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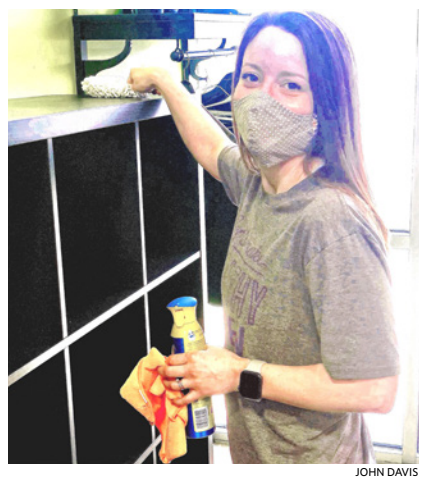
– HEALTH –

FINDING A WAY

Fitness centers welcome new members with New Year's resolutions to get healthy

Haley, one of Anytime Fitness' PT managers, cleans the facility.

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JOHN DAVIS

'WE ARE TRULY BETTER TOGETHER!'

Creative thinking, community support help Cullman Caring for Kids press on through 2020

TONJA GRACE

Cullman Caring for Kids' "three masketeers" (left to right) Tonja Grace, Vaughn Grace and Assistant Director Nancy Bryant

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – Cullman Caring for Kids (CCK) saw a lot in 2020: increasing numbers of new clients, dwindling stocks and even a brief closure of its food bank. But the organization also saw its staff get creative in problem solving, and an outpouring of support from the community that kept things working through the worst of times.

CCK Executive Director Javon Daniel said, "It was the most unusual year I can ever remember. It was hard because of COVID due to the changes we had to make. At the same time, it was also rewarding because it showed the true giving heart of the community."

Administrative Assistant Tonja Grace said, "It was something I myself, or most anyone else, had never experienced. You go to school and learn about history and read the stories about pandemics and plagues, but you never think you will have to live through one. I think it taught us all to be more humble and be grateful for what we do have. It taught us to appreciate the 'little' things in life as they turn out to be bigger than we ever imagined."

By the numbers
In 2020:

» PAGE 3

HEALTH

ADPH: COVID-19 vaccine available to those 75+, first responders Jan. 18

» PAGE 3

FEATURE

Remembering Jerry Willibey

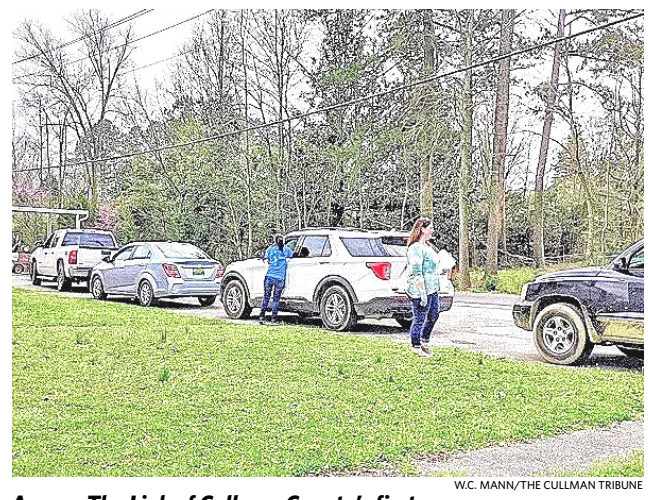


CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Jerry Willibey

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Link of Cullman County rethinks approaches, finds new partners in 2020



W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Among The Link of Cullman County's first responses to the pandemic was a drive-through food distribution program.

» PAGE 7

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EDUCATION

Cullman City Schools sets timeline for superintendent search

Cullman City Schools
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. – The timeline to select the new superintendent for Cullman City Schools has been adjusted, with finalists to be announced in March 2021. Current superintendent Dr. Susan Patterson is set to retire in July, after announcing the transition plan last year.

The notice of vacancy for the superintendent's position was posted in November 2020, and was open for applications until a deadline of Jan. 4, earlier this week. The board will now announce the finalists to replace Patterson March 16, allowing board members the next two months to review applications, as well as vet and consider candidates.

An earlier timeline had called for finalists to be announced later this month, but the adjusted timeline allows board members additional time to narrow down the list and decide which candidates will be interviewed. There is no set number for how many finalists will be considered, as that decision falls to the discretion of the board.

Interviews for the final list of candidates are set to take place between March 22 and April 16, with specific times and dates to be announced once the list of finalists is set.



CHRISTY PERRY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Cullman City Schools Superintendent Dr. Susan Patterson is pictured with Alabama State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric Mackey in 2019.

The board plans to announce and approve its selection for the next superintendent on April 20.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Jacobs proclaims January Human Trafficking Awareness Month in Cullman

Leanne West
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. – Cullman Mayor Woody Jacobs on Friday officially proclaimed January 2021 "Human Trafficking Awareness Month" in the city of Cullman. On hand to accept the proclamation were Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force members District Judge Wells R. "Rusty" Turner, III, District Judge J. Chad Floyd, Cullman County Juvenile Probation Officer & Task Force Chairperson Kathy D. Wilson and Cullman County Assistant District Attorney Jeremy Cline.

"This is a real problem," said Jacobs. "We appreciate the efforts of the Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force to bring awareness to the danger of human trafficking in our community."

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which victims are induced through force, fraud or coercion to work in various forms of exploitation including debt bondage, forced marriage, labor and commercial sexual exploitation of adults and minors.

The majority of human trafficking victims are preteens or teenagers.

Young victims are often lured into traps by people they consider friends, or even by family members.

Also, because of Cullman's close proximity to Interstate 65 and other major highways, Cullman is a prime location for perpetrators of human trafficking.

And with schools being closed and financial hardships increasing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are even more opportunities for human trafficking and fewer places for victims to turn for help.

The Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force was organized to work with local law enforcement and other agencies to help prevent human trafficking in our community.

The first step to prevent human trafficking is to educate the public.

The task force strives to do that through holding public meetings and by sponsoring community events designed to explain what human trafficking is and how people can recognize it.

The task force also advocates for changes in local, regional, and state policies related to human trafficking.

The volunteer task force is made up of individuals from various departments and agencies throughout the community.

In the proclamation, Jacobs urged all residents to "join us in promoting a shift away from the culture of tolerance toward human trafficking, in raising the visibility of this crime, and in becoming more informed about ways to prevent, recognize, and respond to potential victims of human trafficking in our community."

To find out more, visit the Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Cullman-County-Human-Trafficking-Task-Force, send an email to endtrafficking25@gmail.com or stop by Karma's Coffee House Jan. 11, 2021, where the Task Force is set up to share information on human trafficking.

More information on human trafficking in Alabama can be found on www.enditalabama.org or www.stnow.org.

COVID-19 BY THE NUMBERS

Friday, Jan. 8, 2021 COVID-19 update from the Alabama Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Data and Surveillance Dashboard

- Total confirmed cases in AL: 315,365* (+3,782 since yesterday)
- Probable cases in AL: 78,922* (+1,275 since yesterday)
- Total confirmed deaths in AL: 4,482* (+74 since yesterday)
- Probable deaths in AL: 709*
- Total confirmed cases in Cullman Co.: 5,322* (+49 since yesterday)
- Probable cases in Cullman Co.: 2,291* (+26 since yesterday)
- Total confirmed deaths in Cullman Co.: 61 (+0 since yesterday)
- Probable deaths in Cullman Co.: 17
- Total tested in Cullman Co.: 32,395
- Total tested in the last 14 days in Cullman Co.*: 4,224
- Cases in the last 14 days in Cullman Co.: 941
- Total tested in Alabama: 1,944,233
- Cases in the last 14 days in Alabama: 53,578
- Total tested in the last 14 days in Alabama*: 227,853
- Currently hospitalized in Alabama: 3,046
- Cumulative no. of hospitalizations in Alabama: 36,754
- Presumed recoveries in Alabama (reported weekly): 211,684

See more details at https://bit.ly/2VjCQbP.

***Important Notice (01/07/21)**
The Last 14 Days (Tested Diagnostic) number represents the number of individuals whose COVID-19 diagnostic test (PCR or antigen) was reported to ADPH in the last 14 days. If an individual has been tested multiple times in the last 14 days, they will only be counted once.

Today we fixed an error in our coding which caused the Last 14 Days (Tested Diagnostic) number to increase. Previously, the indicator failed to include individuals who had been tested in the last 14 days, but had also been tested more than 14 days ago. It now shows the total number of individuals with reported diagnostic tests in the last 14 days, regardless of any prior testing.

