Life is ‘Grand’ in Russell County

Autumn brings the next generation to staff and friends

Introducing…

Happy Birthday Babies:
Carlee Diane Thomas was born on Sept. 17 at 6lbs. 15ozs. and 20 inches. Very happy mom and dad are Bobby and Courtney (Parker) Thomas. Information Specialist Carla (Dudley) Thomas is Carlee’s Grandmom. Alice Elizabeth Corbett was born on October 14 and came into this world at 8 lbs. 1 oz. and 20 in. Proud parents and big brother are Chance, Jennifer and Colten. Administrative Assistant Beth Monk is her Grandmother. Grandma Wanda Lamb is happy to announce the arrival of Jaxon Allen on August 20 at 7 lbs. 5 ozs. and 19.5 ins. tall. At 18 months, ‘Big Little’ sister Jaiden is just getting her ‘Sale Legs’ at the Ball Park. Jaxon, Jaiden and Skylar’s parents are James and Stephanie Lamb.

Special Kisses: Carla and Wanda take a few minutes at the Yard Sale on Nov. 14 to smooch a new grandchild.
Russell County received over 100 guests in September from Fort Benning. Two familiar white school busses pulled into the new courthouse parking lot a little after 1000 hours on 30 September 2009 carrying ‘Leadership Fort Benning’ for a welcome visit presented by elected officials from Russell County and the City of Phenix City. Commission chambers were “standing room only” for about 30 minutes. Officers, spouses and support staff were dressed causally for the event. Laughter began the brief “tour” of local government. “I really have never seen this many colonels all in the same place in my life,” quipped Russell County Chairman Mervin Dudley, who has spent some time in the military. Councilwoman Michelle Walker, Russell County Commissioners Tillman Pugh, Peggy Martin, Ronnie Reed and Cattie Epps filled the receiving line, which also included commission staff. OHS-EMA Director William Alexander, Tax Commissioner Naom i Elliot, Mapper/Appraiser J.W. Brannen greeted guests in chambers.

On hand to welcome Fort Benning Leadership were Phenix City Mayor Sonny Coulter, who graced the podium briefly in recognition and welcome of the general and his command. RC Administrator LeAnn Horne welcomed the crowd and spoke of Russell County’s 300 year history of military support. “We look forward to more visits and building upon the great relationships we have,” said Horne. “We are proud to be a significant part of Fort Benning in Russell County.”
Most folks can recall a wetter autumn and some even remember as teenagers the Chattahoochee River coming over the 14th Street Bridge in Phenix City; but this is the first time in many years the water has visited the Amphitheater and put on a heck of a show once or twice a month since September. In September, the area saw several inches of rain. Atlanta, Ga., made headlines with closed highways and flooded subdivisions north of and in the city. All that water had to go somewhere and it did stop by here on its way to the Gulf. There has not been any significant damage in Russell County, officials said. Nevertheless, the RiverWalk, as well as downstream in Phenix City and Columbus, has been under surveillance whilst buckets of umbrella-breaking moisture more on through the region. The last and highest stage of the river so far this year was the second week in November when Hurricane Ida, downgraded to a tropical storm, spread across the southeast only to move off the coast as a low pressure system and raise Cain as part of a Nor'easter the third week into the month. Even though the weather system had reached the middle of the alphabet, Ida was the first Gulf hurricane of the season and made landfall in Mobile on Nov. 10 waving its northeast quadroon over much of Alabama and western Georgia—Just in time for outdoor Veterans Day events. “2009 will go into the record books as a very uneventful hurricane season, except for late season Ida,” said officials at the Weather Channel. Even with all the rain since August, the gulf has only sent the region two named storms. “Claudette” arrived in August. It is an El Nino year, meteorologists say, and it is just beginning. These weather cycles bring plenty of rain and disrupt the fish and bird populations in the Southern Hemisphere, causing for instance a shortage of anchovies. Here’s hoping for a “quiet” and drier December and perhaps some sunshine to end 2009.
6-8 loin pork chops (I use bone-in)  
6-8 medium Idaho potatoes (thinly sliced)  
1 stick butter  
2 cups milk (enough to cover completely)  
1 medium onion- (optional)  
Salt & pepper

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees  
Butter the sides and bottom of a 13x9 Pyrex casserole baking dish. Salt and pepper pork chops and sliced potatoes.  
Beginning with pork chops, alternate layers of chops, onions and potatoes. Dot with butter between layers and on top. Pour milk over layers, covering completely. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes to one hour or until liquid is absorbed and top is slightly browned. Remove from oven. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.

