "off the grid" was mentioned. I had no desire to argue or debate with these good folks. They were just trying to make a living like the rest of us.

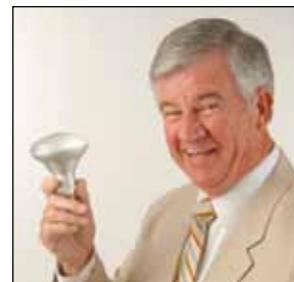
A wind turbine, which cost several thousand dollars should produce 1,000 watts or 1 kilowatt of electricity, if the wind is blowing at a usable speed. Does that sound like a lot of electrical power to you?

Now look at this picture of a common hair dryer sold at department stores. Please note that it uses 1,875 watts or 1.8 kilowatts of electricity when being used. Therefore it would require two, 1,000-watt wind turbines to power this hair dryer. You can see where I am going with this. It's just not feasible.

As relating to solar generation, an installed system that cost about \$20,000 will typically produce about two kilowatts when the sun is shining. You do the math on this one. Again, let me say that getting "off the grid" sounds good, but it is not likely to happen for the average family.

Actually, what the male caller wants, and all the rest of us want, is to be able to keep our home comfortable and affordable without having to give up those things like the television and other conveniences that we have learned to enjoy. And the only way that I know that this can be achieved is with conservation and energy efficiency. I work hard in every issue to help you do just that. See you in July when it will be even hotter.

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](http://www.dougrye.com).



# WATTS NEW IN Piedmont

## City of Piedmont employees partner with RU4Real program

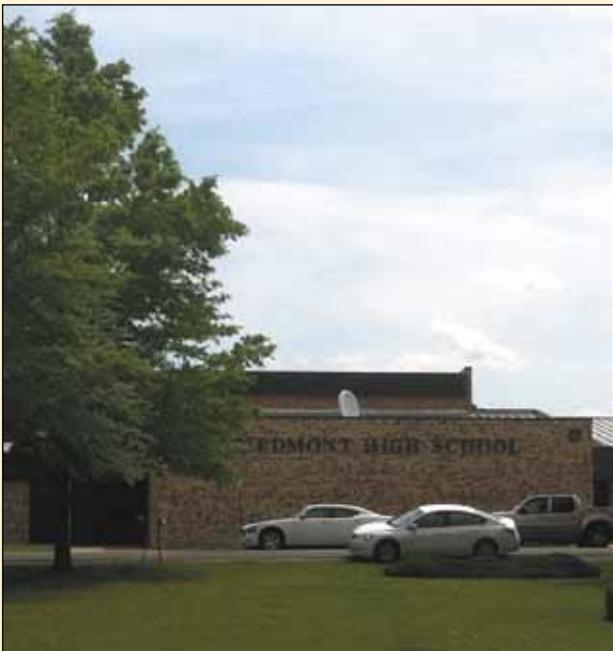
By Ben Singleton

**R**ecently, employees from the City of Piedmont Utilities volunteered at a program at Piedmont High School called RU4Real. This program is a real-world simulation in which the students are able to simulate paying bills and taking care of a family.

Before the students visited the booths, they were provided with a starting check register amount and family status. Employees from Piedmont Utilities worked several of the 11 booths that were set up along with other employees of local businesses. The different booths included buying a car, paying utilities, childcare, purchasing a house and many more.

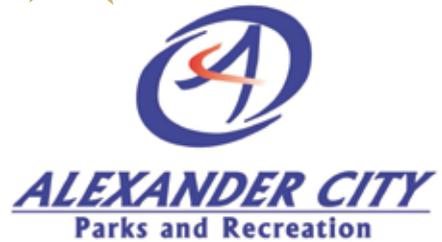
The program was aimed at helping student's keep a check ledger and manage money. After the students purchased the necessary requirements, they had the opportunity to purchase a vacation or trip if money allowed.

This program was sponsored by Gadsden State Community College.



Piedmont High School

# WATTS NEW IN Alexander City



**has something for everyone**

By Tracy Kendrick

**W**hen you think of Alexander City Parks and Recreation, many of us think of the Charles E. Bailey Sportplex. With several baseball and softball fields, as well as the stadium of the Benjamin Russell Wildcats, the Sportplex is a valuable part of Parks and Rec. But there are other Parks and Rec activity locations that you might not be familiar with.

Strand Park and the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park are two more parks which help make up the Alexander City Parks and Rec Department. Strand Park is the home of the Alexander City Jazz Fest. It is located in downtown Alexander City. The 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park offers a walking track and play area for the kids. 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park is located at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets.

Copper Recreation Center is another location that provides sports and services for the community. The center provides activities for children and adults. Activities are available during the afternoon and evening hours. The center is located on Martin Luther King Blvd.

Lakewinds Golf Course is a city-owned course where the golfer in your family can enjoy a round of golf seven days a week. Lakewinds' course offers a par 70 layout. The course is open seven days a week at 7 a.m. It is located off Highway 280.

When it comes to water activities, Alexander City Parks and Rec has everything you need. The city boat ramp provides the community with access to beautiful Lake Martin. Also available is the outdoor pool located at the old Russell Mills Recreation Complex. Swimming lessons and public swimming are offered. The pool is open during the summer months.

There are many events planned by Alexander City Parks and Rec this summer. Whether you are interested in sports, swimming or just relaxing, Alexander City has a place for you. All parks and locations are family friendly and just waiting for you to explore them.

You can find out more about Alexander City Parks and Rec and upcoming events by calling (256) 329-6736, or visiting [www.acpr.me](http://www.acpr.me).

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE IN ALEXANDER CITY:

Day Time (256) 409-2080,

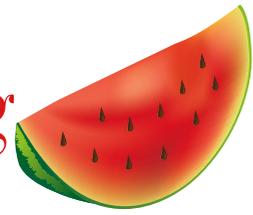
After Hours/Holidays – Call Police Dept. (256) 234-3421 Please do not call 911

A decorative header featuring several musical notes in various colors (grey, blue, green) scattered around a central gold star. The text "WATTS NEW IN Opelika" is centered, with "Opelika" in a larger, bold, black serif font.

WATTS NEW IN  
**Opelika**

# Summer Swing

## Concerts in the Park return



By Jan Gunter

**E**very Tuesday evening, beginning May 8, the Opelika Parks and Recreation Department will host a free outdoor concert at 7 p.m. at the Municipal Park in Opelika. This 13-week concert series offers a wide variety of musical entertainment including Gospel, Soul, jazz, R&B, Oldies, Country, Big Band Swing, Folk and Community Band music.

The Opelika Band Boosters will prepare hamburgers and hotdogs for a nominal fee from 6:15- 7:30 p.m., ideal for a family picnic. PNC Bank of Opelika will provide complimentary lemonade during the concerts.

