

ELYSIAN

Issue No. 1

JANUARY - MAY

\$4.00

FEATURES: **ADVICE**

13 Ways To Survive
Being A Northerner
In The South

INTERVIEW:

Former Auburn Basket-
ball player Michael Hardin
makes his return to Auburn.



About the Author

Hailing from the great state of Massachusetts, Corey Hill had to find her voice from a very young age. With two older brothers in constant motion it was either keep up with them or get left behind. Hill continues to use that hustle in her life now to succeed in her writing (this time without the competition from her brothers). Hill enjoys traveling abroad, obnoxious foodie restaurants and her black lab, Cisco. The pieces included in this issue have been compiled over semesters of hard work at the loveliest college on the plains, Auburn University.

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Protect Your Pooch: 5 Reasons To Microchip Your Pet

Every year the Lee County Humane Society takes in over 2,000 stray cats and dogs with only 10 percent of them being microchipped before coming to the shelter. Microchipping your pet is a simple procedure that when performed by a veterinarian involves the insertion of a microchip in between the shoulder blades, right under the skin of the animal. Microchipping a pet is an easy way to register animals in the event of them running away or being stolen. In the case of a missing pet, veterinarian offices and humane societies are able to scan the microchip and reunite pets with their owners. If you are a long time pet owner or looking to adopt or buy a new pet, here are five more reasons to microchip your pet and make sure you never have to be separated from your best friend.

1. Microchipping is a simple process

According to Lee County Humane Society, microchipping is as simple as an injection or a vaccine. The microchip itself is smaller than a grain of rice and is inserted just under the skin between the shoulder blades of the animal.

2. Microchipping is a one-time cost for the owner

The cost of microchipping can vary depending on the product and who is implanting the chip. "There is a one time cost for the microchip and membership fee with minimal cost after the first year in case of change of address or other contact information," says the Lee Country Humane Society.

3. All kinds of pets can be microchipped.

Whether you have a spirited Labrador Retriever or an aging tabby cat that never leaves the house, microchipping can be useful for all kinds of animals. Even though some animals are more active than others, especially outside, the fear of losing a pet at any moment can be devastating. LCHS says that they see many accidents occur when doors or gates are left open, travelers losing their pet during a car accident or even broken leashes and harnesses at parks. Having your pet microchipped can bring peace of mind and assure that if anything happens, he or she would be able to be returned to their owner.

4. Microchipping is essentially painless for your pet.

Since the embedding of the chip is as simple as an injection or vaccine the pain level is minimal if any for the pet, said the Lee County Humane Society. This procedure affects the pet as much as getting a shot and most pets never even flinch while getting microchipped.

More information can be found on <http://leecountyhumane.org/> or Lee County Humane Society's Facebook page.

“Many accidents occur when doors or gates are left open, travelers losing their pet during a car accident or even broken leashes and harnesses at parks”
-Lee County Humane Society

5. Your local humane society and veterinarian offices offer event to microchip your pet

Lee County Humane Society makes it easy for residents to microchip their pet by partnering with the Auburn Veterinary Hospital and the Tigertown Veterinary Hospital to host regular events in the area. The events are supported by grants to assist with the cost involved and to make sure that all pets that need to be microchipped are able to. Microchipping events are held throughout the year at various locations around town.

Staying In Town? Here Is What To Check Out This Easter Weekend

Spring is in the air and as the warm weather approaches many students and residents of the Auburn-Opelika area are planning trips away from the loveliest village on the plains. With spring break for Auburn University and the surrounding school systems just a week

before Easter, many people are faced with the conflict of traveling out of town two weekends in a row. Many students that live out of state are planning on staying in town and with so many options of things to do in town there are many reasons to cut costs of traveling and stay in Auburn this Easter weekend!

