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ALAINA HERRINGTON

– SPORTS –

Cold Springs' Alaina Herrington reflects on Eagle years

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'We are the Gardeners'

Lauren Estes
lauren@cullmantribune.com

FAIRVIEW, Ala. — May 11-17 was designated Little Free Library Week, and on Thursday, May 15, a group gathered at Fairview's Randall Shedd Community Park to take part in a fun event called "We are the Gardeners."

Stephanie Sprouse, who stewards the Little Free Library at the park, said she applied for a Little Free Library grant, which made the event possible.

"I was awarded a $100 gift card after applying for a grant in April and awarded for this May event, which allowed me to purchase the items needed for today," Sprouse said. "I read 'We are the Gardeners' by Joanna Gaines, which inspired and educated the children in how to plant and care for a garden."

Students from the Awakening Wonder Homeschool Group, led by Suzy Chapman, participated in the event. Sprouse said each child was given a terracotta pot and saucer to plant a » PAGE 8


SAMANTHA SPROUSE
Local homeschool students participated in a gardening event in Fairview on May 15, 2025, thanks to a Little Free Library grant.

'He embodied service, support and love for all of our students'

Hanceville band dedicates field to Rodney Buckelew



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
Left to right are Racheal Buckelew, Nickey Buckelew, Colton Buckelew, Karson Buckelew, Emma Buckelew, Lacie Buckelew, Veronica Wallace, Jon Sharp, Jesse James and Jeremy Buckelew with the new unveiled banner at the Rodney Buckelew practice field on Friday, May 16, 2025.

Nick Griffin
nick@cullmantribune.com

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — Friday was a special day at Hanceville High School. Friends, family, students and other members of the community made their way to The Pride of Hanceville Marching Band's practice field to celebrate Rodney Buckelew and name the field in his honor. Buckelew served as Hanceville's Band Booster Club president before he was tragically killed in car accident in November of last year.

Buckelew dedicated much of his time to the Hanceville band program, and before unveiling a new banner and officially renaming the field, HHS Band Director Jesse James shared some words about Buckelew's impact on the band and all the people who participate in it.

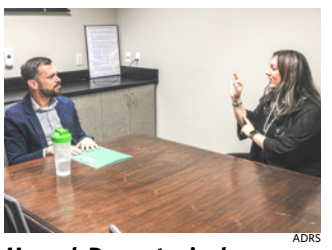
"This is a very, very special day to remember a very, very special person in all of our lives. Today we gather on this field not only as a community of musicians, students and friends, but as a family bound together by a shared passion, person and memories. Today we stand on ground that will be renamed for and forever touched by the spirit of someone who gave so much to us. Rodney wasn't just a band booster; he was the cornerstone of our program. Rodney was always working behind the scenes to make sure our students had everything they needed to succeed, even going above and beyond the call of duty," he said.

"Whether it was pulling a trailer, mowing and fertilizing this field at all hours of the night, pushing equipment at competitions and halftime, lighting fire batons and even being the band director for a game, he embodied service, support and love for all of our students. His belief in this band and these kids and our community was » PAGE 8

Johnny Cook announces Cullman City Council re-election bid


CONTRIBUTED
Johnny Cook » PAGE 2

Cullman's Hannah Dempster finds her calling as sign language interpreter through family connection


ADRS
Hannah Dempster is shown on the right. » PAGE 4

Cullman's Blocher, Turbyfield set school heptathlon, decathlon records



CULLMAN XC TRACK
Both Cullman High School's Jana Blocher (2,981 points) and Slade Turbyfield (5,404 points) set new school records in the heptathlon and decathlon, respectively, at the AHSAA State Championships in Hoover on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. The previous records were held by Lexi Carpenter (2009) and Banks Baker (2022).

WSCC's Vianney Verdin Maldonado receives Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship


WALLACE STATE
Vianney Verdin Maldonado was selected as a recipient of the highly competitive Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. » PAGE 6

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CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported May 16

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Below are the arrests and incidents reported May 16, 2025. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

GJ = grand jury; FTA = failure to appear

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INCIDENTS

May 12

- possession of dangerous drugs; possession of drug paraphernalia; I65NB MM 300
- domestic violence; CR 1478
- theft of property; CR 572
- trespassing; harassment; CR 1059
- violation of protection order; CR 222
- harassment; CR 431

May 13

- possession of dangerous drugs; Hwy. 278E
- possession of drug paraphernalia; CR 531
- violation of protection order; CR 222
- assault; Commercial St. NE Hanceville

May 14

- discharging firearm into unoccupied building; burglary; Fairview Rd.
- unlawful possession of a controlled substance; possession of drug paraphernalia; CR 649

ARRESTS

May 12-14

Atkins, Anthony M.; 42
- FTA – possession of heroin
- FTA – sell/distribute – heroin
- FTA – illegal possession of prescription drugs
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – tampering with physical evidence

Baker Jr., Clinto C.; 69
- FTA – negotiating worthless instruments

Baker, Joshua C.; 40
- possession of methamphetamine
- possession of drug paraphernalia

Ballenger, Zachary D.; 27
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

Bates, Brent D.; 37
- permitting dogs to run at large

Chambers, Angela G.; 51
- assault-child abuse-simple-family
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- possession of dangerous drugs
- theft-theft from yards, less than $500

Chambers, Melissa A.; 46
- possessing forged instrument

Fowler, Anthony P.; 32
- sexual abuse of a child less than 12 years old

Graves, Kevin D.; 39
- possession of dangerous drugs
- public intoxication

Gregg, Edward P.; 68
- possession of drug paraphernalia

Grimes, James D.; 31
- assault-domestic-harassment-family
- possession of dangerous drugs

Harrison, Jamarion A.; 21
- PROBATION VIOLATION – burglary-non-residence-no force

Hogan, Randall D.; 68
- homicide-murder-family-gun-domestic violence

Jester, John D.; 45
- FTA – possession of dangerous drugs

Johnson, Albert L.; 42
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – possession of cocaine
- FTA – possession of marijuana-2nd degree

Kanute, Jerrell W.; 55
- PROBATION VIOLATION – failure of adult sex offender to comply with requirements prior to release

Kilgore, Billy J.; 47
- FTA – resident license – freshwater fishing

Lay, Rachel L.; 34
- FTA – illegal possession of prescription drugs
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – possession of dangerous drugs
- FTA – public intoxication
- FTA – criminal trespass
- FTA – disorderly conduct

Lovelace, James L.; 42
- assault-child abuse-simple-family

Mitchell, Tammy M.; 44
- FTA – negotiating worthless instrument

Owens, Mona M.; 46
- PROBATION VIOLATION – possession of drug paraphernalia
- PROBATION VIOLATION – giving false identification to law enforcement

Sherrell, Joshua A.; 36
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- possession of dangerous drugs

Speakman, James R.; 29
- PAROLE VIOLATION/REVOCATION – possessing forged instrument

Stansell, Tori M.; 25
- DRUG COURT SANCTION – assault-child abuse-simple-family
- FTA – assault-domestic-harassment-family
- DRUG COURT SANCTION – possession of drug paraphernalia
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- DRUG COURT SANCTION – possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- DRUG COURT SANCTION – possession of dangerous drugs
- violation of a domestic violence protection order

Suggs, Sabrena L.; 40
- possession of drug paraphernalia

Tanner Jr., James I.; 61
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – possession of dangerous drugs

Thomas, April N.; 38
- possession of dangerous drugs

Thursby, Whitney N.; 37
- sell/distribution of dangerous drugs

Wallace, Leslie B.; 36
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- possession of dangerous drugs

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

INCIDENTS

May 14
- theft of lost property-2nd degree; person; phone; $1,500; Hwy. 157
- harassing communications; person
- criminal trespass-1st degree; person; Main Ave. SW
- theft of property-3rd degree; person; computer; $1,416; 2nd Ave. NE

May 15
- organized retail theft; Monograms Plus; general merchandise; $733; Main Ave. NE
- theft of property-4th degree; Wal-Mart; general merchandise; $62; Olive St. SW

ARRESTS

May 14-15

Chambers, Melissa A.; 46
- FTA – resisting arrest
- FTA – theft of property-4th degree
- FTA – driving without license

Butts, Dale P.; 51
- trafficking (2 counts)
- possession of drug paraphernalia

Calvert, Shona N.; 38
- trafficking (2 counts)
- possession of drug paraphernalia

Sexton, Desa R.; 60
- criminal trespass-1st degree

Hanna, Amiyah B.; 21
- FTA – resisting arrest
- FTA – harassment
- FTA – criminal trespass-3rd degree
- FTA – stalking-2nd degree

McAlpine, Joyce; 71
- organized retail theft

Peterson, Teresa J.; 61
- organized retail theft

McKinna, Matthew C.; 37
- public intoxication

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests or incidents reported.

