

THE PELHAM

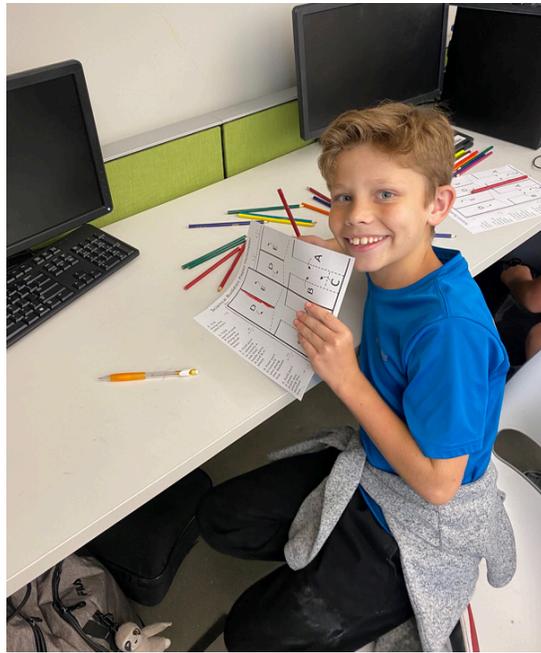
PATHWAY



Issue 6
March 2023

Pelham's News Magazine

IN THIS ISSUE



PAGE 06

Creek Cleaned Up

PAGE 08

Silver Tsunami

PAGE 12

Faith & Resilience

PAGE 16

Panther Profiles

04 Your City at Work

20 In Pictures

22 Tastiest Ticket in Town

26 Activity Guide





A PLAN & A PURPOSE

BY AINSLEY ALLISON

Change is happening all around Pelham and is the direct result of a plan and a purpose. Drive down one street, and you might see investments in the City's infrastructure. On another, colorful flags and banners welcome you to Pelham's treasured recreational spaces. Businesses of varying sizes are finding rich soil to put down roots, creating long-term economic stability for a city known for its diverse private sector. All of this is your City at work, implementing the recommendations of Plan Pelham. Adopted in January 2020, our City's comprehensive plan guides decisions regarding land use, development, growth management, and capital improvement over the next 15-20 years.

While Plan Pelham is a guide, planning & zoning decisions made by the City Council govern development through the Zoning Ordinance. Zoning is a complex topic, but its purpose is simple. It promotes orderly development, ensuring uses are compatible with the surroundings and maintaining the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. While enforcement is essential, listening is also important. The Zoning Ordinance is a living, breathing document, and it is crucial to adapt to changes over time. All zoning requests go to the Pelham Planning Commission,

a board created to hear the voice of the citizens and make recommendations for zoning map changes, ordinance amendments, and the creation of subdivisions to the City Council. The Zoning Board of Adjustments makes decisions on appeals and variances outside the Planning & Zoning rules and regulations that do not conflict with the intent of the Pelham Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Board of Adjustments and Appeals makes decisions on appeals for variances that the Zoning Board of Adjustments did not grant.

One thing to keep in mind: the City of Pelham cannot deny a business from building on a piece of private property if the type of business or 'use' is allowable under the property's current zoning classification. For example, suppose a potential developer wants to build a grocery store on a property already zoned B-2 (General Business District). In that case, they are permitted to do so and must follow the regulations of the City's Zoning Ordinance. If a property is zoned differently than the type of business wanting to build on that site, the business owner or developer could apply to have the zoning changed. The City Council ultimately makes the decision.

City leaders are committed to implementing the recommendations in the comprehensive plan, which is evident in the approval of two new positions in the Department of Development Services and Public Works: A Planning and Zoning Administrator and a Zoning Compliance Inspector. Working with the Building and Fire Departments, each permit application for new development is carefully vetted to ensure the request complies with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. But what about the existing conditions? A significant takeaway from Plan Pelham was that residents and businesses wanted to see our major corridors cleaned up. Telling current businesses and residents how to manage their property to comply with the City's Zoning Ordinance can sometimes be unpopular. Change requires a lot of work and conversations, and it certainly doesn't happen overnight. But rest assured: change is happening.

Meet Pelham's Planning & Zoning Administrator Sherri Proctor

"I am here to help business owners and developers navigate the development process, answer questions, and explain the myriad of regulations early on so that they can avoid obstacles that could delay or disrupt the project. We walk through the process step-by-step to keep them on track."

Meet Pelham's Zoning Compliance Inspector Owen Watkins

"We strive to serve the Pelham community first. As the Zoning Inspector, I aid in achieving the City's vision by ensuring residents and business owners comply with city ordinances. Helping to remedy community complaints and concerns is another priority. My role supports, observes, and reports to the Zoning Administrator so that our department can affect the city development progress, help achieve the goals of Plan Pelham, and improve the city's overall health."



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions: Planning and Zoning Edition

Q What are the advantages of zoning?

A

Zoning helps communities make the best decisions on how land is used to ensure compatibility. At its best, it protects residential neighborhoods from being subjected to intensive commercial and industrial uses. In a nutshell, it keeps the city organized and balanced.

Q Why should people care about what's in the Zoning Ordinance?

A

First, planning and zoning ensure that Pelham residents and business owners are healthy, safe, and thriving. Secondly, we desire to create residential communities that feel like home and are aesthetically pleasing. At the same time, commercial districts are planned in a manner that will be safe and appealing to the citizens while resulting in a growing economy.

Q What are some of the most common zoning violations in Pelham?

A

The most common violations are rooted in concern for public safety. First, signs with a lot of movement or placed in the public right of way can distract drivers and possibly cause accidents. The second most common violation is illegal parking. Parking in one's yard or areas not approved for parking can pollute the groundwater and environment and can detract from the beauty of our neighborhoods and business districts.

Q What is the process for addressing violations?

A

We strive to develop relationships with residents and business owners. Doing so allows us to explain and educate them on the origin and purpose of the ordinance as it relates to the comprehensive plan. Most of the time, that helps to de-escalate situations. Once we explain the big picture, most understand why we bring violations to their attention. We aim to communicate in person at first contact and give a reasonable timeframe to comply. When the deadline expires without compliance, we send a letter with a final deadline. If the property owner is still non-compliant after that deadline, the case goes to Pelham Municipal Court, where a judge may impose fines.

YOUR CITY AT WORK

THE LATEST ON A HANDFUL OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

BY: GINA WOMACK

The City of Pelham is busy with a full slate of capital improvement projects, which will ultimately enhance the beauty and livability of the place we call home. While you can keep up with the status of these projects at any time through the City of Pelham website, here is an update on what's currently happening:

City Hall Renovations

While many city workers have relocated to offices on the second floor of the newly renovated City Hall, work continues on the ground floor. The new City Council chambers are nearly complete. André Bittas, Director of Development Services and Public Works said the space could be ready for council meetings before the end of March. The new meeting room will seat 90-100 people and utilize the latest A/V technology. The Council chambers and a new large conference room will be available for public meetings and special events.