Case counts and deaths reported this week may represent a delay in reporting to the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) due to the holiday weekends.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

ALDOT TRAFFIC ALERT: U.S. 231 southbound lane to be closed Monday-Friday, Jan. 11-15
The Alabama Department of Transportation advises motorists that the inside southbound lane of U.S. 231 at the recently-constructed bridges on Brindlee Mountain in Morgan County will be closed next week for guardrail work. The closure will begin about 7 a.m. Monday. The lane is anticipated to reopen sometime Friday. Please expect minor delays. Reduce speed and be prepared to merge.

PUBLIC NOTICE from Cullman County District Judge Chad Floyd
The traffic call dockets that were scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021 and Jan. 13, 2021 beginning at 8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. have been combined with the March 3, 2021 traffic call docket.

PUBLIC NOTICE from Cullman County Courts
Cullman County jury trials currently scheduled for Jan. 25, 2021 have been postponed until February.... Cullman Circuit and District courts will remain open and motions may still be filed in all cases either electronically or directly through the Circuit Court Clerk's Office. Virtual court hearings will be held for the remainder of January as a substitute for in-person proceedings, where feasible. In-person judicial proceedings will be held utilizing previously adopted COVID-19 safety measures, in cases where it is necessary to provide immediate relief in emergency circumstances and for all court hearings deemed so essential that a postponement is not appropriate.

PUBLIC NOTICE from the City of Cullman Municipal Court
All cases that were set for Jan. 6, 2021 have been reset to Jan. 27, 2021 at 3 p.m. All cases that were set for Jan. 7, 2021 have been reset to Jan. 28, 2021 at 3 p.m. Reset court date notices will be mailed to each defendant. It is imperative that defendants ensure we have the correct address on file. To update your address, please call the court office at 256-775-7136.

Alcoholics Anonymous
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 ANOINTED PRAYER!
• Classes 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
• Sunday, Jan. 10, Message-"Wake Up the Dry Bones" by Pastor Bobby Dodd
• Sunday, Jan. 17, The group PURPOSE will lead praise and worship and bring the message.

Free Community Dinner at Center Hill Baptist Church
• 5-6 p.m.- The first Wednesday of every month we will be offering a Free Community Dinner. Church members, community members, neighbors and friends are welcome. This will be takeout only. Please message or comment with how many plates you will need to help us prepare enough food for everyone. RSVP at http://bit.ly/centerhill.
• 13108 County Road 747, Hanceville, AL 35077

Miércoles de Despensas
• 6-7 p.m. ler. miercoles del mes, En Su Tierra Cullman FUMC
• Despensas para la comunidad. No requiere ID. Entrega en su vehículo. Por favor use mascarilla.

Cullman City Council Meeting
Monday, Jan. 11 at noon at Cullman City Hall

Good Hope City Council Meeting
Monday, Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at Good Hope City Hall

Colony Town Council Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 5 p.m. at Colony Town Hall

Vinemont Town Council Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 6 p.m. at Vinemont Town Hall

Cullman Education Retirees Association Meeting
• Thursday, Jan. 14 at 11 a.m. at Stone Bridge Farms, 281 County Road 717, Cullman
• Our program will be presented by Kelly Smith, personal financial counselor. Following our program, we will have a short business meeting and then enjoy lunch together. Remember to wear your mask and practice social distancing.

Hanceville City Council Meeting
Thursday, Jan. 14 at 5:30 p.m. at Hanceville City Hall

Dodge City Town Council Meeting
Thursday, Jan. 14 at 6 p.m. at Dodge City Town Hall

General Dentist Office
Needs part-time hygienist Tuesdays, Wednesdays and some Friday mornings. Position will become full-time. Some dental assisting may be required. Teamwork and a positive attitude are a must. Experience preferred.
Send resumes to dentistoffice1965@gmail.com

Funny Things from Yesterday: The cardboard box

Robert N. Tidwell, Sr.
robertntidwellsr@gmail.com



Leanna bought a nice toy box for the twins, Rhett and Vaughn, to store their toys in when they are not playing with them. The box is about 2 feet square and maybe 18 inches high. It has hand holes on the sides to make it easy to move.

Saturday afternoon she sent us a picture of the toy box with the boys standing in it. They seemed to think it was something to play with more than storing things in.

Seeing this picture reminded me of the time when Leanna, Tyler and Trey were little.

We had a large cardboard box at our house. I don't know where it came from or what was in it, but these three children thought this was the grandest thing to play with.

They would play hide and seek and one of them would hide in this box. When the one hidden in the box thought they were about to be found they would jump up and scream trying to scare the seeker.

Other times one would hide in the box and call Granny or me to come and find them.

After a thorough searching and saying out loud, "Where can they be?" we would hear sniggering and then we would find them in the box. They would be so excited that it took us so long to find them.

Sometimes children play with the box more than the toy that was in the box.

BILLY BOB'S STORIES AND STUFF

Good Riddance 2020 – Welcome 2021

Bill King
Tribune
Contributor



Taking Aim with a Cap Pistol

Back when I grew up, we played with dangerous things. Amazingly, most of us survived those days...even without crash helmets! I probably wasn't more than eight or nine years old, when I got my first pocketknife. I'll be the first to admit, that was probably too young, but I still have all ten digits and only cut myself badly once, that I can remember. Even then, I didn't bleed to death or even have to get stitches. Back then, especially in the country, if a boy reached his teenage years and didn't have his own pocketknife, people viewed him with suspicious eyes. Some even spoke poorly of him. Honestly, my first knife was a piece of junk, but within a year or so, I had traded up for a pretty little yellow-handled two-bladed Queen...from a grown man, but that's another story for another time.

Not long after the "knife-age," we had guns. Now before you get all wound up, the first ones weren't real. As a matter of fact, my first gun-and-holster set came before that first pocketknife. My hips were not big enough to hold up my holsters and keep them from sliding down my legs before I could quick draw on some imaginary bad guy.

Marshall Dillion and Roy Rogers would have been so disappointed, especially since some of my equipment had their names written on it. I tied the ends of my holsters around my legs with a piece of string, so they would stay in place during my blinding-speed fast draws.

Maybe I should have used some of that string to tie the top of my holsters to my belt loops...you know, so they wouldn't slide down. For a while, I got a new set every Christmas or two, because I had worn out the one from the year before.

One of those early cap-gun sets caused my first skepticism about the big guy in the red suit. Before Christmas, I spied a holster set hidden in the bottom of Mama's chifforobe. You do know what a chifforobe is, don't you? Don't worry about why I was plundered in there, in the first place. The confusion, followed by suspicion, came when Santa brought me a holster set that was identical to the one I had spotted in there. I never said a word, so let's just keep this between us. At sixteen, I was probably too old to still believe, or to still be playing with cap guns. You do know I'm kidding, but just in case, let's keep that between us too!

For a long time, I was a bit confused about something. No matter how well I took aim at my buddy Ronald, or one of my cousins, they usually shouted, "You missed me!" They could be two-feet in front of me, but according to them, I still missed, no matter how well I aimed. I've come to realize that this was because I was shooting a cap gun. Cap guns make a lot of noise, but that's as far as it goes.

As we enter into this new year, I hope you have set some goals to aim at hitting. The late Zig Ziglar said, "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time." No matter how young or old we may be, we need to have goals. In order to hit those goals, we have to take aim. We also have to be sure we aren't simply firing cap guns, which have no capability of hitting anything. May 2021, be a year when we take aim at some worthy goals and at least hit some of them.

Bill King can be reached at bkpreach@yahoo.com or 334-745-0588 (office).

HISTORY

Files from Yesteryear: 1936

From the files of 1936

Ralph H. Sanders is the new minister at the First Christian Church in Cullman. He is a native of Savannah, Georgia.

Mr. and Mrs. Bertis Rascoe are building a new home in West Cullman.

From January 1, 1935 to June 30, 1935, there were 198 marriage licenses issued in Cullman County.

A Hartford man was paid 12 cents a pound for the first bale of cotton ginned in Cullman County.

Doctor Byron Gibson, of Barberville, Kentucky, attended the funeral of his aunt, Miss Katherine Gurley, on Monday. Mr. and Mrs. Joe H. Ray attended the funeral of their cousin, Mrs. Sam Bradford, at Bethsadia, on Tuesday afternoon.

Mrs. Kittie Smith, who has been nursing Miss Katherine Girley, has returned to her home at Reform, Alabama.