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



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Cook (from Front)

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Cullman City Council President Pro-Tem has announced his re-election bid. Cook began his fourth term on the city council on Nov. 2, 2020. He was named president pro-tem in August 2018. He serves in Place 3 and chairs the Council's Public Works Committee.

Below is Cook's re-election bid announcement:

Longtime Cullman resident and community member Johnny Cook has announced his candidacy for Cullman City Council.

Just "Johnny," as he prefers to be called, has been an engaged member, playing an integral role with numerous improvements and investments during a time in which the city of Cullman has seen its largest growth since post-World War II.

Johnny, while just proud to continue serve and give back, has been an alderman with responsibility over the City garage, City sanitation and the City street departments, but noted that every council member votes and participates in every aspect of the City government. "We all share our views and make decisions on financing, public safety and city services," he stated. "Each one of us has input – and that input stems from the voices of those we represent."

A significant sanitation accomplishment was working together and partnering with the Cullman County Commission to purchase the landfill. Disposing of waste will not be a concern for nearly 100 years. As far as roads go, in 2021, Johnny worked hard with federal, state and local leaders, by building lasting relationships. This helped to secure a $14 million grant to complete the widening of Highway 157. Johnny didn't stop there. In 2024, he worked tirelessly to find funding to widen Highway 278 and the Saint Bernard bridge. The City garage has been brought up to modern times with state-of-the-art computers, equipment and tools. The garage is staffed with certified technicians who also possess emergency vehicle certifications. This has allowed the City to stop outsourcing all body and mechanical work.

Johnny says Cullman has grown in every area – retail and shopping opportunities, dining options, commercial development, new and expanding industry, housing, schools, medical, festivals, entertainment and quality of life. "City government plays a vital role in all of these areas, and I am extremely proud of our accomplishments," he said.

Plans for the future include the above noted widening of Highway 278, partnering with the Cullman County Commission to complete a new landfill scale house and a large paving schedule throughout the city.

Johnny and his wife Dawn are proud parents of three children and eight grandchildren.

Johnny is a member, and a deacon, at Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church and frequently leads a Mission Team from the church to Greece. He also is a strong supporter of the Foundry Farm.

In Johnny's words, "I've been blessed by the voters to serve and play a role in improving our community. They trusted me and I've never lost sight of that. We've seen increased revenue without increased taxes. We've seen larger investments in our schools without increased taxes. And we've seen increased quality of life opportunities without increased taxes. However, what I'm most proud about is the fact that God blessed me with such a great community in which He's allowed me to serve, and I humbly pray that if it is His will and, in His plans, I will be allowed to continue serving such a great community with the utmost honesty and integrity."

Cullman's Municipal Election will take place Aug. 26, 2025.

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May 22nd Special Needs
Registration 7:30am
Starts at 8am

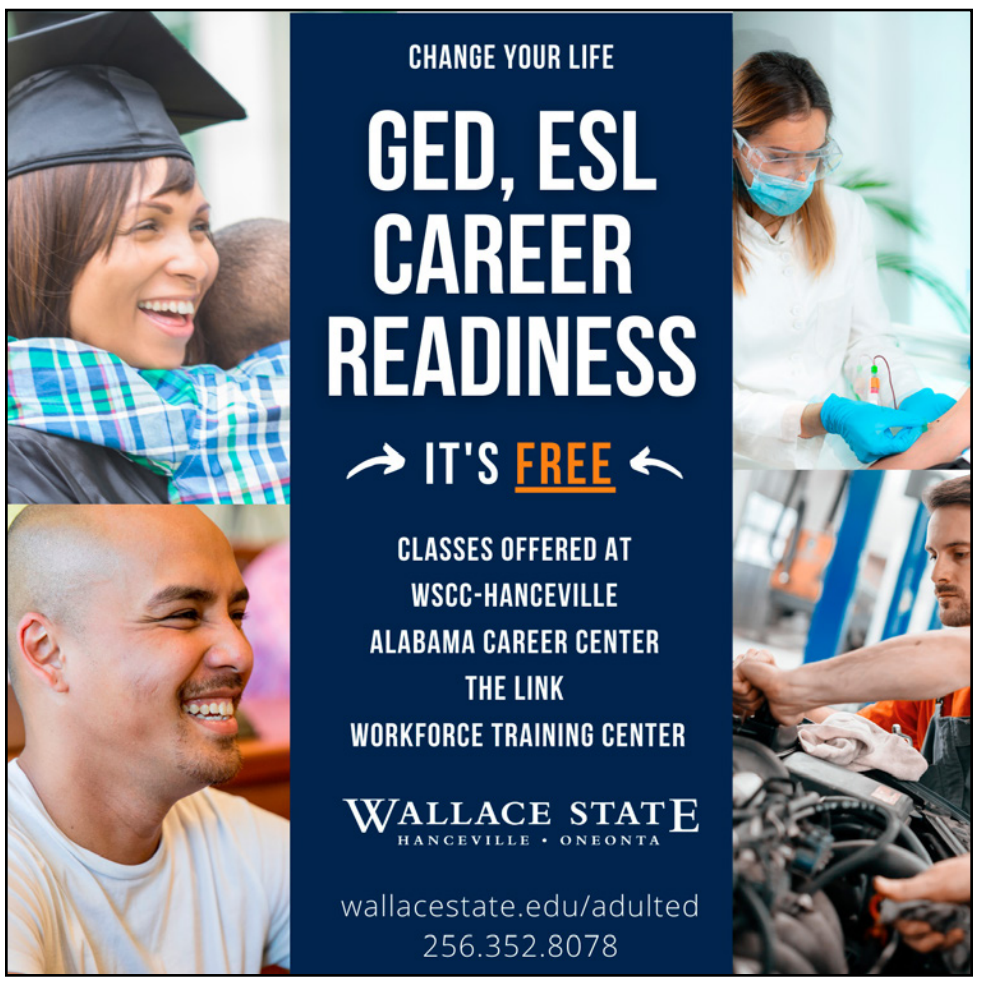
May 23rd Senior Citizens Division 55+
Registration starts at 7:30am
Starts at 8am

May 24th Kid's Division
Registration starts at 7:30am
Starts at 8am

This will be a free event. Providing Trophies for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners across various age groups and divisions. We will be giving out door prizes. Offering lunch for attendees.

Veterans Memorial Park
503 Park Street Hanceville, Al 35077

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Attention Senior Citizens
If you are 60 or over, please come to the Cullman Senior Center at 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW and have some fun with us and eat lunch. Good fun, good friends and good food. Different things going on Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-noon. Volunteers needed to deliver meals to homebound. Call Commission on Aging for info. 256-734-1241.

SAVE THE DATE! Little Pink Dress Benefit
Tuesday, Oct. 7, from 6-9 p.m. at The Venue at Stone Bridge Farms. Table for eight for $450. Tickets available from Jennifer Limerick (256-201-2521 or jenniferalrealtor@gmail.com) or Judy Grissom (256-347-5993 or options5993@gmail.com) or www.CullmanBosomBuddies.com. Benefits the Cullman County Bosom Buddies Foundation.

