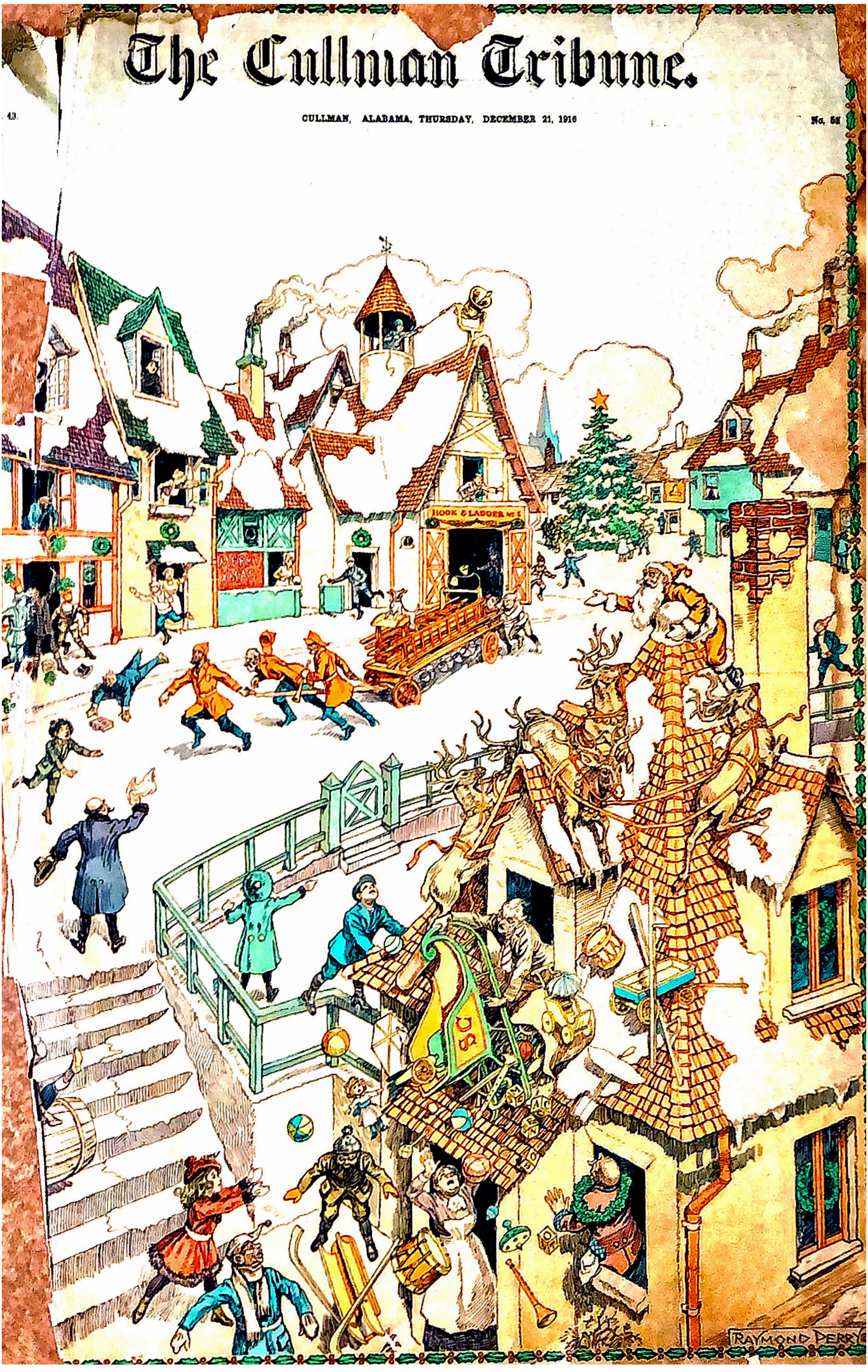
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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
DECEMBER 24, 2018

Team Levi spreads Christmas joy

Annual drive delivers 555 books to childhood cancer patients

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Elena Caudle and Bethany Kerr, the local author/artist duo who created the children's books "Serendipitous" and "Serendipitous Too!" again teamed up with childhood cancer survivor Levi Bates for a book drive to provide copies of their new book "Billy the Kitten and Travis Too" free of charge to patients at Children's Hospital in Birmingham. Last week, "Team Levi" delivered 555 copies of the new book to children who will be spending Christmas at Children's, Camp Smile-A-Mile's recreation/education center childhood cancer patients, the Ronald McDonald House and the physical therapy clinic where team leader Bates is a patient.

In 2016, the first drive sent more than 250 books to Children's Hospital.

Last year, the team didn't make a very ambitious goal of 525, but still delivered 482 books.

The 2018 goal of 500 was surpassed with plenty of room to spare.

Bates, the teenage driving force behind the book drive, is a childhood cancer survivor and has been a patient at Children's Hospital and the therapy clinic.

In a message at the outset of this year's drive, he wrote:

"I've spent so much time at Children's Hospital over the last few years and they have been so good to, and for, me that that I want to 'give back' to them in some way.

"These books are full of funny stories about cute critters and they've made me smile a million times and I think anything that makes a kid smile is a good thing to 'give back,' don't you?"

At Camp Smile-A-Mile, the delivery team was met by CSAM Program Director Jennifer Amundsen.

After receiving the books, she told Caudle, "This is the kind of thing that makes me smile!"

After returning from the delivery, Bates wrote, "We had a great morning at Children's delivering the books for all the amazing kids that will be spending Christmas in the hospital.

"It's such a great experience to be able to give back! Looking forward to making some more smiles next year!"

On Thursday, Caudle told The Tribune, "I never thought I'd be old enough to say something like this, but as cheesy as it sounds, there really is no way to give away a smile or love or joy without getting a whole lot back in return!

"We are beyond grateful to this community and our friends nationwide for helping us with this opportunity to give away a lot of all three!

"And as Levi said: 'Can't wait to see what we can do next year!'"

Find out more at www.facebook.com/Serendipitousness.



CAITLYN COLBURN/SERENDIPITOUS

L-R: Camp Smile-A-Mile Program Director Jennifer Amundsen receives copies of "Billy the Kitten and Travis Too" from Levi Bates and author Elena Caudle.

Victoria's Hope founder reflects on 2018

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

DODGE CITY – April Bowen German started Victoria's Hope earlier this year as a way to honor her mother, Victoria Hammond Hankey, and help out single parents.

German said of her mother, "She was a single mom for a very long time and had a hard time; (she) had to work three jobs raising us. And I just remember her trying to get everything for us, and her not having even a pair of blue jeans that didn't have a hole in them, because she couldn't do anything for herself, because she was trying her best to provide for her kids.

"But, even through all that, she would help other people, like getting up donations for families in need, and helping pay people's bills, and things like that. She was an apartment manager that would let people move in even if they didn't have the money at the time. And she was always just helping people, and that was always her dream was to help people and do something like this."

Six months in, German updated The Tribune on how things are going:

"In the six months since we have started we have helped roughly 200 families with clothing and household items.

"We helped 20 children go back to school with school supplies with help from the community and Tonya Williams Insurance Agency, six children with clothing, backpacks and all their school supplies; (we) provided for 50 children at Christmas at our Santa's Workshop this month. Good Hope Cub Scout Pack 333 held a canned food drive for us, and we were able to give food and water to the families that came to Santa's Workshop."

Not without help

Victoria's Hope has benefited from a small army of helpers who have volunteered their time, energy and resources.

German shared, "I have so many people that have helped and donated that I couldn't name them all without taking all day! But I would like to thank of course my sister Heather Hankey for helping me come up with the idea and helping me follow through with it, Lora Raley for being my backbone and 'boss,' Kristi Cassels for all her time and dedication, Judy Thompson, Mike Hancock and Becky Bailey for helping me in the very beginning with my vision, Gerald and Janet Turner for providing me with a place for people to come get what they need, Angie and Retha Johnson for a their help with Santa's Workshop, Woodland Nursing Home for their huge donation of clothing over the summer, Moe's Southwest Grill for always being kind enough to let us have fundraisers, Good Hope Grocery for allowing us to have a car wash there to raise funds, and of course my boys and sweet husband Craig who have had to share some of their time with me so I could live out this dream.

"Also Bubble Gum and Blue Jeans for helping me with fundraisers and being a drop off point, and also Younique Sophistication Boutique for being a drop off point as well.

German continued, "My hope for next year is that we can be open more hours. There for a while I was only able to be open one afternoon a week, with me being a teacher and having three boys active in school and sports.

"But Lora has started coming in for me some to offer more days for people to come in and I have had a few more people offer to do that as well so that is in the works. I just can't thank everyone enough for the support, and to The Tribune for helping me get the word out.

"I couldn't have done any of this without the help of people in the community. Whether it's been through monetary donations or donations of clothing, toys or household goods, I have always had enough to give to those who needed and enough to pay my rent on my building each month. None of that could have been possible without all the help from the community. One thing I have seen through my grief and starting this is how many loving and good people we have in Cullman County. I have met some amazing people that I would have never met if I had not have started this to honor my mom's dream."

Looking forward to the new year

"I'm so blessed to be part of this great community and to have been able to have this experience," said German. "Doing this has blessed me more than I could have ever imagined. In 2019, I hope to see us grow even bigger.

"I'm going to need a bigger building--again!--because I'm now outgrowing the one I am in through all the donations. I hope to find a place big enough to be able to also store furniture for those who need it.

"I also hope to, in the next month or so, start collecting prom dresses and suits for teenagers who wouldn't be able to attend prom otherwise, because they don't have the money to get clothing for it.

"We are also in the works of working with people who help the homeless. I didn't realize just how many homeless we have in Cullman County. It's sad that we even have that issue, but we do.

"It's so amazing to me that in June, me and my sister just wanted to help a few single moms get stuff for themselves that they would normally not be able to get because they were too worried about getting for their kids, has turned into so much more.

"One thing that amazes me is when single parents do come and shop, they still only want to get for their kids. I will tell them I have two huge racks of women's and men's clothing--because you would be amazed at how many single dads there are, too--and they will say 'I really just want to make sure my kids are taken care of,' then I'll beg them to please get something for themselves. I have more adult clothing than kids' clothing because the parents never want to get anything for themselves."

What it means

"If anyone can take anything away from this," said German, "I hope it's that, even through your toughest times in your life, God can use you to help someone else.

"I feel that's why we go through trials in our life, to learn how to be a more compassionate person to others who are hurting. I've seen people I've helped come back and donate stuff to me later because they wanted to return the favor to someone else. And to me that's what it's all about: starting a chain reaction of people helping each other.

"This has also been a healing experience for me. I have had so many women come in and shop that reminded me so much of my mom, doing everything they can to get by and provide for their kids.

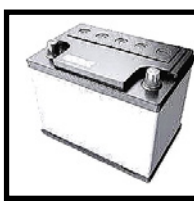
"We have cried together, prayed together and just hugged and hugged when they come in. It's therapeutic for me to be able to help them, and hopefully, I have given them just a little hope and relief during their struggles."

Get involved!

Victoria's Hope accepts donations of clothing and household items. It is a 501(c)(3)nonprofit, so monetary donations are tax deductible. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/vickishope42018/.