RECIPE BOX

The Blue Knights: Coy, Doc, Chris, Comer, Jackie and Dale filled several coolers with some smokin’ pork butts on Oct. 31, in spite of the inclement weather. The proceeds will benefit Lee County Deputy James Anderson’s family. Corinna Anderson joined her road-warrior compatriots at the pit on Halloween in the Wal-Mart parking lot in Phenix City.

From the Kitchen of Carolyn Dudley  
Pork Chop Casserole  
_A Fall to Winter Feast_

Butt, butt, butt…Officer! Ah, but there were no butts left by this Saturday afternoon in October.

The Blue Knights Alabama Chapter 11, a law enforcement motorcycle club sold, marinated and cooked 550 pork butts to benefit Lee County Deputy James Anderson’s family. They began about mid-month and had no trouble gathering a few dollars for some prize-winning barbeque. Neither rain, nor drizzle, nor dark of morning kept the club from their appointed tasks. The results were delicious. The Blue Knights and friends were “fired up” by 5:30 a.m. on Friday and before noon on Halloween; the beautifully roasted feasts were ready for distribution. The meat did fall off the bone and tasted Southern-best.

Deputy Anderson was killed on Sept. 24 during a traffic stop, the Lee County Sheriff’s report said. The driver of the vehicle is facing capital murder charges. He was a deputy with Lee County for three years. The Anderson’s have two children. The Chapter also answered the call to cook for Russell County on Nov.11 and grilled 300 hot dogs for the Veterans Day Event.
The Russell County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is offering classes for CERT: The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program. CERT educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills. CERT members are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. Please call 334-291-5080 to find out more and sign up.

The rain went away and YOU MADE OUR DAY!
Thanks for delivering the grill and attending the Tribute to our Veterans and Salute to the Troops on 11-11 at 11. You are Awesome.
The RCSO Rocks!

Sgt. Thomas stopped by the ‘lab’ tent last month to see if he could help pack up. The Sheriff’s Office provided a First Responder Fair for the Village at West Gate on Hwy. 165. By sunset, over 400 families enjoyed meeting officers and staff from the department, the OHS-EMA personnel, CARE Ambulance and Fort Mitchell fire fighters. Hot dogs and beverages were served and games and inflatables for future first responders were set up near the subdivision clubhouse. Forensic and investigation equipment in Russell County is quite extensive and drew a lot of interest from the residents. The Fair also made sure emergency and educational trailers were open for touring.

SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT IS IN SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY

Lt. Heath Taylor takes a moment with Miss Phenix City Keleigh Edwards at the Russell County Children and Family Connection “meet and greet.” The event was at the new Hampton Inn and Suites on Hwy. 431. Russell County Officers, Deputies and staff are very active and visible in the community.

Investigator Grover Goodrich and Deputy Rod Costello carry the message to an assembly of Russell County High School students during Red Ribbon Week.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE THE RUSSELL COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE AND CORRECTIONS For providing the fabulous meal at the City/County Fellowship meeting in September.
Starke Family Field to Open in April ~ Plans Move Forward at RCSRC

Wanda Lamb gives Jim Lancour $500 for new benches. Fireworks Outlet has challenged all local business to do the same. "Mr. J.C." came to cheer on the many volunteers in August, as sod was laid and rakes were furious.

The Starke Family field saw completion in August with just a couple of details to take care of before Opening Day in April. Wyndel and Bill Starke donated time and materials to make it happen. The field is for ages 3-6 and is set up for T-Ball. The next two fields on the agenda are for the big leagues. Finishing off the cloverleaf due west of the Dixie Youth fields will be two tournament-regulation Babe Ruth diamonds for ages 13-18. Plans are in process and fundraisers have begun. Support the RC Baseball league this fall and winter by calling 706-573-0847 for information about how you can help.