Music Every Thursday Night in February at the Bethel Community Center
4-8 p.m. at the center, just off U.S. Highway 278, west of Cullman on County Road 1117. Bluegrass, gospel and country music. Musicians are welcome with acoustic instruments only. Covered dish supper and everyone is invited. Please join us! No entry fee, but donations are appreciated for building upkeep.

Grief Support Group: Broken Heart for Repair
For more information, contact Reverend Warren Ruland at 256-962-2521.

Cullman County Republican Women Monthly Meetings
Second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Cullman VFW. President Cathi Bradford: "We are going to begin training to track legislation in Montgomery. If you need information, you can directly message me on Facebook." Full meals at 5:30. Meetings start at 6.

The Crossing Food Bank
The Crossing is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-3:30 p.m. We are located at 1503 Second St. SW, Cullman (in the Housing Authority).

Cullman Low Vision Support Group Meetings
Third Tuesday of every month, from 10-11:30 a.m., at the Alabama Career Center, 1201 Katherine St. NW in Cullman. Contact Olivia Wade, case manager, at 256-389-2502.

Baileyton Bargain Days
First 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

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 the Donald E. Green Adult Active Center, 1625 Cleveland Ave. SW. 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 Al-Anon Meetings
The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of friends and family whose lives have been affected by alcoholism. The Cullman Serenity Al-Anon Group meets each Monday at noon at 1519 St. Joseph Dr. NE. There is also a Zoom meeting each Tuesday at noon. The Courage to Change Al-Anon Family Group meets on Thursdays at 6 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church at 305 Arnold St. NE in the Carriage House, located between the church and the Arnold House on the corner. For more information call 256-734-2231 or 256-531-4429.

The 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.

Church Services: Spirit Life Church of GOD
• 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman
• Saturday, May 17 – 9-11 a.m. Drive-through food bank
• Sunday, May 18 - 9 a.m. Van runs in the 5 Points Area. Call Betty Hays at 256-338-3728 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. Healing service at 5 p.m.

Guy Hunt Library Summer Reading Program
• Make plans to join us at Guy Hunt Library in Holly Pond on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. for the Summer Reading Program. Children from ages 2 to 12 are welcome.
• June 3: McWane Science Center
• June 10: Cullman County Soil and Water Conservation District
• June17: Cullman County Extension Office (ACES)
• June 24: North Alabama Agriplex
• Drinks and snacks will be provided. For more information contact Guy Hunt Library at 256-796-5226. Leave a message if needed. We look forward to having you join us for a morning of fun.

Hamm Family Reunion
Saturday, May 17, at noon, at the Hanceville Lions Club, 111 Michelle St. NW in Hanceville. Please bring a covered dish. For more information contact Scott Hamm at 256-924-6272.

Pancake Breakfast to Benefit Holly Pond Cemetery
The Holly Pond Lions Club is having a pancake breakfast on Saturday, May 17, at the Holly Pond Lions Club Building from 6-9 a.m. Enjoy all-you-can-eat pancakes, bacon, sausage and a drink for a donation to eat in or take out. The proceeds will benefit the Holly Pond Cemetery. Come join us and bring your friends! Thank you in advance for your support.

Shibori Dyeing Class
Monday, May 19, at 1 p.m. at the Cullman Senior Center, 1539 Sportsman Lake Road NW in Cullman. $32 per person. Space is limited. Sign up today. Call 256-734-0145 M-F 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Ladies' Conference
Saturday, June 7, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., with lunch at noon. At The Foot Of The Cross Church, 2101 County Road 1435 in Vinemont. Guest speaker Kristy Garrison Harris: Trusting God through every season. There will be games and door prizes. Please join us.

Bates Family Reunion
Saturday, June 14, at 11 a.m. at the Trimble Community Center, 7744 County Road 813. Bring your favorite dish and enjoy the fellowship.

Fairview High School Class of 1975 Reunion
Saturday, June 21, at 6 p.m. at The Venue, 8575 Alabama Highway 69 N, Cullman, AL 35058. Cost is $45 per person. Contact Sheila Woods to RSVP at 256-347-6738. Looking forward to seeing everyone and having a great time.



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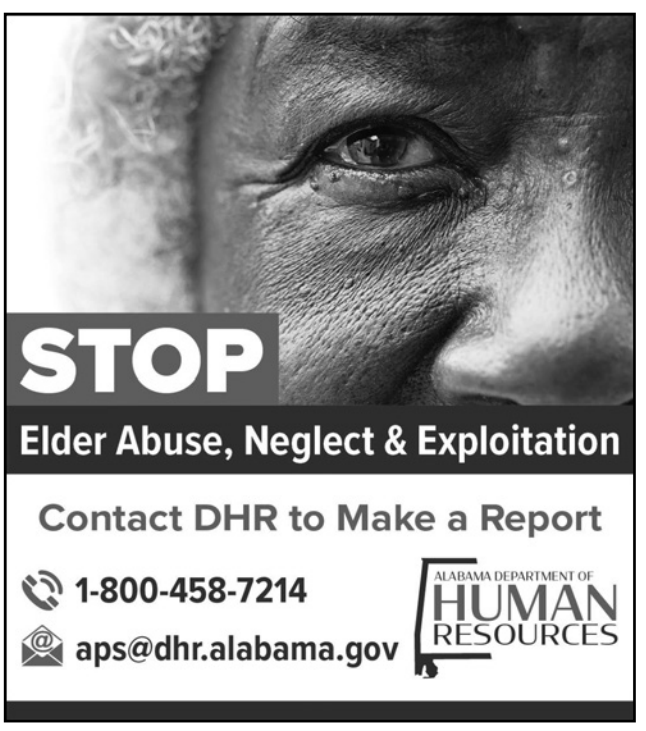
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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
MAY 17, 2025

Rocket City Trash Pandas' Hometown Throwdown spotlights Cullman and supports Curt's Closet

Cullman Tribune Staff
Contributor

MADISON, Ala. — The Rocket City Trash Pandas are bringing the spirit of Cullman to Toyota Field with the highly anticipated Hometown Throwdown, a special event celebrating the Cullman community while giving back to a worthy cause. This exciting night of baseball, community pride, and philanthropy is set to take place on Friday, August 14th at 5:30 p.m. as the Trash Pandas take on the Knoxville Smokies.

In the spirit of giving, a portion of the evening's proceeds will support Curt's Closet, a nonprofit dedicated to providing clothing, shoes, and essentials to children in need.

Founded by Ashley Wilson in memory of her son Curt, Curt's Closet has become a beacon of hope for families in North Alabama. Fans attending the game will have the opportunity to contribute to the cause through an optional donation when purchasing tickets!

At the end of the Hometown Throwdown Series, the Trash Pandas Foundation will present an additional donation to the Hometown Community Spotlight based on the number of fans who attended! Let's fill up those seats!

"We are thrilled to bring Cullman County to the Rocket City for a night of fun and community spirit," said Joey Orr, President at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce.

"This event not only highlights what makes Cullman special - the people!

"But also supports an incredible organization that is making a real difference in the lives of local children and families."

Tickets for the Hometown Throwdown are available now at https://www.milb.com/rocket-city/community/hometown-throwdownor https://www.gofevo.com/event/Cullmancounty2

PREP CHEER

'Don't waste the time you've been given'

Cold Springs' Alaina Herrington reflects on Eagle years

Sammy Confer
sammy@cullmantribune.com

BREMEN, Ala. — Cold Springs senior Alaina Herrington has been cheering for two years and as she prepares to graduate this weekend, she discusses some of her favorite memories from her time at Cold Springs and the most valuable lessons she learned from her experiences.

"One of my favorite memories has to be coming back to a sport I've loved ever since I was young and creating memories with some of the nicest people I've ever met," Herrington said. "It was an amazing experience being surrounded by so many people who wanted nothing but the best for me. They accepted me for who I am and helped shape me into the person I am today, and being able to have the ability to make some friendships that will last a lifetime is one of the best things that came from my high school years. They taught me to stay true to who I am, that life goes by way too fast, to have fun, and to make the best of what you've been given."

