
Elect CAROL BERRY
PROBATE JUDGE
CULLMAN COUNTY
Committed to community; Dedicated to progress
Pd. Pol. Adv. for Carol Berry, 103 Greenview Circle, Cullman, AL 35057
VISIT ELECT CAROL BERRY PROBATE JUDGE ON FACEBOOK

The Cullman Tribune

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Elect ALEX J. CHANEY For ALABAMA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 12



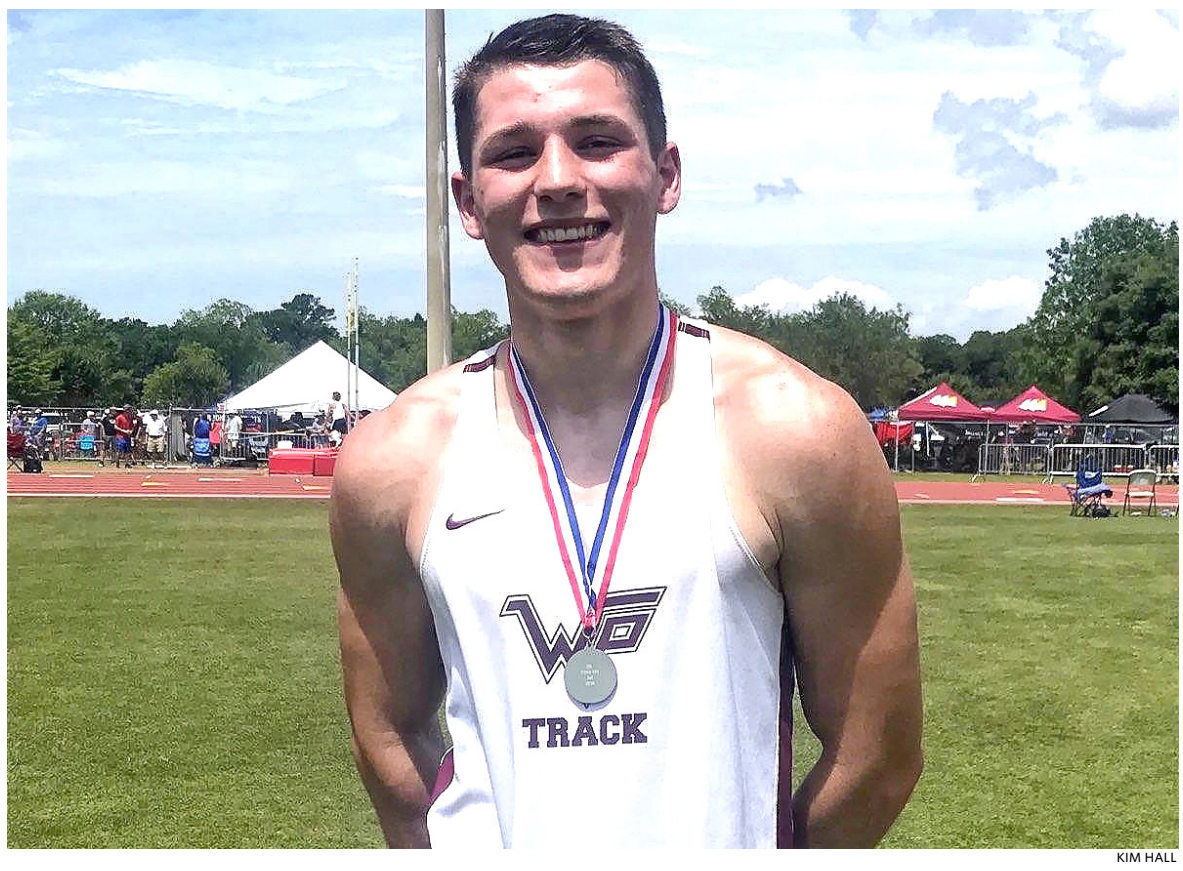
Alex is a 5th Generation Cullman County native. He is the son of Kim and Mauren Chaney and the Grandson of Jim and Jean Chaney who owned and operated Chaney Seed and Feed. He is a graduate of The University of Alabama and attended Jones School of Law.

A TRUE CONSERVATIVE with The Right Combination of Experience, New Ideas and Old Fashion Values

Pd. Pol. Adv. by Alex Chaney, P.O. Box 1052, Cullman, AL 35056

PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Local athletes shine in state track and field meets



KIM HALL

West Point High School's Hunter Appling shattered a 21-year-old state record in the 110-meter hurdles Saturday at the AHSAA 4A-7A State Track and Field meet in Gulf Shores. Appling claimed gold with a time of 14.10 in the event. He also snagged the gold in the 300-meter hurdles. » PAGE 6

RE-ELECT TAMMY BROWN PROBATE JUDGE

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- Conservatorships
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- Condemnations
- Guardianships

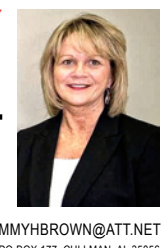
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS, SUPPORT, AND VOTE

TAMMY BROWN for PROBATE JUDGE

JUNE 5, 2018 REPUBLICAN PRIMARY



PHONE 256.531.8347 ~ TAMMYHBROWN@ATT.NET

PD. POL. ADV. BY TAMMY BROWN, PO BOX 177, CULLMAN, AL 35056

CAMPAIGN 2018

Democratic candidates speak at town hall meeting in Cullman

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – On Saturday, while most of Cullman seemed to be gathered between the Warehouse District and Depot Park for the Strawberry Festival, a small group of concerned voters quietly assembled in the basement of the Cullman County Museum for a town hall-style meeting sponsored by the District 4 chapter of Indivisible Alabama to hear from several Democratic Party candidates in the 2018 campaign.

Event coordinator Gayla Wynn explained to The Tribune, "Indivisible started as a nationwide movement after the election of 2008, and the whole purpose is to resist and change the Trump administration's goals and policies, which we feel like hurt regular, normal working people.

"We're a non-partisan group for the most part. We do calls to action, contacting our congressmen and senators to let them know what we think about upcoming proposals, and asking them to vote for people rather than corporations."

Wynn said Saturday's event was "a challenge primary candidate town hall forum where any of our statewide candidates who face an opponent in the primary are here, so that our members can take a look and listen and make an educated vote."

Indivisible, as a state and national movement, defines itself as "non-partisan," but supports Democratic Party causes through programs like FlipAlabama, which mobilized Democratic/progressive voters during last December's special election to elect Doug Jones over Republican Roy Moore.



TAMMY BROWN

U.S. House of Representatives candidate Lee Auman, who hopes to unseat incumbent Robert Aderholt, addresses the audience Saturday at the Cullman County Museum.

Attending candidates at Saturday's event included:

- Rev. James Fields, Doug "New Blue" Smith and Sue Bell Cobb; Democratic candidates for governor v. Republican incumbent Kay Ivey
- Lula Albert, Democratic candidate for Alabama Secretary of State v. Republican incumbent John Merrill
- Chris Christie and Joseph Siegelman, Democratic candidates for Alabama Attorney General v. Republican incumbent Steve Marshall
- Rick Neighbors and Lee Auman, Democratic candidates for U.S. House of Representatives District 4 v. Republican incumbent Robert Aderholt

Democratic gubernatorial candidates Christopher Countryman, Anthony White and Walt Maddox were scheduled to appear, but did not attend.

For more information on Indivisible Alabama, visit http://indivisiblealabama.com.



TAMMY BROWN

Cullman County Probate Judge Tammy Brown

CAMPAIGN 2018

Q&A with Cullman County Probate Judge Tammy Brown

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – The Tribune has been speaking with all local candidates who will be on the ballot in the June 5 primary election. Here, incumbent Cullman County Probate Judge Tammy Brown, who is being challenged by Carol Berry, answers some questions. Brown first won her seat in 2012, after 25 years of service in the Cullman County Probate Court and Cullman County Revenue offices. She began her career as a clerk for Probate Judge Tom Burleson in 1987.