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THE CHRISTMAS STORY

the visit of the shepherds....

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.



the visit of the wise men...

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

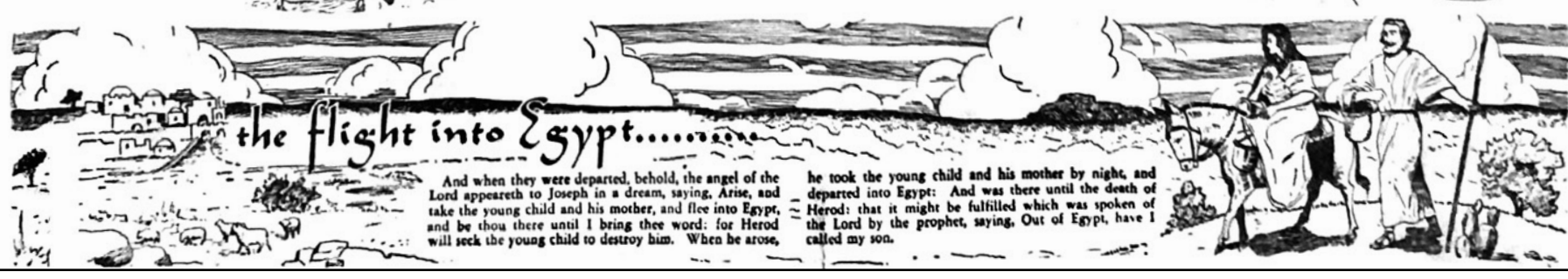
And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.



the birth of Jesus.....

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.





PREP BASKETBALL

Lady Eagles finish Wallace State Christmas Challenge with win over Lauderdale County

Nick Griffin
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HANCEVILLE – The Lady Eagles wrapped up this year's Wallace State Christmas Challenge Friday afternoon with a 51-36 victory over the Lauderdale County Lady Tigers.

Cold Springs jumped ahead to an eight-point lead by the end of the first quarter and despite some full-court pressure from Lauderdale County, the Lady Eagles maintained a 32-25 lead at the half.

Elizabeth Hill led Cold Springs with 11 points at the break.

The Lauderdale County Lady Tigers started the third quarter with a 5-0 run to cut into the lead, but the Cold Springs Lady Eagles applied some defensive pressure of their own and created some needed separation.

Cold Springs stretched the lead to 45-34 by the end of the third.

By that point the Lady Eagles' lead and defense were too much for Lauderdale County to overcome and Cold Springs pulled away to win it 51-36 and move to 12-4 on the season.

Hill led the Lady Eagles with 18 points, followed closely by Toni West who finished with 16.

After the game, head coach Tammy West said she was happy with how her team adjusted in the second half defensively and how they are playing right now overall.

"Right now, I feel like we are playing well together and that's huge," she said.

"We are sharing the ball, but I think we can cut down on some of our turnovers, but overall it was a good day today."

PREP BASKETBALL

Vinemont, Lady Saints finish as runners-up in St. Bernard Christmas Tournament; Friday night roundup

Sammy Confer
sammy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN – Friday was the final day of the St. Bernard Christmas Tournament and in the championship games, St. Bernard's girls fell short to Southeastern 52-32 while Vinemont's boys wound up falling to J.B. Pennington 57-41.

Southeastern 52 - St. Bernard 32 (varsity girls championship game)
The first quarter was closely contested as the Lady Saints stayed close thanks in large part to Claire Sanders and Emma Tafazoli. The duo combined for all of St. Bernard's 10 points. A Sanders trey gave the Lady Saints a 10-9 lead, but they didn't keep it long as seven straight points by the Lady Mustangs gave them a 16-10 lead after one.

Southeastern quickly made it 22-10 to start out the second period, but Sanders converted an and-one and Claudia Fallin added a jumper to cut the deficit to just seven at 22-15. The Lady Mustangs closed the quarter on a 13-0 run and the Lady Saints found themselves trailing 35-15 at the half.

Tafazoli and Sanders scored the first six points of the third period for St. Bernard to make it 35-21, but the Lady Saints couldn't cut more into the deficit, ending up on the wrong side of a 52-32 score to finish second in the tournament.

Tafazoli finished with 15 points, eight rebounds and a steal for St. Bernard. Sanders added 13 points and a steal. Jackelyn Arteaga had two points, four rebounds and three blocks, while Macy Whaley ended up with seven rebounds, a pair of steals and a block.

The Lady Saints will not play again until 2019 when travel to Falkville on Jan. 8.

J.B. Pennington 57 - Vinemont 41 (varsity boys championship game)
The first quarter was dominated by both defenses as both teams were held to just five baskets. Three of them came from behind the arc by Vinemont's Katch Johnson and the Eagles held a 9-8 lead after one.

After a layup gave the Tigers a 10-9 lead, Vinemont went on a 10-0 run, with four different players scoring, the Eagles going up 20-10. Vinemont took a 23-16 lead into the locker room.

Both teams traded baskets to start out the second half. After an and-one by J.B. Pennington cut the Eagle lead to five at 32-27, Jordan Hall hit a layup and Curtis Kennedy nailed a three from the left corner to make it a 37-27 contest, but the rest of the quarter belonged to the Tigers, who finished on a 10-0 run to tie the game at 37 going into the final period. Hall gave Vinemont a 39-37 lead with a pair from the line, but that was the Eagles' last lead of the game as J.B. Pennington held them to just one basket and wound up outscoring the Eagles 20-2 the rest of the way. The Eagles fell 57-41 to finish second in the tournament.

Johnson led the way for Vinemont with 18 points, four rebounds and a block. Hall finished with 12 points and 10 rebounds. Clay Rogers added five points and four rebounds. Kennedy ended up with five points and a steal, while Collin Teichmiller chipped in with a point, three rebounds and a pair of steals.

The Eagles will not play again until Jan. 3 when they host Winston County.

Other Friday night scores:

- West Point 65 – Good Hope 58 (varsity boys)
- West Point 66 – Good Hope 36 (varsity girls)
- Arab 66 – Holly Pond 58 (varsity boys)
- Arab 43 – Holly Pond 34 (varsity boys)
- Spain Park 55 - Cullman 33 (varsity girls)
- Cold Springs 51 – Lauderdale County 36 (varsity girls)

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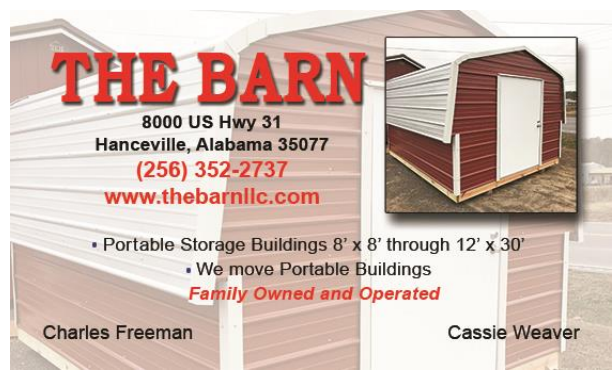


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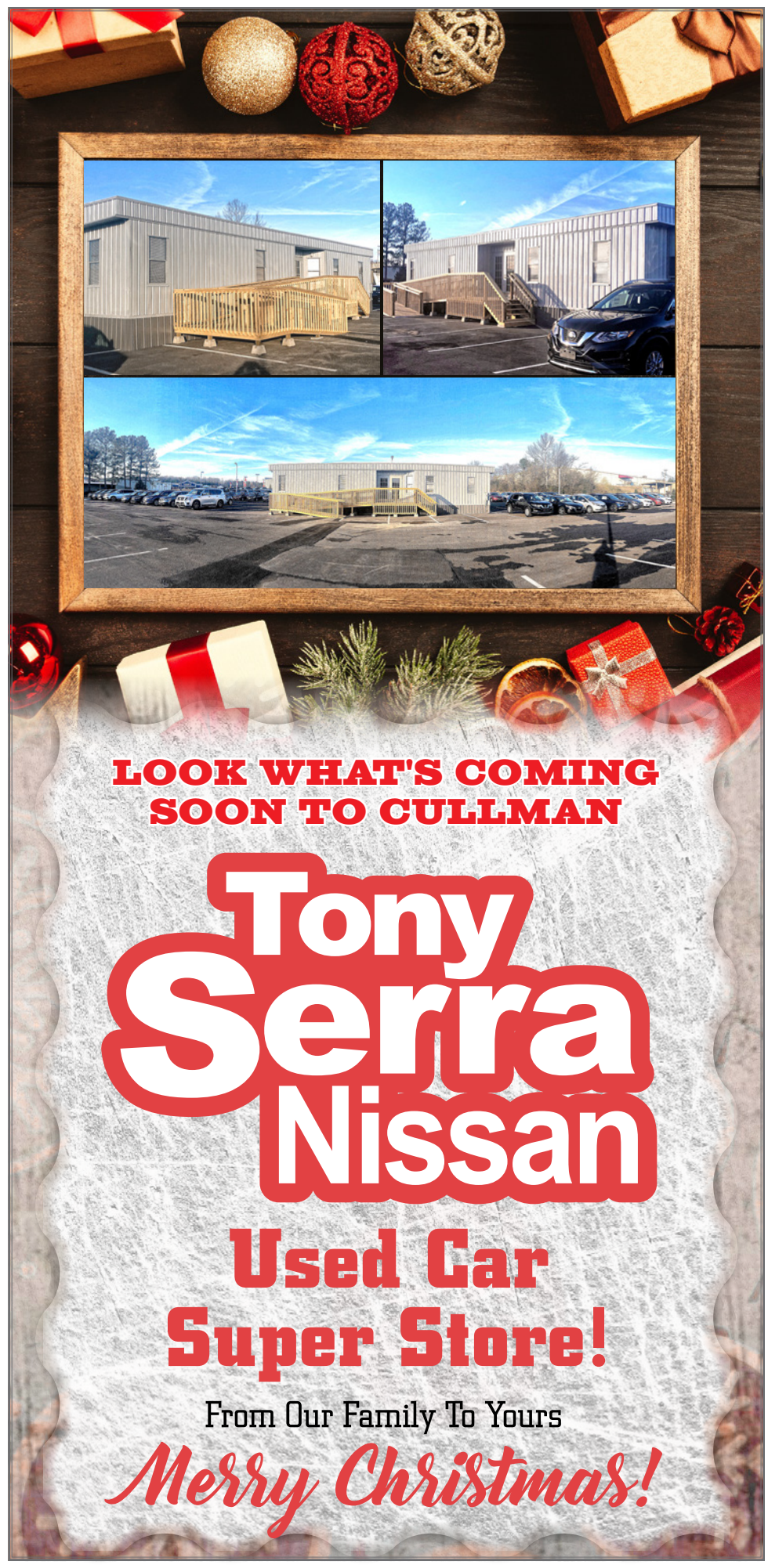
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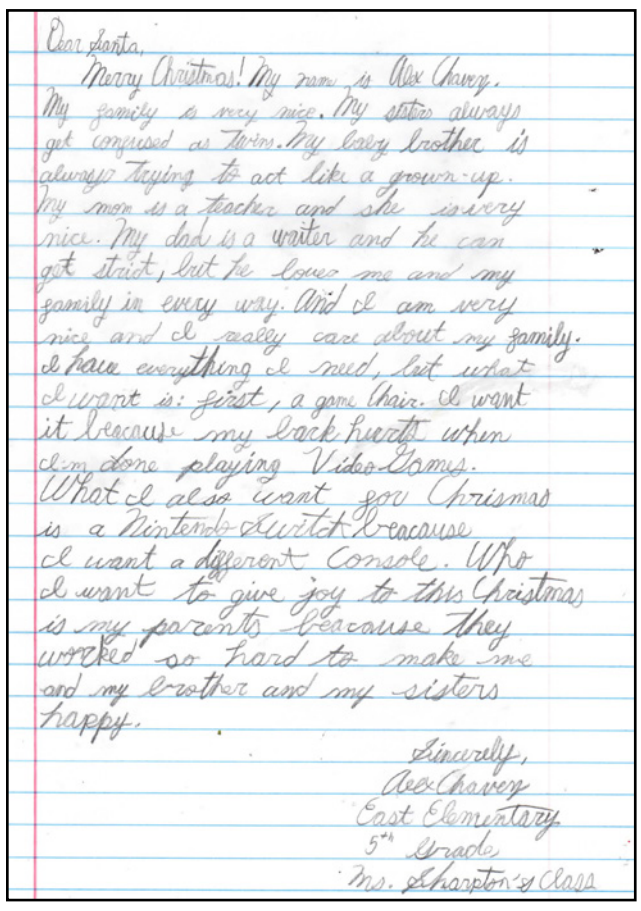
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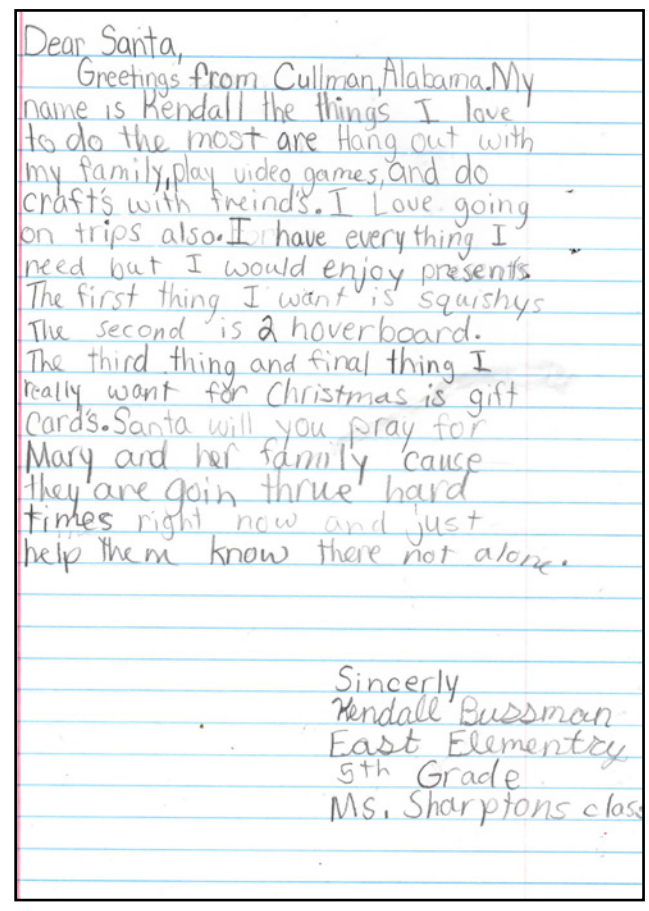
Ms. Sharpton's 5th grade class, East Elementary