FRIDAY

Every season is a great season for Auburn athletics but as the weather gets warmer, take advantage of the many outdoor games offered and cheer on your Auburn Tigers. Auburn Softball is hosting South Carolina at Jane B. Moore Field and 6 p.m. All this season, Auburn softball is hosting a food drive to support the community and Food Bank of

East Alabama and will be collecting nonperishable goods at all games. Each person to donate a nonperishable good will receive a \$1 beverage coupon! Stay hydrated and give back to the community while supporting your Auburn Tigers!

Saturday:

Get festive! The 35th Annual Easter Egg Hunt is being hosted at Kiesel Park and sponsored by Wells Fargo and Auburn Parks and Recreation. The egg hunt starting at 10:30 a.m. is one of the largest in Lee County and will include four "hunting grounds" for various age groups. Three and under will "hunt" at 10:30 a.m., 4 – 6 at 10:45 a.m., 7-9 at 11 a.m. and 10-12 at 11:15 a.m. Food and beverages will be available to purchase and all proceeds raised will be donated to need families throughout the community.

For those feeling too old to Easter egg hunt, Auburn Women's Tennis will be taking on Ole Miss at 1 p.m. and Alabama A&M at 5 p.m. Also, Auburn Softball will be hosting South Carolina at 6 p.m. at Jane B. Moore field.



Sunday

Time to feast! Various brunches will be offered around Auburn for whatever you fancy this Easter weekend. The Hotel at Auburn University will be offering Easter Brunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with photo opportunities with the Easter bunny, a kids corner and live jazz. Brunch is \$45 for adults and \$19 for children. Join The Marriot at Grand National in Opelika for an Easter Brunch for either an 11 a.m. or 1 p.m. seating time. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt at 12:15 p.m. and 1:15 p.m. and a photographer to take complimentary family photos. Brunch is \$55 per person and \$20 for children 12 and under.

