

CALENDAR

Georgiana Davis Masonic Lodge meetings

Georgiana Davis Masonic Lodge No. 338 in Trussville meetings are at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday each month. Practice nights are on the first and third Monday. Family nights are on the fifth Monday of the month. The lodge is at 190 Beechnut St. in Trussville. For more information, call Bruce Phillips at 205-4852.

Center Point Masonic Lodge meetings

Center Point Masonic Lodge No. 872 located off Old Springville Road meets every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. For more information call Mike Lann at 205-6877160.

Springville Military Order of the Purple Heart meetings

The Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 2213, Springville, meets at the Smokin Grill at 85 Purple Heart Boulevard on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Republican Women of Trussville meetings

Republic Women of Trussville meetings are at Three-Eared Rabbit on Main Street in Trussville the first Thursday of each month. Meet and greet is at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting follows at 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.rwot.net or email cherylmathews@gmail.com.

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at

First Baptist Church Trussville at 7 p.m.

Cahawba Art Association meetings

The Cahawba Art Association meets monthly on the second Monday at 6 p.m. at the Trussville Public Library.

Speakers present interesting programs and demonstrations at each meeting. Visitors are always welcome and membership is open to anyone with an interest in art. For more information call 661-0517.

Birmingham Children's Theatre Presents: Wake Up, Brother Bear

The Birmingham Children's Theatre will be bringing a performance of "Wake Up, Brother Bear" to the stage at the Rock School Center in Pinson on March 31. This free event is for all ages and open to the public. Registration is not required. The doors will open at 9:45 AM.

TACC Shred Day

Trussville Area Chamber of Commerce, along with Secure Destruction, is hosting a Shred Day on Friday, March 31, from noon until 2:00 p.m. This free event will take place in the parking lot behind the chamber office at 400 Main Street.

Anyone wishing to take advantage of this service may bring 3 to 5 bags or boxes of paper to be shredded for free. Material will be shredded on-site then disposed of in a secure manner through a documented chain of custody.

For more information on this event, call the chamber of-

merce or email june.mathews@trussvillechamber.com.

TACC accepting scholarship apps

The Trussville Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC) is accepting scholarship applications. Applicants must be Hewitt-Trussville seniors or home-schooled seniors who live within the Trussville city limits. A committee has been named to select the recipients and will determine the criteria for awards. A copy of the student's transcript will be required. Awards will be presented this spring. The deadline is Friday, April 7, 2017.

Scholarship applications can be obtained on the chamber's website, www.trussvillechamber.com.

Women's Connection East Luncheon

Women's Connection East will host its monthly luncheon on April 12 at Grayson Valley Country Club. There will be a jewelry exchange and the guest speaker is Babs Hawks. Walk-ins are welcomed, but reservations are requested. Call Cathryn at 640-6182. The cost is \$17 per person and includes lunch.

Flashlight Easter Egg Hunts

The City of Trussville is hosting its annual easter egg hunt April 1 at the Trussville Civic Center at 6:30 p.m. for ages 2-8. 6,000 toy-and-candy-filled eggs will be hidden at the soccer field.

Center Point's 9th Annual Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt is on Friday, April 7 at dark. It will be held at the Center Point Sports Complex located on

Chalkville School Road. For more information, contact Amy Green at 256-390-3159.

Color Blast Egg Hunt

The Healing Place Church will host a color blast egg hunt Saturday, April 8 at 10 a.m. at the church. The event is for kids 12 and under. Inflatables, games and snacks available.

2017 Noon Holy Week Services & Lunch

Monday, April 10 - Sunday, April 16, 2017.

Monday - Friday at 12 noon services held in the sanctuary. Lunch will follow immediately in the Christian Life Center. Donations will be accepted for T.E.A.M.

TDMA Scavenger Hunt

Trussville Downtown Merchants Association is sponsoring a scavenger hunt that will take people into every

area of downtown and multiple business. The event is scheduled for April 8 at 8 a.m. Food trucks will be here for great food! Come join in the fun!

National Walk @ Lunch Day

Come out and walk with us on April 25 from 11:00 - 1:00 at Civitan Park. We will have various vendors on site providing and selling food at lunch time. For more information, call Dot Kelley 655-3777, Drew Peterson or Suzy Hammons 655-9486.