Dear Santa,

Merry Christmas! My name is Alex Chavez. My family is very nice. My sisters always get confused as Twins. My crazy brother is always trying to act like a grown-up. My mom is a teacher and she is very nice. My dad is a writer and he can get strict, but he loves me and my family in every way. And I am very nice and I really care about my family. I have everything I need, but what I want is: first, a game chair. I want it because my back hurts when I'm done playing Video Games. What I also want for Chrismas is a Nintendo Switch because I want a different Console. Who I want to give joy to this Christmas is my parents because they worked so hard to make me and my brother and my sisters happy.

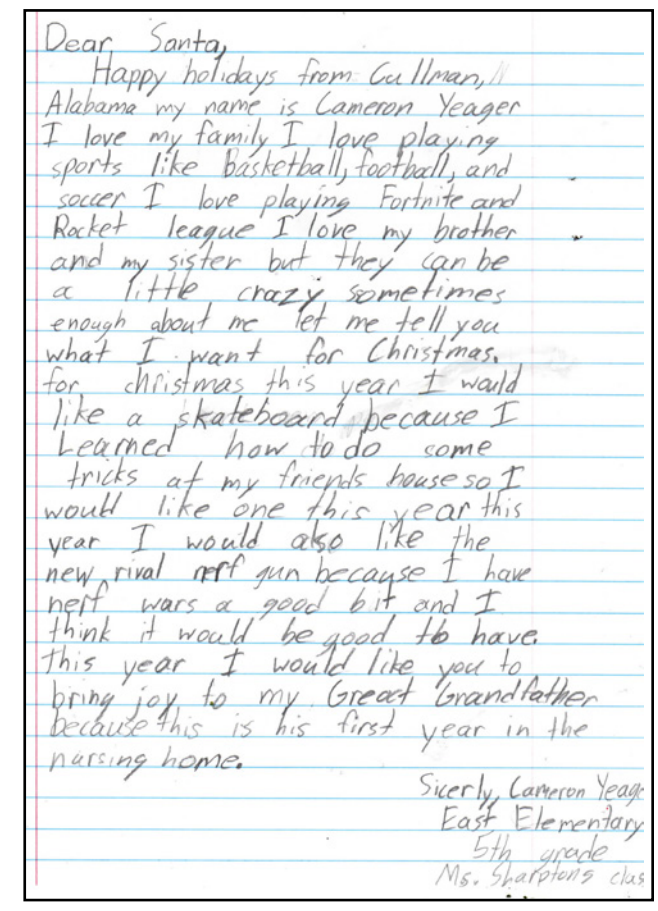
Sincerly,
Alex Chavez
East Elementary
5th Grade
Ms. Sharpton's Class



Dear Santa,

Greetings from Cullman, Alabama. My name is Kendall the things I love to do the most are Hang out with my family, play video games, and do craft's with freind's. I Love going on trips also. I have every thing I need but I would enjoy presents. The first thing I want is squishys The second is a hoverboard. The third thing and final thing I really want for Christmas is gift card's. Santa will you pray for Mary and her family cause they are goin thrue hard times right now and just help them know there not alone.

Sincerly
Kendall Bussman
East Elementry
5th Grade
Ms. Sharptons class

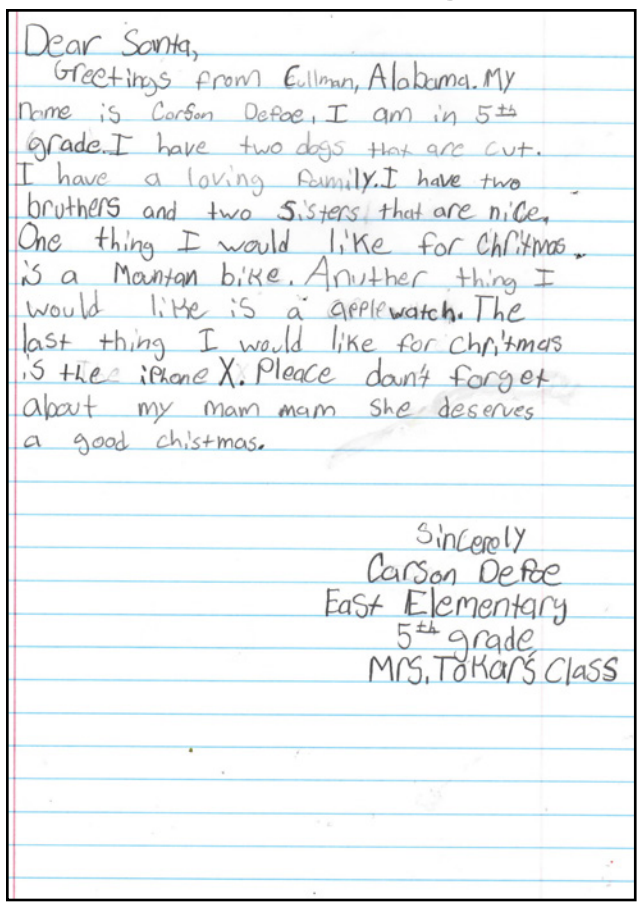


Dear Santa,

Happy holidays from Cullman, Alabama my name is Cameron Yeager I love my family I love playing sports like basketball, football, and soccer I love playing Fortnite and Racket league I love my brother and my sister but they can be a little crazy sometimes enough about me let me tell you what I want for Christmas. for christmas this year I would like a skateboard because I Learned how to do some tricks at my friends house so I would like one this year this year I would also like the new rival nerf gun because I have nerf wars a good bit and I think it would be good to have. this year I would like you to bring joy to my Great Grandfather because this is his first year in the nursing home.

Sicerly, Cameron Yeag
East Elementary
5th grade
Ms. Sharptons clas

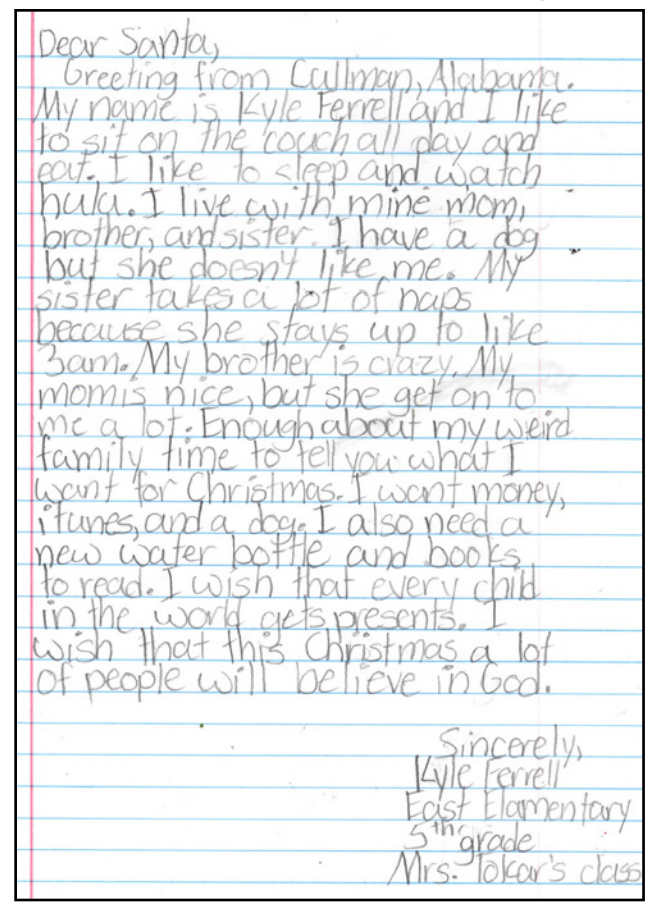
Ms. Tokar's 5th grade class, East Elementary



Dear Santa,

Greetings from Cullman, Alabama. My name is Carson Defoe, I am in 5th grade. I have two dogs that are cut. I have a loving family. I have two bruthers and two sisters that are nice. One thing I would like for Christmas is a Mountan bike. Anuther thing I would like is a applewatch. The last thing I would like for christmas is the iPhone X. Please dont forget about my mam mam she deserves a good christmas.