Join Us December 5
8 a.m. until 2 p.m.
for the Russell County Baseball League Yard Sale
Proceeds go to benefit the league. Please call Carla or Bobby Thomas to get involved at 706-617-7097 or 334-298-2892.
Bring your treasures to donate...
Or get a table to sell.

Thank You
Fireworks Outlet
for Stepping up to the Plate
Judged Greene administers the oath of office to Tax Commissioner Naomi Elliott. Though elected in 2008, her new term begins with the fiscal year, which is October 1. Mike Elliott is holding the Bible for his wife. A reception followed the ceremony in the Courthouse atrium with several guests, friends and family. This is her second term.

Did you know?

You can pay your taxes online by visiting www.rcala.com
And by going to www.russellcountyrevenuecommissioner.com

Property Tax Information 334-298-7011
Property Maps and Appraisal 334-297-7104
Construction/Building Inspection/Permits 334-297-7964
Planning Commission 334-298-6426
RC Engineering 334-855-0209
Phenix City Building Code Enforcement 334-448-2740
Russell County Commission/Russell County Administrator LeAnn Horne 334-298-6426
September 24 marked a very special evening for Russell County Sheriff Tommy Boswell.

He was named the Chairman of the Historic Chattahoochee Commission for 2009-2010 during the 27th Annual Supper Meeting at Lakepoint Resort in Eufaula. Boswell has served for several years as a board member for the organization. In his first act as chairman, Boswell honored Becky Fendley for her service as the 2008-2009 HCC Chair. The HCC is a state agency of Alabama and Georgia charged with the mission of “developing the Chattahoochee Valley’s full potential for tourism and historic preservation.”

The evening brought about 200 people to the resort and 10 organizations received matching seed grants for various heritage tourism projects within the Historic Commission’s 18-county bi-state region. Among the grantees are: Uchee Chapel Methodist Church in Hatchechubbee, the Lee County Historical Society of Loachapoka, the Auburn Heritage Association, the City of Eufaula and the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan. Since 1985 the HCC has distributed more than $148,000 to 66 different groups in an effort to support historical and tourism projects along the Chattahoochee Trace. A silent auction was held previous to the catered meal and award presentations. Regional Partnership Coordinator Patty Wissinger of the National Park Service presented a local and federal effort for the Chattahoochee Trace to become a National Heritage area through the NPS and eventual Congressional approval.

“The process examines a region’s history and resources in depth, beginning with a feasibility study,” she said.

The Chattahoochee Trace, with the solid support of the Historic Chattahoochee Commission and local organizations and agencies, firmly meets initial criteria to begin the study, she said. Though initial financial trust is provided through different avenues by the NPS, the National Heritage program is eventually managed locally, said Wissinger. The study can take up to two years and heavily incorporates local historians and historical groups. Boswell takes the helm after serving in 2008-2009 as the Vice Chairman of the HCC.
Phenix City-Russell County Library

1501 17th Ave. - 334-297-1139 - www.phenixcitylibrary.com—Martha Noyes, Director

From the Desk of Martha Noyes

Phenix City/Russell County Library

SPECIAL TO THE CONNECTION

Volume 3, Issue 11
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Man’s best friend can be a wonderful listener. Allie, rescued by Leslie Touchberry, is trained for the PAWS program and visited a recent Saturday Story Time. The children in attendance thought she was the greatest!

How to Eat a Poem by Eve Merriam

Poetry evenings are a time to enjoy and “eat” poetry if you so desire. “How to Eat a Poem” by Eve Merriam is just one of the poems shared at the poetry evening last Thursday night. If you write poetry, enjoy listening to others share their own poetry, or wish to share a published poem, join us on Tuesday, November 24 at 6:30 p.m. You’ll find others who enjoy poetry too. Ron Self leads the group and makes this a fun evening for everyone.

(Refreshments are available also for eating—along with the poems.)

GED and ESOL Classes

Chattahoochee Valley Community College instructor Erica Paul is reaching several classes here at the library to help students prepare for the GED. She also works with foreign students who need assistance in learning English. If you are interested in either of these classes, call Chattahoochee Valley Community College at 334-214-4851.

The library will be closed on Wednesday, November 11 for Veterans Day.

The library will be closed on Thurs. and Fri., Nov. 26 & 27 for Thanksgiving.

The library will be open on Sat. & Sun., Nov. 29-30.

