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– LIFESTYLE –

My view: There's plenty to do!

Meet Kale, an endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle, at The Cook Museum of Natural Science in Decatur.

» PAGE 8



CHRISTY PERRY/THE CULMAN TRIBUNE

– FEATURE –

'I try to keep it as natural as possible'

Meet Kelly Hayes of Urban Farm and Forage



"Our Urban Farm and Forage rainbow egg layers were featured in Backyard Poultry magazine."

KELLY HAYES

» PAGE 7

LIFESTYLE

Strange New Year's traditions from around the world



CANVA

Black-eyed peas

Tribune File
Contributor

New Year's Day is here, and people from all over the world are celebrating its arrival by doing some pretty strange things. While people here in Alabama might chow down on black-eyed peas, collard greens and ham hocks, others are doing their own thing, depending on where they live.

Nearly every country has its own special tradition for celebrating the first day of the year, but no matter what those rituals are, everyone does them for the same reasons. They do them in hopes of having a happy, healthy and wealthy New Year. Some of the traditions can be very simple, like eating a specific meal, but others can be rather, well, weird. Here are just a few of the customs from different parts of the world.

People in the Philippines like round things. To them, the custom is all about the money. They believe everything should be round on New Year's Day to represent coins, which bring wealth. They will eat round food, wear round clothes and use round objects. The sky's the limit – as long as it's round.

In Japan they ring all of their bells 108 times because of the Buddhist belief that doing so brings cleanness. The Japanese are also all smiles as they go into the New Year because they believe smiling will bring them good luck.

In Romania they throw their spare coins into the river for good luck. (This reporter has to wonder if divers go to the river later to scavenge all the coins. It would be pretty good luck to find all that loot!)

Belgium, like Cullman County, takes its livestock seriously. The only difference is, they take their seriousness to a whole new level; farmers in Belgium actually wish their cows a Happy New Year! Does anyone around here that do that?

The French like to keep things simple and delicious. Every New Year they eat stacks and stacks of pancakes. How about a pancake pig-out over here?!

» PAGE 6

BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Bill Smith
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STATE

ALDOI: What to Look for in Your Summary of Benefits and Coverage

Jennifer Bowen
Contributor

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – Health insurance plans can be complicated, but the right tools can help you understand what they cover and how much you'll pay when you need health care services. The Summary and Benefits and Coverage (SBC) is one of those tools. It helps when you're shopping for a health plan or when you want to better understand the plan you have. The SBC is a short list of benefits and deductibles, co-pays, and coinsurance amounts (cost-sharing). SBCs for different plans are laid out in the same way to make it easy for you to compare one with another. And the SBC can help you avoid surprise health care bills by explaining your plan and what your costs will be ahead of time. Your health insurance provider or your employer can provide you with your SBC.

Top considerations

An SBC is usually available when you shop for a health plan on your own or through work, or when you renew or change your plan. If you can't find an SBC for your plan, ask the insurer, your agent or your employer for one. Just remember, short-term health plans aren't required to give you an SBC. A short-term plan is one that only covers you for less than 12 months and doesn't have to provide minimum benefits or cover you for preexisting health conditions.

Things you should know

Remember, your SBC is just that—a summary. If you need more details, contact the health insurance provider.

Your SBC will contain information about your plan type, the coverage period of the plan, and whether it's an individual or family plan. The SBC provides coverage examples that show you what the plan would cover in common medical situations like diabetes care and childbirth. An SBC will tell you what is not covered under your plan. This information all varies by provider, so you can compare SBCs from multiple plans to see their differences.

Top 3 things to remember

1. Information on your insurance card about your plan and your cost-sharing can help you figure out what your out-of-pocket costs will be. You can also find more information to help you on the SBC.

2. Insurance providers and employer-sponsored health plans are required to provide an SBC and a uniform glossary of terms used in health coverage and medical care.

3. You can review a sample of an SBC at www.healthcare.gov/health-care-law-protections/summary-of-benefits-and-coverage/.

HOME

How your family can adopt healthier digital habits in 2021

StatePoint
Contributor

(StatePoint) – As we head into 2021, adults and kids alike may still be enjoying the excitement of digital devices received as gifts over the holidays. However, the new year is always a great time for a reset, so alongside those new devices, consider adopting some new digital habits.

Here are some great ideas for helping your family build healthier relationships with their digital devices:

• Get healthy: Not all screen time is wasted time. You can use your device in positive, productive ways that help your family work toward improved physical health. For example, a steps counter might encourage your family to move more or even take up running, while a yoga app can help guide your family through quick routines you can practice from the comfort of home.

• Get smart: Likewise, the members of your family can use their devices to exercise their minds. Encourage everyone to let their smartphones and tablets double function as e-readers, and to download apps that teach new skills and build knowledge. You can even try setting a goal as a family, such as learning a new language using the same app.

• Schedule digital downtime: Too much screen time is associated with poor quality sleep, increased anxiety and a range of other physical and mental health concerns, so be sure each day includes digital downtime. This is especially important if your family is working and learning from home right now. Make the most of these screen-free blocks by engaging in active play, moving, getting fresh air or spending quality time together.

• Get assistance: Making sure every member of the family is using their device only in safe and healthy ways is easier said than done, however, a parental guidance app can help. Using OurPact for example, the most comprehensive parental control app, you can remotely establish automated schedules for when internet, apps and the device itself are unavailable. Features include URL whitelisting and blacklisting, daily screen time allowances and iMessage/SMS blocking, helping ensure device usage passes your approval. Available at the iOS App Store and Google Play Store, parents can also sign up for an account at www.ourpact.com.

For better overall health and wellness, make 2021 the year your family adopts great digital habits.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Submit your calendar items or public notices to wendy@cullmantribune.com

St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank Closed until Jan. 4

The St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church will be closed until Jan. 4, 2021. It will reopen with regular hours Monday, Jan. 4, from 9-11:45 a.m. on regular days: Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings

The Grace of God group of Alcoholics Anonymous has open AA meetings (all are welcome) Monday and Thursday nights from 7-8 p.m. at the Carriage House, located next to Grace Episcopal Church, 305 Arnold St. NE Cullman. Contact phone numbers: 256-347-1097, 256-841-2209 or 256-708-1340

Church Services-Spirit Life Church of GOD

• Spirit Life Church of GOD, 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman
• Prayer meetings-Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Please join us to pray or come for prayer.
• Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
• Sundays at 10 a.m. adult, youth and children's classes; 11 a.m. children's classes; praise and worship, and message by Pastor Bobby Dodd

City, County Holiday Hours, Sanitation Schedules

• Cullman County offices will be closed Jan. 1 in observance of the New Year's holiday.
• Cullman County sanitation routes will run normally.
• City of Cullman offices will be closed Friday, Jan. 1 on New Year's Day.
• There are no residential sanitation/recycling services on Fridays, but commercial sanitation will run as normal on New Year's Day.

