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# Cullman's Peetz earns full ride to Yale


Cayla Grace Murphy
caylagrace@cullmantribune.com


**CULLMAN, Ala.** — For Cullman High School student Sophie Peetz, Yale University was always a dream, never even close to fathomable – in her own words, at least. However, for the educators in her life who fostered her interest in health sciences and her family who supported her every step of the way, it came as no surprise when Peetz learned she earned a full ride scholarship to the Ivy League school.

"I became so drawn to the school because of its holistic education – students are encouraged to take classes outside of their major and learn a variety of topics," explained Peetz, sharing that Yale also acts as a fast-track for opportunities after graduation for students of its pre-med program, her track of study.

Discussing the impact her family had on the dream, she credits her mom with much of her learned resilience and persistence, translating not just to her impressive academic resume, but also how she carries herself in her day-to-day life.

"She never » PAGE 3



CONTRIBUTED

*Sophie Peetz*

# Local potter Sandra Heaven talks Empty Bowls



CAYLA GRACE MURPHY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

*Sandra Heaven works at a turning station at Meek High School's pottery studio on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024, in preparation for this year's Empty Bowls of Cullman County fundraiser.*


Cayla Grace Murphy
caylagrace@cullmantribune.com


**CULLMAN, Ala.** — For 19 years, Sandra Heaven has been throwing (the process of shaping clay on a pottery wheel) bowls to benefit her community through Cullman First United Methodist Church's Empty Bowls of Cullman County chili dinner. The fundraiser benefits the food bank at Cullman Caring for Kids by rallying local potters to make keepsake bowls that will be filled with deliciously spiced chili for a small fee, filling attendees' bellies and opening a conversation about food insecurity.

Heaven says her passion for pottery began in her college years but blossomed after she began teaching others to throw and sculpt, from elementary to college-aged students. Heaven was head of the art department at Wallace State Community College until 2005, and those last few years, she said, were when Empty Bowls got its start.

"Tanya Shearer contacted me when I was at Wallace State," Heaven explained, saying it sparked a partnership that has lasted every year Empty Bowls has been hosted in Cullman. "So we started the Empty Bowls there. When I retired, I moved out to Winston County, and we wanted to do the campaign » PAGE 6

# Introducing 'Cullman Today' weekday news broadcast




CULLMAN TODAY

*A screenshot from the inaugural broadcast of "Cullman Today." Watch on The Cullman Tribune and Cullman Today Facebook pages as well as The Cullman Tribune YouTube page.* » PAGE 5

# United Way hosts largest Business Alliance Breakfast to date



CAYLA GRACE MURPHY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

*United Way of Cullman County Executive Director Stephanie Childers, left, and Resource Development and Outreach Manager Taylor Johnson, right, address the crowd at the United Way Business Alliance Breakfast on Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024.* » PAGE 7

# Kalen DeBoer named head coach of Alabama Football



ALABAMA ATHLETICS

*Kalen DeBoer, recipient of six 2023 national Coach of the Year awards, becomes Crimson Tide's 28th head coach.* » PAGE 2


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# DeBoer (from Front)

**Alabama Athletics**
Contributor

**TUSCALOOSA, Ala.** — Kalen DeBoer, winner of the 2023 Associated Press, AFCA, Eddie Robinson, George Munger, Walter Camp and Home Depot Coach of the Year awards, has been selected as head football coach for the Alabama Crimson Tide, Director of Athletics Greg Byrne announced on Friday. DeBoer comes to Tuscaloosa after spending the last two seasons at Washington.

"We are excited to welcome Kalen and Nicole DeBoer, and their daughters, Alexis and Avery, to The University of Alabama," said Byrne. "Coach DeBoer has proven he is a winner and has done an incredible job as a head coach at each of his stops. One of the things I told our team the other day is we are going to get someone who is not only a great coach with the Xs and Os, but also someone who cares about his players and someone I'd want my sons to play for, just like I would have wanted them to play for Coach Saban. We got that in Coach DeBoer. He is ready to get to work, and we look forward to him leading the Alabama Crimson Tide football program for years to come.

"We are grateful to our leadership in President Stuart Bell, Chancellor Finis St. John and The University of Alabama System Board of Trustees for their support during this process."

In his nine seasons as a head coach, DeBoer has won 104 games while only losing 12, which includes a 25-3 record with the Huskies. In 2023, he led Washington to the College Football Playoff National Championship Game, won the Pac-12 Championship and recorded the most wins in a season in program history (14).

"I have always had an incredible respect for Alabama football and its commitment to excellence," DeBoer said.

"The tradition-rich history of this program is unmatched across the landscape of college athletics, and I look forward to continuing that moving forward. Following Coach Saban is an honor. He has been the standard for college football, and his success is unprecedented.

"I would not have left Washington for just any school. The chance to lead the football program at The University of Alabama is the opportunity of a lifetime. My family and I feel truly blessed and look forward to becoming a part of the Tuscaloosa community.

"I want to thank Director of Athletics Greg Byrne, President Stuart R. Bell, Chancellor Finis St. John and The University of Alabama System Board of Trustees for their belief in me to lead this program."

DeBoer became the first Washington coach to win 11 or more games in consecutive seasons after going 11-2 in 2022 and 14-1 in 2023 and the first to win a bowl game in his first season with the Huskies. That success resulted in back-to-back Pac-12 Coach of the Year honors. His Washington squads also went 10-1 vs. ranked teams, and he's 18-3 in playoff games as a head coach.

"I am thrilled to welcome Kalen DeBoer as the new leader of the Crimson Tide football program," said UA President Stuart R. Bell.

"With great enthusiasm for the future, we are confident that Coach DeBoer will uphold the proud tradition and standard of excellence synonymous with Alabama Athletics.

"I extend my sincere gratitude to Athletic Director Greg Byrne for his exceptional leadership throughout this process. Additionally, we appreciate Chancellor Finis St. John and The University of Alabama System Board of Trustees for their continued support of our great institution."

Prior to taking over at Washington, DeBoer spent two seasons at Fresno State, going 12-6 and leading the Bulldogs to the 2021 New Mexico Bowl.

His first head-coaching stop was at his alma mater, the University of Sioux Falls, where he spent five seasons (2005-09) at the helm going 67-3 with three NAIA national titles and three national Coach of the Year awards.

Other coaching stops for DeBoer include Indiana (2019 – Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks), Fresno State (2017-18 – Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks), Eastern Michigan (2014-16 – Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks), Southern Illinois (2010-13 – Offensive Coordinator/Wide Receivers), Sioux Falls (2000-04 – Offensive Coordinator; 1997 – Wide Receivers) and Washington HS (1998-99 – Assistant Coach).

DeBoer coached 2023 Maxwell Award winner Michael Penix Jr. as well as the offensive line that took home this season's Joe Moore Award.

While at Sioux Falls, he developed three NAIA National Player of the Year winners in quarterbacks Lorenzo Brown (2009) and Chad Cavender (2007) and running back Nick Kortan (2002) and 25 first team All-Americans.

A 1998 graduate of Sioux Falls with a degree in secondary education, DeBoer was a record-setting football and baseball student-athlete. During his football career, he compiled 3,400 yards and 33 touchdowns on 234 career receptions – all school records at the time – and played on the 1996 NAIA Division II National Championship team.

He also played baseball for the Cougars, batting .520 (still a school record) as a senior in 1998. His career average of .492 is tops in USF history, as are his 37 career homers and .944 slugging percentage.

DeBoer and his wife, Nicole, have two daughters, Alexis and Avery.