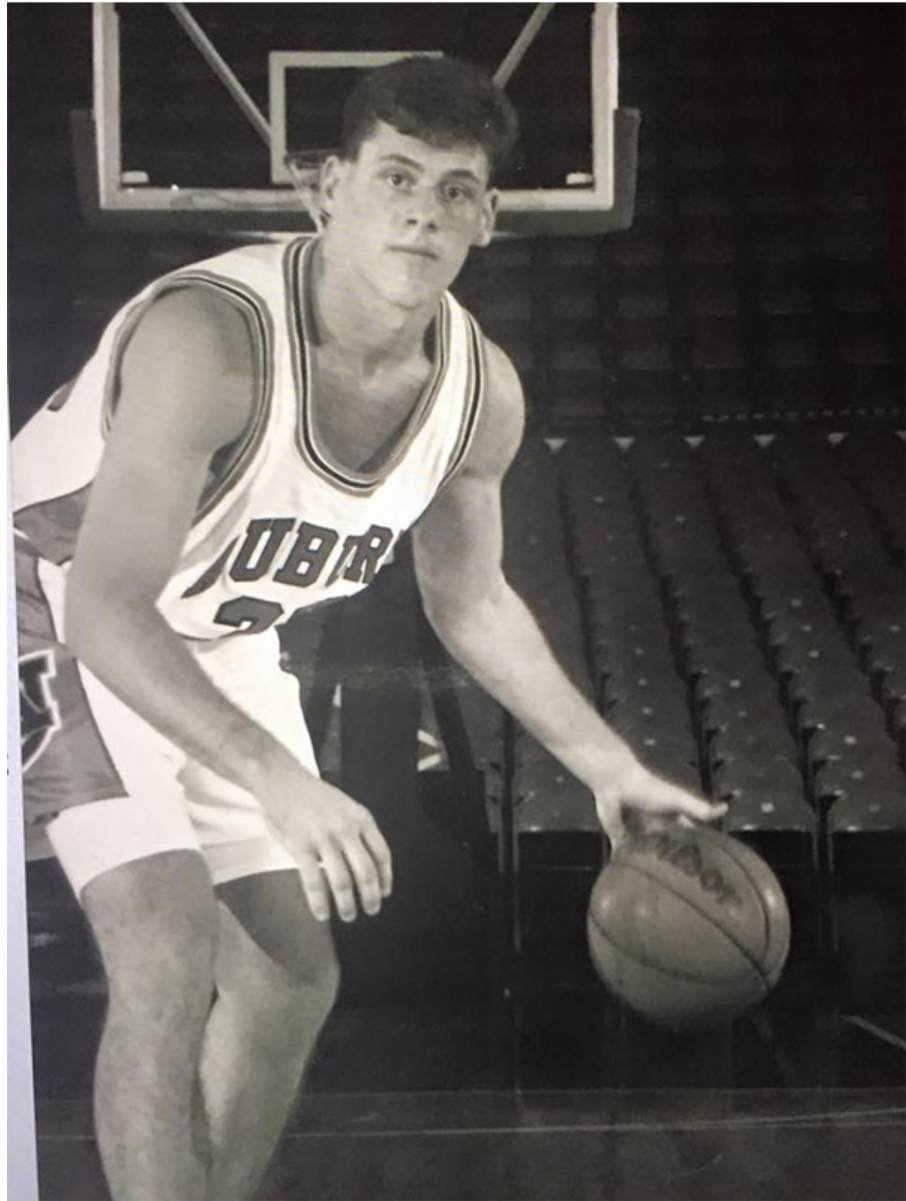
AUBURN SPOTLIGHT

MICHAEL HARDIN

Five years ago, Michael Hardin went to sleep in his family's new home in Auburn and heard an all too familiar sound, the Auburn train horn roaring through town. It was a sound he hadn't heard in some time and immediately brought back memories from his college years as an Auburn University student and athlete.

After moving around the Southeast since graduating from Auburn in 1997, Michael and his wife, Laurie, always talked about moving back to Auburn to eventually retire. When a job opportunity presented itself at New York Life as a Managing Partner in Montgomery, Ala., they knew they would move back to the town they loved.

Growing up in Birmingham, Ala., Hardin was always an Auburn fan and after graduating from high school and being recruited to play football at several SEC schools he decided that Auburn was his school and basketball was his sport. Hardin was a walk-on to the Auburn Basketball team in 1991 under Tommy Joe Eagles and remembers the feeling of pride when he walked into the locker room and saw his name over a locker. "It was an unbelievable feeling to have accomplished one of the biggest goals I had since I was a child," said Hardin. "I had made it. Traveling around the country as an 18 year old freshman playing against players like Shaquille O'Neil, Alan Houston, Robert Horry and JR Rider was just unbelievable."



Hardin during his Auburn basketball days

"It was an unbelievable feeling to have accomplished one of the biggest goals I had since I was a child"

“It was one of the hardest decisions I had to make in my life,” said Hardin. “I love the game and I love Auburn, but I knew my career was more important long term.”

Hardin’s time as an Auburn basketball player came with a lot of work and sacrifice. As a freshman studying Civil Engineering, the early morning workouts, class and afternoon practice proved to be a challenge and Hardin soon realized his grades and success in school needed to come before his basketball career. After his second year, Hardin decided not to return to the team and stay focused on his education and career.

“It was one of the hardest decisions I had to make in my life,” said Hardin. “I love the game and I love Auburn, but I knew my career was more important long term.”

After graduation, Hardin started working in the engineering and construction field in his hometown Birmingham, Ala. Within six months, Hardin realized the job wasn’t for him. With advice from his father-in-law, Paul Smith, he was introduced to the field of financial planning.

“He introduced me to a career that allowed me to bring real value to families and business owners through comprehensive financial planning,” Hardin said.

Eighteen years later, Hardin is a Corporate Vice President and Certified Financial Planner with New York Life and attributes his success in his career to what he has learned playing basketball at Auburn.

“Sports taught me to be competitive. It taught me to be coachable. It gave me confidence. It taught me how to be a good teammate and it taught me the ‘will to win,’” Hardin said. “These characteristics are exactly what I look for in hiring people today.”