Mr. and Mrs. Hermon Calvert of Akron, Ohio left Wednesday for their home.

Mr. and Mrs. T.W. Quattlebaum and daughter, Thelma, of Birmingham have returned home after a visit with her sister, Miss Daisy Quattlebaum.

Doctor and Mrs. Jack Fisher of Moulton spent Sunday in Cullman as the guests of Doctor Fisher's mother, Mrs. O.M. Fisher.

A good selection of beds and springs for $5.00. Ad.

A razor bought 200 years ago is still being used by Oliver Ballard of Ionia, New York.

Miss Nadine Allen was the Sunday afternoon guest of Miss Nova Self.

Doctor and Mrs. McAdory were in a Gulf storm, while on a fishing trip to Gulf Shores.

Cullman County has reported twelve cases of infantile paralysis.

Vaccine (from Front)

Karen Landers, M.D.
Contributor

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – Gov. Kay Ivey and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) announced Friday that ADPH will provide COVID-19 vaccinations for people 75 years or older and first responders, including law enforcement and firefighters, statewide by appointment only effective Jan. 18. Appointments at locations throughout the state are made first come, first served. The addition of these groups is not a full expansion into the next phase of the vaccine rollout.

"I appreciate the swift work of ADPH to establish a system to efficiently provide our limited resources of vaccine to as many Alabamians as possible," Ivey said.

"We have previously worked to provide vaccines to our health care workers who are on the front lines of the pandemic, and now, are diligently working to expand access to our seniors, law enforcement officers and various members of our first responders. It is critical for everyone to remain patient; demand is high, and supply is low. ADPH and their partners are working around-the-clock to assist as many people as they can."

Alabama continues to vaccinate more than 326,000 health care workers and nursing home residents who are most at-risk of contracting COVID-19. As the vaccine uptake for this category is satisfied, ADPH is now encouraging sites to vaccinate persons in the 75-plus age group and those in the law enforcement and firefighter vocations to prevent any loss of vaccine due to cold chain storage requirements.

"We recognize that demand for vaccine exceeds supply," said State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris.

"While there is still an insufficient amount of the vaccine supply, we want to maximize our resources to help protect Alabamians at high risk. County health departments are working with their local points of distribution to assess what their vaccination reach has been. Decisions about the next groups to vaccinate are made at the community level with community engagement. If the very high-risk population has been covered adequately, providers can then begin vaccinating people in the other priority groups."

Nearly 350,000 people in the state of Alabama would qualify for a vaccine at 75 years old and older.

To schedule an appointment for the free COVID-19 vaccination at a county health department, individuals may call the ADPH toll-free phone number at 1-855-566-5333. Telephone calls are answered from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. seven days a week. Vaccination locations can be viewed at https://go.usa.gov/xARKp and additional specific information, such as what to bring and what to wear, will be provided when appointments are made.

If wanting to be vaccinated at sites other than a county health department, such as a private provider, individuals should contact those sites directly.

For information about COVID-19 vaccine, visit https://go.usa.gov/xARKE.

See the ADPH's' full COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Plan at www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/assets/adph-covid19-vaccination-allocation-plan.pdf.

The ADPH said late Friday afternoon: "Please do not call your local hospital directly to set up appointments to be scheduled to receive your COVID-19 vaccine. We have learned that hospital switchboards are being overwhelmed with phone calls, which is creating an obstacle to patient care. Hospitals throughout Alabama are overwhelmed in providing care to both COVID-19 patients as well as responding to all other medical needs of our citizens.

"While hospitals in a few areas of the state have begun vaccinating those 75 years of age and older, most are still working to make sure their frontline workers are vaccinated. Additional information will be provided when hospitals and locations other than county health departments have vaccine available for additional groups."

Together (from Front)

- Families served: 6,054
- Individuals served: 11,608
- New families: 938
- Total food donated: 340,616 pounds
- Average monthly donation of food: 28,385 pounds
- Average amount of food given to each family per visit: 70 pounds
- Total food purchased in 2020: 150,000 pounds

Grace noted, "All of this food went right back out as fast as it came in."

CCK's Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program served 93 children in the court system with 27 volunteers. Grace told The Tribune, "Our numbers have decreased in 2020. We started out with higher numbers, and once COVID hit in March, our numbers started to drop. Even though our normal client numbers dropped, we did see an increase for new clients."

One long "wow" story

Grace shared, "For Cullman Caring For Kids, the entire year has been a 'wow' story. We started 2020 on the high note of helping record numbers of clients, our CASA volunteers started class, and we began our 15th year of hosting the 'Kids Matter' radio program, and also completed our first year of airing the program on Praise 97.9.

"As everyone knows, March was not kind to any of us. We did have to close for a few days to regroup and get a plan together on how we could best serve the community. We started the drive-thru pickup for food, which was a huge change and adjustment for us. After a few kinks were worked on, the operation was up and running as smooth as it possibly could. Assistant Director Nancy Bryant and a few staff members kept things going for over two months during the hardest time, while the rest of the staff worked remotely.

"We have learned so much in 2020: perseverance, health, personal safety and, yes, helping others in ways we have never done before. When we think of all the people, individuals, organizations and corporations that have played such a vital role in helping Cullman Caring For Kids in 2020, our hearts are just overwhelmed. You, this town, kept Cullman Caring For Kids going. Every dollar donated, every can of food, every hour spent by our precious volunteers, made a difference in the life of many. No matter the size of the donation, someone in this community received a blessing.

"Since we are a United Way agency, every time you donate to United Way, you are supporting us as well."

Daniel added, "The staff of Cullman Caring For Kids want to thank each and every one of you who have supported us in any way."

Bigger and better in 2021

"We have big plans for 2021," said Grace. "Due to COVID-19 we were not able to conduct any of our Child Abuse Awareness Month activities. This year we anticipate making it bigger and better than ever before. They may not be close-contact events, but it will happen. We have huge plans and look forward to being more accessible this year as far as the food bank goes, and that will be announced at a later date, so please keep an eye out for upcoming events.

"COVID made CASA much harder for everyone. Volunteers were not able to see their CASA children face to face as often as they normally do. Court cases were postponed, trials rescheduled, causing cases to take longer to close. This put a tremendous strain on all who were involved, especially the children. Our CASA program is looking for new volunteers to help advocate for more children in the court system. 'Every child deserves to have a happy childhood' will be over emphasized this year."

The final word

CCK Assistant Director Nancy Bryant told The Tribune, "2020 was a challenge for so many people and for the employees here at Cullman Caring for Kids. We had so many changes to meet the demand for the families in need. We met so many people who would never ask for help. We were here for them and they appreciated it so much. We did what we did to protect ourselves, yet kept pressing on. The first month was extremely busy as we worked with just a skeleton crew. The volunteers who also came to our rescue were amazing. The food donations, the monetary donations, they saved us. Others stopped in to help us as well so that no one would fall through the gaps. We truly are better together!

"Please remember COVID-19 is real and to protect yourself and the people you love. Please wear your mask and wash your hands! Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts for all efforts made to see that Cullman Caring for Kids was a success despite the odds!"

Get involved

CCK is still having to work hard to keep its food pantry stocked. CCK can always use monetary donations, and if you're on the way to the grocery store, the pantry's high-volume items regularly include canned beans, especially other than green beans, canned vegetables, dried beans, cereal and rice.

CCK reports a particular shortage of cereal at this time, so consider helping out during your next visit to the grocery store. Donations can be dropped off at CCK's office, 402 Arnold St. NE, #W-1.

To get involved, visit www.cullmancaringforkids.com or www.facebook.com/CullmanCaringForKids/ or call 256-739-1111.

POET'S CORNER

The Old Year

By: Randy C. Hale

The old year is like a worn shoe,
the tongue lapsed to the side.
December's final
days over,
the aged traveler
fades away
to be tossed aside like
Christmas Day
wrappings.

There are new
boots awaiting,
a strong set,
unbroken,
with the smell of
fresh leather,
and we like the
thought of new
beginnings, the roads of our past
having us all worn paper thin.



So we pull on the
polished boots,
and pull tight the
fresh waxen
strings, gathering
the slack
to launch out on
our journey again.
For being God's
creation, we are
a resilient lot.

Today's poem is my 200th poem published for the Cullman Tribune. Thank you all for this privilege.

CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported Jan. 8

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. – Below are the arrests and incidents reported Jan. 8, 2021. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

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

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

No incidents or arrests reported.

