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YEAR-END REPORTS

‘There are still lots of good folks out there’

Victoria’s Hope celebrates community involvement through challenges of 2021

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Victoria’s Hope began in 2018 in Dodge City as a ministry to help single parents in need. Since then, it has grown into a full-time thrift store near the heart of Cullman, where families in need shop for free, and where profits are channeled into other local charities. For founder April Bowen German, 2021 was a year of tragic loss and increasing need, but with that need, more op- » PAGE 6



VICTORIA’S HOPE

– YEAR-END REPORTS –

Flourishing in 2021: Flourish of Cullman expands staff, services


W.C. MANN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Teresa Hunt, Dana Creel and Brenda Turk dressed the part for Flourish of Cullman's Roaring 20s Bingo and Silent Auction in February 2020.

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CULLMAN, Ala. — Flourish of Cullman, Inc. is a nonprofit that empowers people with disabilities to live, work, play and enjoy life with as much independence as possible. The program offers life and career coaching, job placement assistance, structured play and social activities for its clients. Director Melissa Dew reported that 2021 was a busy year for her organization and people.

“So many things have happened in 2021,” said Dew. “2021 is Flourish’s fifth year since the organization was founded. This year we have had 36 referrals. We are participating in a new pilot program with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. The pilot program was developed to assist individuals on the waiting list for the 310 Scope Medicaid Waiver. We are one of the six organizations throughout Alabama to participate.

“We provide transition classes to the schools in Cullman City, Cullman County, and surrounding counties. The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation funds these classes. Each class focuses on skills needed to become employed after high school. Individuals participating in these classes must have an IEP or 504 plan to be eligible.

“Flourish recently started a cooking class that meets one night a week for eight weeks, beginning with fundamental tasks like food safety, how to use a microwave, and how to prepare different meals for their family.

“We partnered with Childhaven to use one of their empty homes to help the classes be home-based. There were five participants in the last class. Flourish will begin another cooking class in March. Follow our Facebook page and stay tuned for those details.”

Flourish’s social group was restricted by COVID, but has been able to resume, following CDC guidelines, with a new Social Coordinator, Jessica Fox, a graduate of the Wallace State Oc- » PAGE 6

YEAR-END REPORTS

Victim Services achieves goal of increased local services in 2021



VICTIM SERVICES OF CULLMAN, INC.

Puppy Bella, seen in this 2019 image, is now a support dog working in the VSC shelter. » PAGE 2

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cullman County Commission approves American Rescue Plan Act Funds for temporary premium pay program » PAGE 3

LOCAL CHARITIES

The Link of Cullman County recognized as Birmingham Squadron’s Non-Profit of the Night » PAGE 2

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EDUCATION

Wallace State offering free training in Automation Technician, Computer Applications, Diesel Technology, Phlebotomy and Welding

Russell Moore
Wallace State

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — Wallace State Community College's Adult Education Department, the Center for Career and Workforce Development and select programs on campus are teaming up, beginning in January, to offer free training to any student seeking specific skills to enter the workforce.

Training is available in Automation Technician, Computer Applications, Diesel Technology, Phlebotomy and Welding. No high school diploma is required to enroll in the classes.

Students interested in the program will embark on training courses that range from 4 - 12 weeks and be eligible to enter the workforce upon completion.

Orientation for these classes is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 6 at 9 a.m.

The completed classes can be subsequently transferred as credit into respective associate degree programs if the student wishes to pursue their education further.

Automation Technician students can continue enrollment into the Mechatronics, Electronics and Robotics program, Computer Application students have the option to enter either the Computer Science or Business Administration degree path, Diesel Technology students can further pursue their training to earn an Associate Degree and their CDLs, Phlebotomy students can apply for the Medical Lab Technician program and Welding students can pursue a degree in the field.

For more information about the Jan. 6 orientation, contact Tia Rutledge at 256-352-8077 or at tia.rutledge@wallacestate.edu.



CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Link (from Front)

Sara Gladney
sara@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Link has been selected as Birmingham Squadron's Non-Profit of the Night. Birmingham Squadron is Birmingham's new NBA G League team. The Squadron will take on the Iowa Wolves at 7 p.m., Saturday Jan. 8. Tickets start at $20, and a portion of the proceeds goes directly to the Link. To purchase tickets, visit https://squadron.spinzo.com/saturday-january-8-2022-01-08-KYVAY?group=link-of-cullman-county-bge8.

The Link's recent services include an Alabama Rural Coalition for the Homeless Rapid Rehousing program. The program is for people who are homeless or facing homelessness. In addition to rehousing, The Link can help people in need get caught up in their rent, so they are not evicted. Landlords with vacant units can call the Link at 256-775-0028 for more information.

The Link is also offering a 24/7 Dad program from The National Fatherhood Initiative. This 12-session workshop gives fathers the skills they need to be committed and involved in the lives of their children. The workshop teaches necessary parenting and communication skills.

Director of Development and Operations Melissa Betts stated the Link's mission statement, "We exist to provide supportive and empowering Christ-like relationships to our neighbors on the journey toward personal and relational wholeness, and we do that through four main service areas."

The four areas are: neighbor services, educational services, renewal services and family services.

Neighbor services are services in which there is a tangible need. The Link gives referrals for resource needs like housing, utility assistance and crisis involvement. The Link is also home to a food pantry located in their facility and they provide monthly community meals.

Educational services consist of volunteers in public schools, adult literacy tutoring and after school child tutoring.

Renewal services include classes for anger management, parenting skills and learning boundaries. Classes raise self-awareness and strengthen relationships.

Family services include supervised visitation services and co-parenting classes. The Fatherhood Initiative is included here.

Betts noted that "In order to provide supportive and empowering relationships, we have to have people who are willing to come alongside and help mentor."

The Link has several methods available for people who are looking to serve their community.

Betts invited anyone who would like, to "Come and serve in the food bank, get to know people coming in and what their needs are or teach a class, be a mentor one-on-one for a child that needs tutoring. There's lots of opportunities for serving." To volunteer, call 256-775-0028 or email info@linkingcullman.org.

Betts said that The Birmingham Squadron is trying to highlight communities around them this season. "They are highlighting all of Cullman County including our school systems, and they looked for a nonprofit that benefits their county and we were selected to be that for Cullman County."

Betts continued, "We are really fortunate to have a team like the Squadron in our nearby area."

The Link will be recognized during the game, and they will have an information table set up where people can gather information about their services or make a donation. To learn more about The Link of Cullman County visit their website: https://linkingcullman.org/.

Victim Services (from Front)

W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — In 2021, Victim Services of Cullman Inc. celebrated its 30th year of service to victims of crime, especially domestic violence, in Cullman County. For Director Carol Horstman, it has been a year of goals achieved.

"This has been an exciting year of expansion for Victim Services as we finally completed a goal that we have been working toward for years – the opening of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (or SANE) Clinic in Cullman County for adult survivors of sexual assault," said Horstman.

"Up until now, adult survivors of sexual assault have been forced to travel to Birmingham or Huntsville for a 'rape kit' to document, gather, and preserve evidence while also having their immediate medical needs attended to.

"Local victims of sexual assault can now receive the most up-to-date, comprehensive care – medical exams, victim advocacy and law enforcement reporting – all in one location, right here in their own community.

"Victim Services works closely with local law enforcement and CRMC to ensure coordination of services with the goal of decreasing any additional trauma to the victim."

"We are grateful to Dr. Adam Harrison for volunteering his time and expertise to act as our SANE Medical Director and to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, the Alabama Civil Justice Foundation and People's Bank for helping fund the project."

By the numbers

In 2021, Victim Services saw 1,218 women, men and children who received 5,194 services.

