

THE LUVERNE Journal

Thursday
February 13, 2020
75 cents

SERVING CRENSHAW COUNTY SINCE 1888

STAY CONNECTED/LUVERNEJOURNAL.COM

FACEBOOK.COM/LUVERNEJOURNAL

TWITTER.COM@LUVERNE_JOURNAL

INSTAGRAM@GREENVILLENEWSPAPERS

OBITUARIES: Marilyn Lee McShane Bailey, Elizabeth Morgan Flint, Albert Donovan Fowler, Sr., James Hal Owens

CALENDAR, PAGE 3
CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 5

KIDS FUN, PAGE 4
FAITH, PAGE 7

Speeding into the future

*Luverne Public
Library welcomes
internet upgrade*

By **MATT HUTCHESON**
The Luverne Journal

Access to high-speed internet is an ongoing struggle in rural areas. Lack of access can be detrimental to students, adults and everyone in between.

Local and state representatives gathered with library board members and reps from the Alabama Supercomputer Authority at the Luverne

See **LIBRARY**, PAGE 2



From left: Crenshaw County Commission Chairman Charlie Sankey, Jr., ASA CEO Walter Overby, Rep. Chris Sells, Dr. Pat Walker, library director Kathryn Tomlin, Luverne Mayor Ed Beasley, Senator Will Barfoot and ASA's Deborah Wallace gathered to mark the LPL's new high-speed internet provided by the Alabama Supercomputer Authority.

Journal Photo/Matt Hutcheson

*ALDOT resurfacing
project scheduled for
Alabama Hwy. 97*

STAFF REPORTS
The Luverne Journal

An ALDOT resurfacing project on Alabama Hwy 97 from U.S. Highway 331 to the Montgomery County line officially began on Monday, Feb. 10.

According to ALDOT representative Brantley Kirk, the project, which will be worked on "weather permitting," will include shoulder widening, resurfacing, culvert extensions, guardrail installation, and traffic striping.

"Motorists should expect delays and should be mindful of workers and equipment in the construction zone. A reduced speed

See **ALDOT**, PAGE 2

PAGE 2

THE LUVERNE JOURNAL

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2020

LIBRARY

Continued from 1

Public Library last Monday, Feb. 10 to mark the library's new high-speed internet capabilities.

State Senator Will Barfoot, Representative Chris Sells, County Commission Chairman Charlie Sankey, Jr. and Luverne Mayor Ed Beasley met with library director Kathryn Tomlin and board member Dr. Pat Walker and ASA CEO Walter Overby, along with Deborah Wallace and Cary Hill.

Wallace spoke first to explain how the ASA came to team with legislators to begin the process of giving public libraries access to high-speed internet.

"We reached out to a majority of the legislators and they agreed this was a wonderful opportunity. In the last few months, over 100 new libraries have added high-speed internet access and we've also upgraded 65 of our libraries. This was made possible thanks to funding that Senator Barfoot and Rep. Sells pushed through the legislature... All of this is done at no cost to the libraries and no cost to the school systems," Wallace explained.

She also pointed out that Crenshaw County Schools have internet access through the ASA.

The ASA provides internet access to a "majority" of public schools in the state, according to documentation provided by

"We serve about 550,000 students in Alabama, and are happy to reach out and

help the school systems and libraries," she continued.

"Once we are finished, by the end of March, we will have over 170 libraries connected. That's 77% of the total libraries in the state of Alabama," Wallace concluded.

Senator Barfoot added his thoughts next.

"It's important- the Governor's initiative was to [expand] broadband access throughout the rural parts of the state and we passed several bills to help that. This is certainly a piece of that puzzle, to help students and adults who don't have access to high-speed internet come to places like this, use it, be successful and take care of their business. It's not "our" money, it's taxpayer money, and we're happy to be able to put it to good use," Barfoot said.

Sells followed up with a statement as well.

"It's good to see money put to work [in this way]. If you're anywhere in a meeting, and can say anything to anyone about Crenshaw County- we need help with broadband internet down here, in some areas," Sells said.

Library director Kathryn Tomlin thanked those involved for the help to the library.

"We have a lot of people and students who use our computers, for everything from searches to job applications," Tomlin said.

"It's a tremendous help to small libraries like us."



State Senator Will Barfoot, left, listens as state Rep. Chris Sells praises the ASA's high-speed internet implemented at the Luverne Public Library.

Journal Photo/Matt Hutcheson

Tomlin pointed out that the library's internet speed made the leap, thanks to the ASA, from 20 mbps to 100 mbps.

The Alabama Supercomputer Authority (ASA) is, according to its website, a state-funded corporation founded in 1989 for the purpose of planning, acquiring, developing, administering and operating a statewide

supercomputer and related telecommunication systems.

The initiative to assist libraries with offering high-speed internet is part of their Alabama Research and Education Network (AREN) program, which "offers education and research clients in Alabama internet access and other related network services."