Ridgecrest Shred Day

Ridgecrest Baptist is hosting a community shred event on April 22 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. There is a maximum on three containers/bags

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SPORTS

Gilmer tabbed to succeed Hood at CCHS

By David Knox and Chris Yow

CLAY — The Clay-Chalkville Cougars have their next head coach, and he's a familiar face to the program.



Gilmer

Clay-Chalkville Principal Michael Lee announced last Wednesday that, pending Jefferson County Board of Education approval, Drew Gilmer will be the next head coach for the Cougars.

Gilmer has been part of the Clay-Chalkville program for the past seven seasons in a number of different roles. He coached cornerbacks his first year and moved to wide receivers in his second season. In his third season, he became the linebackers coach, where he has remained. Additionally, he is the strength and conditioning as well as the special teams coach. He previously worked at

Pinson Valley High School as the quarterbacks coach before moving to Clay-Chalkville. He is a graduate of Pinson Valley, and played college baseball at Central Alabama Community College before finishing his degree at the Univ. of Alabama.

"It's an honor," Gilmer said. "I couldn't be more excited about the opportunity, and I'm just looking forward to getting to work."

He said that he sees his tenure as one that will continue and build on former coach Jerry Hood's legacy — a 6A state championship

in 2014 and a runner-up finish in 2015.

"Absolutely. To be honest with you, Coach Hood is basically my mentor. He's taught me everything I know and I've grown up underneath him. Of course, I'm going to put my own spin on a few things, but if the wheel's not broke, let's don't try to fix it."

Gilmer has not been a head football coach before, but he said he feels he's ready for the challenge of being the head man.

"Absolutely. I've felt this way for quite some time, but I've always told people I'm in such a great position

here, it's tough to leave. I've just been blessed with this opportunity and I'm excited about it."

Lee said he had many applicants from all over for the position.

"Coach Hood made this a very attractive position," the principal said.

"There are several candidates on our staff that were qualified, and a lot of good candidates out there, but for us and what we are trying to accomplish, Drew Gilmer is the best selection we could have made.

He's a great football coach, a man of character, and a great role model for a lot of

our guys. I look forward to have him put his stamp on our program."

Lee didn't reveal who the other finalists were, but one of them was certainly offensive coordinator Stuart Floyd. Floyd, who quarterbacked the 1999 state championship team and had served as offensive coordinator for seven years, immediately indicated that he would be searching for a new coaching position.

Gilmer confirmed that Jon Clements, formerly the offensive coordinator at Pinson Valley, will be the new offensive coordi-

See GILMER, pg. 12

Pinson Valley football schedule set for 2017



Photo by Ron Burkett

By David Knox Sports Editor

PINSON — Patrick Nix's first Pinson Valley Indians squad will hit the field for spring practice on April 24.

The Indians' practice was scheduled to conclude with a spring game May 12 vs. Pell City, but Pell City has canceled, so Nix is still weighing options for that game.

Meanwhile, he's upbeat about how his new team is working.

"I'm very excited about how hard they're working," Nix said. "They're buying in. Watching them work extremely hard is most exciting thing of all."

The Indians are set to play in 7on7 tournaments at Mountain Brook and Auburn in July, and are waiting to see about tournaments at Alabama and Samford pending new

NCAA regulations.

The 2017 football schedule is tentatively set, although Nix said there might be one change in a non-region game.

For now, the Indians will open Aug. 25 at McAdory; host Class 6A champion Ramsay on Sept. 1; host Minor on Sept. 8 in the 6A, Region 6 opener; travel to Clay-Chalkville on Sept. 15 for another region matchup; host Jasper on Sept. 22 in a region game; host Shades Valley in a non-region game on Sept. 29; open, Oct. 6; visit Center Point in a region contest on Oct. 13; visit region foe Gardendale on Oct. 20; travel to Carver on Oct. 27 in the region finale; and visit Pleasant Grove in a non-region game on Nov. 3. Playoffs begin Nov. 10.

Pinson Valley returns the bulk of its 8-4 squad that reached the second round of the playoffs.

All-Tribune hoops teams



Photo by Chris Yow

By David Knox Sports Editor

Clay-Chalkville head basketball coach Justin Haynie took the Lady Cougars to a 23-7 season and won the area championship for the fourth straight season.