While appropriate members of The Board of Trustees have been notified of the proposed terms and conditions of this proposed appointment, the financial terms remain subject to approval by The Board of Trustees.

# Avoid freezing disaster: 15 tips from a plumber

**Cheyenne Sharp**
cheyenne@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — While the promise of snow and freezing temps may sound like a dream to some, others are aware of the lurking potential disasters that icy weather can bring. When the temperature stays at or below freezing for a significant period of time, the chances that pipes could freeze and burst are exponentially higher.

Justin Barbee, owner and Master Plumber at Premier Plumbing, explained, "As winter temperatures plummet, safeguarding your home against frozen pipes becomes paramount.

"By incorporating these measures into your winter preparations, you can protect your home against a hard freeze and ensure your plumbing remains safe."

**1.** Insulate exposed pipes: Shield pipes with insulation or wraps to prevent exposure to freezing air and winds. Foam insulation wraps are an inexpensive way to protect your plumbing and pipes quickly and efficiently.

**2.** Seal cracks and leaks: Inspect and seal any gaps in walls, windows or foundations to keep out cold drafts. Spray-expanding foam, tape or even pieces of folded or torn fabric can prevent icy wind from seeping into a residential space.

**3.** Disconnect and drain hoses: Store hoses indoors after draining to avoid frozen water in the pipes. Disconnecting and draining any outdoor water hoses or water fixtures and storing them in a temperature-controlled environment ensures that any residual water cannot freeze and damage the hoses.

**4.** Faucet covers: Install faucet covers on outdoor faucets to add an extra layer of protection. Faucet covers can be purchased at many big box or home improvement stores, making them an easy safeguard to grab and go in the event of a sudden freeze.

**5.** Open interior doors: Allow warm air to circulate freely by keeping interior doors open. Allowing air to circulate freely through the home eliminates dead spots from becoming too cold.

**6.** Let faucets drip: Maintain a slow drip from faucets to relieve pressure and prevent freezing. When water freezes, it expands. By allowing faucets to drip, it allows the extra space for frozen water to expand.

**7.** Consistent thermostat settings: Keep your thermostat at a consistent temperature, day and night.

**8.** Open cabinet doors: Ensure warm air reaches pipes under sinks by opening cabinet doors.

**9.** Insulate attic and crawl spaces: Upgrade insulation to maintain warmer environments in vulnerable areas. Cover open vents or holes to stop cold air from entering. Warm air rises; with a poorly insulated attic or crawl space, the heat from the home is lost shortly after it reaches the attic. A poorly insulated crawl space could lead to frigid temps under the home, directly in line with the home's plumbing.

**10.** Know your main water shut-off valve: Familiarize yourself with the location of the main (any) shut-off valves for quick response in emergencies.

**11.** Pipe heating cables: Install heating cables on exposed pipes for added protection against freezing. While this is one of the more expensive tips, it is useful, nonetheless. Heating cables for plumbing and pipes virtually eliminate the issue of frozen water lines.

**12.** Schedule plumbing check-up: Have a professional inspect your plumbing system before winter sets in. Preventative measures and regular maintenance are key to the health of your plumbing system.

**13.** Cover outdoor exposed pipes: Use insulated wraps or materials specifically designed for outdoor pipes.

**14.** Install smart leak detectors: Technology with smart leak detectors that provide real-time alerts. When a pipe breaks due to a freeze, it may not be noticed immediately. A smart leak detector could alert a homeowner in real time about a potential leak, saving headaches and hundreds of dollars.

**15.** Monitor weather forecasts: Stay prepared by monitoring weather forecasts to anticipate freezing conditions and take timely preventive measures. Perhaps the most useful tip is to stay weather aware, taking any precautions that are felt to be necessary.

Premier Plumbing is located in Cullman County and can be reached at 256-507-9907.

# JSU announces Fall 2023 graduates, releases President's, Dean's Lists

**Buffy Lockette**
Contributor

**JACKSONVILLE, Ala.** — More than 500 students were awarded degrees as part of Jacksonville State University's Fall 2023 commencement on Dec. 15, including:

- Ryan Fannell of Arab, Emergency Management degree
- Katherine Robles of Arab, Psychology degree
- William Caneer of Arab, Biology degree
- Lakelyn Wilson of Arab, Forensic Investigation degree
- Rilee Henderson of Bremen, Nursing degree
- James Thompson of Bremen, Music degree
- Lilly Hudson of Cullman, Early Childhood Elementary Ed degree
- Kolton Guthrie of Cullman, Computer Science degree
- Ashley Turner of Cullman, Criminal Justice degree
- Randi Bentley of Cullman, Nursing_Undecided degree
- Kelsee Haynes of Cullman, Nursing degree
- Edmund-Joseph Lovett of Vinemont, English degree
- Della Hand of Vinemont, Forensic Invest Undecided degree
- Kinley Coots of Falkville, Forensic Invest Undecided degree
- Heather Sharpe of Falkville, Integrated Studies degree

More than 1,100 students were named to the President's List at Jacksonville State University, earning a perfect 4.0 GPA for the Fall 2023 semester while completing at least 12 credits.

**Local students include:**

- Ryan Keith Fannell of Arab
- Katherine E Robles of Arab
- William Henry Caneer of Arab
- Lakelyn McKenna Wilson of Arab
- Rilee Jaye Henderson of Bremen
- James Tyler Thompson of Bremen
- Lilly G Hudson of Cullman
- Kolton L Guthrie of Cullman
- Ashley Warren Turner of Cullman
- Randi Jill Bentley of Cullman
- Kelsee Meghin Haynes of Cullman
- Edmund-Joseph Kochan Lovett of Vinemont
- Della M Hand of Vinemont
- Kinley G Coots of Falkville
- Heather L Sharpe of Falkville

More than 1,300 students have been named to the Dean's List at Jacksonville State University, earning a GPA of 3.5-3.99 for the Fall 2023 semester while completing at least 12 credits. Local students include:

- Breanna Marie Ballew of Arab
- Wesley Kent Tyler of Arab
- Blake Matthew Aziz of Arab
- Charles Gavin Huffman of Baileyton
- Julee Sue Bryan of Cullman
- Elijah B Loyd of Cullman
- Robert A Pitts of Holly Pond
- Stella Grace Phillips of Vinemont
- Paige E Holcomb of Vinemont
- Jessie Lane Woodard of Arley
- Hannah Faith Phillips of Arley

# LEGALS

PB MIN BK 221 PG 379 - 01/12/2024 11:23 AM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF *
BARBARA ELIZABETH PALOKONIS, * CASE NO.: PC2024-012
Deceased. *

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration having been granted to KATIE LYNN LACHELLE ALLEN, as Personal Representative of the Estate of BARBARA ELIZABETH PALOKONIS, deceased, on the 12th day of January, 2024, 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.

Katie Lynn Lachelle Allen
Personal Representative

James B. Griffin
Attorney for Petitioner
P.O. Box 911
Cullman, Alabama 35056

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

NOTICE OF
MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

STATE OF ALABAMA
COUNTY OF CULLMAN

Default having been made of the terms of the loan documents secured by that certain mortgage executed by James Mckinney And Nirvani Mckinney Husband And Wife to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for First Partners Bank, its successors and assigns dated November 10, 2016; said mortgage being recorded on November 14, 2016, in Book 1803, Page 365, as having been modified by an agreement recorded on and recorded in Book 2040, Page 77 in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama. Said Mortgage was last sold, assigned and transferred to Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC by assignment recorded in Deed Book 373, Page 668 in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, ALABAMA.
The undersigned, Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLCunder and by virtue of the power of sale contained in said mortgage, will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the main entrance of the Court House in Cullman County, Alabama during the legal hours of sale (between 11am and 4pm), on the 5th day of February, 2024 the following property, situated in Cullman County, Alabama, to-wit:
Lots 3 and 4 of the Hanceville Square Subdivision as recorded in Slide B222A in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama. Subject to the following: Right of way as set forth in instrument recorded in Deed Book 478, Page 119 in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama.
Subject to the following:
1. Utility and drainage easements as shown on the plat of Hanceville Square Subdivision as recorded in Slide B222A in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama.
2. Easement granted to Cullman Electric Cooperative as recorded in Deed Book 557, Page 120 in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama.

