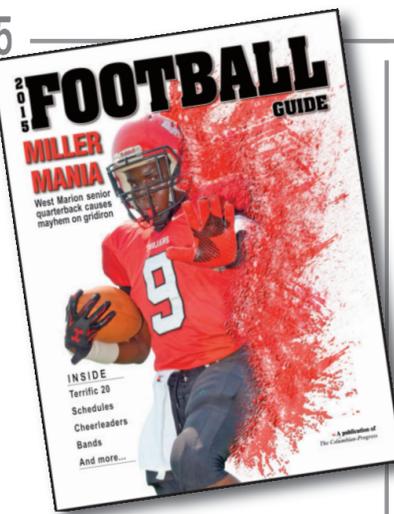


# The COLUMBIAN PROGRESS

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48-page prep football magazine.

— Inside

School lunch menus posted



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Volume 113, No. 69  
75 cents

### INSIDE TODAY

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# Crown adding jobs

By Adam Prestridge  
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Crown Health Care Laundry Services, which spent the first half of the year rebuilding its Columbia facility following last December's deadly tornado, received a significant shot in the arm last week.

In an agreement that is expected to result in capital cost avoidance of nearly

\$9 million, Crown's Marion County facility will now provide laundry services to three Jackson metropolitan area hospitals. Baptist Health Systems, St. Dominic Hospital and the University of Mississippi Medical Center announced the five-year, collaborative laundry service deal with Crown late last week during the State Institutions of Higher Learning board meeting.

"It's a significant piece of business and we're very excited about it," Crown Pres-

ident Don Haferkamp said Tuesday. "It will add anywhere between 10-12 million pounds of new business into the plant, which will increase current volume by 15 to 20 percent."

However, the biggest news for Marion County is the up to 35 jobs the new contract will create.

"We're hiring production, drivers, maintenance; a mix across the board,"



A 150-pound continuous catch washer is shown.

Photo by Katie Pellerin | Pellerin Milnor Corp.

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# Katrina remains on minds



Residents collect water at the artesian well behind Columbia City Hall days after Hurricane Katrina.

Photo Submitted

## Residents reflect on 10th anniversary of hurricane

By Mark Rogers  
Managing Editor  
news@columbianprogress.com

For area residents, Aug. 29, 2005, will forever be engrained in their minds.

That's the day Hurricane Katrina swept through Columbia, Marion County, Mississippi and the entire Southeast.

For many, the memories are still fresh, and as the 10th anniversary

approaches, several took time to reflect on the days leading up to the storm and its aftermath.

For former Walmart manager Ray Mathews, the weeks after Katrina are a blur.

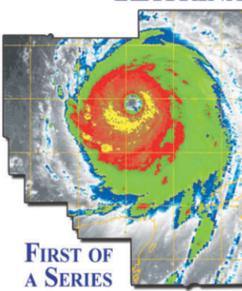
Mathews, who retired last year, spoke about work at Columbia's largest retailer during the storm as he painted pictures on pieces of trees felled by Columbia's Dec. 23, 2014 tornado.

"The hurricane didn't hit until

about 8:30 in the morning," he said. "Cynde Moree, who still works there, and I had planned to go to the store and stay all day because we had closed the store. We were directed to close. We closed the night before at about 10 p.m., so that everybody could get home and get their things ready for the hurricane."

Mathews said he thought it would be a relatively uneventful day.

### REMEMBERING KATRINA



and South Mississippi forever.

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"We thought there was going to be a storm coming through and we would have an easy day," he said. "It was a Monday morning. We brought a deck of cards and we were going to sit and play rummy all day. Boy, were we surprised."

Mathews said what happened next changed Columbia

# 7 face multiple charges

By Mark Rogers  
Managing Editor  
news@columbianprogress.com

Seven people were arrested Friday afternoon in Columbia on a variety of drug charges.

According to the Marion County Sheriff's Office Narcotics Division, a search warrant was executed at the home of Corey Ross Tucker, located at 212 East Rankin St. in the city. The Narcotics Division, Marion County Sheriff's Office and Columbia Police Department combined to make the arrests, which included Tucker, 29, of Columbia, who was charged with three counts of possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute while in possession of a firearm within 1,500 feet of a church, manufacturing marijuana, manufacturing counterfeit currency, possession of counterfeit currency and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

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## Pursuit leads to narcotics discovery, arrest

By Mark Rogers  
Managing Editor  
news@columbianprogress.com

A Columbia man was arrested late Monday night after he fled the scene of a traffic stop and was found to have drugs in his possession.

Malcolm Conerly, 27, of Columbia was arrested shortly after 10 p.m. on Lafayette Street following the incident.

"Officers initiated a traffic-related stop," CPD Detective Capt. Bobby Patterson said. "They tried to stop Conerly on Gill Street and he did not yield. The



CONERLY

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# Veterans Picnic to mark Vietnam War

By Mark Rogers  
Managing Editor  
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Organizers have big plans for the annual Veterans Picnic and 5K slated for Nov. 14 in Columbia.

This year's event will again be held at the Columbia Water Park and will feature a traveling Vietnam-era museum, according to organizer Mark Retcho.

"We're in year three, that's a milestone," he said. "Last year, we

had 200 to 300 people attend. I'm hoping to triple that this year."