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

Come out early. Bring the whole family, a quilt or lawn chair and relax on the banks of Rocky Brook Creek for an evening of musical fun, fellowship and relaxation. For more information, call (334) 705-5560, or e-mail LPierce@ci.opelika.al.us.

### The 2012 Summer Swing Concert Schedule

- **May 8, Lee-Scott Academy Jazz Band.** Jazz, Swing Rock, Ballads and more.
- **May 15, Opelika High School Symphonic, Concert and Jazz Bands.** The Opelika Concert and Symphonic Bands' music will be chosen from an assortment and variety of marches, movie music and contemporary collections. The Jazz Ensemble will feature local talent, Jazz, Rock and Swing.
- **May 22, Adam Hood.** An Opelika native, Adam Hood is a singer/ songwriter and will perform an acoustic show of his original songs.
- **May 29, Southeast Alabama Community Band.** 58-member band, conducted by Dr. Johnny Long, Troy University Band Director Emeritus. Marches, Broadway show tunes and classical music will be featured.
- **June 5 Neil Diamond Tribute Artist, Conner Lorre.** A top-tier singer with a fun and unique talent. He dazzles his audiences as a singing voice impersonator.
- **June 12, Route 66.** This energetic group plays it all.. Oldies, Pop, Rock and dance music. Audience participation in encouraged. Join the "Monkey Park Dancers" on the grass around the stage as they dance, blow bubbles and have a great time.
- **June 19, Crossroads.** Formed in 2007, Crossroads is a five-piece variety band that covers may country and classic rock hits. The band performs less frequently covered material from artists such as Fleetwood Mac, Linda Ronstadt and even REM, as well as Carrie Underwood, Sugarland and Taylor Swift. Some original selections are also in the song lineup. Crossroads produces vocal harmonies and provides audiences with a unique, varied and entertaining experience.
- **June 26, Bill J. Brooks, Elvis Lives Concert.** Top-rated Elvis Tribute artist in the Southeast. This show is dynamic, entertaining, moving and family friendly. Elvis fans or not, you are in for a rare treat.
- **July 10, Soul Coalition of East Alabama.** The Soul Coalition of East Alabama, or SoulCo, performs a wide variety of covers and original music. The instrumentation includes drums, bass, guitars, sax, congas, keyboards, and of course vocalists. The song list ranges from covers of Marvin Gaye to the Beatles, with a mix of originals. A widely varied and entertaining experience.
- **July 17, John and the Connors.** The Connors bring a beautiful blend of folk, rock, bluegrass and blues, which they label "vanilla" style. In addition to a several original songs, they also do folk infused covers of the Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, and Ryan Adams.
- **July 24, Muse.** 21<sup>st</sup> year on the Summer Swing bandstand. Easy listening, vocal oriented acoustic soft rock played only as Muse can.
- **July 31, Martha's Trouble.** Nationally recognized Americana singers/songwriters –"have all the qualities that bands like 10,000 Maniacs with Natalie Merchant possessed- great songwriting, great melodies and a great sense of timing." –*All Music Guide*.
- **Aug. 7, Back to School Bash, Route 66.** Enjoy a final concert as we bid summer farewell.

Many thanks to our community partners: *The Opelika-Auburn News*, the Opelika Area Chamber of Commerce, Opelika Main Street, WKKR and MIX 96.

WATTS NEW IN  
**Fairhope**

# Taking steps to keep Fairhope beautiful and litter free

By Sherry Sullivan

**F**airhope is kicking off the spring and summer by encouraging residents of all ages to keep the community clean and beautiful.

“It’s so important to teach our young people the importance of taking care of our community by encouraging participation in community environmental events and projects, like Earth Day, Alabama’s Coastal Clean-up and our newest Anti-Litter Campaign: Plant Pride, Not Litter,” said Fairhope

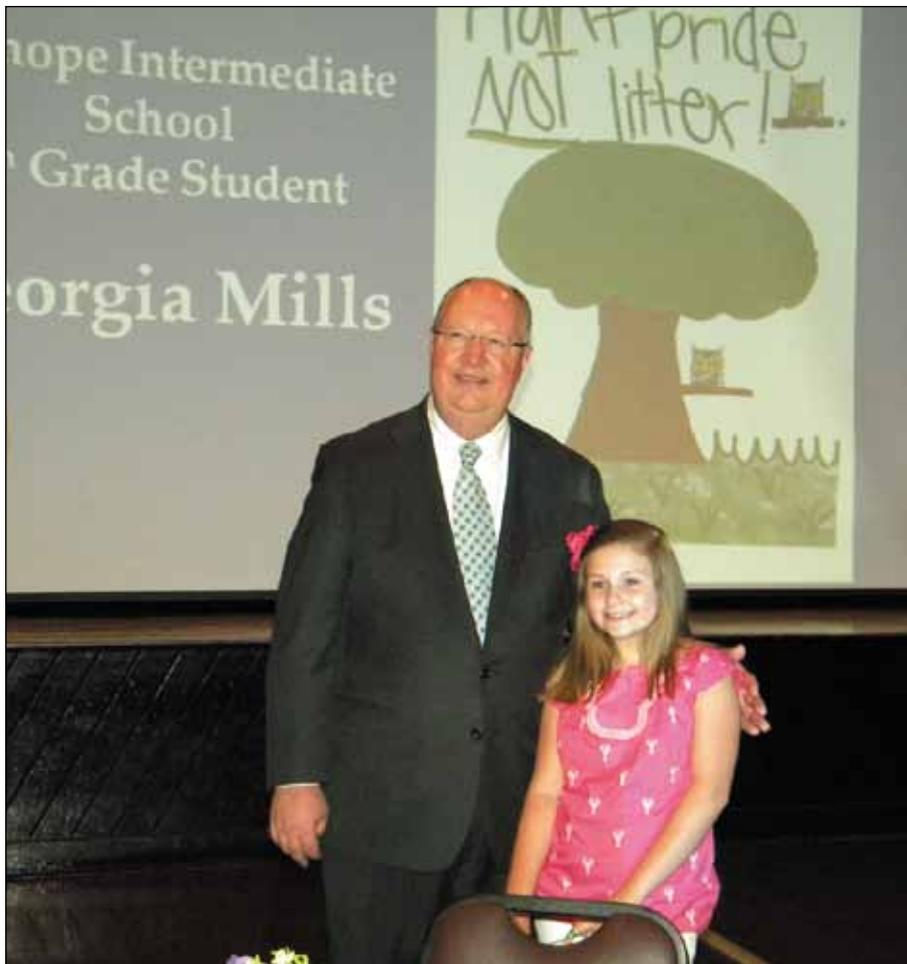
Mayor Tim Kant.

Students in the 5th grade in Fairhope recently took part in a contest to design an anti-litter campaign for the City of Fairhope. The winner of the contest was Fairhope Intermediate School Student Georgia Mills. Her design was placed on t-shirts that were given to each 5th grade student in Fairhope and was recognized at the Annual Earth Day celebration on April 22 at the Fairhope Municipal Pier &

Park. To receive a free t-shirt, students were asked to sign a pledge not to litter, to educate others about littering and the negative impacts it has on our community, and to be role models to others by cleaning up in front of their house.