Along with his wife and three children, Sydney Jordan, Savannah Rose and Maxwell Lee, it is rare that the Hardin’s miss an Auburn home game. With floor seats on the baseline as a Scholarship donor, Hardin is able to enjoy the game he loves in a different way. Hardin’s contributions to Auburn Athletics and Tigers Unlimited are fueled by his love for the game, seeing the success of the coaches and players every year and an innate love for Auburn.

“It’s hard to put into words what makes Auburn so special. All Auburn alumni understand exactly that feeling. Auburn is special because it is Auburn. It is family. It is very special to be a part of that community.”

Advice Three Telltale Signs Public Relations Is The Major For You

For as long as I can remember I wanted to grow up to be a veterinarian, quickly after I had a short stint in wanting to be a mermaid and then realistically an Olympic equestrian. As you can tell, I had an extremely active imagination growing up but never could fully put a finger on what it was I wanted to do with my life. I grew older and some of those same passions stuck with me (still convinced I'm going to be a mermaid), I continued to horseback ride and had a strong love for animals, which lead to me starting at Auburn with the hopes of majoring in animal science. A few

semesters and many tears later I came to the tough realization that anything involving science, math or the combination of both was not for me. I thought back to what I was truly passionate about growing up (read: good at in high school). I remembered reading all day at the pool during the summer and staying up past bedtime with a tiny light to continue reading my favorite stories. This passion for literature and storytelling transferred to a thirst for writing and even creative problem solving.

Unfortunately, I was one of many students that

came into the public relations field not exactly knowing what it was. I quickly learned the many aspects of the major and how each one matched up with a skill set I could develop and expand on. So for those that are like me and didn't quite know what they wanted from life when they got to college, here are some signs that majoring in public relations is right for you!

You think reading is cool, but writing is even better.

Press releases, feature stories, spokesperson prep, media kits. The list goes on and on about all of the different platforms that a public relations professional (and student) will have to write throughout their career. Now this isn't any old email to a teacher, the major has the word relations in it for a reason, so making your writing clear, concise and creative in order to communicate your message is an important component in being a successful addition to your company or client. Writing may not be the only aspect of a public relations major and career, but it can be one of the most important and crucial aspects of being successful on your chosen career path.

You love stress...maybe a little too much

Public relations is one of the most fast-paced and stressful industries out there, clocking in second in America just below commercial pilots. With deadlines, clients and campaigns all begging for your undivided attention, the work of a public relations professional can quickly become stressful. Even in the everyday life of a student juggling a creative and challenging reporting class with a website design course, the challenges provided are sure to keep you on your feet and moving. Although the saying about work and jobs goes, "If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life" with PR it can sometimes feel like "find what you love and let it kill you". The constant challenges and satisfaction of a completed product makes all the stress, anxiety and trips to Starbucks worth it.

Sometimes you can't pick exactly what hat you want to wear.

Choosing an outfit can be hard and choosing a career path can be even harder. As an indecisive person, things like choosing what to eat for dinner or even what color to paint my nails can cause turmoil and despair in my brain. Thankfully, public relations get rid of these hard decisions because with this degree you can truly do it all. Thinking of ways to promote a client, product or campaign? Well that's a form of advertising and marketing. When you are trying to keep that clients brand and image consistent, you have brand management. Writing media and press releases that make a strategic impact and go straight to newspapers? You have yourself journalism and reporting! On top of all that you have skills required for pitching ideas, stories and campaigns, incorporating the skills of an experienced salesperson. Sometimes wearing all the hats can be fun and with public relations it helps build a well-rounded skill set beneficial to any career path you may find yourself on.

So whether it's staying up past your bedtime to read as a kid or realizing that you are never going to pass Chemistry II no matter how many tutors you hire (sorry Mom), look back at some of the skills that made you a successful student and human being and see where those can lead you. It takes a special type of person to work in PR so if passion, creative insight, strong work ethic and individuality are just a few of the traits you think you have, then public relations may be the major for you.

