

Free

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Chronicling the Campus Community and Beyond Since 1971

Dance the Night Away with the Dancing Belle

By Nick Manoliu



The Fitzgerald Museum's 22nd annual fundraising gala will take place on April 30 from 6-10 p.m. Photos courtesy of the Fitzgerald Museum.

As two of the most prominent figures of the Jazz Age, Zelda and Scott Fitzgerald liked to party. In 1923, Zelda was even acclaimed the founder of the flapper movement in America. To honor the famous couple's memory and the history behind them, the Zelda and Scott Fitzgerald Museum hosts an annual gala. Every year, the gala seeks to recreate the Jazz Age in all its glory. "We host the gala every year to swing Alabamians back into the World War I era and remind them that the experience of young people discovering the world at a party is the same, now, as it was back then," said Willie Thompson, the museum's curator.

The Fitzgerald Museum will be hosting its 22nd annual fundraising gala on April 30 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Each year brings a new theme. Last year's theme was a masquerade ball. This year, the theme is the "Dancing Belle" in honor of Zelda Sayre and her informal debut with the Montgomery Ballet at age 16. The gala seeks to celebrate the centennial of Zelda's debut and to help raise funds for the museum's continued operation. Advanced tickets go on sale in April. Student tickets are \$35 and non-student, adult tickets are \$60 at the door.

To make this authentic Jazz Age experience a reality, the gala will be host to a 9-piece brass band that will be playing period songs. Guests are welcome to dress in period attire to go with the flapper and southern belle motifs. There will be dancing, heavy hors d'oeuvres, two glasses of complimentary wine and a cash bar for those of age, as well as an opening ballet solo, courtesy of the

Montgomery Ballet. Additionally, there will be ballerinas dispersed throughout the party for photo opportunities. At the center of all the fun is a silent auction and fundraiser that seeks to raise 20 percent of the museum's annual budget. Items that will be auctioned include art, furniture, household goods, vacation packages and curiosities reminiscent of the time. Of course, donations are always welcome.



Daughter of Alabama Supreme Court Justice Anthony Dickinson Sayre, Zelda was raised as a southern belle born into the genteel lifestyle. However, as her namesake suggests, she gravitated more to the lifestyle of a "gypsy queen from civil war romances," Thompson said. She was a partier, but that seems to be the only thing many people know about her. "Zelda is the most famous Montgomerian that Montgomerians know very little

about," he continued. "Although she died tragically after her bout with mental illness, her legacy remains as one of the quintessential stories of the Jazz Age."

Montgomery's Zelda and Scott Fitzgerald Museum is the only one of its kind. There is no other in the world. The house that is the museum is one of only five surviving structures that the Fitzgeralds called "home." With that in



mind, the museum preserves a piece of history that is seldom seen. The museum has been in operation for 25 years and continues to keep this local slice of history alive and well for all. As an integral piece of Montgomery, Alabama's history, the Fitzgerald Museum is a wonder that deserves local support and recognition. Enjoy a night in the Jazz Age, April 30, 2016, and help keep this local treasure thriving.

Happening in Montgomery:

April 9

BEER BASH

1-4 p.m.

Join Filet and Vine in Old Cloverdale for a BEER BASH with live music, food, and beer samples. Purchase your tickets today for \$20 or pay \$25 at the door.

Second Saturday

6-9 p.m.

Head downtown to the Riverfront Park for live entertainment, food, drinks and fireworks. Admission is \$1. Free for children 12 and under.

April 12

Veg Out

7-8 p.m.

Bring a plant-based dish to the gardens at Hampstead for EatSouth's monthly potluck.

April 16

Walk of Life

8:30 a.m.-11 a.m.

Join the Joy to Life Foundation for their annual Walk of Life and help raise funds for breast cancer awareness and research.

April 23

Alabama Book Festival

9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Come to Old Alabama Town for the annual book festival. It's free!

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Apple Opposes FBI's Request for Master Key to Unlock iPhones

By Dasa Rosca

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack in San Bernardino on Dec. 2, 2015, where 14 people were killed and other 22 people were critically injured, the FBI has retrieved the iPhone of the person responsible for the attack. FBI immediately issued a request for Apple to create a backdoor into its operating system so it can gain access to the terrorist's personal information.

One of the many critical issues this nation faces today is Apple's battle against the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Apple's CEO Tim Cook has respectfully opposed the request by stating that this can lead to a serious threat to data security. Cook's desire is to protect his clients and to inform them that this is not a one-time demand by the FBI. He believes that this is an overreach by the U.S. government and that this issue should not be taken lightly because the privacy of Apple users is seriously at risk. "The overall fear by the general public with the possibility of Apple granting the FBI access to iPhones is that of Big Brother watching," said Janet Robinson, a sophomore in accounting. "In today's technological world and with the proliferation of terrorist activity worldwide, I believe giving the FBI a certain level of access would benefit private citizens in the long run. Accessing iPhones should follow the proper legal channels in that the FBI must be required to show cause and retain a search warrant to specific accounts – not just on a random basis."

Having Apple develop such a software will also allow other countries to have such advantage and access to all the devices they wish to get into which will become a serious threat to

the national security. Susan Landau, Professor of Social Science and Policy Studies at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, believes that the FBI should be better funded so it can develop its own powerful investigative tools: "The FBI developing it is, of course, a security risk that Apple is going to counter," said Landau. "But it's less of a security risk than if Apple has it, where it's a central point for opponents to get into and then break phones that they target."