According to Horstman, "Services provided include crisis hotline response, emergency shelter, transitional residence and program, counseling, victim advocacy, victim accompaniment, SANE exams, assistance filing protection orders, Alabama Crime Victims Compensation application assistance, risk assessments, safety planning, support groups, life skills/empowerment classes, parenting classes, Domestic Violence Intervention Program – batterer's intervention, children and teen emotional support services, children's advocacy, interpreter services, referrals and assistance with transportation, employment, housing, education and benefits."

A community effort

"We are grateful to United Way of Cullman County, the City of Cullman and Cullman County Commission for their continued support and partnership," said Horstman. "The community-wide support we receive is amazing. Thank you to the individuals, churches, civic groups and businesses who support our mission to end family violence and promote peace by donating money and supplies.

"Thanks to our generous community, we were able to provide Christmas gifts for children of 51 current and former clients, as well as gifts and Christmas dinner for all the women and children in our two shelters."

Get involved, get help

Victim Services provides domestic and sexual violence crisis response and recovery services for primary victims and their family members, no matter when the abuse occurred. Services are provided at no cost to victims.

For more information, call 256-775-2600 (office) or 256-734-6100 to speak to an Advocate anytime, day or night.

RNs wanting more information on how to become a SANE can email SANE Clinical Director Heather Mahler at heather@victimservices.online.

To make a monetary donation, or to view wish lists for Victim Services' shelters, visit https://www.victimservices.online/get-involved/shelter-wish-list.

COVID-19 BY THE NUMBERS

Friday, Dec. 31, COVID-19 update from the Alabama Department of Public Health's COVID-19 Dashboard Hub (https://bit.ly/3iVJwXK)

ADPH COVID-19 dashboard changes

Along with decreases in COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths, ADPH will be updating its dashboard less frequently. Effective June 7, the Data and Surveillance Dashboard will update Monday, Wednesday and Friday; the Vaccine Distribution Dashboard will update Tuesday and Thursday and no weekend updates will be made. Additional information may be provided in the future as ADPH gathers more data on the pandemic.

*The dashboard has been redesigned to help people better understand the current transmission levels in their communities and the impact of COVID-19 in Alabama. The moving 7-day sum is updated daily instead of weekly--instead of a 3, 7 and 14-day average, the dashboard will provide a 7-day moving sum for cases. The 2020 and 2021 breakdowns of cases and deaths will be provided - not just a total sum over both years.

Case details* (Updated Monday, Wednesday and Friday) No Updates Available

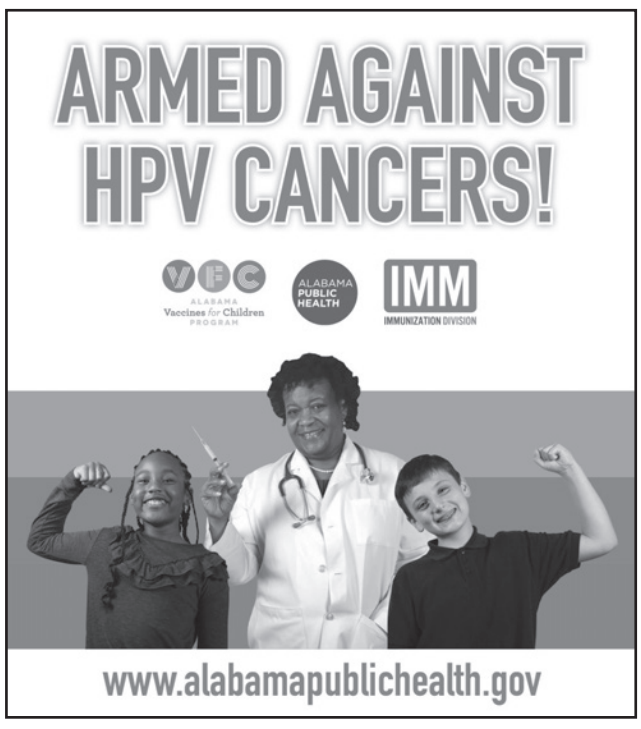
- Positivity in tests in Alabama: 27%
- Confirmed cases in Alabama (2020): 387,479
- Confirmed cases in Alabama (2021): 492,828 (+9,693 since Monday)
- Total confirmed deaths in Alabama (2020): 7,186
- Total confirmed deaths in Alabama (2021): 9,268 (+36 since Monday)
- Positivity in tests in Cullman Co.: 10.1%
- Total confirmed cases in Cullman Co. (2020): 7,561
- Total confirmed cases in Cullman Co. (2021): 9,255 (+151 since Monday)
- Deaths in Cullman Co. (2020): 128
- Deaths in Cullman Co. (2021): 182 (+2 since Monday)
- Total tested in Cullman Co. in the last 7 days: 1,664
- Total tested positive in Cullman Co. in the last 7 days: 168
- Total tested in Alabama in the last 7 days: 58,941
- Total positive tests in Alabama in the last 7 days: 15,924
- Currently hospitalized in Alabama: 612

Vaccine details (updated Tuesday and Thursday) No Updates Available

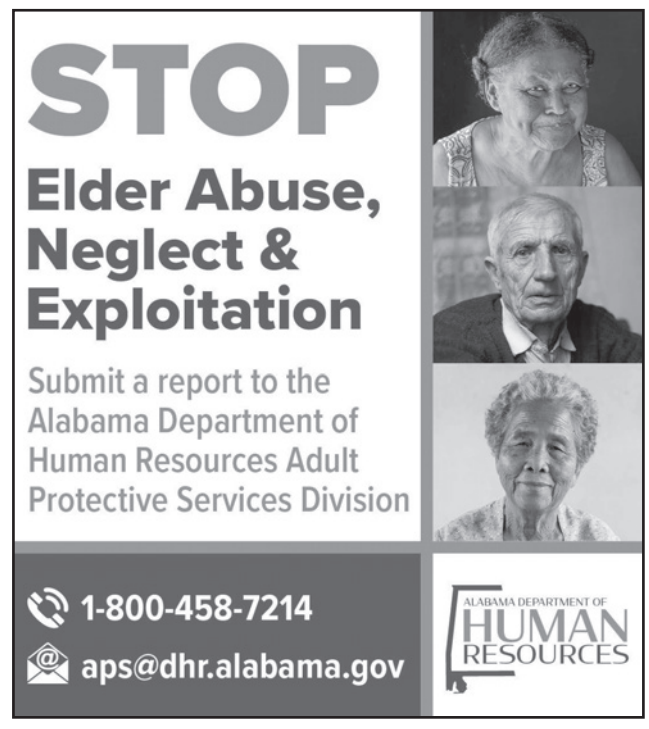
- Doses delivered to Alabama: 7,827,125 (No update available)
- Doses delivered to Alabama providers: 4,289,825 (No update available)
- Doses administered: 5,396,355
- Additional doses administered: 559,223
- Number of people receiving one or more doses: 2,714,278
- Number of people who have completed vaccine series: 2,213,016
- Doses delivered to federal programs: 3,537,300 (No update available)

Alabamians in Phases 1a, 1b and 1c (including those 12 and older) are now eligible to receive a vaccine.

View the Alabama COVID-19 Vaccination Allocation Plan at: www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19vaccine/assets/adph-covid19-vaccination-allocation-plan.pdf







Commission (from Front)

Sara Gladney
sara@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – The Cullman County Commission on Tuesday evening recognized Phyllis Little who is retiring after 26 years with the Cullman County EMA. Clemons said, "We appreciate your dedication to the citizens of Cullman County for 26 years, that's amazing, so thank you." Kerry Watson added, "I want to thank you, not only for your service, but for your friendship. I consider you a very good friend and we go way back. I want to thank you for what you have done for the community."

Tina Brown was not present at the meeting but was also recognized for retiring after 23 years with Sales Tax.