What made you want to become a judge when you started?

"I began working in the probate office in 1987 in the driver's license department, then to recording, » PAGE 3

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2-month operation nets 71 defendants, including 2 from Cullman County, and 140 firearms

Dept. of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office N. Dist. of Ala.

BIRMINGHAM – A two-month operation focused on reducing violent crime in Birmingham and across north Alabama resulted in federal charges against 71 defendants, with about 140 guns seized, announced U.S. Attorney Jay E. Town, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Special Agent in Charge Marcus Watson and Acting Birmingham Police Chief Henry Irby III on Monday.

Two of those defendants are from Cullman County. Joshua Michael Roden, 32, of Vinemont, and Matthew Edward Childers, 19, of Cullman, are each facing a charge of felon in possession of a firearm.

The U.S. Attorney's Office and ATF joined with local law enforcement in Birmingham, Jefferson County and across north Alabama in an intense effort in March and April to charge violent offenders and take guns off the streets.

"At the Department of Justice, we've increased violent crime prosecutions to 25-year highs and gun prosecutions to 10-year highs," U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions said.

"Under our Project Safe Neighborhoods program, I've directed our U.S. Attorneys to target the most violent criminals in the most high-crime areas, and to work with people in the community to develop a customized crime-reduction plan. That's exactly what U.S. Attorney Jay Town has done in Northern Alabama. I want to thank him, Sheriff Mike Hale, ATF, Birmingham Police, and all of our other fabulous law enforcement partners who have made these arrests and firearm seizures possible. I have no doubt they have made my fellow Alabamians safer. This roundup is more proof that our targeted, community-based model really works."

"These indictments represent the hard work of many of our law enforcement partners, especially the ATF, and exemplify our global efforts to return our neighborhoods to their rightful, peaceful owners," Town said.

"The Department of Justice has reserved space in federal prison for gang members, trigger-pullers, violent offenders, and felons with guns ... and we plan on filling it. We must shift our prosecutorial philosophy more towards Capone rather than Soprano, not conflating the level of crime with the level of criminal," Town said.

"ATF and our partners are committed to removing the criminal element from the streets of Birmingham," Watson said. "ATF Crime Gun Intelligence Centers are the driving force to reducing the violent crime that plagues our neighborhoods."

"The Birmingham Police Department continues to pursue ways to help improve the quality of life for our citizens," Irby said. "The Gun Round Up will have a huge impact on the City of Birmingham as it relates to violent crime. Violent crime is an epidemic that has no barriers. Our citizens deserve law enforcement's combined efforts to ensure that they are safe and secure as they go about their daily lives," he said.

"Our children, in particular, are our future. They deserve a chance to grow into productive citizens and do incredible things."

"This is only the beginning of what I believe will put an end to the gun violence we are seeing day in and day out," Hale said.

"Our partnership and commitment with all participating agencies has never been stronger. Our resolve has never been stronger. That's good news for the law-abiding citizens who deserve a quality of life that doesn't include fear of harm at the hand of these violent thugs," he said. "We will be here as long as it takes. That's a promise."

Cases involving about 24 of the 71 defendants are based in Jefferson County, but the remaining cases range across north Alabama and include five Talladega defendants indicted in March on drug distribution and firearms charges. Law enforcement seized at least 15 firearms in the Talladega case.

The majority of the 71 defendants facing current gun charges have at least one prior felony conviction. The total number of prior convictions tops 160. There are at least 40 additional arrests among the defendants for violent offenses, including charges such as domestic violence, assault and attempted murder, and at least 13 of the 71 defendants are suspected of having a gang affiliation.

Law enforcement seized one firearm from the majority of the defendants charged during the operation in March and April, but five or more guns were seized from at least eight defendants. Among the 140 firearms seized, at least 30 were identified as stolen, according to ATF.

These cases are part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. Attorney General Jeff Sessions reinvigorated PSN in 2017 as part of the department's renewed focus on targeting violent criminals, directing all U.S. Attorney's Offices to work in partnership with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and the local community to develop effective, locally based strategies to reduce violent crime.

Full list of defendants: www.justice.gov/file/1060431/download

Arrest report: May 4-6

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Below are the arrests reported for May 4-6. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

GJ = grand jury; **FTA** = failure to appear

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Ashley, Amanda Lashay, 27
• third-degree domestic violence- harassment

Baker, Johnie Dee, 65
• public intoxication

Fletcher, Michael Paul, 64
• public intoxication

Freeman, Joshua Aaron, 37
• public intoxication

Garrett, Shelby Lizabeth, 19
• harassing communications

Gregory, Tammy, 51
• FTA- negotiating a worthless negotiable instrument

Holmes, Keith Glenn, 53
• FTA- DUI- controlled substance

King, Dewey Wayne, 41
• failure to obey lawful order
• public intoxication

McCormick, Kenny Lynn Jr., 25
• third-degree domestic violence- harassment

Quick, Leanda Lechele, 31
• criminal littering
• trafficking illegal drugs
• second-degree unlawful possession of marijuana
• unlawful possession of a controlled substance (2 counts)

Self, Cody Lowell, 27
• possession of drug paraphernalia
• public intoxication
• unlawful possession of a controlled substance

Swann, Danny Ray, 55
• nonsupport

Turner, Zachary Jermaine, 33
• trafficking illegal drugs
• second-degree unlawful possession of marijuana
• unlawful possession of a controlled substance (2 counts)

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Steele, Jeffrey D., 49
• unlawful possession or receipt of a controlled substance

Peek, Abigail L., 19
• FTA- speeding

May, Benjamin H., 37
• third-degree criminal trespassing

Freeman, James M., 58
• second-degree theft of lost property

Strickland, Ronnie J., 44
• public intoxication

Dill, Angela L., 54
• public intoxication

Kirby, Donald W., 29
• public intoxication

Manning, Christopher M., 42
• public intoxication

Lipsey, Jared L., 20
• public intoxication

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests reported.

Find arrest reports online Monday-Friday at www.CullmanTribune.com.

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IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF BOBBY W. BYARS, Deceased.) CASE NO.: PC-2018-120

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary having been granted to RICKEY JOE PEEK, as Personal Representative of the Estate of BOBBY W. BYARS, deceased, on the 2nd day of May, 2018, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate of said County, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against the estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law, or the same will be barred.

DONE this 2nd day of May, 2018.

RICKEY JOE PEEK
Personal Representative

PRO SE

TO THE PUBLISHER OF: THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Please publish the above notice for three (3) consecutive weeks and provide a proof of publication affidavit to the Probate Judge of Cullman County, Alabama.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO. PC2018-058

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF ELIZABETH JANE MEYER, DECEASED.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Letters Testamentary on the Estate of said deceased have been granted to Dorothy Jane Friedrick Falkner and Tina Jo Friedrick on the 3rd day of May, 2018, by the Hon. Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate of Cullman County. Notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

Dorothy Jane Friedrick Falkner and Tina Jo Friedrick
Personal Representatives

To the publisher of *Cullman Tribune:*

Please publish the above notice three successive weeks in said newspaper.

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate

Steven C. Smith
Smith & Smith, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioners
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STATE

Governor Ivey releases SAFE Council report

Office of Gov. Kay Ivey
Contributor

MONTGOMERY – Gov. Kay Ivey on Monday released the report of recommendations from the Governor's "Securing Alabama's Facilities of Education" (SAFE) Council. The report focused on improvements in three areas: physical security, threat assessments and mental health, and coordinated training and planning.

