



FOCUS

ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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ABAC Celebrates Homecoming Week Monday - Sunday

From club reunions to the Gee Haw Whoa Back rodeo, alumni and friends can help ABAC celebrate its week-long 2016 Homecoming activities Monday - Sunday.

The festivities will begin on Tues. at 4:30 p.m. with a tailgating party before the ABAC baseball game against Gordon College. On Wed., past and present members of Greek organizations on campus will throw a Greek Toga Party for ABAC students. Located in the Nickelodeon, this event is free of charge.

The Alumni Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame ceremony will be held on Friday at 6 p.m. in Gressette Gym. Tickets for the awards dinner are \$30 per person and must be purchased in advance.

At 7:30 p.m. on Friday, the first day of the Professional Cowboy Association-sanctioned preliminary round of the Gee Haw Whoa Back Rodeo will be held at the ABAC Arena.

Rodeo tickets are \$10 at the gate and \$5 for children ages 6-13. Children five and under and ABAC students will be admitted free of charge.

The fifth annual Run for the Nurses will kick off the activities on Saturday at the Health Sciences building at 7:30 a.m. Those



"No Place Like Home"

interested in participating in this event can go to www.active.com or visit www.abac.edu/nursing for a printable registration form through Thurs. Runners can also register on race day.

The annual Remembrance Service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Sat. in the Chapel followed by a tour of Tift Hall.

Prospective students can tour the campus on Sat. during Stallion Day.

The Alumni Cookout will be held outside Gressette Gym at 11:30 a.m. on Sat. This event is for alumni, students, and prospective students. There is a \$10 registration fee that must be paid in advance.

The Stafford School of Business will offer the "Yakking with the BOSS" kayak and canoe event at the pavilion at Lake Baldwin at 1:30 p.m. on Sat. There is no charge to participate.

One of the highlights of Homecoming, the Alumni vs. Students Softball Game, will follow at 4 p.m. at Fillies Field. Community members are welcome to be a part of the audience for this event.

The Baldwin Players will perform "Nunsense" Thurs. - Sat. at 7 p.m.

and a matinee performance at 3 p.m. on Sun. in Howard Auditorium. Admission is free to ABAC faculty, staff and students. The ticket cost is \$7 per person for the general public.

A plant sale open to the general public will be held on Thurs. and Friday from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the J.G. Woodroof Farm at ABAC.

Reunions of the AET Club, Baptist Student Union (BSU) and Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM), and the Golden Alumni will all take place on Sat. at 1:30 p.m. The Golden Alumni will gather at the Lakeside Lobby, the AET Club will host past members at the AET shop, and the BSU/BCM reunion will take place at the BCM building. These reunions are free of charge, and pre-registration is requested. Those interested can register online at www.abac.edu/homecoming.

The Homecoming festivities will come to an end with the finals of the Gee Haw Whoa Back rodeo at 7:30 p.m. on Sat. at the ABAC Arena, where the Stallion Cup will be announced.

For more information on the 2016 ABAC Homecoming activities or to sign up for a particular event, interested persons can go to www.abac.edu/homecoming or call (229) 391-4900.



ABAC Students "Strike Out Cancer"

Students from the Wellness and Human Experience class along with the Fillies softball team at ABAC helped to "Strike Out Cancer" last Tuesday. ABAC employees Gloria Sulkowski and Vickie Wilson threw the ceremonial first pitch to help fight cancer. The event raised nearly \$340 for the American Cancer Society. Pictured (l-r): Vickie Wilson, Donna Campbell and Gloria Sulkowski.

Volunteer to Sponsor a Month in The ABAC Veteran Success Center

Is your department or school looking for a way to help out on campus? Volunteer to sponsor the ABAC Veteran Success Center for a month. Committing to sponsor the Center means that you would commit to donate drinks and snacks for a month. During that month you will be recognized with a sign. If you have further ideas of ways to sponsor or would like to volunteer, contact Jessica Swords at jswords@abac.edu

Thigpen Returns for ABAC Rodeo Friday and Saturday

Rodeo fans are in for a special treat as they fill the stands for the Gee Haw Whoa Back Rodeo on Sat. and Sun. at 7 p.m. each night at ABAC. ABAC alumnus Justin Thigpen will return to the campus he once called home to compete in the Professional Cowboy Association (PCA) sanctioned rodeo during ABAC's Homecoming Week.