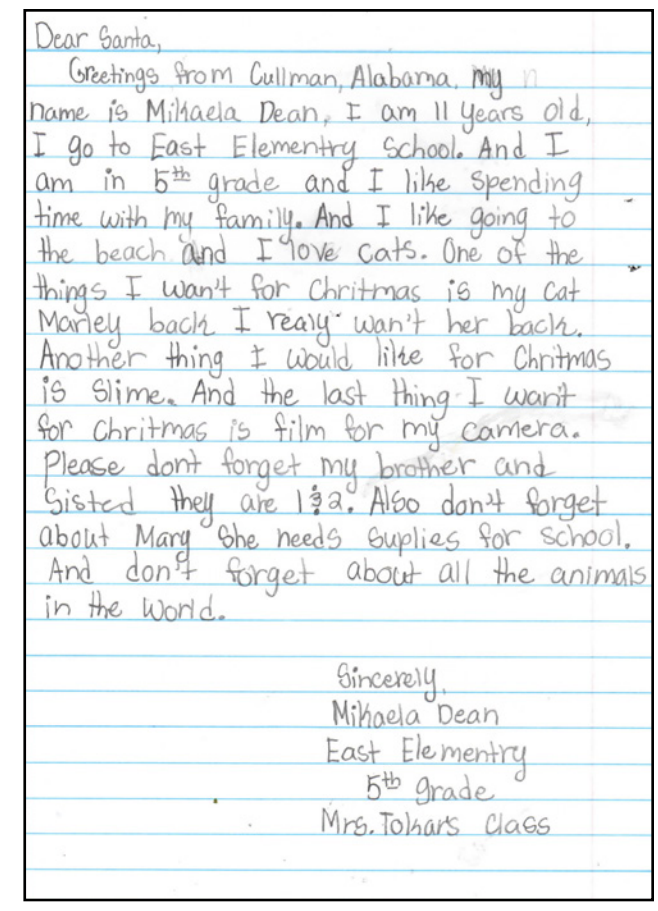
Sincerely
Carson Defoe
East Elementary
5th grade
MRS. Tokar's Class



Dear Santa,

Greeting from Cullman, Alabama. My name is Kyle Ferrell and I like to sit on the couch all day and eat. I like to sleep and watch hulu. I live with mine mom, brother, and sister. I have a dog but she doesn't like me. My sister takes a lot of naps because she stays up to like 3am. My brother is crazy. My mom is nice, but she get on to me a lot. Enough about my weird family time to tell you what I want for Christmas. I want money, itunes, and a dog. I also need a new water bottle and books to read. I wish that every child in the world gets presents. I wish that this Christmas a lot of people will believe in God.

Sincerely,
Kyle Ferrell
East Elementary
5th grade
Mrs. Tokar's class

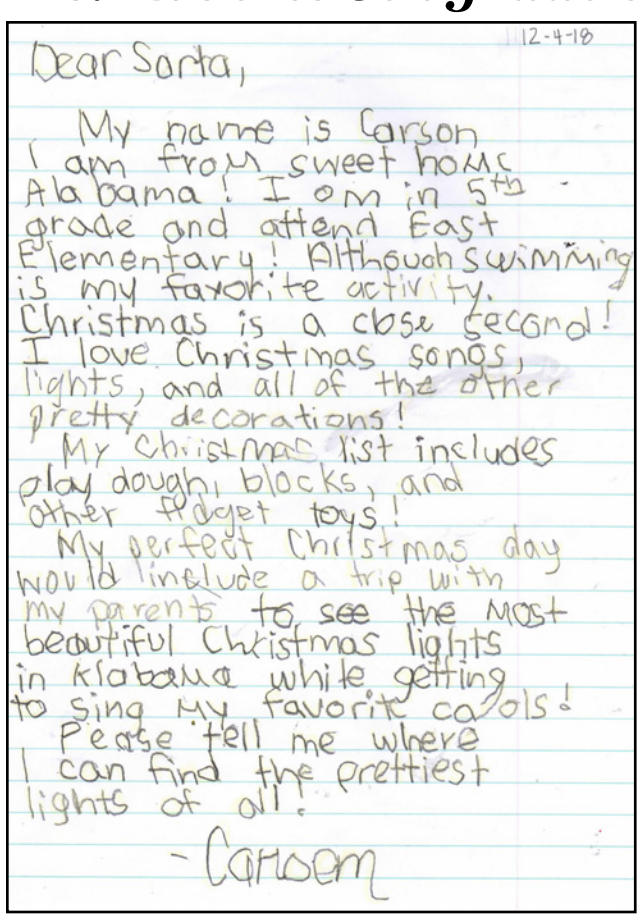


Dear Santa,

Greetings from Cullman, Alabama. My name is Mikaela Dean, I am 11 years old, I go to East Elementry School. And I am in 5th grade and I like spending time with my family. And I like going to the beach and I love cats. One of the things I want for Chritmas is my cat Marley back I reary want her back. Another thing I would like for Chritmas is Slime. And the last thing I want for Chritmas is film for my camera. Please dont forget my brother and Sisted they are 1 & 2. Also don't forget about Mary She needs suplies for school. And don't forget about all the animals in the World.

Sincerely,
Mikaela Dean
East Elementry
5th grade
Mrs. Tokars class

Ms. Roberts 5th grade class, East Elementary



12-4-18

Dear Santa,

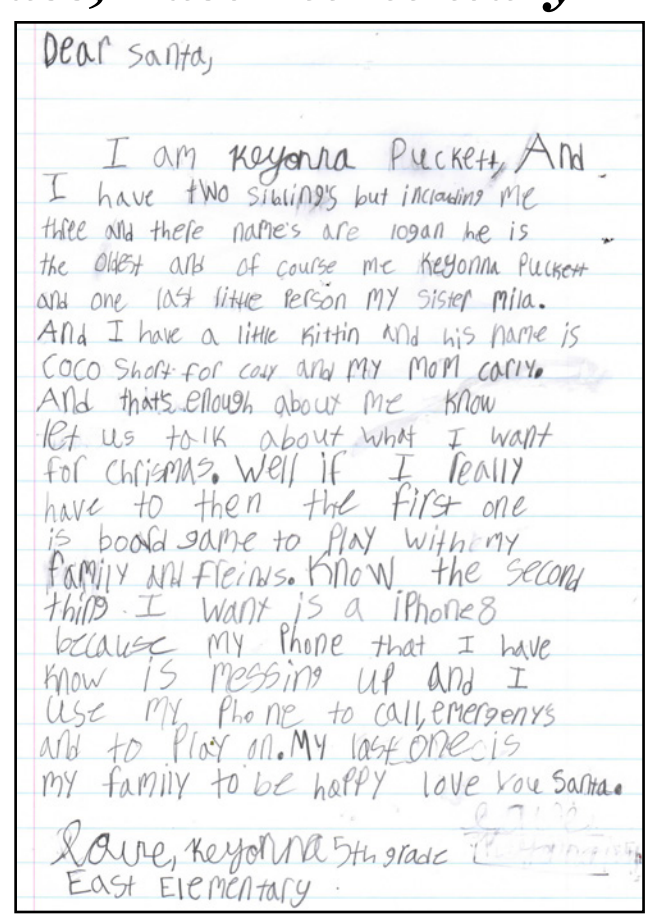
My name is Carson I am from sweet home Alabama! I am in 5th grade and attend East Elementary! Although swimming is my favorite activity. Christmas is a close second! I love Christmas songs, lights, and all of the other pretty decorations!

My Christmas list includes play dough, blocks, and other fidget toys!

My perfect Christmas day would include a trip with my parents to see the most beautiful Christmas lights in Alabama while getting to sing my favorite carols!

Pease tell me where I can find the prettiest lights of all!

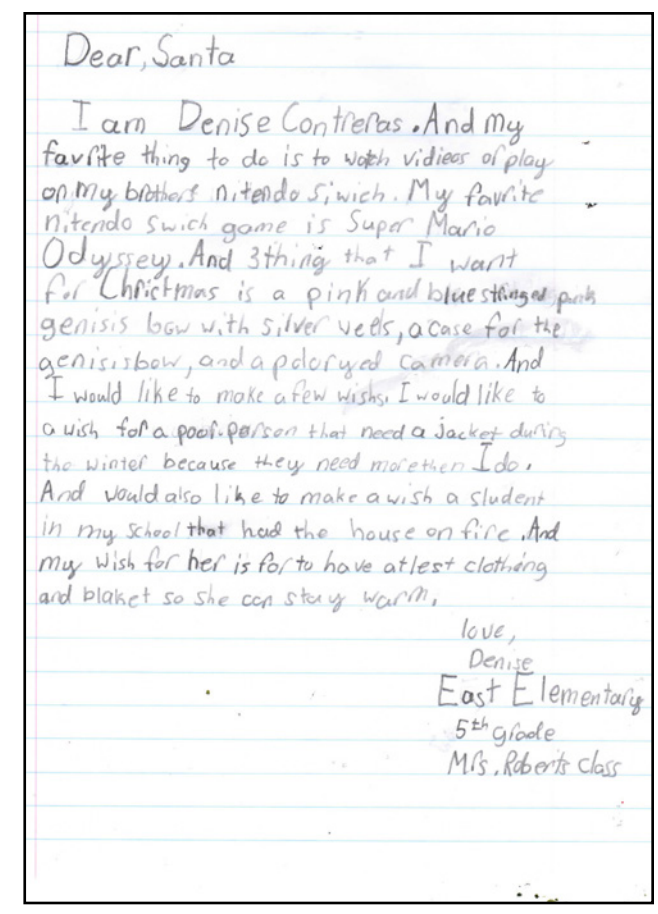
-Carson



Dear Santa,

I am Keyonna Puckett, And I have two siblings but including me three and these name's are logan he is the oldest and of course me Keyonna Puckett and one last little person my sister mila. And I have a little kittin and his name is Coco short for coy and my mom coriy. And thats enough about me know let us talk about what I want for Chrisms. Well if I really have to then the first one is board game to play with my family and freins. know the second thing I want is a iPhone8 because my Phone that I have know is messing up and I use my Phone to call, emergenys and to play on. My last one is my family to be happy love love Santa.