"I am very pleased with the findings of the SAFE Council and I am already having discussions with agency heads about implementing some of these recommendations immediately," Ivey said. "Other recommendations need further consideration and will need some actions by the Alabama Legislature. I will continue to review the recommendations within this report, and other options not directly addressed by the report, to ensure all Alabama schools are as safe and secure as possible. I want to praise the members of the SAFE Council for their hard work and prompt attention to this matter. I am confident that once these recommendations are fully implemented they will greatly reduce the chance for tragedy in our schools."

The recommendations in the report fall under one of three categories:
Physical Security
• Funding for School Resource Officers (SROs) and District Safety Coordinators (DSCs)
• Bond Issue for Enhancing School Building Security
• Surveillance Systems Linked to Law Enforcement

Threat Assessments and Mental Health
• School-Based Mental Health
• Identifying Warning Signs
• Reporting Threats
• Tracking School Violence

Coordinated Training and Planning
• Empowered and Accountable District Safety Coordinators
• Building a Culture of Safety
• School Safety Training and Compliance Teams

"I commend Governor Ivey and others who worked so diligently to create a plan that looks at sound, practical methods of protecting this state's greatest assets – its students. The only thing more important than making sure Alabama students receive a quality education that prepares them for the future, is making sure they are safe from hurt, harm, and danger when in our care,"

Interim State Superintendent of Education, Richardson said. "Parents entrust the safety and well-being of their children with caring education professionals every day. It is our responsibility to use whatever resources and collective ingenuity we have to uphold the promise that Alabama students attend school in a secure environment that is safe and conducive to learning."

"I was grateful to serve as a member of the SAFE Council to offer recommendations that will increase preventive and interventional strategies in our schools," said Lynn Beshear, Alabama Department of Mental Health commissioner. "Mental health awareness and treatment are vital to the health of our students and their success. The Alabama Department of Mental Health looks forward to being a part of the team to train school personnel and to continuing our current work with the Alabama State Department of Education to further expand school-based mental health services."

The SAFE Council report is one part of a four-step process aimed at objectively accessing security needs in Alabama schools and then implementing those recommendations which are proven to be effective. The second step, which is currently underway, includes a full review by Ivey of the report, including in-depth discussions with the leaders of agencies affected by the recommendations. The third step, which is expected in the next few weeks, includes executive branch implementation of those recommendations which do not require legislative approval. The fourth, and final step, is the ongoing review, by the SAFE Council, of school security conditions and needs.

The priority for this report is the safety and security of K-12 facilities with consideration for post-secondary institutions. The SAFE Council will continue meeting as needed to work on implementing these recommendations and to fulfill other recommendations in their report.

Members of the SAFE Council include: Interim State Superintendent of Education Dr. Ed Richardson; Chancellor, Alabama Community College System Jimmy Baker; Secretary of Law Enforcement Hal Taylor; Commissioner, Alabama Department of Mental Health Lynn Beshear; and Acting Secretary of Information Technology Jim Purcell.

The SAFE Council report is available at http://qrne.ws/safe.

HEALTH

ADPH reviewing cluster of eye cancer cases associated with Auburn University

Justin George, M.P.H.
ADPH

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is working in conjunction with Auburn University to review cases of uveal melanoma among former Auburn students and employees in the area.

Uveal melanoma is a cancer of the eye involving the iris, ciliary body, or choroid, collectively referred to as the uvea. According to the Ocular Melanoma Foundation, there is no known cause for uveal melanoma, and the National Cancer Institute states there are approximately 4.3 new cases per million people. According to Auburn officials, "Auburn University is in close collaboration with ADPH as ADPH currently reviews reports of area uveal melanoma cases for validation purposes. Through this process, Auburn will be actively involved with verifying whether cases of uveal melanoma validated by ADPH also have connections to the university. Upon completion of the data collection and verification stage, ADPH will deem whether or not a cluster of cases exists and that will guide next steps as to any future state or federal agency involvement."

"We have met with researchers and Auburn officials and are offering assistance," Justin George, director of cancer epidemiology, ADPH Alabama Statewide Cancer Registry, said. A cancer survivor and advocate has provided a list of 35 names of individuals that have self-reported to have attended or worked at Auburn and developed uveal melanoma. The ADPH is reviewing medical information for these individuals and will share the results with the research group and Auburn officials.

Findings as of May 3, 2018, are as follows:
• From 2006 through 2015, there were 316 cases of uveal melanoma among Alabama residents for an average of 31.6 new cases each year.
• The number of cases in Alabama fluctuates annually, and a 10-year incidence rate trend analysis showed no significant change in the incidence rate over this time period.
• Numbers will not be reported until the review is completed and validated.

Health care professionals advise those who may have concerns they have uveal melanoma to schedule an eye exam with an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

Brown (from Front)

probate court and elections. I knew from working in the different areas of the office that this office was about helping people. I love helping people. I am completing my first term in office after being elected in 2012. I was very fortunate to have first worked in the office and now the be the current Probate Judge.

The probate court has original and general jurisdiction conferred upon the court by the Code of Alabama. I preside over cases such as commitments, adoptions, conservatorships, guardianships, estates (wills and administrations), condemnations, name changes and other jurisdictional court procedures. I knew, but quickly learned first-hand, that when there are opposing sides in court cases everyone cannot win or be made happy. I knew that I would be fair when presiding over cases and make court decisions based upon the law for the best interest of the person, the person's estate and the child in the different cases, and I have done that.

"I must also state 'who' made me want to become judge when I first started was Probate Judge Tom Burleson and Betty Brewer. Judge Burleson presided over cases that he had to make tough decisions about when the parties involved did not agree. People at times would be upset with him, but he would state people involved in the case could not or would not make a decision and that is what I have been elected to do. Judge Brewer was more of a judge that just wanted everyone to get along. The employees in the office made sure we took care of her when there were tough times. In my first term as your probate judge, I've leaned from the thousands of experiences from working in the office and working with these two individuals while adjusting the work flow to handle the increased case load of today."

What do you hope to accomplish in your next term?
"The first thing I want to accomplish is to secure additional assistance for mental health at the local level. this mental health group (Cullman County Mental Health Advisory Committee) or 'task force' that was started and went public began to help within our county first. We cannot stop here; the next goal is to secure more assistance for mental health issues at the state level. I witnessed first-hand when the 2011 tornado hit; we did not wait for someone to come in and help, we started helping each other first. I volunteered with the Cullman County EMA during the tornado to help people. That is when I saw our Cullman County people help each other during the time of need. That is our goal with mental illness. The local officials at Cullman Regional Medical Center, Wellstone Behavioral Health, law enforcement agencies, the County's legislative delegation and everyone involved have been very cooperative and helpful with regard to mental health. This was not intended to rely on one agency, department, hospital, etc., to provide the assistance needed. Our goal was to reach out and educate people in Cullman County about mental illness in the hopes that we will start helping each other right here in our great county first. I believe that I can speak on behalf of everyone involved to say that it is our hope to continue to move forward for the mentally ill in Cullman County. The Probate Office averaged 257 mental commitments per year during the last two years, as opposed to 126 commitment cases in 2013. This number of probate court cases will only continue."