Retcho said he is trying to invite as many people as possible to come to the event and see the displays.

"I'm passing out invitations," he said. "If I see somebody out jogging, I'm giving them an invite."

The museum should be a big draw to the event, according to Retcho.

"It's pretty amazing," he said. "This is the 50th anniversary of the United States' involvement in

Vietnam. Adding the museum will be another way to honor our Vietnam patriots and provide knowledgeable entertainment for the community. This museum may never come this way again."

The museum, "Through the Eyes," is based in O'Fallon, Mo., and it is a Vietnam-era exhibit designed to honor the men and women who lost their lives and who served in the Vietnam War. The exhibit presents both images of military personnel as well as the

items they carried and used during their time in country.

"Through the Eyes' allows you to walk through an exhibit of more than 5,000 items," Retcho said. "You can read about the events and the people that used the items and are depicted in the photographs. The exhibit preserves the history, legacy and selfless duties performed by members of the armed forces. It will redden and bring tears to your eyes and warm

See Veterans | Page 11A

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." — John 8:12

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Crown

Haferkamp said. "It basically bumps us up in every department."

Marion County Development Partnership President Jerry Frazier was delighted with the news.

"We at MCDP celebrate with Crown the announcement of an expansion for the Columbia plant," he said. "We are proud to have worked, along with the Board of Supervisors, the City of Columbia and other partners to locate Crown here in 2013 and are excited that they will be expanding to provide more jobs for our citizens and additional investment in our community."

Haferkamp added that the MCDP has been an instrumental organization to the company.

"Jerry Frazier and the MCDP as a whole have been great," he said. "Through the tornado and through this, they have supported us in trying to generate any support for us in the Jackson area."

In addition, Haferkamp applauded the Columbia community for its unwavering support following the tornado. He added that the new contract is a testament that the community's help, Crown's commitment to the community and hard work can pay dividends.

"This, in a way, helps, one, because we've got our building built back and ready to go, but, two, there are additional jobs being generated that maybe will help some folks get back on their feet because there are new opportunities at the plant," he said. "If somebody wants to work, we've got a job for them. We're looking for good people. The tornado didn't blow us off the map. We're still there, we've rebuilt and we're ready to go."

Crown's new contract is also expected to help advance the Mississippi Healthcare Corridor in Jackson, which Gov. Phil Bryant has lauded over the years.

"This new services agreement is an example of these major health care institutions working together to gain efficiencies and spur development," Bryant said. "This willingness to collaborate is vital to continued growth and development within the Mississippi Healthcare Corridor."

The five-mile Mississippi Healthcare Corridor links Interstate 55 and Interstate 220 and includes most of the area's academic and medical institutions. Anchored by the Jackson Medical Mall Thad Cochran Center, the corridor is dedicated to providing the finest medical care and education throughout the Southeast while hosting a biomedical research enterprise that fosters innovations and enhances applied therapies nationwide. Bryant's interest in collaboration among the metro-area hospitals stems from his 2012 visit to the

continued from Page 1A  
Texas Medical Center (TMC) in Houston. The world's largest medical complex, TMC comprises multiple participating hospitals and academic centers that collaborate in many areas including infrastructure and support services.

The cost avoidance for each hospital will position them to increase their focus on providing excellent health care, and their collaborative agreement increases the overall competitiveness and economic vitality of the Mississippi Healthcare Corridor, according to hospital officials. For that reason, Haferkamp believes the contracts were no-brainers.

"Not having to spend capital dollars on laundry equipment is a huge benefit," Haferkamp said. "They are in the healthcare business, not the laundry business. That is one of the reasons we came to the state is the fact to get some of these hospitals out of the laundry business that didn't have a lot of options. Now, with a \$10 million plant sitting there in Columbia, we've been able to provide a solution for a lot of these hospitals that are looking to get out. With healthcare the way it is today, it doesn't make any sense to spend capital dollars on laundry equipment; they need to be buying MRIs and CT scans, all those kind of things to generate revenue versus supporting an expense that they can outsource."

Currently, Baptist Health Systems processes 4 million pounds of laundry at its campus facility each year, while St. Dominic Hospital handles 2.7 million and UMMC processes 4.2 million. UMMC-Grenada maintains its own laundry facilities and is not included in this contract.

In October, Crown also plans to open a Jackson-area laundry distribution center within the Mississippi Healthcare Corridor to distribute the consolidated laundry from the three hospitals. The center is expected to employ up to 15 people, with employment levels increasing as dictated by laundry volume.

Aside from its industrial-scale facility in Columbia, Crown, a nationally-accredited private-sector healthcare laundry processor, also boasts laundry processing facilities in Selma, Ala.; Quitman, Ga. and Pensacola, Fla. In the event of an emergency disruption in service at the Columbia plant, laundry service would be managed at one of Crown's other facilities, preventing any disruption of laundry and linen services to the three healthcare institutions.

Although the annual economic impact in salaries for the new employees has not been determined, it is expected to near \$1 million.

"We are looking forward to the future," Haferkamp concluded. "It's bright." ■



The sheet folder production line at Crown Health Care Laundry in Columbia is shown.

Photos by Katie Pellerin | Pellerin Milnor Corp

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The blanket folder line is shown at the Columbia facility.