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Lady Raiders earn area title with 60-55 win over Priceville, Raiders fall to West Morgan 63-59
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7 93888 98541 4

Hawkins Medical & Wellness opens in Klein Building

Cheyenne Sharp
cheyenne@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — One of Cullman's newest developments, the Klein Building, is now home to one of Cullman's first direct concierge primary care providers. Hawkins Medical & Wellness is taking a new approach to health care: for a monthly, quarterly or yearly fee, patients get access to the practice's amenities and services, including next- and same-day scheduling, physicals, labs and scans.

Owners Dr. Jeremy Hawkins and his wife, Jacy Hawkins, R.N., said they hope to make health care easier to access and afford.

"With their retainer fee, they will get 24/7 access to Jeremy (Hawkins) or myself," said Jacy Hawkins. "Anytime, anywhere – going out of town and need some medicine? You can just text me or call me and 'bam!,' we will get that for you."

In addition to » PAGE 6


CHEYENNE SHARP/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
Jeremy Hawkins, M.D. and his wife, Jacy Hawkins R.N. are offering a new style of health care to the residents of Cullman. Their new practice, Hawkins Medical & Wellness offers direct, 24/7 access to providers for a yearly, quarterly or monthly fee.

Cullman's Ainsley Irani named Professional Cowboy Association Rookie of the Year



ANN LAW IRANI
Ainsley Irani with her prize buckles

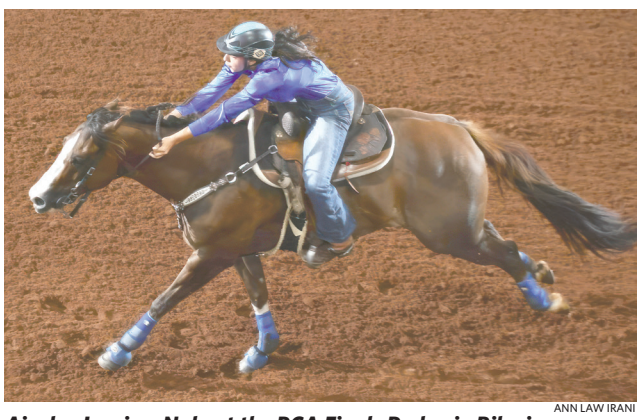
W.C. Mann
craig@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Ainsley Irani, 19, of Cullman, qualified to compete in Barrel Racing at the 2023 Professional Cowboy Association Finals Rodeo in Biloxi, Mississippi, finishing high enough to earn her the title of 2023 PCA Rookie of the Year and 2023 Barrel Racing Average Champion. The event was held Feb. 1-4, 2024.

Irani rode her horse Nala in four rounds, placing third in rounds three and four, helping her win the title.

"Being Rookie of the Year has been a goal of mine for a while," said Irani, "and winning it is a dream come true! Winning the Average Championship was an unexpected surprise! I knew I had a chance to place when I had my fourth clean run, but I didn't think I was going to win it. I'm so thankful and blessed to have Nala; she really is amazing. I couldn't do this without all of the support from my family and friends."

Irani welcomes anyone interested in beginner riding/barrel racing lessons to message her through Facebook.


ANN LAW IRANI
Ainsley Irani on Nala at the PCA Finals Rodeo in Biloxi

Gudger, Reed issue statement on election security measure approval


THE ALABAMA SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS
Sen. Garlan Gudger » PAGE 5

CCSO asks for assistance locating stolen dump trucks



CCSO
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Cullman City Schools to host job fair March 21 » PAGE 2

Jacobs proclaims February 'Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month' in Cullman » PAGE 5

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CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported Feb. 7

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. – Below are the arrests and incidents reported Feb. 7, 2024. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

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

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

No arrests or incidents reported.

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

INCIDENTS

Feb. 5

- harassing communications; person
- theft of property-4th degree; person; 2nd Ave. NW; miscellaneous
- breaking entering motor vehicle; criminal mischief-3rd degree; T&T Motors; wheel and tire damage; damaged hubcap; $526

Feb. 6

- organized retail theft; Lowe's; Cherokee Ave. SW; general merchandise; $1,241
- theft of property-4th degree; D.R. Horton; Ashland Dr. SW; miscellaneous; $885
- theft of property-4th degree; person; cash; $155
- theft of property-4th degree; Wal-Mart; Olive St. SW; general merchandise; $207

ARRESTS

Feb. 5 – 6

Flanigan, George L.; 46

- FTA- criminal trespass-3rd degree
- FTA- insurance violation
- FTA- driving without license

Allred, Dustyn H.; 28

- FTA- possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA- criminal mischief-3rd degree
- FTA- domestic violence-3rd degree
- FTA- unauthorized use of vehicle
- FTA- insurance violation
- FTA- no tag
- FTA- driving while suspended
- FTA- run stop sign
- FTA- driving without license
- FTA- DUI-controlled substance

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests or incidents reported.

Find arrest and incident reports online Monday-Friday at www.CullmanTribune.com.

Fair (from Front)

Cheyenne Sharp
cheyenne@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – Cullman City Schools will host a job fair in Cullman High School's Tillman Hall on Thursday, March 21, from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Department positions at each city school will be posted at the fair, including certified teachers, cafeteria workers, support personnel, clerical personnel and more.

Cullman City Schools Superintendent Kyle Kallhoff said, "We are always seeking the best educators and employees to meet the needs of our students, families and schools. Each school will have a table set up for potential future employees to visit. They will answer any questions and share specific details about their campuses."

Kallhoff explained the reasoning behind hosting the job fair, saying, "In previous years we invested in attending job fairs in the surrounding areas with little success. This year, we are hosting our own job fair so we can involve all administrators and zero in on qualified applicants who are ready to join one of the best school systems in Alabama."

The school system schedule is a positive draw for many hopeful employees, and the benefits are a little known, well, benefit. Benefits are available to all employees, subject to some limitations. Benefits available to all employees include $15,000 board-paid life insurance as well as matching board-paid accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance and a $200 bonus for perfect attendance. Certified teachers are also eligible for reimbursement of any fees accrued for obtaining certification and up to a $5,000 supplement on top of the Alabama State Department of Education supplement.

The job fair will be hosted on Thursday, March 21, in Cullman High School's Tillman Hall from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Cullman High School is located at 510 13th St. NE.

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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.
• Friday, Feb. 9 - 7 p.m. Celebrate Recovery. Fellowship and 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 6:30. Childcare provided!
• Saturday, Feb. 10 - Kingdom Mindset Marriage Seminar from 9 a.m.-noon. Doors open at 8, and breakfast will be served. Conference starts at 9. Donations only; childcare is provided.
• Sunday, Feb. 11 - 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, Feb. 11 - 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 and worship and message by Pastor Bobby Dodd at 11.
• Sunday, Feb. 11 – 5 p.m. Healing Service: Miracles, Signs and Wonders follow those who believe!

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.

Heartland Quilt Guild Meeting
Thursday, Feb. 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Christ Covenant Church, 1310 St. Joseph Dr. NW. Contact person is Porsia Anderson 256-737-7557. Everyone is welcome.

Cullman Educator Retiree Association Meeting
Thursday, Feb. 15, at 11 a.m. at Stone Bridge Farms. Our program will be presented by Fairview Florist. Afterward, we will have lunch and fellowship for those who wish to stay.

Holly Pond Lions Club Annual Beans and Greens Dinner
Saturday, Feb. 17, from 4-7 p.m. in the Holly Pond Lions Club building. Donations accepted. Invite your friends and neighbors to join you for a fun evening and good food.

Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church Singing
Sunday, Feb. 18, at 5 p.m. with The Pylant Family from Eva. 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.

Cook Ministries Presents A Night of Gospel Music
Saturday, Feb. 24, at 5 p.m. at Hillside Baptist Church in Falkville. Featuring Tim Fulgham, The Shaneyfelts and Loretta Jent. Love offering. Doors open at 4. For more info, call 205-500-1908.