Alaina got to cheer under a couple of great coaches at Cold Springs, and they were always there to help her whether it was with cheer or anything else.

"They were very helpful in teaching me how to be a better person and cheerleader. They also helped me in not only cheer, but at times that I needed to talk or get things off my chest," Herrington said. "One of my favorite competitions was the one from this year, because all of the girls really put in the work at every practice. Even down to the last few minutes before we went out, we were really just trying our hardest and giving it our all to win this year. Even though we came up short, we still put it all out on the line, and that's what matters the most."

Alaina will miss cheering at Cold Springs in August. She had so much fun cheering alongside her fellow seniors and wants to be a role model for younger girls that were watching them cheer.

"I will miss cheering at football games every Friday night and having to leave behind the friends I've made in the grades below me," she said. "It was an amazing experience not only getting a chance to be side-by-side with some of my best friends but also getting out there and to hopefully influence younger girls to get involved in a sport like cheer. It truly is a fun sport to be involved in."

In addition to cheerleading, Alaina participated in several school clubs as well

"I was part of the Diamond Dolls, FFA, FCCLA, 1936 Club, Yearbook staff, Clean Campus Committee, Student Government Association, and Honor Society. Being in clubs helped me to meet new people," she said. "Although Cold Springs is small, it still has lots of opportunities for you to befriend people I probably would've never have talked to without joining some of these clubs. I learned so much from being in so many clubs and trying so many different things during my time in high school, so I wasn't just stuck doing one thing for the entirety of my four years at Cold Springs."

Alaina shared a lot of special traditions with her fellow cheerleaders. She also gives the credit for a lot of what she has in her life to her relationship with God.

"With cheer, it's a very demanding sport, because the schedule is very constant. We were always together and trying to help one another out, no matter if it was helping put someone's bow in or if they needed help with their math homework. We were always trying to help and make life a little easier on each other, because it can be a very tiring sport. He has played a huge role in my life. Without Him, I'm not sure where I would be. Every hardship I've been through, I haven't had to go through it alone, because He is always with me and clearing a path for me to go down," Herrington said.

"My favorite Bible verse would have to be Psalm 23:4: 'Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid for you are close beside me.' That verse means that no matter how bad life gets or how dim your light may seem, the Lord will always be by my side," she said. "I want people to remember me for the way that I put a smile on everyone's face, and how kind I was to everyone around me. I hope that, during my time at Cold Springs, I've inspired at least one kid to be themselves. Maybe they would have looked at me and said to themselves, 'I want to be like her one day.' I know that when I was little, I had plenty of role models who influenced me to become involved in my community. I hope that I was just that to any of the kids at Cold Springs."

She made a lot of memories during her years at school and Cold Springs will always hold a very special place in her heart.



ALAINA HERRINGTON

Cold Springs' Alaina Herrington

"Some of my favorite high school memories would have to be from my AG class my junior year. I just have so many good memories from that year, or some of the ones I made from being a Diamond Doll. In reality, all I was doing was working the gate or the concession stand, but it was a lot of fun at the end of the day, because it got me out of the house, and I was surrounded by some great people," she said. "What made Cold Springs a special place to go to is mainly the people. Being surrounded by people who care for you and your well-being definitely made my high school experience a little easier. The faculty and staff at Cold Springs were very helpful in my experience there," Herrington said. "I'll remember all of the fun memories and times I had with everybody. I'll mostly miss getting to see my friends and teachers every day, but I know bigger and better things are ahead for me," she said. "My advice would have to be live in the moment, and don't take anything for granted. It might feel like at times, high school is terrible, and you can't wait to get out, but the truth is, you really are going to miss it, so don't waste the time you've been given."

Dempster (from Front)

Staff Reports
Contributor

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Like many Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) sign language interpreters, Cullman's Hannah Dempster's family connection led her to her new career. Dempster, who has a deaf cousin, said opening the lines of communication with him first sparked her interest in learning American Sign Language.

Dempster joined the ADRS team in March and made an immediate impact. She said she loves providing a service and growing as a person.

"Interpreting is a very needed skill," she said. "You must have a heart for it and a will to learn. You are always learning and always growing."

State Interpreter Coordinator Wendy Darling said they recognized Dempster's passion for the profession when she interned with the department in 2024. They knew Dempster would be a great addition to the team.

"We saw right away that she was talented, and we were hoping that at some point we could get her on our team," she said. "It worked out that a position came available, and we immediately thought of Hannah."

ADRS sign language interpreters are crucial for bridging the communication gap between hearing and deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals to ensure equal access to information and opportunities. They facilitate communication in various settings, including education, on the job, meetings and many other situations.

Darling said the job is demanding, but ADRS interpreters are always willing to step in to help each other.

"We have a great team," she said. "Everyone is highly skilled and has lots of experience. They're all very flexible and willing to do whatever we need them to do statewide."

This atmosphere drew Dempster to ADRS after a rigorous college schedule. She began her education at Wallace State Community College in Hanceville before continuing her education at Troy University, where she completed a double major in Communications and the Interpreter Training Program.

While much of her academic career was similar to traditional students', Dempster's journey through the Interpreter Training Program required a much more involved curriculum. Specialized classes included a practicum with strict observation through a deaf mentor in the first session and an interpreting mentor in the second.

"That is where I first got in contact with ADRS," she said.

"Over the summer, I would observe events, appointments, meetings, and get to sit in and watch qualified, highly skilled interpreters and see the process of how facilitating communication worked in a professional field."

Dempster said she was impressed with the skill of the ADRS interpreters and took note of the number of non-interpreting staff members who also learned sign language to more effectively communicate with consumers. When it was time to secure an internship, she said ADRS was at the top of her list.

This proved to be a great decision. Dempster said members of the staff were very outgoing and always willing to help her learn. During debriefing sessions throughout her internship, she received feedback on approaching specific phrases and words and finding the best fit. Most importantly, she said her mentors had a calming presence.

"The team has always been so great," she said. "We would get around, and they would give me some tips, some feedback. When you are interning, there can be nerves, and they could talk you down when I got a little too nervous."

After graduation, Dempster used the skills she'd acquired through Troy University and her internships to secure contract work, but she said she always hoped to gain a spot with the ADRS team. When the door opened, she said she was quick to apply.

"When I saw that there was a position available, I jumped on it," she said.

"I knew that this was where I wanted to be, and it just so happened that it worked out."

Dempster, who is based in Montgomery and helps cover 23 counties in south Alabama, said she loves the variety that her job provides.

"I love being able to see a wide range of consumers and signing styles," she said.

"It is very interesting, very fun and never the same. I love that."

In her short time with ADRS, Dempster said she has already been embraced as a member of the rehabilitation family.

"They have all encouraged me beyond measure," she said. "It has been an amazing experience. I think that is really what sets ADRS apart. We all have a lot of heart."



FAWN: 30 years of outdoor learning

Gauge Day
gauge@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — For 30 years now, sixth graders across Cullman County have taken a break from the classroom to step into nature and learn what it means to be a good steward of it. Hosted May 6 and 8 at Sportsman Lake Park, this year's FAWN (Forestry Awareness Week Now) Field Days celebrated three decades of educating local students on the natural resources surrounding them, using hands-on learning to make those lessons stick.

Organized by the Cullman County Natural Resources Planning Committee (NRPC), the event brought in nearly 850 students over two days. Tuesday's session welcomed 290 students from East and West Elementary, St. Paul's, Sacred Heart, Cullman Christian and local homeschool groups. On Thursday, 550 students from Good Hope, Hanceville, Holly Pond, Vinemont and Cold Springs attended.

Throughout each field day, students rotated through multiple interactive learning stations, each focused on a different aspect of natural resources. In "Skins and Skulls," led by state Fish and Game staff, students examined animal pelts and skulls native to Alabama. At the "Alabama Water Watch" station, Alabama Cooperative Extension educators guided students through macroinvertebrate assessments to demonstrate how to monitor water quality. Volunteers led "Tree ID" sessions in the Wildflower Garden, helping students identify local tree species, while at the "Wood Products" station, led by Forestry Commission staff, they highlighted the many everyday items made from wood.