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

INCIDENTS

Jan. 7

- leaving the scene of an accident; person; Main Ave. SW; damage to '16 Chevrolet Colorado
- harassing communications; person
- first-degree theft of property; person; cash

ARRESTS

Jan. 7

Lee, Brandon W., 29

- second-degree unlawful possession of marijuana

Shine, Tara M., 28

- FTA- possession of drug paraphernalia

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No incidents or arrests reported.

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A Round of Applause for the Joy-Givers: A party with American joy-givers of 2021

Ben South
Tribune Columnist

You sense the joy the minute you enter the room. HOORAY FOR THE JOY-GIVERS! This is a party to celebrate the birthdays this week of great American joy-givers of today and those from the past.

Please give A ROUND OF APPLAUSE for these American joy-givers born in the first two weeks of January: 1—Paul Revere and George Washington Carver, 2—Roger Miller, 3—Victor Borge, 4—Don Shula, 5—Diane Keaton, 6—Danny Thomas, 7—Zora Neale Hurston, 8—Elvis Presley, 9—Edgar Allan Poe, 10—George Foreman, 11—Alexander Hamilton, 12—John Singer Sargent, 13—Horatio Alger, Jr., 14—T-Bone Burnett, 15—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Did you know Paul Revere fathered 16 children? I like to share some surprise facts with these salutes. He was of French ancestry. His father, Apollos Rivoire, immigrated to Boston from France and Anglicized his surname to Revere. Besides being the most famous of the midnight riders of our Revolutionary War, Paul Revere was a silversmith, gifted artist, tavern menu illustrator and political cartoonist. He also formed the first "spy ring" in the U.S., a forerunner of the CIA known secretly as the "Mechanics."

Paul Revere never owned a horse. For his famous awareness campaign, when he rode through the night yelling, "The Regulars are about," he borrowed a horse named "Brown Beauty."

After the war, Paul Revere founded a successful hardware business and the country's first rolling copper mill. His company produced more than 900 church bells, one of which rang in the New Year of 2021 at Boston's Kings Chapel. Per this American joy-giver, "There is a time for casting cannons and a time for casting church bells."

The main menu for our birthday party comes from one of America's greatest plantsmen and culinary giants, George Washington Carver. But, the appetizers, were done on a George Foreman grill. And, there is a tasty, seasoned assortment of Mr. Carver's favorite plants: peanuts.

George Foreman is a two-time world heavyweight boxing champion and Olympic gold medalist. Known as "Big George," the 6' 3" athlete kept his fighting weight around 270. Foreman was known for quick knockouts. After one fight where his opponent hit the mat within seconds of the first, starting bell ringing, a sportswriter commented it looked "fixed." Foreman's friendly response was, "Sure, the fight was fixed. I fixed it with my right hand."

After retirement he became an ordained Christian minister and a hugely successful entrepreneur promoting the sale of 100 million units of the George Foreman grill. He sold the commercial rights to the grill for $138 million in 1999.

We're getting this party going with George Foreman Grilled Artichokes with Tangy Dipping Sauce, a healthy, vegetarian dish that Dr. Carver would applaud. Recipe at www.foremangrill-recipes.com.

George Washington Carver, one of the greatest botanists in the history of the U.S., was born into slavery in America's Midwest. Even in childhood, he remembered neighbors bringing "sick" plants for him to cure, which he often did. He was also curious about nature from the "git go" and was what he called--"bookish." He promoted literacy for all saying, "Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom."

Carver was the first African-American to attend Iowa State University. After completing a master's degree, he was recruited by Booker T. Washington to create a world-class agricultural program at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The never-married scientist worked with monkish obsession, inventing perhaps 300 uses for his beloved peanuts and promoting crop rotation to rehabilitate the nutrients of the soil.

Our dinner party menu highlights plants with African origins, including an okra and smoked sausage casserole, we titled "'Role Tide" for another Alabama institution which is playing a national football championship game this week. The joy-givers will also enjoy sweet potato souffle', black-eyed pea caviar, watermelon pickles, Benne seed biscuits and a blend of coffees from Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Pro-football's "Winningest Coach," Don Shula, born on Jan. 4, had this advice for those coaching the teams vying for the national college football championship a week later: "Strive for perfection, but settle for excellence."

Our birthday dessert, Cape Gooseberry Cake, comes from Harlem Renaissance writer, Zora Neale Hurston, who immortalized a time and place in Florida the way Faulkner did for what he called his little "postage stamp" of Mississippi. The simple cake recipe comes from the cookbook, "Zora Neale Hurston on Florida Food," and there are step-by-step directions at www.betterbutter.in .

Zora Neale Hurston is having a resurgence of popularity and I have a collection of her short stories in my Amazon queue. She seems to have been prescient about 2020 and 2021 when she stated, "There are years that ask questions and years that answer."

Though mysteriously not an entire cask, there is Amontillado sherry to tipple with Edgar Allan Poe, who wrote "The Cask of Amontillado" and created the mystery novel. The cocktail cart also boasts a good quality Scotch, the occasional cocktail of choice of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who is honored with a national holiday on Jan. 18 this year.

Our party décor reflects the chic restraint with a wink of wit that is divinely Diane Keaton. As she explained, "We could choose to live graciously or gorgeously. I pick both."

The ever-stylish, Oscar-winning actress, Keaton, has also authored books on interior and architectural design. Explore these titles by her: "The House that Pinterest Built," "California Romantica" and her ode to minimalism, with the minimalist name: "House."

We leave the party music to multiple Grammy Award-winning record producer/guitarist/songwriter, T-Bone Burnett with our special requests for Roger Miller's "King of the Road" and anything by Elvis "The King of Rock and Roll" Presley, and while we enjoy dessert, we'll have classical piano favorites tickled by comedian and symphony musician Victor Borge.

Near the end of the early January evening, all gather around the fireplace in the sitting room. On a large easel, there was a masterpiece by John Singer Sargent, the leading portrait painter of his time. When the others commented on how beautifully the artist had rendered his subject, Mr. Sargent quipped, "Every time I paint a portrait, I lose a friend." And, continued with a grin, "The sitters I've immortalized have taught me a portrait is a picture in which there is just a tiny little something not quite right about the mouth."

Many of the joy-givers had particular causes they were passionate about and the joyful talk centered around those.

Danny Thomas recalled that when he was a young, starving actor he vowed if he were to become successful, he would open a shrine dedicated to St. Jude Thaddeus, the patron saint of despairing causes.

The comedian and nightclub entertainer said after he landed a network television show, he and his wife began touring the country to raise money to build what would become St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis. The "Make Room for Danny" star beamed with gratitude that now the hospital spends $1.4 billion each year on treatment and research and does that with $1.5 billion in annual donations.

Dr. King spoke fondly on Memphis and said he knew of a black nurse, Clara Mason, who started working at St. Jude's back in 1966.

He said, "When I spoke about having a dream of little black boys and little black girls joining hands with little white boys and little white girls as sisters and brothers, that certainly includes all those children who are suffering and all their talented and loving caregivers."

Alexander Hamilton, who had been a banker and created the nation's financial system, said he was impressed with how Americans regularly give money to the causes they value.

When someone in the group commented on how we must not get discouraged when we are faced with obstacles that keep our cherished causes from soaring, Horatio Alger, Jr., who is known as one of the greatest American motivational writers, said, "You are all successful in your careers and in your compassionate causes, but we all have encountered naysayers. I've written this same message in many variations in my rags-to-riches stories, "If at first you don't succeed," and the others joined him, "TRY, try again."

As a final toast, John Singer Sargent, who had trained in Paris and lived mostly in London, raised his glass to his ancestor, Epes Sargent, an American revolutionary military hero, said, "Here's to a new year, and to each of you, American joy-givers. If I may borrow a line from Dr. King, I have a dream that all the good cheer we have enjoyed this evening will radiate more joy throughout the coming year."

HAPPY NEW and JOY-FILLED YEAR!

The entrée for this American joy-givers dinner party was created by Beth Rutledge Glasscock, a truly great cook, and most of the time, a pretty good friend of mine. In my experience with almost seven decades eating my way through Alabama, Beth is one of the finest culinary creatives in the state. This delicious and festive casserole is perfect for a winning dish Jan. 11 as top-ranked, University of Alabama plays Ohio State University for the National College Football Championship.