In my opinion, this is quite a challenging demand where privacy and security collide. If the FBI were to be granted access to our devices we would have to deal with a serious breach of our privacy where all of our personal information would be exposed—information such as health records, financial information, messages and so on. If the FBI fails to gain access, the country will miss opportunities to intercept and be proactive against terrorism and the citizens may be at risk.

"I feel like there are multiple ways to access that kind of information," said Tyler Ramsey, a junior in Human Resource Management. "The fact that they particularly channeled Apple is interesting. I see both sides. If the purpose is only to use it for terrorist's information, I think it's okay. It all has to do with intentions, from there you can determine if it's right or wrong."

Truth be told, after Edward Snowden's information about the National Security Agency was made public, I am somewhat sure that the government already has access to all our devices, yet they have failed at preventing domestic terrorist attacks so far. Snowden claimed that the NSA is responsible for not just national but global monitoring and collection of information and data so it can gain intelligence.

It is my belief that the FBI should not be granted access to our devices and respects our privacy. It is not worth compromising our privacy for the government's empty promises to help with domestic and international terrorism.

Eastchase Eateries – Try Them Before They're Gone

By Rachael Fairchild

With limited food choices and restricted hours at our campus dining facility, it is a great convenience for students and faculty to have a multitude of other food options so close to the AUM campus. The Shoppes at Eastchase, one of the hub areas of Montgomery, offers a wide range of food options for our AUM community including both fast food and traditional restaurants. However, through the years, many restaurants have failed to thrive and closed their doors. After watching so many depart from the local shopping center, I personally wonder if the new restaurants will continue in the short-lived business trend that so many others have fallen into.

In the past few years, students have been able to see a handful of new eateries open right down the road from campus. Some of the newest options include Buffalo Wild Wings, Outback Steakhouse, Twin Peaks, Blackfinn Ameripub and, a personal favorite, Urban Cookhouse. While these restaurants remain open, no one can predict how long they will last. Blackfinn just celebrated its one year anniversary of business at the outdoor mall despite the initially negative reviews that were given during its opening months, while other restaurants that have opened within the past year have already closed their doors.

Most recently, Pizza 120 experienced an extremely short life span. The DIY pizza store opened its doors in June of 2015 and quickly closed at the beginning of this year; its closing took some, myself included, by surprise. Theater sophomore Ashley Allen said she was shocked when she went for lunch one afternoon to find that the pizza place had closed their doors. "Pizza 120 was fast, affordable, and creative and was the only pizza restaurant that close to AUM's campus," Allen said. "I would think that such an innovative type of pizza place would have been a huge hit with AUM and Faulkner so close, but apparently it wasn't as great of a concept to everyone else as it was to me."

Pizza 120 is just one of the many restaurants that have closed their doors at Eastchase. Others over the past few years include Boardwalk Burgers and Fries, 32 Degrees Yogurt Bar, Mimi's Café and Del Taco, which was abruptly closed. Many on-campus students experienced the Del Taco closing because it was one of the only late night options nearby. A group of students described the closing as an "overnight disappearance" because there was no warning that they would be closing until the morning it occurred.

While it is sad to see so many great food options close, we also

have the opportunity to enjoy new restaurants that continue to take their places. However, one can only wonder why some restaurants have success and others terrible failure. Fazoli's, an Italian eatery recently opened at the Shoppes at Eastchase, and within the next few months, Jack's will open directly across from campus and KOBE, a Japanese steakhouse and sushi bar, are scheduled to open.

The situation is advantageous for when we are tired of the same individual pizzas, sandwiches, sushi and salad bar the Roost offers or cannot make it during their open hours. With such a variety of choices so close, I encourage you to take advantage of the new food options while you can – they may not be around for long.

Go Eat!

La Coronilla

Looking for authentic Mexican food in Montgomery? You just found it! This little restaurant serves delicious, fresh-tasting dishes from tacos to gorditas. The menu is mostly in Spanish, so be prepared to translate or ask questions. The friendly wait staff is always happy to help!

425 N Eastern Blvd.

Corsino's

This Italian Restaurant has been operating in Montgomery for 35 years and still continues to create always fresh, homemade cooking.

911 S Court Street

D'Road Café

If you want to try something new and different, this is the place to go in Montgomery. This Latin American restaurant goes above and beyond, offering a variety of cuisines at their weekly International Night every Friday. D'Road recently opened a new location downtown as well!

6250 Atlanta Hwy. and 121 Montgomery Street

Second Thoughts about the Second Amendment

By Tiffany Pattillo

All names have been changed to protect the identities of the victims and the accused.

May 5, 2015, 6:09 p.m.

"It's Cinco de Mayo. We should be at a bar right now."

I sent that text message to my best friend, Samantha, with no real intention of making those plans. We weren't frequent bar patrons and certainly not alcohol connoisseurs, but after seeing endless tweets about drink specials at local bars, I thought a night out in Auburn might be fun. We didn't make it to any bars that night, though.

6:55 p.m.

"TIFF MY DADDY JUST GOT SHOT!"