Said property is commonly known as 402 Whaley Ave NE, Hanceville, AL 35077.
Should a conflict arise between the property address and the legal description the legal description will control.
Said property will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), the right of redemption of any taxing authority, all outstanding liens for public utilities which constitute liens upon the property, any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, easements, rights-of-way, zoning ordinances, restrictions, special assessments, covenants, the statutory right of redemption pursuant to Alabama law, and any matters of record including, but not limited to, those superior to said Mortgage first set out above. Said property will be sold on an "as-is" basis without any representation, warranty or recourse against the above-named or the undersigned. The successful bidder must present certified funds in the amount of the winning bid at the time and place of sale.
Alabama law gives some persons who have an interest in property the right to redeem the property under certain circumstances. Programs may also exist that help persons avoid or delay the foreclosure process. An attorney should be consulted to help you understand these rights and programs as a part of the foreclosure process.
The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Mortgage.
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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

**Calling All Young Singers!**
Cullman Community Young Singers (CCYS) is looking for YOU! All young singers (ages 8-15) are invited to join us on Tuesday afternoons from 3:30-4:45 at the Little House at Art Park, 1031 Second St. SW in Cullman. No auditions, just come for a fun afternoon of learning music from pop to classical styles. We will rehearse and prepare to perform at a variety of events in and around the Cullman community. Bring your friends- we will have music and everything you need to get started! For more information, text or email Miss Cindy at 256-338-4404, cindypass22@gmail.com. CCYS is sponsored by Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism.

**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) Mondays and Thursdays 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
• 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 birthdays. Register your child and pick up a birthday box with cake mix, icing, sprinkles, decorations and toys! Pickup 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.
• Wednesday, Jan. 17 - 7 p.m. Children and youth classes. Adult Bible study of Romans. Free pizza for children at 6:30. Van runs in the 5 Points Area at 6. Call 727-215-9092 for pickup.
• Friday, Jan. 19 - 7 p.m. Celebrate Recovery. Fellowship & Testimonies. Hurts, habits and hang-ups are a part of everyone's life. Come and see how to overcome these and more! Bring a dish, dessert or drink for a potluck meal at 6:15. Childcare provided!
• Saturday, Jan. 20 – 9- 11 a.m. Drive-through food bank
• Saturday, Jan. 20 - 9 a.m. CPR class for CARES team members
• Sunday, Jan. 21 - Prayer - Join Teresa at 9:15 a.m. in the prayer room to pray for our church, nation and those who need healing, salvation or deliverance.
• Sunday, Jan. 21 - 9 a.m. Van runs in the 5 Points Area. Call Guy Sunter at 727-215-9092 for pickup. Breakfast at 9:30. Bible study classes for children, youth and adults at 10. Praise & worship and message by Pastor Bobby Dodd at 11. Church meeting at 5 p.m.

**Alcoholics Anonymous**
Sundays, 3 p.m. at Cullman First Church of the Nazarene, 5415 Alabama Highway 157. CLOSED literature study. Handicap accessible.

**TOPS (Take off Pounds Sensibly) Meetings**
Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m., at Cullman Housing Authority Community Center (1545 Vine Circle SW, Cullman, AL 35055). The first meeting is free. TOPS, a national program, is a hands-on/pounds-off approach to weight loss and management through weekly meetings providing information, accountability, support and encouragement where you make the changes that make sense to you.

**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.

**Cullman Serenity AlAnon Meetings**
The Cullman Serenity AlAnon group meets each Monday at noon at 1519 St. Joseph Dr. NE. There is also a zoom meeting each Tuesday at noon. The AlAnon family groups are a fellowship of friends and family whose lives have been affected by alcoholism. For more information, call 256-708-6645, 850-323-0490 or 256-734-2231.

**Master's Hand Food Pantry at The Link**
• 708 Ninth St. SE, Cullman, AL 35055
• Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
• Closed for lunch noon-1 p.m.

**Cullman Education Retirees Association Meeting**
Thursday, Jan. 18, at 11 a.m. at Stone Bridge Farms. Our speaker is Jill Jackson, president of Alabama Retirees Association. Afterward, there will be lunch and fellowship for those who choose to stay. New members and all education retirees are invited.

**Fairview High School 1963 Luncheon/Meeting**
Friday, Jan. 19, 2024, at 1 p.m. at the Golden Corral, 1720 Cherokee Ave. SW in Cullman. For more information, call Joyce Williams Rodgers at 256-339-3451.

**2024 Polar Bear Plunge**
Saturday, Jan. 20, at 10 a.m. at WildWater and the Cullman Wellness and Aquatic Center. Prizes include four WildWater season passes and one annual family CWAC membership. Event benefits Special Olympics. You MUST be present to win! The event is FREE to enter, and we will be accepting optional donations at the event for our partner, Special Olympics! Register NOW to take the plunge: http://tinyurl.com/PolarBear-Plunge2024

**Pleasant View Singing**
Sunday, Jan. 21, at 5 p.m. with Dry Creek. The church is located on U.S. Highway 278, approximately 2 miles east of Holly Pond on the left. For more information call 256-796-5986 or 256-338-9202.

**19th Annual Empty Bowls of Cullman County Chili Dinner**
Monday, Feb. 19, from 4-6:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church. Featuring fun, fellowship, chili by Three Guys, grilled cheese sandwiches, handmade pottery bowls, silent auction and live Southern Gospel music. Special guest emcee Nate Williams from WXJC 101.1. Eat in, carry out or drive through. Tickets are $15 and are available at Cullman Caring for Kids and First United Methodist Church. Proceeds will benefit the Cullman Caring for Kids food bank.

# Peetz (from Front)

pushed expectations of going to a 'prestigious' school on me; I had the dream, and she continually supported me throughout the journey," Peetz said. She also credited several local educators for fostering a love for learning and understanding and nurturing an interest in health and medical sciences that led her to this path.

"Mrs. (Stacey) Tankersley nourished my love for the health sciences and I have been forever grateful for what she's taught me over the past four years. Other teachers like Mrs. (Gina) Nix and Mrs. (Elizabeth) Pylant have not only been some of the greatest educators, but also mentors," explained Peetz.

"I can go through and name every single one of my teachers, and would not have enough words to describe the profound impact they've had on me. Truly, I have been forever blessed by the teachers in my life!"

Peetz maintained that the application process was more than just filling out forms; it was years of dedication to prove that she had the gumption to make it in an Ivy League setting.

A mindset shift, however, was also needed to translate herself to paper in a way that Yale admissions could understand.

"Leading up to the deadline the most important thing was to take on an introspective mindset and examine myself and my values," she said.

"That way, I was able to translate that to my application through my essays."

In a moment she recalled as surreal, with her heart rate soaring over 190, Peetz ripped open the decision letter at Cullman High School and found out she was awarded a full scholarship to Yale – no small sum, since a Yale scholarship can vary from a few hundred dollars to over $70,000 per year.

"I was stunned for days and I still don't think it has set in. Reminiscing on that moment feels like I'm watching a movie!" she laughed.