“We want the children to know that it’s important to take pride in their city and keep it clean,” Kant said. “Don’t toss trash out the car window, pick up paper and other debris in your yard, and be careful while on the beach or pier so that loose items and trash don’t blow into the bay. Everyone benefits when a community is litter free. People want to visit and shop someplace that’s clean, and that’s just as important along the highway and in our neighborhoods and parks as it is in downtown shopping district.”

For information on the anti-litter campaign or City of Fairhope events, call (251) 929-1466.



Fairhope Mayor Tim Kant is shown with Georgia Mills at the Mayor’s State of the City Address. Georgia’s winning artwork was used as the t-shirt design for Fairhope’s Anti-Litter Campaign.



# WATTS NEW AT Riviera Utilities

## Training to be the best

By David Horton

Two years ago, Riviera Utilities went through an extensive strategic planning process. During the process, management determined that a more formal training program was needed for our line workers to continue to improve and develop their skills and afford them the opportunity to be the best they could be at their jobs.

Over the years, Riviera Utilities has had a successful history of training electrical line workers on the job.

Recently, the Electric Department took its first steps towards expanding our program to include more formal training as well. In March, eight of our Ground Workers traveled to Montgomery to participate in the initial training session of the four-year Line Worker Apprentice Program offered by the Alabama Rural Electric Association. Brady Beck, Jason Brown, Blane Cordova, Rick Dionisio, Elon Koski, Ryan Moreno, Noah Nelson, and Darrell Townley successfully completed the Pre-Assessment Lab as part of the first-year Apprentice Program. The apprentices were subjected to 24-hour call out, working at all times of the day and night, installing poles and equipment while insuring public and crew safety, and operating trucks and equipment used to repair downed power lines and getting power restored following an outage. These employees will be traveling back to Montgomery three more times in 2012 and several more times over the course of the following three years to complete the curriculum and gain certification from the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association as having completed the Apprentice Program.

“To complement this training program, we also brought in a recognized training consultant, Collaboration Unlimited, to help evaluate and determine possible training opportunities for our current Apprentices, Line Workers, Journeyman Line Workers, and Lead Line Workers,” said Tom DeBell, Electric Manager. “While our goal has always been to have the best trained and most qualified employees in our crews, these efforts will add a new dimension to the training program, providing a measurable standard by which we can document the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our line crews. We have a reputation for training the best line workers and now we’ll have the documentation to back it up.”

Our crews continue to work on a training yard at the Daphne office where field training can become a part of our regular routine for all of our line workers.

“We now have a means of insuring all of our line workers have the skills to perform their duties safely and to establish standards for us to make sure we do things consistently throughout our electrical system,” said Roby Tomlin,



Bottom left, clockwise: Brady Beck, Jason Brown, Elon Kowski, Darrell Townley, Rick Dionisio, Blane Cordova, Noah Nelson and Ryan Moreno.

Superintendent of Stores, Safety and Training. “With the guidance and help from Collaboration Unlimited from Austin, Texas, we have completed the first week of Line Worker evaluations at the new training yard. This not only affords us the ability to evaluate the different Line Worker classifications, but it also gives us the opportunity to bring our crews together and build camaraderie and team work. This first week of training has been very successful and I am excited about our crew’s abilities to perform and the direction of our training program. The evaluations and training just proved what we thought all along and that is we have some of the best linemen you will find anywhere,” he added.

“I am very proud of the fact that our board has given us the ability to make sure we provide our employees with training opportunities to be the best at what we do,” said Mike Dugger, General Manager. “Our mission is very important to us as we continue to provide high quality, reliable service and value to our customers, while we constantly strive to improve ourselves and the communities we serve. We are working hard to become a recognized leader in our industry.”

WATTS NEW AT  
**Utilities Board  
of Tuskegee**

# Together We Shine

By Karin Hopkins and Jessica Leonard

At times throughout history, Tuskegee and Macon County have been synonymous with excellence. Today, the Macon County Economic Development Authority is poised to usher in a new era of excellence rooted in collaboration, strategic planning and economic growth.

Representing the four municipalities in Macon County – Tuskegee, Shorter, Notasulga and Franklin – this organization is the “official entity responsible for fostering economic development, investment and industry in Macon County.” The board and its strategic consultant, Joe Turnham, say this area’s best asset is something developers crave, “location, location, location.” They are so thrilled about where this community is; the organization’s slogan is a bold statement — Macon County, the *New Diamond of the I-85 Corridor*.

Macon County has five exits off Interstate 85 and State Highway 80 is another major traffic artery. Macon County is a supplier’s dream because it sits perfectly between the Hyundai and Kia automotive assembly plants. This gives Macon County a geographical advantage regarding the automotive and aerospace sectors with an added bonus. The convenient interstate access makes it quick and easy to get to both the Atlanta Airport and the Gulf Coast.

With more than 400 automotive-related companies in Alabama, the future is bright for growth. Mercedes Benz, Honda and Hyundai have announced expansion plans with a combined investment of \$2.8 billion and more than 1,800 new jobs. Macon County is no longer on the sidelines watching and wishing to be considered for projects of this magnitude.

The Macon County Economic Development Authority recently debuted its new web site, [www.madeinmacon.com](http://www.madeinmacon.com), which showcases Macon County’s business advantages to the world, including available properties. Macon County has more land with development potential than any neighboring community, including economically vibrant Auburn and Montgomery, which is the state Capitol.

The Macon County Economic Development Authority is pursuing AdvantageSite status on two major pieces of property. AdvantageSite is a designation from the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA) certifying that a piece of property has undergone rigorous testing and analysis. It also means the property has utilities and that the utilities can service



For a full perspective of economic development in Macon County, visit [www.madeinmacon.com](http://www.madeinmacon.com).

all needs. The majority of companies today will not look at anything but an AdvantageSite, says Turnham who adds, “Basically this shows a community has done its homework and that the community is offering a piece of property where all the basic essentials and necessities have been addressed.”

More evidence of the Macon County Economic Development Authority’s work can be seen at a formerly abandoned building located in the Tuskegee Industrial Park. After undergoing renovations, the facility now has a new tenant, a company called Fiblast, which makes architectural fiberglass products for the construction industry. The community successfully landed this business through a collaboration involving the Macon County Economic Development Authority and others including the City of Tuskegee. Winning this company confirmed that Macon County can succeed in the arena of competitive business recruitment.

Mark Ennis, chairman of the Macon County Economic Development Authority Board, is also general manager of the Utilities Board of Tuskegee (UBT). The utility offers a series of classes to citizens, through a concept called the UBT Academy. During academy sessions, Ennis explains the connection between population growth and lower utility bills. He talks about ways UBT is improving the community’s appearance

to help make a favorable impression on business and residential prospects. Ennis recently shared information about the quiet growth that has taken place or may be on the verge of happening in Macon County.