It would be an understatement to say that wasn't the response I expected. My eyes scanned the words of the hastily sent text message in disbelief. Her dad was an experienced gun owner, so I thought maybe he was shot in a hunting-related accident. My next thought was that someone had shot him in a robbery attempt. I would later learn that both my conjectures were wrong.

Samantha received a frantic call from her sister, Sadie, wherein she learned that Sadie had just witnessed their father accosted and shot during a fishing trip. A few rushed phone calls later, I was in the passenger seat of my sister's car. Amber and I drove to meet our parents, who had gone to the pond where this happened to pick up Sadie and drive her to the hospital. Hazard lights flashing and speed limits be damned, we navigated the dark, rural roads haphazardly, racing to the hospital where their father had been airlifted. "Hurry, please," Sadie said through her sobs, urging my sister to drive faster. We sat in silence for the entire car ride, at a loss for words and listening as Sadie repeatedly cried, "He shot my daddy. I can't believe he shot my daddy." The "he" to whom she referred was her Uncle Dale, her mother's brother—a man she called family. "Sadie, where did Caleb get shot?" Amber asked.

I could see her tear-filled eyes directed at Amber. "In the head," she said with a shaky voice. My eyes met Amber's in the rearview mirror, silently agreeing that the situation was worse than we thought.

Darkness had fallen by the time we reached the hospital. We parked the car and briskly navigated the unfamiliar hospital to find her family in a private waiting room in the emergency room lobby. We learned that her dad had died during transport mere moments later. I



Tiffany Pattillo shooting at clay targets on Thanksgiving Day 2014. Photo courtesy of Tiffany Patillo.

leaned back against the white brick walls and cried silently as their sounds of despair washed into the hallway. Sadie was inconsolable for a while; Samantha, their mother and hospital staff did what they could to quiet her. When she finally calmed, the nurses started leading small groups of the gathered friends and family back to see him with one condition—no one was allowed to touch his body. The police still had to complete their investigation.

I didn't go in and see him that night. I didn't want to forever remember that image of the lifeless body of my best friends' father—a man whose first statements to me every time I saw him were, "Hey, Tiff. How's your mama and daddy?" Sadie had seen everything, and I had seen her. That was enough for me. I had known this family my entire life. Our grandparents grew up together. Our parents grew up together. We grew up together. How could this be happening?

I keep my pistol in my closet. Unloaded. Safety on. In its case on the top shelf. It doesn't get much use, only at the range shooting bottles and targets. It's a small .22—a gift from my parents on my 21st birthday. One trip to the shooting range left me wanting my own for our next target practice venture.

I don't know what time the clock read when we found ourselves back home during the early morning hours of May 6. It was dark out, well after midnight. I found my way to bed and lay in disbelief at the events of the previous day. I slept through the rest of the morning. As I dressed around 2 p.m., I saw the corner of my gun's box peeking out beneath a stack of folded sweatshirts and pushed it back so it was covered. Looking at it didn't feel right. Owning it didn't feel right.

I've been around guns my entire life, but I had never been enthusiastic about using them. My dad is an experienced hunter—deer, turkey, doves, wild hogs, rabbits, squirrels, pheasants—but every hunting trip in which I've been included consisted of my sister and me eating snacks and laughing too loudly to attract any game.

November 27, 2014

"Pull!" I prompted loudly, and with a few clicks of a machine, the clay disc hurled into the sky. My eyes looked down the barrel of the shotgun in my hands, seeking to align the sites with my target. My finger found the trigger as the target began to fall below where the tree line met the sky. One shot and the clay disc shattered. Cheers erupted from the crowd behind me. I'd just hit my first mark. My second shot was a miss and followed by succinct instructions from my dad on how to adjust my aim for the third. Another miss, but I was proud. It was my first time skeet shooting, so one in three wasn't too shabby. Waiting for another turn, I was eager for the thrill of it. The stance. The smell. The skill. The competition.

May 6, 2014

I reflected on my memories of Thanksgiving 2014 during the drive to meet Samantha and Sadie to be with them and their family at the home of one of Caleb's three brothers. We were settling in for a long day. We found the sisters in separate chairs in the living room, tears coming and going sporadically. That first day after Caleb died was probably the hardest to get through. The sting of his loss was still fresh, and everyone was shocked at the events that transpired. I hugged them both that day more times than I have throughout our lives. But words failed me. Words couldn't make sense of this in my mind.

Over the course of the next few days, I learned more details about the circumstances surrounding the shooting as others recounted their experiences. The family seems to agree that the general dispute involved Dale's ex-wife, who was also fishing with her daughter at the pond. Samantha spoke to Dale on the phone just hours before the shooting. He had been trying to locate her father. Sadie witnessed the verbal confrontation and threats directed toward Caleb at the pond, moments before the shot was fired. There is no dispute that the gun was loaded and pointed at Caleb; however, it is still unclear whether the single fatal shot was deliberate or if the gun was meant as a threatening scare tactic and went off by accident. Family members that are supporting Dale seem to be assured

that he wasn't in a stable state of mind at the time of the shooting. Dale was arrested at the scene of the incident and was eventually released on bail. His trial has yet to take place although he is waiting to be tried for murder.

We were sitting in a booth of a new restaurant a few months after Caleb died, talking about the upcoming hunting season. "Something that we used to do together killed my daddy," Sadie said to me across the table. The topic somehow found its way into this conversation as it does most of the time now. That's where we found ourselves, confused at how we should perceive guns after what happened to her father.

The Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence gave Alabama an "F" based on the strength and effectiveness of its gun laws in 2014, a ranking of 34 out of 50 states. Alabama ranks 5th for its rate of gun death. According to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Alabama does not have legislation that: restrict sales or purchases of multiple firearms, require gun owners or purchasers to obtain a license, impose a waiting period on firearm purchases, or require firearm registration. Concealed carry licenses are issued by the sheriff of each county, and no gun safety course or demonstrated knowledge of handguns is a requirement for a permit.

Gun violence is a demonstrated problem in the United States. These days, we hear too many reports attesting to this on a weekly basis. It's part of our reality. The federal definition of a "mass killing" is "three or more killings in a single incident," according to the Investigative Assistance for Violent Crimes Act of 2012. Columbine. Fort Worth. Santana High School. Virginia Tech. Fort Hood. Aurora. Sandy Hook. Fort Hood, again. Charleston. Umpqua Community College. San Bernardino. These are just a small fraction of the long list of mass shootings that are designed for maximum casualties and shock value.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data, over 30,000 people died of violence-related gunshot wounds in 2013. Victims of fatal gunshot wounds are not always targets of mass killings, and many states, like Alabama, are prioritizing the rights of gun owners over the safety of potential victims by not passing even the simplest legislation to regulate guns.

The Second Amendment states: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." The 2008 U.S. Supreme Court ruling on District of Columbia vs. Heller found that the Second Amendment protects the "individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home." Justice Antonin Scalia's opinion addresses the phrasing of the amendment, analyzed as the prefatory and operative clauses, to maintain that the right is guaranteed to the individual,

as preserving a militia was not the amendment's only value. The opinion does state that, like most constitutional rights, the right to keep and bear arms is not unlimited but doesn't elaborate on its specific limitations. Scalia also dispels the notion that only arms that existed in the 18th century are protected by the Second Amendment, clarifying that constitutional rights aren't interpreted in that way.

Many Second Amendment defenders view any gun legislation as a slippery slope that leads to no guns and a large, overly-empowered government. We accept that there are limitations to every right and privilege granted to us as Americans. How can guns not be the same? The simple fact is that guns don't belong in the hands of some people. The conversation has to shift from what negative results we fear may happen to the positive effects that effective gun legislation could have in reducing the gun-related tragedies that fill air time. Where can we draw the line so it respects our constitutional rights while keeping us safe?

Effective gun legislation can't save every potential victim of gun violence. It likely wouldn't have saved Caleb's life. No one can predict a sudden shift in someone's mental state, and how that shift will cause irrational actions. However, the effects on the lives of my friends are evidence to me that we must address how guns are manufactured, bought and sold in this country. "What I was, I am not now. What I was, I will never be again," said in 1994 James Brady, gun control advocate and the White House press secretary wounded in an assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. The lives of my closest friends are no longer what they were because of one man's hasty decision to point a gun at another as if that would solve his problems. We cannot keep accepting this as our American reality, mourning those lost then forgetting them as the body count mounts.

Celebrating Student Parents

By Nikki Headley

The topic of children is a common aspect of many people's lives, especially to those who are student parents. Despite the numerous challenges, being a parent in college is a joy that can be given much praise. My mother was a student at AUM when I was a young girl. Many nights I would come home to her books and papers strewn on the table. I also remember that she would spend hours studying.

This never stopped her from being present as a mother. She would pick me up from elementary school, help me with my homework and spend time with me. During my summer breaks, with her teacher's permission, she would occasionally even take me

to a class or two. Unfortunately, she unexpectedly passed away a semester before she graduated in 2004. Despite having a complicated schedule she almost finished her bachelor's degree in elementary education. Thinking back to those cherished times in my life, I wonder how she did it.

Perhaps the joy she found in being a mother outweighed her stresses in college. Crystal Weissenberger, a mother and graduate student in the MLA Program, feels that it does. "To know that this child is yours to guide is an honor to experience," said Weissenberger. "It can be the most rewarding occupation of your life. My favorite part of being a parent is watching them laugh. A child's laughter is special. There's joy in it." These days, I stay very busy with work, school and the thought of graduation approaching. If I had a child in the midst of it all, I am not sure I would be able to deal with it. My mother did all of these things, and the same is true for many other parents also concerned about their college education.

Being a parent is frequently viewed as a career in itself. "It is difficult to apply the words 'full-time job' to parenting because we don't like to think of it as a job, but it is certainly full-time," said Erin Mills, AUMnibus editor and student. "The small people that we care for depend on us for all of their basic needs, from eating to brushing teeth. Not to mention the possibility of illnesses, night-wakings and early rising in the morning," said Mills.

Parents are following their dreams and improving their future while raising a human life that they are responsible for. "Nevertheless, parenting has its wonderful rewards," Mills said. The feel of tiny arms around your neck and a small voice whispering 'I love you' has no comparison." I will always admire my mother for following her dreams. She inspired me to keep my own desires on the forefront of my mind. Coming from a student whose mother is gone, I would advise anyone to appreciate the small things your parent might do for you.