Peetz said she's looking forward to the challenge of adjusting to Ivy League life, and perhaps more than just growing academically, she's excited at the prospect of meeting a diverse group of peers.

"The thing about Yale is that their student body is made up of students from every state and numerous countries," she said.

"I am ecstatic to converse and learn about people from all walks of life."

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JANUARY 16, 2024

PREP BASKETBALL

# Vinemont earns 65-48 win over Susan Moore, Lady Eagles fall 69-55

**Nick Griffin**
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**VINEMONT, Ala.** — Both the Eagles and Lady Eagles of Vinemont were back home Friday night to host a pair of matchups against Susan Moore and they split their varsity battles with the Bulldogs. The Lady Eagles fell to Susan Moore 69-55 but in the boys' game, Vinemont fended off a third quarter from the Bulldogs to collect a 65-48 win.

**Susan Moore 69 - Vinemont 55 (varsity girls)**

The Lady Eagles led the way 12-8 midway through the opening period but a 10-0 run from Susan Moore made it an 18-12 game. Maggie Burks knocked down a three-pointer to trim the lead to 18-15 but the Lady Bulldogs were able to pull ahead 22-15 by the end of the first quarter.

Morgan Flanagan split a pair of free throws and scored a pair of baskets for Vinemont early in the second quarter, but Susan Moore continued adding to its lead. Reagan Robinson laid one in to make it a 34-23 game late in the second, but the Lady Eagles went into the locker room trailing 40-24 at the halftime break.

Baskets by Caroline Miller and Burks made it a 48-28 game midway through the third and Robinson scored inside to hold the lead at 20. Quick knocked down a pair of free throws and Addison Holcomb laid one in before the end of the period, but Susan Moore led 54-34 going into the final frame.

The Lady Bulldogs continued to pull away early in the fourth, stretching their lead to 64-36 with five minutes to play.

Vayda Yarbrough scored inside to trim the lead to 64-38 and later in the fourth, Burks and Flanagan each drained three-pointers to make it a 67-47 game. Burks buried another three to cut the lead to 67-50 and Robinson scored the next five for Vinemont to finish the game, but it wasn't enough to overcome the Susan Moore lead and the Lady Eagles fell at home 69-55.

Burks led Vinemont with 15 points in the loss, followed by Robinson with 14 and Flanagan with nine.

**Vinemont 65 - Susan Moore 48 (varsity boys)**

Isaiah Jones laid one in to give the Eagles a 2-0 start against the Bulldogs and Jeremy Harbison drained back to back three-pointers to keep Vinemont in front 8-7. Kaden Graham laid one in and Jones drained a three to put the Eagles in front 13-9. Harbison turned a steal into an easy bucket to make it a 15-9 game and Jones scored with just two seconds on the clock to give Vinemont a 17-11 advantage going into the second quarter.

Jones hit a pair of free throws and Graham knocked down a three to make it a 22-14 game midway through the period. A couple of Wilhite free throws and a basket by Harbison kept the Eagles in front 26-14 later in the second and Wilhite and Jaxon Holcomb each added baskets in the final minute of the half to put Vinemont on top 30-19 at the break.

Free throws from Graham and Wilhite helped the Eagles maintain a 35-21 lead early in the third quarter, but the Bulldogs began to chip away at the lead as the period went on.

Holcomb laid one in and Harbison knocked down a three to make it a 40-31 game with three minutes remaining in the third. However, Susan Moore outscored the Eagles 11-6 in the final three minutes of the quarter to cut the lead to 46-42 at the start of the fourth.

Baskets by Jones and Harbison helped keep Vinemont ahead 53-43 midway through the fourth quarter and Graham scored the next nine points for the Eagles to extend their lead to 62-45 with just over two minutes remaining in the game. Harbison laid one in, and Holcomb split a pair of free throws to wrap up a 65-48 victory for Vinemont.

Graham led the Eagles with 22 points in the win, followed by Harbison with 17 and Jones with 12.

Vinemont will travel to Cold Springs Tuesday.



MARTHA NEEDHAM/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

*Kaden Graham (10) led Vinemont with 22 points in its 65-48 win over Susan Moore Friday night.*

PREP BASKETBALL

# West Point collects area wins over Brewer

**Sammy Confer**
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**WEST POINT, Ala.** — After traveling to Lawrence County earlier this week, the West Point Warriors returned home Saturday afternoon to take on the Brewer Patriots in a pair of area games and both Warrior squads collected area wins. The Lady Warriors broke open a close game in the second quarter and pulled away to earn a 70-34 win over the Lady Patriots and a big second half by the Warriors helped them get past Brewer in the boys' game 65-44.

**West Point 70 - Brewer 34 (Varsity Girls)**

A rebound and putback by Laklin Shadix put West Point on the scoreboard first. Later on, Camryn Faulkner drained a trey from the left win, and a pair of baskets by Laklin Shadix and one by Liberty Shadix pushed the Lady Warrior lead to 12-4 with over three minutes to go in the first quarter. Laklin Shadix put in a three, then Jaelyn Faulkner and Liberty Shadix followed that up with a basket of their own in the paint, to make it a 19-7 game. The Lady Patriots hit a pair of late baskets to cut it to 19-11 going into the second period.

Hallie Wheeler drilled a trey and Liberty Shadix added a basket in the paint to increase West Point's lead to 25-11 early in the second. Jaelyn Faulkner put in a layup, then later on, found her sister, Camryn, for a three, to make it a 30-13 game.

A rebound and a putback by Liberty Shadix was later followed by a pair of free throws from Camryn Faulkner to push their lead to 34-13. Camryn Faulkner and Liberty Shadix each added a late basket and a rebound and putback by Kylee Quinn gave West Point a 41-20 lead at the half.

The Lady Warriors continued to add onto their lead in the third quarter.

A trey by Laklin Shadix, a layup by Jaelyn Faulkner, and a pair of free throws by Laklin Shadix gave them a commanding 50-24 lead. Threes by Jaelyn Faulkner, Wheeler, and Camryn Faulkner made it a 61-26 game, and West Point ended up taking a 64-34 lead into the final period.

The fourth quarter was run under a hot clock and the Lady Warriors stretched their winning streak to 11 in a row after their 70-34 win over Brewer.

Five West Point players finished in double-figure scoring on the day. Laklin Shadix finished with 15 points, seven rebounds, and three blocks for the Lady Warriors, who are now 17-3 on the season and 5-0 in the region. Liberty Shadix put in 13 points, six rebounds and a pair of blocks. Camryn Faulkner also ended up with 13 points on the day as well. Jaelyn Faulkner added 11 points and three steals. while Wheeler finished with 10 points.

**West Point 65 - Brewer 44 (Varsity Boys)**

A pair of free throws by Brewer put the Patriots on the scoreboard first, but Kolten Perry drilled a trey from the left wing and Jay Lamar drained a short jumper to give West Point an early 5-2 lead. Jacob Harbison put in a basket in the paint to break a 5-5 tie to give the Warriors a 7-5 lead, then Perry and Lamar each added a long-range shot to push the Warrior lead to 13-5 with a little over three minutes to go in the opening period.

Each team traded a three to keep it at an eight-point game, but a three-point play by the Patriots made it a 16-11 game late in the first. A jumper by Lamar was later followed by a rebound and putback by J.D. Cochran to give West Point a 20-13 lead going into the second period.

Each team traded baskets to start out the second. After a Cochran basket made it a 24-17 game, six straight points by Brewer cut it to 24-23.