XEEL, a new company specializing in innovations for the aerospace industry, has opened in Notasulga. Another company, Independent Medical Equipment (IME) opened a warehouse distribution operation in Shorter. And he mentioned four possible projects, cloaked in such secrecy they are referred to only by code names — Project Portside (manufacturing), Project Special K (manufacturing), Project Heart (retail) and Project Zone (retail).

Change is in the air in Macon County. Much needed upgrades were completed at the historic Moton Field, recently celebrated as the training ground for the Tuskegee Airmen in the George Lucas movie, *Red Tails*. Long ago converted to a modern airport, recent improvements at Moton Field include a security fence, lighted runway and FAA certified mechanical and flight training. The runway is slightly more than 5,000 feet and is large enough to accommodate jet planes.

The next chapter of excellence in Macon County is being written with each business recruitment tale. The abundance of rich attributes here thicken the plot — available properties in Macon County in the heart of the Alabama aerospace supply chain, available workforce, favorable wage rates, rail access and great manufacturing potential. Manufacturers now require higher education and technical support systems. Macon County scored an A+ in this category, with Tuskegee University located in the community and Auburn University nearby.

By accident or coincidence, two mottos have emerged that celebrate this community as a rare and precious gem. First, economic development officials came up with “Macon County, the New Diamond of the I-85 Corridor.” Then citizens in the UBT Academy proposed this slogan for the broader community — “Together We Shine.”

## WATTS NEW IN **Dothan**

### *White board helps Dothan Utilities coordinate and manage power restoration*

By Richard Ash

**A**t Dothan Utilities, we are working hard to provide “five star service” to our utility customers. Everyday we review each aspect of our utility to ensure efficiency and functionality. One of the most critical, but less seen parts of our utility, is the role of our dispatch center.

When power line work is needed, our customers are accustomed to seeing our utility crews and large bucket trucks. However, they rarely get a glimpse inside of our operation to see how we identify problems and send crews to evaluate and repair issues. The “who and how” is our Dothan Utilities dispatch center.

The dispatch center is an area filled with computer screens and telephone banks that assist with putting the customer in touch with a trained operator. These operators are able to retrieve required information to help identify what type of response is needed.

We are always in a continuous search to better ensure we are able to provide the best service possible. Recently, we implemented the installation of a white board to better coordinate and manage power restoration. The white board is an interactive, computerized screen that can pull information from various databases. Due to these capabilities, the dispatcher is able to highlight outage areas, assign crews, and initiate repairs directly on the board. This aides in providing our department with a continuous comprehensive overview of the affected areas.

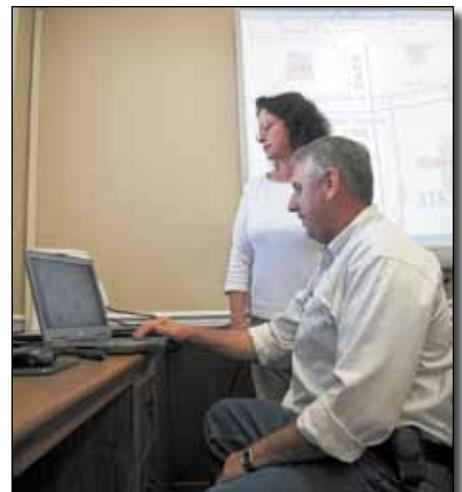
Other functionalities the white board provides are:

- Up-to-date location information in lieu of wall maps or map books;
- Expedites the allocation of resources by providing a convenient means to update equipment locations;
- Easily conforms for large or small area outages;
- The means to stack information on the map as needed: substations, circuits, fuses, water mains, sewer mains, etc.;
- Geographical information: streets, house numbers, RRR at a glance;
- Expedites the dispatching of service calls due to the information so readily available.

By playing the role of “information collector,” the white board enhances our efficiency and response time by gathering information from various locations into one central location for the dispatcher.

At Dothan Utilities, we are always searching for innovative ways to better serve our customers and the addition of the white board is a shining example of this commitment to provide excellence in service.

*Mark Kight, General Line and Service Supervisor,  
and Becky Hornsby, Service Order Dispatcher, in the  
Dothan Utilities dispatch center.*