Cullman County Cattlemen and CattleWomen Annual Meeting Canceled

Our annual meeting was planned for Jan. 9, 2021 at Stonebridge Farms in Cullman. Due to the record number of COVID-19 cases and our annual meeting being 15 days after Christmas, we feel it is in the best interest of our members to postpone our annual meeting until a later date. We will reschedule and as soon as we have a date. You still need to renew your memberships so that you do not see an interruption in your Alabama Cattlemen's magazine and your other member benefits. We can do this for you. Please reach out to us on Facebook or get in touch with any of our directors and they can help you.

City of Cullman Planning Commission Meeting

Monday, Jan. 4 at 5:30 p.m. at Cullman City Hall

Holly Pond Town Council Meeting

Monday, Jan. 4 at 6 p.m. at the Guy Hunt Library

Fairview Town Council Meeting

Monday, Jan. 4 at 6 p.m. at Fairview Town Hall

Town of Berlin January 2021 Special Meeting

• Monday, Jan. 4 at 7 p.m. at the Berlin Community Center
• Discussion will include Farmers' Market building and weather alerts.

Baileyton Town Council Meeting

Monday, Jan. 4 at 7 p.m. at Baileyton Town Hall

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UAB: Staying well through a COVID-19 winter: experts offer solace

Mary Ashley Canevaro
Contributor

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – We've lived through a lot this year. Not only have we dealt with a global health epidemic that has impacted more than 67 million individuals, but we have also endured a complexity of social circumstances. As we embark on the winter season of this tumultuous year, we are met with shorter days, spiking COVID-19 cases and unconventional holiday plans.

Staying COVID-19 safe and protected is important, but tuning in to our well-being is just as critical.

"COVID-19 has posed a substantial threat to our physical wellness; but the ever-present danger posed by the virus, and even the social distancing practices themselves, have threatened other aspects of wellness," said David Rogers, M.D., MPH, chief wellness officer of UAB Medicine. "Practices that promote physical wellness must be combined with those that address the occupational, spiritual, emotional and intellectual features of our selves. Doing so will allow us to navigate through this adversity, emerge with an appreciation for wellness and be even more resilient for future challenges."

As a nation, we are experiencing a time of collective grief and heightened anxiety. Not only have individuals lost loved ones due to the pandemic, but other life losses have occurred, such as the loss of normalcy in celebrations, weddings and graduations. Feelings of anxiety, loneliness, depression and anger are common right now, and they may often exist simultaneously.

Clinical psychologists, integrative doctors and wellness experts from the School of Medicine and beyond have come together to give their top suggestions on how to brave the turbulent winter months.

Know that your feelings are normal

Megan McMurray, Ph.D., clinical psychologist in the UAB Medicine Office of Wellness, says that any range of emotions is common right now.

"This year has been filled with unprecedented uncertainty, which has led many people to experience feelings of anxiety and depression," said McMurray. "Anger has also been quite common, especially with the election and inconsistent mask-wearing. As the pandemic drags on, emotional fatigue has also cropped up."

McMurray acknowledges that many people are exhausted by performing constant risk assessments for otherwise normal activities.

"It's now becoming draining to continuously decide if daily activities are safe, like deciding whether to eat indoors or outdoors, if it's OK to schedule playdates for kids, or if it's safe to visit family during the holidays," she said. "When people do engage in social activities, they may experience guilt afterward, perhaps wondering if they put themselves or others at risk. The most essential thing to remember is that there's no wrong feeling right now."

Lean into your feelings

McMurray suggests that "leaning in" to difficult and complex emotions is healthy and crucial to well-being. There is a common assumption that negative emotions are 'bad' and that we should try to get rid of them. We commonly hear messages to 'think positive' or 'positive vibes only.' Fighting against our own feelings is a losing battle that causes even more suffering. To build resilience and a capacity to handle difficult experiences, we want to move through the difficult emotion and get to the other side, not step around the hard feeling or push it away.

Try this: To sincerely feel your feelings, McMurray suggests to stop resisting and turn toward the difficult emotion(s).

Then, take a deep breath and "sit with" the anxiety, fear, anger, guilt, sadness or other feeling — without judgment. Identify the emotions with descriptive words. For example, start with the most obvious feeling, then take it one step further. Feeling anger may also be described as feeling threatened, frustrated, withdrawn, devastated or resentful.

Last, imagine "opening up the door" to the emotion. This visual representation helps acknowledge and accept the emotion. There is power in identifying emotions.

Explore mindfulness

Similarly, mindfulness is a great tool to utilize through the winter months. Carolina Salvador, M.D., assistant professor of medicine and director of the Integrative Medicine, Wellness and Health clinic, recommends practicing a moment-by-moment awareness of sensation and feeling — without interpretation or judgment.

"When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we're sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future," said Salvador.

Salvador affirms that, as we go through these particularly challenging times and holidays, being mindful and aware of our thoughts without judgment, plus having compassion toward ourselves and others, could bring us the necessary strength to keep going. She says that mindfulness can stop rash reactions and help us respond in more beneficial ways. Mindfulness also helps us practice gratitude, which is scientifically proved to raise wellness levels.

"When you apply mindfulness, you remove judgment, which allows a different perspective," she said. "You find parts [of life] for which you can give thanks. Practicing mindfulness exercises can have many positive benefits, such as decreasing stress, anxiety and depression, reducing negative thinking and distraction, and improving mood."

Try this: Schedule out time in the day to slow down and pay attention to one routine activity. Be it drinking a morning coffee or eating lunch, notice the environment in that moment with all five senses. What do you smell, see, hear, taste and feel? What does the surrounding look like? Try keeping thoughts only on the present moment.