Lamar stopped the run with another trey to give the Warriors a 27-23 lead. A rebound and putback by Mattox Chapman and a floater by Pressley Burtis stretched their lead to 31-23. Cochran added another late basket to give West Point a 33-24 lead at the break.

Pressley Burtis drained a trey from the left wing to push the Warrior lead to 36-24 early in the third, but Brewer scored five of the next seven points to make it a 38-29 game.



SAMMY CONFER/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

*Jay Lamar led West Point with 23 points in its 65-44 win over Brewer Saturday night.*

A huge and-one by Burtis, though, gave West Point a 41-29 lead with 5:14 remaining in the third period. Lamar and Perry each added baskets later in the third and Lamar drilled a trey to make it a 48-33 game going into the final period.

Lamar's three from the left corner to start out the fourth stretched the Warrior lead to 51-33. A pair of free throws and a layup by Perry made it a 55-33 game, then later on, a rebound and putback by Burtis gave them a 57-36 lead. Six points by Perry and a late basket by Cochran made it a 65-42 game. West Point would go on to pick up a big 65-44 win over Brewer.

Lamar led the way for West Point (14-7, 2-3) with 23 points. Perry added 18 points, seven rebounds and a pair of steals while Cochran and Burtis each put up 10 points.

West Point will take a trip up to Birmingham to take on Mortimer Jordan at Legacy Arena on Monday.

# No. 16 Auburn beats LSU 93-78, stays unbeaten in SEC play

**Greg Ostendorf**
AU Athletics

**AUBURN, Ala.** — On a day where most of the other SEC unbeaten teams fell, No. 16 Auburn has a chance to be the only one left standing following a 93-78 victory over LSU in a sold-out Neville Arena on Saturday.

It marked the ninth straight win for Auburn who moves to 3-0 in league play for the first time since 2020 and 14-2 overall.

Chad Baker-Mazara led the home Tigers with 19 points, setting a new high at Auburn, and made a significant impact on the defensive end as well with a career-high five steals.

"It felt good," Baker-Mazara said. "Just being out there hitting shots, being able to help my team in many ways. It's a great feeling, especially a season high with Auburn. I'm still trying to get a little bit more, but it will come."

The junior college transfer has provided energy off the bench all season, and Saturday was no different as he and the second unit came into the game and turned three quick steals into seven straight points to put Auburn up 18-12 early. Baker-Mazara finished 5-of-10 from the field, knocking down three 3-pointers, and was a perfect 6-of-6 from the free throw line.

As a team, Auburn racked up a season-high 15 steals and turned 16 LSU turnovers into 24 points. It was the most steals Auburn has had in a conference game since it had 18 steals in a home win over Tennessee in February 2020.

"If you just have Chad Baker-Mazara on the floor, that's three or four (steals) before you even get started," Auburn head coach Bruce Pearl said. "Just Chad's length and his IQ – he's a problem out there. He's so versatile offensively. The fact that he knocked down three 3s tonight. He shot a good percentage. I trust him as a playmaker and obviously trust him defensively."

Baker-Mazara was one of four Auburn players to score in double figures against LSU along with Johni Broome, Aden Holloway and Tre Donaldson.

Broome finished with 18 points on 6-of-12 shooting from the field and tied Jaylin Williams for the team lead in rebounds with seven. He's now scored 10 or more points in seven straight games and 14 of Auburn's 16 games on the season. In his last seven games, he is averaging 15.9 points and 8.3 rebounds and is shooting 55.4 percent from the floor.

Holloway and Donaldson, Auburn's point guard duo, tallied 13 and 10 points respectively. Holloway had the hot hand early, knocking down two 3s in the first four minutes, and it was Donaldson's 3-point play in the final minutes that helped close out the game.

Auburn led by as many as 28 points midway through the second half after going on a 10-0 run with its second unit, but LSU closed the gap with a 21-2 run of its own and got it under 10 points for the first time since the first half.

Needing a spark, it was Baker-Mazara who drilled a 3-pointer to bring the energy back to Neville Arena and put Auburn ahead 78-66.

"I feel like after that 3 it kind of killed their energy," Baker-Mazara said. "The whole crowd, everybody got really excited and really hyped."

Between Baker-Mazara, Donaldson, K.D. Johnson, Dylan Cardwell and Chaney Johnson, Auburn's second unit finished with 49 points, 15 rebounds, 10 assists, nine steals and six blocks off the bench. Cardwell had five blocks alone, setting a new career high.

"That kind of won us the game today," Holloway said of the second group. "We'll get a slight lead, but when CB's (Baker-Mazara) group comes in, they just blow out the lead to 18 or 20. It just makes it easier for us. I give them a bunch of credit."

"It's getting really obvious that our second group coming in is really effective defensively and turning people over and playing with a different level of effort and energy and effectiveness," added Pearl.

With the win, Pearl moved past Cliff Ellis into second on Auburn's career head coaching wins list with 187 wins. Joel Eaves is first with 213 victories.

Auburn (14-2, 3-0) will leave the friendly confines of Neville Arena this week and travel to the Music City for a showdown at Vanderbilt on Wednesday night.

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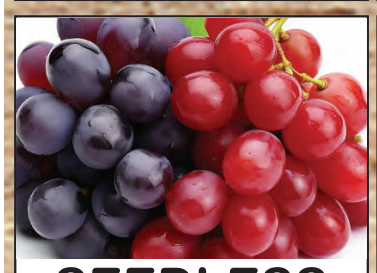
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# Introducing 'Cullman Today' weekday news broadcast

**Cayla Grace Murphy**
caylagrace@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Cullman Today, originally a popular Facebook page, has been relaunched as a news broadcast of the same name that will run weekday mornings at 7. "Cullman Today" will start viewers' days with a quick rundown of local news, sports and weather forecast.

News Editor Noah Galilee said that while a return to video format has been on his and Producer Dustin Isom's minds since 2008, this launch was months in the making.

According to Galilee, the hard work and late hours needed to make sure the show will run according to plan were worth it to see the first publicly published video broadcast on Monday morning, Jan. 15, 2024.

By working in tandem with reporters from The Cullman Tribune, Galilee said, he hopes this endeavor will keep residents who may not have time to sit and read a full newspaper informed.

"The Cullman Tribune is the main source of news and information for many in and around Cullman County and my hope is that 'Cullman Today' will continue to extend the news reach to those who may not be keen on reading multiple stories.

"Though I write, I absorb more through video and audio, so it holds my attention, which is a hard task to accomplish," he explained.

Galilee credited the professionalism of the program to Isom, saying, "Without his unlimited talent, this wouldn't have gotten off the ground."

Galilee also gave credit to "Cullman Today" Anchor and local educator Katie Spicer. "She has been phenomenal from her first day and has picked up the flow with ease," he said.

"Katie has helped free up our reporters at The Tribune so that's a win for all as it will only open more articles."

Spicer echoed Galilee's gratitude, taking pride in being able to play a part in a new facet of local news.

"I'm honored and excited to get to be a part of this new endeavor for The Cullman Tribune! It is the opportunity of a lifetime and I couldn't ask for a better team to work with," she grinned.

"I encourage everyone to tune in to 'Cullman Today' for all your local news needs!"

Galilee said the ability to bring a fresh aspect to authentic local news is something that can be rare to find in many communities, and said he is happy to bring that new outlook to Cullman.

"We are just grateful to be able to bring real, authentic local news to our residents, because you don't find that in many places these days. So don't miss an episode as it streams Monday through Friday on Cullman Today and The Cullman Tribune!" he smiled.



