



JOSEPH WAKER, A HOME GROWN HUMANITARIAN

BY MYRA MURRAY

When we were growing up there were a lot of influences in each of our lives. Some were in the form of persons we came into contact with or experiences that we had. Their influences determined the paths that we took and many of those influences led us to become productive men and women in our various communities.

THE SOUTHERN STAR

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PAGE SLUG: THE SOUTHERN STAR, PAGE 1 SECTION A

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Little Caesars
HOT-N-READY
PIZZA
1485 Andrews Avenue
Ozark
334-774-1001

Ozark Wins
State Championship
Page 1B

Star Scribe's
Scribbings
Page 6A

The Southern Star 75¢

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STEVE MCLENDON FUN IN THE SUN DAY - Steve McLendon, a nose tackle for the Pittsburgh Steelers, returning for 7th season and the Steelers, hosted his 4th Fun in the Sun Day with hats and shirts given away to youngsters. The 6'4", 320 pound McLendon is a graduate of Carroll High School and Troy University, where he played football at both schools (photos by John Phillip Adams).

Fort Rucker Gets Word of Force Structure Cuts

The Department of the Army today announced force structure decisions and stationing plans for the reduction of the Regular Army from 490K to 410K Soldiers. This reduction of 80K Soldiers will occur in fiscal years (FY) 2016 and 2017. This represents a cumulative cut of 120K Soldiers from the Regular Army (to 215K) since 2012. Those will be accompanied by a reduction of approximately 17K Department of the Army Civilian employees.

Driven by fiscal constraints resulting from the Budget Control Act of 2011 and defense strategy and budgetary guidance, these cuts will impact nearly every Army installation, both in the continental United States including Fort Rucker, and overseas. The Army was directed to make reductions, and did so in a strategically-considered approach to preserve warfighting capability and avoid a hollow force as the Army faces continuing fiscal pressures.

After comprehensive analysis of mission requirements and installation capabilities that included public



AWARD NAMED IN HONOR OF STEVE'S - Ozark's Jack Binkley receives an award from Dave Major Baseball coach at the Sportsmanship Award in his honor. Presenting the award is long time Dave Major official Brenton Bell. The award reads "The Jack Binkley/Charlie Alexander Alabama Dave Major/Ozark Major Baseball Sportsmanship Award." In Honor of Jack Binkley. In recognition of his knowledge, dedicated spirit, promotion of fair play and sportsmanship both on and off the field for over 100 years to our youth and Dave Binkley, the Alabama Dave Major/Ozark Major/Ozark Major Baseball Sportsmanship Award in Honor of Jack Binkley.

Column One

Phonics Help Out: 7:00 July 19, 2015. 8:00 p.m. at 6 A.M. (Ozark at 9 A.M., ending at 4 P.M.). Commencement July 19th. Early bus service available. Ages 5 years old through 18th grade. Tickets \$10.00. For the May, the same info. call 334-774-1001.

Agribusiness Meeting 10 A.M. Tuesday, June 23, 10:00 A.M. Wednesday, June 24, 10:00 A.M. Thursday, June 25, 10:00 A.M. Friday, June 26, 10:00 A.M. For more info, call 334-774-1001.

The Cancer Center has opened its office in Ozark at the recology center. This office will be open every Thursday.

Revised Services, Sales, Regular Church Sun., July 19, 11 A.M. and 1 P.M. and Mon., Wed., July 20, 11 A.M. and 1 P.M. 25 north of Ozarkville, Hwy. 160, Ozark, Ala. Contact: Susan White by Worded. For more info, call 334-774-1001.

Visitors Welcome of America Monthly meeting, 8:00 A.M. July 16, 2015 at The Veterans Lodge in Ozark. All members encouraged to attend. All are welcome and Veterans receive invited. For more information, call 334-774-1001 or 334-774-1002.

