



***Alabama Public Radio Newsroom
Public File
April 1 through June 30, 2014***

TOPICS COVERED

CURRENT EVENTS

School students in Birmingham are learning about a Jewish musical prodigy from the Holocaust. Over a thousand young people throughout Birmingham are reading “The Children of Willesden Lane” by Grammy-nominated pianist [Mona Golabek](#). It’s about Golabek’s mother. (5:00) April 1 7:33am

Thursday marks an annual event AT NASA'S Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville. It's the so-called “Marshall 2014 Update.” Marshall Center Director Patrick Scheuermann will speak about the future of the center and its strong relationship with Alabama. He'll also talk about the progression from the early Apollo rockets to the Space Shuttle to where we are now. (5:00) April 16 7:33am

The legislative session for this year has come to a close and the education budget managed to sneak in under the wire. After much debate over a two percent raise for teachers, the budget for this year was passed by the legislature and signed by Governor Robert Bentley without the raises included. That has some people, namely teachers disappointed with Montgomery. Alabama Public Radio’s Ryan Vasquez has more on the fallout over the recently passed education budget. (4:36) April 23 at 7:33 and 4:44

This Sunday marks three years since a deadly tornado struck Tuscaloosa killing dozens and leaving a lasting mark on the city. Efforts to build back have been slow and deliberate with an emphasis not on rebuilding Tuscaloosa but a better Tuscaloosa. The city has marked the anniversary with a week of events highlighting the progress made in the past 36 months. I spoke with Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox about the rebuilding process and some of the challenges that exist today three years after the storm. (4:36)

April 25 at 4:44

A new book from an assistant professor at the University of Alabama focuses on pollution problems in Anniston in the mid 1990's. The book titled "Baptized in PCBs: Race, Pollution, and Justice in an All-American Town" tells the story of the town's struggle with PCB contamination. Monsanto had been accused of dumping PCBs in the predominantly black community and people were getting sick. A lawsuit was eventually settled in 2003 with seven hundred million dollars for the plaintiffs and the clean-up.

Author Ellen Griffith Spears began interviews over ten years ago. (5:00) May 1 7:33am

Alabama researchers are looking into which kinds of structures can best survive tornadoes. Investigators went to Moore, Oklahoma and found that storm shelters survived when other buildings didn't. University of Alabama associate professor Andrew Graettinger was a lead author of the study. He says they not only looked at the damage in Moore but also at the damage in Joplin, Missouri and Tuscaloosa. And in Moore, they found most shelters survived the damage. (5:00) May 8 7:33am

This week saw the release of yet another in a long string of increasingly dire reports on climate change. The federal government's third National Climate Assessment is perhaps most notable for documenting the impact climate change is having in the U.S. RIGHT NOW as opposed to in the future. More severe weather, extreme drought, and torrential rainfall like that seen along the Gulf Coast last week are becoming measurably more common. (5:00) May 11 7:33am

This week is National Bike to Work week and Friday is National Bike to Work DAY. It's recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as a way to encourage people to ditch the car to get to and from work. Tuscaloosa's [Druid City Bicycle Club](#) is organizing a breakfast for club members. New members will get a reduced rate. They're also gathering on the way home from work at Black Warrior Brewery downtown. Druid City cyclist Sam Rombokas says sometimes it's just about getting out and doing it. (5:00) May 15 7:33am

All year long on Alabama Public Radio, we're collaborating with AL.com to examine the Affordable Care Act. When it comes to healthcare, Alabama has its problems. So does the commonwealth of Kentucky. The difference is, the Bluegrass state is going about it differently and they seem to be getting results. Alabama Public Radio's Stan Ingold traveled to Kentucky to see how that state is handling their challenges... (5:15) May 19th 7:33, 4:44

This Monday is Memorial Day. The Civil War gets a lot of attention here in the South, as does World War II. But less attention is paid to the first World War. And Alabamians plaid a pivotal role in it. Author Nimrod Frazer has written a book about it called "[Send the Alabamians: World War One Fighters in the Rainbow Division.](#)" You can hear our conversation by clicking the audio file. (5:00) May 22 7:33am

A new study says Alabama state worker pension funds could run out of money in a decade if changes aren't made. The report from the Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy at Troy University is part of a larger effort to look at improving the lives of Alabamians. Scott Beaulier is Director of the Johnson Center. I recently talked to him about the paper and if the plight of Alabamians really differs that much from other states. (4:58) May 22 at 4:44

Researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham are hoping to learn more about a deadly fungal infection called Cryptococcus. The germs are inhaled at a young age and are present in most people. And most people handle it just fine. But in some it can develop into fungal meningitis that can be fatal. UAB professor of medicine Peter Pappas says people with compromised immune systems are the highest risk. (5:00) May 26 7:33am

Recently school nutrition standards have come under criticism from some lawmakers. The rules have required healthier food to be served in schools. Alabama Representative Robert Aderholt chairs the Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee. He says the standards aren't working for Alabama schools. He wants the House to pass a waiver exempting certain schools that are having financial problems from the requirement. US Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says that would be a step backwards. (5:00) June 11 7:33am

The question of how to reduce the pollution that causes global warming is now a hot topic since new carbon limits were announced by the EPA earlier this month. Those proposed rules aim to reduce national carbon emissions from existing power plants 30 percent by the year 2030. In Alabama, the goal is 27 percent. The boom in natural gas

could help, as could investments in renewable energy like wind and solar. Another method is what's called "carbon capture." (5:00) June 12 7:33am

Last weekend, a little known but prolific songwriter brought his summer tour through our listening area with three shows (**details below**), starting in Pensacola, Florida, then in Birmingham, and ending Sunday in Tuscaloosa. Just a few of the many stops on his journey. David Dondero is not a household name, but it could have been. His career spans decades with 10 albums to his name, ranging in genres from folk to country and blues to punk. (5:00) June 13 7:33am

All year long, Alabama Public Radio is collaborating with A-L-dot-com on the Affordable Care Act. The federal deadline to sign-up for health insurance is well in the rear view mirror. So, by now you are either insured or not. For those Alabamians who are not insured, questions remain as to how the federal government will enforce what's called the individual mandate. Alabama Public Radio's Ryan Vasquez has more on just who is responsible for making sure you signed up for health care. (4:45) June 18 7:33 and 4:44

A new environmental [report](#) ranks Alabama among the worst in the nation for water pollution. The study is from the group [Environment America Research and Policy](#). It says industrial facilities dumped more than 12 million pounds of toxic chemicals into Alabama waterways in 2012. John Rumpler is the group's Senior Attorney. He says THAT pollution puts Alabama at fourth worst in the nation. (5:00) June 19 7:33am

It's been one year since the Supreme Court ruled a key provision in the 1965 Voting Rights Act unconstitutional. In Shelby County, Alabama versus Holder the ruling says states with a history of chronic racial discrimination no longer needed to get Justice Department approval for changes to voting rules. Janai Nelson is the associate director counsel for the N-Double-A-C-P Legal Defense and Educational Fund. She and I talked about the act, and how violations outlawed by the measure are now re-appearing. (4:24) June 25 at 4:44

It was one year ago when the US Supreme Court struck down a key section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. That section required federal approval for voting changes in states with a history of racial discrimination, mostly in the south. And after the Supreme Court acted, many of those states rushed to enact laws requiring photo identification to vote, including here in Alabama. The state reported few problems during this month's primary election. Critics of voter photo ID say they're waiting for the November election when more voters show up at the polls. (5:00) June 29 7:33am

SPORTS