Love, Keyonna 5th grade
East Elementary

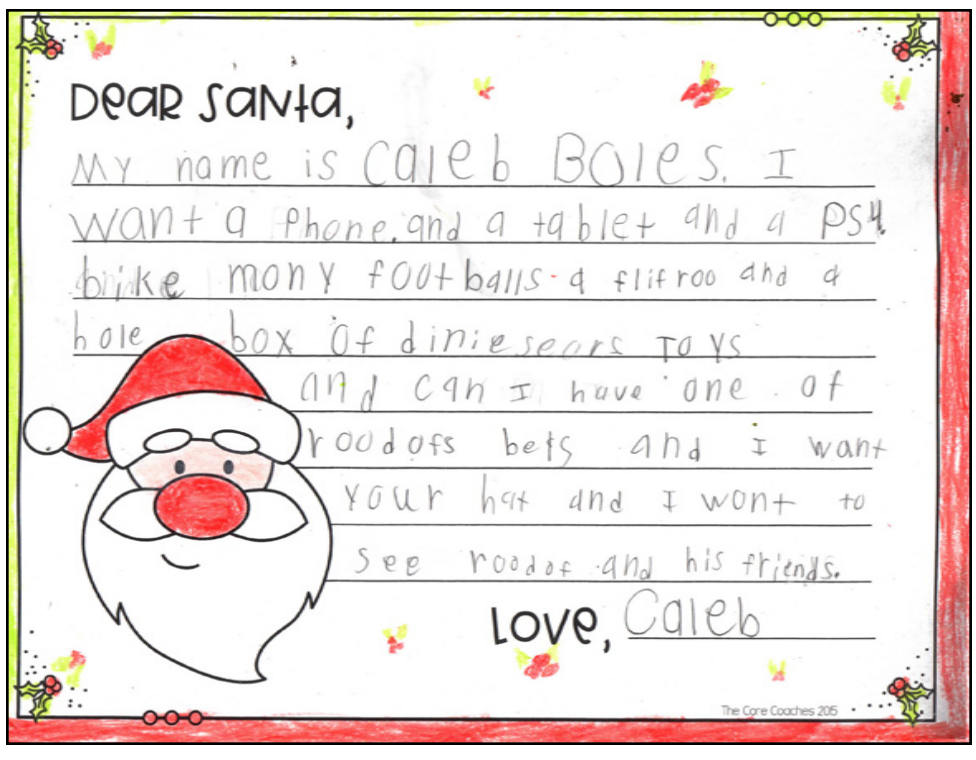


Dear, Santa

I am Denise Contreras. And my favrite thing to do is to watch vidieos of play on my brothers nitendo swich. My favrite nitendo swich game is Super Mario Odyssey. And 3thing that I want for Christmas is a pink and blue stringed punk genisis bow with silver veels, a case for the genisis bow, and a polaryed camera. And I would like to make a few wishs. I would like to a wish for a poor person that need a jacket during the winter because they need more then I do. And would also like to make a wish a student in my school that had the house on fire. And my wish for her is for to have atlest clothing and blanket so she can stay warm.

love,
Denise
East Elementary
5th groole
Mrs. Roberts class

Ms. Hutchinson and Ms. Cofer's 3rd grade class, Good Hope Elementary

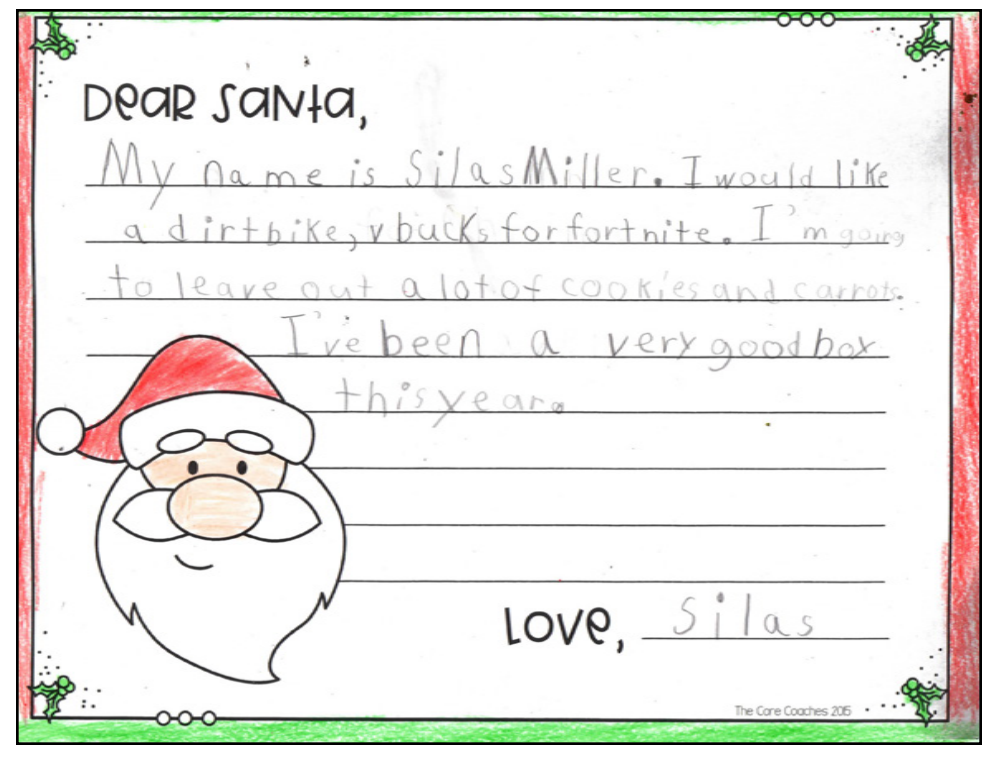


Dear Santa,

My name is Caleb Boles. I want a Phone, and a tablet and a PS4 bike mony footballs a flitroo and a hole box of dinie sears toys and can I have one of roodofs bels and I want your hat and I wont to see roodof and his friends.

Love, Caleb

The Core Coaches 205



Dear Santa,

My name is Silas Miller. I would like a dirtbike, v bucks for fortnite. I'm going to leave out a lot of cookies and carrots. I've been a very good box this year.

Love, Silas

The Core Coaches 205

Mrs. Robertson's 'Robin' Class, 1st Grade, Cullman City Primary School

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Kristina. I would like a bicycle, horses, motorcycles, baby dolls and Barbie dolls. I also want some cars. What are you and your reindeer doing? I listen to your songs and see you on TV.
Love, Kristina, 6 years old

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Trenton. I want a Nintendo Switch, FNAF lego set, Lego Jurassic World set, toy machine gun, Jumanji board game, monopoly FortNite, Motorcyle, Minecraft legos, StarWars Legos and Boxing Gloves.
Love, Trenton, 6 years old

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Ezra. For Christmas I want Pokemon cards, Let's Go Pinkachu Video game, Pie Face Canon, DC Super Villains video game, Star Wars Legos, and a musket.
Love,Ezra, 7 years old

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is AJ. I have been good. For Christmas I'd like Pokemon Legos Let's go Pinkachu, a T-Rex, an untame toy, and please bring my sisters a toy.
Love, AJ, 6 years old

Dear Santa,
Are you doing fine? My name is Caden. Can you give me the new Pokemon go Let's go Pinkachu, please? I'm a good boy too.
Love, Caden 6 years old

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Atticus. I'd like a motorcycle, soarball, Ninetendo Switch, Jumanji Lego set and board game, a drone, Jumanji video game, Minecraft and Star Wars legos, boxing gloves, Jurassic park Legos and a Jurassic park t-shirt.
Love, Atticus 7 years old

Dear Santa,
I am Caleb and my sister is Kendall and she is crazy. She is. My sister wants a Lolo doll and a kitchen playset and I want a motorcycle, lego set, Ninetendo Switch, a plane lego set, and Jurassic World legos. I love you.
Love, Caleb 7 years old

Dear Santa,
My name is Brianna. On Christmas will you bring me bubbles and a doll if I am good? Please bring gifts for my mom, dad, and brothers and sister too.
Love, Brianna 7 years old

Dear Santa,
How are you doing Santa? Are your reindeer doing good? Santa please send an elf to my house. I want a bunny and a flute and a trumpet. My name is Avery. I am 7 years old.
Love, Avery 7 years old

Dear Santa,
How are the elves doing? I want a twisty pet, a skateboard, a hoverboard, and a bunny. I also want a Ninetendo DS.
Love, Hayden 6 years old

Dear Santa,
My name is Adriana. All I want for Christmas is a doll. I love you.
Love, Adriana 6 years old

Dear Santa,
I want a motorcycle. I love you. I can't wait for Christmas. I've been good. Have you? Look at the back of my paper. I drew you a picture of presents. Ho Ho Ho!
Love, Presley 7 years old

Dear Santa,
My name is Millie. I love you. How are the elves doing? I can't wait until Christmas. I want to get a JoJo pillow, a JoJo bow, and a JoJo twisty pet. I love you Santa.
Love, Millie 6 years old

Dear Santa,
I love you. For Christmas I want lipstick, a dress, a JoJo shirt, a map, a cup, a hat, a doll, and toys.
Love, Julia 6 years old

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Mason. I want an X box 1, a flash game, and a motorcycle. How is Dasher?
Love, Mason 6 years old

Dear Santa,
I want legos, knee pads, a helmet, and a noise maker. My sister wants a phone and a cow dressing kit.
Love, Clayton 7 years old

Dear Santa,
I have been nice this year. I really like you Santa. You are fun. Please surprise my brother, sister, and me for Christmas.
Love, Tate 6 years old

Dear Santa,
I want an Ipod for Christmas, and a snow globe, and a bike. I also want a JoJo poster.
Love, Maci Jane 7 years old

Dear Santa,
I know I have already sent you a note but what else I would like for Christmas is a toy elf, more Barbie dolls, another book, and another American girl doll. That is the end.
From Samantha 6 years old

Dear Santa,
I'd like an LOL doll, a Moana doll, and stuff to play pranks like a fake spider. I also want fake crayons so I can prank my brother and dress up clothes. Thank you!
Love, Brookelyn 6 years old

Mrs. Anderson's 1st grade class, Cullman City Primary School

Dear Santa,
We all love you. We love you because you bring presents to us. We celebrate Christmas for Jesus and Santa. For Christmas I want a new backpack, a puppy, a car for my puppy, and a new tablet. I also would like an Elf, and a smart board.
Love, Lashanda R. (Age 8)

Dear Santa,
I have been very good this year Santa. This year I want a candy cane, doll, and a big car. I want an elf. I love Santa. Santa is very nice. Santa has presents and reindeer. Santa eats cookies and milk. Thank you, Santa.
Sincerely, Alexa A. (Age 6)

Dear Santa& Mrs. Claus,
I want a Rescue Pet and a LOL Capsule Doll and Dumbo in a blanket. a Num-Nums truck, and a Shopkins. Merry Christmas, Santa! I love you.
Sincerely, Kennedi B. (Age 7)

Dear Santa,
For Christmas I want a video game with Pokemon and Mario, a car that I can drive in, 14 books, a pet red panda, and an Osmo. Thank you, Santa.
Sincerely, Graham D. (Age 6)

Dear Santa,
I hope you had a great day. I love you! I hope I've been good; if not then I don't mind, but here's what I want. I want an LOL Hotel and LOL All Series Little Sister and Big Sister. I also want a baby alive.
Sincerely, Natalie F. (Age 6)