Nourish your physical health

During this time, well-being may be enhanced by practicing mindfulness for basic needs, too. Shorter winter days can make even the simplest of tasks feel daunting. When it comes to mealtime, many feel anxiety and stress during the pandemic about eating healthy, meal prep and buying groceries. Riley Thornton, RDN, L.D., wellness manager of UAB Employee Wellness, suggests planning ahead when possible.

"Whether it's making an extra serving at dinner to eat at lunch the next day, saving leftovers in the freezer, or adding more shelf-stable items (whole grain pasta, brown rice, beans, lentils) to your shopping list, give yourself a head start on meals by planning ahead in the most convenient ways for you," said Thornton.

Another simple way to stay physically well through the winter is to stay hydrated. With the cold and dry months, it's easy to forget to drink enough water. But staying hydrated comes with a copious amount of physical and emotional perks.

"Being properly hydrated is key to maintaining good health and contributes to many important body functions," she said. "While plain water is a great first choice to stay hydrated, other liquids and some foods can also contribute to your hydration status. Consider drinking 100 percent orange juice fortified with vitamin D, adding frozen berries or citrus fruits to plain water, or lightening lemonade by adding extra water. Get creative and mix up your hydration habits throughout the day. To monitor your own hydration, pay attention to the color of your urine and aim for it to be more pale yellow than dark yellow."

Try this: Focus on balance, moderation and variety — rather than getting it "right" every day. Employ moderation to enjoy the foods you love while also consuming meals similar to those on Thornton's suggested resource: MyPlate Guidelines. Think of variety when you look at your plate, aiming for different food groups that provide different vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin D, iron, vitamin C and calcium.



UAB

Incorporate mindful movement

McMurray suggests that emotional and physical health are inextricably linked.

"Prolonged stress, like what many of us are experiencing during COVID-19, can take a toll on all systems of the body, from increasing the risk of cardiovascular problems to weight gain," she said. "Poor emotional health can weaken the body's immune system. We also have a tendency to reduce our self-care activities when emotionally distressed, and may not feel like exercising, eating nutritious foods or taking medicine as prescribed.

"We may resort to unhealthy eating patterns, stream too many shows or drink too many glasses of wine before bed, all of which can lead to further decline in overall health."

Mindful movement can help alleviate symptoms of physical and emotional stress. Incorporating elements of mindfulness into an exercise routine can be done by placing as much attention as possible on the movements of the body, breathing and surroundings.

Research suggests various benefits to the practice of mindful movement, including lower stress and anxiety, as well as improved concentration. Mindful movement is being intentional and aware of every move, and focusing on how movements make you feel.

Thornton adds that balancing foods with your activity throughout the day is key to a mindful emotion/body connection.

Try this: Prioritize movement, even in small amounts, throughout the day. Try yoga or even a simple walk outdoors. During movement, try to focus on how your body is feeling, as well as what's going on in the surrounding environment. If your mind starts to wander (and it will), gently bring your awareness back to the present moment.

Practice wellness at work

For some, this year has blurred the lines of personal and professional life with the normalization of remote work. For others, continued on-site work has been a source of stress due to constant safety concerns and risk assessment. In a place where we spend 40 hours or more of our time, we need tools to feel well at work, too. Lauren Nassetta, M.D., chief wellness officer of the Department of Pediatrics, suggests that healthy work environments increase employee engagement and positively impact well-being.

"Engaged employees are less likely to develop job burnout and are more likely to contribute significantly to the success of the team or workgroup," said Nassetta. "Happier employees are not only more physically healthy than unhappy ones, they are also more creative, more productive and more likely to stay in their positions as part of the team."

Nassetta confirms that workplace culture is where work wellness starts.

"Stress and burdens are inherent in any job, and can lead to negative emotions that prevent thriving," she said. "Generating a positive work culture is dependent on the values, behavior and shared experiences of each team member.

"Creating a positive work culture starts with making wellness a priority, and then creating necessary systems and encouraging behaviors that support it. An environment in which workers feel both physically and emotionally safe is an essential foundation on which to build trust and engagement."

Nassetta suggests asking "Can this be changed?" when we face a stressful incident or numerous stressors at our job. If so, work to make it better. If not, change the perspective. It is often our thoughts about something, not the thing itself, that determine our feelings.

Try this: Start by separating facts and thoughts. Let's look at a burdensome new company policy as an example. Re-frame an immediate reaction of "That is the worst new policy ever!" into a responsive consideration: "The new policy states ..." (facts) and "I dislike it because ..." (thoughts). From here, we can choose new thoughts that result in positive feelings, such as "I dislike parts of the policy, but it might be helpful because ..." Re-structuring the situation more positively is essential to maintaining joy, and brings about the possibility to enjoy work responsibilities even more.

Invest time in long-term wellness

Counseling may be a good pathway for longstanding wellness. Tami Long, Ph.D., LPC, director of the UAB Employee Assistance and Counseling Center, says that counseling gives individuals struggling with life challenges — big or small — a place to be heard, a place to engage in self-exploration and a place to identify effective coping strategies to reduce stress.

"Counseling is important year-round," said Long. "However, during the winter months, some individuals are more susceptible to seasonal affective disorder or 'winter depression,' due to the cold temperatures, gray cloudy days and the sun setting earlier. It's important to be aware of mental health and well-being by monitoring mood to determine shifts in thought patterns, behaviors and actions that may warrant seeing a counselor."

Likewise, Long says that if well-being is put on the back burner, then the result for many is increased anxiety, depression, or other mental health-related problems that will eventually impact relationships at home and work.





Auburn Tigers in the NFL: Week 16 rundown

Greg Ostendorf
AU Athletics

It was a solid week for former Auburn cornerbacks Jonathan Jones and Jamel Dean who are both ranked among the top 15 at their position per PFF. That and more in the Week 16 NFL rundown.

BEST OF WEEK 16

Derrick Brown, DL, Carolina Panthers

A week after recording his first two NFL sacks, Brown proved disruptive yet again in Carolina's 20-13 win over the Washington Football Team. The rookie defensive lineman finished with two QB pressures, one hit on the quarterback and two pass deflections.

It was the sixth straight game in which Brown has had multiple pressures, and he now leads all rookies with 34 pressures on the season. His PFF grade (60.7) is third highest among all defensive rookies taken in the first round, trailing only Chase Young (87.7) and A.J. Terrell (64.4).