Gateway Improvements

There's nothing like a good first impression, so we're working to put our best foot forward as people enter Pelham. Work is underway on a new, more aesthetically pleasing gateway to the city. An existing structure and old asphalt were demolished to make way for a beautifully landscaped area that will complement a new welcome monument planned for the space. The city's northern border is just north of the Southgate Village shopping center on US 31. Design for the new monument sign, landscaping, and lighting is underway.

Campus 124 Park

Pelham residents will soon have a new gathering place with the development of a new city park behind Campus No. 124. Site clearing and grading are underway and should take approximately four to six weeks. The entire project is expected to take four to six months to complete. Pelham Parks and Recreation Director Brian Cooper said he is excited to add another park to Pelham's portfolio. "Campus 124 Park will provide a great access point for the Pelham Greenway Trail and offer additional space for our residents and visitors to get out and enjoy the great outdoors."



Senior Center Pickleball Courts

Pickleball is one of the fastest-growing sports in America, and city leaders recognize the demand for more pickleball courts in Pelham. The newest courts are planned for the land adjacent to the Pelham Senior Center. The \$60,000 project also includes a pavilion. The City will enlist the help of a third party for design services. Construction could begin in April and take three months to complete, weather permitting.



Highway 11 Water Main Replacement

Work continues to replace the water infrastructure on County Road 11 from the intersection of CR 11 and CR 52 to just east of Chatham Court. As of now, the project is about 30 percent complete. Work started last fall, and crews expect to finish sometime this summer. The water mains along Kelly Drive, Deer Springs Road, Ruby Drive, and Chatham Court (east) are part of the replacement project.



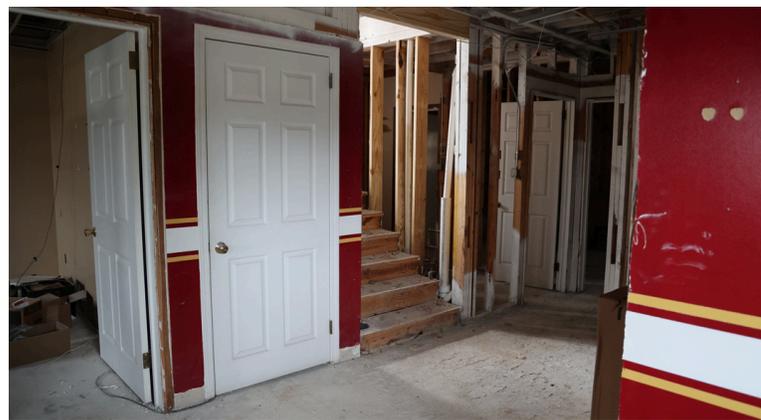
Canterbury Road Storm Sewer Replacement

After the failure of an existing pipe, a storm sewer replacement project on Canterbury Road will begin in March. Work should take three weeks to complete.



Fire Station No. 2 Renovations

Fire Station No. 2 is getting some much-needed attention. Interior renovations and upgrades to the living space are underway. City leaders said the project is approximately 20 percent complete and expect a move-in date of June 2023. The total project cost is \$631,576. The station, located near the intersection of US 31 and Highway 119, covers portions of the northern part of the city, including US 31, Highway 119, Interstate 65, Oak Mountain State Park, and multiple off-streets from Crosscreek Trail to Valley Road.



Tree Replacement – Chandalar Drive

When the City of Pelham replaced the water lines along Chandalar Drive near Carroll Park, a row of Bradford pear trees beside the road had to be removed. The City promised nearby residents that it would replace the trees, and Princeton elms and Teddy Bear® magnolias were chosen. The new trees should be planted by the end of March.

Keep up with the progress of the City of Pelham's capital projects. Visit www.pelhamalabama.gov and click on the "Community" tab at the top of the page.



CREEK CLEANED UP

BY: GINA WOMACK



A portion of Cahaba Valley Creek (also known locally as Bishop Creek) flows much more freely. A significant component of the debris removal project is now complete and provided some much-needed maintenance to remove storm and construction debris from the creek bed and its banks. The project area stretched from Chandalar Drive to U.S. Highway 31, approximately 1.3 miles.

The debris removal was made possible through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The City of Pelham applied for and received the grant, agreeing that the federal government would pay 75 percent of the cost and the City of Pelham would contribute the remaining 25 percent. On July 5, 2022, the Pelham City Council approved the funding of \$266,000 for the City's portion of the work. The estimated cost of the project was \$1.3 million. The next step in the project was crucial. "The creek and its banks are private property, so we had to get access permission from property owners to complete the work," explained acting City Engineer Chris Cousins.

All agreed, and the City Council awarded the bid for debris removal to Gray's Tree Removal Service. Work began in early November. The storm debris was removed with heavy equipment and by hand and then hauled off.

During the cleanup, workers created temporary dams to capture some of the debris. "These temporary dams were created by placing a large log or several logs across the creek near the downstream end of the project. As floating materials were dislodged from upstream cleanup efforts, they traveled downstream and were trapped by the dam where the debris was removed. After the project was complete, the temporary dams were removed from the creek," explained Cousins.

On January 5, 2023, Pelham City leaders and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service members walked the project site. After a recent heavy rain, the water flowed smoothly, but signs of the March 2021 tornado are still evident. "Our goal was to leave enough of the creek bank intact to stabilize the area," said Cousins. He pointed to large root balls left purposefully along the creek bank.

The project area was graded to remove ruts and other signs of the presence of heavy equipment. New gravel was brought in, and the banks of the creek were seeded to further protect the integrity of the creek banks. "Grassing prevents soil erosion. The grading is primarily to remove ruts caused by equipment and to restore the walking track areas near the YMCA, explained Cousins."

Between 800 and 1,000 trees were removed from the creek and the surrounding floodplain, totaling 91 truckloads of debris. That equates to 6,370 cubic yards of trash or 1,592.5 tons. Do the math, and that's 3,185,000 pounds. The contractor pointed out that two of those truckloads were nothing but construction and demolition debris. Cousins explained, "Construction materials and other items stored on private property can easily become displaced by rising water. People should be mindful of where those things are stored if the property is in a flood-prone area."





SILVER TSUNAMI

BY: GINA WOMACK

Every day, a wave of at least 10,000 people in the United States will reach the age of 65. It's called the "silver tsunami." If you go out in public, chances are good that one in five people you see is 60 and older. While it is true that people are living longer and healthier lives, many people over 60 years of age will suffer abuse, neglect, or exploitation at some point during their golden years. Fortunately, one organization in Shelby County is working to make sure some of our most vulnerable citizens are better protected.

The Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging (M4A) is one of 13 designated agencies for aging in Alabama. It was formed in 1989 to serve older adults, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities in Blount, Chilton, Shelby, Saint Clair, and Walker Counties. An Area Agency on Aging services every county in the United States, and most of the funding comes from the Federal Older Americans Act of 1965.

Because needs and age requirements for services vary, several of these agencies have created individual non-profit organizations to better serve people who don't qualify for social services like meal delivery and help with medication. In 2020, M4A's Robyn James was asked to create the 4 ALL Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, with the mission to support and advocate for the dignity of all people.