The Lady Cougars missed a trip to Jacksonville after a 46-44 loss to Ramsay in the Northeast Subregionals, but

that couldn't dim the success the Lady Cougars had again on the hardwood.

The Lady Cougars were unbeaten in Class 6A, Area 12 play and won the tournament championship over Center Point.

For those reasons, Haynie is our Tribune coach of the year.

"I couldn't do it without those kids," a modest

See GIRLS, pg. 13



Photo by Danny Joiner

By David Knox Sports Editor

Pinson Valley head basketball coach Cedric Lane turned the worst area team into its best in one season, and for that reason he is the Trussville Tribune's coach of the year of the first All-Tribune boys basketball team.

After some success under Clint Argo, the Indians fell

on hard times in 2015-16, resulting in a 3-27 record.

Lane came from Jackson-Olin and got the Indians right back on track in the opener, beating his old team 132-65.

Pinson Valley (21-11) rolled on to a 6-1 area mark, losing only to Clay-Chalkville, and the Indians and Cougars tied for the area regular season cham-

See BOYS, pg. 13

HT mountain bikers are tops in state



Photo by Chris Yow

From staff reports

TRUSSVILLE -- Following the first two races of the season, the Hewitt-Trussville mountain bike team is sitting in the top spot in the state.

Led by Jackson Davis, who has placed first in both races this season, the Huskies have scored 4,444 points as a team. They lead second-place Auburn, who has scored 4,148 points.

At the T-Town Throw-down, Davis was first fol-

lowed by Christian Mason in second place. Joshua White was fifth and Scott Johnson took 11th place. That strong performance was followed by another great race at the Crank Down in Tiger Town last weekend.

Davis, again finished first, while Mason was fourth. White took sixth, and Justin Wilson was ninth. Johnson finished in 12th place.

The team will race again in Huntsville on April 8-9.

Former player of HT girls coach shines in NCAA tournament win for Miss. St.

By David Knox Sports Editor

TRUSSVILLE — Tonya Hunter and Morgan William talk every day. But never before a game on game day. Only after. No distractions.

You can imagine the anticipation Hunter, the Hewitt-Trussville girls basketball coach, felt Sunday night as she waited for the call from her former Shades Valley point guard.

William, who led Hunter's Lady Mounties to the 2014 6A state championship, had just rung up 41 points on top-seeded Baylor to advance the Lady Bulldogs to the NCAA Final Four.

That call came about 11 p.m. as State was flying back home and continued pretty much the whole flight. And she got a text after 1 a.m. to let her know William and her teammates had landed safely.

That's the bond a player and high school coach have,

but in their case, the bond is more than player-coach. William's step dad, Donnie Rory, was an AAU coach and an advocate and mentor to many basketball players in the Birmingham area, and for Hunter's own children as well.

He was on both of their minds Sunday night. He passed away three years ago last Saturday, and William dedicated her performance to him.

"He was a huge influence in my life and my family's life, he helped my kids," Hunter said of Rory, a former Samford running back who died of a heart attack at 44 in 2014. "He coached Morgan's AAU team and was just passionate about girls basketball. All over the city and all over Alabama, really. But I think Morgan and I connected even more since that day he died. I said I'll always be there for you. It's really more than a player-coach relation-



AP photo

ship now."

Hunter and William had just gotten off the phone Monday morning as the junior was going to class.

"I said, 'You just got 41 points, you don't want to be late to class, you want to be early,'" Hunter laughed,

knowing how her classmates would want to lavish their praise on the star, whose effort won her the Oklahoma City Regional Most Outstanding Player Award and whose post-game interview

See WILLIAM, pg. 12

Walk-off win starts decent weekend for Indians

From staff reports

Pinson Valley Lady Indians took Friday's game in dramatic fashion, with a 5-4 walk-off victory over Oak Grove. The game was tied at four with Pinson Valley Lady Indians Varsity batting in the bottom of the fourth when Shauna Clevenger singled, driving in one run.

Jordan Walker earned the win for Pinson Valley. She pitched three and a third innings, surrendering four runs, four hits, and walking one. Lauren Keplinger recorded the last two outs to earn the save for Pinson Valley Lady Indians Varsity.