NOAH GALILEE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

*"Cullman Today" Anchor Katie Spicer reads a script in the filming studio.*

# Beach renourishment continues along Alabama coast

**David Rainer**
Ala. Dept. of Conservation and Nat. Resources

For those planning trips to Alabama's beautiful Gulf Coast for spring break or summer vacation, expect to see an abundance of change for the better, including beach renourishment projects at the East End of Dauphin Island and in Baldwin County from west of Little Lagoon Pass all the way to the Florida-Alabama line.

"It is great to see our beach being renourished. From the Florida line through Gulf State Park and Gulf Shores to west of Little Lagoon Pass, the beaches in Baldwin County are getting several million cubic yards of fresh, clean sand," said Conservation Commissioner Chris Blankenship.

"On Dauphin Island there is a lot of sand moving as well. In 2023, new islands and marsh area were created on the north side of the middle of Dauphin Island in Graveline Bay. The East End renourishment project just getting underway will put more than a million cubic yards of sand on the East End beach. The Corps of Engineers has closed the Pass Drury cut on Little Dauphin Island with sand dredged from the inside channel, and we are funding the engineering and design for adding millions of cubic yards of sand to the West End of Dauphin Island in 2025 or so.

"All of this work on the area around Dauphin Island will be great for sustaining the ecological and cultural benefits that Dauphin Island provides for our area."

The engineered beach renourishment projects involve pumping more than three million cubic yards of sand from nearshore areas onto the Alabama beaches. Those projects, which also include raising the sand dune heights, planting vegetation and building sand fences, are partially funded by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration), the NFWF (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation) Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF), and from state and local dollars.

Bill Bennett, General Manager of The Lodge at Gulf State Park, said the beach renourishment project may be a slight inconvenience during the work but will pay great benefits for the future of the Alabama Gulf Coast. He said the locations where he's lived that have beaches face the same reality of coastal erosion, which requires beach renourishment projects like the one proceeding in Alabama.

"This project is absolutely amazing to witness," Bennett said. "It disrupted a few people on overnight stays, but when you walk out on that east boardwalk and watch the ship come in and pump sand on the beaches and bulldozers moving the sand into place, you watch your natural habitat expand and protect everything north of the coastline. That's what the dunes are designed for. It's truly humbling to watch.

"We had a couple come down from Mobile for a few days of tranquility, and they weren't inconvenienced. Like me, they thought it was fascinating to watch. Instead of being a disruption, they focused on the positive aspects."

Bennett applauded the commitment made by the cities, county and the Department of Conservation to ensure the vitality of the beaches.

"I've lived all around the country, and we have some of the most beautiful beaches in the country," he said. "In watching the renourishment, it speaks to their commitment to the protection of this natural asset. It makes me proud of our commitment to sustainable environmental and economic stewardship. This is taking care of it and ensuring it will be here for years to come for our children and grandchildren."

The project in Baldwin County has completed the work in Gulf Shores and Gulf State Park and has just started to pump sand on the beaches of Orange Beach. It will continue until it reaches the Florida-Alabama line.

Phillip West, Coastal Resources Director for the City of Orange Beach, said the current beach renourishment is not quite as large as the one completed in 2005 after Hurricane Ivan, where more than three million yards of sand were used to mitigate the storm damage.

"The current project will use about 650,000 yards of material in Orange Beach," West said.

"It's not as huge as the project after Hurricane Ivan because the beaches aren't in as bad a shape as they were after Ivan. This project is to repair storm damage from Hurricanes Nate (2017) and Sally (2020) and repairing normal erosion. The project includes fixing breaches in the sand dunes, planting sea oats and installing sand fences.

"Prior to Ivan, we'd never done any beach renourishment, and it showed. By maintaining our beaches and doing these periodic renourishments, we are able to maintain an 'engineered beach' designation in the eyes of FEMA. If you maintain that, if you do have a catastrophic event, FEMA will cost share with you to repair the damage."



ADCNR

*Bulldozers near Gulf State Park's Pavilion move sand pumped in from nearshore areas to bolster Alabama's beaches.*

In good news for anglers who visit the Orange Beach area, the fishing area on the west side of Perdido Pass has been renovated and is partially open to anglers and sightseers again. The area directly under the Perdido Pass Bridge remains closed as the work continues.

"It's a great fishing spot," West said. "There's only one place in Alabama like that. To me it's a very iconic location, and it will be even better for people who want to fish and watch the boats traverse the pass and dolphins playing in our coastal waters.

"This is a great partnership between Orange Beach and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. We have staff right there to maintain it, and it's in our best interest to keep it usable and attractive.

"For a shore-bound angler, it's probably the easiest place for somebody with a mobility disability to use. If you're wheelchair-bound, you can just roll a few feet and drop a line in the water. Those options are limited for people with mobility issues, so I think this a very important area to have available."

In Mobile County, the Dauphin Island beach renourishment project will restore approximately 1.5 miles of beach shoreline and approximately 85 acres of beach and dune habitat on this 14-mile barrier island that protects a portion of the Alabama Gulf Coast.

The East End beach protects the Audubon Bird Sanctuary and other upland resources from beach erosion due to storms. The project will protect an additional 50 acres of beach and dune habitat as well as a maritime forest and a freshwater lake within the Dauphin Island East End Bird Sanctuary.

"The East End restoration should get underway within the next couple of weeks," said Dauphin Island Mayor Jeff Collier.

"The contractors are assembling the dredge pipeline. They will be moving 1.1 million cubic yards of sand onto 1.5 miles of shoreline. It won't make it all the way to the golf course. We will also have restoration of the dune system with sea oats planting and sand fencing.

"The emphasis on all of this is habitat protection and creation. One of the big things is the protection of the bird sanctuary property, which is under threat of being breached in storms. That whole ecosystem could be changed from freshwater habitat with saltwater intrusion."

Collier said he appreciates the funding of the $25 million project by NFWF. The project is expected to be completed in three to four months.

"We really think this is a great project for a lot of different reasons," he said. "It's going to increase the beach area that the people can enjoy, and, at the same time, it's going to increase the habitat for animals, like birds and sea turtles. It covers all the bases.

"We just ask beachgoers and boaters to be aware of the construction activity. Be mindful of that and stay out of the construction area. Pipelines will be in the water and on land. It's very interesting to watch, but we ask that people keep a safe distance away."

In other news from Baldwin County, facilities at Gulf State Park continue to be upgraded.

Lamar Pendergrass, Alabama State Parks' South Region Operations Supervisor, said the Romar Beach access area will soon be reopened, and renovations at the Gulf State Park Pavilion will soon begin.

"In the past few months, we've been constructing a bathhouse at Romar Beach," Pendergrass said. "We added about 40 parking spaces. We think the addition of the bathhouse will give folks who use Romar Beach a much more pleasant experience. We're also adding an additional shower on the boardwalk out to the beach.

"At the pavilion, in addition to upgrades in the past, we're trying to give the restrooms and pavilion a complete facelift. We plan to redo the entire restroom areas. We plan to show the bridal room more love."

Pendergrass said the new cabins on Lake Shelby are nearing completion and will provide visitors with the opportunity to rent 32 cabins and cottages on the lake and four woodside cottages. The project included rebuilding 17 original cabins destroyed during Hurricane Sally and adding three additional cabins.

"We've done one walk-through at the new cabins," he said. "We have another inspection the middle of this month. We're looking for those cabins to be available to rent in March. The cabins can be booked online at www.eaglecottagesatgsp.com.

"The new cabins will have two bedrooms, two baths and a bunk room for children with a TV for entertainment. Also new is a laundry room with a washer and dryer underneath each cabin. They are really first-class cabins and will be a great addition to Gulf State Park."



