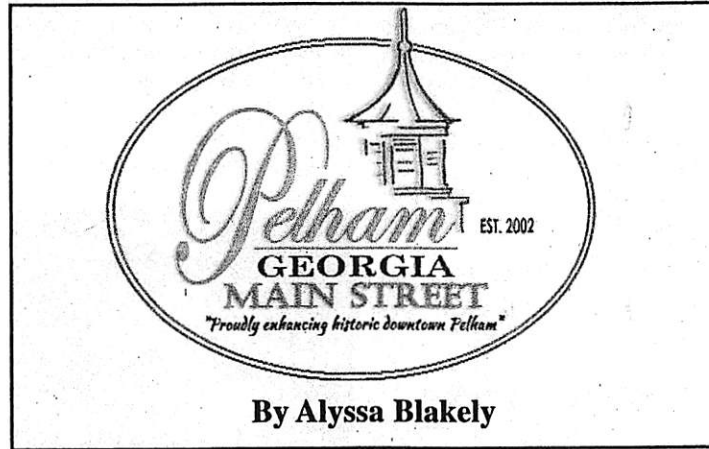




# Pelham Main Street News

As I sit and think about what to include in this month's column, I can't keep my mind off the series of events that took place in Albany in January. When the last storm came through I was only on my fourth week in this position and knew the City of Pelham had sent several crews to help with the first storm that ravaged Albany. First thing on the morning of January 23rd, I was briefed by the city manager, that he would like to use City Hall as a drop off location for supplies for victims. My instructions were to coordinate these efforts with the Pelham Chamber of Commerce and there was no hesitation to get started.

By the afternoon, City Hall was packed with everything you could think of that might come in handy for a tornado victim who never thought in a matter of seconds would be an issue. As we researched where to take all the donations, our public works director mentioned that it would be appreciated in a residential area that still had homes and people living in them. This also happened to be the neighborhood where our city crew was working clearing debris. This neighborhood had no power or water, was damaged badly and officials were not letting anyone in and out of



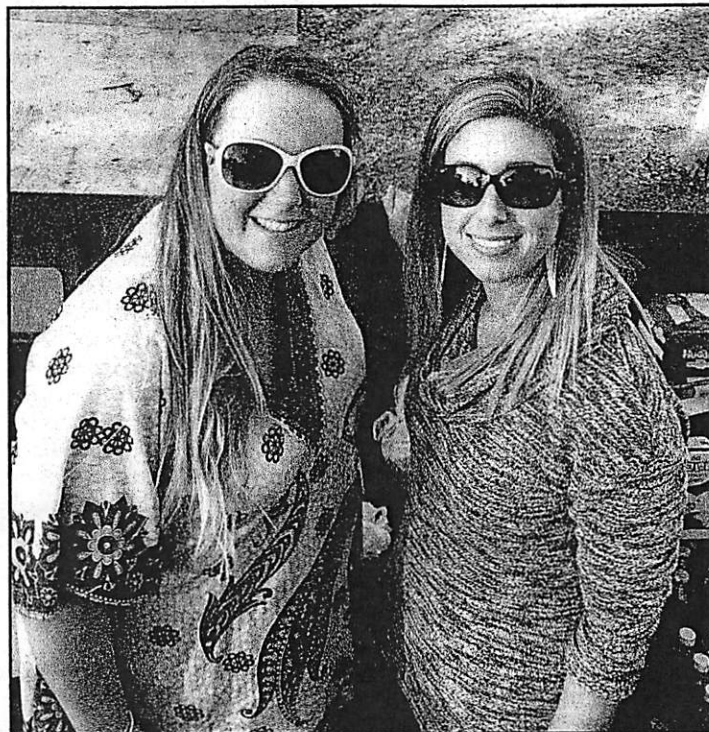
By Alyssa Blakely

this neighborhood, because utility workers were repairing main electrical lines. Many of these residents were faced with having to stay put and their resources were running low by day two. The plans Tuesday morning were to load up supplies

into the Pelham Police Department's Humvee and the chamber director's SUV. The four of us then headed to Albany into what I could only describe as what looked like where a "bomb" was dropped. The residents who received the supplies were

so gracious and expressed their gratitude as we tried to fill their requests. To our surprise there were a lot of elderly and children in this area, and we even found out that one of Pelham's police officers also lived in this same neighborhood! During my time spent on this project, I could only personally think about what I would do if that had happened to me. Would I be prepared? Is it dumb to think that having an emergency kit with food, first aid, and water wouldn't become beneficial one day? Or having a safe place designated to go to if we are in a tornado warning again?

That night I rested well, mainly because I was exhausted, but humbled all the same. I was a little more grateful for air conditioning, the hot meal I prepared and have been since. I urge all of our residents to be prepared, just in case.



Pelham Chamber director Caitlyn Hatcher and Pelham Main Street Director Alyssa Blakely

I know that I speak for the City of Pelham, Pelham Chamber of Commerce, and Pelham Main Street by saying THANK YOU, for all the donations you, the community, sent to help our neighboring counties during that tragic time. These efforts truly shown how much of a giving community we really are and the generosity does not go unseen.

February 2017