The Commission proclaimed January 2022 Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force, Director Kathy Wilson, DA Wilson Blaylock, District Judge Chad Floyd and District Judge Rusty Turner were present. Floyd cited a proclamation from the governor which included, "the United States government estimates between 600,000 and 800,000 individuals are trafficked across international borders each year and are exploited through forced labor and forced sexual activity."

To be in line with the American Rescue Plan, the resolution to adopt premium pay implementation policies and procedures was approved.

This will allow employees that qualify, any employee making less than $70,260, to be paid $3,000 over three paid periods, $1,000 each pay period for full-time employees.

Part-time employees will be paid $1,500 over the three pay periods.

The commission approved the expenditure of American Rescue Plan Act Funds for temporary premium pay program. For employees who do not qualify for the American Rescue Plan Act Funds, the commission also approved the one-time, non-recurring pay increase for active employees making more than 150% of the state average annual wage up to a maximum of $3,000 for full time and $1,500 for part time employees using the remaining CARES Act funds.

The commission ratified the Homeland Security Grant Agreement for VHF Amplifiers in the amount of $11,810.28 (100% reimbursable) for the Cullman County EMA.

Also ratified was the Homeland Security Grant Agreement for the State Mortuary equipment and training in the amount of $10,000 (100% reimbursable) for the Cullman County EMA.

The Commission ratified the issuance of a Tax – Exempt Note on behalf of the Health Care Authority of Cullman County. Cullman Regional has been experiencing bond issues. They want to expand the emergency room to include 13 CCU beds and another floor will be added to the hospital. To satisfy the requirements of the bond issue the governing body, having jurisdiction over the area must approve the issuance of the bond.

In other business:

• Chairman Clemons was authorized to sign the Amendment to IAC Program. This amendment will allow counties more time to enter the program and set a minimum fee of 3% to the program.

• The commission reappointed Gordon Sandlin as Chairman to the Local Emergency Planning committee for FY 2022. The commission appointed Tim Sarton as Vice Chairman to the local Emergency planning committee for FY 2022.

• The transfer of one 2012 Chevrolet Suburban from E-911 to Cullman County Commission was accepted.

• The chairman was authorized to sign the renewal of Filter Maintenance Contract for Cullman County Detention Center with Trane in the amount of $22,586.85.

• The commission approved the Voice Evacuation System installed per code by ADS Security in the amount of $28,852.24 at the courthouse to be paid from the General Fund. This system is permanently affixed to the property and is less than the Public Works Bid limit of $50,000.

• The commission authorized a payment to the City of Hanceville for Mud Creek Cleanup in the amount of $15,000 for FY 2021.

• The Proposed plat John Cook Subdivision, a minor subdivision containing two lots located on U.S. Highway 67 was approved.

• A bid was awarded to US Foods for two convection ovens for the Cullman County Detention Center in the amount of $43,350.94

• Bid #1371 for Tree Service 2021-2022 was rejected due to an inadequate number of bids and will be rebid.

• The next Commission Work Session will be Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022, at 4 p.m. in the Commission Meeting Room.

The next Commission Meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022, at 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend.


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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

"Come to the Well" Community Women's Bible Study
• Tuesday mornings at 10 at the Hebrews Cafe at East Side Baptist Church, 1111 Third Street SE in Cullman
• Please wear a mask/face covering.

Baileyton Bargain Days
• First and third Saturday of each month from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the old Baileyton fire station next to the town's park
• Beauty and health products, toys, home goods, pet items, food and many everyday items
• A donation of $20 will allow a shopper to fill up a bag, and for $40 a shopper can fill a large box. Some of the items of greater value will require a larger donation. There will be some restrictions and product limits on the items. Cash and checks accepted.
• Proceeds will be used for park improvements and capital improvements for the town.

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 Saint Joseph Drive NW, Cullman
• Prayer meetings- Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Come and pray with us or come to receive prayer.
• Ladies' exercise classes- Wednesdays at 6 p.m. Children welcome.
• Van runs in 5 Points Area. Call 256-841-2060 for pickup. Breakfast at 9:30 a.m. Small group classes for children, youth and adults at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. Message "EMPOWER ME LORD!" by Pastor Bobby Dodd
• Mondays-Fridays 5 Points Food Outreach: CANCELED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE DUE TO COVID
• Sundays at 9 a.m. Van runs in 5 Points area. Call 256-841-2060 for pickup. Small group classes for adults, children and youth at 10 a.m. Praise and worship and message at 11 a.m.
• Mondays-Fridays- Free hot meals for children Mondays 11 a.m. – noon, Tuesdays 1-2 p.m. and Wednesdays-Fridays 11 a.m. – noon. Cullman Housing Authority Community Center 1545 Vine Circle SW. Please call Kristie 256-636-5362 for more information. Eat in or take out. Sponsored by Kids Loving Kids, Raising Arrows Ministry, and Spirit Life Church.
• Kids Loving Kids Birthday Blessings serves children ages 1-18 in need of assistance to celebrate their birthday. Register your child and pick up a birthday box with cake mix, icing, sprinkles, decorations and toys! Pick up is the last weekend of the month. Saturday (5100 Curry Highway Suite 100-B Jasper, AL 35504) from 3-5 p.m. or the last Sunday of the month at Spirit Life Church Cullman from 12:30-1 p.m. Birth certificate is required at the time of box pickup. Register at https://form.jotform.com/-203435614640045. For more information, text or call 205-717-7478.

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 NAR-ANON Group Meetings
The NAR-ANON family group meetings are a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else's addiction. We offer Help by sharing our experiences, strength and hope. We carry the message of hope by letting others know that they are not alone by practicing the 12 Steps of NAR-ANON and changing our own attitudes. We Respect Your Anonymity. Our program is not a religious one, but a spiritual way of life. Meetings will be held at The Ruehl Building (family life center of St John's Church) Tuesday evenings at 6 p.m. Contact Jamie Weathersby Smith 256-708-7122 or Don or Nancy McKenzie 256-736-3327 or 256-736-3470 for more information.

Wallace State Fine and Performing Arts fall – spring performances

Night of Jazz
• Feb. 10, 7 p.m.
• Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre
• Featuring Wallace State Faculty and Friends
• Info: 256-352-8277, jessica.chairez@wallacestate.edu

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
• March 18-19, 7 p.m., March 20, 2 p.m.
• Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre
• Featuring Wallace State Theatre
• Info: 256-352-8277, jessica.chairez@wallacestate.edu

Dazzle Me, Disney!
• April 7-9, 7 p.m.
• Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre
• Featuring the Wallace State Singers
• Info: 256-352-8277, jessica.chairez@wallacestate.edu

Big Band Dance
• April 15, 7 p.m.
• Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts
• Featuring the Wallace State Jazz Band
• Info: 256-352-8277, jessica.chairez@wallacestate.edu

Dance Spring Showcase
• April 22, 7 p.m.
• Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre
• Featuring the Allegro Dance Theatre
• Info: 256-352-8277, jessica.chairez@wallacestate.edu

Spring Under the Stars
• April 26, 7 p.m.
• Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts (bring lawn chairs, blankets etc.)
• Featuring the Wallace State Concert Choir and Concert Band
• Info: 256-352-8277, jessica.chairez@wallacestate.edu

Wallace State Community College spring registration
Dec. 11 - Jan. 15: Registration for the spring 2022 semester is underway at Wallace State Community College. Classes will begin Jan. 10 with options for day and evening classes on campus, online and hybrid. Registration will continue through Jan. 15 for regular and Mini Term I classes. Mini Term II classes will begin March 8. Call 256-353-8000 for more information.

Sing Me to Heaven choir concert
Jan. 18: Cullman choir Cullman Women Sing will be holding their concert "Sing Me to Heaven" on Tuesday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. at Seventh Street Baptist Church. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

Cullman Community Theatre's "Arsenic and Old Lace"
Feb. 18-20: Cullman Community Theatre will present "Arsenic and Old Lace," a play by Joseph Kesselring, Friday, Feb. 18 – Sunday, Feb. 20 at Stonebridge Farms. More information to come.