Most of the work centers on helping all people live and age with dignity, security, and independence. "The goal is to fill existing gaps across all service areas that we know to exist," said James. "There are many advantages to having a non-profit because we can apply for grants to help fund these programs." She said that with federal funding often comes age requirements for services. "We specialize in older adults, but we also serve people of any age with a disability and their caregivers." The 4 ALL Foundation helps meet people's needs so they can age in their communities. They also provide education on aging and resources to prevent adult mistreatment. Three Centers for Excellence exist under the 4 ALL Foundation umbrella: The Center 4 Critical Needs, the Training 4 Aging Center, and the Center 4 Elder Justice and Advocacy.

Cases of elder abuse are on the rise, and the 4 ALL Foundation is working hard to ensure residents in Shelby County and statewide have access to resources. Elder abuse can come in five main ways: emotional abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. James shared some alarming statistics. "According to the National Council on Aging, at least one in 10 older adults living in the community experienced some form of abuse in the past year. For every incident reported to authorities, it is estimated 24 go unreported," said James.

An example of the prevalence of this crime comes from numbers right here at home. "In 2020, there were 690 reported cases of alleged abuse in Shelby County, the most populated county served by M4A. If 24 cases are unreported for every reported case, there were approximately 17,250 cases of alleged abuse just in Shelby County." She went on to explain another sobering fact. "Additionally, as reported in 2021 by Shelby County Adult Protective Services (APS), family members were the perpetrators in 77 percent of the APS cases in which the perpetrator was known and was not the actual person." An example would be someone living alone who neglects themselves.

James said she believes elder abuse cases went up during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Social isolation is the number one trigger. When people could no longer get out in social situations or go to church, the number of cases seemed to grow."

With an obvious need in the community, the 4 All Foundation's Center 4 Elder Justice and Advocacy recently purchased a vacant 16-bed assisted living facility on Highway 25 in Montevallo. The facility will house all the Center's services under one roof and, once fully operational, will also act as an emergency shelter for elderly abuse victims. James acknowledged the lack of emergency housing for elderly abuse patients in our society, a glaring gap that has existed for decades. The Center will be modeled after abuse shelters for people in domestic violence situations but will provide for the needs of older adults. James said she expects the shelter to be open by August 2023 and hopes to have at least ten beds.

"The shelter will provide an escape and basic care for these individuals, 24/7. We'll always have a geriatric nurse to provide for their medical care."

The shelter will provide a solution to another problem often faced by first responders. "Many times, a law enforcement officer will respond to a 911 call from an elderly person claiming abuse. In some cases, the officers can't arrest the caregiver because there would be no one to provide basic care for that person," said James. With an emergency shelter available, officers can remove a person from a dangerous situation and get them the care they need."

Caregiving for an aging loved one can be very overwhelming, especially if the caregiver is also juggling a full-time job and a family of their own. "Most caregivers have the best intentions, but the stress can get the best of them. So, we provide in-depth training, educational opportunities, and virtual support groups," explained James. She called these caregivers the "sandwich generation" because they are stuck between taking care of children and an aging loved one simultaneously. For these caregivers, resources for support and relief are a necessity.

That's where respite care comes in. The Center supports caregivers through The Best Days Adult Day Program, which is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. For a few hours, twice a week, caregivers can drop off a loved one for a day of social activities, arts and crafts, health care monitoring, exercise, and education. In addition, participants will receive breakfast, lunch, and a snack. A partnership with the UAB School of Nursing will provide medical supervision for the day program.





The Center is available by phone when people need help and need help figuring out where to turn. James explained, "When people call the Center seeking help, we ask the individual a series of screening questions. We want to find out if they have enough food for the month, whether they can afford their medicine, or if they face other problems. We offer free legal help and counseling for caregivers and patients. We're a one-stop shop." Once the emergency shelter is fully operational, the Center will be the first of its kind in the country. "Organizations from four southern states are already looking to model after our facility," said James.

Robyn James is quick to praise the Pelham Police and Fire Departments for their efforts in identifying the need for more elderly services in the area and for their willingness to participate in the alliance of first responders, social services, the Department of Human Resources, and advocacy groups that came together to launch the Center 4 Elder Justice and Advocacy. "Pelham Fire Department's Community Paramedic Program led by Adam Moore is a great resource to identify the needs of the elderly in the community," said James. She explained how M4A provided a dementia-friendly first responder training program in 2018 that started in Shelby County and has now expanded statewide. It was through a grant with M4A's PANDA Project that initially funded the Community Paramedic Program.

As the 4 ALL Foundation's programs expand, James hopes more people in Shelby County and all of Alabama can take advantage of these services that some may not be aware exist. "Our goal is to ensure older adults can live free from harm and worry."

If you or someone you know is a victim of abuse or to report suspected abuse, please call the Adult Abuse Hotline at 1-800-458-7214. All reports are confidential and may be made anonymously. To find out more about M4A and the 4 ALL Foundation, please visit www.4allfoundation.org.

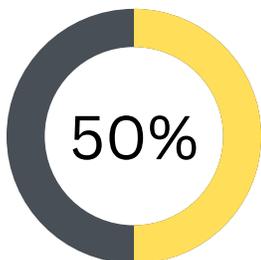
THE SOBERING STATISTICS



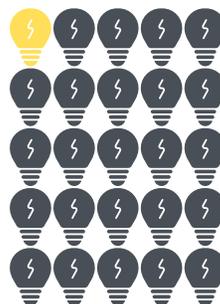
One in ten people aged 60 and over who live at home suffers from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.



The mortality rate is three times higher for abuse, neglect, and exploitation victims.



Half of all people with dementia suffered mistreatment by their caregivers.



For every case of elder abuse that comes to light, another 24 remain hidden.



The Community Paramedic Program provides community blood pressure checks once a month at the Pelham Senior Center, the Pelham Recreation Center, and the Pelham branch of the YMCA. We also offer monthly education seminars at the Pelham Senior Center. Topics range from recognizing and treating chronic, long-term illnesses to taking care of your mental health.

FAITH AND RESILIENCE

BY: GINA WOMACK

Pelham Police Detective Adam Schniper has a passion for helping others. In his assignment with Compact Shelby County, Detective Schniper comes in contact with many people in the community, some in crisis, and others who need help identifying local resources to get on their feet. Adam Schniper's desire to help others was greatly influenced by his family history, which involved a dark time for the world.

"I am the grandchild of Holocaust survivors," said Schniper. My father, Jack Schniper, was also a survivor." Adam Schniper might not be here today if not for his resourceful grandparents, who were determined to save their infant son Jack and survive the horrors of a Nazi work camp to start a new life in America. Many complicated and sometimes coincidental chances of fate came together to continue the legacy of Schniper's family.

Adam's father, Jack is proud to tell his story. Still, he admits he doesn't know many details of his parents' time in a Nazi work camp near Cherson (Kherson), Ukraine. He also quickly lets others know that even though he's technically considered a Holocaust survivor, his parents are the true survivors. "They just took me along for the ride," he said.