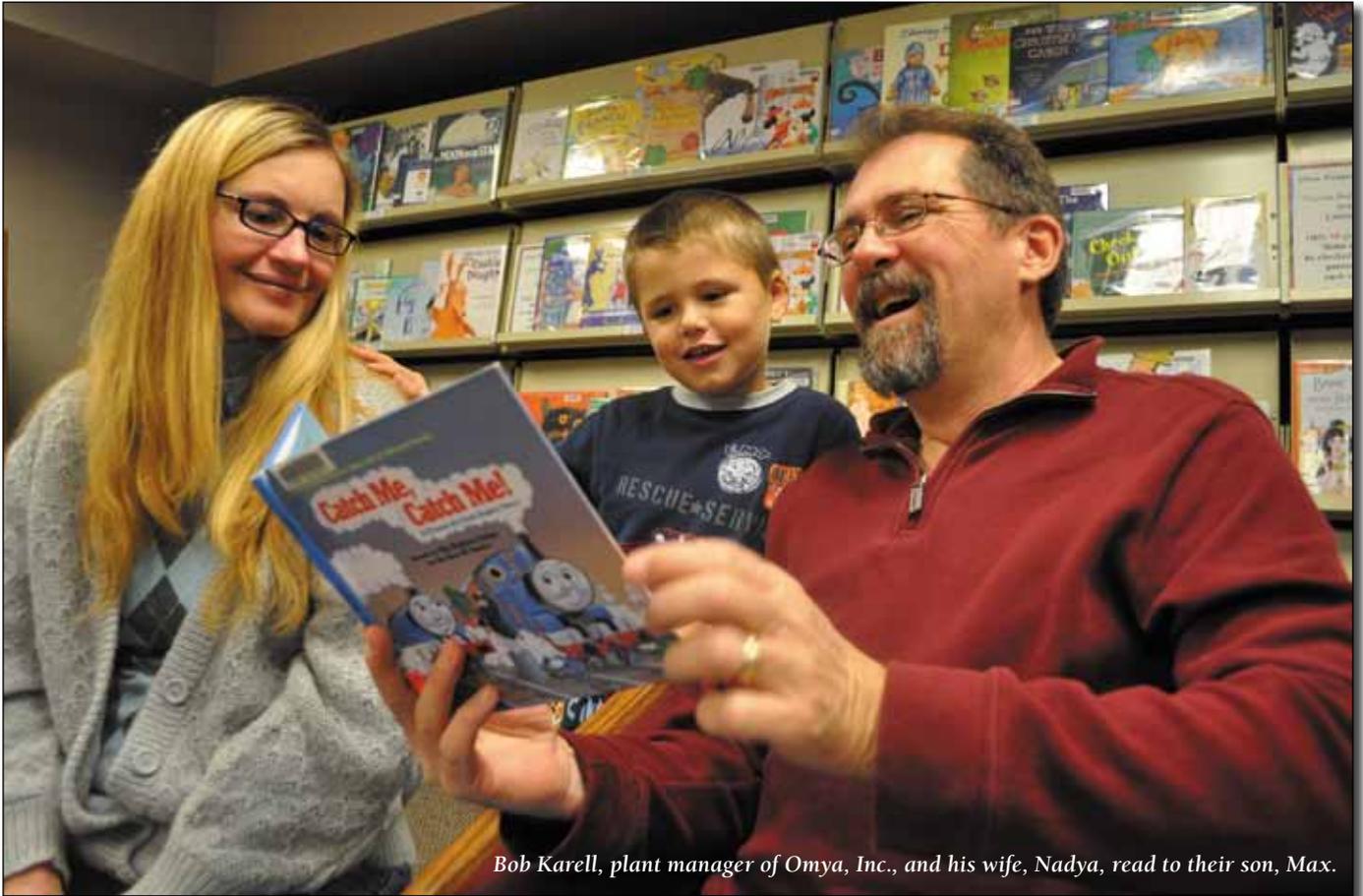


WATTS NEW IN  
**Sylacauga**

# Dream Big — Read

is the theme for Comer Library's Summer Program

By Dr. Shirley Spears



*Bob Karell, plant manager of Omya, Inc., and his wife, Nadya, read to their son, Max.*

The price of gasoline remains high and many children can only dream of taking a vacation trip. But the B. B. Comer Library will make it possible for the kids to “Dream Big” close to home.

Just as they have for over 60 years, the Comer Library will provide a summer program of education, enrichment and entertainment that allows kids to use their imagination to visit any place that they choose through fun-filled programs and thousands of beautiful books.

The “Dream Big” series will offer an impressive line-up designed for all ages.

Library Director, Dr. Shirley Spears, describes the upcoming Summer Library Program as “the result of a labor of love on the part of the youth services staff members, Elaine Liveoak and Mandi Cantrell.”

“Elaine and Mandi have chosen books, reading prizes and lively programs that will feature the best performers available,” said Dr. Spears. “They made sure that all of the presenters stress the importance of reading as big part of their programs. Both of these super librarians are parents and they know the value of reading.”

Ms. Liveoak, the Youth Services

Director, said, “Research has shown that if children continue to read during the summer months, they maintain the level of reading attained by the end of the prior school year which enables them to start the new school year on grade level with their reading. Statistics indicate that if children do not continue to sharpen their reading skills during the summer months, it often takes them as much as two or three months of the first semester of school to get back to their previous year’s reading level. This is a huge incentive to parents and the library staff to encourage reading during the summer vacation months.”

Ms. Cantrell expressed gratitude to the sponsors of the Summer Library Program saying, "We couldn't provide the incentives, the bright new books or the entertaining programs without help from our sponsors. These donors are investing in the future by supporting library service for children."

"The programs run the gamut with Monday and Wednesday cultural arts programs for entire families and Tuesday story time sessions devoted to the 3- to 5-year-olds. All programs are held from 10 until 11 a.m.," added Ms. Liveoak.

Ms. Cantrell has a background in early childhood education and she has an enchanting Tuesday story series planned for the 3- to 5-year-olds. She has chosen the best stories accompanied by music, skits, puppets and beautiful books for the children to check out for home use. The children will have fun in the group setting while they learn to love books and reading.

The fresh, new books that accompany the "Dream Big" theme will just fly off the shelves as the performers combine their entertaining programs with a strong reading message. The library will have neat prizes to encourage young readers to set and meet their reading goal. Then

those who continue to read will be entered into a drawing for the grand prize which will be given at the end of the series.

Dr. Spears predicts that the "Dream Big--READ" series will appeal to kids of all ages. The theme is so versatile. The focus can be on sleep as in some of our fairy tales — *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *Cinderella*, and *Sleeping Beauty*. Fairy tales help establish a common culture and all children should be introduced to them.

The focus can be on the night time with great stories and books about nocturnal creatures like owls, raccoons and opossums. Then, too, the night time sky has promise with so many beautiful tales about the moon and the stars with great stories about the Big Dipper, Orion or the Bear.

The library staff spent months putting these programs together for the children of the Sylacauga area. They picked the tried and true presenters and threw in a few new ones as a surprise. Again, our sponsors are wonderful; they always step forward to help finance the summer's blockbuster series. By June 11 when we kick off, everything will be in place and we will be looking for the children to come out and join us for the time of their lives.

For information about sponsoring programs or registering for the Summer Reading Program, call (256) 249-0961, or visit the library's web site, [www.bbclibrary@sylacauga.net](http://www.bbclibrary@sylacauga.net).

## Comer Library's "Dream Big" Summer Library Programs for 2012

### Monday Programs - 10-11 a.m. All Ages Welcome

**Monday, June 11**, Peter Hart Puppets, "Fantasy Puppet Show". The dare-devil cousin of Puss-in-Boots soars through a hoop, a quartet of unicorns dance, and unique puppets of different styles dazzle and delight while drawing children into a world of exciting imagination.

**Monday, June 18**, Tommy Johns, "I Had This CRAZY Dream! Inventors, Artists, Authors and other Dreamers" Magic, puppets, comedy, costuming and audience participation get the message across that all kids can make their dreams come true if they work hard, try their best, and of course, read.

**Monday, June 25**, Gary Ledbetter, "Magic Good Enough to Dream About". Magic is the vehicle that Ledbetter uses to bring mystifying illusions and one-on-one magic tricks that bring a happy face to the kids and adults alike.

**Monday, July 9**, Bruce Brannon, "Wild West Entertainment". Cowboy singing, poetry, trick roping, and the art of the bull-whip accompany a story on how cowboys 'Dream Big and Read'

### Tuesday Blue Bell Story Time Programs - 3-5 Years Only - 10-11 a.m.

**Tuesday, June 12**, "Dream Big". Using our imagination, we will share our dreams for the future.

**Tuesday, June 19**, "Light the Night with Fireflies". Stories of chasing fireflies on summer nights.

**Tuesday, June 26**, "Good Night, Sleep Tight". Wear pajamas and enjoy bedtime stories.

**Tuesday, July 10**, "Wish Upon a Star". Enjoy 'out of this world' stories about outer space.

### Wednesday Programs - Children of all ages are welcome. - 10-11 a.m.

**Wednesday, June 13**, Alabama 4-H Center. "Creatures of the Night – Nocturnal Animals" - Kids will meet some of the animals that stir while they sleep and learn about the unique adaptations of these nighttime creatures and of their importance to a healthy ecosystem.