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PREP BASKETBALL

West Point falls short against Priceville in Christmas Tournament finals

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

WEST POINT, Ala. — The West Point Warriors were back home at Jim Boyd Gymnasium to compete in their Christmas Tournament Championship Game Wednesday afternoon but unfortunately for the home crowd, the Priceville Bulldogs were the ones who left with this year's trophy. The Warriors trailed by 23 at one point in the second half but they rallied in the fourth quarter to cut the lead down to eight with two minutes to play. However, Priceville was able to finish strong and pull away with a 76-60 win.

Jay Lamar scored the first nine points of the game for West Point, all on three-pointers, to tie the score at 9 midway through the first quarter. A run from the Bulldogs put them ahead 16-9 but Andrew Lynn knocked down a three of his own to cut the lead to four. A pair of Kolten Perry free throws and another three-pointer from Lynn cut the Priceville lead to 19-17 at the end of the first quarter.

The second quarter was one that the Warriors would like to forget. The Bulldogs scored the first 17 points of the period to take a commanding, 36-17 lead with three minutes to play in the half but a basket by Lamar finally stopped the run. However, West Point still went into the locker room trailing the Bulldogs 39-19 at halftime.

Another basket from Lamar made it a 42-21 game early in the third quarter and Ashton Rodgers laid one in and drilled a three-pointer to cut the lead to 44-27. Lynn and Sam Wheeler each chipped away at the lead from the free throw line and Lamar buried another three in the final moments of the third to make it 51-35 going into the fourth quarter.

The Warriors got hot from three-point range in the final period, starting with back-to-back treys Lynn and Perry that made it a 58-41 game. Lamar added another three later in the quarter to trim the lead to 13 and back-to-back baskets from Perry made it 58-49 midway through the fourth. Lynn and Wheeler each hit from three-point range again to cut the lead to 63-55 with two minutes remaining in the game but West Point couldn't get any closer than that. Perry and Lynn each added to their point totals in the final minute but couldn't keep pace with Priceville. The Bulldogs held on to defeat the Warriors 76-60 and claim this year's West Point Christmas Tournament title.

Lamar led the way for West Point with 19 points in the loss. Lynn finished with 16 and Perry added 11. The Warriors will face Priceville at home again Monday night.



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

West Point's Jay Lamar led the Warriors with 19 points in their 76-60 loss to Priceville Wednesday.

Birmingham Bowl: Auburn falls to Houston in season finale

Jeff Shearer
AU Athletics

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – John Samuel Shenker broke Auburn's single-season records for tight end receptions and yards but Houston scored on a late fourth-quarter touchdown pass to win the Ticketsmarter Birmingham Bowl 17-13 Tuesday at sold-out Protective Stadium.

"I told our team in the locker room I'm proud of our guys," Auburn coach Bryan Harsin said. "We have a lot of fantastic people on this team. In football, it does come down to execution and things you have to do to win it. We need to obviously be better in those areas.

"I'm proud to be their coach. Those seniors understand where our football program is going, and I appreciate the seniors. We didn't get the results we wanted at the end of the season."

After allowing a touchdown on Houston's opening drive, the Tigers kept the Cougars out of the end zone until Most Valuable Player Clayton Tune threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Jake Herslow with 3:27 remaining in the game.

Needing to drive 75 yards for a game-winning TD, Tank Bigsby gained 8 yards on Auburn's first play, but three straight incompletions ended the possession.

Trailing 10-6 in the third quarter, Auburn drove 78 yards on 11 plays to take a 13-10 lead on T.J. Finley's 12-yard touchdown pass to Kobe Hudson on third-and goal, helping the Tigers overcome the Cougars' 10-0 first-half lead.

Finley completed 19 of 37 passes for 227 yards and a touchdown. Bigsby led Auburn with 96 rushing yards on 19 carries and 68 receiving yards on five catches, including a career-long 51-yarder that led to Auburn's first points on Ben Patton's 35-yard field goal late in the first half.

The Tigers made two interceptions and a fourth-down stop in the second half, helping turn a 10-3 halftime deficit into a 13-10 lead.

After Hudson's touchdown, Nehemiah Pritchett intercepted Tune but a long return was negated by a targeting penalty on a block by Smoke Monday, costing Auburn 50 yards of field position.

In his final Auburn game, Chandler Wooten led the Tigers with 12 tackles, including a fourth-down stop early in the fourth quarter, and an interception on a double pass midway through the final period.

"I'd rather have zero tackles and win," Wooten said. "We played extremely hard. It was never about the fight with this team. It's just about cleaning up those little things. That's how we take that next step."

"He's one of those guys you want in your organization," Harsin said of Wooten. "He's a tremendous worker. He's a guy who does what he says he's going to do. That's why he's a captain. There's a lot of great people in that locker room and he's one of them."

Shenker made two clutch grabs to set the record, a third-down conversion in the first half and a 41-yard gain on Auburn's touchdown drive that passed Fred Baxter's 391 yards in 1991.

"That's a great honor, but obviously we wanted to get the win," said Shenker, who finished with five receptions for 54 yards to bring his record-setting season totals to 33 catches and 413 yards. "I'm happy to hold it now. We'll see how long it lasts. That helps with recruiting, showing these guys we'll throw to tight ends. It opens your offense and brings a huge versatile piece to it."

Trailing 10-3 at the half, Auburn came out hot to start the third quarter. After Finley began the drive with a 9-yard pass to Shedrick Jackson, Bigsby rushed for 15 and 32 yards on successive plays to set up Patton's 35-yard field goal that trimmed Houston's lead to 10-6.



JACOB TAYLOR/AU ATHLETICS

Auburn running back Tank Bigsby finished with 96 rushing yards in the Tigers' 17-13 loss to Houston Tuesday.

Houston drove 87 yards on 12 plays on the game's opening possession, taking a 7-0 lead on Tune's 5-yard touchdown pass to Alton McCaskill.

In the second quarter Auburn drove 55 yards on 12 plays but video review overturned a fourth-and-3 completion at Houston's 21-yard line. The Cougars then drove 45 yards and took a 10-0 lead on Dalton Witherspoon's 52-yard field goal.

Auburn concludes the 2021 season with a 6-7 record and now sets its sight on offseason conditioning, February's signing day, and spring practice.

"I'm most disappointed for our seniors," Harsin said. "There are a lot of fixable things that I know we can be much better at. Consistent execution. We're not as consistent as we need to be, and we'll fix them.

"Everything you do matters. The way we prepare, the way we work. We'll get our players back and refocus on things we know we have to do better, take what we learned from this season and go apply it to next year.

"The inconsistency showed up more this year than the consistency did. We're not going to stop.

"We're going to change it, we're going to fix it, and we're going to get better. There is no Plan B.

"There's Plan A, and we're here to make this work, and we've got a staff and a group of players who are all willing to do whatever it takes to make it work."

Troy legend DeMarcus Ware a semifinalist for Pro Football Hall of Fame; fan vote open

Adam Prendergast
Troy Athletics

TROY, Ala. — Troy legend DeMarcus Ware is one of 26 modern-era semifinalist for the Pro Football Hall of Fame in his first year on the ballot. One of the greatest players in Troy Football history, Ware is on the ballot for the first time following a 12-year NFL career with the Dallas Cowboys and Denver Broncos. Fans can get in on the voting action by visiting bit.ly/HOFFanVote22.

A Super Bowl champion, nine-time Pro Bowler, four-time first-team All-Pro and member of the NFL 2000s All-Decade Team, Ware ranks ninth in NFL history in career sacks with 138.5 (the stat became official in 1982). Additionally, he tied the NFL record by leading the league in sacks twice and was a two-time Butkus Award winner.