Jack Schniper's story begins in Rowno, Poland. His father, Chaim Schniper, who was married with two daughters, was a medical school student at the time. The oppressive Nazi laws made it illegal for a Jewish man to attend school, and he was expelled. "My father lost his wife and children during the Nazi invasion of Poland. He managed to survive. My mother's story was a little bit different, though," said Schniper. Chana Bruztberg and her mother and sister went into hiding on a Polish farm. They knew the farmer, who dug holes for the women to hide. "My mother was in a hole by herself, and her mother and sister were in a different hole. They would come out at night to visit each other. Her mother and sister disappeared one day, so we don't know what happened to them." Schniper said both of his parents took different routes of existence over the following months, joining groups of people trying to survive and hiding from the Nazis. They were both captured, but a fortunate event most likely saved their lives.



Pelham Police Detective Adam Schniper speaks to local students.



Jack Schniper with his son Adam, a Pelham Police Detective.

"They had both lost their paperwork, which was a blessing. This kept them from being identified as Jews. It probably saved them from being sent to a concentration camp, where they would likely have been murdered. Instead, my mother and father were sent to a Nazi work camp, where they ultimately met and married." It is believed Chaim and Chana passed themselves off as Christians to survive.

It wasn't just the Jewish people who the Nazis targeted. "Anyone who didn't curry the favor of the regime was targeted. Catholic priests, gypsies, the disabled - anyone whom the Nazis didn't agree with were either exterminated or made to do hard labor."

Because the Schnipers were in a labor camp, they weren't tattooed when they arrived, like those sent to concentration camps. "They were treated similarly, though. They got off the trains and had to disrobe - men, women, and children. There's no telling what happened to the kids. My parents didn't talk about their experience in that camp." Schniper went on to explain that in the eyes of the Nazis, children and the elderly were useless to them because they couldn't work. Most were killed.

As Adam Schniper and his father sat together to discuss their family history, the younger Schniper reminded his father of a story he'd heard through the years. Jack Schniper relayed the story. "My mother and another woman were working in the fields with guards watching them. One of the guards kept taunting prisoners to see if there were Jewish or hiding as Jews. The other woman reacted, and the guard shot her on the spot. My mother just kept on working, trying not to let it appear that she was phased. If she reacted, she would be gone too."

"Isn't that the guard who told my grandmother, 'I know you're not a Jew, because you're too good a farmer?'" asked Adam.

"That's right. The guard said, 'Jews don't know how to farm,'" answered Jack.

Jack Schniper was born in March 1945. "The war was pretty much over in May," said Schniper. Interestingly, because of his date of birth, Jack Schniper is considered the youngest Holocaust survivor in Alabama.

Soon after Jack was born, his parents escaped the work camp with their infant in tow. "My parents wouldn't talk about how they escaped, but I do know there were other people involved. Somehow it was something of a group effort, and these people were able to get out."

Schniper became emotional when he talked about his parents' sacrifice to keep him alive. "They didn't have to take me on that ride after they left the prison camp. They went through the woods. They would hide by day and travel by night. My mother said they worried that I would cry as an infant. I never cried. It was a miracle."

Along the way, the young family was fortunate to meet up with American forces, who kept the family safe. "They took us under their wing and sent us to Stuttgart, Germany, of all places. But this was after the war, so we were treated as displaced persons." The Schnipers applied for and got permission to immigrate to America in 1950. "Once my family was approved, the rest is fate," said Schniper with a little hitch in his voice. "I'm glad to be in this country."

Schniper explained that the Jewish Federation was responsible for absorbing displaced Jewish people after the war. Many Jews came to America, while others went to Central and South America. Coincidentally, the Schnipers were originally scheduled to immigrate to South America. By chance, Chaim Schniper met a guy who was scheduled to go to the United States. The man wanted to take his family to South America instead, so they received permission to swap their assignments.



German political prisoners at hard labor in 1935. This photo from The Everett Collection shows the treatment prisoners were subjected to in Nazi work camps.



Chaim & Chana Schniper survived the Holocaust and immigrated to America in 1950. Their grandson, Adam, credits them for his passion for helping others.

"Most people assume we came through Ellis Island, but we came through New Orleans. We were on one of three transport ships from Germany. Those three boatloads of people fanned out across the South. They would go wherever communities could sponsor them and help them get started with a new life." The Schniper family came to America aboard the USS Hershey. "After three trips, the ship was decommissioned and became a freighter. However, no documentation was ever found of a ship arriving with the other passengers and us. It has led to some conspiracy theories that there may have been ex-Nazis on that ship who were bound for Huntsville and the Space Center. I have no idea why the manifest is not available. I can't prove anything. It is what it is," said Jack. He said that even though he was a young child, he could remember bits and pieces of the trip to America aboard that ship.

The Schniper family arrived in Birmingham and found an apartment on the Southside. "Not having transportation, it was chosen because it was close to Temple Beth El, where we worshipped.

The apartment was near a bus line as well." Chaim Schniper, who was in medical school when the war broke out, found a job in retail in Birmingham. "Some community members helped my dad get a job stocking merchandise, and he eventually opened a family clothing store. He had no retail background, only the entrepreneurial spirit." Jack Schniper also remembered helping his mother sell clothing out of the back of a station wagon after the family was able to buy a car. By then, the Schniper family had grown. Chana and Chaim Schniper added two sons to the family, Abe, born in Stuttgart, and Steve, born in Birmingham. "The community made sure we had what we needed to make a new start – not just dollar-wise, but they made sure we were nourished and that we prospered."

Jack Schniper grew up, married, and had three children, including Adam. At 78, Schniper still works in retail and frequently travels for his job. He said he is already looking forward to Passover with his family, which this year begins at sundown on April 5. Passover is a time to remember the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt and also a time to celebrate freedom, something that is not lost on Holocaust survivors.

Adam Schniper recalled being aware of his family history at a young age. "In the Jewish community, if you went to the temple, a bar mitzvah, or other celebration, you'd usually see older people with tattoos from the concentration camps on their arms. While many non-Jewish people might not understand the tattoos' meaning, it was normal for Adam. "It was sad that it was normal, but I didn't think twice about it. I knew exactly what it was."



Jack Schniper is considered the youngest Holocaust survivor in Alabama.

Adam said his family history and that his grandparents had to start a new life in a new country allows him to better empathize with Pelham's immigrant community. "When you hear stories of your own family doing what they needed to do to make ends meet, and then when you work in the community and see other families doing the same things as they establish themselves, it helps me relate. I've been an officer in Pelham for 19 years. I've seen families go from living in a crowded trailer with other families to getting their own trailer to buying their first house or establishing a business. When I look at that, I imagine that if I could go back in time and watch my family do that in America, I think it would be similar. I believe when people feel supported, it's easier for them to be absorbed into a community."

When asked if it was possible to forgive the atrocities of the Holocaust, Jack Schniper said that question would have been better to ask his parents if that were possible today. However, he said it's all about perspective and using the mistakes of the past to avoid them in the future. "I can't dwell on the past because I'm a 'live and let live' person. So I think that's what we should do. Not just as a Jew, but as, you know, overall. We're better off if we live and let live and try to lead a productive life."