Mushroom Log Inoculation Workshop
• Saturday, March 9, from 1-4 p.m. at Sportsman Lake Park. Grow Shiitake mushrooms in your own backyard! Learn how to prepare and inoculate your own log, promote mushroom growth, where to store, when and how to harvest and more. All materials will be provided.
• Tickets purchased by Feb. 24 are $20, which includes cost of materials and one inoculated Shiitake log to take home. Tickets purchased after Feb. 24 will be $30. http://tinyurl.com/shitakesportsmanlakepark
• Additional Shiitake or Oyster logs may be purchased onsite for $15 each. Both mushrooms are edible and medicinal, and should give you multiple flushes for a few years. We will also have biochar, comfrey roots, tree cuttings, rabbit fertilizer and other items available for purchase. Cash preferred.

Hanceville Irish Festival
Saturday, March 16, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. in downtown Hanceville. Music, food, dancing, arts and crafts. Live music and free parking.

Cullman Lions Club Fish & Ham Dinner
Saturday, March 9, from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Cullman Middle School cafeteria. Dine in, carry out or drive through. $15 per plate. Your choice of catfish filet or ham with baked potato, slaw, hushpuppies and dessert. Proceeds benefit Cullman Lions Club community projects.

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PREP BASKETBALL

Lady Raiders earn area title with 60-55 win over Priceville, Raiders fall to West Morgan 63-59

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

GOOD HOPE, Ala. – Both of Good Hope's varsity squads were back home Tuesday night to host a pair of area championship games and the Lady Raiders fended off a late run from Priceville to claim this year's 4A, Area 13 title. Good Hope Head Coach Justin Aby is proud of the way some of his younger players stepped up when they were needed and played big minutes in a big game.

"I'm super proud. There were some girls that come off the bench that aren't as used to playing as much as they did, and they came out tonight and they performed. I thought they played well," Aby said. "As far as for us moving forward it was good experience for them to get some good minutes in a meaningful game but just overall as a team, we have to get healthy. We had one that didn't play because of a concussion, and we had two others that got hurt in tonight's game and weren't able to finish it so we've just got to get healthy and see how far of a run we can make at this thing."

Good Hope 60 – Priceville 55 (Varsity Girls)

Ava McSwain split a pair of free throws and Ivey Maddox drilled a three to tie the game at 4 and after Priceville pulled ahead by five, McSwain hit a three to cut the lead to 9-7. Maddox scored the next five points to give the Lady Raiders their first lead of the night at 12-11 and Charly Johnson converted an and one play to stretch the lead to 15-11. Ella Gossett buried a three to make it an 18-11 game and Bailey Tetro scored Good Hope's final seven points of the first quarter to build the lead up to 25-13 by the start of the second.

Johnson scored inside to keep the Lady Raiders in front 27-19 early in the second quarter and McSwain buried a three to make it 30-19. Baskets by Maddox and Gossett added to Good Hope's lead later in the period and after splitting a pair of free throws, Johnson laid one in just before time expired on the first half to give the Lady Raiders a 39-28 advantage at the break.

Free throws from Maddox and Gossett made it a 41-33 game early in the third and Lucie Adams knocked down a three to stretch the lead to 44-33 midway through the period.

Maddox sank a pair of free throws and McSwain drilled a three to make it 49-41 with one minute to play in the third quarter. Gossett added a pair of free throws in the final seconds of the period to give Good Hope a 51-41 lead going into the fourth.

Johnson scored inside and Gossett split a pair of free throws to keep the Lady Raiders ahead 54-47 midway through the final frame. McSwain netted two more free throws to give Good Hope a 56-50 lead with just under three minutes on the clock and Lexi Marshall split a pair from the line to make it a 57-51 game with one minute to play. Gossett drained a pair of free throws with 24 seconds remaining to give the Lady Raiders a 59-53 lead and Adams split a pair of free throws in the final 10 seconds of the game to cap a 60-55 win for Good Hope.

Four Lady Raiders finished the game in double figures, led by Maddox with 15. McSwain posted 12, Gossett added 11 and Johnson finished with 10.

Good Hope will be back home Friday night to host a Sub-Regional matchup against either St. John Paul II or Randolph.

West Morgan 63 – Good Hope 59 (Varsity Boys)

Baskets by Tyler Cone, Tucker Malin and K'mal Bell gave Good Hope a 6-2 start over West Morgan in the opening period. Cone scored six straight points to extend the Raider lead to 12-6 and Dakota Overton buried a three to make it a 15-6 game midway through the first. Cone laid another one in to put Good Hope in front 17-8 but the Rebels were able to trim the lead to 17-12 by the start of the second.

Jacob Haynes scored the first six points of the second quarter for the Raiders to extend the lead to 23-16 and Tucker Malin drilled a three-pointer to make it a 10-point game with less than three minutes remaining in the first half.



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

The Good Hope Lady Raiders defeated Priceville 60-55 Tuesday night to win this year's 4A, Area 13 Championship.

Overton knocked down another three to give Good Hope a 29-18 lead later in the period and Cone laid one in to put the Raiders in front 31-24 at the halftime break.

Baskets by Malin and Weston Hancock kept Good Hope ahead 35-26 early in the third. Malin scored inside and Bell scored on back to back trips down the court to make it a 41-35 game with two minutes to play in the third quarter. Cone laid one in, and Malin split a pair of free throws to put the Raiders on top 44-40 later in the period and Haynes added another basket just before the end of the third to make it a 46-43 game at the start of the fourth.

West Morgan took a 48-46 lead over the Raiders early in the fourth quarter but a pair of free throws and a three-pointer from Bell put Good Hope back in front 51-50 midway through the period.

Overton sank a pair of free throws to keep the game tied at 53 with three minutes to play and Overton scored inside later in the fourth to keep the score knotted at 55. The Rebels hit a three and split a pair of free throws to take a 4-point lead with just over a minute on the clock. Malin scored in the paint to cut the lead to two at one point, but The Raiders couldn't come any closer than that and West Morgan held on to win the area 13 tournament championship with a 63-59 win over Good Hope.

Five Raiders finished the game in double figures, led by Cone with 14. Malin posted 12, Bell added 11 and Overton and Haynes each finished with 10.

Good Hope will be on the road Saturday to face either Randolph or Westminster Christian in the Sub-Regional round.

PREP BASKETBALL

No. 4 Cold Springs captures area title with 58-49 win over No. 3 Locust Fork

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

BREMEN, Ala. — After defeating Cleveland in the opening round of the 2A, Area 11 Tournament Friday night, Cold Springs was back on the court Monday night to battle Locust Fork for the area championship. The Lady Eagles went into the locker room leading 33-22 at halftime but Locust Fork was able to cut the lead down to one by the end of the third. However, Cold Springs bounced back in the final frame, outscoring the Hornets 18-10 in the final eight minutes to secure a 58-49 win and the area title.

Lady Eagles Head Coach Tammy West was pleased to see her team finish the game strong and secure the area championship, but she's been even prouder of the way they've responded to adversity late in the season and continued to work hard for one another.

"I felt like we got really fatigued in the third quarter and of course Locust Fork made some great plays, they're a great team. So, I thought in that fourth quarter we kind of got our second wind and we were able to execute some plays and get some stops on defense," West said.

"I'm just so proud of them. They've gone through a lot of adversity over the last week and a half losing their teammate, Ella (Dickerson) so we've just had to regroup and do a lot of different things. Their hearts hurt for her but we're so glad that her surgery went well, and I know she's their number one fan sitting over there. I'm so proud of the girls because they work extremely hard and they're a special group."

Ella Bruer knocked down a pair of three-pointers to give Cold Springs an early, 6-4 lead and Ciara Calvert followed with a three of her own to make it 9-4. Malaya Taylor laid one in to stretch the lead to 11-4 and Bruer scored off a turnover in the final minute of the first to put the Lady Eagles in front 13-4 going into the second.

Bruer's next three-pointer kept Cold Springs ahead 17-4 early in the second quarter and another basket from Taylor made it a 19-8 game later in the period. Calvert scored the next five points for the Lady Eagles to add to the lead and three-pointers by Bruer and Maci Brown put Cold Springs in front 30-18 with two minutes remaining in the half.

Bruer drained her fifth three-pointer of the night with less than a minute on the clock to give the Lady Eagles a 33-22 advantage at halftime.

Brown knocked down a three and Taylor scored inside to make it a 38-28 game early in the third but Locust Fork was able to chip away, bringing the lead down to five midway through the period and eventually making it a 1-point by the start of the fourth quarter.