The goal? To deepen students' understanding of the natural environment by reinforcing what they're already learning in school with hands-on, real-world experiences.

"Several of the topics covered during the activities are covered in their science classes. This hands-on field day helps connect the dots between what they are learning in the textbook to real life," explained Dr. Kira Sims, County Extension director. "For example, at the Water Watch station, youth hear the words 'macroinvertebrate' and 'exoskeleton.' For them to see the actual 'critters' up close, reiterates their classroom lessons."

To Dr. Sims, that kind of real-world exposure is one of the biggest benefits of hosting the event at a place like Sportsman Lake Park. "FAWN is a great way to educate our youth about the natural resources in our area using hands-on activities," Sims stated. "When we host at Sportsman Lake Park, many of the youth are familiar with the park, but we are helping them to see it as more than a playground that it is brimming with life in the lake, creeks, woods and meadows."

She added, "Outside of school, a lot of youth are consumed by technology and screen time. We are hopeful that getting them outdoors in places like Sportsman Lake Park and showing them the living environment that is in their backyard will encourage them to explore their own space."

With years of experience working with students, Dr. Sims knows firsthand how outdoor learning can leave a lasting impression. For FAWN, that impact continues to reveal itself even decades later.

"I haven't been doing this long enough to see all of the impacts, but there are a few stories that I've been told," Sims shared. "One of the ladies that helps us with the event realized she was in the first group, 30 years ago, that came through FAWN and now she's back helping out. That full circle moment is really special."

Sims also shared that the County Extension director in Winston County, who helps with their own FAWN event, once attended as a student. "He enjoys being able to give back by now teaching at their FAWN event," she added. "It's encouraging to see former students return as leaders, continuing the work that once inspired them."

Those full-circle moments are what keeps FAWN moving forward. The event runs entirely on volunteer coordination, with most of the planning handled by NRPC members alongside local agencies, landowners and educators. Sponsors across the county help cover costs like T-shirts and supplies for the students involved. "We couldn't do it without the sponsors. They are committed to natural resources education and we truly appreciate that," Sims stated.

Having reached its 30th year now, FAWN continues to act as a living classroom for Cullman County students. It serves as a place where lessons from their textbooks come to life and where the next generation of students can begin to cultivate their love and respect for the beauty in nature that surrounds them.

For more information on FAWN or upcoming NRPC events, contact the NRPC at 256-734-1431 or kholmes@cullmanswcd.com.



DR. KIRA SIMS

Students gather around instructor Kerri Roberts to get a closer look at macroinvertebrates during the "Alabama Water Watch" station at their FAWN field day this month.

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Federation calls for Farming Feeds Alabama Photo Contest entries

Maggie Edwards
Alabama Farmers Federation

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — The Alabama Farmers Federation is searching for a bumper crop of snapshots displaying forestry and agriculture through the Farming Feeds Alabama Photo Contest.

Submissions are accepted at www.AlfaFarmers.org/PhotoContest now through Sept. 15, 2025. Mailed entries are not allowed.

"A picture is worth a thousand words — especially when the photograph captures Alabama's diverse farm land," said Marlee Jackson, the Federation's publications director.

"From cattle to catfish and peaches to poultry, Alabama has the perfect backdrop for farmers and members to put their photography skills to the test.

"We're excited to share winning submissions in the 2025 November Neighbors magazine 50th anniversary commemorative issue."

Categories

- Youth Photographers: Photographers 17 and under as of Sept. 15, 2025
- Adult Photographers: Photographers 18 and over as of Sept. 15, 2025

Judging

- Photos will be ranked by a panel of expert judges, who will determine a Top 3 in each category. Photos will be judged on quality, resolution, content, storytelling and relevance to the theme.

Prizes

- Youth Top 3 — Farming Feeds Alabama Portable JBL Bluetooth Speaker
- Adult Top 3 — Sweet Grown Alabama Gift Basket

Rules

- Entries are accepted at www.AlfaFarmers.org/PhotoContest between May 15 and Sept. 15, 2025.
- Photos must have been taken in Alabama in 2025 and must be original, unpublished content.
- All photos must be entered in the correct age category.
- Each photographer may enter one photo.
- Minor adjustments of color/contrast, sharpening, spotting, dodging and burning are accepted. Photos may be color or black and white.
- Photos with embedded text or logos or watermarks will not be accepted.
- Shoot photos at the maximum resolution and submit that original without cropping, compressing or reducing the file size. Photos taken with cameras or smartphones are acceptable, as long as quality and resolution are not affected.
- Photos must comply with safe farm practices. Photos exhibiting unsafe behavior will be eliminated.
- Entries must include the photographer's name, age, county, contact information, a photograph title and brief description.
- Alabama Farmers Federation staff and their immediate families are ineligible.

Questions? Contact the Federation's Maggie Edwards at medwards@alfafarmers.org.

Maldonado (from Front)

Special to The Cullman Tribune

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — Wallace State Community College is proud to announce that Vianney Verdin Maldonado was selected as a recipient of the highly competitive Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. The award, valued at up to $55,000 per year for three years, will allow Maldonado the resources to complete her bachelor's degree debt free at most any institution in the nation.

"We are incredibly proud of Vianney's achievements and her selection as a Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholar," said Wallace State President Dr. Vicki Karolewics.

"She has been an outstanding student leader at Wallace State with the drive, determination and intellectual curiosity to dream big and achieve her goals. This prestigious scholarship is a testament to her hard work, dedication and academic excellence."

She will join other Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship recipients for Scholars Weekend in Virginia in late July.

Maldonado, Wallace State's third Jack Kent Cooke transfer scholarship winner, reflects the high standards and supportive environment at Wallace State.

The college was recently named one of the Top 3 institutions in the nation and recognized as an Aspen Institute Rising Star.

Maldonado, of Oneonta, graduated from Wallace State in 2024 with a degree in General Studies. She plans to continue her education at New York University or Auburn University, where she plans to pursue dual degrees in Neuroscience and Psychology, with a goal of earning her doctorate and working in neuroscience psychology.

She was named the college's Student of the Year in 2024 and was recognized by the Alabama Community College System with her selection for the 2024 All-Alabama Academic Team.

Maldonado joins Aljon Cellis (2020) and Chelsea Allen (2008) as Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship recipients. Bryan Simmons was named a semifinalist in 2021.

The 2025 cohort marks one of the largest in the Foundation's 25-year history, reinforcing its continued commitment to creating debt-free pathways to higher education for high-achieving students with financial need.

"This year's cohort reflects the remarkable talent and determination thriving in community colleges nationwide," said Giuseppe "Seppy" Basili, executive director of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

"As we mark 25 years of impact, we remain committed to amplifying the successes of these students and opening doors to the opportunities they deserve."

While nearly 80% of community college students aspire to earn a bachelor's degree, only 16% reach that goal within six years. The Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship aims to increase bachelor's degree attainment for community college students.

Beyond last-dollar-funding, Scholars receive personalized advising to guide their academic and professional journeys.

Scholars also gain access to a nationwide network of more than 3,400 Cooke Scholars and Alumni, along with opportunities for internships, study abroad and graduate school support – ensuring they have every tool needed to thrive beyond community college.