Jamel Dean, CB, Tampa Bay Buccaneers

With teammate and fellow Auburn alum Carlton Davis out, Dean earned the start in Saturday's 47-7 win over the Detroit Lions. The second-year cornerback played every defensive snap and finished with two tackles while the defense held the Lions to 113 yards passing, 186 total yards and no offensive touchdowns. The only points came on a special teams touchdown. With a PFF grade of 77.0, Dean is tied for 10th among all NFL cornerbacks.

Jonathan Jones, CB, New England Patriots

Making his first start since Week 8, Jones stepped up with eight tackles and forced a fumble in the first quarter where he punched the ball out of the wide receiver's hands. Though it was a rough night for the Patriots defense as a unit, Jones was a bright spot.

Tasked with covering Cole Beasley in man-to-man, the fifth-year cornerback held Beasley to just three catches for 17 yards. Jones is currently ranked 13th overall at his position with a PFF grade of 76.2. He's also third on the team with 69 tackles this season.

OTHER TIGERS IN THE NFL

- Peyton Barber, RB, Washington Football Team
- Daren Bates, LB Tennessee Titans
- Angelo Blackson, DE, Arizona Cardinals
- Josh Bynes, LB, Cincinnati Bengals
- Daniel Carlson, K, Las Vegas Raiders
- Byron Cowart, DL, New England Patriots*
- Chandler Cox, FB, Miami Dolphins
- Marlon Davidson, DL, Atlanta Falcons
- Carlton Davis, CB, Tampa Bay Buccaneers
- Rudy Ford, DB, Philadelphia Eagles
- Josh Harris, LS, Atlanta Falcons
- Noah Igbinoghene, CB, Miami Dolphins
- Kerryon Johnson, RB, Detroit Lions
- Carl Lawson, DE, Cincinnati Bengals
- Cam Newton, QB, New England Patriots
- Cody Parkey, K, Cleveland Browns
- Darius Slayton, WR, New York Giants
- Braden Smith, OL, Indianapolis Colts
- Jarrett Stidham, QB, New England Patriots
- Neiko Thorpe, CB, Seattle Seahawks

DNP (Reserve/Injured)

- Montravius Adams, DL, Green Bay Packers
- Shon Coleman, OT, San Francisco 49ers
- Jack Driscoll, OT, Philadelphia Eagles
- Dee Ford, DL, San Francisco 49ers
- John Franklin, WR, Tampa Bay Buccaneers*
- Brandon King, LB, New England Patriots
- Dontavius Russell, DL, Jacksonville Jaguars
- Daniel Thomas, DB, Jacksonville Jaguars
- C.J. Uzomah, TE, Cincinnati Bengals

Practice Squad

- Nick Coe, DE, Miami Dolphins
- Blake Countess, DB, Philadelphia Eagles
- Javaris Davis, CB, Miami Dolphins
- Mike Horton, OG, Carolina Panthers
- Devaroe Lawrence, DT, Washington Football Team
- Derrick Moncrief, LB, Los Angeles Rams*
- Arryn Siposs, P, Detroit Lions
- Chad Slade, OG, New York Giants
- Prince Tega Wanogho, OT, Philadelphia Eagles
- Duke Williams, WR, Buffalo Bills

**AU lettermen*



TODD VAN EMST/AU ATHLETICS

Head Coach Bryan Harsin arrives in Auburn for his introductory press conference on Christmas Eve.

Crimson Tide in the NFL Spotlight: Week 16

UA Athletics
rolltide.com

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – The 16th week of the 2020-21 season in the National Football League wrapped up on Monday. Below is a look at some of the highlights from Week 16 by former Crimson Tide players currently in the NFL.

Former Alabama tight end Irv Smith Jr. had a huge day for the Minnesota Vikings. Smith hauled in a season-high six passes for 53 yards and two touchdowns. Joining Smith with impressive receiving performances were Amari Cooper and Calvin Ridley.

Cooper racked up 121 yards on four catches in the Dallas Cowboys' win over the division-rival Eagles to officially knock Philadelphia out of playoff contention. Ridley caught five passes for a team-high 130 yards in the Atlanta Falcons matchup with the Kansas City Chiefs. With his performance on Sunday, Ridley ranks fifth in the NFL in receiving yards.

On Sunday night, Derrick Henry carried the load for the Tennessee Titans. Henry rushed for 98 yards on 23 carries as the former Heisman winner continues to lead the NFL in rushing yards on the year with 1,777.

On the defensive side of the ball, two former Tide linemen contributed in a big way. Jarran Reed helped the Seattle Seahawks clinch a playoff berth with his performance, totaling three stops, including two tackles for loss and two sacks, to go with one quarterback hurry.

Da'Ron Payne stuffed his stat sheet for the Washington Football Team with four tackles, including two tackles for loss and one sack, while also adding one quarterback hurry.

Former Tide defensive back Minkah Fitzpatrick helped Pittsburgh continue their successful season thanks to his output this past week. Fitzpatrick tallied eight tackles and broke up one pass in the Steelers' win over the Indianapolis Colts.

Rounding out the defensive group was rookie Xavier McKinney. The New York Giants' safety recorded a season-high eight tackles against the Baltimore Ravens.

Get all the latest information on the team by following @AlabamaFTBL on Twitter and Facebook and AlabamaFBL on Instagram. General athletic news can also be found at UA_Athletics on Twitter and Instagram and AlabamaAthletics on Facebook.



UA ATHLETICS

Former Alabama Tight End Irv Smith (82) caught six passes and a pair of touchdowns for the Minnesota Vikings Sunday.

Troy closes 2020 with dominant victory over Carver College

Troy Athletics
troytrojans.com

TROY, Ala. – The Troy basketball program closed 2020 and its non-conference schedule in style Monday night, earning a dominant 88-35 victory over the Carver College Cougars at Trojan Arena.

In total, 12 different Trojans (5-4) reached the score sheet led by Nick Stampley and Zay Williams. Stampley's 17 rebounds were a career-high and combined with his 16 points gave the senior his third double-double of the season.

Williams' 15 points mark the sixth time in nine games that the forward has scored at least 10 points in a game.

For the contest, Troy shot an efficient 35-for-66 (53 percent) and outrebounded Carver 53-29.

After the Cougars (0-22) won the opening tip and Bryson Scott nailed a triple, the Trojans used a 15-0 run over the next 5:06 of action to open a 15-3 lead with 14:30 to play in the period. The outburst was sparked by five points from Zay and a Stampley triple.