The Alabama Holocaust Education Center in Birmingham is an excellent resource for learning more about the history, the lessons, and the local survivors of the Holocaust. Please visit www.ahecinfo.org



The Alabama Holocaust Education Center is located at 2100 Highland Avenue.

DAY OF REFLECTION

Yom HaShoah

Translated Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day, Yom HaShoah is the day that Israel commemorates the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust. In 2023, Yom HaShoah begins at sundown on Monday, April 17, and ends on the evening of Tuesday, April 18.

Yom HaShoah is the Jewish community's day for internal reflection. Many use the day to educate children, share stories, honor the victims, and recognize the survivors.

Yom HaShoah is different from International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which was observed on January 27, 2023. International Holocaust Remembrance Day is for everyone to remember the victims of the Holocaust, no matter their religion or ethnicity. It is observed on January 27 each year to mark the day that the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and extermination camp was liberated in 1945.



Israel observes Yom HaShoah in April.

PANTHER PROFILES

SPOTLIGHTS ON SOME OF THE PROGRAMS OF PELHAM CITY SCHOOLS

BY: NICOLE KNIGHT

FOCUS ON SCHOOL SAFETY

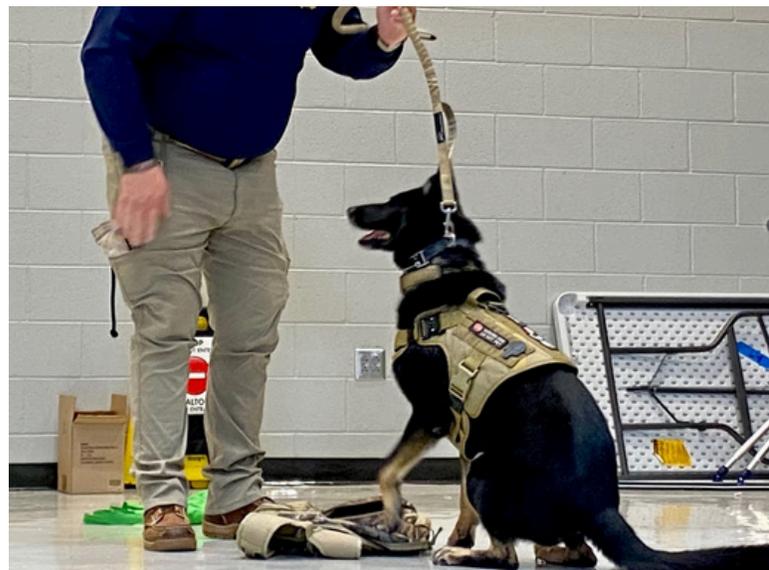
From working closely with the Pelham Police Department and controlled access buildings to implementing the CrisisAlert system and educating teachers and students in emergency response drills, Pelham City Schools works diligently to keep schools safe for students and staff.

"School safety is something we continuously work on," Superintendent Dr. Chuck Ledbetter said. "Everybody must be safe and feel safe to learn."

The system is implementing the CrisisAlert system, which will allow every Pelham City Schools employee to instantly request assistance or initiate response protocols in the event of a threat or other emergency. "It essentially empowers all of our people to help keep everybody safe," Ledbetter said. "We have great educators, and we want to empower all of them so that if something problematic is happening, we can address it immediately." One thing research has shown in situations of school crises is that when a threat arises, time is of the essence. Police presence and timely responses to crises are focal points for ensuring school safety.

Pelham schools have the support of Pelham Police Department School Resources Officers (SROs), who are onsite throughout the school days and at many extracurricular and sporting events. "We have been working to increase police presence," Ledbetter said. "We want to give them the ability to respond to anything that might be problematic immediately and to prevent problems."

Additionally, the Interquest Detection Canines program is another safety initiative that provides trained dogs led by certified handlers who can find and identify substances that are of concern to the school environment. "They come unannounced to our middle and high schools," Ledbetter said. "It doesn't search people. Instead, it searches places, and the dog will hit on illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and gunpowder." The program was not initiated in response to issues with illegal items on campuses. Instead, it serves as a preventive measure so that students will not bring unlawful or prohibited items to campus. This proactive approach adds another level of protection to the system's commitment to ensuring a safe learning environment for students and staff.



It is abundantly clear that there is a steadfast commitment to keeping Pelham's students and employees safe, and according to Dr. Ledbetter, the Pelham school community is a family.

"We are truly a small-town school district in the metropolitan area, and that is pretty unique," Ledbetter said. "We have those dynamics of a small town, and the idea of the Pelham family is real."

STEM in Our Classrooms

Pelham City Schools focuses on building students' skills, content knowledge, and literacy in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) through a vertically-aligned curriculum. Shannon Bogert, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Pelham City Schools, spoke about the role of incorporating STEM into the classrooms and introducing students to STEM at a young age.

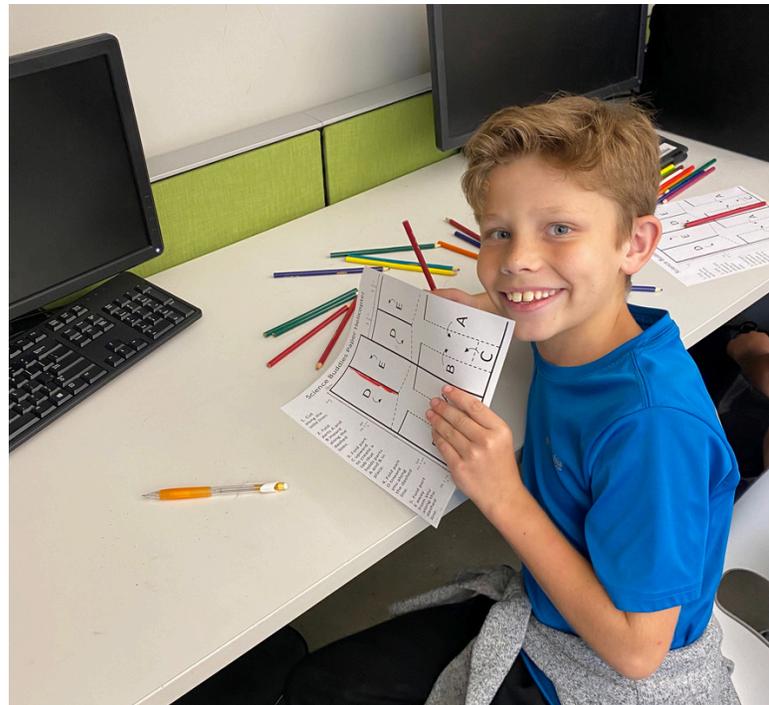
"STEM education prepares students for the workforce and many jobs that haven't even been created yet," Bogert said. "STEM education allows for project-based learning that teaches research, critical thinking, organization, and teamwork."

Bogert said all students in K-12 have opportunities to participate in a STEM curriculum. K-5 students have weekly STEM classes with a dedicated STEM teacher who uses hands-on, project-based learning to incorporate computer science and digital literacy standards. Then, students in grades 6-12 have opportunities to participate in robotics, computer science, health science, and engineering.