However, Cold Springs responded in the final frame, stretching its lead back out to 46-42 with three-pointers from Brown and Calvert. Baskets by Calvert and Taylor kept the Lady Eagles in front 50-44 midway through the fourth. Taylor and Calvert each split a pair of free throws to make it a 52-44 game with three minutes remaining and Brown sank four straight from the line to extend the lead to 10 with less than a minute to play. Bruer drained her final two free throw attempts of the night to put the finishing touches on a 58-49, area championship win for Cold Springs.



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Cold Springs defeated Locust Fork 58-49 to win the 2A, Area 11 Tournament Championship Monday night.

The Lady Eagles will remain home for the Sub-Regional round and will face the runner up of the Area 7 tournament Friday night.

Trucks (from Front)

Lauren Estes
lauren@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Cullman County Sheriff's Office is searching for stolen dump trucks that were taken from My-Way Transportation on Jan. 30.

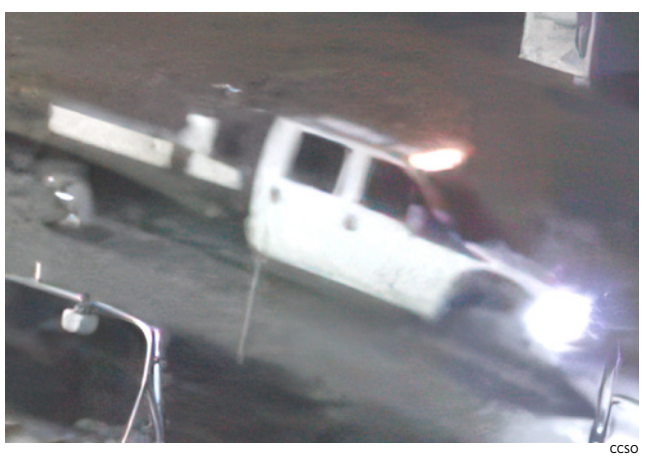
Sheriff Matt Gentry said they were taken after midnight. "The flatbed truck was on video in the area and is believed to be involved," Gentry said. "Investigators are following up on all leads at this time as it continues to be an active investigation."

Gentry said the crime is somewhat unique because of the vehicle type.

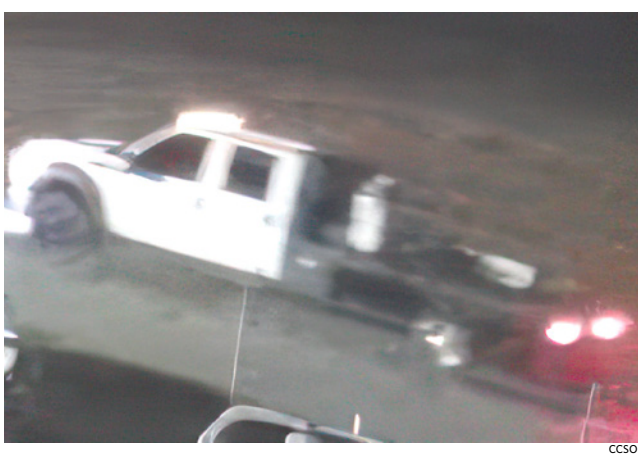
"By the nature of the crime, the size and scope of the crime, it does appear to be the work of an organized group with knowledge of this type of vehicle," Gentry said. "For an organized group with the proper connections, the value of these types of vehicles would be more than the average car thefts."

My-Way is offering a $25,000 reward for information leading to the recovery of the vehicles.

If you have any information, please contact Investigator Josh Wallace at 256-735-2713. After hours or on weekends, please call 256-734-0342.



CCSO



CCSO



CCSO

Playground planners

Cullman students design inclusive playgrounds as part of STEM project

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — What's one of the best ways to get young students engaged in design and engineering concepts? Let them dream up something fun. That's exactly the approach taken recently at East Elementary School, where fourth graders had the opportunity to conjure up their own designs for an inclusive playground for students of all abilities.

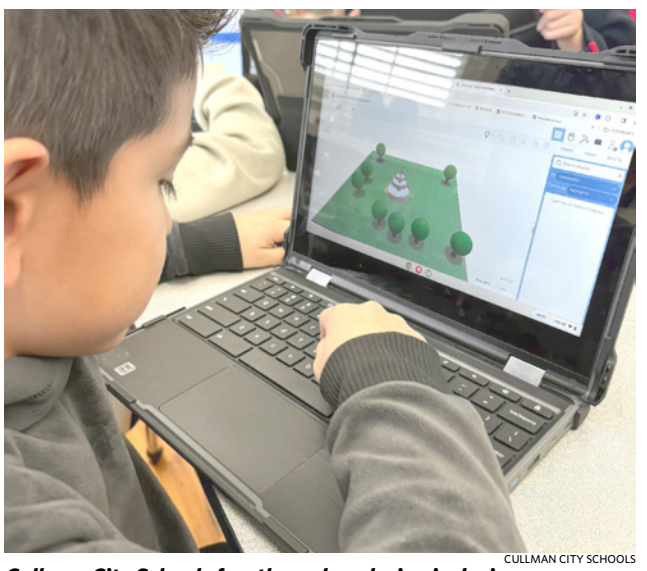
Students used the project as an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the Tinkercad software program, which teaches students 3D design, electronics and coding. The software is an innovative way to bring project-based Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) concepts into the classroom.

"The goal of our 'Inclusive Playground Project' was to create and design a 'pretend' welcoming and accessible environment for students that accommodates children of all abilities, fostering a sense of belonging, social interaction and physical activity for everyone," East and West Elementary STEM instructor Jennifer Tidwell explained. "Inclusive playgrounds are designed to be inclusive and barrier-free, allowing children with diverse abilities and disabilities to play together seamlessly. We addressed goals associated with inclusive playgrounds. By addressing these goals, we concluded that inclusive playgrounds contribute to a more equitable and enjoyable play experience for all children, promoting physical activity, social interaction and the development of essential skills in a supportive and inclusive setting."

Students came up with plenty of clever ideas in their playground designs, including larger bathrooms with bigger stalls, sensory gardens for students who are wheelchair bound, accessible paths that are obstacle free, play structures with ramps, adaptive sports courts, socialization spaces and more.

"The students were very passionate about this project and brought their creativity and innovative thinking to the project itself," Tidwell said.

"They came up with unique solutions, thought outside the box and added a fresh perspective to the overall project concept. They were sad when our class time was finished, which made me smile. I loved their overall enthusiasm for this project."



CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS

Cullman City Schools fourth graders design inclusive playgrounds as part of a recent STEM project.

WSCC: Broadway Night set for Feb. 15

Special to The Cullman Tribune

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — Students in Wallace State Community College's Fine and Performing Arts programs are gearing up for the annual Broadway Night, scheduled on Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. in the Recital Hall of the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts.

The upcoming showcase, staged and choreographed by Wallace State Fine and Performing Arts students, will present guests with an evening of popular Broadway show tunes. Included in this year's Broadway Night setlist is student-selected music from "Into the Woods," "Hamilton," "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," "White Christmas," "Footloose" and "Anything Goes." Admission to the performance is a $10 donation.

"Students from all programs come together to plan and perform at Broadway Night, showcasing their creativity through staging, choreography, and presentation," said Tiffany Richter, director of the Wallace State vocal ensembles.

"They do an amazing job, and it is always a blast to see how students work with one another to interpret the songs they've selected."

Other upcoming performances from Wallace State Fine and Performing Arts programs include:

• "The Lightning Thief," a musical presented by the Wallace State Theatre program, March 8-9, at 7 p.m. and March 10, at 2 p.m. at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre

• Spring Dance Showcase presented by the Allegro Dance, March 21, at 7 p.m. at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre

• "That Seventies Show," presented by the Wallace State Singers, April 11-13, at 7 p.m. at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theatre

• Big Band Dance by the Wallace State Jazz Band, April 19, at 7 p.m. at the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts

• Spring Under the Stars by the Wallace State Fine and Performing Arts programs, April 25, at 6:30 p.m. at the Burrow Center for the Fine and Performing Arts

The Fine and Performing Arts programs will hold scholarship auditions Feb. 9 and March 1 from 8 a.m.-noon in the Burrow Center for the Fine Performing Arts.