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Library will meet on Sat., November 21 at 10 a.m. in the conference room. All persons interested in the growth and improvement of the library are invited to come.

The Friends have done so much for the library since their organization in October, 2006. A digital camera, a baby changing station, a fanned area and a new refrigerator were all completed or purchased for the Children’s area. $2000 was donated toward a new circulation system, while another $2000 has been donated for purchasing books. A speaker system was bought and has been used many times already. Recently, the Friends purchased 25 stacking chairs that are being used in the classroom until they are needed in other areas.

These are only a few things the Friends have done. The library will not not include their donated hours of labor they have given. The purpose of the Friends is to raise money and help the library. Our Friends are certainly doing just that.

Adjusting to the new hours

The staff and patrons do not love the change but are adjusting to the new hours of operation. Everyone is hopeful that the former hours will return in the near future.

“It has been a change and we can tell it in our paychecks,” said fulltime employee Terri Childs whose 40 hours per week are now 36. “We’re all happy that we still are here, and we’re hoping things will improve.”

The opening time of 9:30 a.m. on Mondays—Wednesdays may be a permanent change and the 6:30 p.m. closing hour will be good for the winter months. Presently, the Thursday hours are from noon to 6:30 and Fridays from noon to 5:00. Saturday hours are 10—2 and Sundays are from 1—5 as in the past.

“The library is open 46 hours per week now instead of the 56 hours in the past. We appreciate the patience of our patrons. Many people need access to the computers for job searching, testing and homework assignments. Circulation continues to be strong,” said Martha Noyes, director.
WHAT TO DO WITH THE ‘FLU’

Signs and symptoms: The symptoms of this new influenza A-H1N1 virus - are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Diarrhea and vomiting have also been reported.

The Next Step: Call your Doctor or Health Care Provider for testing and treatment. Stay home and avoid contact with other people until you are symptom-free for 24 hours. Total downtime can be 7 days.

The Usual Precautions:
- Wash your hands
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue, if you sneeze and then wash your hands again!
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. These areas are the perfect incubation stations of the body. Germs love to grow there.
- Follow all public warnings regarding closures and event cancellations. Check www.cdc.gov for more information.

C’mon...this won’t hurt a bit: The Alabama Department of Public Health Worksite Wellness Division set up in the atrium of the Russell County Courthouse with the ‘regular’ flu vaccine in September. Several employees took advantage of the free immunization. The H1N1 inoculations have arrived in Russell County, though the Health Department has a limited supply. There really were no complaints about pain as the shots were administered. The seasonal flu vaccine is an inactive serum; meaning there is usually very little reaction to the vaccine beyond a sore arm and the patient can not “spread” the flu by receiving the inoculation. Doctors and the Health Department are recommending both the seasonal and H1N1 vaccinations this fall for everyone.

To everyone who is suffering with what is “going around”
They shot the Sheriff

But they also shot the deputies

In August, the Russell County Health Department Director Johnny Burrell held a workshop at the Courthouse on the H1N1 virus and the progress and status of the vaccine. The program cleared up misinformation and was offered to the public. Specifically asked to attend were public safety officials and educators. Alabama offered seasonal flu vaccines in September for all state employees. The State Health department received 55,000 doses to distribute in November.

The H1N1 vaccine became available in November and the Russell County Health Department immediately released notification to those on the ‘target’ list. The list includes First Responders and Health Professionals. Russell County Sheriff Tommy Boswell and OHS-EMA Director William Alexander were among the first to get the inoculation.

Targeted Population
- All People 6 month through 24 years
- Pregnant women
- Household contact and caregivers for children younger than 6 months
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- Persons 25 through 64 with underlying medical complications

The Russell County Health Department is located at 1850 Crawford Road in Phenix City (334) 297-0251 Behind the Phenix City Board of Realtors

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Please visit: www.adph.org.
The Alabama Public Health Department has set up a toll-free number for questions about H1N1 and seasonal influenza: 1-877-377-7285. You can leave a message; your call will be returned.
October is Hot Dog Days at the Shriner’s Club in Columbus and the Phenix City Exchange Club came over the river to support the cause. Proceeds go to support civic programs on both sides of the river. The Phenix City Exchange Club meets each Tuesday at the Quality Inn on Hwy. 280 at noon. The mission of the club is to “Make a difference in the Life of a Child.” The group assists local agencies following the same mission. In 2008, the PC Exchange gave over $30,000 to support child abuse prevention and agencies in Russell County.