Brown pointed out additional accomplishments of the probate court office during her term:
• "Employee cross training in all areas of the office to serve the people in our county"
• "Streamline employees so that we have probate office employees that want to work together as a team and that are proud to work for and to serve you"
• "Utilize the conference room setup for families to have a more private place to meet and to hold court"
• "Utilize the camera system in place for the security and safety of the public and employees"
• "Satellite offices in place now to remain with the collaborated plan for employees to better serve our community"
• "Ensure that the record room is available to our local abstractors for the hours needed"
• "Provide and update current information for the county probate court website (www.cullmancourts.org)"
• "Probate court to continue with mental health meetings for all departments, agencies, hospitals involved to discuss any and all information regarding mental health"
• "Working together to have audits like the last two audit results without any incidents of noncompliance with applicable state or local regulations through the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts"

"And finally, for this question, to continue with the three goals I made when first elected in 2012:
1. All people will be served in an effective, efficient and professional manner.
2. Your family matters will be my priority in presiding over probate court cases.
3. I will set aside politics when making decisions, often time tough decisions, for probate court cases; the probate court and employees and will serve all people fairly.

What do you consider to be the big difference between you and your opponent?
"I find it amazing how people seeking any office for the first time emphasize accessibility and an open-door policy and exactly what that means. Well, the probate office is your office and it is open to you all the time. You hired me for the job. The license and recording departments are not shut off where the general public cannot see what we are working on or doing. But when a family is having their parent's estate divided, families are having a loved one committed, a child is being adopted, or other cases that fall under the jurisdiction of the probate court, these cases deserve my undivided attention in a professional private setting exactly where you would want your family's case to be handled.

"One important fact as your probate judge is that I cannot have communication about any case filed in probate court without all parties and their respective counsel present at the same time. If any judge discusses cases without all parties present this is ex parte communication and a judge cannot participate in this discussion. The general public does not fully understand this, but I want you to understand that I must follow this by law.

"Another big factor to consider is that as the probate judge I am here to follow the laws as they are written. Most people if not all people can provide an opinion.

FOR EXAMPLE:
Alabama Code 22-52-1.1
1. MENTAL ILLNESS. A psychiatric disorder of thought and/or mood which significantly impairs judgment, behavior, capacity to recognize reality, or ability to cope with the ordinary demands of life. Mental illness, as used herein, specifically excludes the primary diagnosis of epilepsy, mental retardation, substance abuse, including alcoholism or a developmental disability.

"I truly pray that the people in Cullman County know that we are at a crisis level in providing the treatment and assistance needed for persons diagnosed with a mental illness. What will this county do if we consider committing persons with substance abuse based upon the judge's opinion? The number of commitments just soared from what we have at the present time. It concerns me greatly to believe that anyone would want to begin this process."

If you had to boil your message down to a concise statement, what would you want people to know about you?

"I am thankful that I was raised by my parents, the late Talmadge 'Buck' Hudson and the late Thelma Hudson, that always taught me to never forget where I came from and use a common-sense approach when dealing with people. I have devoted myself to working in the office as your current probate judge. I will continue probate court law training so that I know the law for the cases that come before me. I will follow the law in making decisions about court cases. I will not make decisions that will affect people for the rest of their life based upon opinion. I feel that I have had a successful first term with many accomplishments that we want to continue plus new ideas as they are presented. I am proud of the probate court with the case load and factoring in the same number of employees handling court cases as we had 15 to 20 years ago even though the court cases have increased tremendously. Our vendor handles the number of probate court cases, recording, marriage and business license with updates as needed. The employees were provided the opportunity to change vendors and not one employee wanted to change and emphasized the ease of learning the system. It is important to me to include employees when making such a huge decision as changing computer vendors.

"I am proud of the employees in the probate office. 'WE' the probate office employees are working for 'YOU' the people we work for and love serving on a daily basis.

"I had over 20 years of experience when I began five years ago in my first term as probate judge. That experience allowed me to hit the ground running and to process this extremely heavy case load in a timely manner without having to learn the job first.

THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
MAY 8, 2018

Rock N Roll Sushi coming to Cullman

Wendy Sack
wendy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Rock N Roll Sushi is coming to Cullman. A Facebook page for the new location popped up late Friday night with the announcement.

"That's right Rock N Roll Sushi is coming to Cullman Alabama. Opening date and location announcement soon. I can tell you it will be this summer. Here is a sneak (peek). Updates to follow!!!!!!!!!!!"

Although no location or opening date for the new Cullman location have been announced, The Tribune did confirm that restaurant is coming to town.

"I can confirm that a franchisee agreement has been signed by Rock N Roll Sushi owner Joe Ragsdale, but the location is still to be determined.

"Look for location announcements coming soon," said Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Leah Bolin.

"We are still in negotiations on two locations in Cullman. We plan to open before August 1. We should have a lease signed by next week.," one of the new location's owners, Lee Black, told The Tribune.

Black said he and his wife, Brooke, along with Tina Aldijaili, are opening the restaurant.

The Alabama-based restaurant chain, co-owned by Cullman native Ragsdale, describes its cuisine as "Asian fusion and sushi bars." It opened in 2010. Find out more at www.rnrsushi.com.

"Lee and Brooke Black will be the franchisees for the Cullman location," said Bolin. "Folks can check out updates on the Rock N Roll Sushi Cullman Facebook page and the Cullman Chamber's page, too."



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Good Hope 1st Annual Raider Run 5K & Mile Fun Run

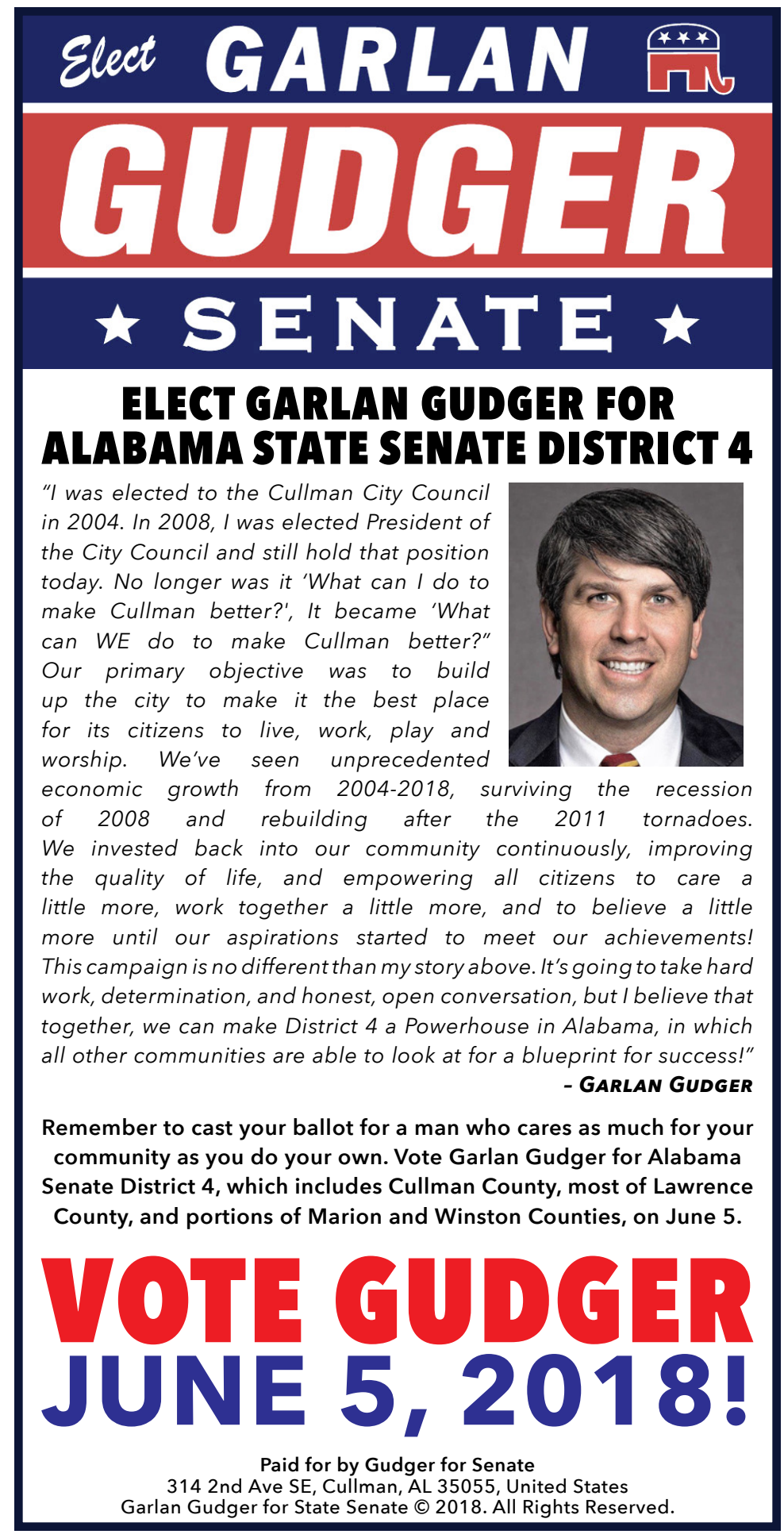
Saturday, May 12, 2018 – 8:00 a.m.
Pre- registration is open through April 30th.