Auditions are open to current and incoming students and will be awarded starting with the Fall 2024 semester.

For more information, visit www.wallacestate.edu/fpa or contact Amy Seymour at 256-352-8277 or amy.seymour@wallacestate.edu.

Gudger (from Front)

Staff Reports
Contributor

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Reed, R-Jasper and Sen. Garlan Gudger, R-Cullman on Wednesday, Feb. 7, issued a statement after the Ballot Harvesting Bill advanced out of the State Government Affairs Committee.

The bill, sponsored by Gudger, prohibits any individual from ordering, requesting, collecting, prefilling, obtaining or delivering an absentee ballot and receiving or offering payment for such services. Assistance for Alabamians with disabilities is protected.

The statement is below:

"No greater priority exists than ensuring integrity in our elections.

"We must ensure absentee ballots are handled and cast in proper ways. Voting is a right that is foundational to our democracy, and we need to make certain that legitimate votes are not being diluted by fraudulent votes," said Reed.

"The main goal of these efforts will be to make sure that your vote counts and that those who try to cheat our system are held accountable."

"A democratic Republic cannot survive if election laws allow voters to commit fraud easily," said Gudger.

"When individuals engage in deceptive practices during elections, it undermines the very essence of democracy, discouraging legitimate voters. The Ballot Harvesting Bill ensures the people of Alabama are the ones managing our elections without interference from bad actors."

Last night, in the governor's State of the State Address, Governor Ivey expressed support for the issue, stating, "I am proud to support legislation that prohibits ballot harvesting in our state.

"We would put a stop to any manipulation of our elections by closing loopholes that allow unaccountable, paid political operatives to pressure folks through the absentee voting process."

Senate Republicans are committed to making Alabama elections transparent, trackable and publicly verifiable so Alabama voters have confidence in the security and accuracy of our elections.

Month (from Front)

Leanne West
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Cullman Mayor Woody Jacobs on Tuesday, Feb. 6, proclaimed the month of February 2024 "Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month" (TDVAM) in the city of Cullman. On hand to accept the official proclamation from Victim Services of Cullman were Jessica Atchley (interim executive director), Lacey Lemley (outreach advocate) and Gwen Parker (board president).

"We appreciate Victim Services for addressing the issue of teen dating violence," said Jacobs. "Helping young people learn how to avoid unhealthy or abusive relationships will benefit them greatly throughout their lives."

Dating violence is very common, especially among teens and young adults. Studies show that one in three teens in the U.S. will experience physical, sexual or emotional abuse from someone they're in a relationship with before they become adults, and nearly half of college women report experiencing violent or abusive dating behaviors.

The month of February is set aside across the country as a time to raise awareness about the issue of teen dating violence through TDVAM. The focus of TDVAM is on advocacy and education to stop dating abuse before it starts. The theme for TDVAM 2024 is "Love Like That." The "Love Like That" theme illuminates what "that" means regarding healthy and unhealthy relationships.

The Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services, an office of the Administration for Children & Families (ACF), has a Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Action Guide. That action guide, which can be downloaded at www.acf.hhs.gov/ofvps, contains helpful information and guidance on personal boundaries, self-care and self-love, consent, trust and honesty, conflict resolution, open communication and more.



LEANNE WEST

Pictured left to right are Gwen Parker, Lacey Lemley, Mayor Woody Jacobs and Jessica Atchley.

The website www.loveisrespect.org is an inclusive space where young people can access information and get support in an environment designed specifically for teens and young adults. Loveisrespect.org also shares the following tips on how to tell if a relationship is healthy, unhealthy or abusive.

A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Equal
- Enjoying personal time away from each other
- Making mutual choices
- Economic/financial partners

You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:

- Not communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time together
- Pressured into activities
- Unequal economically

Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:

- Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way
- Mistreating
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue
- Denying their actions are abusive
- Controlling
- Isolating their partner from others

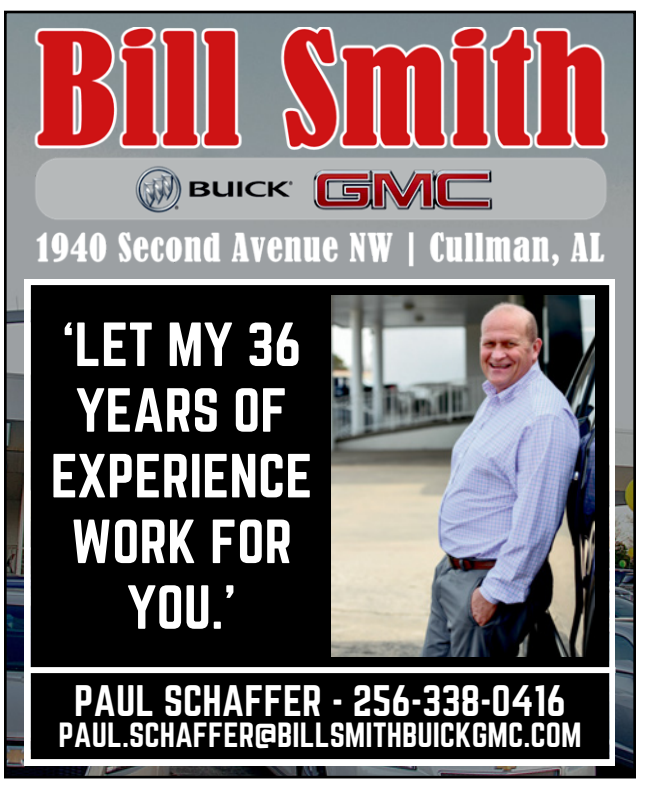
Teens who find themselves in unhealthy or abusive dating relationships have a place to turn to for help. The Teen Dating Abuse Hotline is 866-331-9474.

They can also go to the website loveisrespect.org to text, call or chat with someone who can help. The site also has many resources regarding dating, healthy relationships, personal safety and more.

To find out more about Victim Services of Cullman, Inc., visit www.victimservices.online or call 256-775-2600.

To find out more about TDVAM, visit loveinrespect.org or call the administrative line at 737-225-3150.

Are you a teen in an unhealthy or abusive dating relationship who needs help now? Call 1-866-331-9474 or text LOVEIS to 22522 or visit loveisrespect.org to chat with someone now.





Hawkins (from Front)

traditional health care services, the family and emergency medicine board-certified Jeremy Hawkins, along with his wife and fellow practitioner, Jacy Hawkins, also offer non-traditional services, including hormone, intravenous and weight therapies.

At a ribbon cutting for the practice this week, attendees were invited in to experience the lush waiting room as well as the homey and warm aesthetic of the office. Cullman Mayor Woody Jacobs was also on-hand.

"I appreciate you being here in our downtown area, providing this service," said Jacobs, laughing as he added, "It hit me a little bit when you were talking about weight management right after Christmas! But I do believe you will be very successful. Thank you for being a part of Cullman."

Hawkins Medical & Wellness is located in Suite 145 of the Klein Building at 421 Third Ave. SE. It is open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday and can be reached at 256-531-3961.

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LEGALS

Legal Notice

Notice is hereby given to all owners, secured parties and lienholders of the following described motor vehicles, which I have a right to sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, in accordance with the State of Alabama abandoned vehicle law, Statues, Chapter 13, Section 1-8, Title 32 and Alabama Law Act Number 83-494-S-80.

2000 Chevrolet Malibu, Vin.#1G1ND52J3Y6126612
2007 Honda Accord, Vin.#1HGCM56307A014194
2014 Nissan Versa, Vin.#3N1CN7AP7EK452730
2007 Saturn Vue, Vin.#5GZCZ53487S868727
2007 GMC Yukon, Vin.#1GKFK63807J184826
2017 Honda Accord, Vin.#1HGCR3F92HA021577
2015 Toyota Camry, Vin.#4T1BF1FK0FU912677
2002 Chevrolet Tahoe, Vin.#1GNEC13V52R201473
2005 Honda Accord, Vin.#1HGCM56495A172765
1995 Jeep Grand Cherokee, Vin.#1J4GZ58Y9SC503257
1989 Chevrolet S10, Vin.#1GCCS14Z0K2164152

These vehicles will be sold to pay storage and or repair fee at Mullins Body Shop, LLC, 11042 US Highway 31 South, Cullman, Alabama 35055, on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF DAVID FRANKLIN CLARK, Deceased. * CASE NO.: PC2024-013

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary having been granted to DAVID ALLEN CLARK as Personal Representative of the Estate of DAVID FRANKLIN CLARK, deceased, on the 23rd 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.