**Wednesday, June 20**, Jacksonville State University Drama Department, "Cinderella's Big Dream". This original musical sequel to the Cinderella story will demonstrate how Cinderella takes charge of her life and rejects the prince in favor of going off to college.

**Wednesday, June 27**, John Scalici, "Get Rhythm". Scalici uses drums to entice individuals and groups to express themselves through the power of rhythm — the universal language that empowers kids to play, think and live more synergistically with the world around them.

**Wednesday, July 11**, Lisa Baldwin, "Music Minds and Motion". Baldwin, a long-time proponent of learning through song—uses music, reading and movement to encourage kids to explore the world of their imagination.

# Places to Go & Things to Do

## Alexander City

### May 1, Alexander City Parks and Recreation Swimming Lessons

**Registration.** Classes start June 4. For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**May 1-31, Library Exhibit Series.** Adelia M. Russell Library and Mamie's Place Children's Library offer varied books, DVDs, audios, public access computers, periodicals, newspapers, databases (including genealogy). At Adelia M. Russell Library, our 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, vintage garments and unique quilt displays. Instructional tours for classrooms and social clubs are available. Also, movies and games and art activities for various groups. Special events, author series and seasonal activities for the Children's Library. Emphasis on Summer Reading at Mamie's Place with many fun and interesting programs. Check the library website or look for posters and advertisements or call for upcoming events at the libraries. Adelia M. Russell, (256) 329-6796, and Mamie's Place, (256) 234-4644, or browse [www.alexandercityonline.com/library.htm](http://www.alexandercityonline.com/library.htm).

**May 1-31, Sarah Carlisle Towery Art Show.** Free year-long exhibit featuring art composed at colony retreats at Children's Harbor. Also included are select works of Sarah Carlisle Towery. Board of Education Building, 375 Lee Street, Alexander City, (256) 215-4251.

**May 3, 5:30 p.m., Adelia M. Russell Library "Folk Inspirations."** Join us for an evening of traditional folk music presented by Irene Levin's Music Studio.

**May 5, Mayor's Annual Prayer Breakfast.** First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, beginning at 7 a.m. Free. (256) 329-6730, or visit [www.alexandercityonline.com](http://www.alexandercityonline.com)

**May 5, Antique Car Cruise In.** Car enthusiasts cruise into Arby's parking lot, U.S. Highway 280, the first Saturday of the month April through October, beginning at 6 p.m. Enjoy the era of classic cars and classic music. Call (256) 234-7154 for additional information.

**May 4 and 5, Alexander City Kiwanis Club Star Weekend/Skeet Shoot.** Annual charity five-person team Skeet Shoot Competition and barbeque at Five Star Plantation Hunt Preserve. To benefit the Alexander City Schools Education Foundation. For additional information, please contact Randy Dawkins, (256) 329-7445, or [rdawkins@aliantbank.com](mailto:rdawkins@aliantbank.com).

**May 5, Derby Day at The Stables.** Russell Crossroads on Lake Martin. Ladies, bring your hats and guys dig out your seersucker for Derby Day. This annual event benefits Children's Harbor on Lake Martin. Pick your favorite horse during the "Run for the Roses" and enjoy some great bluegrass music. Contact (256) 212-1479, or [www.RussellLandsOnLakeMartin.com](http://www.RussellLandsOnLakeMartin.com)

**May 5, Pioneer AT&T Fishing Tournament.** Wind Creek State Park. (256) 329-0845.

**May 11, Tallapoosa County American Cancer Society Relay For Life.** Charles E. Bailey Sportplex. For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**May 12, Alexander City Parks and Rec Family Fun Day.** Our Youth Fishing Day will be that morning, we will have a quilt and art show by our Seniors, planning a cook-off contest for the guys and also a Cruise In and Antique Tractor Show. We will end the night with a free concert at the football field. For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**May 12, Cast For Kids Fishing Tournament.** Wind Creek State Park.

**May 15-19, Kiwanis Fair.** Football stadium parking lot.

**May 18, 6 p.m., Alexander City Parks and Rec Seniors Friday Night Dance.** Entertainer Buddy Broach and Band will be playing at the Activity Center. Admission is \$5. For more information, call (256) 329-2910.

**May 19, EAHA Youth Club Horse Show.** Held at the Charles E. Bailey Sportplex Riding Arena. For more information, contact Barbara Barrentine (334) 300-2570 or [www.achrc.com](http://www.achrc.com).

**May 24, 10 a.m.-12 noon, Alexander City Parks and Rec Seniors Special May Celebration.** Charles E. Bailey Sportplex. Lunch will be provided. Door prizes. Tickets available for pick-up on Mondays at the Senior Activity Center from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. For more information, call (256) 329-2910.

**May 27, Memorial Day Weekend Concert at The Amp** by Russell Lands on Lake Martin. Kick-off the summer season with groups like *Kansas*, *Marshall Tucker Band*, *The Atlanta Rhythm Section* and more. Watch on Facebook (Lake Martin Amphitheater) or [www.lmat.org](http://www.lmat.org) for information.

**May 29, Alexander City Parks and Rec Summer Day Camp.** Camp opens on May 29 and will be open until school starts. Registration is going on now. For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**Alexander City Parks and Rec Swimming Pool opens May 29.** For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**MainStreet Strawberry Market.** Late March or early April. Actual date to be announced at a later date. Call (256) 329-9127, or visit [www.mainstreetac.org](http://www.mainstreetac.org) for more information.

**June 1-30, Library Exhibit Series.** Adelia M. Russell Library and Mamie's Place Children's Library offer varied books, DVDs, audios, public access computers, periodicals, newspapers, databases (including genealogy). At Adelia M. Russell Library, our year-long Library Exhibit Series encompasses poetry readings, musical presentations and book signings. Instructional tours for classrooms and social clubs are available. Also, movies and games and art activities for various groups. Special events, author series and seasonal activities for the Children's Library. Emphasis on summer reading at Mamie's Place with many fun and interesting programs. Check the library website or look for posters and advertisements or call for upcoming events at the libraries. Adelia M. Russell, (256) 329-6796, and Mamie's Place, (256) 234-4644, or browse [www.alexandercityonline.com/library.htm](http://www.alexandercityonline.com/library.htm).

**June 1-30, Sarah Carlisle Towery Art Show.** Free year-long exhibit featuring art composed at colony retreats at Children's Harbor. Also included are select works of Sarah Carlisle Towery. Board of Education Building, 375 Lee Street, Alexander City. (256) 215-4251.

**June 1, Alexander City Parks and Rec Dine in Movies.** The pool will be open for family swimming starting at 6 p.m. and the movies will start around 8:00 or at dark. The swimming and the movie are free and concessions will be sold. For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**June 2, Antique Car Cruise In.** Car enthusiasts cruise into Arby's parking lot, U.S. Highway 280, the first Saturday of the month from April through October, beginning at 6 p.m. Enjoy the era of classic cars and classic music.