LEGALS

Legal Notice

Surplus property of Wallace State Community College (Hanceville Campus) will be offered for sale on the website www.govdeals.com Various sales will occur on this website, please check the www.govdeals.com website weekly to see any current sales. This is a government auction website and you MUST be registered on the website to bid on any items. You may view the surplus property to be sold without registration. The govdeals.com website will contain detailed information including descriptions and photos. Items may be inspected by APPOINTMENT ONLY: Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Contact Wesley Sams at inventory@wallacestate.edu to schedule any appointments. All items listed are to be sold "AS IS, WHERE IS". Wallace State Community College reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

FORM OF ADVERTISEMENT OF COMPLETION
LEGAL NOTICE

In accordance with Chapter 1, Title 39, Code of Alabama, 1975, notice is hereby given that MECO, INC has completed the Contract for CSMS#2 DIESEL FUEL TANK REPLACEMENT, CONTRACT #AC-24-C-0051-S, located at 2340 CHEROKEE AVE SW CULLMAN, AL 35055, for the Armory Commission of Alabama, Owner, and have made request for final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, materials or otherwise in connection with this project should immediately notify the Armory Commission of Alabama, P.O. Box 3711, Montgomery, Alabama 36109-0711.

MECO, INC
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MONTGOMERY, AL 36108
334.263.5502

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT

COUNTY OF CULLMAN * CASE NO. AD2024-023

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION PETITION OF DAVID LEVI HAYNES and AMBER ALTMAN HAYNES.

NOTICE OF ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS

Notice to: Christy Ella Lee Dixon
whose whereabouts and location are unknown

Please take notice that a Petition for Adoption of A.R.M, a minor child born October 19, 2016, was filed on the May 2, 2024, in the Probate Court of Cullman County by Petitioners David Levi Haynes and Amber Altman Haynes. If you should contest this adoption, you must file a written response within thirty (30) days of the date of the last publication herein with counsel for said Petitioners, whose name and address are as shown below, and with the Clerk of the said Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, 500 2nd Avenue SW, Cullman, Alabama 35055.

DONE this 7th day of May, 2025.

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

To: *THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE*

PLEASE PUBLISH ONCE A WEEK FOR FOUR SUCCESSIVE WEEKS.

Sherry H. Barrett
SMITH & SMITH, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioners
P.O. Box 398
Cullman, AL 35056-0398
256-734-4721 (telephone)

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT

COUNTY OF CULLMAN * CASE NO. AD2024-022

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION PETITION OF DAVID LEVI HAYNES and AMBER ALTMAN HAYNES.

NOTICE OF ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS

Notice to: Roger J. Powell Jr.
whose whereabouts and location are unknown

Please take notice that a Petition for Adoption of D.C.M, a minor child born January 14, 2018, was filed on the May 2, 2024, in the Probate Court of Cullman County by Petitioners David Levi Haynes and Amber Altman Haynes. If you should contest this adoption, you must file a written response within thirty (30) days of the date of the last publication herein with counsel for said Petitioners, whose name and address are as shown below, and with the Clerk of the said Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, 500 2nd Avenue SW, Cullman, Alabama 35055.

DONE this 7th day of May, 2025.

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

To: *THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE*

PLEASE PUBLISH ONCE A WEEK FOR FOUR SUCCESSIVE WEEKS.

Sherry H. Barrett
SMITH & SMITH, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioners
P.O. Box 398
Cullman, AL 35056-0398
256-734-4721 (telephone)

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of *
LAURA JAMES BOWNES, * CASE NO. PC2023-048
Deceased. *

NOTICE OF HEARING
PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT AND DISCHARGE OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

TO: ALBERT DEAN JOHNSON, MICHAEL ANTHONY BOWNES, CATHERINE BETH BOWNES JOHNSON, PATRICK BART BOWNES, KELLY ANNE BOWNES, PATRICK CONNOR JOHNSON, BRENNAN BOWNES JOHNSON AND ANY KNOWN OR UNKNOWN NEXT OF KIN OR INTERESTED PARTIES.

Please take notice that a *Petition for Final Settlement and Discharge of Personal Representative* has been filed by Michael Anthony Bownes, Petitioner, by and through Attorney Alex J Chaney. A hearing on said *Petition for Letters of Conservatorship and Guardianship* has been rescheduled for the **10th day of June, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.** before Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County Courthouse, 500 2nd Avenue SW, Room 101, Cullman, Alabama.

All persons are hereby given notice to appear, and contest said petition if they think proper.

Cullman County Courthouse
500 2nd Avenue SW
Room 101
Cullman, Alabama 35055

Done this the 30th day of April, 2025.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

Alex J. Chaney
Attorney for the Petitioner
PO Box 1052
Cullman, AL 35056

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of *
RICKEY CLIFTON LEE, *
Deceased. * **CASE NO.** PC 2025-079

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration have been granted to SARA DOTY as administrator of the Estate of RICKEY CLIFTON LEE , deceased, on the 2ND day of December, 2025, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, and 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.

SARA DOTY, Administrator

Sara Doty, Attorney and Administrator
SARA DOTY ATTORNEY AT LAW, LLC
4725 Whitesburg Drive
Suite 202
Huntsville, Alabama 35802
(256) 519-9970
(256) 519-9952 – fax

TO: The Publisher of Cullman Tribune :

Please publish the foregoing notice once a week for four consecutive weeks and send an affidavit of publication.

Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT

CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO. PC 2025-125

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF COY TALMADGE JONES, DECEASED.

NOTICE OF HEARING OF PETITION FOR PROBATE OF THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF COY TALMADGE JONES

TO: THE HEIRS AND NEXT-OF-KIN OF COY TALMADGE JONES, AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

The Petition of Anita Marie Jones to admit to probate the Last Will and Testament of Coy Talmadge Jones, deceased, has been set for hearing on the 17th day of July, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

All persons in interest residing or being without the state are hereby given notice to appear and contest said petition if they think proper.

TO: PUBLISHER OF *The Cullman Tribune:*

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

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

Steven C. Smith
Smith & Smith, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioner
P.O. Box 398
Cullman, Alabama 35056-0398
(256) 734-4721
steve@smithandsmithllp.com

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT

COUNTY OF CULLMAN * CASE NO. AD2024-022

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION PETITION OF DAVID LEVI HAYNES and AMBER ALTMAN HAYNES.

NOTICE OF ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS

Notice to: Christy Ella Lee Dixon
whose whereabouts and location are unknown

Please take notice that a Petition for Adoption of D.C.M, a minor child born January 14, 2018, was filed on the May 2, 2024, in the Probate Court of Cullman County by Petitioners David Levi Haynes and Amber Altman Haynes. If you should contest this adoption, you must file a written response within thirty (30) days of the date of the last publication herein with counsel for said Petitioners, whose name and address are as shown below, and with the Clerk of the said Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, 500 2nd Avenue SW, Cullman, Alabama 35055.

DONE this 7th day of May, 2025.

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

To: *THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE*

PLEASE PUBLISH ONCE A WEEK FOR FOUR SUCCESSIVE WEEKS.

Sherry H. Barrett
SMITH & SMITH, LLP
Attorneys for Petitioners
P.O. Box 398
Cullman, AL 35056-0398
256-734-4721 (telephone)

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
ANGELA MOORE, AN INCAPACITATED PERSON
now deceased. CASE NO. PC2023-197

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

THE ESTATE OF ANGELA MOORE, DECEASED.

Letters of Administration of said deceased have been granted toSteven C. Smith on the 8th day of May, 2025, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate of Cullman County. Notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

Steven C. Smith, Personal Representative (Administrator),

TO: Publisher of *Cullman Tribune*:

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

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate

Steven C. Smith
P. O. Box 398
Cullman, Alabama 35056-0398
Phone: (256) 734-4721
Fax: (256) 734-4774
e-mail: steve@smithandsmithllp.com

BILLY BOB'S STORIES AND STUFF

Where are you from?

Bill King
Tribune
Contributor



Chances are I am not from where you live, but I may have been there. I may have even lived there at one time or another. Through the years, I have been blessed to see many wonderful and beautiful places and met many marvelous people. I have lived in four states in my lifetime. I grew up in Alabama and have spent most of my life here, but I have also lived in Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana. I have never lived in Tennessee, but I have lived so close I could see it! I love this nation of ours. I have set foot in every state in the union except three and later this year I will narrow that number to two. I have enjoyed visiting each one of those states, but I must admit I am partial to the South, and I do love my home state of Alabama.