Fourth-Grade Open House will have Day one 30 days after school at 1:00 p.m. This will be the second day. Sign-up prior to the first day. Dates July 20-21.

Joseph Waker a Home Grown Humanitarian

When we were growing up there were a lot of influences in each of our lives. Some were in the form of persons we came into contact with or experiences that we had. Their influences determined the paths that we took and many of those influences led us to become productive men and women in our various communities.

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COOLING-OFF SITE - Blue Springs, an artificial (but swimming) pool, has been a popular recreation site for years. A host of youngsters shown above prove it is still a fun place to be on a hot day (photo by John Phillip Adams).

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Home Grown Humanitarian

By: Myra Murray

When we were growing up there were a lot of influences in each of our lives some were in the form of persons we came into contact with or experiences that we had. Their influences determined the paths that we took and many of those influences led us to become productive men and women in our various communities. Whether it was our mothers who told us to become a doctor or our fathers who said join the military. Even a teacher or pastor may have tried to influence or direct you to a career they thought you were a fit for but in the long run we find our own way and our own purpose.

The choices that many of us make will allow us to gain financial security and fame and others feel trapped in boring jobs. The ultimate choice of career and purpose is one that we all make but not many will make the decision that Ozark Alabama's own Mr. Joseph R. Waker, Jr. did in becoming a fulltime humanitarian. Joseph made a decision to spend his life helping those who could not help themselves.

Mr. Joseph R. Waker, Jr. was raised in Ozark Alabama and attended Flowers Elementary. While a young man he watched his grandparents and mother help the citizens of his community. Mr. Waker's family also taught him the importance of helping your family, friends and community. They also instilled in Mr. Waker a sense duty that has stayed with him throughout the years.

By the time Mr. Waker moved on to attend Carroll High School he was already working a full time job to help support his mother and sisters. But he also had not forgotten to help those in the community. He also attended Alabama Aviation and Technical College while still enrolled in high school. Mr. Waker would go on to graduate from Carroll High School and the Alabama Aviation and Technical College the exact same day. That day, May 29, 1981 would make him the first African American man to graduate from College that morning and High School that evening in the history of Ozark, Alabama.

After, graduation Mr. Waker moved to South Carolina and opened a very lucrative Construction Business and several Martial Art Studios. While working in South Carolina he continued to help those in need by donating his time and construction skills to help the community.

Finally, several years later in April of 1984 Mr. Waker moved to Washington, D.C., where he once again opened a very lucrative Construction Business and continued to teach martial arts. Then Mr. Waker had an earth shattering experience; this experience pushed Mr. Waker into opening the Waker Foundation a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization that helps persons in need.

The Waker Foundation has programs that are designed to help provide Job Training (Construction and Auto Body Repair), Housing for the Homeless, HIV Awareness, Clothing, Food, Transportation Cost, Community Service Hours for High School Students, Environmental Programs, Hurricane and Disaster Relief, Gang Intervention and Counseling . These programs have helped so many people in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama and Florida (Nationwide). The Waker Foundation web page is www.waker-foundation.org.

Mr. Waker of the Waker Foundation is very determined to continue on as a Humanitarian so he can help those who cannot help themselves. He is in the process of raising money to renovate his Washington, D.C. homeless shelter and has been asked to open homeless shelters in Virginia, North Carolina and Alabama.

During the last four weeks Mr. Waker has been on a Hunger Strike to bring awareness to the Homeless and Hungry people both here in the United States and around the world. There are several videos on You Tube at this time of Mr. Waker of the Waker Foundation explaining his plight to raise money for the homeless and hungry. Mr. Waker has addressed the Bullying Campaign too.

Mr. Waker has also lived on the streets of Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia for four days to show support for National Homeless Month and to bring attention to his Homeless Shelter that is in need of funding for the renovations to be completed before the first snow of this coming winter.

I hope that the career path you chose brings you as much joy and satisfaction as being a full time Humanitarian does for him.