



Master Gardners' plant sale next week

If the spring planting has its rake claws in you, then mark the calendar for Sat., April 27, for the Covington County Master Gardener's annual plant sale.

"We'll have daylilies, hydrangeas, drift roses, native plants, vegetables and more," said Betty Johnson, master gardener, of the day's sale, which will be held from 8 a.m., until 12:30 p.m. at the USDA agriculture service center across from the county health department.

"If you've got a gardening question, the master gardeners will be on hand to answer whatever it might be at our help desk," she said.

Soil testing will also be available for \$2 per cup.

"I urge you to get to the sale early for the best selection," Johnson said. "We hope to have a lot of beautiful, blooming plants this year."

Realtors hosting open houses Saturday

The Covington Association of Realtors will have a countywide open house this Saturday, April 20, from 2 - 4 p.m.

Look for lists of the featured homes inside the April edition of the Covington Real Estate magazine, on *The Star-News'* Facebook page, on our web site, and in our Saturday edition.

Most fertilizer plants here not like Texas tragedy site

There are 89 fertilizer manufacturers licensed in Alabama, but few bear resemblance to the fertilizer plant in West, Texas, where a horrific chemical explosion late Wednesday killed several and injured more than 160, al.com reported Thursday.

In Alabama, most of the in-state manufacturers are small operations blending existing products to better suit the soil tests of individual farmers, according to the the Alabama Department of Agriculture.

A spokesman said the only plant bearing any similarity in scope and process would be Agrium in Florence.

170 parcels on tax sale list

Property will be auctioned May 1 if taxes aren't paid

• **By Stephanie Nelson**
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Some \$100,000 in property tax collections remains outstanding, which means 170 parcels of property

could be up for grabs at a May 1 delinquent property tax sale.

Diane Thompkins, chief clerk at the county revenue commission, said the figure is much higher compared to

previous years at this time.

"A lot of these parcels owe small amounts of taxes," Thompkins said. "That's the base amount. That doesn't include penalties and late fees."

Tax officials in other counties are required by law to run a list of delinquent property owners in a newspaper before public auction. That list ran multiple times in April in *The Star-News*.

The public sale is mandated by state law and will be held on May 1 at 10 a.m.

The list outlines pieces of property throughout the

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SOMEBODY KNOWS SOMETHING



Shelby and Charles Smith at Ed Smith's Fillin' Station in Florida. Charles Smith's father, Ed Smith, was murdered there in 1978.

35 years later, family still seeks closure in Ed Smith's murder

STORY, PHOTOS • MICHELE GERLACH

Charles Smith is 99.9 percent certain that the man who murdered his father in 1978 is serving a life without parole sentence in Holman Prison.

But it is that lingering shadow of a doubt – a doubt that caused a Covington County jury to acquit David "Bubba" Bonner Jr. of murder charges – that nags at Smith.

Ed Smith's murder is just one of the officially unsolved murders in Covington County. Since the Covington County District Attorney's Office announced a 15-member cold case task force was con-

ducting an active investigation earlier this month, *The Star-News* is giving exposure to some of those unsolved cases.

Late in the day on Jan. 3, 1978, Ed Smith was shot twice with the apparent motive of robbery inside his service station in Florida. His pockets were turned inside out, and his money clip, which normally held small bills that perhaps looked like a large sum of money, was missing.

"Somebody knew he had some money," Charles Smith said this week of the

cash that was missing in 1978. This he believes because his father also had cash in his shirt pocket that wasn't taken.

"I had borrowed some money from him to buy a car in Mobile," the younger Smith, who was then 24, recalled. "On Christmas, I had paid him back in \$100 bills.

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Covington County COLD CASES



FOURTH IN A SERIES



Jason and Carrie Kime with daughter Catherine and son Christian. Courtesy photo

Active first-grader has no lingering effects of being born with CDH

• **By Stephanie Nelson**
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To look at 7-year-old Christian Kime, a first-grade, baseball-playing boy, one would never guess he was born with his internal organs outside his body.

All is well now, but the child – the son of Jason and Carrie Kime – spent the first three months of his life hooked up to tubes and wires after being diagnosed with a congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH).

CDH is a congenital birth defect of the diaphragm, the muscle that separates the chest cavity and one's internal organs. Diagnosed at 20 weeks, Kime's mother said doctors gave him a 50 percent chance of survival.

"We went in to find the baby's gender, and found this out instead. Of course, I freaked out," she said. "I had never heard of the condition, and there was very little information available."

And now, the push is on to bring more awareness to the

birth defect that happens as frequently as cystic fibrosis. Today, April 19, is CDH awareness day, Kime said. She hopes by sharing her

son's story, it will help people become more familiar with the condition. She said when Christian was born, they were told he would have trouble breathing because his lungs were compressed, and that he could suffer other medical issues.

And he did – undergoing a surgery to correct his diaphragm and then by experiencing complications. "Over all, he spent 59 days in the (neonatal intensive care unit at Shands Medical Center in Gainesville, Fla.)

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Douglas slated for Opp Hall of Fame

• **By Kendra Bolling**
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The Opp and Covington County Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame will induct the man who saved the city and put it back on the right path financially in the early 1900s – Angus Smith (A.S.) Douglas.

Douglas came to Opp

from North Carolina and purchased property near the present-day Opp High School location, and built a home on Barnes Street.

Douglas was a major broker of naval stores in

North Carolina and brought two colleagues – J.S. Rozier and J. Frank Williams - to join in Opp's first industry, a turpentine still, around 1900.

"Mr. Douglas had the unique ability

to know where to get the help needed for projects," a press release stated. "This trait will served Douglas and Opp very well in the future."

Douglas founded The First National Bank in 1905, providing a major part of the financial back-

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Angus Smith Douglas

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