Carver and Troy split the next 20 points, as Troy lead 25-13 with 8:23 to play in the opening period. From that point on, the Trojans scored 18 of the next 20 to take a 43-15 advantage into the break. Highlights from the outburst included five key points from Desmond Williams and an exclamation point dunk from Rory Pantophlet.

Following the halftime break, The Trojans used a quick 17-4 outburst to take a decisive 62-19 lead with 12:53 to play. The run was capped by freshman Marquel Bryant's first career points.

Over the next five minutes, Carver answered with 12-8 run to cut the Troy lead to 75-31 with 6:25 to play.

Over the final 6:25, the Trojans held Carver to just four points. The biggest highlight from the span was a 3-pointer from freshman Nick O'Brien with just 90 seconds to play.

Troy returns to action Friday night for the Sun Belt Conference opener at App State. Tip-off from Boone is set for 5 p.m. Central.

Inside the boxscore:

• Coach Scott Cross missed tonight's game due to a health issue in his immediate family.

• Cross is expected to return for Troy's weekend series at App State.

• With the victory tonight, Trojan Arena remains a perfect during the 2020-21 school year. Troy volleyball

• Stampley finished just three rebounds shy of the Trojans first 20 rebound game since Fred Spencer back in 1996.

• Stampley's 17 rebounds are the most by a Trojan since Jordan Varnardo grabbed 15 at St. Louis in 2018 (Nov. 10).

• The forward recorded his third double-double of the season, and his fourth career double-double.

• Troy recorded a season-best 15 assists.

• The Trojans have allowed just 137 points over the last five games. Troy held Carver to just 20 points in the second half tonight.

• Carver hit just 14 field goals Monday night. It's Troy's second sub-15 field goal defensive performance of the season.

• Troy outscored Carver 58-8 in the paint.

• O'Brien saw three minutes and 17 seconds of action. It was his first appearance of his Troy career.

Acting head coach Kenneth Mangrum:

"We told our guys before the game that tonight was about Troy playing Troy, not Carver.

"We set specific goals that we hit. We had 16 kills tonight (three stops in-a-row on defense) and held them to 23 percent shooting which was way below the 38 percent goal that we set. We also wanted to outrebound them by at least 15, and we outrebounded them by 24. We were able to hit our goals and young guys that haven't had a chance to play were able to get in and shine."

On Nick Stampley's performance:

"Nick is a gritty player and he's able to rebound the ball because of his heart and determination.

"Nick knows that when we miss a shot it's his job to go and get it.

"Tonight, Carver didn't box him out and he was able to get some free rebounds. And then at times we went up and grabbed them like a grown man. I think half of his points tonight we off of rebounds."



TROY ATHLETICS

The Trojans pounded Carver College 88-35 in their final game of 2020.

Shots from this week's Cullman County Youth Basketball Tournament







KATIE DRUMMOND/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Local teams of different ages have been playing games in multiple locations across the county during the week.

Bill Smith
BUICK GMC

BEST WISHES FOR A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

NEW 2021 GMC ACADIA
FWD Denali
!!!!!!!!!!!!! LOADED !!!!!!!!!!!!!

LIST ~~$52,855~~ STK#17096
NOW $40,995*

NEW 2021 BUICK ENCLAVE
Avenir FWD

LIST ~~$60,700~~ STK#14033
SALE PRICE $47,995*

NEW 2021 BUICK ENCORE
Preferred FWD

LIST ~~$25,895~~ STK#14004
NOW $16,995*

NEW 2021 GMC SIERRA 1500
Crew Cab Short Box 4-Wheel Drive SLT

LIST ~~$59,840~~ STK#17358
SALE PRICE $46,995*

NEW 2020 GMC TERRAIN
FWD SLT

LIST ~~$35,965~~ STK#08380
NOW $24,995*

Bill Smith BUICK GMC
*Notates all rebates applied, must have 2005 or newer qualifying trade in. Prices are plus tax, title, & fee. Colors may vary.
BILLSMITHBUICKGMC.COM • 1940 SECOND AVE NW • CULLMAN, AL 35055 • 256-734-4472
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Traditions (from Front)

People in Colombia must love to travel. On New Year's Day they carry their suitcases around with them all day in hopes of having a travel-filled year. That seems like a lot of work, huh?

Denmark's tradition is pretty interesting. People climb on top of chairs and literally "jump" into the New Year to bring good luck.

Besides throwing buckets of water on each other, folks in Thailand also smear each other with gray talc. Maybe they use the buckets of water to wash the talc off after they have been smeared?

How about a sleepover in the cemetery? In Chile, families get together and actually spend the night in the company of their long gone loved ones by sleeping in cemeteries.

Just like the farmers in Belgium, Romanian farmers try to communicate with their cows. The twist is, if they succeed it means bad luck for the year. Who wants to eavesdrop on one of those conversations!

This is a good one! In Ireland, they actually hit the walls with bread to get rid of evil spirits. Bread!

In some parts of South Africa people throw furniture out their windows. Now that's an expensive tradition!

Frozen tree trunks are a hot item this time of year in Siberia. People there jump into frozen lakes carrying them!

In Panama, statues are made of anyone and everyone famous. Then they are burned as a way to start the New Year off with good luck. Why famous people and not just the average guy down the street?

The Scottish people are rather competitive. Scotland's New Year tradition consists of people racing through their houses, headed for the door. They believe the first person to cross the threshold of the home in the New Year should carry a gift for good luck. No word on what that gift is.

Most of us have never heard of such oddball New Year's activities, but eating black-eyed peas surely sounds weird to those in other parts of the world. To each his own!

Happy New Year and pass the peas, please.

This story originally ran in December 2016.

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM
The Cullman Tribune

LEGALS

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF LOUIS E. PRICE, DECEASED * IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA. * CASE NO.: PC2020-205

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary having been granted to SCOTT CARPENTER, as Personal Representative of the Estate of LOUIS E. PRICE, on the 17th day of December, 2020, by the Honorable Tammy Brown.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all persons having claim against the said Estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

Scott Carpenter
SCOTT CARPENTER, Personal Representative of the Estate of LOUIS E. PRICE, deceased

TO: The Publisher of The Cullman Tribune:

Please publish the foregoing notice once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks and send an Affidavit of Publication to the Judge of Probate

Prepared by:
Law Firm of Nail & Sparks, LLC
Pamela E. Nail
Attorney for Petitioner
200 Second Avenue, Southwest
Cullman, Alabama 35055
Telephone: (256) 734-3342

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE

PB WIL BK 99 PG 245 - 12/17/2020 09:26 AM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO.: PC2020-274

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF TRAVIS ODELL DINGLER, DECEASED.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Letters Testamentary on the Estate of said deceased have been granted to Peggy Jean Coggins on the 17th day of December, 2020, 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.