DAVID ALLEN CLARK
Personal Representative

G. Edward Coey
Attorney for Personal Representative
Post Office Box 834
Hanceville, Alabama 35077
256-352-2090

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, JUDGE OF PROBATE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: I.W. A Minor Child, 05/07/2021) CASE NO. JU 2022-400.02

NOTICE

The Petitioner having made a Motion for Service by Publication in the above styled action, it is

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the Mother of I.W., born on or about 05/07/2021, respond to the Petition by the 22 day of February, 2024, or thereafter a judgment may be rendered in favor of the Petitioner.

Contact may be made: Attorney for Petitioner: Michael J. Baggett, 206 Ninth Street SW, Cullman, AL 35055, (256) 737-0740 or Clerk of Court: Lisa McSwain, 500 2nd Ave SW Cullman, AL 35055.

DONE this the 29 day of Dec, 2023.

WELLS R. TURNER, III
JUVENILE JUDGE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

FILED IN OFFICE
DEC 2 8 2023
LISA McSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT
CULLMAN COUNTY

PB WIL BK 121 PG 279 - 01/30/2024 08:15 AM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF CECIL COLEMAN PIGG, Deceased. * CASE NO.: PC 2023-293

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary having been granted to ANGELA NETHERTON, as Personal Representative of the Estate of CECIL COLEMAN PIGG, deceased, on the 29th day of January, 2024, by the Honorable Will Motlow, Special Judge of Probate.

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 will be barred.

Angela Netherton
Personal Representative

Alex J. Chaney
Attorney for Estate
PO Box 1052
Cullman, Alabama 35056

TO: **The Publisher of The Cullman Tribune**

Please publish the above Notice once a week for three consecutive weeks and send an affidavit of Publication to the Judge of Probate.

HON. WILL MOTLOW,
SPECIAL JUDGE OF PROBATE

PB WIL BK 121 PG 308 - 01/31/2024 10:18 AM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

STATE OF ALABAMA
CULLMAN COUNTY
IN THE PROBATE COURT OF
CASE NO. PC 2023-300

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF AMIEL BAKER, DECEASED

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Letters Testamentary of said Deceased having been granted to the undersigned, CAROL McKOY, on the 31st day of January, 2024, by the Hon. Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

Dated this the 31st day of January 2024.

CAROL McKOY
Personal Representative of the Estate of Amiel Baker, Deceased

PERRY D. KNIGHT
Attorney for the
Estate of Amiel Baker, Deceased
412 First Avenue SE
Suite 101
Cullman, AL 35055
256-734-4090

To the Publisher of The Cullman Tribune:

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

TAMMY BROWN
Judge of Probate

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: H.W. A Minor Child, 06/05/2019) CASE NO. JU 2022-401.02

NOTICE

The Petitioner having made a Motion for Service by Publication in the above styled action, it is

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the Mother of H.W., born on or about 06/05/2019, respond to the Petition by the 22 day of February, 2024, or thereafter a judgment may be rendered in favor of the Petitioner.

Contact may be made: Attorney for Petitioner: Michael J. Baggett, 206 Ninth Street SW, Cullman, AL 35055, (256) 737-0740 or Clerk of Court: Lisa McSwain, 500 2nd Ave SW Cullman, AL 35055.

DONE this the 28th day of December, 2023.

WELLS R. TURNER, III
JUVENILE JUDGE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

FILED IN OFFICE
DEC 2 8 2023
LISA McSWAIN
CIRCUIT COURT
CULLMAN COUNTY

PB WIL BK 121 PG 262 - 01/29/2024 02:54 PM
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, AL

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF LAURA JEAN CAMPBELL, Deceased. * CASE NO.: PC2023-399

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary having been granted to JERRY SHADDRIX as Personal Representative of the Estate of LAURA JEAN CAMPBELL, deceased, on the 29th 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.

JERRY SHADDRIX
Personal Representative

Jerry L. Kilgo
The Kilgo Law Firm
Attorney for Personal Representative
421 3rd Avenue SE, Suite 250
Cullman, Alabama 35055

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, 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 Ryan V Key , Unmarried Man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Consumer First Mortgage, Inc., its successors and assigns dated September 8, 2010; said mortgage being recorded on September 13, 2010, in Book 1633, Page 592 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 344, Page 981 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 7th day of March, 2024 the following property, situated in Cullman County, Alabama, to-wit:

Lot No. 14 according to the Map which was platted by Warren Brothers and known as Warren Brothers Addition to Hanceville, Alabama, situated in Cullman County, Alabama, which map is recorded in Map Book 2, Page 5, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama.

Said property is commonly known as 310 Self 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.

LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC
as holder of said mortgage
McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLC
Two North Twentieth
2 20th Street North, Suite 1000
Birmingham, AL 35203
(205) 216-4238
FT21@mccalla.com
File No. 23-05560AL

www.foreclosurehotline.net

Cullman Tribune
02/01/2024,02/08/2024,02/15/2024

WSCC: Nursing offering evening classes starting fall 2024

Special to The Cullman Tribune

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — Wallace State Community College will begin offering evening nursing courses this fall to provide a more flexible option for students interested in pursuing a degree in nursing. The evening program will follow the same pathway as traditional daytime classes, with students being eligible to take the practical nurse licensure exam (NCLEX-PN) to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) after three semesters.

Deborah "Pepper" Hoover, chair of the Wallace State Department of Nursing Education, said the new program allows students with obligations during the traditional daytime hours to work toward getting their degree in nursing.

"We are very excited to announce a new program option starting in the fall of 2024, and it is an evening option, at the end of which you would earn a practical nursing certificate.

These nighttime classes give options to people who are working during the day or that have family obligations," said Hoover.

"The classes will start at five o'clock – we estimate three nights a week – with the clinicals on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. The curriculum for the evening option will mirror the curriculum for our traditional nursing program, so it's a year-long curriculum."

Students in the evening program are expected to be on campus three days out of the week, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Hoover said that those opting to take evening classes wouldn't miss anything that traditional daytime students experience.

"The evening option is designed to be totally offered in the evening, but we anticipate once a semester those students would be invited to join the daytime classes at the School of Nursing, for events such as Let's Pretend Hospital in the fall," Hoover said. "We do not want these students to miss out on anything that Wallace has to offer."

Logan Gibbs is the coordinator of the new evening nursing program and a Wallace State alumna. In 2018, she completed her studies at Wallace State before attaining a bachelor's degree in nursing education from the University of Alabama in 2021 and a master's degree in nursing education from the University of North Alabama in 2023. Before taking on the role of evening coordinator, Gibbs worked as a school nurse in Huntsville.

Online applications for the traditional daytime and evening programs at Wallace State Department of Nursing Education open March 15 and will be accepted through May 15.

The Department of Nursing Education holds Exploring Nursing at WSCC Information Sessions each month from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the School of Nursing and Center for Science Room 219. Upcoming sessions are scheduled for Feb. 26, March 18 and April 29.

Attendees to the information session will receive one point toward the overall point total used in the application and selection process. Pre-register at https://forms.office.com/r/rC34CRB5e8.

For more information about the Wallace State Nursing program, visit www.wallacestate.edu/nursing, call 256-352-8199 or email nursingapplicant@wallacestate.edu.

Obituary Announcements: Feb. 6-7

Shirley Ann Guthery, 74
A graveside service for Shirley Ann Guthery, 74, of Hanceville, will be 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024, at Prospect Church of Christ Cemetery. A visitation will be prior to the service from 11 a.m. until noon at Hanceville Funeral Home. Hank Allen will be officiating services.