For more information please call: 334-298-0516 or 334-298-6426
WOMEN’S MISSIONARY AME CONFERENCE IN RUSSELL COUNTY

The Women’s Missionary Society Ninth Episcopal District African Methodist Episcopal Church Conference blessed Russell County in September as the “Sisters in White” held their workshops, meetings, meals and prayers at Gaines Chapel on Dillingham Street in Phenix City. The WMS is comprised of women from AME churches throughout the area. Community service is a pillar of their mission. The group supports and commands various programs within the church and tends to civic need during the year for many organizations. Officers and members arrived this year at the Canterbury HealthCare Facility with much needed and welcome supplies for the residents as a part of the conference’s compassionate care project. Russell County Commissioner Peggy Martin joined the conference and presented, in partnership with WMS Conference President and Commissioner Cattie Epps, a recognition proclamation to WMS leadership.

Bishop James Levert Davis and Mrs. Arelis Beevers Davis along with Episcopal President Carolyn Cummings graciously accepted the proclamation.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church is one of the oldest denominational churches in America being founded in 1787 and chartered in 1812.

QUALITY TIMES IN RUSSELL COUNTY ~ WHAT’S HAPPENING

JUST BEGINNING
ART SHOW AND SALE
DECEMBER 1
Come and see what our tiny hands can do! It is winter wonderful at the Children and Family Connection 901 13th Street in Phenix City. P.E.A.K. is presenting works of fine art by our pre-kindergarten artists. The show begins at 6 p.m. the CFC is offering 4 Baskets full of goodies during the sale. Tickets are $1. Proceeds from the art show will benefit pre-K programs in Russell and Lee County.

NIGHT OF LIGHTS
Santa Clause is coming to the Phenix City Amphitheater to begin the Season. The Annual Night of Lights will be December 3 and gates open at 6 p.m. It is OK to bring a blanket and get there early for Hot Chocolate for the kids!

YARD SALE IN SEALEASE
December 5 from 8-2 is the Russell County Baseball league Yard Sale. Plenty of treasures from several families. Stay and shop, refreshments will be available.

CHRISTMAS IS ALMOST...
Well it is here in Russell County!

Phenix City Parks and Recreation announce Christmas at Moon Lake beginning on December 10. Walk the trail and enjoy the displays. Train rides are on the schedule. Several singing groups and businesses have great plans for the season. Moon Lake will be open and free to tour until December 27. Come and See the Lights!
The CFC has served RC families for 13 years.

U.S. Congressman Mike Rogers, Fort Benning Leadership, the Phenix City Exchange Club all had the opportunity in September and October to hear about major projects prepared for funding in Russell County. RC leadership continues to present to and request federal support for infrastructure, roads, schools, commerce and utilities in the BRAC Impacted area of Fort Mitchell and throughout the county.

Special Projects Director James McGill
Phenix City/ Russell County Chamber of Commerce

Russell County Engineer Larry Kite
Department Director

SUCCESS AND SUPPORT: ‘WE WORK WITH AND FOR OUR COMMUNITY AGENCIES’

Lakewood had the links the Child Advocacy Center had the Game. No cold or rainy moment stopped the play.

Alabama Power provided the truck, support and volunteers for the tourney and the ‘Ball Drop.’
Supporters and friends join CT Publisher for presentation at the RC Courthouse

The Columbus Times newspaper was ‘born’ in 1924; about 100 years after the African American press began to publish and has been the voice of the Black community in Columbus and Russell County for 85 years.

“The Columbus Times proudly carries the weight of that respected role,” says the newspaper publishing family. “We pride ourselves on locating and reporting the positive aspects of our community; the success stories and the achievements. At the same time, we keep our readers informed of those issues and events of importance on the local, regional, national and international levels.”

Commissioner Ronnie Reed, on the occasion of the paper’s nearest anniversary, presented Co-Publisher Carol Gertjegerdes with a proclamation in October, recognizing these accomplishments.

“Congratulations Columbus Times”
And Thank You