Peggy Jean Coggins
Personal Representative

To the publisher of *The Cullman Tribune:*

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

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate

Steven C. Smith
Attorney for the Personal Representative
Smith & Smith, LLP
P. O. Box 398
Cullman, AL 35056-0398
(256) 734-4721

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2017-900182

Shallewmist Burge

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Shallewmist Burge, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $2,561.90 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2017-900349

Angela Hooper

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Angela Hooper, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $1,529.53 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2016-900558

Delana Dingler

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Delana Dingler, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $1,607.92 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2017-900043

Kenneth Woods

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Kenneth Woods, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $717.22 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2015-900441

Brad Grady

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Brad Grady, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $2,163.85 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2016-900176

Christopher Bailey

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Christopher Bailey, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $379.24 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2015-900289

Pond View Farms

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAWSUIT

Defendant, Pond View Farms, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $929.42 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2015-900545

Robin Canaday

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Robin Canaday, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $3,223.40 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

DISTRICT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY
500 2ND Ave SW
Room 303
Cullman, AL 35055

Walker Brothers, LTD

(Plaintiff)

v. Case No: SM-2015-900549

Tyler Freeman

(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Tyler Freeman, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him/her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $640.60 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 22nd day of January, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him/her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 16th day of December, 2020

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

Live Christmas trees: Recycle and reuse

Justin Miller
Contributor



ALABAMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

AUBURN, Ala. – The parties are over and the decorations are packed. Now, there is just one thing left to do – get rid of the Christmas tree. For those who have live Christmas trees, this can sometimes be a bothersome issue. Luckily, there are several options for tree disposal.

Recycle and reuse

While Christmas trees are not a major landfill problem, the best option is to recycle and reuse old trees. Many times, recycled trees are used in a way that adds back to nature.

Many communities have a recycling program for discarded Christmas trees. These trees are often chipped and used for mulch or compost. However, if this is not available in the area, there are other options.

Fish attractor

One way to reuse a Christmas tree is by bundling several of them together to attract fish in recreational ponds.

Rusty Wright, an Alabama Extension fisheries specialist, said fish are attracted to a tree habitat for many reasons.

"Small fish use the tree bundle as a form of protection from larger predators," Wright said.

"Larger fish use it as a place to wait for their prey to pass by. They also use it as protection from predators such as large fish-eating birds."

Algae, and the animals that eat algae, also attach to the tree, providing food for the fish. According to Wright, fish attractors are an important part of pond management.

"They help anglers enjoy the pond and more effectively catch fish," he said. "Fish harvest, particularly harvest of bass, is critical to keeping the predators and prey in balance."

Making an attractor

To make a fish attractor, Wright suggests bundling two to three trees together with wire. At the base, use two concrete blocks per group of three trees as an anchor.

Bundles can be placed upright or on their sides. If making an upright bundle, tie a float to the tops of the trees.

Place upright bundles in water, 4 to 6 feet deep.

People can place bundles on their side in shallow water, right up to the edge.

To make them more effective, place the bundles in groups of three or four.

"Be prepared to augment or add to the bundles through time," Wright said. "Christmas trees generally don't last long."

Helping wildlife

Andy Baril, an Alabama Extension forestry, wildlife and natural resources regional agent, said old Christmas trees are great for creating bird sanctuaries.

"Stand the tree up in your backyard so birds can use it for nesting and as a potential food source for the winter months," Baril said.

"Place peanut butter directly on the branches and cover them with bird seed. This is a great way to help birds because food is scarce during the winter."

Baril said people can also use the trees as a habitat for rabbits.

"If you live in a rural area, gather several Christmas trees together and lay them on the ground to make a shelter for rabbits," he said.

"Rabbits are active at night, so they need a place to protect themselves from owls."

According to Baril, these habitats can be placed fairly close to houses.

"I have had these shelters as close as 60 feet to my house and the rabbits still used them for shelter," Baril said.

Norman Haley, an Alabama Extension forestry, wildlife and natural resources regional agent, added that other wildlife can also use these shelters.

"These Christmas tree shelters produce wildlife habitats that provide cover and structure throughout the landscape," Haley said.

"These piles are used by not only rabbits, but also by many game and non-game mammals, as well as birds."

According to Haley, it is best to make several small piles (10 trees or less) rather than one large pile.

"Small mammals can find escape routes in small piles better than in large ones," he said.

"Also, large piles tend to attract skunks, raccoons, opossums and coyotes."

More information

For more information about recycling your Christmas tree, visit www.aces.edu or contact your county Extension office.

Hayes (from Front)

Christy Perry
christy@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – West Elementary second-grade teacher Kelly Hayes' no. 1 passion is teaching, but from an early age, nutrition and the love of all things natural have also been particularly important.

Besides having a degree in elementary education and a master's degree in exercise physiology and nutrition, Hayes is a Master Gardener and the owner of Urban Farm and Forage in Cullman. Teaching full-time and maintaining a farm might seem like a ton of work for most, but for Hayes, the latter is what she considers her "downtime."

Hayes, a 1995 graduate of Cullman High School, received her teaching degree from Athens State and started teaching in 1999, but after marrying her husband Jonathan (also a CHS grad), the couple moved to Birmingham.

She taught at Vestavia, then took a break from teaching when her son was born. She is now at West Elementary in Cullman for her eighth year.

Teaching seems to be a family affair. Hayes' sister is a teacher at East Elementary, her father was a principal at Cullman Middle School and her husband is a teacher and coach at Cullman High School.

"My dad always told me two things growing up," Hayes laughed, "Don't grow up to be a teacher and don't marry a preacher! My husband is not a preacher, but he was a youth minister when we first got married."