Pinson Valley collected nine hits. Shauna Clevenger, Graci Graves and Walker each collected multiple hits for the Indians.

Walker, Graves, Mollie Peoples, Destinee Cole and Clevenger each drove in one run to lead Pinson Valley Lady Indians Varsity.

Indians hold on to lead

in win over Austin: Despite allowing three runs in the first inning, Pinson Valley defeated Austin 5-4 on Monday.

Austin captured the lead in the first inning.

Pinson Valley took the lead for good with five runs in the second inning. In the second Graci Graves doubled, driving in one run, Shauna Clevenger singled, driving in one run, Jordan Walker grounded out, scoring one run, Destinee Cole singled, driving in one run, and Madison Pliskofsky earned a walk to drive in a run.

Lauren Keplinger earned the win for the Indians. She pitched four innings, surrendering four runs, five hits, striking out four, and walking zero. Graves, Cole, Clevenger, Walker, and Pliskofsky each drove in one run to lead Pinson Valley.

Powerhouse Pisgah shuts down Indians: The Pinson Valley Lady Indians

watched the game slip away early and couldn't recover in an 11-3 loss to Pisgah on Monday. Pisgah scored on a pair of doubles, a single and a groundout in the first inning.

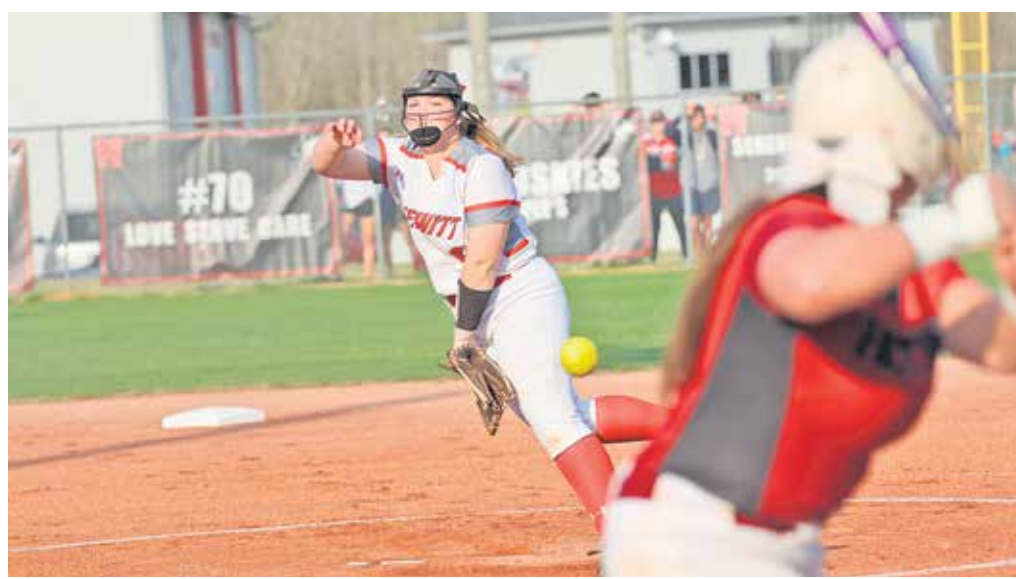
Pinson Valley scored three runs in the third inning. Pinson Valley Lady Indians Varsity scored on a double by Jordan Walker and a home run by Destinee Cole.

Hope Cole took the loss for the Indians. She threw, giving up five runs, five hits, and walking zero.

Graci Graves, Cole, Ande Findley, Walker and Madison Pliskofsky all had one hit to lead Pinson Valley Lady Indians Varsity.

Huskies lose lead late against Huntsville: The Hewitt-Trussville Huskies stayed in it until the end, but Huntsville pulled away late in a 4-1 victory last Thursday.

Hewitt-Trussville lost despite out-hitting Huntsville



nine to five.

The Huskies took an early lead in the second inning. Sara Borden drove in a run when she walked with the bases loaded.

Borden and Abigail Inman each collected multiple hits for Hewitt-Trussville. Borden led the team, going 3-for-3 on the day.

Cougars out-hit Moun-

tain Brook in win: Clay-Chalkville took the lead late in the game in a 14-11 victory over Mountain Brook on Thursday. The game was tied at eight with the Cougars batting in the bottom of the fifth when there was an error, scoring one run.