**June 2, National Trails Day.** Russell Trails at Russell Crossroads. (256) 212-1479, [www.RussellLandsOnLakeMartin.com](http://www.RussellLandsOnLakeMartin.com).

**June 2, Alex City Club Horse Show.** Charles E. Bailey Sportplex Riding Arena. For more information, contact Pat Avery (256) 234-2925 or [www.achrc.com](http://www.achrc.com).

**June 4, Alexander City Parks and Rec Swimming Lessons.** For more information, please call (256) 329-6736.

**June 4-8, Kitty Dark Kids Arts Camp.** The Kids Art Camp is an annual week-long workshop for children, grades 1 through 6. Held each year at Benjamin Russell High School, the camp gives children a chance at drama/music, mixed media, mosaics, drawing/painting and creative movement. (256) 329-9816, or [jamiewdark@yahoo.com](mailto:jamiewdark@yahoo.com).

**June 8 and 9, 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Alex City Jazz-Fest.** Funded by local sponsors, the two-day event is free to the public. Friday night's event is held at Strand City Park on Tallapoosa Street and the Saturday night event is held at The Amp (the Lake Martin Amphitheater). Contact the Alexander City Chamber of Commerce, (256) 234-3461, or [www.alexandercitychamber.com](http://www.alexandercitychamber.com) for details.

**June 9, MainStreet Alexander City Farmer's Market** thru Oct. 29. Saturday mornings at the fountain on Broad Street, 7:30 a.m. to noon. Local growers, craftsmen and craftswomen present their goods. Call ahead for weather-related changes, (256) 329-9227, or visit [www.mainstreetac.org](http://www.mainstreetac.org).

**June 15, Alexander City Parks and Rec Seniors Biscuits & Bingo.** Event located at the Senior Activity Center. Bring a household product to play or a \$3 wrapped gift. RSVP (256) 329-2910.

**June 15, 6 p.m., Alexander City Parks and Rec Seniors Friday Night Dance.** Entertainer Buddy Broach and Band will be playing at the Activity Center. Admission is \$5. For more information, call (256) 329-2910.

**June 16, Annual Turtleneck Turtle Races.** Pits amphibian against amphibian in this fun family event. Awards include best dressed and best decorated. Proceeds benefit Alzheimer Research Foundation. Airport Pavilion. (256) 234-6464.

**Alexander City Parks and Rec Seniors Opryland trip** for those 50+. Call the Senior Activity Center for more information, (256) 329-2910.

## Dothan

**May 4, Free Outdoor Movie at Landmark Park.** *Ghostbusters* (1984) from Columbia Pictures. Rated PG; 105 minutes. Admission is free. Gates open at 6 p.m. and movies begin at dusk at the Gazebo. Sponsored by Knology. Landmark Park is a 135-acre historical and natural science park located on U.S. Highway 431 north in Dothan. For more information, contact the park at (334) 794-3452.

## Fairhope

**May 4, First Friday Smart Walks** now in their 4th year of being organized by the nonprofit Smart Coast in collaboration with the city of Fairhope and many local merchants. Fairhope citizens are invited to come join the students and their parents on these fun walks. The last walk of the school year will be held on Friday, May 4. Meet at Fairhope Library at 7:15 a.m.

**May 4, 6-8 p.m., First Friday Artwalk.** Stroll downtown Fairhope and visit all the art galleries Fairhope has to offer. Walk begins at the Eastern Shore Art Center. For information, call (251) 928-2228.

**May 6, 2-5 p.m., Yummy Yards: A Self-Guided Tour of Local Gardens.** Visit seven private home gardens, two community gardens, one school garden, and one small farm — all in or very near Fairhope. “Yummy Yards” is the theme because the gardens on the tour feature creative ways that local gardeners are adapting their landscapes to grow some of the food they serve at home. Tickets will be available on the day of the event at the Summit Street Community Garden located on Summit Street in Fairhope between Morphy Avenue and St. James Avenue. Ticket prices are \$5 per person. Children under 16 are admitted free and must be supervised by adults. A map of the garden tour is provided with the ticket purchase. For information, call (251) 928-8646.

**May 6, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Good Life Ride to LuLu's.** Presented by The Good Life Foundation. This fun bike ride starts on De La Mare Avenue in the heart of downtown Fairhope at 8:30 a.m. and ends with a celebration at LuLu's Homeport Marina in Gulf Shores. Choose from a 37-mile ride, 18-mile ride, or 7-mile ride. Participants will receive a t-shirt, food, two drinks and door prizes. For more information or to register go to [www.iamaathlete.com](http://www.iamaathlete.com) (type in keyword Good Life).

**May 11, Rotary Steak Cook-Off.** Sponsored by the Fairhope Rotary Club in downtown Fairhope on Delamare Street. Sign-up for a team or come on May 11 and enjoy an evening of good food and music. Tickets for this incredible charity event are \$50 per person in advance, \$60 at the gate. For about the price of a steak dinner out, you get all-you-can-eat steak, baked potato, and tossed salad accompanied by wine, beer, and soft drinks, plus live entertainment at no additional charge. Split-the-pot raffle tickets will also be sold. Advance sale cook-off tickets will be available at selected area retail locations as well as from club members. Group sales in blocks of five will also be offered. For more information on the event, visit [www.fairhopesteak.org](http://www.fairhopesteak.org).

**May 24 & May 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28, Fairhope's Summer Outdoor Market** is back. It will offer fresh produce, local honey, fresh cut flowers, plants, baked good and more. The market will be held behind the Fairhope Public Library every Thursday afternoon from 3 until 6 p.m. through July 12.

**May 28, 7 p.m., Baldwin Pops Concert on the Bluff** at Henry George Park.

**June 1, 6-8 p.m., First Friday Artwalk.** Stroll downtown Fairhope and visit all the art galleries Fairhope has to offer. Walk begins at the Eastern Shore Art Center. For information, call (251) 928-2228.

**June 2, 4-7 p.m., Bald Eagle Bash, Annual Fundraiser for the Weeks Bay Foundation** at the Weeks Bay Reserve's Tonsmeire Resource Center, Fairhope. Live music and shrimp dishes prepared by top local restaurants. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the gate. For more information, call (251) 990-5004, or go to [www.BaldEagleBash.com](http://www.BaldEagleBash.com).

## Foley

**June 15-17, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival.** Foley SportsPark, 18507 Highway 98 West. Be a part of south Alabama's most unique and fun festival. For more information, visit [www.gulfcoastballoonfestival.com](http://www.gulfcoastballoonfestival.com).