Said Hayes, "I taught for a while and went back to school and I did my graduate work in nutrition at UAB and I worked for a while at the nutrition department at UAB. The farm stuff- I've always enjoyed being outside. I'm an outside person and nutrition has always been super important to me. I know I started my first garden when I first got married at 21."

Now, at age 44, she runs Urban Farm and Forage on the family's property in southwest Cullman.

"The chickens came because I wanted my own meat and egg source. Then the bees came because I like honey. I make a lot of homemade salves, medicine, propolis, and wax is important in that," she smiled. "I want to say that chickens are my gateway drugs!"

Next came goats named Blueberry Cobbler and Nutmeg for dairy.

"We have two dairy goats and I make a lot of soaps and lotions out of the goat's milk because it's really healthy for you, and of course, we consume cheese and that kind of stuff," said Hayes.

"I've always just been a total geek about nutrition and that's always been so important for me and my kids. I wanted them to grow up knowing where their food came from and giving them the healthiest source of organic always. Even before organic was cool. I have been an organic gardener and composter for 20-plus years."

Hayes credits her grandparents for her passion for gardening. Her parents didn't garden, and Hayes' mom often jokes, "It must have skipped a generation." Hayes' grandmother always maintained a huge garden and loved to can vegetables.

"I love to can, too," she said. "My favorite thing to do in the winter is open the pantry and I have meticulously lined up all of my canned tomatoes and green beans. I remember my grandmother doing that and enjoying it so maybe I got it from her."

Hayes also recalls a book she read in the seventh grade that played a role in shaping her future.

"It was my first book on nutrition, and it was about the evils of white flour. I laugh about it now, but it made such an impact on me when I read that first book in seventh grade about the connection of what we eat and put in our bodies and our health," she said. "I have always been fascinated with how nutrition works in the body and how the body uses vitamins and minerals."

Some people prefer homegrown veggies because they taste better, and although Hayes agrees that they do, indeed taste better, she said that isn't the motivator for her.

She laughed, "Most people do it because it tastes better, but I'd eat it even if it tasted like garbage if I thought it was good for me- but it does taste better."

Hayes grows tomatoes, peppers, lettuces, carrots and other typical vegetables, but she also grows medicinal herbs and flowers including calendula. Calendula flowers are good to use for skin care.

"I make body butter and lotion after I have dried the flowers," she said. Her Urban Farm skincare products are popular with people who have dry skin and eczema.

She grows horseradish and other herbs to make her "Fire Cider" in the winter.

"It's a winter tonic with stimulating winter herbs of ginger, horseradish root, rosemary, thyme, parsley, sage and garlic that I infuse with my raw honey," said Hayes, who explained that the Fire Cider is considered a "cure all" for winter flus and colds. She also makes elderberry syrup.

McSwain's Pharmacy in Cullman sells many of the products made at Urban Farm including the line of skincare products.

Hayes talked about how she came about acquiring her original flock of chickens, saying it was after spending more than 10 years begging her husband to build a chicken coop. When Hayes' son Asa, 15, who has Asperger syndrome, was in fifth grade, she said, he wanted to do a 4-H project with chickens.

"He begged for chickens, so I told Asa that we are going to double team up on dad because I have been begging for 10 years and now you want to do this project," she said. "That's how we got our first flock of chickens."

Hayes said the animals have been great therapy for Asa, and daughter Evy, a fifth grader at West Elementary, chose bunnies as her 4-H project this year. She received two pedigree Holland Lop rabbits for Christmas.

With the addition of the two bunnies, the farm has chickens, goats Blueberry Cobbler and Nutmeg, 500,000 bees, a mini Australian Shepherd named Lola and the farm cat, Cole.

For her birthday, Hayes' husband commissioned portraits of the goats from local artist and family friend Laura Walker. The now famous goats have been featured on the cover of Hobby Farms magazine and her chickens on the cover of Backyard Poultry magazine.

About her love of being outside, Hayes said, "Working in the garden is my downtime. It is my stress relief and my therapy.

"I do not watch TV. I'm not a TV watcher and I never have been. I have always wanted to be a no TV, no screen house, but I am the only person in the family that is weird like that. They are all like, 'Oh, we are already Amish.' Asa always says he gets made fun of at school because they say, 'Y'all are so Amish! Your mom won't let you do anything!' When he was little, I was very no video games and none of that. We are going to be playing outside, and that is my philosophy with kids. I am constantly challenging my students at school to go home and play outside and play in the dirt as their homework. I always tell my kids and my students, 'If you don't leave a ring around the bathtub at night, you have not played outside enough, and you haven't played hard enough.'

She continued, "I am a very big advocate for children's nutrition, exercise, and part of that I consider being in nature. I think there is a really big disconnect right now between children not spending enough time outside in nature. That's really where you develop an appreciation and an understanding of basic respect for life and life cycles. I think our kids are missing that and replacing that with video games that are often violent.

"I just think we are in a really bad pattern. I was determined when I had kids that we were going to be outside playing and growing.

"That's really where I feel my greatest connection to God and my faith- when I am outside appreciating what he has made, and it never ceases to amaze me that anything we find in nature- from the tiniest flower to a blade of grass- is so much more wonderful and beautiful than man's effort that we have put into our best creations. The Pyramids or whatever are just not as beautiful and wonderful as the tiniest flower we can find in nature. That is kind of my life philosophy."

Hayes has also introduced her second graders at West Elementary to gardening and the happiness that comes from planting, growing, harvesting and preparing their own food. As they harvest the vegetables, students are sent home with the day's harvest and a recipe to try at home.

"Educating kids is really important to me. Being a teacher is my first love," Hayes said.

More about the farm

"We have about 3 acres at Urban Farm. Really, you can be self-sufficient, grow enough food for your family with a mini milk cow or goat on half an acre. It's kind of a false notion that you can't be self-sustainable on a small amount. I have 3 acres and I have way more than I need to grow and do everything. I even have a mini apple orchard."

She smiled, "I try to do everything as close to the way God created it in the Garden of Eden as possible. I try to keep it as natural as possible. I try not to force my weirdness on my kids. We go out to eat. We eat birthday cake, and we order pizza.

"It's probably not on a regular basis as much as other people. I do cook a lot. I love to cook, and when you grow your own food, by golly, you better eat it because it's a lot of work to grow all of that food!"

Urban Farm and Forage products can be purchased at McSwain's Pharmacy at 1910 Main Ave. SW in Cullman.