Ware was instrumental in Troy's transition to the Football Bowl Subdivision in 2001 and finished his Trojan career as the program's all-time leader in tackles for loss with 55.5 in addition to totaling 27 sacks for a loss of 198 yards to rank among the all-time greats in Troy history.

Ware became a starter in 2002 and quickly made an impact in the trenches by finishing fifth on the team with 72 tackles.

Along with the former Troy and NFL star Osi Umenyiora, the duo combined to record 25 sacks and 40 tackles for a loss.

In his sophomore campaign, Ware tied for 15th in the country with nine sacks, while his 19.5 tackles for a loss tied for ninth in the nation.

In 2002, Troy's defense finished fourth in the country in total defense as the Trojans' allowed 276.8 yards per game.

In 2003, Ware secured a selection to the NCAA Division I-A All-Independent Team by making 62 tackles, 16 tackles for a loss and six sacks. As a junior, Ware led the Trojans with 32 quarterback hurries, five forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries.

A member of the Sun Belt Conference All-Decade Team, Ware was a finalist for the 2004 Hendricks Award, which is presented annually to the nation's top defensive end.

The Dallas Cowboys selected Ware with the 11th overall pick of the 2005 NFL Draft becoming the first-ever first round pick from Troy or the Sun Belt Conference.

The 122-person group on the initial ballot will be cut to just 25 names in November when the Hall of Fame's selection committee announces the semifinalists.

That then will be pared down to a list of 15 finalists in January.

The committee will then select a group of up to five modern-era picks as it votes on the Class of 2022, along with senior finalist Cliff Branch, contributor finalist Art McNally and coach finalist Dick Vermeil.



TROY ATHLETICS

Troy Football legend DeMarcus Ware.

Gymnastics and Cheer Academy to continue their LEAP Program in January

Sara Gladney
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CULLMAN, Ala. — Cullman Gymnastics and Cheer Academy is holding a new six-week LEAP program beginning Thursday, Jan. 6. The Leading Exceptionally Amazing People, or LEAP, program was created in partnership with the Cullman Therapeutic Recreation Program to provide a recreational outlet for children with disabilities. This program allows children with disabilities to participate in the sport of gymnastics in a small group setting using age/ ability level equipment.

The two instructors for the class, Lindsey James and Kim Warren, are experienced in working with special needs kids.

James is a team coach at the Gymnastics and Cheer Academy and Warren is a special education teacher with the Cullman County Board of Education.

To register for classes, visit their Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Cullman-Gymnastics-and-Cheer-Academy-258323177949/.

First-time applicants will need to create an account and add the student who will be participating, then go to Booking and find the LEAP into Gymnastics Camp. If there is a waitlist, add your name at no charge.

Classes will be held once a week each Thursday. Ages 3-5 have two different time slots, one beginning at 4:15 p.m. and another at 5:45 p.m. Classes for ages 6-10 will begin at 5 p.m.

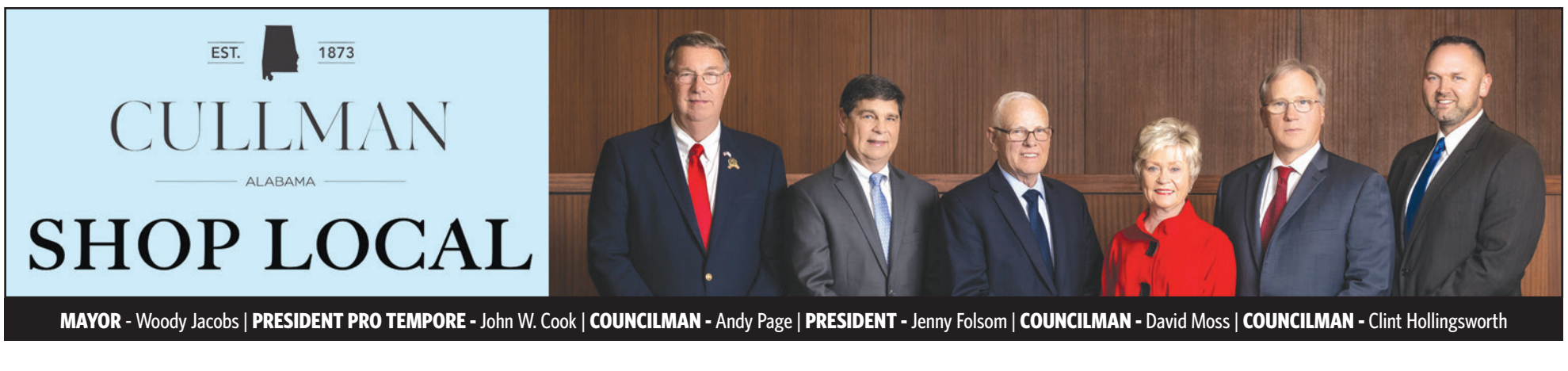
Each session lasts 30 minutes and costs $45 per session.

Tammy Allums with the Academy said that all participants enjoyed the last session: "The parents were really excited and happy about it and wanted to make sure we were going to do it again."

The Academy will not be holding a meet and greet before classes as they did before the last six-week session.

However, if parents would like to meet the coaches before classes, they can call 256-739-5567 to set up a meeting.

The Cullman Gymnastics and Cheer Academy is located at 1511 Sportsmans Lake Road NW in Cullman.





















LIFESTYLE

Seasonal depression – Being neighborly could be the difference

Lauren Estes
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CULLMAN, Ala. — Although for most, the holidays bring many fun events and family time, for others, they can be reminders of loss and loneliness. The bat of seasonal depression often sweeps in when the days get shorter and the night appears earlier each day.

Cullman County Coroner Jeremy Kilpatrick said as of Nov. 1, in the county there have been 24 overdoses, 19 suicides and four homicides. The winter months and holidays are often a time of painful memories of loss, often triggering loneliness. It's a pivotal time to check on your neighbors, loved ones and those who might struggle with seasonal depression.

Cullman County resident Jessica Wynn experienced suicide firsthand at the loss of her husband in 2016, She said she struggles herself with seasonal depression.

"One of the main ways it affects me is by being tired all day, with no energy or will power to do anything," Wynn said. "I absolutely feel worthless most days. A lot of people would never know the struggle going on inside of other people because many hide it so well with a smile, including me."

She said she may be overly emotional, but hides it from those closest to her, and often, the holidays are the hardest.

"After losing Nick, we still celebrate Christmas with his family and keep in touch," Wynn said. "We eat with his family every week and even though we enjoy it, there is still a dread about going. Being around everyone is a constant reminder of what we lost. There is always that thought why we were not enough for him to stay. My kids struggle with social anxiety and depression. During the winter and holidays, there's always a guilt of moving on or catching yourself having a good time and feeling guilty. It's really important to check on those around who struggle with depression because it's a daily battle."

"The Cullman County Sheriff's Office would like to encourage everyone to remain diligent this holiday and winter season," Sheriff Matt Gentry said.

"Enjoy the time but do your part to keep yourselves and your loved ones safe. The holidays can be a very trying time for some. Please reach out to your family and friends and check on their health and well-being during this time."

Cullman Police Department Public Relations Officer Adam Clark said to remember to check on loved ones who are alone.

"It is very important to remember to call and check on your loved ones," Clark said. "Especially if they are alone. The holidays can be a very lonely and depressing time for some people. If anyone needs any help, please contact the Cullman Police Department, we can talk and/or can get them in touch with a mental health professional."

Flourishing (from Front)

cupational Therapy Assistant program.

Revamped men's and women's groups have also become active again.

Flourish sponsors a volunteer program in which clients go out to work at various places around the county, to gain work skills and improve their employability. The program also suffered under COVID, but is back up and running in 2021.