Over the past 11 years, I have had the privilege of being in many of your homes. No, perhaps not in person, but at least through my writings. You may hear from me every week, and I hear from some of you almost as often. Since I have been doing this column, I have gotten mail, emails and Facebook messages from all over the state, as well as from other states. I do enjoy your kind messages.

Because my columns are carried by newspapers in various parts of the state, and are on Facebook each week, I am often asked where I live or where I grew up.

That is a good question. Occasionally, I hear from readers who think I live in their town because their paper carries my column, but unless you live in the Opelika/Auburn area, that is not the case. For some of you, I have lived in your area in the past.

Where someone is from and where they live can be the same. Where I'm from and where I now live are the bookends of my life, at least at this point.

I spent the first 20 years of my life in Rainsville, Alabama, and I have now spent almost that same amount of time living in Opelika, Alabama. I have lived in several places between those two. Those places include Birmingham; New Orleans; Fort Payne; Marietta, Georgia; Rainbow City; and Southaven, Mississippi. We also spent one summer, as well as weekends for a year, in Butler, Alabama, and weekends for a couple of years near Linden, in the neighboring community of Half Acre.

Although I have not lived in my hometown in almost 50 years now, it is a place and a people that is very near and dear to my heart. Many of the "firsts" in my life happened there.

Much of who and what I am has its roots in my hometown. I did have the privilege of returning to my home county when we spent five years in Fort Payne.

That was practically the same as being back home. I am a bit envious of those who have had the joy of spending their lives where they grew up. There is a connectedness to that which may not be found anywhere else. The other side of that is that I have enjoyed getting to experience new places and meet new people.

Opelika has become a great home for us and likely will our last one on this earth, but one day, we will live in a place that is out of this world! I hope to see the rest of this nation and a little more of this world, but I am excited about moving to my eternal home one day!

Bill King can be reached at bkpreach@yahoo.com or 334-728-5514 (office).

HISTORY

Files from Yesteryear: May 17, 1945

From the files of May 17, 1945

Holly Pond News
CORINNE GILLEY

Mrs. Kermit Gorham, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Lukasik, Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Morgan and daughter, Shirley Faye, of Birmingham were the Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gilley.

S/Sgt. Earney Shaw left for camp Saturday after spending a few days here with Mr. and Mrs. Walter Shaw.

W. G. Hatley, Mr. and Mrs. Odus Allen of Birmingham, Mr. and Mrs. Henderson Bailey, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Hodge of Cullman visited Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Hammock Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Shaw of Athens visited relatives here this week end.

Pvt. Wayne Moon of Ft. Benning, Ga. spent the week end with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Moon.

Mrs. M. E. Shaw is very ill from a fall she got Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Stisher and family of Cullman visited relatives here Sunday.

Dwight Hammock S 1/c, who has been in the Pacific, spent a few days in California last week from where he called his parents.

Corinne Gilley spent Wednesday night with Evelyn and Hilda Tucker in Cullman.

Mrs. Henry Patterson of Berlin was the Saturday guest of Mrs. M. E. Shaw.

Mrs. Hershel Burgess visited Mr. and Mrs. Ed Burgess Sunday.

Mrs. Brice Coppock of Birmingham spent Sunday with Mrs. Rowena Coppock.

Pvt. Ralph Smith visited friends here this week.

Walter News
Pfc. Cortez Sutton is home from the Philippines on leave with his mother, Mrs. Ollie Sutton.

Mrs. Marie Dean of Birmingham was the Friday night guest of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sutton.

Woodrow Barnett E. M. 3/c of Camp Peary, Va. is visiting his mother, Mrs. Maud Barnett.

Pfc. Cortez Sutton was the Friday guest of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sutton.

Horras Johnson of Detroit, Michigan was called home to the bed side of his father, Hosey Johnson.

Pfc. Glen Coppock has returned to Camp Bergstorm, Tex.

Hosey Johnson is at home from the Cullman Hospital.

Mrs. Roy Glasscock gave a bridal shower at her home, Saturday afternoon, honoring Mrs. Violet McDowell Daniel.

Kathalene Gable spent the week end in Cullman with Gayla Sutton.

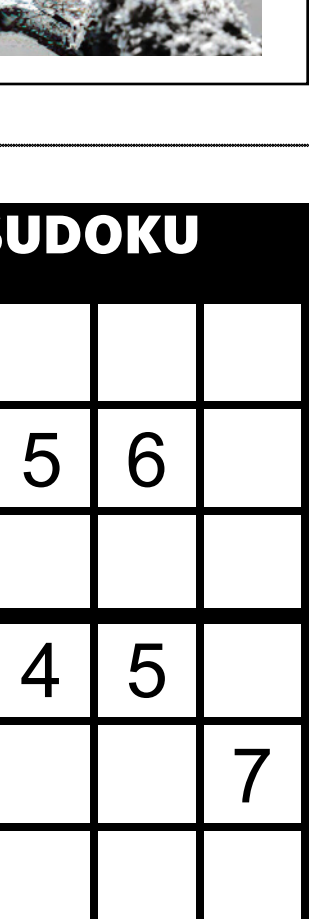
Winfred Sutton of Gadsden spent the week end with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. R. Sutton.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Segler and daughter, Bobbie Lou, of Cullman, and Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Burrow and daughter, Carolyn, spent Sunday in Nashville, Tenn.

Mr. and Mrs. Claude Gable were the Sunday evening guests of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Burrow.

Mr. and Mrs. Alton Sutton of Cullman visited relatives here, Monday.

Decoration at Duck River Church next Sunday, May 20th.



POET'S CORNER

I Listened to the Bird Song | By: Randy C. Hale

As a teen, I believed that happiness
would unfold with all my dreams.
And surely life, be clear
with long light burning beams.

But happiness never lingers long,
pain lurks down every trail.
And conquer in one battle, and
another one never fails.

So the secret of life, may not to find
in a solace place of time.
Nor setting under this tree,
gazing in blue skies.

But detect the surest answer
in the bird's familiar song,
the one that I've been hearing
as my days continue on.

And as I see the creeping
of darkening evening shade.
May I absorb the sunshine,
of life for just today.



CULLMAN TRIBUNE WORD SEARCH

MAY 17

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

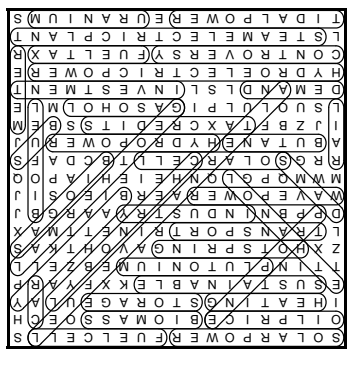
Alternative Fuel
Battery
Biofuel
Biogas
Biomass
Bus
Butane
Car
Chernobyl
Controversy
Dams
Demand
Ethanol
Fuel Cell
Fuel Tax
Gasohol
Geothermal
Heating
Hot Spring
Hydroelectric Power
Hydropower
Industry
Investment
Meter
Oil Price
Plutonium
Propane
Rail
Solar Cell
Solar Power
Steam Electric Plant
Storage
Sustainable
Tax Credits
Tidal Power
Transport
Uranium
Wave Power

CULLMAN TRIBUNE SUDOKU

MAY 17

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

ANSWERS:



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

Gardeners (from Front)

periwinkle.

"Dirt was supplied to fill the pot, and boxes of free books were available for families to choose from," Sprouse said. "Little Free Library bookmarks, stickers and information (about the) Little Free Library app were also distributed."

Learn more about the Little Free Library program at littlefreelibrary.org.



SAMANTHA SPROUSE

Buckelew (from Front)

second to none. He constantly reminded us that nothing comes easy and that hard work and dedication will help you reach your goals. It's hard to imagine going to a competition without hearing 'Let's go!' or 'I need a Sun Drop' or 'Where are your shoes? It's your responsibility to bring your equipment' or 'No props next year' because he hated every prop idea I gave him.