Do (from Front)

Christy Perry
christy@cullmantribune.com

The COVID-19 pandemic continues, and most are still waiting for their turn to receive the vaccine. This doesn't mean you have to be idle and bored. There are many activities nearby that are great for a quick family outing or a weekend getaway that still allow for social distancing and staying safe. Regardless of your budget, there is something for everybody to do.

Here is a list of some of my favorite places I have visited in 2020 or plan to visit in the coming year. Social distancing was adhered to during all these activities and masks were worn when required.

CULLMAN CITY PARKS
COST: FREE
All of the city's wonderful parks were explored throughout the year along with Xena The Tribune Park Puppy. From the many smaller neighborhood parks to the Art Park, Ingle and Heritage Park, the parks are free and have all types of different activities and play equipment for everyone in the family. The weather is cooler and the parks' water features are closed, but there is still plenty to do.

CULLMAN COUNTY PARKS
COST: VARIES
Cullman County parks offer a great variety of activities for families to enjoy. Smith Lake is known for its fishing and water sports, but the park is also free to enter and a beautiful place to walk or sit and watch for birds or picnic. Hurricane Creek Park is free and offers some breathtaking views and great hiking and climbing. Sportsman Lake Park should be back in full swing soon as it wraps up the Winter Wonderland. The park is free to enjoy, but amenities such as the train and putt-putt have a small cost. Stony Lonesome OHV Park is open Friday-Monday and costs $15 for ages 13 and older. Clarkson Covered Bridge is a great place to stop and learn about the history of the area while enjoying the sounds of the water and the peace and quiet the location provides. Some bathroom facilities may be closed.

HANCEVILLE CITY AND OTHER MUNICIPAL PARKS:
COST: FREE
Hanceville has the beautiful Veterans Memorial Park and C.W. Day Park. Both are a great place to spend the day. The walking trails around the lake at Veterans Park and the open spaces and playgrounds at C.W. Day are fun to explore.

Vinemont has a new and exciting feature at its walking trails- an 18-hole disc golf course that was professionally designed for tournament play. Grab your gear and check it out!

Baileyton has recently reopened its park and walking trails, and other municipalities such as West Point, Colony, Holly Pond, Good Hope and Fairview all have great municipal parks. The best is that no two parks are the same and a new adventure can begin at each one.

Other great places to check out in Cullman County are:
- Ave Maria Grotto- Cullman
- Crooked Creek Civil War Museum- West Point
- Cullman County Museum- Cullman
- Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament- Hanceville
- Duck River Reservoir- Cullman

Looking for some day trip ideas outside of Cullman?

BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST- DOUBLE SPRINGS
COST: $3 PER VEHICLE FOR DAY USE
The "land of a thousand waterfalls" is just next door in Winston County and is one of four national forests in Alabama. Bankhead is great for many popular outdoor activities including hiking, horseback riding, hunting and fishing. The birdwatching is said to be superb.

NOCCALULA FALLS STATE PARK- GADSDEN
COST: FREE
The ticketed portions of the park are currently closed until March 1, 2021, but the falls overlook, playground and Black Creek Trails are open and free.

ANNISTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, THE BERMAN MUSEUM AND LONGLEAF BOTANICAL GARDENS- ANNISTON

COST: AMNH $8 FOR ADULTS, $6 AGES 4-17 AND CHILDREN 3 AND YOUNGER FREE.

Senior discounts available and all access admission to all $12 for adults and $8 for children 4-17.

Open Tuesday-Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday from 1-5 p.m., the Anniston Museum of Natural History is currently featuring its Native American collection. The Anniston Museum of Natural History is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and is a world-class museum right in Alabama. Planned correctly, the Anniston Museum and Gardens can be paired with a visit to Noccalula Falls for a fun-filled and educational day trip. Stop in downtown Gadsden before heading home to Cullman for some great local food choices.

HUNTSVILLE BOTANICAL GARDEN- HUNTSVILLE
COST: $14 ADULTS AND KIDS 3-17, $9- STUDENT. SENIOR AND MILITARY DISCOUNTS ALSO AVAILABLE.
Tickets available 7 days a week but must be purchased in advance The Garden's Galaxy of Lights will continue each night through New Year's Day with the Gardens open to foot traffic during the day. The gardens have something for everyone, including a kids' area with fun features and activities.

COOK MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE- DECATUR
COST: $20 ADULTS, $15 AGE 3-14, SENIORS AND MILITARY $17 AND YOUNGER THAN 3 IS FREE
Both the Anniston and Cook Museums are a great learning opportunity for children and adults. Cook Museum has many interactive features that are so fun that your kids might not realize they are learning science! The many animal dioramas feature animals native to our area and some who aren't. The museum shop has some great items for the budding scientist or nature lover in your life.

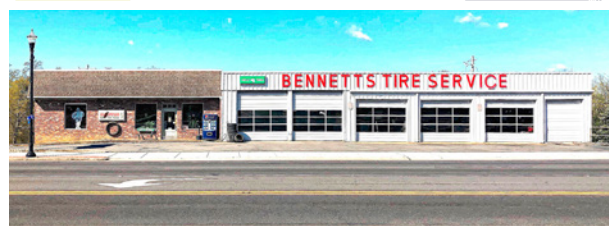
JOE WHEELER STATE PARK- ROGERSVILLE
COST: VARIES
Joe Wheeler State Park has been a family favorite for many years. Often while driving through the large park, you find yourself surrounded by deer and other wildlife. It's a fantastic escape back to nature. A family can explore the parks for the day or spend the night in the lodge, cabins or cottages. This is a great choice for a day trip or weekend getaway. The park has many walking trails and bridges to explore on the banks of the Tennessee River. Make sure to keep your eye out for the group or "squadron" of pelicans that now call Joe Wheeler home. Take a picnic or stop by the lodge for a nice dinner.

MENTONE, ALABAMA
Mentone is a town in northeast Alabama that is simply beautiful year round. The downtown area of Mentone features great local shops, candy stores, art galleries and eateries that remind you of being in a Hallmark movie. Mentone has Alabama's only ski resort! Yes, snow skiing in Alabama! Check out the Cloudmont Ski and Golf Resort for dates. Mentone can be a great family trip or a much needed romantic getaway. The town, located on Lookout Mountain has many private cabins and cozy B&Bs to rent with gorgeous views.

To be continued.....

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