April Elizabeth Stephenson (Pannell), 57
April Elizabeth Stephenson (Pannell), 57, of Cullman, Alabama passed away on Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024, in her home. April was born on Nov. 4, 1966, in Humbolt, California and later on adopted by the late Katheryn and Charles Pannell. April was predeceased by her brothers; Wayne Pannell and Jeff Pannell, Sisters; Deborah Pannell Valdez and Nena Cole. April is survived by her three sons Joe Stephenson (Lili), Jacob Stephenson, and Jonah Thompson, Three Granddaughters; Ariana Stephenson-Fischel, Heaven Stephenson, and Harper Stephenson, six brothers; Steve Pannell, Jerry Pannell, Kenneth Parnell (Hollywood), Dale Halloway, Coty Dunnaway and James Dunnaway (Sandy), one sister; Sebrina Waldrep as well as numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. April had a love for God and nature. In her free time, she enjoyed drawing pictures of Jesus and spending time with the ones she loved. The family will be having a private service at a later time and wants to thank everyone who chose to be a part of April's life. She will be greatly missed by many.

Tony Glen Hill, 61
Tony Glen Hill passed away on Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024, at his residence. He was born Saturday, April 21, 1962. Survivors include his wife, Renay Hill; son, Brian Hamilton; step-daughters, Denise (Derek) Sheedy, Crystal (Blake) Cobb, Nicole (Mike) Griffin and Meagan Wilbanks; step-son, Michael Wilbanks; grandchildren, Brayden Dickson, Conner and Jameson Sheedy, Jared, Caleb and Riley Gaddis, Eisha Griffin and Randi Jo, Aubrey, Skylar and Kensleigh Wilbanks. There are no services at this time. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Raymond Gregg Hodges, 81
Raymond Gregg Hodges joined his Lord and Savior and wife Marie on Feb. 5, 2024. He was a dedicated follower of Jesus Christ, devoted husband, loving Daddy, doting Paw Paw to eight grandchildren, and dear friend. He was a community leader who was active with his church and many other charitable and civic agencies. Born in New Hope, Alabama on Nov. 15, 1942, Gregg was the only child to Raymond and Leota Hodges. They lived in Albertville, Alabama, for most of Gregg's young life. He married the love of his life, Marie Theresa Hodges on Feb. 28, 1967, and remained faithfully devoted to her even after her passing in 2010. Hodges received a Bachelor's Degree of Animal Science and a Master's degree of Extension Education from Mississippi State University. He later received an Ed.S. Degree in Education and Supervision from University of Alabama, Gadsden Center. Stationed in Texas, Hodges served four years in the Air Force during the Vietnam War. He achieved the rank of Staff Sargent (SSgt). He was honorably discharged in 1972. He will receive military honors at his graveside service. Hodges began his Extension career in Mississippi followed by service in Franklin and Etowah counties before assuming his position in Cullman in 1981. Hodges served as Cullman County Agent Coordinator of the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service for over 20 years in Cullman. Hodges was a driving force in the development of the Cullman County Agricultural Trade Center. He was also involved in the Farm- City program on state and county levels. He was part of the delegation that received the National Award for rural development in 1983. He was asked to participate in a humanitarian USDA project requested by Polish authorities. He served from June 1991 to December 1991 after the removal of the Berlin Wall. Hodges was part of a two- man team whose primary focus was to deprivatize the agricultural sector. The team was stationed in Poland. While there, Hodges organized the first 4-H Club in Poland and was also responsible for organizing a Chamber of Commerce for industry in Leszno, Poland. This action opened the door to new economic development in the western corridor of Poland. In Oct. 1999, Hodges was listed among the Top 100 citizens of Cullman County Leaders of the 20th Century for Agriculture representation. Hodges has served in many other leadership roles including Director of the Cullman Chamber of Commerce, President of United Way, President of Alabama Association of County Agricultural Agents. He was actively involved in Cullman Co. Cattleman's Association, Farmer's Federation, Cullman Hospice and Housing Authority. Recently, Hodges has concentrated his service with the Gideons and Cullman First Baptist Church, where he has served as Elder, Deacon, Sunday school teacher, and many church committees over the years. He was a faithful visitor to homebound friends and members of the church, often bringing oranges, shortbread cookies, or flowers cut from his garden. He enjoyed the chance to sit and encourage, laugh, and share the latest local news. Gregg is preceded in death by his wife Marie. He is survived by their three children: Tracy (Seth) Thompson of Cullman, David Hodges of Nashville, Aimee (Dave) Reese of Birmingham; eight grandchildren: Will, Claire, and Grace Thompson, Cooper and Katy Hodges, Luke, Ruby and Hodges Reese. They will miss him dearly. Donations to honor Gregg Hodges may be made to the Gideons of Cullman, attn: Rick White or First Baptist Church of Cullman. Visitation will be held on Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024, from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. Funeral will be Friday, Feb. 9 at 10 a.m. with graveside to follow at Cullman City Cemetery. Both visitation and funeral will be at First Baptist Church of Cullman, 501 Second Ave. SE, Cullman, AL 35055.

Hedy Susanna L'Hereault, 78
Hedy Susanna L'Hereault, age 78, of Cullman, Alabama passed away Feb. 5, 2024. Mrs. L'Hereault is preceded in death by her mother Susanna Cornelia Vanderputte Kelly and father James Frances Kelly. She is survived by her husband Charles Michael L'Hereault, sons Roger L'Hereault, Stephen L'Hereault and Sean L'Hereault, daughter Marie L'Hereault, brother John A. Kelly, grandchildren William McElhone, Savannah McElhone, Walker McElhone and Emma L'Hereault, and great-grandchild Ezra Blackwelder. Mrs. L'Hereault was an expert at Scrabble and though it is difficult to quantize comprehensively, her abilities were quote worthy; possibly attributable to her avid reading habits. She was a devout catholic who loved to sing for her family and parish. Hedy was a guiding light, loving mother and a tremendous example of kindness and compassion. Visitation will be Thursday, Feb. 8, from 6 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. followed by the rosary at Sacred Heart Church. Her Funeral will be Friday, Feb. 9, at 10 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 217 Second Street SE, Cullman, AL.

Maggie Octavia Dodson Smith, 85
Maggie Octavia Dodson Smith, known to most of us as Mrs. Smith or perhaps even Big Momma, passed away on Monday evening, Feb. 5, 2024. Maggie was born in Cullman County, Alabama, on Nov. 24, 1938, to John Homer and Lola Belle Stisher Dodson. Maggie was a lifelong resident of Holly Pond, Alabama, with the exception of the two years she spent in Germany alongside her husband, Bud, as he served in the military. She was a graduating member of the Holly Pond Class of 1957. Maggie obtained her master's degree and began a career of more than thirty years teaching high school English, Typing, and Business at Vinemont High School, and later at Holly Pond High School. Mrs. Smith was a no-nonsense teacher who expected the best from her students. Her high standards made her students work hard in her classroom. Mrs. Smith's spunk and quick wit also made her a favorite among her students and the impact Maggie had on her students will be remembered for many years to come. Mrs. Smith was a longtime member of Holly Pond First Baptist Church where she enjoyed the fellowship of her friends in the Rebecca-Fidelis class. She enjoyed a short and to the point message and reminded Brother Benjamin of her preference often. Maggie was also active in her community, and she was a member of the Holly Pond Homemakers Club as well as a member of the Red Hat Society. Mrs. Smith was knowledgeable about the history of her town, and the preservation and upkeep of Holly Pond Cemetery was very important to her as a way of continuing and maintaining the town's history. Mrs. Smith was a child of God and her strong faith in her Savior and Lord was evident in the life she lived. Second only to her faith, family was the most important aspect of Mrs. Smith's life. Maggie and Bud had been married for fifty-six years when Bud passed away in 2020, and their life together had been one of great love and devotion. She was a loving and proud mother to their children, Heidi and Mitch, and Maggie adored her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Big Momma and her babies played Rook for hours on end, and their Star Wars and pizza weekends are memories that will be cherished for a lifetime. Maggie is preceded in death by her parents; beloved husband, Talmadge "Bud" Alton Smith; brothers, Winfred Dodson, and Ralph Dodson; sisters, Montez Pylant, Audrey Harris, and Jo McCowan. Those surviving Maggie includes her children, Mitch Smith (Sheila), Heidi Walker (Ricky); grandchildren, Kristen Walker (Trent), Hunter Walker (Jordan), Payden Smith (Caitlyn), Parker Smith (Abbie), Isaac Smith; great-grandchildren, Brooks Walker, John Beckett Walker, Elayne Smith, and two additional great-grandchildren to be born later this year; a host of nieces and nephews, extended family, and friends. Friends are invited to join the family for a time of visitation at Holly Pond First Baptist Church on Friday, Feb. 9, 2024, from 1:30 p.m. until services begin. Funeral services will begin at 3:30 p.m., on Friday, with Brother Benjamin Smothers officiating. Mrs. Smith will be laid to rest in Holly Pond Cemetery where her family will serve as pallbearers. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in Mrs. Smith's memory to Holly Pond Cemetery. Holly Pond Funeral Home is honored to serve the Smith family.