Clay-Chalkville collected 17 hits and Mountain Brook had 12 in the high-scoring

affair.

Rachel Smith, Kelsey English, Shelby Morgan, Kaitlyn Berry, Jewel Mealing and Lauren Wright each collected multiple hits.

Smith, Berry, Alexis Griffin, Morgan and English each drove in two runs to lead Clay-Chalkville.

WILLIAM, From pg. 11

won her the hearts of America.

"This is for my dad," William said, as she wiped tears away. "It's for him, it's just for him. I just wish he could be here to see this."

The 41 points were her career high - Hunter and William recalled the last time she got 40 it was against Bessemer City - and a school NCAA Tournament record.

State earned its first Final Four trip with the 95-84 win in overtime over Baylor,

led by legendary coach Kim Mulkey, a former All-American star point guard herself and a Women's Basketball Hall of Fame member. "Their one kid kicked our rear," Mulkey said.

MSU coach Vic Schaefer said, "My point guard put us on her back today. She's the best point guard in the SEC."

William made 13-of-22 shots, 6-of-8 3-pointers and 9-of-10 free throws. She added seven assists - setting the school career assists record -- and had zero turnovers in 40 minutes.

State (33-4) will face UConn in Dallas on Friday.

William was a three-time ASWA 6A Player of the Year finalist at Shades Valley and Super 5 team member for three years, rated as a three-star player by ESPN and the No. 25 point guard prospect in the country. She won Metro player of the year honors, but some recruiters looked at the tape measure instead of her tapes, at her height instead of her heart.

Many people told her she was too small, at 5-foot-5, but not Rory, who had been

her stepdad since she was about 2.

"He saw me win the state championship and he knew I was going to Mississippi State, but he didn't get to see me go to prom or to graduate.

"But he said I'd be the best point guard in the SEC."

Said Hunter, "It's amazing to see his legacy still alive. It's a blessing to see that.

"He was watching her. He's not here right now, but he was smiling big on her Sunday."

GILMER, From pg. 11

nator. He joined the Clay staff this spring after Matt Glover was let go as Indians head coach.

It's too soon to know exactly how the rest of Gilmer's

first staff will shape up, but the new coach did say he thought the offense would basically stay the same with some tweaks to accommodate personnel.

Clay-Chalkville has posted ads for football coaches

on both sides of the ball on the AHSAA website.

"There's going to be a lot of familiar faces on staff and then we'll reach out wherever we need to fill holes," Gilmer said.

Spring practice had been

set for April 19, but will now slide to April 24. The spring game at Gadsden City is set for May 12, unless the coaching change at Gadsden affects that.



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GIRLS, From pg. 11

Haynie said. "They should get all the credit."

Clay-Chalkville senior point guard Raven Omar, a Samford signee, was the motor that made the Lady Cougars go. The 5-foot-3 Omar knocked down 3s, drove the lane and scored or got to the free-throw line, or found center Alex Johnson

for a layup. Her 10 points and 6 assists per game are only a part of the story, as she was a coach on the floor for the Lady Cougars.

For those reasons, she is our selection as Tribune girls most valuable player.

The first Tribune girls team also features Clay-Chalkville senior Johnson, an Alabama A&M signee, and junior small forward

Mekaila Hill; Hewitt-Trussville junior guard London Coleman, senior sharpshooter Bailey Berry, a Milligan College signee, and sophomore guard Morgan Kirk; Center Point junior guard ShiCoryia Orr, sophomore guard Taylor Henderson and senior post ZaKaria Adams; and Pinson Valley junior guard Kaylin Hamby.

BOYS, From pg. 11

pionship. Pinson Valley won the coin flip to host the area tournament and beat Clay in the finals for the Area 12 title. The Indians beat Ramsay in the subregionals before losing to Oxford 60-58 in the Northeast Regionals in Jacksonville.

For the trip to the regionals, Cedric Lane of Pinson Valley is the Tribune coach of the year.

"I feel like all the credit should go to the players for buying in, me being a first-year coach there. They did everything we asked them to do. And the administration, (Principal) Mr. (Michael) Turner, allowing us the freedom to do what we needed to do to start building the program. Couldn't do it without that, and we had a really supportive group of parents.