Roommates Gone Wrong

By Kalen Huggins

Imagine coming home hungry, tired and ready for some peace and quiet after a long day only to find your kitchen sink full of dirty dishes, your trash can overflowing, and your refrigerator devoid of the food you recently bought. You see your roommate has borrowed your favorite pair of shoes without asking again and is in a screaming match with her boyfriend, who might as well be your third roommate because he never leaves. I bet that you are making a face and mumbling about how terrible that would be under your breath. I wish I could do the same but I lived through this exact scenario firsthand and it was every bit as terrible as it sounds. I have had two roommates during my three years as an AUM student, two of which I lived with in Warhawk Hall. I knew neither of these girls beforehand

but figured living with anyone would be better than staying with my parents and commuting—I was wrong.



When asked what students' biggest pet peeves were when living with someone, a pile of dirty dishes in the sink was the first annoyance on almost every list. Photo courtesy of Kalen Huggins.

Of course, there are some people you will not get along with no matter how hard you try; personality clashes exist and the best we can do is try to coexist with them. However, AUM Housing tries to rule out these problems by adding a preference page to future resident's applications. This page asks the applicant to choose preference options ranging from room temperature to frequency of visitors. The applicant's information then goes into a computer system and is matched with someone who had similar answers. When assigning rooms, these answers are reviewed in combination with factors such as age and class scheduling to match students with similar preferences. While this is a fairly reliable system of matching, every system has its flaws. For instance, sometimes the resident does not fill the survey out correctly or even take the time to fill it out at all. In these cases, housing is not given much to work with and has to make its best guess. In the event that the system does get it wrong, or really wrong in my case, you have options. AUM Housing recommends that you first schedule a roommate conflict resolution with your Resident Advisor. This is essentially a roommate counseling session where you and your roommate will talk about your feelings and disagreements in front of two RA's. If this does not clear up your issues, you can go to the Nest and request a new room. "However, in my experience as an RA there have been far more successfully matched roommates than not," says Victoria Salvador, a Resident Advisor at Warhawk Hall.

Many students often struggle with the question of living with a friend as opposed to a stranger. While this is up to you, AUM Housing, as well as numerous people who have lived with their friends would recommend living with a stranger instead. This allows you to get to know someone new. It may also be easier to ask a stranger to pick up after themselves or tell them that you need time alone than it would be to tell a friend. While it may seem like the ideal situation to live with your best friend, the truth is that everyone needs space. Living with a friend in addition to hanging out with them when you are away from home may be overkill. Living with strangers was not the golden ticket for me but I would have to agree that it is far easier than butting heads with someone you value in your life.

When randomly selected students were asked around campus what their pet peeves were when living with someone, they almost all had the same answers.... dirty dishes in the sink, clothes on the floor, not replacing the toilet paper, not taking the garbage

out, borrowing things without asking, always having company over—the list goes on and on. However, what is important to any situation is how you react to it.

One of the most crucial skills we will ever learn is how to tolerate people we do not like and unfortunately, college is the time that we are tested the most. With all of the stress that accompanies being on our own, working, declaring a major, making new friends, participating on campus, and thinking long term about our future (which is stressful enough on its own...yikes), we are bound to have disagreements with people every once in a while. It is important to know that you are never trapped in a situation you do not want to be in. There are numerous people and resources that can help you with whatever you are going through. So, before your dorm room looks like the start of World War III and you resort to making death threats, meet with the Resident Advisor of your floor or call AUM Housing at (334)244-3296.

An Author Among Us

By Kalen Huggins

What items can you check off of your bucket list so far? Most of us can say that we've done a little traveling or seen someone we like in concert. For me, I can say things like I've eaten at Paula Dean's restaurant, been on television, and gotten front row seats to a Blue Man Group performance. Tommi Jo Miller, a current sophomore at AUM, can check something that most of us can hardly fathom off of her list – writing a novel. At the age of 16, she began to write. She kept writing for almost two years and finally became a published author this year at the age of 18.



Miller's book "When I'm Asleep" is available online at Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million and Amazon. Photo courtesy of Erin Mills.

Her book *When I'm Asleep* is a young adult novel with the lesson that "being different is not a punishment." Miller's story is a combination of fiction and her own personal experiences. "When writing my book I found that I cared so much for my characters that it hurt me to see them hurting," Miller said. "It took a lot to throw obstacles at the main characters because I would imagine myself experiencing the same thing."

However, her challenges in writing the novel were insignificant compared to her challenges in getting it published. Similar to the way that it is difficult to get your first real job

without experience and your first credit card without previous credit, it is also extremely difficult to get published as a first-time author without representation. Miller described the process as a “never-ending circle of no’s.” Consequently, she became very discouraged until finding a publisher that specializes in new and upcoming authors. She then had to undergo an extremely extensive process that took several months. This process included a general review, editing, formatting, cover designing and audience targeting.

Furthermore, Miller was afraid to release her work for others to judge. After all, a novel is a reflection of the thoughts that go on in your head and it is terrifying enough to tell those to someone you know. Imagine telling some of your deepest secrets and most meaningful thoughts to thousands of strangers. However, she overcame the fear of judgment and advises that anyone who is an aspiring author “not be afraid to write something on a page because you are unsure of how your family and friends will react to it. Your work could change someone’s life.”

Miller is from Millbrook and has established herself as a published author before entering her 20s or completing half of her college career. How impressive is that? Her success proves that no matter how many times people tell you “no,” won’t hear you out because of your age, or laugh at the size of the town you come from, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to.