Dear Santa,
I have been very good all year. I want to see the reindeer. I want a toy horse and dinosaurs and dragons for Christmas. I love you, Santa. Merry Christmas!
Sincerely, Addison H. (Age 6)

Dear Santa,
I hope you are feeling good this year. I have been good this year. All I want for Christmas is a hover board and a Twisty Pet and a LOL doll and 15 of the Who Would Win? books and some jewelry. Do not bring these colors: red and brown. I want a present for my mom.
Sincerely, Lily H. (Age 6)

Dear Santa,
I hope you had a good year, Santa. I want a phone. I want a drone. I want an Elf on the Shelf and an Osmo and a toy helicopter and WWE fighters. I want a remote racecar.
Sincerely, Julian S. (Age 7)

Dear Santa,
How are you and Mrs. Claus? I want a tablet, bubble gum and a Twisty Pet and hot chocolate. I want candy, and I want a toy and an American Girl doll and a Barbie copy and a ball and white cheddar popcorn and a mug that you drink out of and a hammock for a baby and a biscuit and an elf.
Sincerely, Mary Grace P. (Age 6)

Dear Santa,
I hope you have a great Christmas. I have been very good. I want a Twisty Pet and an iPad and a car and an Xbox and a Baby Alive, slime and Barbies and a ChromeBook and a pool and an American Girl doll.
Sincerely, Jenna-Laine P. (Age 6)

Dear Santa,
How are you and Mrs. Claus? I want some toys and some other stuff. I want the Xbox Live Gold Pack, a robot dog and cat. I want a Go-Kart, a dirt bike and a phone.
Sincerely, Aaron N. (Age 7)

Dear Santa,
I hope you and Mrs. Claus have a great year! Your elves you sent to the house have been watching us. Now what I want is all the Lego City but only the Lego City Legos, more trains, and more trucks. Merry Christmas, Santa and Mrs. Claus!
Love, Davis N. (Age 7)

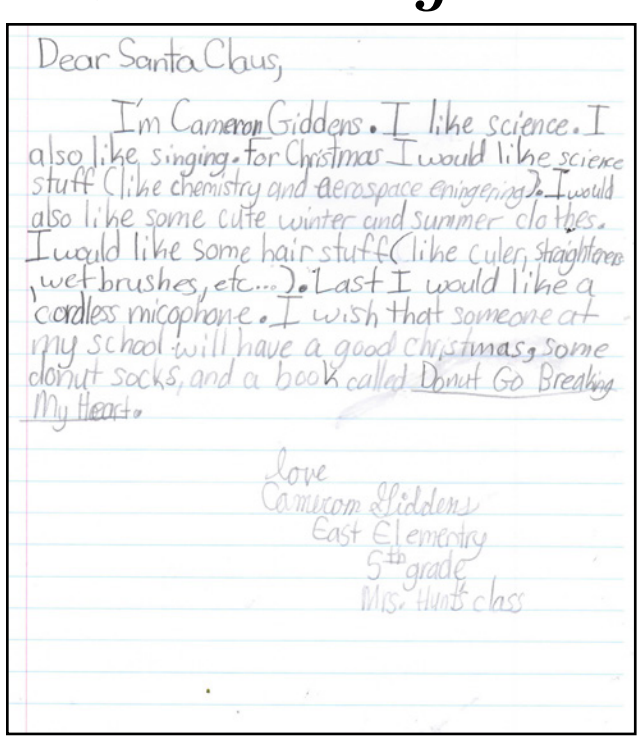
Dear Santa,
I hope you have a great day. I want a phone for Christmas to call Emily. I want a car for that I can drive for Christmas.
Sincerely, Mia S. (Age 6)

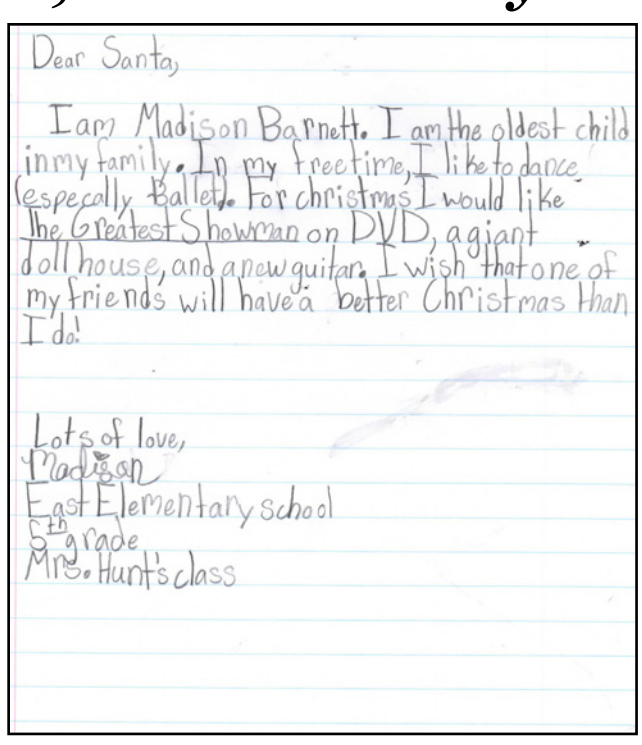
Dear Santa,
I want Witherstorm and Ander-Dragon, Diamond Armor and Diamond Armor Steve and Golden Armor Alex from Mine Craft.
Sincerely, Caden L. (Age 7)

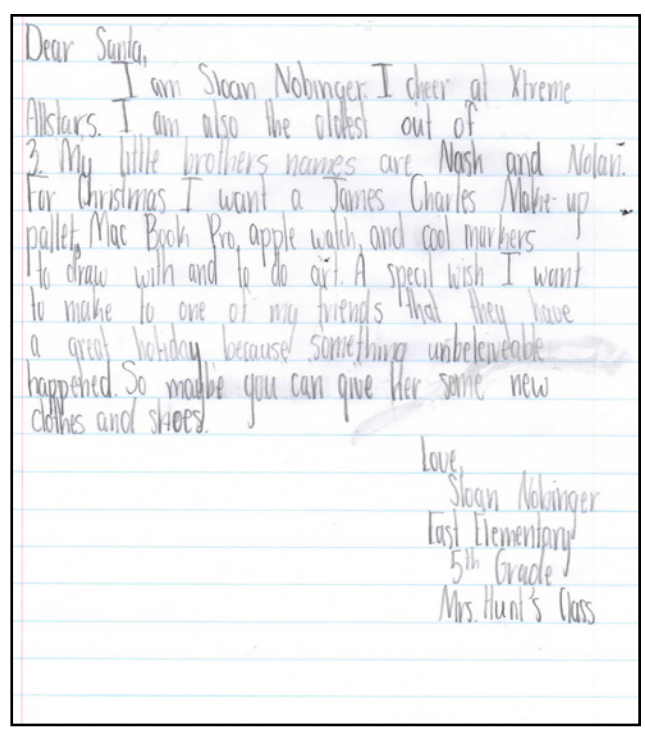
Dear Santa,
I want a dirt bike and an elf and a new school box. Merry Christmas!
Sincerely, Lukas H. (Age 7)

Dear Santa,
How are you and Mrs. Claus? I can't wait for you to come. Here is my list: stuffed animal, an ax, clothes, a lamp, a truck with a trailer, dirt bike and dog on it, square toe boots and a pocket knife.
Love, Sandler E. (Age 7)

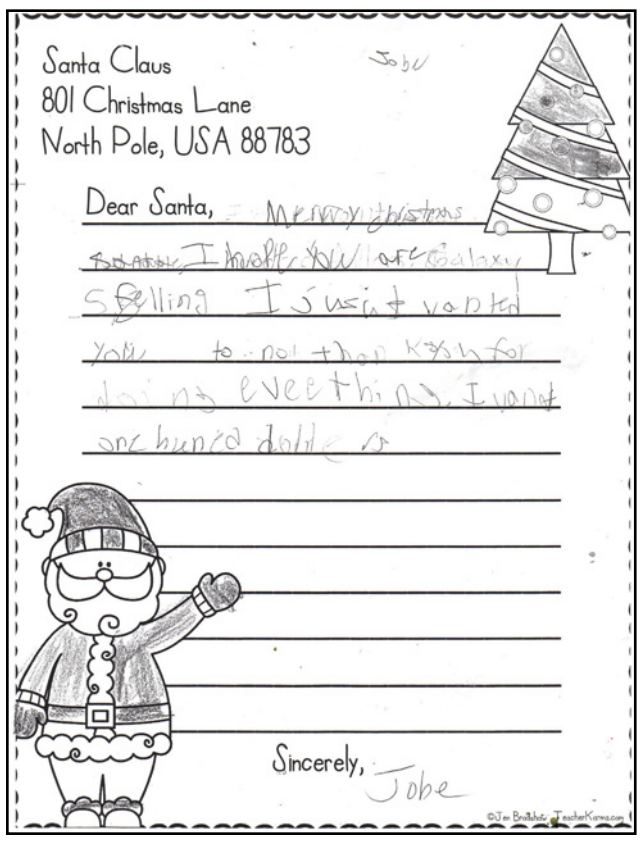
Ms. Hunt's 5th grade class, East Elementary

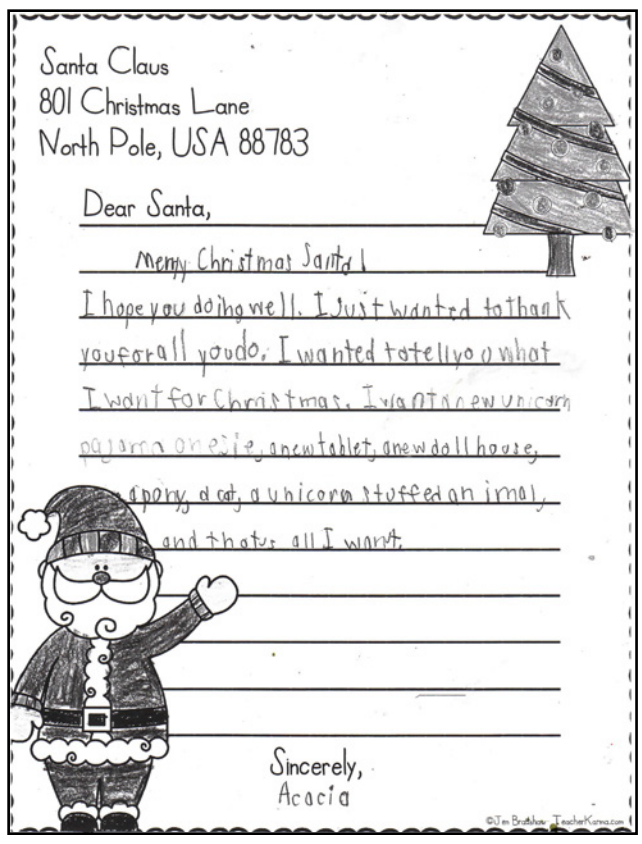

Dear Santa Claus,
I'm Cameron Giddens. I like science. I also like singing. for Christmas I would like science stuff (like chemistry and aerospace engineering). I would also like some cute winter and summer clothes. I would like some hair stuff (like curler, straightener, wet brushes, etc...). Last I would like a cordless micophone. I wish that someone at my school will have a good christmas, some donut socks, and a book called Donut Go Breaking My Heart.
love
Cameron Giddens
East Elementry
5th grade
Mrs. Hunt's class