"I think the credit has to go to them."

The choice for MVP of the 10-man team wasn't an easy one. Pinson Valley freshman Colby Jones gets the nod in a tight one over junior teammate Orion Morris.

Jones averaged 15 points per game, collected five rebounds and handed out two assists per contest. The son of former UAB guard Chad Jones grew in confidence as the season progressed and made some big shots at crucial times. The silky smooth wing could get to the rim or knock down the 3, and when he was feeling it, the Indians were unstoppable.

Before the season started, Lane told the High School Media Day audience that Jones would be Mr. Basketball before he was through. Strong props for a player who hadn't played a varsity game.

Jones' debut didn't cast

doubt on that promise.

"Colby's first two points in a varsity game were a dunk," Lane said, "and his next basket in a varsity game was a 3-pointer. That tells you a lot about what kind of player he's going to be."

Morris, who complemented Jones with 17 points, four assists and two steals per game, was a close, close second in voting, and he joins Jones on the All-Tribune team with sophomore teammate Geordon Pollard (14 ppg, 5 rpg) and junior Liallen Dailey (10 ppg, 11 rpg). Clay-Chalkville seniors Jalen Jordan (16 ppg, 4 apg, 4 rpg) and Anthony Holmes (14 ppg, 8 rpg) and sophomore sharpshooter Eddie Smith represent a strong contingent of Cougars. Hewitt-Trussville's Damon Harper and Harrison Stanley and Center Point's J'Myus Reed round out the team.

2016-17 ALL-TRIBUNE TEAM

GIRLS PLAYER OF THE YEAR: RAVEN OMAR, CLAY-CHALKVILLE

BOYS PLAYER OF THE YEAR: COLBY JONES, PINSON VALLEY

GIRLS COACH OF THE YEAR: JUSTIN HAYNIE, CLAY-CHALKVILLE

BOYS COACH OF THE YEAR: CEDRIC LANE, PINSON VALLEY

Girls

Raven Omar, Clay-Chalkville
Alex Johnson, Clay-Chalkville
Mekaila Hill, Hewitt-Trussville
London Coleman, Hewitt-Trussville
Bailey Berry, Hewitt-Trussville
Morgan Kirk, Hewitt-Trussville
ShiCoryia Orr, Center Point
Taylor Henderson, Center Point
Zakaria Adams, Center Point
Kaylin Hamby, Pinson Valley

Boys

Colby Jones, Pinson Valley
Orion Morris, Pinson Valley
Geordon Pollard, Pinson Valley
Liallen Dailey, Pinson Valley
Jalen Jordan, Clay-Chalkville
Anthony Holmes, Clay-Chalkville
Eddie Smith, Clay-Chalkville
Damon Harper, Hewitt-Trussville
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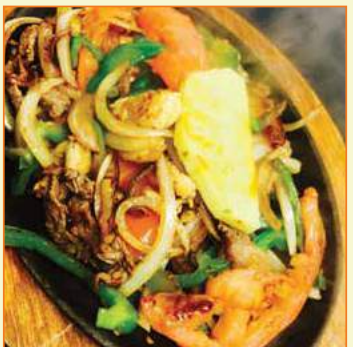
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OUTDOORS

Perdido River Canoe Trail Offers Scenic Vistas

By David Rainer
Columnist

Now that spring is officially here, it's time to dust off the canoes and kayaks and take advantage of another opportunity to explore Alabama's great outdoors.

The latest addition to the Alabama State Lands Division Canoe Trail is the 19-mile Perdido River Canoe Trail, which is divided into two segments with three access points along the Perdido River in Baldwin County.

Typical of a coastal river, the Perdido, which borders Alabama and Florida, is tinted with dark tannin-stained water, like that found in nearby Styx River. The Styx River runs into the Perdido River near Seminole, Ala.

The canoe trail portion of this winding river provides numerous sandbars with white sands that are perfect for river travelers. The many sandbars provide paddlers with frequent opportunities to take a swimming break or lunch break.

The Alabama State Lands Division has provided three access points along the river with two launches and one boat ramp suitable for small boats only. Canoeists and kayakers can stay overnight along the river at one of the six camping shelters that can be reserved or by pitching a tent on one of the sandbars located in front of the shelters. Camping is not allowed on sandbars located between designated shelter locations.