How Wearing a Bright Orange Blazer Changed My Professional Life

By Matthew Robinson

For most college students, 6 a.m. is a time to catch up on the elusive white whale known as sleep. Members of AUM’s Orange Jacket Society, however, are already dressed and ready to go. For three years, I have been a member of OJS, and I have spent many mornings getting ready to go even before the birds wake up. There have been times where I looked at myself in the mirror and said, “Dude, why the hell are you up this early?” The answer is simple: OJS has developed me professionally more than any other organization that I have been a part of.



Participation in the Orange Jacket Society gives students the opportunity to develop professionally. Photo courtesy of Matthew Robinson.”

Through OJS, I have learned how to carry myself professionally,

the importance of nonverbal communication, and how to best represent myself and AUM. When I first joined OJS, I had no idea how to “be professional.” Being professional to me meant being on my best behavior. I quickly learned that a professional does a lot more than just behave in public. I learned that as much as I paid attention to my behavior, I needed to be mindful of my nonverbal communication. Something else I picked up on was making myself available.

A professional will be flexible and ready to do all tasks, even those that some think don’t matter. Taking care of the little things is important for any project and ensures that all bases are covered. I soon became someone that was ready, willing and able to do anything for OJS. This allowed me to be at many events and meet many influential people in our community. I have met Mayor Todd Strange, Auburn University President Jay Gouge and many other public figures through OJS. “What other organization allows you to meet a Presidential candidate, a Hall of Fame golfer, and your future employer?” asked Jonothon Segars, a fellow OJS member. “The time I have spent in OJS has been very valuable to me professionally and personally.”

No other organization has allowed me the type of growth that OJS provided; it has cultivated in me a desire to better myself and to put my best foot forward. I am now far more mindful of what I put on social media and how it may reflect on AUM as a whole. Instead of not caring what people say about AUM, I have learned how important AUM is to me. I want to show those that are not a part of our campus that AUM is a place to grow as a person and develop as a professional. The bright orange jacket I wear is a symbol of this message, and it’s one that I wear proudly.

UNDERmotivated

By Dasa Rosca

It is hard to believe that almost four years have gone by since I started attending AUM as an international student. At the beginning, I was absolutely intimidated by the many challenges I would have to overcome in order to complete the journey. I was not born into privilege and did not attend top schools while growing up in Eastern Europe. Russian was my second language, Romanian being my first. To make matters worse, I took French in high school—not English. My greatest fear was that because of my weak academic background, I would not be able to keep up with the academic system here.



Photo courtesy of Dasa Rosca.

In spite of all my fears of failure, I decided to commit to what has since

been nothing short of an adventure, even though this meant I often had to work over 10 hours on a single assignment just to overcome the gap between my level of knowledge, and what I needed to know in order to succeed.

I truly believe that an important factor in my success at AUM has been learning self-discipline. I realized that in order to improve my academic performance I had to avoid procrastination as much as possible. Back then, it was easy to get out of bed every morning even if I only slept four to five hours a night. I had no difficulty keeping myself motivated through the day. Whenever I found my mind willing to keep going but my physical exhaustion catching up, I reminded myself of the motivational speaker Tony Gaskins’ quote: “If you don’t build your own dream someone else will hire you to help build theirs.” Fortunately, the truth I found in this quote provided me with enough strength to go the extra mile—until recently.

With only two more semesters left to go, I have found myself in a state of complete exhaustion. The snooze button on my alarm clock is used more frequently, four to five hours of sleep at night is no longer enough, and even the miracle of Red Bull does not give me the energy to get through the day.

Even though I overcame insurmountable academic and cultural challenges in order to make it this far, I still have those days when I am unsure of whether I can actually get to the finish line; that’s when my father makes sure that I know I have what it takes to make it. He would just turn around and tell me: “You are not a quitter,” but most often he would tell me, “You are not overworked, you’re just under-motivated.”

Truth be told, every time I watch the news it terrifies me. The world is in such a mess—it faces war, refugee problems and terrorist attacks. This reminds me that being a student is easy and that being able to attend AUM is not a right but a privilege. In valuing this opportunity, I found the right amount of motivation to keep going. So I better stop using the snooze button and roll up my sleeves if I want to achieve my goal.

Student Alumni Association

By Rashad Hugley

Have you ever felt out of place as a student on campus? In need of a group or organization that provides pride and tradition while building life-long relationships? Auburn University at Montgomery has recently added a great organization built specifically for helping students get involved with meeting new people, not just around campus but throughout different colleges across the country. It’s the Student Alumni Association.

The Student Alumni Association is actually connected with the Alumni Association. Along with giving students the opportunities to earn networking experience through alumni at AUM, students can build lasting relationships

that could be useful in their future careers. Valerie Rankin, Alumni Programs Coordinator at AUM and Student Alumni Association President Jordan Price, are two people heavily involved with the organization. Pride and tradition are the leading values the Student Alumni Association stands for. “I think those are kind of the underlining goals of the whole organization,” Valerie Rankin said. “It’s to create something on campus with a sense of tradition and school spirit and something to be proud of.”



Members of the Student Alumni Association celebrate with the Chancellor’s Cup trophy. Photo courtesy of Rashad Hugley.