## Heaven (from Front)

here in Winston. Now we do Cullman and Winston!" she laughed, noting that while Winston County is taking a break from Empty Bowls this year, they're hoping to ramp up again next year.

Heaven said that while she has experience teaching in nearly every medium imaginable, pottery has her heart, leading her to begin a pottery program through Meek High School after starting the Winston County Arts Council.

"When I retired, because I liked pottery the best, I continued doing that. That's what I'm doing here," Heaven said, gesturing to the impressive pottery studio located in the old Meek High School field house. The studio is impressive, boasting several turning stations, glazes, imprints and every tool imaginable needed to make anything out of a humble lump of earth.

"Kids love it, they enjoy it, making things with clay. It's tactile," shared Heaven, who said art class is a nice reprieve from typical desk work for students, giving them a chance to work with their hands and flex their creative muscles.

Heaven stressed the importance of including arts in the education approach, saying pottery itself is a heritage skill that she worries might be forgotten as we move into a digital age.

"I don't want pottery to be forgotten. It needs to be a program that continues, and unless you have someone who really loves it, they're not going to promote it. So I push it!" she exclaimed, noting that she's up at the studio five or six days a week.

Heaven said preparing for Empty Bowls is a year-long affair, with over a thousand bowls being turned, sculpted, fired and glazed to feed the hungry masses. With each bowl taking a little over a week from start to finish, it's a time-consuming process, but one she said she wouldn't trade for anything.

"I've been retired 19 years, but I haven't stopped! I tried to not do anything for a year, and it about drove me nuts!" she laughed.

The 19th Annual Empty Bowls of Cullman County Chili Dinner will take place Monday, Feb. 19, from 4-6:30 p.m. at Cullman First United Methodist Church, 320 Third Ave. SE.

It will feature fun, fellowship, chili by Three Guys, grilled cheese sandwiches, handmade pottery bowls, a silent auction and live Southern Gospel music. The special guest emcee will be Nate Williams from WXJC 101.1. Guests can eat in, carry out or drive through. Tickets are $15 each and are available at Cullman Caring for Kids and First United Methodist Church. Proceeds will benefit the Cullman Caring for Kids food bank.

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# Start the new year with a pantry cleanout

**Katie Nichols**
ACES

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY, Ala.** — Take advantage of the cold weather and make the time spent indoors productive. Angela Treadaway, an Alabama Cooperative Extension System food safety and quality regional agent, said the new year is a great time to inventory canned food items and spices that may have been in your pantry for many years.

"Canned foods are safe alternatives to fresh and frozen foods and help meet dietary needs and avoid preservatives," Treadaway said. "Proper storage can greatly increase the shelf life and quality of canned foods."

### Shelf life

Home-canned and commercially canned foods are both good options for consumers to keep produce on the shelf at home. While there are some good frozen-food options, Treadaway said they will likely not last nearly as long as canned foods will.

### Home-canned foods

While home-canned produce may be more desirable because of the ability to control added salt and sugar, Treadaway said it is important to only preserve the best produce because home-canning cannot improve the quality.

"Home-canned foods — such as vegetables, meats, jams and jellies — are good for one to two years," Treadaway said. "This is a shorter shelf life than commercially canned items, but for the best quality, they need to be used in one to two years."

### Commercially canned foods

Treadaway said commercially canned foods are much better for storing longer periods of time.

"A can of commercially canned vegetables — such as green beans, peas or corn — will last more than five years," she said. "Commercial canners can closely control quality and safety to produce the best product."

Treadaway said commercially canned, high-acid foods — such as fruits and tomatoes — will not last much longer than 18 months because of the acid content.

"It's best to throw away canned foods — home or commercial — that spew or have bulging cans or lids, just to be on the safe side," she said.

### Storage conditions

When storing home-canned or commercially canned foods, make sure they are labeled. It is also important to ensure that they are not out of date and are stored in a cabinet or pantry that is cool, dry and dark. Avoid storage in places where temperatures change.

Treadaway said it is best to store canned goods in the house or a in a room where the temperature is somewhat controlled and unlikely to freeze or get extremely hot.

"Always store canned foods off of the floor on shelves because moisture — especially from concrete floors — can wick up the side of the jar or can and cause rust," she said. "Crawling pests can also cause contamination."

### Spices and flavorings

In general, Treadaway said dried seasonings, herbs and spices in jars will last one to two years. The following are the shelf lives for some common pantry spices and flavorings:

- Vanilla extract and salt have indefinite shelf lives. Other extracts will fade in two to three years.

- Whole spices — including unground peppercorns, whole allspice, caraway seeds and others — have a shelf life of three to four years.




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- Cumin, ginger, garlic, mustard, paprika and chili powder have shelf lives of two to four years.

- Whole leafy herbs — including basil, dill, oregano, rosemary and most seasoning blends — have a one-to-three-year shelf life.

"All of us have a few jars that have been sitting in the pantry for over a decade," Treadaway said. "It is okay to let those spices go. Label or put a date on the new ones, with a month and year, so you know how long you have had them."

### More information

Learn more about food safety and preservation by visiting the Food Safety section of the Alabama Extension website, www.aces.edu.






# United Way (from Front)

**Cayla Grace Murphy**
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**CULLMAN, Ala.** — The scene was buzzing on Thursday morning at East Side Baptist Church as people poured into the fellowship hall for the United Way of Cullman County's Business Alliance Breakfast. Guests shared a meal, learned about the United Way's community impact and heard from a few United Way partner agencies.

The Business Alliance Breakfast is a fresh partnership idea set forth by the United Way to anchor its position in the community as a nonprofit worth investing in. Dozens of business owners and entrepreneurs settled in to munch on buttery, flaky biscuits, warm sausage gravy and scrambled eggs and learn how partnering with the United Way can benefit the community at large.

Executive Director Stephanie Childers said the meeting was the biggest so far, exclaiming, "There were over 60 businessmen and women in attendance to show support for United Way of Cullman County, proving that our small businesses truly know the value of a strong and supportive community!"

Taylor Johnson, resource development and community outreach manager, said for her first United Way event, the turnout was impressive, and she hopes to see it continue to grow as local entrepreneurs continue to invest back in the community that serves them.

"It's such an amazing experience to see everyone having a heart for our community all while wanting to uplift each other's businesses and see them flourish to their full potential," she smiled.

"I cannot thank this community enough!"

Childers said the turnout is indicative of a community that cares, saying she hopes the Business Alliance Breakfast inspires other local businesses to join in and be boots on the ground for the fight for financial stability, health and education for all.

"We are so appreciative of their giving hearts and hope this inspires other local businesses to join in.

"When you support United Way of Cullman County through your gift, you are helping the most vulnerable among us...the young, the old, the sick and the poor, as well as those impacted by emergencies."

To learn more about the United Way of Cullman County, visit www.uwaycc.org.

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# Saw Mill Road Productions; Paving the way for future artists

**Cheyenne Sharp**
cheyenne@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Two local troubadours are taking musicians that are offering upcoming musicians and artists and equipping them with real-word and first person experience into the Music Industry, giving them insight and encouragement into what is known as the most cutthroat business around. Nashville Recording Artist Brett Greer and Jerry Parker are taking the love of the music to heart and opening their hearts and offering a helping hand through their new non-profit organization, Saw Mill Road Productions.

"What we do is find someone that wants to work hard and is dedicated and wants to make this a living and we make that accessible." Says Greer, "We record their songs, get them a demo, teach them how to use the studio and the microphones so when they go and try to make it in Nashville, they will be ahead of the game.

"They can leave here and know how to play their songs, learn how to perform here, how to record here, it's an all in one house, everything is all included in a safe spot for musicians."