T-shirts for all pre-registered participants. Awards to top two winners in each age group.

Walkers Welcome
All proceeds go to the Junior Varsity and Varsity Volleyball programs.

Race Day Registration 7:00-7:45 a.m. 5K run begins at 8:00, Mile Fun Run to follow.
Registration will be held in front of the High School Gym.

5K



AHSAA 6A STATE BASEBALL PLAYOFFS

Bearcats sweep Homewood to advance to Final 4

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

HOMEWOOD – The Cullman Bearcats swept Homewood on the road Friday night behind strong performances on the mound from both starters, punching their ticket to the AHSAA 6A State Baseball Playoffs Final 4.

Game one: Cullman 8, Homewood 1

Michael Myers got the start for the 'Cats in Game one and tossed all seven innings, allowing one run on five hits and collecting four strikeouts. Weston Norton gave Myers and the Bearcats an early 1-0 lead in the top of the first with a solo homerun over the left-field wall.

Homewood tied the game up at one in the bottom of the second on a bunt single RBI, but the Patriots weren't able to score again as Myers and the Cullman defense settled in for the remainder of the game.

The Bearcats took control in the top of the third, starting with an RBI single from Will Morrison to take back the lead 2-1. Grayson Taylor got hit with the bases loaded bringing in a third run and setting up Brennan Norton for a double into left-center that brought three runners across the plate and gave Cullman a 6-1 lead.

The 'Cats scored again in the top of the fifth on a passed ball to go up 7-1 and again in the top of the seventh on a throwing error to wrap up game one with an 8-1 win.

Game two: Cullman 6, Homewood 1

Morrison got the start on the hill for game two and just like in game one, the Patriots could not come up with enough offense to threaten the Bearcats down the stretch.

Taylor gave Cullman a 3-0 lead in the bottom of the first with a two-RBI triple and a throwing error into the dugout that brought Taylor in from third. Taylor wasn't done after his triple. In the third, he extended the Bearcats' lead with a two-run shot over the left-field wall to go up 5-0. Taylor finished the night 2-for-3 with a triple, a homerun and four RBIs. Homewood managed to push one across in the fourth on a passed ball, but it wasn't enough to create any momentum for the Patriots' bats against Morrison. Cooper Beck added to the lead with a solo homerun in the bottom of the fourth to make it 6-1 and help Morrison and the defense cruise through the last three innings. Morrison went the distance for the 'Cats in game two, throwing all seven innings, allowing one run on three hits and racking up 10 strikeouts.



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

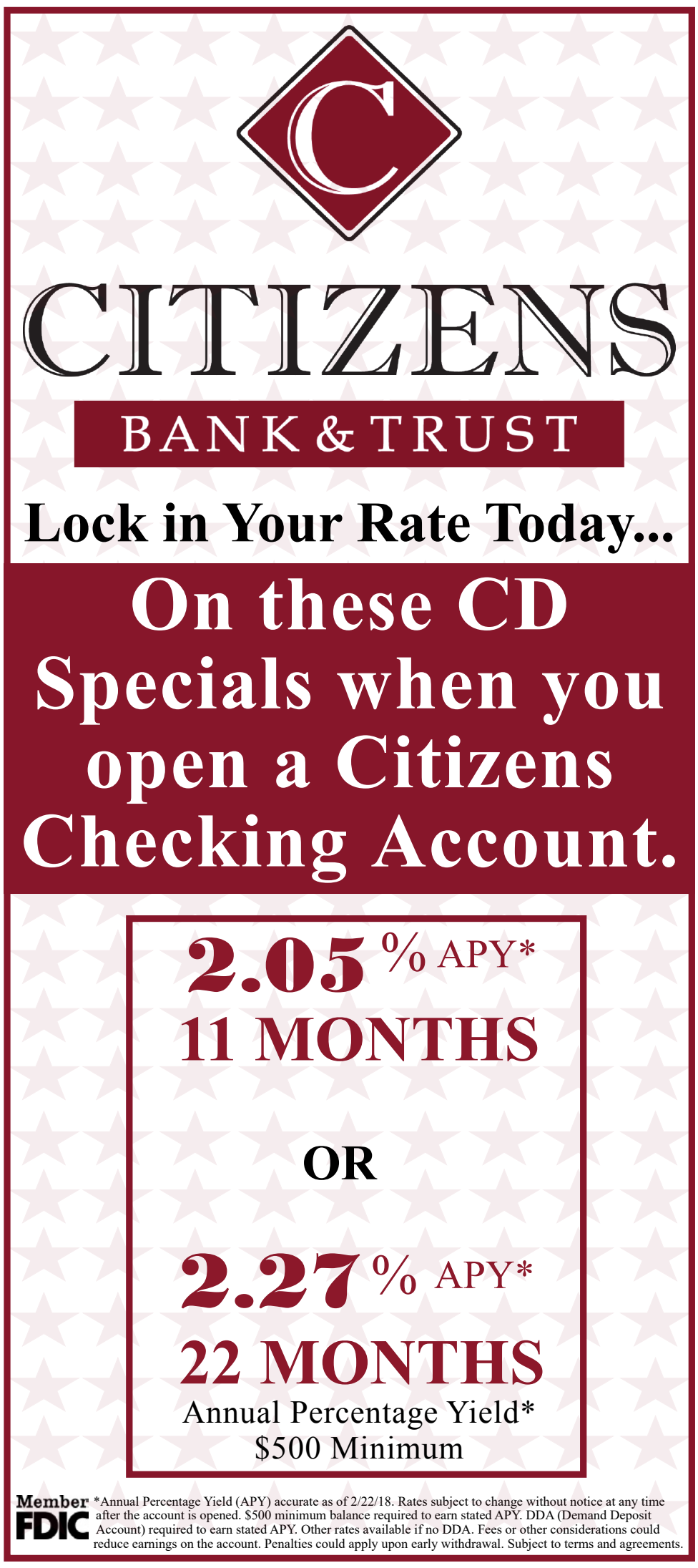
Bearcat Peyton Colvard (2) with Coach Brent Patterson

Bearcats Head Coach Brent Patterson was happy with the way his starters performed Friday night despite some early adversity.

"Mike (Myers) actually struggled a little early with command and with all the emotions and adrenaline of the first three or four innings, but he competed, and he mixed enough and made enough pitches and he let his defense play and they made some plays," Patterson said. "Then after that when he settled down and really found it, he got into a rhythm and we were able to really get going and that helped us offensively, too. We kind of saw in the first inning that Will (Morrison) looked very, very good. He had a lot of movement and a lot of command. He's just very different so we felt good about him after the first because it was real obvious."