"Students in grades K-8 utilize a similar coding curriculum," Bogert said. "So, each year, students learn a little more, even designing websites and games. Eventually, they participate in advanced coding in our high school CTE (career and technical education) programs, leading to students earning industry-level credentials."

"The implementation of STEM classes at our elementary schools has been an amazing way to provide exposure to STEM topics for our students," Bogert said. "Students now come to middle school with background knowledge of various STEM topics and fields they may not know about. We also provide our students many opportunities to visit businesses and industries in the STEM fields and participate in STEM competitions."

Students benefit from increased exposure to STEM initiatives in many aspects of their education. By empowering students with the foundation to gather and evaluate information, collaborate, and identify solutions to today's complex challenges, they will be more prepared to meet the demands of a dynamic and evolving workforce in the future.



PANTHER PRIDE



2022-2023 Teacher & Support Person of the Year Honorees

Pelham City Schools Teacher and Support Person of the Year honorees were recently celebrated at a reception sponsored by the Pelham City Schools Foundation and catered by the Pelham High School Culinary Arts department.

Congratulations to Karen Harrison and Bob Sherer from Pelham Oaks Elementary, Stacey Brown and Kaneesha McGinnis from Pelham Ridge Elementary, Lily Walker Ward and Katie Gotham from Pelham Park Middle School, and Tonya Hatch and Shelley Bates from Pelham High School.

Mrs. Brown was also named the District Elementary Teacher of the Year, and Mrs. Walker Ward was named the District Secondary Teacher of the Year. The district honorees will serve as the Pelham City Schools' representatives in the Alabama Teacher of the Year program.



2022-2023 Support Person of the Year Honorees: (L-R) Bob Sherer, Kaneesha McGinnis, Shelley Bates, Katie Gotham



2022-2023 Teacher of the Year Honorees: (L-R) Tonya Hatch, Lily Walker Ward, Stacey Brown, Karen Harrison

Pelham Park Middle School Boys & Girls Basketball Southern Conference Champions

The eighth-grade boys and girls basketball teams earned the title of Southern Conference Champions in the tournament at the end of their seasons. The eighth-grade boys are coached by James Lawson & Blake Lewis. The team finished the season with a record of 19-1. Tiffany Wright and Melissa Potter coach the eighth-grade girls. The team finished the season with a record of 15-4.

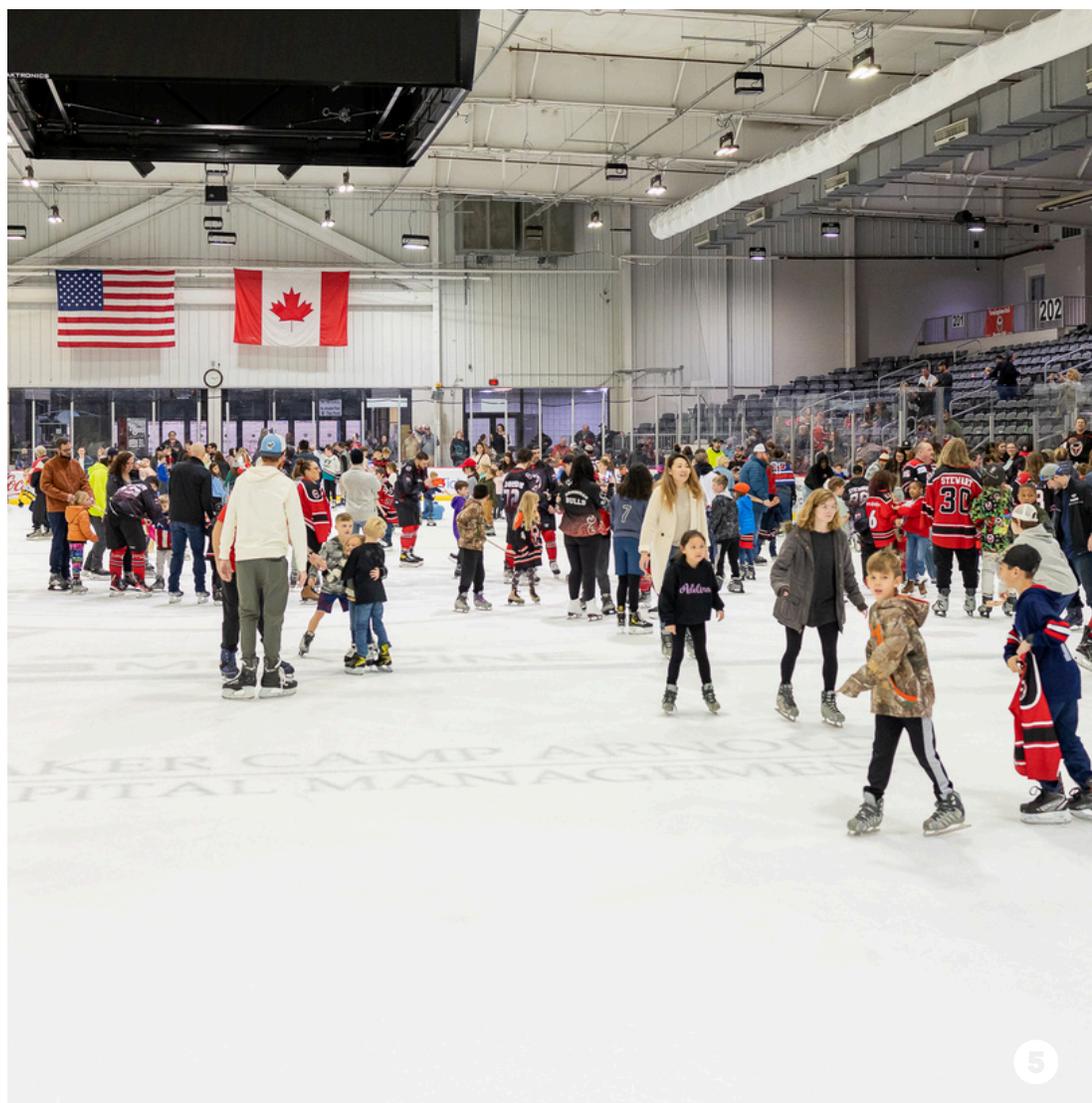
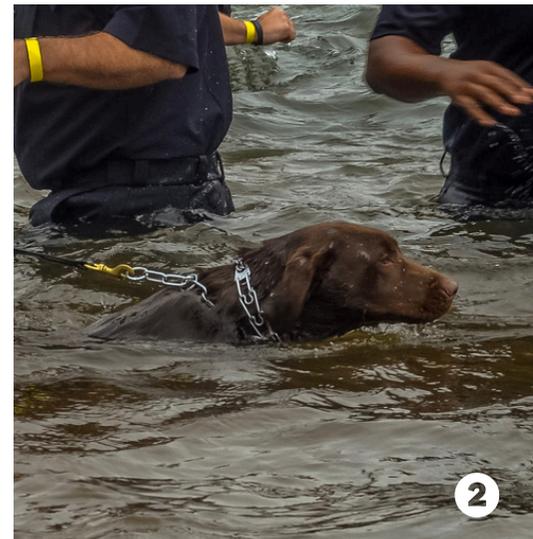


Student Artwork Showcased at Superintendent's Art Show

The Pelham City Schools Superintendent's Art Show showcased the outstanding artwork of nearly 50 students from all of our schools. Several pieces on display were also selected to represent the school system at the State Superintendent's Visual Arts Exhibit in Montgomery.