The program is led by Volunteer Coordinator Karli Lee, a Wallace State Occupational Therapy Assistant program graduate.

Dew said, "We are currently volunteering two days a week, one day at Hope Horses and one day at The Foundry thrift store."

Intake Coordinator Tia Sharp meets with each individual as they join Flourish's programs.

She is a graduate of the Wallace State Nursing Program. In all, Flourish now has six full-time staffers and one part-time, thanks to approval by the organization's board in 2021.

"This is a really big accomplishment for us," said Dew.

Remembrance in action

Flourish started demolition for the "Robert Squires Independent Living Skills Apartment" where clients will learn how to live as independently as possible. The organization is seeking donations for supplies.

Dew said, "We raised a total of $10,000 this year and need about $10,000 more to get it completed.

"Robert, the namesake, was a wonderful man that passed away this year. Flourish wanted to do something special to honor him."

Flourish also started the April Williams Scholarship Fund in 2021.

Dew explained, "This fund was started in May of this year when my sister with differing abilities passed away.

"We wanted a way to keep her spirit of giving alive for years to come. The scholarship fund is used to assist individuals that may need items such as interview clothing or work clothes. My family will hold her annual birthday party on Feb. 24 to build this account."

Ready for now, planning for the future

Dew and her staff have worked to make sure Flourish has the resources it needs to continue its mission.

"We have enough money in our rainy-day fund for Flourish to operate for six months if something were to happen to our funding sources," said Dew.

"Flourish now has five different funding sources to help us grow and serve the individuals in the community. Flourish has partnered again with the Wallace State Community College OTA Program for their Virtual 5K Run. Proceeds will go to the OTA program, Flourish, and two other nonprofits organizations in our area."

Save the date!

Dew shared, "We have an event coming up, 'Flourish the Night Together.' The event will be 80s theme. Guests are encouraged to dress up in their 80s attire, and come out and have fun raising money for Flourish of Cullman.

The event will take place Feb. 5, 2022, at Terri Pines Country Club featuring a silent auction, games, and of course, food."

For more information on Flourish or the upcoming fundraiser, contact the Flourish office at 256-735-4186.

Folks (from Front)

portunities to serve.

"As I reflect back on 2021, it was definitely a year of change for Victoria's Hope," said German. "We started the year losing one of our very own, Robert, to complications from COVID. That left a huge void in our lives, and his shining personality is something that we will always miss.

"We moved into a new location in late January, which was a huge leap of faith. After moving to the new location, we saw our clientele and customer numbers increase greatly. I think that the new location helped get the word out about us. In 2021 we helped roughly 540 families financially in the forms of clothing and household donations, or coming in after a house fire or foster children. We served close to 200 children on our Butterfly Tree at Christmas.

"We began the Butterfly Tree back in 2019, and I am amazed at how much it has grown since then. None of this could have been possible without the help of this amazing community. That's what I love so much about this experience, seeing the way this community comes together to just make it work. We have also contributed financially to schools in the community as the need arose, because being an educator myself that is something that is very important to me."

German launched Victoria's Hope to help single parents, but she has seen the ministry grow into much more.

Germans said, "We have homeless who come in and need blankets and clothing, people who need clothing for job interviews but can't afford anything until they get their first paycheck, people who need suits for an unexpected funeral, people who just need an electric skillet to make supper for the family; the list goes on and on. We want Victoria's Hope to be somewhere where people know they can come in without judgement, and get the help that they need. Anyone can fall on hard times, so we want people to know that that is what we are here for.

"We also have individuals that come in that do not necessarily qualify for our services, but still need help obtaining clothing or other things. That is where our thrift store comes into play. We use the funds from items sold at the thrift store to pay our overhead and to put money back into the Cullman community, yet we also try to keep prices extremely low so everyone can afford the things. People often joke about how we just basically give everything away, and we kind of do, for the most part. But we have been so blessed at the donations that just keep coming in, we feel that's our way of paying the community back.

"We also had a day this past month where the customer paid based on the honor system. We had a bucket, and whatever you felt your total should be, you placed in the bucket without anyone knowing the amount. We did it right before Christmas to help out anyone who might still need some last minute things but were low on funds. It was such a success that we have talked about doing this more often."

Victoria's Hope operates without any kind of regular corporate sponsorship, though local businesses have been generous in giving. Still, the work is a challenge at times.

Said German, "Honestly, there have been months that we were scared we weren't going to make rent, but thank the Lord, we always have. I feel as long as we continue to give and do the right thing, that God is going to take care of us, and He has for the past three and a half years.

"We have been blessed to have been helped by many local businesses including Mr. Plumber, Andy Podner with Atlas Precision Sculpting, State Farm Insurance Agent Shirley Quattlebaum, Express Meds Pharmacy, and many individuals we call our 'angels' who choose to be anonymous. All of these people have been a huge blessing to us. We also have partnered throughout the year with many other services and nonprofits such as The Link, DHR, Restoring Women Outreach, The Public Library and Flourish of Cullman.

"We had so much fun partnering with Flourish this past summer. For five weeks we had three of their amazing teens come and work with us. They worked four hours a day and assisted us with tasks such as sorting, hanging, cleaning up the outside, and basically anything that we needed. They were such a huge help and the customers really bonded with them. I was excited to be able to experience this with them since it was during summer break. We all became extremely close during that time, and I hated to see them go. I look forward to doing it again next summer. I love how our various programs come together for the good of Cullman County. We would love to partner with other companies around the community. The more we come together the more that we are able to do!

"We definitely couldn't sum up 2021 without thanking our amazing volunteers: Lyndsay, Rona, Amy, Heidi, Lora, Lillie, Wendy, Jency, Teresa, Charles, Kassie and our endless numbers of customers that we call family that have stepped in when it was needed the most."

Reflecting on the last three years

German shared, "I never in a million years would have thought it would come to this magnitude. When I first began Victoria's Hope, I thought maybe I might help a couple of people here and there, or every so often someone would come to me with a need, and maybe I could get that for them. But the way it's blown up because of this community, that's something to be thankful for. When I first opened the thrift store, I remember telling my husband that I wanted to make it into a place where the community feels a part of it, a place not to sound cliche, but where everybody knows your name.

"And it blesses me so much to actually see it becoming that. When you walk into the door, you can just feel the love. There are so many acts of kindness that go on in that little building. And it's not us, it's everyone that walks into that store. Sometimes I think God places people in our store at the right time for a reason. We often see someone come and donate something that someone has just come in needing.

"It's amazing; there's really no other way to put it. It's a God thing. That's what keeps me going. All of this started from me mourning my mother and wanting to do something positive in her memory. And because of this community it has turned into so much more. I can't express my gratitude enough.

"Thanking this community is something that I can never do enough of. I can honestly say we couldn't do any of this without the support of the community. We took a leap of faith and people supported us. There's not any words that can show how thankful we are. I hope that Victoria's Hope will always be a place that the community feels like they are a huge part of, because they are. I believe people continue to support us because they feel a sense of family, and a family is what we are."

Looking forward to the future

German said, "In 2022, we would love to be able to take some steps to one day possibly expand. We would love to maybe possibly one day purchase the current building that we are in; then we can look into expanding our space so we can have more room for donations.

"We always think every move we do that we are going to have more room, but we reach max capacity pretty quickly LOL. So we hope to one day have a separate building to be able to sort and store donations. Right now, it gets extremely cluttered very quickly.

"We also would like to one day as well in the future be able to hire an employee or two. Right now we are based only on volunteers, and it's worked up until now, but it's starting to get to a point where it's hard for the few of us to keep up. We would love to be able to be open more days a week as well, but being on a volunteer only basis right now it's extremely hard. I also still would like to set up a Victoria's Hope Scholarship at some local schools. As an educator, I want to give back in that way as much as possible."