BETH RUTLEDGE GLASSCOCK

'Role Tide: Bama Game Day Casserole



BendigoArt.com/CullmanTribune.com

'ROLE TIDE: BAMA GAME DAY CASSEROLE
Makes 8 servings

Ingredients
Cheesy Grits

- 6 cups milk (or use 3 cups milk & 3 cups chicken broth/water)
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1½ cup, uncooked, quick cooking grits (or use regular grits and follow cooking time on package)
- 1 large egg
- 2 cups (8 oz.) any sharp or extra-sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Smoked Sausage & Vegetables

- 14 oz. package smoked sausage, diagonally cut into ¼-inch slices
- 2-3 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 2 cups frozen okra (without breading) or ½-1 pound fresh okra, cut into ½-inch pieces*
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, seeded & chopped
- 10 oz. package frozen whole kernel corn or 2 ears of fresh corn, cut off kernels
- 3 garlic cloves (1½ tsp.), minced
- 1-tsp. red pepper flakes
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 28 oz. can diced tomatoes, undrained or 2-3 large fresh tomatoes, diced & undrained

Directions

Step 1: Preheat oven to 350°. In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, bring milk just to a boil; gradually whisk in butter and grits. Reduce heat, and simmer, whisking constantly, 5 minutes or until done. Remove from heat. In a separate bowl (or your measuring cup) whisk egg; add a big spoonful of hot grits to egg whisking to prevent curdling; add mixture back to saucepan. Stir in cheddar cheese, salt, and pepper.

Step 2: Pour into a lightly greased 13 x 9-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350° for 35 to 40 minutes. Uncover the last 5 minutes to lightly brown top.

Step 3: While grits are in the oven, prepare sauté. Add vegetable oil to a large cast iron skillet on high heat; when the pan is hot, add the okra and cook 4-6 minutes (time varies if using fresh or frozen okra) shaking the pan every couple of minutes to brown okra evenly.

Step 4: Remove from skillet and set aside. Reduce heat to medium, add the smoked sausage, and brown both sides. Remove sausage; set aside with okra

Step 5: Turn heat down to low and add the onion; cook for 2-3 minutes or until tender; add red pepper flakes and bell pepper. Cook another 2 minutes, stir to prevent burning. Add corn and cook for 3-5 minutes or until corn is tender. Add garlic and stir. Season with salt and pepper. Add tomatoes and cook for about 5 more minutes or until tomatoes are starting to break down; stir frequently, scraping the bottom to loosen up any bits stuck to the pan. Add sausage and okra back into pan to reheat. Taste and season with additional salt and pepper, if needed. Serve immediately over grits.

Tips

- Cooking the okra at a high heat helps prevent it from getting slimy. Make sure your pan in hot!
- You might need more liquid using fresh vegetables as opposed to frozen or if you accidentally drained the tomatoes. After sautéing your vegetables and before adding the tomatoes, add ¼-cup liquid (water, chicken broth, or even wine) to deglaze the pan, scraping the bottom to loosen anything stuck to the pan. Using liquid to loosen up those little bits of meat and vegetables stuck to the bottom of the pan are the secret to making any type of sauce.
- Substitute the vegetables or their proportions if you do not enjoy these. Summer squash or asparagus would work well, and shrimp seasoned with Cajun or Creole seasoning would be delicious!



Alabama takes home 6 national honors during the ESPN College Football Awards Show

UA Athletics
rolltide.com

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – Alabama football captured six individual national awards Thursday night at the virtual ESPN College Football Awards Show presented by Home Depot.

The Crimson Tide's list of award winners includes: Landon Dickerson (Rimington), Najee Harris (Doak Walker), Mac Jones (Davey O'Brien), Alex Leatherwood (Outland) and DeVonta Smith (Biletnikoff, Maxwell).

LANDON DICKERSON
Rimington Trophy – Presented annually to the most outstanding center in the NCAA's Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS)

- Dominant interior offensive lineman that earned the No. 2 overall grade at center by Pro Football Focus (91.3)
- Played 725 total snaps with just two missed assignments and allowed zero sacks before a season-ending injury against Florida
- Graded out at 99.6 percent on all assignments by the UA coaching staff
- Past Alabama winners – Barrett Jones (2012), Ryan Kelly (2015)

NAJEE HARRIS
Doak Walker Award – Presented annually to the nation's premier running back for his accomplishments on the field, achievement in the classroom and citizenship in the community

- Leads the nation in total touchdowns (27) and rushing touchdowns (24) along with scoring (162)
- Alabama's all-time leader for total touchdowns in a career with 54 (44 rushing, 10 receiving)
- Totaled two or more rushing touchdowns in eight of 12 contests with at least one score in 10 games this season
- Past Alabama winners – Trent Richardson (2011), Derrick Henry (2015)

MAC JONES
Davey O'Brien Award – Presented annually to the nation's best college quarterback

- Totaled 4,036 yards to set the Alabama single-season passing yardage record
- Posted four 400-plus yard passing performances in 2020, the most by any Crimson Tide quarterback for a career and tied for the most in a single season in SEC history
- Sports an NCAA-leading 203.03 passer rating and a 95.8 QBR heading into the CFP National Championship Game
- Jones becomes Alabama's first winner of the Davey O'Brien Award



UA ATHLETICS

L-R: Alabama's Alex Leatherwood, Landon Dickerson, Mac Jones, Najee Harris & DeVonta Smith combined to win six national awards Thursday night.

ALEX LEATHERWOOD
Outland Trophy – Presented annually to the top interior lineman in college football (offense or defense)

- Made 40 consecutive starts along the Alabama offensive line in 47 career games
- Averaging a 91.3 overall blocking grade and a 99.7 mark on his assignments by the Crimson Tide coaches
- Totaled 746 snaps during the 2020 season, allowing just two sacks while missing only two assignments
- Past Alabama winners – Chris Samuels (1999), Andre Smith (2008), Barrett Jones (2011), Cam Robinson (2016), Quinnen Williams (2018)

DEVONTA SMITH
Biletnikoff Award – Presented annually to the top pass-catcher in college football

Maxwell – Presented annually to recognize the top player in college football

- Leads the nation in receptions (105), receiving yards (1,641), receiving touchdowns (20) and all-purpose yards (1,912)
- Holds the Alabama single-season record for receiving scores while ranking second in both receiving yards and receptions
- Past Alabama Biletnikoff winners – Amari Cooper (2014), Jerry Jeudy (2018)
- Past Alabama Maxwell winners – AJ McCarron (2013), Derrick Henry (2015), Tua Tagovailoa (2018)

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.

Derek Mason named Defensive Coordinator at Auburn

Kirk Sampson
AU Athletics

AUBURN, Ala. – Former Vanderbilt head coach and Stanford defensive coordinator, Derek Mason, has been named Auburn's defensive coordinator, head coach Bryan Harsin announced Thursday.

"Derek Mason is one of the best defensive minds in college football and his track record speaks for itself," Harsin said. "I've always admired his ability to prepare his defenses and his approach with players on and off the field is outstanding. Having experience as a head coach in the Southeastern Conference is invaluable and he will bring a lot to our program. We're fired up to have Coach Mason join the Auburn family."

Mason spent seven seasons at Vanderbilt (2014-20) where he became just the second coach in program history to lead a team to multiple bowl appearances. His 2018 team won six games and capped the regular season with a third straight victory over rival Tennessee and fifth in seven years. It also marked Vanderbilt's second bowl appearance in three years under Mason.

Mason guided Vanderbilt to its eighth postseason appearance in 2016 and finished the regular season 6-6, including four wins over the final six games.

The season featured marquee SEC victories over Georgia, Ole Miss and No. 24 Tennessee. Inside linebacker Zach Cunningham became Vanderbilt's first consensus All-American in more than three decades, sweeping first-team honors.

"Auburn University is a special place with special people, and I've witnessed this in my time in the SEC," Mason said. "I admire the school, the facilities, the traditions and the uniqueness of the community. Auburn has everything! Auburn embraces all that I believe in and I'm very appreciative of Coach Harsin, Director of Athletics Allen Greene, and the University Administration for this opportunity. I've always had a tremendous amount of respect for Coach Harsin and I'm excited to hit the ground running."

The architect of Stanford's vaunted 3-4 defense, Mason spent four seasons with the Cardinal and was elevated to defensive coordinator in 2011 after leading the program to a pair of Rose Bowl appearances and consecutive Pac-12 titles.

Mason's elite defensive units at Stanford ranked among the NCAA's best in defensive efficiency for three consecutive seasons.

While facing seven ranked opponents in 2013, Stanford ranked third nationally in rushing defense (89.4 ypg), 10th in scoring defense (19.0 ppg) and 16th in total offense (343.1 ypg).