The organization is based on pride and tradition, but benefits within the Student Alumni Association are focused on retention. While helping students stay at AUM and graduate, the organization also prepares students to eventually become active alumni. “Now [we have] the opportunity not only to network with alumni but to help other students. To show them there is more to do than just being a student,” Jordan Price said. “Versus going to class and then going home. Get involved, get to meet other people, get to meet alumni. And to also help them ease the transition from student to alumni. Obviously, I’m glad I can be involved with it. It’s a lot of fun.”

The organization is open to all AUM students who want to join and take that next step within the Auburn University at Montgomery family. Students wanting to join can log on to the aum.edu website then click on “Join Alumni Association.” The Student Alumni Association link will be available where students can obtain a membership online for fifteen dollars. Students will receive benefits for joining the association including a discount card. This discount card will give members 10-15% discounts with particular stores within the local area. However, if students do not want to choose the online route to join, you can attend one of the Student Alumni Association membership drives in front of Goodwyn Hall.

As a new organization, the Student Alumni Association strives for adding new people and further growth into an impactful organization on campus. As AUM transitions into becoming more than just a teaching university with new endeavors, students are constantly encouraged to get involved on campus and to use opportunities for life after graduation. Organizations like the Student Alumni Association are just one of the many outlets to help them obtain this. It will provide the necessary preparation for students while allowing them to exceed all their networking opportunities. It’s open to all students who want to join and take that next step within the Auburn University at Montgomery family.

Earth Day 2016

Enjoying Local Nature

By Matthew Robinson

Have you ever wondered what else there is to do at AUM or Alabama in general? There is a host of on-campus activities and there is always something to do in Montgomery, but if you're like me the hustle and bustle can get old. Sometimes you just want to escape for a little while and enjoy the great outdoors. Luckily for us, there is quite a lot to do in Central Alabama for those of us who want to connect to our wild side.

For starters, AUM has a large hiking and biking trail directly behind campus. The entrance to the trails is easily accessible from the outdoor track. These trails are great for anyone who wants a workout or just wants to get away from campus. There are different intertwining routes you can take while on the trails, which allows you to make your own path. If the trails aren't your cup of tea, you can always visit the Montgomery Zoo.



Peacocks can often be found freely roaming the grounds for close-up encounters at the Montgomery Zoo. Photo courtesy of Erin Mills.

The Montgomery Zoo is home to a variety of animals that all ages can enjoy. In addition to seeing the zoo exhibits, you can also walk to the Mann Museum where you can learn even more about the wildlife around Alabama.

Perhaps the zoo isn't exactly

what you are looking for either. Don't worry, Montgomery has a ton of parks for us to enjoy as well! My favorite park, in particular, is the Blount Cultural Park. Home to the Bark Park, Alabama Shakespeare Festival and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Art, Blount Cultural has something for everyone. I especially enjoy sitting by the pond to do homework. But sometimes even these parks don't scratch my itch for the outdoors. Sometimes I need to really get out there, and Alabama doesn't disappoint. For anyone who doesn't mind a drive, Alabama is home to numerous state parks.

One of the closest ones to AUM is Chewacla State Park. Chewacla offers a ton of different activities to its visitors. These include (but are not limited to) fishing, hiking, mountain biking, swimming, boating and geocaching. There's a little bit of everything for you to enjoy at Chewacla, and in Alabama as a whole.

As you can see, there certainly is a lot to do outdoors in Central Alabama. All we need to do is get out there and enjoy. There is a reason why road signs coming into Alabama call it "Alabama the Beautiful," and there are plenty of ways for us to learn why.

Gardening for Beginners

By Erin Mills

With the arrival of spring, Montgomery residents are buzzing about in excitement with gardening plans for the warm months ahead. In a climate that stays warm for many months out of the year, the opportunity to grow our own fruits and vegetables is bright. The benefits of growing your own food exist on both the individual and planet-wide level. When cultivating a garden, you can choose what goes into

the soil – this means healthy, organic vegetables are within your reach at a much lower cost, with a little bit of effort and time. And our planet will thank us, too – the pesticides used in traditional farming can result in groundwater contamination and can be harmful to wildlife. In addition are factors such as the travel time our produce takes to arrive here and the plastic bags that are often used when picking up produce from the grocer. The joys of gardening don't have to be limited to those with large backyards. With mindful planning, even small spaces can be used to cultivate a bountiful harvest in container or box gardens. Below are some tips to get you started:



Squash is one example of an easy-to-grow plant that sprouts rather quickly with the proper care. Photo courtesy of Erin Mills.

1. Start small. When you are planting a garden for the first time, it can be such an exciting experience that you accidentally go overboard, leading to an overwhelming amount of work that wasn't planned for. In the first year, try picking two or three crops, such as tomatoes, squash or bell peppers, to get into the swing of things. The next year, adding more plants will be easier because you'll know what to expect.

2. Start the seeds indoors. My first year, I started my tomato seeds indoors and there is no doubt that it was successful. (Hint: Don't try growing 20

Learn More!

April 16

9-11 a.m.

EAT South's 2016 Spring Workshop series will continue at the Downtown Farm in Montgomery. For the April class, participants will learn how to start their own compost.

April 21

7-9 p.m.

In honor of Earth Day, the AUM Political Film Series will show "Plastic Paradise," a documentary about the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Come and learn about the problem of plastic pollution. The showing will take place on 10th floor of the AUM Library Tower.

tomato plants at once, it is as hard as it sounds.) There are many ways to do this, but my favorite is to simply wet a paper towel, wrap the seeds in it, and place the towel in a plastic bag until they germinate. Then, move them into peat pot that can be placed directly in the ground when the plants are ready.