Patterson continued, "We got some big hits with runners on from Grayson (Taylor) and Brennan (Norton) and we got some big hits that were so, so clutch out of those guys to allow a little bit of breathing room," he said. "It's just hard man, in the playoffs it means a lot to everybody. There's so much intensity in every moment that if you leave a few runners it can really change momentum, so those hits were huge."

Cullman will host Hazel Green next Friday night at home at Bill Shelton Field for a chance to go back to Montgomery.









Athletes (from Front)

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Several local schools and athletes collected hardware at the AHSAA State Track and Field meets last week. The 1A-3A meet was hosted at Cullman High School and the 4A-7A meet in Gulf Shores.

In class 1A, Addison's girls took fifth place and Meek's girls finished 21st. Meek's boys placed ninth with Addison's boys came in 19th. On the 2A side, St. Bernard's girls took home the silver, Cold Springs' girls finished fifth, St. Bernard's boys placed fifth and Cold Springs' boys landed just behind them in sixth place. In class 3A, the Lady Eagles of Vinemont took 15th place and Hanceville's boys finished 24th.

State champions!
Several area athletes brought home gold medals, finishing first in the state in their respective events.

1A-3A Meet winners:
- Addison's Emee Baldwin set a new 1A state record for pole vault Friday morning with a mark of 10-08.
- St. Bernard's Leahrose Mami had a big day as well, pulling off a clean sweep in her individual events, taking home gold in the 800, 1,600 and 3,200 meter runs; she also helped the Lady Saints' 4x800 meter relay team finish with a gold medal.
- Cold Springs' Grace Chambers placed first in the 2A discus throw with a throw of 30.65m.
- St. Bernard's Andrew Sweeney placed first in the 1,600 and 3,200 meter runs as well as helped the Saints' 4x800 meter relay team make first place.
- St. Bernard's Elijah Price won gold in the high jump and
- Meek's John Mark Abercrombie took first place in the javelin throw.

At the 4A-7A Meet in Gulf Shores, Good Hope's boys placed 33rd overall in 4A and the Lady Raiders took 21st. West Point and Fairview's girls finished 25th and 29th, respectively, and the boys' squads placed 12th and 27th. Cullman's boys managed to finish 18th on the weekend and the Lady Bearcats finished highest amongst local teams at the meet in ninth place.

More state champions!
4A-7A Meet winners
- Multiple local athletes took home hardware, but West Point's Hunter Appling took home a new state record as well. Appling placed first in the 100-meter hurdles with a new state-best time of 14.10, beating a 21-year-old record time of 14.13. Appling also snagged the gold in the 300-meter hurdles.
- Cullman's Caroline Hollingsworth also put on a gold medal performance over the weekend, finishing first in the high jump with a mark of 5-04.00.
- Two more Bearcats, Will Kress and Anna Franklin, claimed silver medals in the 110-meter hurdles and pole vault events, respectively.

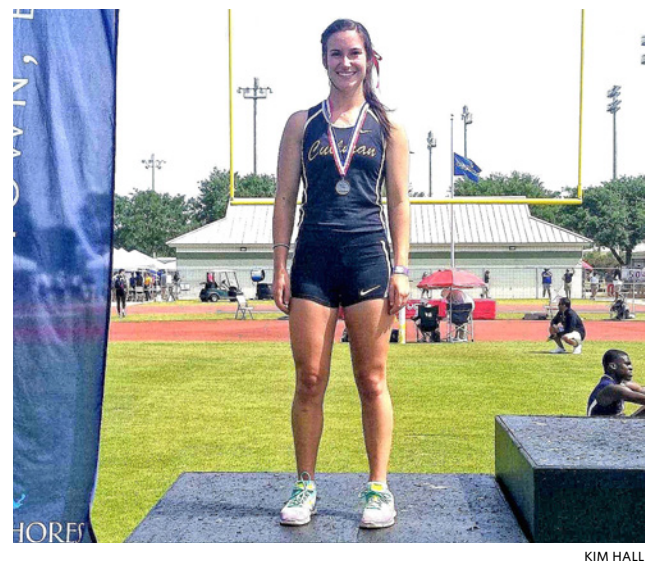
All local top eight performers. Top eight finishers received points.

Addison (1A)
- Abbie Chambless, High Jump – second place
- Girls 4x100 Meter Relay Team – fourth place
- Emee Baldwin, Pole Vault – first place. 100 Meter Hurdles – fourth place
- Destiny Walker, Long Jump – sixth place
- Amanda Erb, Shot Put – seventh place
- Brianna Chandler, Discus Throw – seventh place
- Hayden Ray, Shot Put – sixth place
- Ben Robinson, Triple Jump – sixth place
- Weston Smith, Discus Throw – sixth place
- Boys 4x100 Meter Relay Team – sixth place

Meek (1A)
- Jaycey Bowling, Pole Vault – third place
- Caleb Aaron, 110 Meter Hurdles – fifth place
- John Mark Abercrombie, High Jump – second place. Javelin – first place. Shot Put- eighth place
- Kenneth Sherer, High Jump – sixth place

St. Bernard (2A)
- Leahrose Mami, 800, 1600, 3200 Meter Run – first place
- Girls 4x800 Meter Run – first place
- Gracie Loyd, 200 Meter Dash – fifth place. 100 Meter Hurdles – third place. Long Jump – fourth place. Triple Jump – fifth place
- Anna Faulk, Pole Vault – third place. 300 Meter Hurdles – eighth place
- Claire Sanders, 800 Meter Run – third place
- Eva Barck, 3200 Meter Run – seventh place
- Ashley Duke, Javelin Throw – fifth place. Discus Throw – eighth place
- Andrew Sweeney, 1600 and 3200 Meter Run – first place. 800 Meter Run – third place
- Caleb Guthery, 800 Meter Run – fifth place. 1600 Meter Run – fifth place
- Boys 4x800 Meter Relay Team – first place
- Elijah Price, High Jump – first place

Cold Springs (2A)
- Ava Akridge, 800 Meter Run – eighth place. 1600 Meter Run – fifth place. 3200 Meter Run – fifth place
- Girls 4x800 Meter Relay Team – fifth place
- Lily McSpadden, High Jump – fourth place. Long Jump – eighth place
- Emi Harbison, High Jump – eighth place
- Zoe Strawbridge, Pole Vault – fifth place
- Grace Chambers, Discus Throw – first place. Shot Put – seventh place
- Aubrey Negron, Discus Throw – fifth place. Shot Put – sixth place
- Kinley Campbell, Discus Throw – fourth place. Javelin – fourth place
- Mason Harris, 400 Meter Dash – third place. 110 Meter Hurdles – third place. 300 Meter Hurdles – fifth place
- Trentan Williams, 800 Meter Run – fourth place. 1600 Meter Run – eighth place
- Jonathan Collett, 3200 Meter Run – sixth place
- Seth Walker, 3200 Meter Run – seventh place
- Brian McAnnally, Discus Throw – sixth place. Shot Put – sixth place



KIM HALL

Cullman High School's Anna Franklin brought home the silver medal in the 6A girls' pole vault.