The Cardinal was also one of only five teams to allow less than 100 rushing yards per game in 2013 and ranked fifth nationally with 44 sacks and seventh with 109 tackles for loss.

In 2012, Mason was a finalist for the Broyles Award, given annually to the nation's top assistant coach, after directing a Stanford defense widely considered the program's finest unit ever.

Mason's leadership paved the way to a historic defensive output, breaking Stanford's single-season record with 57 sacks and pacing the Pac-12 in scoring defense, total defense and rushing defense, and helped the Cardinal to an 11-2 season capped off with a Rose Bowl title.

In 11 of 14 games, Stanford held its opponent to 20 or fewer points, including a 14-point effort in an overtime win at top-ranked Oregon, who led the FBS with a 54.8 scoring average. The 2012 Stanford defense held eight of 13 opponents under 100 yards rushing.

In 2011, Mason's first year as co-defensive coordinator, his unit ranked either first or second in the Pac-12 in six defensive categories, including rushing defense, third-down conversion defense, scoring defense, total defense, sacks and opponent first downs.

Mason also helped develop an array of Stanford defensive standouts, including All-Pro cornerback Richard Sherman, All-America defensive end Trent Murphy, All-America linebacker Shayne Skov and All-Pac-12 safety Ed Reynolds.

Prior to his arrival in Palo Alto, Mason served as an assistant defensive back coach for the Minnesota Vikings from 2007-09. He played a vital role in the team ranking sixth in total defense in 2008 and 2009 as the Vikings won NFC North titles each season.

Mason was introduced to the NFL coaching circles through the Minority Fellowship program.

Before joining the Vikings, Mason tutored wide receivers at Ohio under Frank Solich, helping the Bobcats improve from 4-7 in 2005 to a 9-5 campaign and GMAC Bowl appearance the following year. Mason spent the 2004 season as wide receivers coach at New Mexico State, where the Aggies led the conference in passing.

During the 2002 campaign, Mason mentored receivers and assisted with special teams at Utah. The Utes featured the NFL Draft's No. 1 overall pick in quarterback Alex Smith and wide receiver Paris Warren, an eventual seventh-round pick.

Mason's move to Utah came after a three-year stint at Bucknell (1999-2001) in which he gained his first experience as a defensive assistant coach. At Bucknell, Mason served as defensive backs mentor for three straight winning Bison squads.

Mason's first three collegiate positions came as an offensive assistant at Mesa (Ariz.) Community College in 1994, Weber State in 1995-96 and Idaho State in 1997-98.

As a player, Mason was a two-year starter and four-year letter winner at Northern Arizona. Mason earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Northern Arizona in 1993. A native of Phoenix, Mason was a standout football player at Camelback High School.

Derek and his wife, LeighAnne, have two daughters, Makenzie and Sydney.

LEGALS

PB WIL BK 99 PG 567 - 01/07/2021 03:30 PM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of *
MARGARET CHANDLER, * CASE NO. PC 2021 - 005
Deceased. *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE: Letters Testamentary having been granted to Steven R. Glasscock as Personal Representative of the Estate of Margaret Ann Chandler, deceased, on the 7th day of January, 2021, 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.

Steven R. Glasscock
Personal Representative

Shay Persall

ST. JOHN & ST. JOHN, LLC
108 3rd Street SE
Cullman, Alabama 35055
(256) 734-3542

Attorney for Petitioner

TO: The Publisher of The Cullman Tribune:

Please publish the foregoing notice once a week for three consecutive weeks and send an affidavit of publication to the Judge of Probate.

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown, Probate Judge

PB WIL BK 99 PG 452 - 12/30/2020 10:49 AM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF *
FLOYD T. BURNETT * CASE NO.: PC-2020-352
Deceased. *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Testamentary having been granted to BARBARA BURNETT BEARDEN as Personal Representative of the Estate of FLOYD T. BURNETT, deceased, on the 30th day of December, 2020, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Probate Judge.

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

Barbara Burnett Bearden
Personal Representative

Tonya C. Palmer
Palmer Law Firm, LLC
Attorney for Personal Representative
1939 Main Avenue SW
Cullman, AL 35055
Telephone: (256)246-9600

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.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE
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-2016-900124
Whitney Spooner
(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Whitney Spooner, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $2,419.69 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 15th day of February, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 6th day of January, 2021.

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-2020-900447
Brad Henderson
(Defendant)

NOTICE OF FILING OF LAW SUIT

Defendant, Brad Henderson, whose whereabouts are unknown, must answer the complaint brought against him her by the Plaintiff, Walker Brothers, LTD, for $3,072.79 plus court cost, cause of action being: Open Account.

ANSWER TO THE COMPLAINT MUST BE MADE BY THE SAID DEFENDANT on or before the 15th day of February, 2021, or a default may be rendered against him her in the above styled cause.

Dated this the 6th day of January, 2021.

LISA MCSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT CLERK
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

Link (from Front)

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – The Link of Cullman County, an organization that seeks to bring together multiple resources to combat poverty in our area, faced a serious task in 2020: helping a growing number of people and confronting growing needs while being hindered in fundraising efforts and unable to be face-to-face with the people it was trying to help.

A statement from The Link said, "So, how does an organization with 12 board members, seven staff members, many faithful volunteers and a slew of interns and work study students transition in a pandemic? They take a journey. They begin by looking at what works: empowering people to become all they were meant to be works, supporting the physical needs of people for food and shelter works. They settle in their hearts that all people, including themselves, are moving toward personal and relational wholeness.

"The beginning of 2020 involved big adjustments for the Link team members. With Julie Hall as the team leader and director of neighbor relations and Melissa Betts coming aboard as the director of community relations, each team member began a personal journey: to sharpen their strengths, to push through their weaknesses, and to open their hearts to new (and returning) team members. Just as they began to set the course for the year, COVID-19 put everything on hold – except their neighbors' needs. So just like a well-connected GPS, the team recalculated the course."

Continuing to feed with community help

"In March, as schools began to realize their perishables would go to waste, The Link became a distribution center not only for neighbors to obtain food items, but other agencies as well," said Hall. "Suddenly, organizations and their leadership were collaborating in a way they never had before. Bridges were built out of necessity, and they remain strong and stable for the journey towards 2021. Uncharted territories had to be crossed. How does an organization continue their food pantry ministry during a quarantine with specific guidelines? Master's Hands Program Coordinator and Lead Encourager Paige Williams turn(ed) it into a drive-thru pantry. Food from the food bank, in addition to 400 produce boxes from the (North Alabama) Agriplex and 250 produce boxes from Farm to Families, is distributed out in the parking lot. The team distributed 2,282 bags of food to 1,030 households.

"They were able to have extra hands because of a partnership with the Wallace State Occupational Therapy Assistant program that sent 30 students to The Link on a fieldwork rotation! What a blessing, the partnership with Laura Smith, OTA program director, and Kelly Krigbaum, academic fieldwork coordinator, was to their part to empower and support the incoming class of kindergartners and their families with the annual Kindergarten Readiness Camp. With some last-minute site adjustments and some well-thought-out safety protocols, Reginnia Roat, literacy programs coordinator, successfully served 100 students, 49 family members and a whopping 47 amazing volunteers! Anonymous program completion surveys from parents repeatedly stated, 'My child received exactly what they needed- social interaction Master's Hands and the entire Link Team.

"The Team also blazed a new trail with two local food establishments – Milo's Hamburgers and Jack's. Through the efforts of the management of these two benevolent restaurants, about 1,200 lunches were served on alternating weeks.

"The Gathering Community Meal became the Carry-out Community Meal as 1,539 meals were served in drive through style! That number does not include the 600 meals that were served in conjunction with Emily Chamblee and her 'Faithful Friends' at the Thanksgiving Meal (and they only set The Link's smoke alarm off once!)."

Continuing to support education through changing methods and new partnerships

Hall shared, "While Cullman's schools have been in again-out again, The Link did skills or academic skills- to be successful in kindergarten.'

"COVID-19 actually allowed The Link to build a new partnership with Kingdom Life Church. Pastor Heath Tinker said, 'It's always an honor to partner with The Link to see the change and growth in our Cullman community for the better. The Kindergarten Readiness Camp has a positive impact for the teachers, parents and students. It is our joy to be part of this wonderful program.'