Pickers Night at the Saw Mill is where most of Saw Mill Road Production's clientele and talent come from; all of them wanting a shot on the stage, to see if they can pass the mettle and make it to the big time.

Greer and Parker have a goal with their work and nurturing of artists- to provide a safe, secure environment for young artists to gain real world playing experience in front of a live crowd. Stage presence is something that is learned and cultivated; supported and encouraged by Saw Mill Records.

Linking artists with other collaborators around the country to help with chord progressions or composing questions, an entire network of supportive musicians with a passion for preserving the next generation of artists is at their disposal.

All of these services are free to the artists; retired Parker and Greer do not charge for any of their services, according to Parker, "We decided to do it free so we could concentrate on the music and not have to worry about the money. That way its music first, and money is just something that has to come in. By providing it free, it's all about the music."

As Greer and Parker's dreams for the non-profit grew, so did the Saw Mill, Parker's Honky-Tonk that houses Saw Mill Road Productions. Parker added a studio and a sound room and a stage that is able to accommodate a full band, ensuring that all artists are given the opportunity to perform and have a good time. If any of the performers pique Greer's fancy and show a spark of stardom, Greer invites them to spend some time with discussing his program and learning about his services offered.

"We want people to come to this program, we want to help people, we want to give them a hand up that most artists don't and didn't have. This could really help someone."

Says Greer. "There's a yearning inside of musicians, they want to go and play. It's part of it. This is great for a starting artist, because it's safe here."

The Saw Mill is home to Saw Mill Road Productions and is located at 899 County Road 473. Open Mic night for all interested pickers and players is held on the first Friday of each month; Karaoke is held on the first and third Saturday of each month.



CONTRIBUTED

*Brett Greer and Jerry Parker are the backbones of the new Non-profit, Saw Mill Road Productions; offering a unique insight and hand-up into the world of the music industry.*

# Obituary Announcements: Jan. 13-15

**Bryant Perry, 83**
Funeral Service for Bryant Perry, age 83, of Hanceville, will be at 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 19, 2024 at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home; burial at Hopewell Cemetery. Visitation will be from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 19, 2024 at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Mr. Perry passed away on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024 at Cullman Regional. He was born June 7, 1940 in AL to Sydney and Lora Perry. He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Athea Burnham; sister, Nell Smith; and sister, Delilah Perry. Survivors include his daughter, Cindy (Mike) Calvert; son, Mike Perry; mother of children Patricia Perry; grandchildren, Ashley (Andy) Leusby and Tyler (Savannah) Calvert; great grandchildren, Kallista Calvert, Lyla Kate Leusby, Emma Leusby, Izzy Harris, Sophie Leusby, Quinn Calvert, A.J. Leusby, and Maddox Calvert, nephew, Daryl (Pat) Burnham, niece, Diane (Jim) Roberts, and nephew, Stephen Smith.

**DeweyOrbinAbsher,93**
Funeral services for Dewey Orbin Absher, 93, of Hanceville, Alabama will be 12 p.m. Friday, Jan. 19, 202 at Hanceville Funeral Home Chapel. Reverend Randall Waldrep will be officiating services. Visitation will be from 10 a.m. 12 p.m. Friday, Jan. 19, 2024 at Hanceville Funeral Home. Mr. Absher was born on May 1, 1930 to the late Orbin Byno and Leoma (Stapp) Absher in Cullman, Alabama. He passed away on Jan. 14, 2024 at Cullman Regional Medical Center in Cullman, Alabama. He was a cattle farmer for many years. Survivors include his longtime companion, Fay Neely; son, Arthur (June) Absher; grandsons, Scott Absher and Mike Absher; stepson, Dale Neely; brothers, Farris Absher and Kyle Absher; and sister, Iva Thomas. In addition to his parents, Mr. Absher was preceded in death by his son, Danny Absher; grandchildren, Carole Absher and James Absher; sisters, Sybil Johns, Jewel Carney, and Verlia Honeycutt.

**Jayne Glover Norman, 69**
In loving memory of Jayne Glover Norman, who graced this world with her wit, warmth, and a touch of Southern Sass. Born on Aug. 24, 1954, Jayne peacefully departed this life on Dec. 2, 2023, at the age of 69. She leaves behind a legacy of love, laughter, and friendship. Jayne was the owner of Consign and Design Furnishings for two decades, where her impeccable taste transformed houses into homes. Her entrepreneurial spirit and dedication to her craft were evident to all who walked through the doors of her shop. Survived by her devoted daughter, Julie Below, son-in-law Jeffrey Cole, and her grandsons, Hilson and Griffin Cole, who held a special place in her heart and brought endless joy to her life. Her siblings, Betty Skinner and Dale Glover, shared both fond memories and a few good-natured squabbles throughout the years. And let's not forget her feline companion, Prissy, who provided endless comfort and companionship. Preceded in death by her parents, Coy and Iva Glover, and her brother Jerry, Jayne now rests peacefully in the company of her loved ones who passed before her. Those who knew Jayne will fondly recall her stubborn streak, her fierce independence, and her unwavering generosity. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Paddock Vue at Stone Bridge Farms on Jan. 20, 2024, at 2 p.m. Family and friends are asked to join together to celebrate and honor Jayne's life and the lasting mark she left on our hearts. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to The Pilot Club of Cullman, a cause that Jayne contributed to for many years. An opportunity to donate will be available at her celebration. As we say our goodbyes, let's remember Jayne with laughter, just as she would have wanted. After all, a life well-lived is best honored with joy and a touch of humor.

**Freda Vondalee Rowell, nee Bell, 87**
Freda Vondalee Rowell, nee Bell, age 87, passed away on Dec. 9, 2023, in her home state of Indiana. A Celebration of Life Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024, at 11 a.m. at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home with Pastor Adam Whitehead officiating. Burial will take place immediately following at Baldwin Heights Baptist Church Cemetery. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Ms. Rowell was born May 25,1936, in Cullman County, Alabama, to Wilburn Nathaniel Bell and Meley Lavader Bell, nee Mattox. She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Elbert Lee Bell; sister, Vetrel Ilene Segars; and brother, Herbert Cordell Bell. Survivors include her two daughters, Rochelle Dian and Mona Schmitt; granddaughter, Sarah Groom; grandson, Tommy Schmitt; sister, Jewell Dene Bell; as well as many nieces and nephews.

**Windel Lee Brock, 73**
Windel Lee Brock, age 73, of Cullman, Alabama passed away on Friday, January 12, 2024. Windel was preceded in death by his parents Dwight and Lenora Livingston Brock. Windel is survived by his beloved wife, Linda Rusk Brock; his daughters Christie Whatley (Chris) and Sandra Eddy (Noel), his sons Jeff Brock and Randy Brock (Brandy), his sisters Thelma Ward (Terri) and Myra Ciotta (Joe), his brothers Joey Brock (Ann) and Gery Brock (Bobbie) and his grandchildren Randy Lee, Sareace and Ashley Brock, Rance, Trent and Katie Whatley, Monika, Heather, Leigha and Noel Eddy, their Spouses and 22 great-grandchildren. A celebration of life visitation for Windel will be held Monday, Jan. 15, 2024 from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. at Moss Service Funeral Home, 1901 2nd Ave North West, Cullman, AL 35055. A celebration of life funeral service will be held Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024 at 2 p.m. at Moss Service Funeral Home. Windel will be laid to rest in Bethel Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, Cullman, AL 35058. Serving as pallbearers are Matthew Mahler, Joe Wilhelm, Cody Brock, Ronnie Brock Jr., Chris Brock and Kerry Brock.

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