Thigpen has been competing in rodeo for as long as he can remember.

"I grew up in rodeo," he said. "My mom ran barrels, and my dad rode bulls. I started riding professionally when I turned 16 and could drive myself to the rodeos."

Although his list of accolades is impressive, including 11 champion titles in the International Professional Rodeo Association (IPRA), the humble cowboy doesn't take any of his titles for granted. When asked which title meant the most to him, Thigpen simply replied, "They all hold special meaning, not one of them trumps the other."

The ABAC Collegiate Rodeo Team was the reason Thigpen, an agri-business technology major from 2001-03, chose ABAC.

"I got to rodeo with all of my



buddies because a lot of kids I grew up with came to ABAC too," said Thigpen. "The coach taught us a lot about winning and stepping up in competition."

Remembering his time at ABAC, the 33-year-old cowboy said his favorite part was getting to rodeo and meeting lots of people in the

college circuit who have helped him throughout his career. Being a college athlete takes a lot of hard work and dedication.

Thigpen recalls, "We practiced every day, but one time the whole rodeo team got in trouble for something and our punishment was that we weren't allowed in the arena. They had turned the practice calves out in the pasture, so we just went out into the pasture to rope. That was fun!"

Alumni will fill ABAC's campus for Homecoming week to celebrate and remember their time on the beautiful 516-acre campus. The Waycross native says he's excited to return.

"I always like coming back to ABAC and seeing what's changed and what's stayed the same," Thigpen said. "It brings back a lot of memories to drive down the old

horseshoe lane."

Winning over \$19,000 in the 2015 season of the PCA as the second place All-Around Cowboy, it would be easy to assume that Thigpen would want to win it all this year. But when asked about his goal he said, "I'm just trying to rodeo and make money, make finals and provide for my family."

Thigpen's wife, Lauren, and their two sons, Slade and Trent, travel with him often "as far west as Texas and Oklahoma to as far north as Canada" when he competes. He says the life of a professional cowboy is "non-stop and a lot of travel time, but I get to meet lots of people from all walks of life. I enjoy getting to take my family with me, it's what I grew up doing."

Thigpen has no special rituals or superstitions before he competes. He just simply sees what he's drawn, makes sure his tack and horses are ready and "just competes. I'm very blessed to wake up every morning and get to do what I do."

When the National Anthem is over and the rodeo begins at Homecoming, the seasoned rancher will saddle up his horses and prepare to make a clean ride in both steer wrestling and tie-down calf roping. Rodeo spectators will also get to watch bareback and saddle bronc riding, team roping, breakaway roping, barrel racing and bull riding.



Purchase Your Ticket For 'Cow Patty Bingo'

The ABAC Agriculture Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) invites you to 'Cow Patty Bingo' on April 11 at 6 p.m. in the Rodeo Arena. There will be entertainment, food, and door prizes. You may purchase your square for \$10 or 3 for \$25. Minimum prize is \$250. To buy your ticket, contact any ACT club member or email hreeves1@stallions.abac.edu.



ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Stallion Day, April 2nd

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
8:00 – 9:00	Check-in & Tours	Donaldson Dining Hall
9:00 ~ 9:20	Welcome & Overview of the Day	Donaldson Dining Hall
9:30 – 10:40 • 9:30-10:00 • 10:10-10:40	Student Conversation Corner Join the experts and have your questions answered on these areas from staff and students.	Health Sciences Building <u>Seniors & Transfers</u> Room 114: College 101: It's here, are you ready? <u>Underclassmen</u> Room 254: College 101: Preparing for the future Room 259: Student Information Panel
9:30-10:40	Family Conversation Corner	Howard Auditorium
10:45-11:50	Stallion Marketplace & Tours	Gressette Gymnasium
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch: <i>Students eat free. Guests may purchase lunch tickets that day for \$10.</i>	Gressette Gymnasium Grounds
1:10 and 2:00	Financial Aid Info Session	Bowen Hall, Room 100
1:10 until... <i>Housing Tours will continue through the afternoon!</i>	Admissions Info for all students Housing and Lakeside Tours	Herring Hall Lakeside Multipurpose Room