Vinemont (3A)
- Emily Cheatwood, Triple Jump – fifth place
- Kanasta Daniel, Javelin - fourth place

Hanceville (3A)
- Aaron Brown, 3200 Meter Run – fifth place

Good Hope (4A)
- Bijou Phillips, 800 Meter Run – eighth place. 1600 Meter Run – sixth place. 3200 Meter Run – fifth place
- Tommy Fetters, Pole Vault – fifth place

West Point (5A)
- Hunter Appling, 110 and 300 Meter Hurdles – first place
- Sadie Junkins, 100 Meter Hurdles – fifth place. 300 Meter Hurdles – eighth place

Fairview (5A)
- Abby Schnittker, Triple Jump – sixth place
- Lorin Zehr, Discus Throw – eighth place
- Dylan Garner, Discus Throw – fourth place

Cullman (6A)
- Caroline Hollingsworth, High Jump – first place
- Girls 4x800 Meter Relay Team – seventh place
- Anna Franklin, Pole Vault – second place
- Ragan Carter, Discus Throw – fifth place
- Eli Wilhite, 3200 Meter Run – sixth place
- Jackson Tucker, 3200 Meter Run – seventh place
- Will Kress, 110 Meter Hurdles – second place
- Boys 4x800 Meter Relay Team – sixth place
- Colby Hutson, Pole Vault – eighth place

Obituary Announcements: May 8 - 20

Graveside services for Harvey Alex Hawkins 43, of Linden, Al. will be 2 p.m. Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at Dorsey Creek Cemetery in Bremen. Visitation will be Tuesday beginning at 11 a.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home. Mr. Hawkins died Friday at his residence. He is survived by: Father; Marlin Hawkins of Vinemont Mother; Myra (Bobby) Pitts of Bremen Uncles; Glenn Purdue, Charles Hawkins and Allen Hawkins; Aunt, Gail Gorham.

Funeral services for Mr. Billy Ray Hunt, 77 of Hanceville, will be 11 a.m. Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at Hanceville Funeral Home, Reverend Theron Robertson officiating, with burial following at Hopewell Cemetery. Family receiving friends Monday evening 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the funeral home. The son of the late Hubert and Louise Adams Hunt retired as a supervisor from Cullman Products. He leaves behind his wife, Mary Nell Hunt; Son, Joe (Connie) Hunt; Daughter, Angie (Alan) Widner and a grandson, Jesse Widner.

Doyle V. Carter, 78, of Section, Alabama, passed away on May 3, 2018. He is survived by 3 children Kathy Riley of Ridgeville, SC., Ronda Martin of Moncks Corner, SC., and Scott Carter of Somerville, AL., 7 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. A memorial will be held for family and friends in Section, AL at a later date.

Funeral services for Douglas Hank Baker, 65, of Vinemont are Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at 2 p.m. at Bethlehem West Baptist Church, Tim Aris and Greg Alldredge officiating, with interment in the church cemetery. Visitation on Tuesday from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at Cullman Funeral Home and on Wednesday from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. at the church. Mr. Baker passed away on Friday, May 4, 2018. He was preceded in death by his parents, Woodrow Lewis and Eva Anderson Baker and his sister, Sondra Baker Turner. He is survived by his wife, Elaine Baker; daughters, Leah (Daniel) Tolbert and Lori (Shane) Oakley; stepchildren, Richard (Dana) Walker, Sherry Walker Latham and Michael (Sommer) Walker; brother, Mike Baker; thirteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Tressie Ingle, 76 of Double Springs, entered into rest on Sunday, May 6, 2018 at her home surrounded by her family. Complete obituary and arrangement information will be announced at a later date by Nichols Funeral Home.

James Dingler, 76, of Holly Pond passed away Monday, April 24, 2018. He is preceded in death by his parents, Kenneth Elmer Dingler and Veola Hann Yelli; wife, Carolyn Schrader Dingler; son, James Alan Dingler; and brother, Erven Dingler. Survivors include his daughters, Carol Richards and Tammy (Allen) McKendree; brother, Clayburn Isaac Dingler, of Texas; eight grandchildren; five great grandchildren; and one great grandchild on the way. A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 20, 2018 at Holly Pond Funeral Home Chapel.

Free Obituary Listings

Have your funeral home contact us

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Complete obituaries may be found free of charge at CullmanTribune.com/obituaries.

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Wallace State Dental Hygiene program pins 25 graduates

Gail Crutchfield
WSCC



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The Wallace State Community College Dental Hygiene program held a pinning ceremony for its 25 graduates on April 27, 2018. Pictured are from left, in front row: Karissa Hutchison of Jasper, Elizabeth Vinson of Bremen, Whitney Bowers of Danville, Magnolia Orozco of Fort Payne, Rachel Diaz of Decatur, Elisabeth Black of Cullman, Lydia Taylor of Trinity, Samantha Shultz of Oakman; second row: Jennifer Barber of Huntsville, Karlee Phung of Gadsden, Drakken James of Cullman, Katelyn Anderson of New Hope, Hannah Long of Guntersville, Marilu Domingo of Fort Payne, Stefani McClure of Huntsville, Amberly Euper of Huntsville; back row: Cassie Hall of Oneonta, Lauren Morrison of Douglas, Madison Stubblefield of Grant, Hanna Hornbuckle of Boaz, Donna Flores of Decatur, Mollie Hilburn of Guntersville, Alex Gregg of Jasper, Chandler Aldridge of Cullman, and Melinda Hosch of Birmingham.

HANCEVILLE – With bright smiles, more than two dozen young women were pinned as graduates of the Class of 2018 from the Dental Hygiene program at Wallace State Community College.

In her remarks, instructor Susan Brewer complimented the graduates on the teamwork they exhibited throughout their two years in the program.

"That was really highlighted this last week and it really amazed me," Brewer said. "It was beautiful to watch."During the last week of classes, students needed to complete their clinical requirements, which included a long list of practical experiences.

"It looked daunting," Brewer said of the list. "But you guys made a plan, you made a back-up plan, and you made a back-up to your back-up plan."

During the last week of clinic, Brewer said while many of the students completed their clinical requirements on one day, many of those students called in the following days. They messaged her or came by to make sure the students completing their requirements had the patients they needed.

"Because the ones who finished Monday still had back-up plans, and if the ones Tuesday hadn't finished, they had their back-up patients lined up and ready to go for them," Brewer said.

Student Stefanie McClure, of Huntsville, thanked all of the family and friends attending the ceremony for being their patients as they trained. "If it wasn't for all of our friends and family, we would be where we are right now," McClure said. "Thank you from me and all of my classmates. Nobody really understands what it's like when you start this program. You're anxious, so to have somebody in your chair that's a familiar face means more than anything."

Several students were recognized with awards during the ceremony. Award recipients included:

- Karissa Hutchison of Jasper, Thomas P. Hinman Scholarship
- Rachel Diaz of Decatur, Irene Newman Award
- Lydia Taylor of Trinity, Academic Excellence Award
- Elisabeth Black of Cullman, Hu-Friedy Golden Scaler
- Whitney Bowers of Danville, Colgate Star Award and Dental Hygiene Program Award
- Magnolia Orozco of Fort Payne, Dental Hygiene Club Award
- Elizabeth Vinson of Bremen, Who's Who Award.

Wallace State's Dental Hygiene program is five-semester program offering an associate in applied science degree. One semester of pre-requisites is required before applying. Applications for Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting, which offers certificate and degree options, are currently being accepted through June 1 for Fall 2018.

Huntley delivers inspirational story during Learning Communities lecture at Wallace State

Kristen Holmes
WSCC

HANCEVILLE – Lawyer, author and child advocate Liz Huntley delivered an inspirational lecture during a recent visit to Wallace State Community College as part of National Community College month and the college's Learning Communities project.

Huntley shared her story, "More Than a Bird," with the Learning Communities classes and spent additional time answering students' questions. She also held a book signing.

Huntley lives in Clanton, Alabama – the same city where she was once sent to live with her grandmother at the age of 5 – after her father was sent to prison and her mother committed suicide.

From that point forward, Huntley said, her journey was not easy, and she experienced many hardships at such a young and impressionable age. But through all the abuse, poverty and pitfalls she experienced throughout her childhood, Huntley decided she would not let her circumstances define who she was as an adult.

She believes education was a way of getting her out of her circumstances. She describes education as the great equalizer.