3. Be mindful of where you place your plants. Vegetables, fruits, and herbs usually require full sun to thrive, so choose a spot that gets at least 8 hours of sun each day. In order to ensure that your plants receive the right amount of sun, be sure to check the tag or the back of the seed packet for complete instructions.

4. Water the plants thoroughly at least twice a week. On weeks with heavy rain, this may not be necessary, but a dry week will mean dry soil for your plants. If the soil is lightly watered, it is likely to evaporate in the sun, leaving little for the roots to soak up. This is why it is wise to thoroughly wet the soil so that the water soaks through. If your plants are in a raised box, wet the entire box, not just the spots where the plants are.

5. Don't forget to enjoy it. Watching a plant grow from a seed into something that produces food for you and your family can be an incredible experience. Furthermore, gardening has been proven to be a stress relief so long as it remains a hobby instead of a chore. Psychology Today reminds gardeners to be mindful of the moment when out in the garden. "A garden offers a feast for the senses: verdant leaves, aromatic blossoms, chirping birds, squishy earth. Make a deliberate choice to soak it all up."

In essence, growing a garden is not only about the plants, but also a cultivation of our relationship with Mother Earth, which for many is invaluable. For more information on starting a garden, check out www.awaytogarden.com.

Warhawk Squawk:

States have been considering legislation about whether firearms should be allowed on college campuses across the country. Mass shootings raised questions and arguments about existing gun regulations. Students were asked: Should firearms be allowed on college campuses?

By Dasa Rosca

Amber Vance

Senior
Sociology Major

"I think people should have the right to competently defend themselves and feel safe, especially on a college campus. However, the proper firearm permits should still be obtained and procedures followed. If someone wants to abuse the power of firearms, he or she will do so regardless of whether there is a ban or not."



Samantha Blakely
Senior
Theatre Major

"We should not have firearms on campus. This is a learning institution, not a gun range. We have police officers who are capable of protecting us. Guns do not make a conducive environment, and a college campus is supposed to provide safety for its occupants."



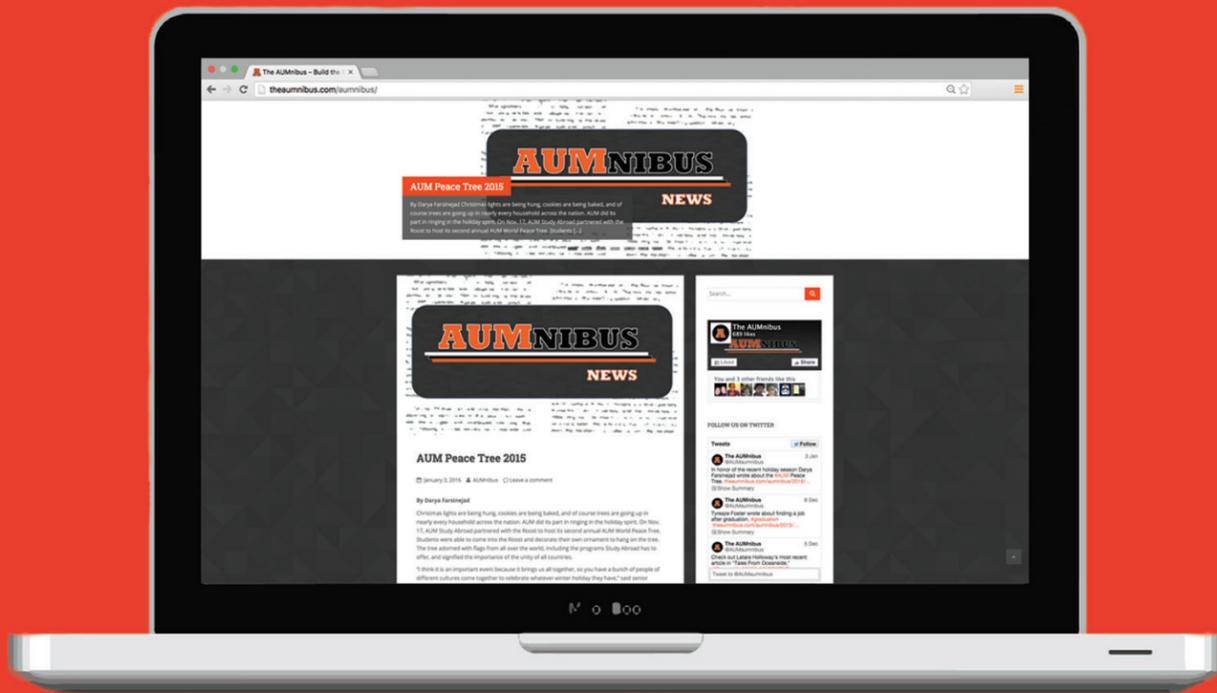
Irina Lazar

Junior
Marketing Major

"I believe that firearms should be prohibited on our college campus. The firearm could become an option to someone who is not thinking clearly or reacting properly. Nonetheless, we have campus police nearby at all times, and there is no need for students or staff to get involved."



Check Out the AUMNIBUS Online!



www.theaumnibus.com

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