"The high schools in our Cullman community usually host our Wise-Up Financial Literacy program during the spring and fall semesters. In March, we sent emails to the host teachers that began with, 'In light of the schools closing...' and that was the end of the spring semester of Wise-Up. The Link team took out their road map and looked for another route to get this important financial information to the students of their community. Therefore, the Wise Up YouTube channel was born. Thanks to volunteer 'video teachers,' eight video lessons were created and made available to the host teachers. The handouts and worksheets were provided via email. The fall semester student numbers were lower than previous years, but the videos on the Wise Up YouTube channel have a combined total of 454 views.

"For non-traditional teaching opportunities, The Link looked to Amber McLaughlin, Renew U coordinator.

"Thanks to her willingness to be flexible and adapt to the need for distance learning, 392 people were impacted by on-line and socially distanced classroom curriculums. These curriculums were specifically designed for adults seeking to increase their parenting skills, develop their relational skills, and manage their anger. With the help of three full time Wallace OTA Program interns and 11 rock-star volunteers, the Renew U program reached the 2020 destination: life transformation."

Continuing to help families heal, emotionally and spiritually

For parents who legally require supervision to spend time with their children, The Link provides a safe and court-approved location for visitation. Shutdowns and social distancing provided challenges, but The Link responded.

Said Hall, "With supervised visitation, sometimes the distance to be traveled toward wholeness is complex. It was made more so by COVID-19 and its difficulties. Carrie Woods, family support advocate, was able to directly provide services to 60 people. There were 81 people impacted by the services provided. The Link was awarded a grant from The Children's Trust Fund to assist with additional parental education opportunities.

"While there were challenges, there were also victories. A confession of faith occurred during the midst of the restrictions. The eternity of that parent, and possibly future generations, was changed. No COVID roadblock can interrupt God's perfect plan of salvation for His children!

"Thanks to The Rotary Foundation of Cullman and the Wells Fargo Foundation, plans are in place to create a parent-lab and outdoor area so that services can be provided more organically."

Preparing to help people make a new start

The Link has created programs geared toward helping people in the correctional system make a smooth transition back to life outside, with tools that can help them avoid ending up back in that system.

Hall said, "The fall of 2020 was meant to be the launch of the ONE-eighty program. COVID-19 created a detour. Oct. 1 should have seen a super-highway of participants to Cullman's only Second Chance Act Grant recipients, but all they have seen is a socially-distanced single file line. This program will begin its first cognitive behavioral therapy groups in January of 2021, and Case Manager Aubrey Moore has done the preparation to ensure all policies and procedures are in place. She recruited and trained volunteer mentors who will assist participants in the development of pro-social skills. Be on the lookout for updates about the impact that this program has on recidivism in Cullman County."

Surprising successes in fundraising and new community partnerships

Hall said, "Fundraising was a bumpy road on the journey of 2020. Grill-Master Competition? Ugh, up in smoke! Golf Tourney? Yes, but only because you can social distance on the green! Sean of the South? Nope, the storytelling will have to wait!

"However, The Link's recent 'Won't You Be My Neighbor' campaign, created by Director of Community Relations Melissa Betts, raised $51,000. Ms. Betts had been thinking through ways to create new connections when Saints MC asked if there was a need that they could help meet. Homelessness weighs heavy on the staff and has traditionally been an underfunded line item. The Saints agreed they could meet that need. When Chicken Salad Chick wanted to partner with The Link, a resounding yes! When the Red Cross wanted to partner with The Link, why yes! In 2021 The Red Cross-Cullman, The Committee on Church Cooperation, and The Crossing will all be providing their services at the Link facility. We are so grateful to be in partnership with these organizations!"

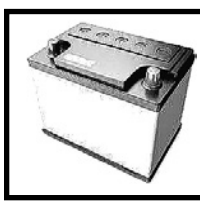
The final word

Hall concluded, "Our new mission statement says we exist to build empowering and supportive Christ-like relationships with our neighbors on the journey toward personal and relational wholeness. That is what we focused on doing in 2020. We want to do what Christ commanded: to love God and love our neighbor. Our neighbors include those that provide services and those that need services. We want and need to build relationships with everyone. We are all on this journey toward wholeness, and we are better together."

Learn more about The Link of Cullman County at www.linkingcullman.org.

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Obituary Announcements: Jan. 9

Robert Oneal Saint, 70, of Hanceville

Robert Oneal Saint, 70, of Hanceville, Alabama passed from this life Jan. 7, 2021 at Cullman Regional Medical Center. Mr. Saint was born Oct. 18, 1950 to Velmer and Betsy Ross Saint. A memorial service will be planned and announced at a later date. Cullman Funeral Home is honored to serve the Saint family. Mr. Saint served his country in the US Army and was a Vietnam veteran. He loved working with wood and gardening. He was preceded in death by his parents Velmer and Betsy Ross Saint. Mr. Saint is survived by his wife Joyce Saint; stepson Glenn Leipert; sisters Pam McGee, Martha Jane Hansard, and Susie Saint; grandchild Karissa; step-grandchildren Faith (David) Tanton and Justice Leipert; and step-great-grandchildren Lincoln Beins, Beck Tanton. Family and friends may sign the online guestbook at www.cullmanfuneralhome.com.

Larry Wayne Hagood, 72, of Cullman

Funeral services for Larry Wayne Hagood, 72, of Cullman, Alabama will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021 at the Cullman Funeral Home Chapel. Reverend Mark Long will officiate. Interment will follow at the Welcome Baptist Cemetery. Visitation will precede the service from noon-2 p.m. Saturday. Cullman Funeral Home is honored to serve the Hagood family. Mr. Hagood was born July 18, 1948 to Ervin Lee and Mildred Drake Hagood. He passed from this life Jan. 7, 2021. He was well known in the Fairview community as a man who loved country music, Alabama Football and family. Mr. Hagood was preceded in death by his parents Ervin Lee and Mildred Drake Hagood and sister Joyce Helphand. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Arvella Hagood; daughters Jennifer Hagood and Ashley (Austin) Hagood; brother Billy (Reba) Hagood; sister Sharon White; grandchildren Karyhs Carnes, Adalynn Bowers, Nevaeh Kilgore, Linken Kilgore, and Cash Barnett; and a host of family and friends. Family and friends may sign the online guestbook at www.cullmanfuneralhome.com.

Frank B. Shikle, 89, of Cullman

Funeral services for Frank B. Shikle, 89, of Cullman will be at 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 11, 2021 at Cullman Funeral Home Chapel with interment in Center Grove Baptist Cemetery with military honors. Rev. Scott Sessions will be officiating. Visitation will be Monday from noon-2 p.m. Cullman Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements. Mr. Shikle passed away Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021 at his residence. He was born April 14, 1931 to Charles G. and Mollie McKinney Shikle. He honorably served his country in the Air Force and enjoyed working on aircraft along with studying history and reading the Bible. He was preceded in death by his parents; son-in-law Joe Spradlin; daughter-in-law Sandy Shikle; sister Margaret Abbott; and brothers Bobby Shikle and Junior Shikle. Survivors include his wife of 59 years, Mary Shikle; sons Delane Shikle, Dale Shikle, and Darren Shikle; daughter Lisa Spradlin; grandchildren Chad Spradlin, Cody Shikle, Jason (Tisa) Spradlin, and Selina (Colton) Stricklin; great-grandchildren McKenzlie Spradlin, Logan Spradlin, Gage Spradlin, Ella Spradlin, Levi Shikle, Keegan Stricklin, and Mason Stricklin; and a host of family and friends. Friends may sign the online guestbook at www.cullmanfuneralhome.com.

Charles Whitt Lomneck, 39, of Crane Hill

Charles Whitt Lomneck, 39, of Crane Hill passed away Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021 at his residence. He was born April 12, 1981 in Orlando, Florida to Donald Lomneck and Judith Wallace. He was preceded in death by his parents. Survivors include his wife Charity Lomneck; father- and mother-in-law Tony and Kim Johnson; brother Donald; sisters April, Lucenda, Michelle, and Christy; and a host of close friends and extended family.

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JANUARY 9, 2021

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Winter Wonderland workers honored

Commission recognizes employees who made annual event success

Christy Perry
christy@cullmantribune.com



CHRISTY PERRY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Workers who were a part of the 2020 Winter Wonderland at Sportsman Lake Park were honored Friday by the Cullman County Commission.

CULLMAN, Ala. – The Cullman County Commission on Friday morning recognized all those who worked together to make the 2020 Winter Wonderland at Sportsman Lake Park a success. In a year that has been especially difficult for area seniors, the Commission, along with the Cullman County Commission on Aging, held special nights when seniors could enjoy the park's lights for free.