Gee Haw Whoa Back Rodeo at 7:30, ABAC Arena
\$10 for adults. \$5 for kids 6-13. free to kids 5 & under

Alumni vs. Students Softball Game
4 PM—Filly Field

**ABAC Bookstore is open from 1-3,
1st floor Student Center**

Help ABAC win the National Cesar E. Chavez Blood Drive Challenge

Tuesday • 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. • 2nd floor of Branch Hall

All donors will receive a free T-shirt! Remember to EAT WELL and INCREASE your FLUID INTAKE the day of the donation! Sponsored by the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)



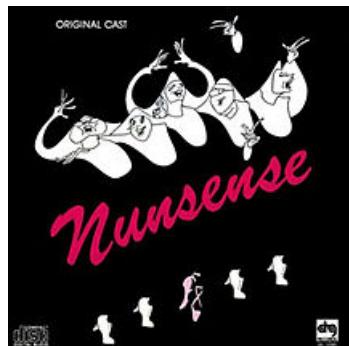
Baldwin Players Perform Musical ‘Nunsense’

The Baldwin Players of ABAC will perform the musical comedy “Nunsense” on Thurs.-Sat. at 7 p.m. and then again at a 3 p.m. matinee on Sun. All performances will be in Howard Auditorium on the ABAC campus.

“Nunsense” was expanded from a line of greeting cards by Dan Goggin, who turned it into a musical.

Dr. Brian Ray, director of the theatre troupe, said the admission is free to ABAC faculty, staff and students. The ticket cost is \$7 per person for the general public.

Cast members include Taylor Walker, a music-vocal major from Omega, as Sister Mary Regina (Mother Superior); Krystina Braswell, a music-vocal major from Covington, as Sister Mary Hubert;



Caroline Kirkland, a biology major from Tifton, as Sister Robert Anne; Juli-Ana Massey, a psychology major from Fitzgerald, as Sister Mary Leo; and Lauren Lever, a music major from Tifton, as Sister Mary Amnesia.

Goggin wrote the book, music, and lyrics for “Nunsense.” It first opened in 1985 off-Broadway and was performed 3,672 times, making it the second-longest-running off-Broadway show in history. It was later adapted for TV and led to six sequels and three spin-offs.

The musical is about five of the 19 surviving Little Sisters of Hoboken, a one-time missionary order that ran a leper colony on an island south of France. The five nuns discover that their cook, Sister Julia, Child of God, accidentally killed the other

52 residents of the convent with her tainted vichyssoise while they were off playing bingo. Upon discovering the disaster, Mother Superior has a vision in which she was told to start a greeting card company to raise funds for the burials.

After the enormous success of the greeting cards - and thinking there is plenty of money - the Reverend Mother buys some items for the convent leaving her with no money to pay for the last four burials. With the deceased nuns on ice in the deep freeze, the sisters decide to stage a variety show in the Mount Saint Helen’s School auditorium to raise the funds.

For more information on “Nunsense,” interested persons can contact Ray at (229) 391-4969 or via e-mail at bray@abac.edu.

STEM Hosts Third Annual ‘Slime Your Professor’ on Thursday



The STEM Affiliates Club is hosting the 3rd Annual Slime Your Professor fundraiser. As before, club members will collect donations toward the faculty and staff members who have volunteered to be slimed. The top three will get doused with five gallons of slimy green goo around 12:20 p.m. on Thursday in the Meadows near the Dining Hall. The potential victims are: April Abbott, Jerry Baker, Jimmy Ballenger, Kennon Deal, Andrell Durden, Johnny Folsom, Steve Janousek, Justin Ng, Keith Perry, Brandon Reeder, Amanda Urquhart and Nicholas Urquhart. Currently Folsom is in the lead. Contact Amanda Urquhart at aurquhart@abac.edu for more information about donating.

ABAC Birthdays

28 Patsy Hembree 30 Laura Agundis
April 1 Jan Gregus 2 Peter Guevara 2 Ruth Jackson
3 Joey Johnson 3 Melvin Merrill