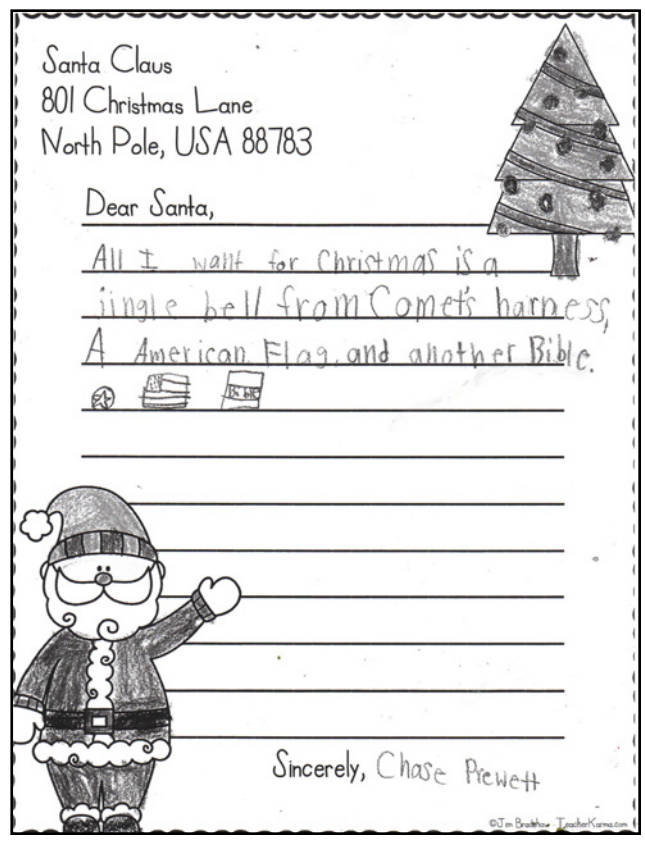

Dear Santa,
I am Madison Barnett. I am the oldest child in my family. In my freetime, I like to dance (especally Ballet). For christmas I would like The Greatest Showman on DVD, a giant doll house, and a new guitar. I wish that one of my friends will have a better Christmas than I do!
Lots of love,
Madison
East Elementary school
5th grade
Mrs. Hunt's class


Dear Santa,
I am Sloan Nobinger. I cheer at Xtreme Allstars. I am also the oldest out of 3. My little brothers names are Nash and Nolan. For Christmas I want a James Charles Make up pallet, Mac Book Pro, apple watch, and cool markers to draw with and to do art. A specil wish I want to make to one of my friends that they have a great holiday because something unbelieveable happened. So maybe you can give her some new clothes and shoes.
love,
Sloan Nobinger
East Elementary
5th Grade
Mrs. Hunt's Class

Ms. Sweatmon's 3rd grade class, Good Hope Elementary


Santa Claus
801 Christmas Lane
North Pole, USA 88783
Dear Santa, Merry christmas
~~Dear Santa~~, I hope you love Galaxy
~~S~~elling I just want you
to not than k~~s~~ for
doing everything. I want
one hundred dollars
Sincerely, Jobe


Santa Claus
801 Christmas Lane
North Pole, USA 88783
Dear Santa,
Merry Christmas Santa!
I hope you doing well. I just wanted to thank you for all you do. I wanted to tell you what I want for Christmas. I want a new unicorn pajama onesie, a new tablet, a new dollhouse, a pony, a cat, a unicorn stuffed animal, and that's all I want.
Sincerely,
Acacia


Santa Claus
801 Christmas Lane
North Pole, USA 88783
Dear Santa,
All I want for Christmas is a jingle bell from Comet's harness, A American Flag, and another Bible.
Sincerely, Chase Prewett



HEATHER MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Guests enjoy a wagon ride at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament Christmas Open House on Saturday.

FAITH

Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament holds Christmas Open House

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

HANCEVILLE – As a way to celebrate 19 years in Hanceville and to reach out to the community, the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament held an open house on Saturday, complete with a variety of sights and activities.

The first things visitors saw were the Christmas decorations spanning the grounds, from ribbons and wreaths on the light poles to a giant Christmas tree in front of San Miguel Castle, perfect for family photo ops. Lights woven into bushes and trees make for a dazzling nights on the grounds, and sightseers year-round can enjoy the permanent nativity display in the Creche Grotto (as well as donate a quarter or two for the votive candles).

This time of year, one of the bigger draws is the opportunity to take a festive ride around the grounds. The rides take place either in a horse-drawn carriage, for those with reservations, or a hay ride trailer for those spur-of-the-moment visitors. The rides will be put on hold until after Christmas and will resume on Thursday the 27th and Friday the 28th from 1-4:30 p.m., and Saturday the 29th from 10 a.m. to noon and 1-4:30 p.m. Drivers arriving on the grounds are urged to use caution as the wagon rides do cross the main entrance to the parking lots. Call 256-787-4121 to ask about ride reservations.

Guests can also enjoy free refreshments in the castle with coffee and hot chocolate, assorted holiday candy, and homemade cookies courtesy of the nuns.



HEATHER MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

One of the beautiful Christmas trees on display at The Shrine of a Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville

When asked about the decision to host an open house, pilgrimage assistant Lizzie Bomback said, "We really wanted to make sure the local community knew they were welcome to come. This place really is a gift to the community, and so we decided that Christmas was a good time to invite people out. We were hoping that people could walk around and be dazzled by the Christmas season and be renewed in their excitement for it, just have a moment to slow down during the busy time it brings and remember the beauty of it."

Bomback smiled, "This is a place where we want people of all faiths, all religions, people of no faith, to come and join us in our efforts to reach the world in evangelization. It's where people of all faiths can come and worship the Lord, and we want everyone to know that they are welcome here."

The Shrine will be holding a Christmas midnight mass on Christmas Day, with Christmas carols shortly before on Christmas Eve. A full schedule of the services for the 24th and 25th can be found at www.olamshrine.com/event/christmas/.

Wishing Everyone A Very Merry Christmas!



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Merry Christmas!



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Cullman City Hall, 204 2nd Ave. NE Cullman, AL 35055 cityhall@CullmanAL.gov



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Best Wishes For A 2018 Christmas Season!

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Mayor Kenneth Nail & The City of Hanceville Wish Everyone A Blessed and Very

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Wishing Everyone A



Merry Christmas!

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Merry Christmas From All Of Us!



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Freedom Insurance Agency

Gloria Williams – Agent

Office: (256) 737-0011 Fax: (256) 737-0616 Home: (256) 734-0463
168 County Road 1435, Cullman, AL 35058
gloria.williams@freedomagency.net



Have A Very Blessed And Merry Christmas!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Wishing Everyone A very Merrry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

CULLMAN COUNTY CCED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
DECEMBER 24, 2018

Almost a year in, Curt's Closet impacting lives in a big way

'Curt had the biggest, most giving heart, it does me good to honor his legacy in such a small way'

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com



CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Kicking off Curt's Closet's first sorting day were (L-R): Denise Williams, Courtney Herron, Christy Patterson, Brenda Rush, Ashley Wilson and Carrie Bentley back in January 2018.

CULLMAN – Ashley Wilson's world changed forever in May 2017 when her son Curt died in a tragic automobile accident on County Road 222. Two months later, she set in motion a plan not only to honor his memory, but to make the lives of other kids better in his name. In March 2018, Curt's Closet opened its doors as a youth clothing boutique with a twist: everything's free! It's a charity operation, but it's not a typical "clothing closet." Children and teens from disadvantaged families come and shop in a setting that feels more like a retail boutique, just without the cash register and card scanner. Wilson said she wanted kids, whatever their circumstances, to enjoy a normal shopping experience in the store.

As she prepared to open the store, she posted to the Curt's Closet website:

"Curt had a gift for loving others with the love of Christ... he brightened any room he walked into and touched many lives with his sincere care and concern for others. His wit and humor made everyone he came in contact with walk away smiling! I want to continue his gift of love by lessening the burden of the expenses that parents face each year as their children go back to school and throughout the year. In doing so, we collect donations of gently used/new clothing, shoes, backpacks and lunch boxes. There's no greater gift I can give in memory of my son than that of making a difference in the lives of those in need. It's what Curt would want... to make life a little easier and make people smile."

The Tribune caught up with Wilson this week to find out how her first year has gone.

"As 2018 comes to a close, I look back at our year at Curt's Closet and I am extremely grateful. I have said it numerous times; this community is the best! 2018 would not have been as successful without our supporters," said Wilson.

"Since opening our doors on March 1, 2018, we have served 418 families and 662 children. The need for basic needs, such as clothing and shoes, is so much greater than I imagined. I have heard heartbreaking stories and seen sad situations of families trying to do better for themselves. Their situation does not define who they are. We want to love on these families and help in any way we can, to get them back on their feet."

Reaching around the world

Wilson shared, "Not (only) have we been able to provide nice, clean clothing, shoes, backpacks and accessories to children right here in our community, but we have also sent three shipments to Uganda. Most of these children are refugees, who have had to flee to refugee camps due to their homes and villages being destroyed. Most are orphaned. I have received pictures of these children wearing clothing from Curt's Closet.

"This makes me so happy, knowing we are not only spreading the Love of Christ here but overseas. Helping others in need is what we are called to do. You can actually see these pictures as soon as you walk into Curt's Closet; they sit right under the picture of Curt.

"I know my precious Curt would be so happy to see all the good happening at Curt's Closet. Curt had the biggest, most giving heart, it does me good to honor his legacy in such a small way."

Christmas cheer here at home

Wilson said, "This week Curt's Closet was able to deliver over 200 new Christmas gifts to very deserving families, including turkeys and bags of groceries. These children, otherwise, would wake up on Christmas morning with no gifts to open. No child should experience that heartache. Once again, all this was possible with the help of this community."

Wilson recently began a combination shoe drive/fundraiser, which is still going on. Shoes needed here will be distributed here and, thanks to a partnership with other charitable groups, Curt's Closet will be paid for excess shoes that it sends for overseas distribution. The shoe drive, then, provides the local charity with both material and financial support.

Said Wilson, "The drive has been extended till after the first of the year, giving us extra time to reach our goal of 2,500 pairs of shoes. We are about 650 pairs from our goal. I am believing we will exceed our goal.

"I am overwhelmed by the response: we have had classrooms, churches, the Elks Lodge get involved. The shoes we do not use at Curt's Closet will be refurbished and sent to places like Haiti. This shoe drive is not only providing shoes for children here but also developing countries, all while raising funds for Curt's Closet. It is a win-win."

Community and business partners make it work

"I am truly blown away with the support everyone has shown to Curt's Closet," said Wilson. "From the multiple donations we receive weekly to keep our racks full, to the support of local businesses, such as Belk, If The Shoe Fits, Three Pears, Better Than Before, just to name a few.