Commissioner Garry Marchman reminded those being recognized, "We are all part of the same team. We really are. It doesn't matter if you are sitting in the chairman position or if you are dumping trash cans at the park. We are part of the same team."

Employees from the Commission on Aging, Cullman County Parks and Recreation, City of Cullman, Sportsman Lake Park, Stony Lonesome OHV and Smith Lake Park were all recognized.

"I think I tell you all the time, we have the best County employees. I'd put our employees against anyone in the county. I think we have the best county in the state, and when you have the employees we have, it makes me proud to have people like you representing our county and I appreciate all of you," Commissioner Kerry Watson added.

The City of Cullman donated for senior nights. Stephanie Neal and Karla Pitts were recognized for helping bag and pass out candy to the seniors who visited Winter Wonderland.

County employees recognized included:

• Cullman County Commission on Aging: Becky Faulk, Brenda Foxx, Lorri Lee, Kristy McCarn, Susan Smith, Dennis Doty, Laurie Knight, Ellen Robertson, Rhonda Brewer, Angie Carter, Jamie James

• Sportsman Lake Park: Brandon Hutsell, Katherine Ashley, Juanita Acosta, Don Newman, Alex Thompson, Meagan Quick, Ashley Knott, Colin Long, Randall Campbell

• Stoney Lonesome OHV Park: Tyler Lindsey, Haley Briscoe

• Smith Lake Park: Brittney Heron, Richard Burks, Katie Robinson, Mike Thomas, Billy Chumley, Frank Boren

• Cullman County Parks and Recreation: Doug Davenport, Sara Morgan

• Chairman Jeff Clemons also thanked the sponsors for this year's Winter Wonderland, including Byars Wright Insurance, Gloria Williams-Freedom Insurance, Drinkard Development, First Baptist Church of Cullman, the City of Cullman and Ms. Senior Alabama Phyllis Hain.

Clemons said he hopes to do more of these types of recognitions in the future, sharing, "I think it's very important to recognize people when they do a great job."

Willibey (from Front)

Christy Perry
christy@cullmantribune.com

The Tribune is paying tribute to those in our community lost to COVID-19. If you would like to share your family's story, email Christy@CullmanTribune.com.

CULLMAN, Ala. – "He was a pretty quiet guy. If you went into a room full of veterans and started talking to people, he'd probably be the last guy you would get to because he just wasn't one of those guys that cares about being out front. He was just a quiet guy but a hard worker. You could always count on him." That's how Ken Brown remembered his friend and fellow veteran Jerry Willibey, who died Jan. 2, 2021 after battling COVID-19.

Willibey was born in 1940 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. When he finished high school, he and his family relocated to Tucson, Arizona and soon after Willibey joined the United States Air Force. He served a combat tour in Vietnam where he was stationed at Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base in Saigon. He earned the rank of sergeant and retired from the Air Force after 25 years of service.

When he returned from Vietnam, he was stationed at McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento. It was in Sacramento where he met his wife Ava, a Cullman County native.

"I was working in a bank, and a lady I worked with, her husband worked with Jerry," said Ava Willibey. "That's how we met."

The couple married in 1971 and would have celebrated their 50th anniversary later this year.

After 25 years in the Air Force, Willibey began working for Lockheed Martin in its missile division. He retired from Lockheed Martin after 15 years. The Willibeys eventually moved to Alabama.

Said Ava Willibey, "He followed me in my career. I worked for DOD (Department of Defense) and I worked at Maxwell Air Force Base for a short period of time. I then transferred to Kettering, Ohio and worked for about five years before I retired."

When she retired, the Willibeys moved to Smith Lake then to the city of Cullman.

Willibey became an active member of Cullman's Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2214. He was elected commander of the post five times and led the post to being selected as the top post in the state of Alabama.

Recalled Brown, "That was a nice distinction for him, and he got to go to the National Convention to be recognized for that. Jerry just put a lot of work in at the post and as a member there for 15-16 years. He served in a number of different positions within the post and was selected as commander five different times. He was a real stalwart down there. Commanders and their wives, it's a big commitment in terms of time and all."

Willibey was also a member of the Cullman Elks Lodge, where he served for five years as an officer for the executive committee, which organizes Cullman County's Veterans Day celebration. He served as treasurer of the committee.

Brown said, "You could always count on him to do whatever project you gave him to do, assigned him to do or he decided to do. He's one of these guys who was always involved in a lot of different projects and always giving back to the community."

"He was able to help this year (2020). He was always willing to do anything or whatever anybody needed help with," Ava Willibey said.

The 2020 Veterans Day Celebration was the most successful on record.

Willibey also served as president of the homeowners association of the Canterbury Gardens neighborhood where he and his wife lived. He loved the Alabama Crimson Tide, NASCAR, working in the yard and collecting coins. The Willibeys were members of Seventh Street Baptist Church, where Jerry attended regularly until his passing.

"He was a wonderful husband and family man. He was always friendly and helpful. Wherever and whoever needed help, he helped," smiled Ava Willibey. "He was always very organized and kept our home organized and he was just a wonderful person."

Willibey is survived by his wife Ava; daughters Lorrie Vancheri of Warrenton, Virginia and Patricia Crump of Cullman; and granddaughters Audrey and Anna Vancheri. Donations can be made in Jerry's name to the Flag Fund at VFW Post 2214, 112 Veterans Dr. Cullman, Alabama 35055.

Willibey died Jan. 2, 2021. He was 80 years old.

Way (from Front)

Heather Mann
heather@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – With the annual flood of new members joining to kick off New Year's resolutions, local gyms and fitness centers are finding ways to keep their members healthy and safe while health experts caution about post-holiday spikes in numbers of COVID-19 infections. The Tribune spoke with John Davis, manager of Anytime Fitness, and Jennifer Hunter, new owner of Jan's Fitness Club, to see how this year looks different.

Davis said Anytime Fitness has always had very thorough cleaning and sanitizing routines, even before the pandemic, but now it has stepped up to make sure that facilities and equipment are not just clean, but immaculate.

"We've always practiced thorough cleaning and sanitizing even before the pandemic hit, so the only thing that's really changed is we're using some stronger chemicals that really kill off everything," he said. "We also offer wipes for anyone to use and wipe down the equipment, as well as hand sanitizer. We don't require masks just because we think it's not something you can easily work out in, but we've been able to keep everyone spaced apart and we've been keeping on top of our cleaning routine."

Hunter said reopening Jan's Fitness Club came with some new technology to ensure the women who use the facility stay healthy.

"We've got a fog machine that sprays the disinfectant everywhere like the schools have, and we also have a temperature check on the wall that the ladies check when they come in. The temp check is connected to my phone and lets me know if someone comes in with a temperature, and it also has an alarm," said Hunter, who said her patrons "have been wonderful about distancing and sticking to guidelines to keep everyone healthy," with some continuing to mask up even while working out.

When asked how this year compares to other post-New Year turnout, Davis remarked that there was a definite decrease in the number of new members.

"Usually, we get a flood of people around this time of year, and while there are more people than usual compared to the past few months, we're still only seeing about half the number of people we usually get during the new year," he said.

Hunter said she saw an increase in new members. "When we were in quarantine for so long, people were really starting to feel the need to get out and move, and when we opened back up, we just had a lot of people join us," she remarked.

"It's really thanks to God's work and His influence. I've never seen so many people getting out and biking and walking and running, and I really think that this virus has made people more aware of the need for exercise and health focus."

She said that she's added a new 5:30 a.m. class for women whose schedules conflict with other workout times.

The Tribune also asked both what hopes they have for their gyms in 2021.

Davis: "Hopefully things will get back to normal soon with the vaccine. We usually do monthly boot camps, and unfortunately last year and some of this year we definitely won't get to do. It's a bit of a bummer because those are a good chance for the community to come and check out our facilities and our culture here, but we're not too worried about everything else. We're here for the people who feel comfortable coming out and exercising with us now, and we'll be here for everyone else once the cases start easing up."

Hunter: "What I'm hoping for is that this virus goes away to where I can fit more people in the facilities, but I really don't know what else there is to say. As cliche as it is, we really are all in this together. The ladies here have been wonderful, and I couldn't ask for anything better right now. If it wasn't for God Almighty and the ladies who come work out here, I never could've kept things moving."

Editor's note: Longtime owner of Jan's Fitness Club, Janet Woods, passed away in October 2020.