## Luverne

**June 1-July 13, Children's Art Classes.** Lurleen B. Wallace Community College-Luverne Center. 886 Glenwood Road in Luverne. Classes will be held on Fridays from 10 a.m. – 11a.m. and 11a.m. – noon for six weeks. The first course, “Mommy and Me-Arts, Crafts and Cooking,” is designed for children ages 3-5 and the child must be accompanied by an adult. Children will learn fun craft projects, easel painting

and kid-friendly recipes. This course will meet from 10-11a.m. The second course, “Crafty Kids,” is designed for students in grades 1-6. Students will experience two weeks of face-painting, two weeks of Origami and two weeks of make-and-take crafts. This course will meet from 11a.m.-noon. The cost for each course is \$50 per participant. No book is required and all materials will be supplied. Space is limited. Parents may register their child at the LBWCC-Luverne Center, Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m.–noon. For more information, call the Luverne Center at (334) 335-2187 or Instructor Jackie Sport at 334-313-3742, or e-mail [mreeves@lbwcc.edu](mailto:mreeves@lbwcc.edu).

## Opelika

**May 2-30, 12-1 p.m., NoonTunes.** Every Wednesday in May. Courthouse Square

**May 7, Summer Registration** begins for Opelika Parks & Recreation events.

**May 8, 12 p.m., Opelika Area Chamber of Commerce 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament.** Saughatchee Country Club.

**May 12, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Touch a Truck.** Downtown Opelika. Awesome fun for kids (and kids at heart) to see all types of vehicles up close.

**May 18, 6 p.m., Lee County American Cancer Society Relay for Life.** Southern Union State Community College.

**May 19, 6 p.m., Railyard Art Exhibition.** Art, music and food in a new downtown location.

**May 14-19, Annual “Paint the Town Purple.”** Downtown Opelika will be decorating for the American Cancer Society as well as having special purple promotions.

**May 20, 8:20 a.m., Opelika High School Baccalaureate.** Awards at 2 p.m. Opelika High School.

**May 25, 7 p.m., Opelika High School Graduation.** Bulldog Stadium at OHS.

**May 28, 10 a.m., Opelika's Memorial Day Celebration.** Veterans Memorial Monument.

**June 5, 3-6 p.m., First Day of Farmers Market.** Every Tuesday at Courthouse Square.

**First Fridays.** Shop Late, Eat Local. Downtown Opelika every first Friday of each month. Shop the stores until 8 p.m. and visit one of our great restaurants while listening to music or enjoy a horse and carriage ride.

**June 20, 11:30 a.m., Opelika Chamber Annual Meeting.** Marriott Grand National Hotel and Conference Center.

## Sylacauga

**For the month of May, the Isabel Anderson Comer Museum** will host paintings by the students of the Sylacauga City School System. A reception will be held on May 10, 6:30-8 p.m.

**May 19, Marble City Baptist Church “Chasing the Sun” 5K/1 Mile Fun Run.** Applications available at the Sylacauga Area Chamber of Commerce office.

**May 11 and 12, American Cancer Society Relay for Life.** Legion Stadium.

**May 12, 8 a.m., Sunshine Saturday.** Central Park. Benefit for ARC of South Talladega County. Game booths, live music and items for sale.

**May 19, 8 a.m., Children's Fishing Derby.** Lake Howard.

**June 2, SYLABRATION.** Legion Stadium. Featuring hometown native Jim Nabors and others in concert.

**June 8-Aug. 31, Sylacauga Farmers Market.** Central Park. Open Fridays at 7:30 a.m. Buy fresh, Buy Local.

**June 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., March of Dimes Jail & Bail** at Scott Hamlet/Farmers Ins. Agency.

**Isabel Anderson Comer Museum** will host an exhibition of artists Dale and Ava Beshears during the month of June. Metal sculpture, 3D paintings, and ceramic paintings will be displayed. A reception will be held on June 14, 6:30-8 p.m.

## Tuskegee

**June 23, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Juneteenth Celebration.** Festivities will be held on the city square in downtown Tuskegee at the intersection of Martin Luther King Highway and South Main Street. The 2012 Juneteenth Celebration Planning Committee is hosting the celebration that commemorates the ending of chattel slavery in America. The celebration is open to the public and admission is free. There will be special guests, entertainment for young and old, special recognition awards, games, music and food. There will be musical competitions for cash prizes. Exhibitors and vendors are welcome. For more information, call (334) 727-1997, (334) 727-3200, (334) 727-7725, or the Mayor's office, (334) 720-0514.

## Alabama Municipal Electric Authority

804 South Perry Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

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## City of Lanett names new Police Chief

By Jeannie Gunnells

The City of Lanett has named Angela Duffie Spates as its new Police Chief. Chief Spates is the first woman to be named Police Chief in the City of Lanett.



*Chief Spates*

Chief Spates began her career as a police officer at the City of Piedmont in December 1994. She came to the City of Lanett in March 1998 and worked her way up from police officer to Detective, which is a Sergeant's rank.

She accepted a job at the Atlanta Airport with the United States Customs and Border Protection. Her job there was to interview arriving passengers in an effort to establish the reason they are coming to the states and looking for contraband and identifying terrorist behavior.

She worked at Chambers County Sheriff's Department as an investigator before returning to the City of Lanett as a police officer in February 2008. She quickly worked her way up to Detective where she supervised the Detective Division. She worked all felony cases, prepared cases for court, processed crime scenes, gathered evidence, and gathered information on suspected criminal activity. She rapidly advanced to Lieutenant and then was named Patrol Commander in March 2011.

As Patrol Commander, she supervised the daily operations of the Police Department. She maintained scheduling and administered all grants as well as overseeing disciplinary actions.

She is married to Steve Spates, has two children, Brandi Andrews McCoy and Jamie Andrews of Opelika, and one grandson, Logan McCoy. Her parents are Gene and Opal

Duffie of LaFayette. She grew up in LaFayette and attended LaFayette High School.

Chief Spates attended Southern Union in Opelika and is a May 2010 graduate of Columbia Southern University with a B. S. degree in Criminal Justice Administration. She has a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Columbia Southern University that she received in November 2011.

When former City of Lanett Police Chief, Ronald Dollar, decided to retire, there were many qualified applicants. However, Angela D. Spates, was selected as the new Police Chief. She has an extensive Police background with experience in many areas.

Chief Spates has already made several changes in the Police Department, which are working very well. She is known as a tough, but fair leader.

Chief Spates has many positive plans for the Police Department. She firmly believes in working with the community to bring the department and residents together in a community-wide effort to fight crime. She believes it is important for the citizens to know that we care about them and we want them to live in a safe neighborhood. She hopes to begin more Neighborhood Watch groups. She is planning a self-defense class for the local ladies, and will be offering gun safety classes. She wants the department to move forward and be a place where employees enjoy working. She wants the community to be proud of the department and feel that the Police Department is here to serve and protect them.

"Our citizens are our greatest asset and they deserve to feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods," she said.

If you have not met Chief Spates, please come by the Police Department and introduce yourself. She will be pleased to meet all our City of Lanett citizens. We are lucky to have such a talented and dedicated Police Chief.