"My grandma used to say, 'People can do a lot to you Elizabeth, but they can never take your mind; that's yours,'" said Huntley. "'You own that.'"

Huntley believes your mind and what you choose to do with it is your choice.

"I know you were all blessed before I walked in this door because you're at a college," said Huntley.

"You're in an environment where you're surrounded by advocates that care about you and you have resources and people you can go to, to help you navigate where you want to go as an adult."

Huntley described life with her grandmother, who believed you go to church every Sunday, you mind your elders, you're clean and you get an education.

Because of her grandmother, Huntley was sent to preschool to begin that education.

She said she was scared to begin this journey, but she was also embarrassed, ashamed and hung her head down low because of her life. Once she arrived at school, though, she smiled.

"The reason I smiled was the same reason I smiled when I walked in here today," said Huntley. "Because it was so beautiful. Don't you know that when somebody takes the time to invest the resources and money to develop an environment for you to learn in that is beautiful, comfortable and inviting like this (Wallace State) it is a true blessing and you should be thankful for it."

Huntley described that first day of preschool and how she, for first time in her life, felt the nurturing touch of an adult and thrived under it.

It was also an escape from the abuse she was receiving at home by a male relative.

Later in life, Huntley spent time with her aunt to avoid the continued abuse during the summers.

One Wednesday in church the pastor spoke from Matthew 6:26, which reads: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"



WSCC

Huntley embraces Mary Ann Wolfe, a student at Wallace State, who was moved by her story.

This, she said, translates to if God equips us to be concerned about a bird then he will equip us to take care of our children.

"At that point I sat there with everything that was going on with my life and I questioned whether or not I was better than a bird," said Huntley.

"I questioned whether or not a bird had it better than I did. Then the preacher said this, 'Know that you're more than a bird because God will send people to love you.'

She said when the preacher said that, a lightbulb came on and all she could think about was her school and teachers and everyone who had loved her through education.

"People who do things that interact with children have the opportunity to impact their life and in the smallest ways sometimes," Huntley said.

CITIZENS
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JIM HAYS OF CULLMAN JOINS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT CITIZENS BANK & TRUST



Citizens Bank & Trust announces the appointment of James E. "Jim" Hays, Jr. of Cullman to its Board of Directors. The appointment of Hays expands the Board to 9 directors. "Jim is an accomplished business leader and his broad experience across important industries will add a valuable perspective to our Board of Directors," said Charlie Williams, President and CEO of Citizens Bank & Trust. "We appreciate his willingness to serve as a director and are confident that he will add great value to our Board of Directors."

MORE ABOUT JIM HAYS
Jim Hays, a Cullman native, is the president of Hays & Son Oil Co., Inc., Dodge City Travel Center, Inc., and the Managing Member of Hays Properties, LLC, and JTK Group, LLC. These companies are centered in Cullman, Alabama. Hays graduated from Cullman High School in 1976, the same year his family bought a small gas distributorship in Cullman. The business grew into Hays & Son Oil Company and now markets over 20 million gallons a year of gas and fuel through retail outlets branded Conoco, Pure, Chevron, and Shell and approximately 200 customers in agriculture, construction, and trucking businesses. Hays and his family also founded two real estate development companies in Hays Properties, LLC and JTK Group, LLC. Hays has served in the petroleum industry as a founding member and stock holder of the Pure Oil Jobbers Cooperative which markets fuel in 10 southeastern states. He has served two terms on the Pure Oil Board of Directors and is currently serving his second term on the board of the National Association of Truckstop Operators (NATSO).

Hays and his wife, Terri, have been married and working together for 36 years. They have one daughter, Karen, a teacher, and a son-in-law, Jordan Graham, who is a nurse. Hays has been a member of Northbrook Baptist Church since 1999 and has served on various committees including Stewardship, Properties, and Long Range Planning.

ABOUT THE COMPANY
Citizens Bank & Trust opened for business on March 3, 2003, is headquartered in Guntersville, Alabama and is traded publicly as an Over-The- Counter (OTC) stock under the symbol CBTH. It is the largest community bank based in Marshall County and has eight full-service offices located in Albertville, Arab, Cullman, Elkmont, Guntersville, Hazel Green, New Hope, and Rogersville, a loan office in Oneonta, a wealth management division, and a mortgage division. Citizens Bank & Trust is insured by the FDIC and is an equal housing lender. For more information visit www.citizensbanktrust.com or find Citizens Bank & Trust on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube.

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
MAY 8, 2018

Bigger and better than ever: Strawberry Festival 2018

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

In spite of rain midway through the event, this year's Strawberry Festival is projected to be the biggest one yet.

CULLMAN – Huge crowds defied threatening weather Saturday to turn out for what will likely be Cullman's largest ever Strawberry Festival. More crafters, more produce from farmers, an entertainment district extending farther up First Avenue through the Warehouse District, an entertainment schedule extending into the evening (featuring Eve6!), the Grill Master competition sponsored by The Link of Cullman County, and the relocation of "Art in the Park" all combined to make the event a record-setter for Cullman Parks and Recreation (CP&R).

In the early afternoon, CP&R Marketing Director Waid Harbison told The Tribune, "It's going fantastic . . . This has been the biggest crowd, I think, we've ever seen before lunchtime. I mean, you're seeing it right now, but definitely a record-breaking crowd. I think a lot of people are trying to come out before the rain, but still, this is way more people that we've seen, normally. It doesn't (usually) really start to super pick up with a huge crowd till about 10 or 11, but by about 9 this morning, we were just wide open with a crowd like you see right now. So it's been just a steady stream all day long.

"A lot of people from all over the place. We've already sold over 2,000 gallons of strawberries over at the farmers' market, which is actually--believe it or not--better than last year, (when) we did about 1,300."

According to Harbison, in the early afternoon farmers were still coming in with fresh loads of strawberries to replenish the fast-selling stocks at the Festhalle. Parking patterns (parking lots and street parking remained nearly full for much of the morning and early afternoon) and sales numbers led CP&R to estimate that the event would draw around 15,000 visitors by the end of the day.

About an hour later, The Tribune met with CP&R Director Nathan Anderson, who adjusted the strawberry count up to 2,500 gallons sold.

"Last year, we had a great year," he said, "and we only sold 1,300 gallons. So we are way ahead of the game from last year."

When speaking with Anderson, the first rumble of thunder was heard. Very quickly an overcast but dry day turned very wet.

The music stage shut down and vendors pulled in merchandise as visitors ran for whatever cover they could find.

Rain poured down hard and was blown under shelters and umbrellas by steady winds.

After the storm passed, the crowd began to thin out, and several vendors whose displays had been drenched packed up to leave.

The majority, though, just shook it off and got back to business.

The stage reopened for musicians to perform, and crowds returned in the evening to see Eve6 take the stage.

"Our staff is doing an awesome job today," said Harbison. "We've got one of the best staffs of any park and rec department, I think, in the country, and that's why we're one of the best park and rec departments in the country.

"But our staff got here early this morning to set up the stage. They've been here late all week getting everything set up. But these guys are dedicated; they've been here all day long, they're doing a fantastic job with every area of the festival.

"I want to brag on them and say they're doing a fantastic job. We're proud of everything that they're doing.

"It's just a great community event. We have so many people from here, from out of town; it's a great way to showcase (sic) Cullman. A lot of people (sic) from the state track meet (at Cullman High School) are coming over, as well. So it's just a great weekend to showcase (sic) everything that Cullman has to offer."

Anderson added, "We have a great event planning team. They've done a great job. We appreciate all the vendors and the farmers for partnering with us, and also The Link for the Grill Masters competition partnering with us. It's been a great event!"

The 2018 Strawberry Festival Grill Master Champion team was the Cullman Rotary Club.



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