The final word

"I would be sugar coating things if I said that this has been easy," said German. "It has been one of the hardest yet most rewarding things I have ever done. It's definitely strengthened mine and my family's faith and hope for humanity. The things I've seen and witnessed since beginning this, and the interactions I've seen among other people and that I've had myself, I just can't explain it. People like to kid me about how much I tear up when I'm there. But the stories, the history, the connections between complete strangers, it's just amazing. It just always reminds me that there are still lots of good folks out there, and sometimes the scariest risks to take become the most rewarding in the long run."



TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Victoria's Hope mourned the loss of every customer's friend, Robert Squires.

LEGALS

PB ADT Bk 60 Pg 197 - 12/16/2021 02:10 PM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT

COUNTY OF CULLMAN * CASE NO. AD2021-073

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION PETITION OF JONATHAN JAMES KILGORE TO ADOPT I.P.J. a minor child.

NOTICE OF ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS

Notice to: UNKNOWN FATHER OF I.P.J
WHOSE IDENTITY, ADDRESS AND/OR WHEREABOUTS
ARE UNKNOWN OR UNDISCLOSED

Please take notice that a Petition for Adoption of I.P.J. a minor child born on 12/15/2016 to Jenifer Marie Johnson, was filed on the 12th day of November, 2021, in the Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, by Jonathan James Kilgore, Petitioner. Please be advised should you intend to contest this adoption, you must file a written response within thirty (30) days of the date of the last publication herein with the Clerk of the said Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, 500 2nd Avenue SW, Cullman, Alabama, 35055.

DONE this 16th day of December, 2021.

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

To: *THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE*

PLEASE PUBLISH ONCE A WEEK FOR FOUR SUCCESSIVE WEEKS.

Steven C. Smith
SMITH & SMITH, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioner
P.O. Box 398
Cullman, AL 35056-0398
256-734-4721

BILLY BOB'S STORIES AND STUFF

Something ugly can become something beautiful

Bill King
Tribune
Contributor



I'll never forget that September afternoon back in 2017. It happened on Monday, September 11th, to be exact. Hurricane Irma had wreaked havoc on the Alabama Gulf Coast, causing major damage. The category-5 hurricane claimed the lives or 134 people, and did over 77-billion dollars in damage. By the time the monster's remnants reached Opelika, it seemed like no big deal; however, the weakened winds were still strong enough to uproot a giant tree at the edge of my neighbor's rain-soaked yard. That 105-foot-tall poplar sliced through our fence and our house like a monstrous-serrated knife through a cake. No one was home, except Jean. By God's grace, she was not injured. I could hardly believe my eyes when I pulled onto our driveway. Before that moment, I had never paid any attention to the size of that tree. The downed tree stretched over our driveway and completely across our house from one end to the other. It destroyed the roof and several of the rafters over our garage, demolished our newly-rebuilt chimney, and ripped holes through the roof over the main part of our house. All total, it caused over $40,000 worth of damage to our house. The uprooted tree's destruction was a sickening sight!

We hired a tree service to come in with trucks and cranes to remove the invader. Once the tree was on the ground, they removed the limbs and cut the trunk up into several-large logs. I gave several of those logs to my friend William. They loaded them onto his trailer, and he took them to a local sawmill and had them sawed into boards.

A few weeks ago, a friend gave me several live-edge boards of cedar, so I asked William if he could bring his big trailer and help me pick them up. When he arrived, I noticed several other boards were already on his trailer. I didn't give them much thought until we had unloaded my cedar, and William said, "Those other boards are yours too." When I asked what they were, he said, "Those are boards from your poplar tree!"

Often, what appears to be the worst and perhaps ugliest thing possible, in time, becomes something beautiful. The Apostle Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

Four-years ago, while the carpenters were there to repair the damage to our house, we hired them to also add an attached and covered back porch. Later that year, that porch became my retreat as I recovered from cancer surgery.

Then, last week, for Christmas, I gave Jean a 20-inch-long charcuterie board that I had fashioned from one of the boards from that fallen tree. The heartwood of a poplar has a greenish-yellow vein that runs through it that is stunning. It doesn't even need to be stained. I simply sanded it, oiled and sealed it, and it looks amazing. As I stared at the beauty of my finished project, I was struck by the memory of how grotesquely-ugly that fallen tree had looked as it protruded from our house, but how a portion of it had now become something so beautiful. No doubt, I will use the rest of my boards to build other beautiful pieces too.

When a monstrous tree is sticking through your house, or some other tragedy has hit, it is hard to imagine how something good, not to mention beautiful, could ever come from it. If you are staring at something ugly in your life, hang on...you may be pleasantly surprised what comes from it.

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

HISTORY

Files from Yesteryear: 1950

From the Files of 1950

Mrs. Jess Latham and Mrs. Homer Pike spent Friday afternoon with Mrs. Tom Waldrop at Concord.

Betty Loyd of Mountain View and William McDermic were married on Saturday.

Sandra Taylor, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W.W. Taylor is ill with the mumps.

Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Sinyard, Jerry and Judy and Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Speegle and Dale spent Sunday evening with the Leonard Woodards at Guthery's Crossroads.

It rained 24 days in January. The warm weather and rain have caused a great deal of meat spoilage.

Reverend J.T. Farmer has a new car.

Those spotted eating together last weekend were Sharon Howard and Bryce Sterling, Martha Jane Christopher and Dane Estes, Betty Hooten and George Hamrick, Ruth Hasenbein and Charles Lee, Mary Lois Willingham and Bill Lovelady, Jackie Speegle and Wendell Copeland and Joyce Glasscock and Willie Burmester.

Cullman defeated Arab, 54 to 38. Elwin Robinson scored 19 points, Childs 7, Bobby Joe Blalock 7, Asa Blalock 3 and Bob Dahlke 4.

Mrs. Arthur Karter hosted a 82nd birthday party for Mrs. J.R. Woodard on February 2.

Mr. and Mrs. Tignal Holmes and Mr. and Mrs. E.C. Gibbs, Junior will spend the weekend in Birmingham with Mr. and Mrs. Bill Jones.

Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Weeks and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Ruel and families visited Bellingrath Gardens in Mobile last weekend.

Mrs. Alec Bland, Mrs. Fred Meadows and Mrs. Paul Meadows entertained on Tuesday afternoon with a miscellaneous shower at the home of Mrs. J.C. Grantham, honoring bride-elect, Jean Grantham.

Mrs. G.C. Basenberg and Mrs. Carter Gibbs spent Thursday in Birmingham.

POET'S CORNER

River Stone | By: Randy C. Hale

Visiting a cemetery is very
sobering to me,
It removes the lies we
often think
That dying happens to
someone else, and
from it, we are kept
Among the poor
and careless
are the rich and fearless
With morals firm or money
to burn
lies death just the same

The young and old,
rich or poor,
pure or mean,
decrepit or spry;
the story here is matching
Baby graves and
blessed saints,
beautiful ladies and
handsome gents;
preachers, teachers,
lawyers put;
lying shoulder to shoulder,
head to foot

From river stone
to limestone
pillars high, everyone dies.