Joseph Mitchell Wilson, 74, of Hanceville
Joseph Mitchell Wilson, age 74, of Hanceville, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024, at Cullman Regional. He was born, May 21, 1949, to Allen Joseph Wilson and Roxy Vernice Wilson. He was preceded in death by his parents. Survivors include his children, LaQuita (Olalekan) Wilson-Sanusi, Troy (Glenda) Wilson, Crystal (Andreia) Wilson, Seth Wilson (Sydara Brown), Ercy Wilson, Essence Wilson (Brandon Gamble), Nikia Wilson; 17 grandchilden; 14 great-grandchildren; brother, James (Victoria) Twitty; sisters, Eartha Cole, Carmen Hubbard, Jacqueline Marshall, Delynda Fields and DeLisa Fields; aunts, Martha Foster and Laverne Hubbard; and a host of nieces, nephews, family and friends. A celebration of life service will be held at a later date.

Rickie Lee Mason, 67
Rickie Lee Mason, age 67 of Cullman, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024, at Cullman Regional. He was born, Nov. 23, 1956, to Leroy Mason and Jeutte Mason. He was preceded in death by his parents. Survivors include his son, Jeremy (Nicole) Mason; grandchildren, Meelah and Niko Mason; brother, Jerry (Melinda) Mason; sister, Barbara (Randy) Bentley; nieces, Kelly (Chris) Thrasher and Katie (Justin) Rutledge; nephew, Chad (Carrie) Bentley; great nephews, Jack, Harrison and Cal Bentley. A private graveside service will be held at a later date.

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THANK YOU TO OUR ADVERTISERS!

Ivey (from Front)

Staff Reports
Contributor

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Gov. Kay Ivey on Tuesday, Feb. 6, delivered her annual State of the State address. The transcript of her address is printed in full below:

Lieutenant Governor Ainsworth, President Pro Tem Reed, Speaker Ledbetter, Speaker Pro Tem Pringle, members of the Alabama Legislature, justices of the Alabama Supreme Court, distinguished guests – and my fellow Alabamians!

It is an honor to address you all as we begin what will be a consequential legislative session. In just one month on March 5, we will also head to the polls to vote in Alabama's Primary

Election, which is significant this year as we are now one of the earliest states in the nation and included among those on Super Tuesday. All the more reason to get out and proudly cast your vote!

Any chance I get, I remind young people that voting is the single-most important civic duty we have. From delivering this message to Girls Staters each year to speaking with our 4th graders learning about their Alabama history – I am always proud to share with our students that having the right to vote should never be taken for granted.

When talking to a group of Carbon Hill 7th graders preparing for their school elections, I told them: If you don't vote, you can't gripe. The same is true for us adults.

As an Alabamian, something I am most proud of, though, is that after the polls close, no matter who we voted for, we all still treat each other with respect, whether selecting a Class President or President of the United States.

Even while we may vote differently, we all agree in protecting the integrity of our elections in Alabama.

That is why I am proud to support legislation that prohibits ballot harvesting in our state. We would put a stop to any manipulation of our elections by closing loopholes that allow unaccountable, paid political operatives to pressure folks through the absentee voting process.

This year, we have a new bill to outlaw ballot harvesting that also protects folks who truly need assistance in having their voices be heard.

While other secretaries of states are worried about picking their favorite candidates for the ballots, I am grateful Secretary Wes Allen is focused on making sure Alabama's elections will always be free and fair.

This year when Alabamians make their way to the ballot box, I hope they will be voting on another issue: Gaming. I believe the current proposal being contemplated by the Legislature is good for Alabama, and I will be carefully watching it move through the process. It will crack down on illegal gambling, and it will responsibly regulate limited forms of legal gaming, including a statewide lottery. Thank you to Speaker Ledbetter and his leadership team for their hard work on this.

Now is the time for Alabama voters to have another say on this issue.

In more ways than one, we can contrast what we are doing here in Alabama with that of Washington, D.C., or even other states. I am confident that because of our work together – Republicans and Democrats alike – Alabama can be the model for the nation.

We all recognize the responsibility and role of state government. That means standing up for our Alabama values, while focusing on areas like education, economic development, workforce, infrastructure and public safety. And we will always, always make sure our government is working for our fellow Alabamians.

I believe because of these efforts, and because we are on solid financial footing, Alabama is in the most competitive position we have ever been in our state's history.

Ladies and gentlemen, the state of our state is strong, and together, we are prepared for the Alabama of tomorrow.

Fostering safe communities is a paramount responsibility of government on any level, and it begins with protecting the future of our state – our children.

That is why I am calling on the Legislature to, once again, invest in school safety through a $100 million grant program.

We must also continue investing in critical mental health care for our students.

Unfortunately, children across our country, including right here in Alabama, have been victims of human trafficking. We must continue educating the public on this very real evil, and we must take action against it where we can. For many, the movie, Sound of Freedom, was a wake-up call. The proposed Sound of Freedom Act will mandate life in prison for those who traffic minors, and I am proud to put my support behind this important legislation.

In this ever-evolving world, ensuring new technologies are both safe and effective is an important public safety measure. Today, that new technology is Artificial Intelligence, maybe better known as AI.

And look y'all, I am not going to stand here and preach like I know a lick about AI. However, I do know that new technologies can have benefits, but if not used responsibly, they can be dangerous. We are going to ensure that AI is used properly.

This week, I will sign an executive order to establish a task force to better understand Artificial Intelligence and to prepare the state to safely and effectively use this emerging technology going forward.

The Alabama Department of Corrections certainly remains a key focus of our state's public safety efforts. I will be frank: Running a corrections system is a hard job, and I know everyone has an opinion on how they can do it better. There is no one more capable to lead that effort here in Alabama than Commissioner John Hamm.

Prisons around the country and on every level – federal, state and local – are experiencing challenges. But we remain committed to doing everything in our power to make improvements where we can in our state system.

We are moving forward in our mission to build two new facilities. At the same time, we are working to stop contraband coming into our existing facilities, and we are doubling down on our staff recruitment efforts and seeing record graduating classes of officers because of it.

Alabama proudly backs the blue, including our corrections officers, and we steadfastly support our military.

I am thrilled to have recently tapped General David Pritchett to serve as the new adjutant general for the Alabama National Guard.

Already in his short time on the job, the Alabama National Guard has stepped up in times of need. From carrying the torch on important missions like the F-35 project to aiding portions of the state impacted by stinging winter weather.

He also continues to support the hundreds of Alabama soldiers deployed at the Southern Border to protect our country against illegal immigration – we are proud of these men and women and thank them for their service.

In addition to supporting our active military men and women, we also care deeply for our veterans who have served.

Last November, I had the opportunity to visit Dovetail Landing in Lincoln.

Their vision is to create a place to support veterans, especially those struggling with the challenging transition back to civilian life. It could be through emotional support or by helping these folks develop a new skillset to enter the workforce.

I was impressed and moved. This evening, I am calling on you to invest in the construction of this new endeavor. Our veterans carried us, and now it is time we help carry them.

Alabama is a pro-life state. I am more committed than ever to protect the sanctity of life, and as I said on this occasion last year, our work is not done.

This evening, I am proud to declare Alabama will foster a culture of life. We must re-focus our efforts to do more to support life after birth.

Last year, Commissioner Nancy Buckner and the Alabama Department of Human Resources had great success in foster care adoptions, accompanied by a relentless focus on enhancing childcare quality. I am proud to double-down on these efforts.

To foster a better culture of life, we must also do more to support Alabama families, and early onset medical care is necessary for both mothers and children. While we are making significant strides, we still face challenges, especially in Rural Alabama.