IN PICTURES



1. & 2. The Pelham Police Department hosted the 2023 Pelham Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Alabama at Oak Mountain State Park. Nearly 300 people (& K-9 Ripley) took the plunge to raise awareness and money for Alabama athletes. 3. & 4. The second annual Pelham Christmas Parade and Tree lighting was attended by thousands. The theme was Christmas movies. 5. The Birmingham Bulls skated with fans and signed autographs after the annual MLK Day match.



1



2



5



3



4



6

1. Pelham Tennis Pros Rusty Wilkes & Clay Parrish received the Birmingham League Jr. Team Tennis Coaching Excellence Award. 2. The tennis season is in full swing for Pelham Park Middle School. Teams are coached by Tennis Pro Josephy Boba. 3. Gentle Yoga is a popular class on Wednesdays at the Pelham Senior Center. 4. New carts with GPS monitoring and control arrived at Ballantrae Golf Club. 5. & 6. The Pelham third grade girls basketball team defeated Calera on February 4th. A total of 174 children registered to play Youth Basketball this season.

TASTIEST TICKET IN TOWN

BY: GINA WOMACK



Pelham Public Library Director Mary Campbell and members of the Library Guild are in event planning mode, and the clock is ticking. It is almost time for Taste of Pelham, the Pelham Library Guild's largest annual fundraiser. Those involved can't wait to see people fill the Pelham Civic Complex, and their plates, with the best dishes in town. "If you love good food, this event is for you," Campbell said with a smile. Around 20 local restaurants and caterers will bring their best offerings for attendees to sample. The culinary showcase will take place on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. In addition to the food, some local vendors will offer samplings of area wines and beers. "Don't be fooled. Those food and beverage 'samples' add up to quite a large meal," warned Campbell. In other words, be sure to bring a big appetite.

Funds raised from Taste of Pelham are vital to the library and its programs. The event began in 2013 as a way for the Library Guild to raise awareness for the need to build a new, larger library. Library Guild President Debbie Parrott remembered those early days.

"Maurice Mercer brought the idea to me. We were Library Guild members, and I had experience putting together events like this through the yearly Rotary Club Christmas Bazaar. I loved the idea, and we went to work. Maurice sold it to the restaurants, and I did the operations and the sponsorships. The first year was a huge success. Barbara Roberts and I had already been lobbying for a new library, and we presented the Taste of Pelham as a building fund for the new library."

When Taste of Pelham began, the library was housed in what is now the Pelham City Schools Board of Education building. Parrott remained optimistic as calls for a new library gained traction. "It never occurred to me that a new library would not be approved. We continued hosting Taste of Pelham because people enjoyed it and returned year after year. Eventually, the Pelham Library Guild and City of Pelham officials broke ground for a new library." Five years later, in 2018, the new library opened at 2000 Pelham Park Boulevard, adjacent to Pelham Park Middle School. "It wasn't that we raised enough money to build the library, but what we did do was raise awareness of how much the new library was needed and how many residents wanted it.

You should have seen it – there were 600 people in attendance at the library's ribbon cutting!"

Mary Campbell recalled the specifics of how the proceeds from the event have been used over the years. "Taste of Pelham was instrumental in raising funds for the furnishings in the new library. Since then, funds raised have purchased technology, funded staff certification in Sensory Inclusion, and helped with library programming. The event is also a way for us to get the word out about all the great things happening at the library," she explained.

Taste of Pelham was put on hold in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. "We were scheduled for April 2020, and then everything shut down," said Campbell. "We didn't even try in 2021 because we were scared to plan something and then get canceled, so it was easier not to have it." However, the event came back in a big way in March of 2022. Last year, about 250 people attended, which Campbell said was "a pretty packed-out event" for the venue. Debbie Parrott backed up that claim. "Since the second year, we have had the maximum number of guests allowed in the Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena banquet hall."

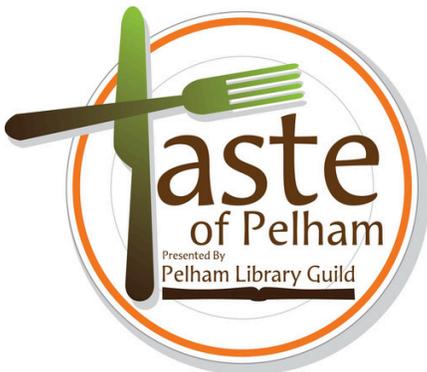
Plans for 2023's Taste of Pelham began with securing the date for the event and reaching out to past vendors and sponsors. "From there, we work to add more sponsors, restaurants, and caterers. Advertising is the key, of course, and we use various methods. Once people know the date, they purchase tickets and plan to attend. The Pelham Library Guild works behind the scenes to take care of thousands of details to be ready to welcome our diners in," explained Parrott. She said the vendors are always pleasantly surprised at the number of diners and how well the event is organized. "We have done this event many times, but we still find ways to improve each year."

The Pelham Library Guild is a non-profit organization devoted to supporting the Pelham Public Library. In addition to Taste of Pelham, the group is instrumental in volunteerism and assisting in improving the library's services to the community. Mary Campbell credits Debbie Parrott and the Library Guild members with the success of Taste of Pelham. "This event would not be possible without Debbie. She has been the superhero behind each Taste of Pelham since its beginning. We also couldn't put on an event of this size without the Library Guild members who give of their time and effort to make the event a success."

Parrott, Vice President of First Horizon Bank, has been part of the Library Guild since 2009 and president of the organization since 2012. "I have loved every minute of it. I have found some great friends within the Guild who have the same love for reading that I have. I would be lost without the library and the thousands of books they have for my pleasure!" She encourages people to join the Library Guild. "Memberships are available anytime and especially at the Taste of Pelham."

In turn, Parrott quickly credits Library Director Mary Campbell and her staff with the success of Pelham Public Library. "Mary did a phenomenal job with the new library and the transition from the old building to the new. She worked tirelessly to make it perfect. And it is perfect, in my opinion. Her staff at the library are among the nicest and most helpful people I have ever worked with."

Campbell hopes this year's Taste of Pelham will raise enough money to expand the usable space in and around the library's Teen Department. "We are bursting at the seams when our middle school friends come over after school," she said. That's a good problem to have because it means more people are utilizing the library for its true purpose.



TICKETS: \$40
PURCHASE NOW



RECENT READS

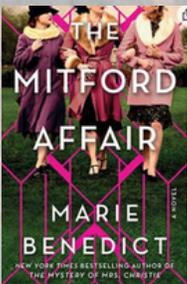
Book recommendations from our Librarians



Mary's Pick

Black Sun by Rebecca Roanhorse

With *Black Sun*, Rebecca Roanhorse has built a fantastical new world based in pre-Columbian folklore where magic, myth, and humanity collide during a solar eclipse. "Rebecca Roanhorse is one of my favorite fantasy writers. Her new series, *Between Earth and Sky*, creates a fantasy world very different from the typical swords and heroes trope. Giant crows, mermaids, and assassins along with fascinating characters will keep you hooked from the beginning."