13 Ways To Survive Be

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1. Bless your heart is both a blessing and a curse

Sarcasm is a language that I speak fluently, but nothing prepared me for the underlying meaning that a simple phrase like “bless your heart” holds. Like many phrases in the South, it’s not about what you are saying but how you say it. You had to drive 20 hours straight to get to school, “oh bless your heart” or how about your car gets towed from your own apartment building the first week of class, “bless your poor heart.” It can be used for almost any situation, disapproving or sympathetic, and it’s now your job to decipher what it means.

2. The RVs that show up on Thursdays in the fall are not for a concert or RV convention

Almost every Thursday in the fall, the open fields around Auburn’s campus turn into parking lots and fill up with RVs of all shapes and sizes. Do not make the same mistake and think that there is an RV convention or event that was drawing in this huge crowd, just know it’s simply tailgaters arriving for football weekends. It’s always football. Because this is Auburn.

3. “I’m from Birmingham” can mean you’re from one of about a thousand different places

When asked where they are from many people generalize and say they are from the biggest city close to them. Cue being highly confused when almost everyone I met the first week of school was from “Birmingham”. I learned quickly to follow up by asking which high school they went to and then pretend that I had any idea where it was.

4. Muscle Shoals is not by the beach

Being unfamiliar with the geography of the state in combination with some of the most interesting town names, I generally made assumptions about where places in Alabama were when I first heard about them. I made my first mistake when waiting for an interview for an on-campus organization. In my opinion, Muscle Shoals sounds like a cute and quaint beach town so when a fellow interviewee told me he lived by the beach I chimed in with, “My friend is from Muscle Shoals!” Nope, not even close. I became best friends with Google Maps soon after.

5. Football games are a holiday and tailgating is a sport

Professional sports teams breed a certain type of fan and college sports breed their crazy uncle. I quickly realized I was entirely unprepared for the Auburn experience of college football and what it included. I needed a crash course and quick! No plans are made for weekends in the fall and alarms are set early to experience every bit of football the plains has to offer. Good season, bad season, rain or blistering heat, Auburn fans are ready to cheer on their Tigers and dress to the nines to do it.

6. The slightest bit of snow is taken very seriously

Coming from a state where unless the Dunkin’ Donuts was closed because of snow, you were probably going to school, so the slightest snow flurry didn’t faze me. That was until classes were canceled for three days and the whole town shut down. I appreciated the snow tires on my trusty Volvo and learned to go with the flow because growing up with tornados is way scarier than snow.

Being A Northerner In The South

7. Boys will give up their seat for you...let them.

Chivalry may not be dead after all! Getting on a crowded campus transit after a long day of classes can be a stressful event. Everyone's trying to get to the same place and no one wants to wait for the next transit. So when that one lovely boy gets up and offers you his seat, say thank you and graciously take it. Know that he has his mother in his ear telling him to be a gentleman and because as awkward as you may feel taking his seat, "transit surfing" is not as fun as it sounds.

9. Fried okra is a vegetable

...so are fried onions. And so is cornbread. Southerners take their comfort food seriously so take advantage of that free membership to the Rec because you're about to make barbeque, fried pickles and hushpuppies a staple in your diet.

10. Unsweet tea is not an option

Well technically it is, but prepare to be judged. Sweet tea is a way of life and a household staple for many Southerners. So when your gut instincts say to be health conscious and get unsweet tea, call you dentist to apologize because your options include sweet tea or water.

11. "War Eagle" is an acceptable response to any situation

Whether the football team is winning the SEC Championship or you just failed your first Chemistry test, "War Eagle" is an acceptable response to any situation. From passing strangers in the airport and sharing a knowing exchange to cheering on your favorite Auburn sport, a simple "War Eagle" is enough and what the Auburn Family is all about.