"And of course, the gracious hearts of donors that believe in what we are doing at Curt' Closet, donors like the Apels and the Bentleys. There is no way to name everyone; we are so blessed with support.

"Our supporters made our first 10 months a huge success. I hope everyone knows how grateful we are; we could not do what we are doing without everyone's support, from a bag full of donations to a big check, it all makes a difference.

"Curt's Closet is so excited to see what 2019 holds. We are setting goals and working on making Curt's Closet even better to serve more.

"We already have plans for our first big fundraiser on May 4, 2019. Mark your calendar, trust me, you will not want to miss this fundraiser."

What it's all about

Volunteer Misti McCombs Easter took part in the recent delivery of Christmas joy to local families in need. She recounted on her Facebook page what happened next, and The Tribune thanks her and Wilson for their permission to include this very personal note.

After stopping to eat following one very special delivery, Easter wrote the two "got into our cars and headed to our respective homes. I'm not even sure if she knew I was still behind her when she got to the entrance of the cemetery, but I saw her turn and I knew what she was doing. She had to go tell her precious Curt about the blessings that took place today in his memory.

"Of course, he already knew because his presence follows her everywhere she goes, and his spirit lives on through every act of generosity and kindness extended by her.

"He's never 'gone.' He's always here. And he's up there...smiling down on her and holding her place. I hope she feels his love especially BIG tonight!

"So, forgive me for waxing a bit poetic. Forget the 'stuff' that has come to define Christmas and just be kindness, love & generosity to someone in need...it's the best gift you can give to yourself.

"Cherish your loved ones and SHOW them how much they mean to you by giving of yourself instead of focusing on the material things. Remember this sweet mother who can't physically hold her son and whisper an extra prayer for her tonight.

"And, most of all, remember our Heavenly Father who gave us His Son so that we have hope of a future that is SO MUCH more than this little sliver of life we're given here on this earth. Thank God there's that...this place is not our home."

Get involved!

Curt's Closet accepts new and gently used clothing, shoes, backpacks, lunch boxes and accessories. It only distributes new undergarments and socks, and these are always needed. And of course, tax-deductible monetary donations are always welcome.

If you'd like to donate, or if you are interested in volunteering, visit https://sites.google.com/view/curtscloset or www.facebook.com/cw20curtscloset/, or call 256-735-4557.

5 super easy Christmas recipes

Maggie Darnell
maggie@cullmantribune.com

PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

- 3/4 cup butter or margarine
- 2/3 cup evaporated milk
- 3 cups sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 packs of peanut butter chips
- 1 7-ounce jar of marshmallow creme

Put sugar, butter or margarine and milk in a heavy saucepan, bring to a full rolling boil over medium heat, boil for 4 minutes, stirring constantly. After 4 minutes remove from heat and add peanut butter chips, stir until chips are melted, add marshmallow creme and stir until fully incorporated. Pour into an 11 x 13 pan that is lined with buttered foil. cool overnight and cut into small squares. This is a very rich fudge.

Original recipe by Debbie Bearden-Darnell

FRUITY PEBBLES CANDY

- 1 package white almond bark
- 1 regular size box Fruity Pebbles

Melt almond bark in a large microwavable bowl. Pour in Fruity Pebbles. Mix until coated. Drop by teaspoonful onto wax paper, let cool until hardened.

Recipe by Debbie Bearden-Darnell

BRITCHES COOKIES

- 1 fruit cake mix
- 1 can of Eagle Brand Milk (any other sweet condensed milk will work too)
- 1 small can of coconut
- 1 cup of pecans
- 3/4 cup of flour

Mix together, dredge in flour. Bake for 25-30 minutes at 325 degrees.

ALMOND BARK PRETZELS

- White almond bark
- Pretzels

Melt white almond bark in microwave (have everything ready because it'll harden quickly after melting). Dip pretzels in bark. Lay on wax paper to cool.

CONNIE'S CANDY

- 12 oz. white chocolate
- 2 tbsp. peanut butter
- 1 cup peanuts
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 ½ cup Rice Krispies
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows

- Melt: 12 oz. white chocolate and 2 tbsp. peanut butter
- Fold in: 1 cup peanuts & pecans, 1 ½ cups Rice Krispies, 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- Mix all together and let stand 2 minutes. Drop by spoonfuls on wax paper and cool.

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Community with Carol: Hope for the Homeless

Carol Berry
Tribune Columnist

For the Christmas edition of Community with Carol, I wanted to showcase Hope for the Homeless, a division of Cullman's Little Pantry. The Little Pantry was installed in April 2017, but this division is brand new. Angie Young is the organizer and the only volunteer (other than her family) for this new outreach. During the Christmas season, we are more focused on loving our neighbor, so showcasing Hope for the Homeless was perfect.

Each person I interview comes to my home and we sit on my sofa to talk before we start the video. Angie was so tired that day, she had been at the Cullman Regional ER all night with a homeless man. He had pneumonia and was very sick. Not only did she and her fiancé take the man for medical attention, they also worked all morning trying to find a way to get his medication for him.

She was very tired, and her heart was so exposed during our talk. Her vision was clear to me: she was only doing what God called her to do. What He calls us all to do.....LOVE. Love our neighbor. She was overwhelmed with the number of people who needed her help and the lack of support to be able to assist them all.

"The need is great! It is much larger than I thought," Angie told me. Tears falling from her eyes, I could tell she was already overwhelmed after only three weeks of saying yes to this project. She believes there are 40 individuals homeless in Cullman. With the majority residing between Alabama Highway 157 / I-65 and U.S. Highway 31.

The vision for Hope for the Homeless is to provide services to break the homeless cycle. The first step Angie takes is meeting immediate needs: food, clothing, temporary shelter and medical attention, if needed. The long-term goals will be helping individuals find avenues to help themselves. Whether that is assisting with securing employment and housing or helping them find programs to address the care of the individuals mental health or physical well-being. Without this step, Angie is certain the cycle will continue.

To assist in this way, Hope for the Homeless needs your help! This is an outreach that is less than a month old, so volunteers are urgently needed. I hope you will watch the interview this week and then call Angie to be a part of helping others.

I am enjoying this new "gig" with The Cullman Tribune. Your wonderful feedback and support are greatly appreciated.

I hope each of you have a blessed Christmas!



BRITTANY HOWELL

Carol Berry with Angie Young

OPINION

Always Reforming: The true meaning of Christmas

Tom Fillinger
Tribune Columnist

The true meaning of Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus who lived in Israel 2,000 years ago and who died on the cross for our sins (1 Corinthians 15 1-4; 1 Peter 2:24). More specifically, when we use the word "meaning," we're talking about the purpose of his birth that Christmas is supposed to celebrate. His purpose was to enter into the world and become one of us, that he might deliver us from our sins. Jesus is not just any man. He is God in flesh (John 1:1, 14; Colossians 2:9). He is the second person of the Trinity who, by being born of the Virgin Mary, was made under the law (Galatians 4:4) and subject to the same temptations and limitations that we are. Christmas is the celebration of the historical event when God entered into our world so that he might display the perfection and holiness of God and that through his work of living perfectly and also dying on the cross for our sins, that all who trust in him would be saved from the righteous judgment of God.

"In this manner God loved the world, that He actually gave His unique one of a kind Son, for the express purpose that the ones believing in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him," (John 3:16-17). So, Christmas is supposed to be the time of year when we celebrate the birth of Christ. Unfortunately, it has become a commercial holiday rather than a religious one. It's mostly known as a time for businesses to make money, for people to give gifts, for children to be excited, for parties, etc. The "reason for the season" is supposed to be Jesus, not gifts, not parties, and not watching "the big game." Of course, having celebrations, attending parties and watching the big game are not wrong. It's just that the meaning of Christmas is supposed to be the recognition and appreciation of the birth of the one who loves us and died in our place.

Jesus' being born of a virgin was prophesied in the Old Testament.

• "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel," (Isaiah 7:14).

Jesus being God in flesh was prophesied in the Old Testament.

• "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace," (Isaiah 9:6).

• "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn," (Zechariah 12:10).

That Jesus would be preceded by a great Prophet was prophesied in the Old Testament

• A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God," (Isaiah 40:3).

Jesus Christ, Messiah and coming King, is the TRUE meaning of Christmas. Celebrate Him today!

Cullman County's Haney retires after almost 29 years

Heather Mann
Tribune Correspondent

CULLMAN – Beloved Cullman County employee Cherrie Haney retired on Friday, after almost 29 years of community-minded service. Haney, with Cullman County Economic Development (CCED) since 2005 and director of the agency since 2013, has spearheaded numerous community grant projects. She spent her first 15 years of her career with the County working at the Cullman County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The reason for the move to the CCED all those years ago? "I just wanted less stress, a job where I could be with my family a little more," she said before laughing. "Little did I know..."

For nearly 15 years, Haney worked with the municipalities around Cullman County to secure grants for community projects such as new equipment for volunteer fire departments, storm shelters, food pantries and road maintenance.

In fact, when asked if there were any outstanding memories she had from her career, she recounted a massive road repair project she undertook shortly after becoming director.

"We had almost $1.3 million in grants to help fix up our roads," she stated, "and we're always looking for more money to keep those roads in good condition.

"You know, we have the most miles of road of all the counties in Alabama, so we really need it."

Haney said the favorite part of her work with CCED was seeing projects come to fruition and then seeing the community enjoy those projects, like storm shelters, splash pads or new gear for volunteer fire departments.

CCED is also involved with the Cullman County People Against a Littered State (PALS), the Cullman County Farm-City Committee and Cullman Area Workforce Solutions (CAWS).

"All of these help our community to be the best it can be," Haney said.

Haney is president of the local chapter of PALS. In November, she was recognized at the state level at the Alabama PALS Governor's Awards program, when she received the Don Hines Memorial Award for her leadership of the program in Cullman County.

In October, she was honored at the opening of the new Carpenter's Cabinet food pantry in Colony when it was announced that the Cherrie Haney Community Development and Enhancement Award had been created in honor of Haney and her efforts on behalf of the town.

Looking back on her time with the CCED and other organizations, Haney spoke mostly about the teamwork that was essential to her work.



HEATHER MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

A retirement reception was held for Cullman County Economic Development Director Cherrie Haney, center, on Wednesday. With Haney are CCED Project Coordinators Tanya Sears (left) and Ashley Graves (right).

"There's a lot of teamwork involved in stuff like this: between me and my team, between us and the mayors and councils, between the local farmers and the local businesses.

"I work with so many people to help get them what they need in order to be the best they can possibly be, but I couldn't do that all on my own."

Haney also wanted to recognize her project coordinators Tanya Sears and Ashley Graves for their help and support, saying, "They are great coworkers, wonderful friends and amazing women."

As to why she chose to retire, Haney's reasons are simple. Her grandchildren and great-grandchild.

She said she wants to watch them grow up, something she couldn't do spending most of her time at work.

At the moment Haney said she is unsure of when a replacement director will be appointed or who the possible candidates might be, but she expressed hope that the office would serve her replacement as well as it had served her, saying "It might not be my job anymore, but it's still all of our jobs to be the best we can be, and to work together to make Cullman County the best it can possibly be."

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