Russ' Pick

The Mitford Affair by Marie Benedict

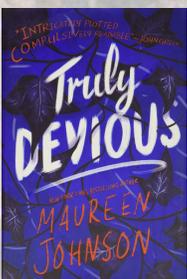
The *Mitford Affair* tells but one story of Nancy Mitford, one of the stylish and controversial Mitford sisters. Nancy's story focuses on the political climate of the inter-war period in Britain and the conflicts and choices facing a family of aristocrats with incredibly diverse opinions. In truth, the Mitford family showcased aristocrats' best and worst characteristics, both brilliance and treason, something modern readers will relate to in the current age of celebrity information overload.



David's Pick

Agent Josephine: American Beauty, French Hero, British Spy by Damien Lewis

Everyone knows that Josephine Baker escaped poverty and racism to seek fame and fortune in Europe. People do not know the other dimensions of her character. New sources reveal that Josephine was a daring risk taker who risked her life during World War Two, gathering Axis intelligence to aid Britain and France during their darkest hours. There is a reason that the French Pantheon is her final resting place. It is where the greatest citizens of France lay.



Liz's Pick

Truly Devious by Maureen Johnson

While trying to solve an infamous murder that occurred at her boarding school in 1936, true crime aficionado Stevie finds her historical investigation turned into a modern-day murder mystery when another student is found dead. "Readers will delight in the thrills, chills, and surprising humor this series opener has to offer."

*Available in both English and Spanish.



Rebecca & Ashley's Pick

Punky Aloha by Shar Tuiasoa

Punky Aloha is a shy girl who loves to help her grandmother. One day, Grandma asks her to go out to get butter to make banana bread, but Punky doesn't feel brave enough to go by herself. Grandma gives Punky a pair of magic glasses to help her along the way. Armed with these special glasses and a heart full of aloha, Punky sets out on a mission to get that butter! When things don't go according to plan, will she still be able to help Grandma?



Save the Date!

**SATURDAY
MAY 20TH**

10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Join us as we kick off summer with live music, shopping, food trucks, and kidzapalooza all along the trail system at the Pelham Recreation Center.

We are excited to partner with the Pelham Parks & Recreation Youth Sports Program to celebrate our young athletes with a parade and recognition during the Palooza!

PALOOZA
IN THE PARK

www.pelhampalooza.live

ACTIVITY GUIDE



MONDAY-FRIDAY | MARCH 27-31
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Coollest Camp Around

Spend your Spring Break at the Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena, improving your skating skills. The Learn to Skate option is for beginning skaters and aspiring hockey players to advanced skaters. Register online at www.pelhamciviccomplex.com

TUESDAYS | MONTHLY
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Dungeons & Dragons

Grades 6-12 are invited to join us for our student-led Dungeons & Dragons campaign at the Pelham Public Library. Seating is limited, and registration is required. D&D Starter Kits are available for checkout on a first-come, first-serve basis. They include dice, pre-generated character sheets, etc.

SECOND THURSDAY | MONTHLY
10:00 AM

Garden Club Meeting

In March, we will focus on The Gardens of Emily Dickinson. Surprisingly, she was better known as a gardener than a poet. Jason Kirby of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens will walk you through the seasons of Amherst, Massachusetts to highlight the flowers that inspired Emily to write her collection of almost 2,000 poems.

SUNDAY | APRIL 2
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Paws in the Park

Celebrate community and the pets that enrich our lives every day. Bama Air Dogs will have two performances, plus, we will have a variety of vendors, treat trucks and more! Bring a donation of dog or cat food to support the Alabama Pet Pantry.

ACTIVITY GUIDE

MONDAYS & THURSDAYS | MONTHLY
TIMES VARY

Tennis Clinics

Pelham Racquet Club tennis pros host several clinics for people of all ages and skill levels. We've added a few new clinics at the Pelham Tennis Center at Pelham City Park. You can learn more at www.pelhamracquetclub.com or call 205.620.6428.

Beginner Adult Clinics
Mondays at 6:30 pm | \$20 per person

Ladies Beginner Clinics
For women of all ages.
Thursdays at 11:00 am | \$20 per person

MONDAY | APRIL 17
6:00 PM - 7:15 PM

STEM Family Night: Recycled Paper Making

In honor of Earth Day, children ages 8-12 and their family members will learn about the importance of recycling and how to make their own paper. Light dinner and snacks will be provided at 6:00 pm. The activity begins at 6:30 pm. Space is limited, and registration is required. For more information, email our Tech Librarian at mcarden@pelhamalabama.gov.

TUESDAY | APRIL 18
11:00 AM

The War in Ukraine

The Pelham Public Library is hosting a presentation from Ukrainian pastor Slavik Rymyski, who will educate and update us on the situation in Ukraine. Mr. Rymyski was in California for a conference on February 24th when the Russian aggression began. He was able to bring his family to the U.S. and is currently working as the Director of SERVE UKRAINE.





TUESDAY | APRIL 18

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Goat Yoga

Back by popular demand! Pelham Parks & Recreation will host 15-minute goat yoga sessions on the youth football field. Don't forget to bring your camera! Registration is required, and the cost is \$5 per person.

SATURDAY | MARCH 18 & 25

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Spring Golf Clinics

Ballantrae Golf Club's PGA Professionals will lead two golf clinics. The first is an intro to golf & short game. The second is full swing. The cost is \$40. Contact the golf shop to register. 205.620.4653

SATURDAY | MAY 13

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Learn to Play Tennis Community Day

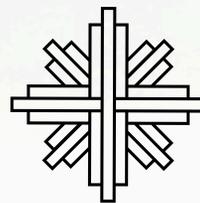
This free event at Pelham Racquet Club is perfect for children, adults, and families. Fun activities are planned for this kickoff to our Pelham Racquet Club Women's \$60,000 Pro Classic. Follow us on IG @pelhamracquetclub or call 205.621.3380 for more information.



USTA
PRO CIRCUIT

May 15th-21st





**Pelham
Civic Complex
& Ice Arena**



**BIRMINGHAM
BULLS
HOCKEY**

REMAINING HOME SCHEDULE

MARCH 10	FAYETTEVILLE MARKSMEN*
MARCH 11	FAYETTEVILLE MARKSMEN*
MARCH 17	EVANSVILLE THUNDERBOLTS
MARCH 24	HUNTSVILLE HAVOC
MARCH 30	EVANSVILLE THUNDERBOLTS*
APRIL 8	EVANSVILLE THUNDERBOLTS*

***SPHL SCHEDULE CHANGE**

Tickets: www.bullshockey.net



P.O. BOX 1419
PELHAM, AL 35124

Prsrt Std
US Postage
PAID
Montgomery, AL
Permit No. 432

*With unmatched indoor &
outdoor recreation,
come discover what sets
Pelham **a path apart.***

www.explorepelhamal.com

