BIG READ INITIATIVE A BIG PROJECT FOR SHELTON STATE LIBRARIES
TUSCALOOSA – In an effort to inspire the West Alabama community to come together to read, discuss, and celebrate literature, Shelton State Community College announces a six-month Big Read initiative focused on Mark Twain’s classic, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.”

From September 2, 2010, through February 17, 2011, the College will host a series of regular events that investigate the literary work itself or the period of American culture during which it was written. Readings, performances, lunch and learn discussions, contests, a movie night, and more highlight the extensive list of activities planned.

To kick off the Big Read, entertainer Ron Jewell will don the author’s traditional white suit and engage young and old alike with his one-man performance of “Mark Twain at Large.” During the show, Jewell invites the audience in from a rainstorm into the private study of Samuel Clemens, a.k.a. Twain. There he seemingly channels Twain, telling stories in such an intimate way as if it was their original recounting. Jewell will perform the show twice on Sept. 2, once at 10:30 a.m. for more than 300 local West Alabama school children, and again at 7:30 for the general public. Admission for the evening is on a “pay what you can” basis, with all revenue benefitting the theatre’s Charlie Dennis Scholarship Fund.

Along with Jewell’s performances, Shelton State President Dr. Mark Heinrich and others will participate in a first-page reading of the classic in the College’s Martin Campus Atrium. Beginning Sept. 9, the College will host 10 Lunch and Learn sessions, touching on topics ranging from “The One-Room School House” to “Caves” and “19th Century Transportation.” Each will be led by a member of Shelton State’s faculty or staff, or by a member of the West Alabama community. A performance of folk music by the Shelton Singers, an apple pie baking contest, a poster contest, a family movie night, and the finale at the C.A. Fredd Campus featuring Dr. Fred Gainous are all activities planned for the Big Read Celebration.

For a schedule or for more information on the Big Read at Shelton State, visit the libraries’ link on the College Web site, www.sheltonstate.edu. Regular updates for public events will be featured on the site.