Doug Deaton, State Lands Manager, and Jeremiah Kolb, State Lands Natural Resources Planner, said the Perdido River Canoe Trail was funded through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) grant spon-

sored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Deaton said the Perdido River Canoe Trail was a natural fit for expanding the State Lands' Canoe Trail system, which includes the Bartram Canoe Trail that traverses the upper and lower Mobile-Tensaw Delta. The Perdido trail runs along the 18,446-acre Perdido River Wildlife Management Area in Baldwin County.

"When looking for ways to expand our canoe trail, we thought the Perdido River presented unique opportunities because we already manage state-owned and Forever Wild Land Trust riverfront property there," Deaton said. "The CIAP program provided the catalyst to start the whole project by submitting a grant application for funding. We were excited to ultimately receive CIAP funding and seized the opportunity to add to the recreational options for the people of Alabama."

Although the Perdido and Bartram trails are not connected, Kolb said it's easy to access both trails in a short amount of time.

"And there's a long history of people using the Perdido River and Styx River," Kolb said. "Anybody who enjoys canoeing and kayaking will get a lot of use out of the trail."

The trail amenities include a total of six shelters that will accommodate up to eight campers each in four locations found along the trail. From north to south, these are the Nelson Ditch Shelters, the Peaden Lake Shelter, the Loggerhead Creek Shelters and the Swamp Field Shelter. Individual shelters, which are elevated, can be reserved for



Photos by Billy Pope

one night only, but campers can reserve additional shelters for \$25 per night as they travel down the trail. Reservations are from noon to noon, and campers need to keep a copy of the shelter reservation during the trip. No open fires are allowed within 20 feet of the shelters. Cooking stoves are allowed on the shelter porches. Pets are not allowed in the shelters. No alcohol is allowed.

"The shelters are screened in, so there will be protection from insects at night," Deaton said. "Reservations are required to use the shelters. We don't allow camping on the beaches unless it's a beach adjacent to a shelter location. All campers need to keep an eye on the weather. If there's a chance of a significant rain storm coming in, the river can rise rapidly. Campers need to check the river stage. We provide a link on our webpage to check the water level at Barrineau Park Bridge. If the river stage is 13 feet or higher, it's out of its banks, so you need to stay away."

The three access points for launching kayaks and canoes are Gravel Landing, Staple Fork Landing and Blue Lake Landing.

"Blue Lake is mainly for take-out, but we improved the launch enough that you could put a small boat in and motor up the river and fish," Deaton said. "When we say small, we're talking about a jon boat with a 25-horsepower motor max. What you're most likely to catch is largemouth bass, bream, and catfish."

In addition to the unique habitat of what are called blackwater rivers, the Per-

did River Trail users will see a wide variety of wildlife, including bald eagles, ospreys, white-tailed deer and occasionally an Eastern wild turkey. Several eagle and osprey nests are visible during the trek. Of course, loads of other wildlife may be spotted along the way, including gopher tortoises and a wide variety of songbirds and reptiles.

"It's a very easy paddle," Kolb said. "You can also tube down the river. But be aware that the river is spring-fed and is cold year-round."

Trail users are urged to make a checklist before embarking on a trip. Included

items should be a map of the area, paddles, life preservers, dry bag with a change of clothes, flashlight, drinks and food, sunglasses, sunscreen, cell phone secured in a waterproof container, car keys, lighter or firestarter stick, toilet tissue, portable toilet, GPS and camping gear.

Kolb and Deaton warn that there may be the possibility of having to portage the canoes and kayaks during the trip because of logjams.

"And users need to be aware that those logjams don't stay in the same place," Deaton said. "They're constantly moving. It's not hard

to get around them, but you will have to take your canoe or kayak out of the water.

"Another thing we need to emphasize to the day users and the overnight campers is there are no bathroom facilities along the trail. It is required that users bring their own portable toilet. You've got to take it out with you. That goes for any garbage, too. We want our users to 'Leave No Trace' that they've been there."

Visit www.alabamacanoetrails.com to find additional information on the Perdido River Canoe Trail and the Bartram Canoe Trail as well as a link to make shelter reservations.



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