That is why I am proud to support a pilot program that will start hosting checkups for pregnant women at nine county health departments in areas of need.

Folks, there is nothing more important than our Alabama families, and we must come together to find common ground on meaningful ways to support them.

The success of any state hinges in large measure upon the ease and speed of the transportation of commerce. Alabama's roads, bridges and ports have always played a major role in driving our growing economy.

Just as our roads and bridges are critical to our success, our digital highways – or broadband connectivity – are equally vital.

Ensuring our entire state has the ability to connect to high-speed internet is the most significant thing we can do to support a modern economy. Just yesterday, I was in Wilcox County to announce 21 grants across the state totaling $188 million. We're talking 46-hundred miles of fiber infrastructure. In total, Alabama's investment in broadband expansion will be a whopping $2 billion. Y'all, I am really excited about this, and there's even more to come!

I believe we have the best broadband deployment map in the country. And over the next three years, every Alabamian will see the difference, and we will be more competitive for it as we work to connect Alabama.

Our state has experienced tremendous success in economic development, and I am confident we will be able to build on those efforts with our new Commerce Secretary Ellen McNair.

Tonight, I am proud to report to you all that during my tenure as governor, Alabama has seen investments totaling $48 billion, which has created 86,000 new jobs. As I like to say: We're just getting started!

Secretary McNair and her team are developing a brand-new strategic plan, one that will meet our goal of having an economic development strategy for the 2030s today!

To help Alabamians and Alabama businesses achieve success, though, we must make sure our efforts in workforce development match what we are doing to recruit and retain business and industry.

Last July, I wrote an Op-Ed saying to eliminate 'Help Wanted' signs, we must shift our focus to labor force participation. The Ivey Administration remains committed to doing that.

In 2015, major reforms were made within the state's workforce development sector. I am committed to taking those reforms a step further so we can remain laser-focused on ensuring government always works better for Alabamians. When it comes to workforce development, there are two customers – jobseekers and employers.

While our unemployment rate remains historically low, our labor force participation rate stands only at 57.2 percent, one of the lowest in the nation.

Our state will not reach its full potential with nearly half of its population sitting on the sidelines. Alabama can do better, and it will take making Alabama's workforce programs more effective and efficient.

The mission of workforce development must be to recruit, train, employ and retain Alabamians into high-demand jobs.

One of our greatest needs remains within our healthcare workforce, especially in Rural Alabama. There is simply no denying it, and we need more people to fill just about every kind of healthcare job out there – doctors, nurses, techs, you name it.

Last year, I introduced the idea of the Alabama School of Healthcare Sciences.

We used our successful School of Cyber Technology and Engineering, as well as our other specialty schools, as the blueprint. This school will directly expose young men and women from around Alabama, and particularly rural students, to various healthcare fields. And it gives them options.

Maybe they want to graduate with a credential to immediately start working a high- wage career, or maybe they want to go to college and become a nurse or maybe even attend medical or dental school.

We will now give these students an opportunity and a state-of-the-art school to attend.

Over the last year, we have finalized the plans, and I am proposing we locate this school in Demopolis. Already, we have received tremendous community support, and the gold standard of rural healthcare is just a few steps away from the proposed site where these students will learn.

And on top of all of this, the feasibility report commissioned by the Legislature last year has once again validated Demopolis as the ideal location for this important school – folks, let's get this important project done.

I'll say this: Demopolis already has a proven track record of producing Alabama's healthcare leaders.

Dr. Selwyn Vickers, who I am proud to have joining us tonight, is proof positive of that.

As a young boy, born in Demopolis, Dr. Vickers' parents showed him that hard work could help him achieve anything he put his mind to, and boy, were they right.

Today, Dr. Vickers is one of the top doctors in the world, while currently serving as president and CEO of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

Students in every Alabama county have the potential to benefit from an education in Demopolis, just like Dr. Vickers did, and we will accomplish that through the Alabama School of Healthcare Sciences. Members of the Alabama Legislature, investing in this project is one of my top priorities this session, and I am calling on you to make this a reality.

Dr. Vickers once said in an interview that education is the great equalizer, and I could not agree more. Thank you, Dr. Vickers, for your contributions to our state and our nation, and for being here tonight. Will you please stand to be recognized?

During my inaugural address, I promised the people of Alabama that ensuring every Alabama student receives a high-quality education would be my number one focus during this term.

And members, while I am always delighted to spend some time with you all, I am especially proud we are joined by many of our young people tonight.

We heard the beautiful music from our Jasper High School students who hail from Pro Tem Reed's hometown. Thank you, all, for being here tonight! Please stand and let us recognize you.

This last year, one of the highlights for me personally was visiting our 15 Turnaround Schools. 4th graders from one of those schools – ABC Elementary in my home county of Wilcox – are here with us this evening.

Folks, these boys and girls had the highest reading gains in the entire state of Alabama last year! This deserves to be celebrated! ABC Elementary, please stand to be recognized!

I believe in every single one of our students in Alabama, and when you set the bar high for them, these boys and girls can reach their fullest potential.

The progress being made at ABC Elementary can certainly be credited to our Turnaround Schools Initiative, as well as these students here tonight, their classmates back home, their parents and their teachers. We must double-down on the success of our Turnaround Schools Initiative.

After I was sworn in for my second term, I established the Governor's Commission on Teaching and Learning. The Commission provided a report that will serve as our blueprint for improving student outcomes over the next three years.

Chief among those recommendations is fully funding both the Numeracy and Literacy Acts.

Our teachers are being trained in the science of math and reading, and we are preparing them not only to teach our kids today, but also of the future. All the work we have done through the Numeracy and Literacy Acts is critical to our success.

And I will say this again crystal clear: If you all send any version of a delay of the Literacy Act to my desk, I will veto the bill.

Ensuring our students are proficient readers and ready for the next grade is simply too critical. And these Wilcox County kids have proven when the right resources and curriculum are in place, they can do it!

I am very proud of the fact that during my time serving as your governor, together, we have invested a new historic amount in our public schools each year. This year, we will, once again, have the largest Education Trust Fund in our state's history.

We must also fulfill our promise to have the highest starting salary for our teachers among our neighboring states. Let's get that done this Session.

Improving our state's education system is a process, and we have to meet the needs of all students. As governor, I realize the way to do that is to make sure there are opportunities available for our children.

For some families, that means having the chance to send their child to a charter, magnet or private school, or to homeschool them. School choice is a spectrum, and last year, we recognized that to expand our options in Alabama, we had to first improve our existing options – charter schools and the Alabama Accountability Act. You accomplished that – thank you.

Now, our next step is to provide our parents, beginning with those most in need, education savings accounts, which will further us on our journey to become the most school-choice friendly state in the nation.

Passing an education savings account bill that works for families and for Alabama is my number one legislative priority, and I am proud to have our education budget chairmen, Senator Arthur Orr and Representative Danny Garrett carry the CHOOSE Act.

Once we get this legislation across the finish line, we will prepare for the program to begin in the 2025-2026 Academic Year. For its first two years, we will be helping families who might not otherwise have the option to afford to send their children to the school of their choice through these $7,000 education savings accounts.

For the third year and beyond, ALL families will be eligible for the program.

As additional families choose to participate in the program, and as our revenues increase, we can grow the program responsibly so that it can be fully universal for every Alabama family who wishes to participate.

This program will be effective and sustainable, and it will serve as the catalyst for making Alabama the most school choice friendly state in the nation for years to come.

My goal is to put us on a trajectory to make our program fully universal, while also maintaining our full and total support for public education. At the end of the day, I believe the CHOOSE Act – packaged with providing our K-12 teachers the highest starting salaries – will help our public schools become even stronger.

And I believe we will continue working towards our goal of being in the top 30 nationally when it comes to student outcomes.

Folks, I am confident in Alabama's future, because I am confident in our students. I have met thousands of these young people, and I am more encouraged by the day.

I am also proud of Alabama. I am proud of our citizens. And I am proud to continue leading our state forward.

The people of Alabama deserve our very best. Future generations of Alabamians deserve our hardest work today. This is our opportunity. So, let's not waste a moment.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless each of you and the great state of Alabama.