12. Embrace the y'all

Never in a million years would I have thought that the word y'all would be included in my vocabulary, but just as quickly as I adjusted to sweet tea I was throwing y'all around like I was born in the Deep South. Auburn is home to people from all over the South with accents varying from each area and y'all is a word that brings everyone together. It's simple and easy and will creep into your everyday conversation without you even noticing.

13. Once you experience the Auburn Family, you'll never be the same.

It's a feeling that's hard to explain and something you only know once you've been here. It could be a long weekend for a football game or four years of school, but no matter how long the stay, it is simply a place that changes you forever. Whether it's the people, the weather or something in the water, there is a common thread for Auburn men and women that will always connect them. A sense of family, support and belonging only cracks the surface of what it means to be an Auburn Tiger and it's a blessing everyday to live in the loveliest village on the plains. Ask anyone what makes Auburn special to them and you will hear a multitude of answers, all of them contributing them to what make the Auburn Family what it is.

Worth The Cost? How Being Out Of State Effects Students

With airfares increasing and travel expenses skyrocketing, some students feel that going to school far from home could have serious hidden costs that outweigh the many benefits.

The transition from high school to college is an exciting one and with over 4,000 colleges and universities in the continental US, the opportunities to start a new chapter in an unfamiliar place are endless. Many students choose to begin their college careers away from home and use the time while getting a degree to experience not only a new place but also a new culture and way of living.

“I grew up in Austin and moved to LA when I was a freshman. The culture in both of those places are very different from Auburn and it took me a long time to get used to that,” said Mullen.

With Auburn University playing host to students from over 100 countries and all 50 U.S. states, students from all kinds of backgrounds contribute to the community inside and outside of the university, said Auburn University Office of International Programs.

Whether it is across the country or across the state, many students get the notorious “itch” that leads them to travel from the comfort of their hometown. For Auburn senior Kristen Williamson, the other side of the state was enough for her to cure her itch.

“I grew up in Mobile and coming to Auburn was far enough that I could leave behind the small city that I grew up in and was able to shape my on life without the constraints of my hometown,” said Williamson.

But for some students the price of travel and being away from home can outweigh the benefits of living in a new area.

“Coming from Texas I knew that trips home were going to be few and far between,” said Laurie Prasifka, a senior studying finance at Auburn University. “With ticket prices increasing all the time, getting home at a reasonable price is becoming harder and harder.”

With booking flights becoming more of a strategy than a necessary evil, many students need to plan their trips home months in advance leaving the options of a spontaneous weekend home nonexistent. Flights averaging around \$500 for a round trip (Austin to Atlanta) said travel booking website Kayak, students like Prasifka would have to prioritize when they would come home.

In addition to scheduling flights and prioritizing when students could visit home, the hassle of moving and shipping belongings weighs heavily on students' decision to attend school out of state or far away from home.

"The process of moving from apartment to apartment over the years becomes tiresome," said Prasifka. "It's not like I can drive all of my belongings home every time I leave so hiring a storage unit and sometimes movers becomes an essential."

As well as costs of traveling becoming a pressing issue, the change of culture from one state to another can greatly effect student's college decisions. Katherine Mullen, a junior from Los Angeles struggled for years to adapt to the culture change. "I grew up in Austin and moved to LA when I was a freshman. The culture in both of those places are very different from Auburn and it took a long time to get used to that," said Mullen.

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Many students weight their options when choosing schools and the cost of travel and life away from home is a pressing factor for those looking to go out of state. For some, it comes down to weighing the benefits of escaping a small town and places they've lived their whole life.

For Mullen, the change of culture was a huge adjustment but also a major factor in her decision to go so far away from home for school. "My sister went to Auburn and loved it," said Mullen. "I knew that being that far would be a challenge but being able to experience something new and different was enticing for me."

The costs and benefits that students need to weigh as they decide where they want to spend their college years vary from person to person. Whether it is the price of airfare keeping students from going home for Thanksgiving or a sibling encouraging relocation, becoming an out of state student can hold many treasures for students and their careers.



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