CULLMAN TRIBUNE WORD SEARCH

JAN. 1

S	A	F	E	A	R	M	F	Y	A	G	R	E	E	R	S	X
I	I	B	N	A	X	O	R	Y	I	Y	B	Q	A	P	G	G
D	R	U	E	S	S	C	C	D	B	E	V	C	E	N	N	E
E	U	N	E	V	E	N	I	A	N	T	S	E	I	U	I	B
S	G	N	E	L	E	A	R	N	E	D	L	L	R	P	H	E
J	A	Y	Y	T	K	G	C	N	E	S	I	E	A	S	K	S
B	S	M	E	L	L	S	U	M	D	M	Y	T	H	S	E	F
A	N	N	O	Y	I	E	M	E	S	D	B	A	R	R	E	L
N	O	F	O	M	O	M	F	E	M	B	A	S	S	Y	B	Y
G	O	A	T	W	O	U	E	T	L	S	L	I	S	U	C	H
S	O	W	H	T	S	D	R	S	W	T	L	G	T	R	N	O
I	O	A	A	D	E	L	E	E	H	S	E	H	A	S	W	R
R	O	R	L	I	S	D	N	B	H	Y	P	T	K	T	E	E
O	O	E	L	I	T	O	C	O	O	U	S	E	E	N	S	J
N	I	P	S	A	Y	G	E	T	T	X	V	D	N	O	T	C
F	E	L	E	P	U	S	I	H	E	O	N	I	O	T	S	O
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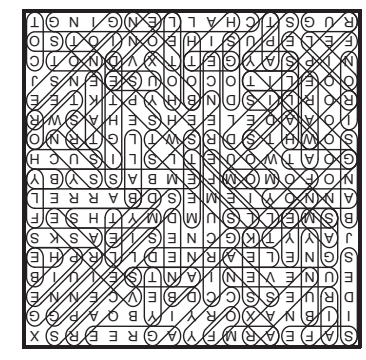
Agree
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CULLMAN TRIBUNE SUDOKU

JAN. 1

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ANSWERS:



3	9	2	4	7	5	6	1	8
4	1	5	8	6	2	7	9	3
6	7	8	9	3	1	2	5	4
1	5	3	6	9	7	8	4	2
8	6	7	2	1	4	9	3	5
9	2	4	3	5	8	1	6	7
2	3	1	5	8	6	4	7	9
7	8	9	1	4	3	5	2	6
5	4	6	7	2	9	3	8	1





– LIFESTYLE –

52 ODES TO JOY in 2022

Ben South
Tribune Columnist

ODE TO AMERICAN JOY-GIVERS

My country 'tis a sunny
land of joy-giving
heroines and heroes,

Like Don Ho,
Quentin Tarantino,
Edgar Allen Poe and
Rudolph Valentino.

And, lest we forget,
Henry David Thoreau
also Bill, James and
Marilyn, the Monroes.

We've got mounds of joy-
giving jesters and clowns

In red and yellow, black,
white and browns.

Ladies and germs, I
give you Mark Twain,
Richard Pryor, Joan
Rivers and Mel Brooks,

The Stooges Three,
Liberace, the funsters,
the punsters and funny
faces making goofy looks.

Sweet tweets, there's
songbirds like Aretha,
Dolly Parton, Marvin
Gaye and Beyonce',

And to keep it all shook
up we've got Elvis,
Chuck Berry, Chubby
Checker and Katy Perry.

We love Lucy and Desi
and Disney and Seuss,

Ogden Nash, Mrs.
Calabash, The Little
Engine Who Could
and the caboose.

Pardner, thar's
cowpeeps and dogpeeps,
Trigger, Secretariat,
Felix and Lassie,

Meryl Streep, the
Roadrunner's beep-
beep; Oprah schmoozy
and Sousa brassy.

Hats off to Mr. Rogers,
Mrs. Doubtfire,

Lady Liberty and
Grandma Moses.

Hugs to Auntie Mame and
Uncle Miltie, to smiley
faces and honkin' noses.

We've got astronauts
and inventors, American
ingenuity from 1776
to perpetuity,

With Edison, Betty Boop
and thanks, Tom Hanks,
Spanx and hula hoops.

Able activists lead
our way, George
Washington, Helen
Keller, John Wayne,
Drs. Salk and King.

Rebels, questioners,
visionaries and change
agents, of thee we sing.

Chief Joseph, Cesar
Chavez, Susan B.
Anthony, Billy Graham,
get my drift?

We salute role models
and myths, Babe the
Blue Ox, Babe Ruth
and Taylor Swift.

We're truly thankful to all
our American joy-givers
and not just being dutiful.

And, I'll end this now
and start every year with
Ray Charles, "America
the Beautiful."

Dear Reader, last year in this weekly newspaper series we saluted "365 AMERICAN JOY-GIVERS for 2021." Here is a real quote from 12 of our fantasy, birthday parties:

JANUARY—"If you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain."—Dolly Parton (born 1/19/46)

FEBRUARY—"Sure, I've gotten old. I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees...I've fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half-blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, and take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded and subject to blackouts. I have bouts with dementia, poor circulation, hardly feel my hands or feet anymore, can't remember if I'm 85 or 92, but...thank God, I still have my Florida driver's license."—Red Buttons (born 2/5/19)

MARCH—"In giving of yourself, you will discover a whole new life full of meaning and love."—Cesar Chavez (born 3/31/27)

APRIL—"I didn't have a mother. I had a mama."—Al Green (born 4/13/46)

MAY—"Fighting for peace is like screwing for virginity."—George Carlin (born 5/12/37)

JUNE—"Women who seek to be equal to men lack ambition."—Marilyn Monroe (born 6/1/26)

JULY—"God's children and their happiness are my reasons for being."—Red Skelton (born 7/18/13)

AUGUST—"If you follow your passion, you'll never work a day in your life."—Tony Bennett (born 8/3/26)

SEPTEMBER—"You gotta try your luck at least once a day, because you could be going around lucky all day and not know it."—Jimmy Dean (born 9/10/28)

OCTOBER—"If there is a sweeter music than laughter this side of heaven, I haven't heard it."—Buster Keaton (born 10/4/1895)

NOVEMBER—"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known."—Carl Sagan (born 11/9/34)

DECEMBER—"Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all."—Emily Dickinson (born 12/10/1830)

A FAVORITE COCKTAIL RECIPE from 2021 for 2022:

KATY PERRY FRENCH KISS COCKTAIL
INGREDIENTS
• 2 fluid ounces Grey Goose vodka
• 1 ½ ounces Chambord liqueur

INSTRUCTIONS
Shake ingredients with ice and strain in a martini glass. Garnish with a Hershey's Kiss and a fresh raspberry.

In 2022, we continue our uplifting efforts through this spirit-challenging time with "52 ODES TO JOY" like "Ode to SUNSHINE" and "Ode to SMILES" starting with the salute above to those icons who inspire sunny positivity, "Ode to American Joy-Givers." As a certified gerontologist for the last four decades, my focus has been on how each of us can make simple, positive choices that increase the likelihood for more joy in our life. Also, since I'm happy to be celebrating my 70th birthday in 2022, each of the weekly "odes to joys" will end with about 20 ideas like these that I'll be planting called--

1,070 JOY-GIVING THINGS from MY FIRST 70 YEARS: 1. Buying yourself sunflowers in the bleak midwinter. 2. Buying someone else flowers in the bleak midwinter. 3. Bagpipes playing "Auld Lang Syne." 4. Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God." 5. A King Leo Peppermint stick in a massaged orange as a sipping straw. 6. Deep-tissue massage, 7. Eucalyptus oil on your temples. 8. A glass of water before every meal—including breakfast—for year-round appetite control and irrigation. 9. Joe South "Walk A Mile in My Shoes." 10. At least a 20-minute walk three times a week. 11. Stopping and smelling evergreens in winter. 12. Feeding the winter birds. 13. Eating one bite of chocolate once a week. 14. An apple schmeared with peanut butter for a nutritious meal. 15. Terri Gross 2021 interview of 95-year-old Mel Brooks on National Public Radio. 16. Scattergories. 17. "ET: The Extra-terrestrial." 18) Vincent van Gogh's "Starry Starry Night" painting at NYC's MOMA. 19. Don McLean's "Vincent" lyrics which start with "Starry starry night." 20. YouTube "The Best Joke I Ever Heard." 21. Diane Keaton, joy-giver icon. 22. Elvis Aaron Presley, joy-giver icon. (To Be Continued)—HAVE A JOYFUL, NEW YEAR!



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