"No matter what, he loved this program and these kids, and we are all better for having Rodney Buckelew in our lives. So, it is with great love, respect and enduring gratitude that we dedicate this practice field in honor of Rodney Buckelew. From this day forward this will be known as the Rodney Buckelew Practice Field. A place not just for rehearsing, but for memories, building relationships and making wonderful music. Let this be a place where students are reminded to give your heart to something bigger than yourself. Let it be a place where we never forget that the power of one person can change the course of so many lives through kindness, hard work and persistence. Rodney, we thank you for all you did for us, for each life you touched and for always being the example. We love you and this field is for you. We promise to keep it mowed and lined at all times like you wanted us to."



Clothed in Cullman brings in $92K

Lauren Estes, W.C. Mann
The Cullman Tribune

CULLMAN, Ala. — Local nonprofit Curt's Closet hosted its annual fundraising event, Clothed in Cullman, earlier this month. On Friday, May 16, it was announced that the fundraiser brought in an incredible $92,000.

Ashley Wilson founded Curt's Closet to honor the legacy of her son Curtis, who was tragically killed by a drunk driver in May 2017. She said Clothed in Cullman has been taking place annually since May 2019.

"Clothed in Cullman is an event that we, as an organization, look forward to every year," she said. "It's a time when the community truly rallies and shows support and love to Curt and his legacy. Much of our fiscal year funds are raised through this event and help Curt's Closet continue to serve thousands of children in the community."

Wilson shared that Clothed in Cullman is also the kickoff and opening date of the nonprofit's "Bless Your Sole" campaign.

"For 2025, we have set a goal of $25,000 to send local kids back to school with a brand-new pair of shoes," she said.

"Last year, as part of our Back-to-School 2024, we were able to get over 1,300 pairs of new shoes onto the feet of Cullman's children, in addition to clothing and new socks and undergarments they typically receive at Curt's Closet."

Wilson said Curt's Closet is grateful to each and every supporter, donor, board member, sponsor and volunteer who helped make this year's Clothed in Cullman such an overwhelming success.

"Each year, we are more blown away by the generosity shown by the community, and this year is no different," Wilson said. "At this year's event, which was held Thursday, May 8, Curt's Closet raised $92,000 – a huge blessing. Funds raised will be used to ensure each child receives exactly what they need to start the new school year with confidence, as well as providing a beautiful Christmas to hundreds of children in our community."

The idea for Curt's Closet took root in 2017. In an effort to show the community the same love that was shown after she lost her son, Wilson started gathering clothes for children and families who were struggling.

"I wanted to make sure that as many children as possible knew that they were loved and worthy, starting with their clothing," she said. "Starting in my home with this organization, the need in the community grew."

In 2018, Wilson expanded to a small, repurposed church building on St. Joseph Street, and in 2021 moved to a much larger facility at 1101 Third Ave. SE. The current location has not one, but two warehouses to accommodate the growing ministry.

Since 2018, she said, Curt's Closet has been able to share God's love with thousands of local children.

There are many ways to be involved with Curt's Closet.

"We are always looking for volunteers," Wilson said. "We utilize volunteers to sort, wash and fold donations, as well as tasks around the office. For our fundraisers, events and daily operations throughout the year, volunteers play such an important role in our organization."

About Curt's Closet

Curt's Closet serves children, teens and some adults through a need-based qualification process, plus children referred by school principals or counselors, the Cullman County Department of Human Resources and Victim Services of Cullman. The ministry also makes its resources available in emergency circumstances like house fires. Qualified kids and their parents/caretakers get to come and "shop" in an inviting space that is far more like a shop than a charity clothing closet, and walk out with dignity and a selection of high-quality clothing and accessories – a fair bit of it brand new, thanks to local donors and businesses – at no charge.

The organization is constantly taking donations of new or lightly used clothing, shoes and fashion accessories, along with still packaged new underwear and socks. Money is always welcome, too! Donations can be dropped off at the facility at 1101 Third Ave. SE in Cullman, as well as a number of other locations around town.

Wilson's growing programs also need volunteers. Volunteer registration forms and a full list of drop-off points are available at https://sites.google.com/view/curts-closet.

To donate, volunteer or seek assistance, visit https://sites.google.com/view/curts-closet or www.facebook.com/cw20curtscloset, call 256-735-4557 or email curtscloset20@gmail.com.



ANABELLE HOWZE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Clothed in Cullman took place on May 8, 2025, at The Venue at Cotton Creek.

Obituary Announcements: May 15-16

Anthony Garrett Smith, 58

Funeral service for Anthony Garrett Smith, 58, of Cullman will be at 2 p.m., Sunday, May 18, 2025, at Cullman Funeral Home Chapel with interment in Welti Cemetery, Bro. Cameron Smith officiating. The family will receive friends on Sunday from 12-2 p.m. Cullman Funeral Home is honored to serve the family.Mr. Smith passed away May 14, 2025, in Franklin County. He was born July 16, 1966, to parents, Gary Henry Smith and Patricia Gibbs Smith Kilpatrick. Anthony loved to cook, loved to plant flowers and could grow anything. He was a huge lover of all plants and nature. He loved riding his motorcycle and he absolutely adored his grandkids. He was preceded in death by his father, Gary Henry Smith; step-father, James Kilpatrick; grandparents, John Henry & Dorothy Davis Smith; grandparents, Felton & Clara Kilpatrick, grandmother, Mary Gibbs; sister, Crystal Smith.Survivors include his grandfather, Clifford Gibbs; mother, Patricia Kilpatrick; daughters, Abby Richter, Katherine (Jacob) Whittle; brothers, Jimmy (Audy) Kilpatrick, Jerry (LaMoyne) Kilpatrick; sisters, Tammy (Paul) Carpenter, Tamelia Lemons, Shelia (Derick) Smith; grandchildren, JaycieBeth Thomas, Jesslyn Wyatt, Emma & Ava Whittle, Gabby Richter, Jaxson Richter; best friends, Jeff Witcher and Amy Hurst; aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, family and many friends. Friends may sign the online guestbook at www.cullmanfuneralhome.com.

Marion Jackie Burks, 82

Funeral Service for Marion Jackie Burks, age 82 of Cullman, will be at 3 p.m. on Monday, May 19, 2025, at Center Grove Cemeter. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Mrs. Burks passed away on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at Folsom Center. She was born Friday, Feb. 12, 1943, to Marion Adams and Velma Adams. She was preceded in death by her parents; sisters, Vonda Gable and Dot Butler. Survivors include her children, Loria Burks, William E Burks, Jr., Donnia Burks, Michael Burks, Marty Burks and brother, Kyle Adams; twelve grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

Voyt Gregory, 76

Voyt Gregory, of Holly Pond, Alabama, passed away on May 14, 2025, at the age of 76. Mr. Gregory was born on Dec. 25, 1948, in Cullman County, Alabama, to the late Willard and Imogene Lawrence Gregory. Voyt is preceded in death by his parents; wife, Joyce Freeman Gregory; son, Tracy Gregory; and sisters, Judy Ramey and Brenda Reasonover. Those left to cherish the memory of Mr. Gregory includes his children, Dexter Gregory (Anita), and Wendy Bagwell (Larry); brothers, Marvin Gregory, Paul Gregory, Kenny Gregory, Junior Gregory, and Charles Gregory; sister, Juanita Jones; grandchildren, Robert Shoemake, Jennifer Shoemake, Kayla Gregory, and Patrick Bentley; great-grandchildren, Ronald Nunnelley, Braxton Lewis, Jazmine Shoemake, and Brooklynn Shoemake; brother-in-law, Jerry Freeman; and his little dog, Abby. Mr. Gregory was an over-the-road truck driver for over fifty years and was known to most by his handle, Pop a Top. He enjoyed the outdoors and loved to deep sea fish, camp, and spend time on the beach. He and his late wife of fifty years, Joyce, loved spending time with their family and had a close relationship with their children. "Pawpaw Went" also loved spending time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Voyt leaves behind a legacy of hard work, love, and family that will be passed down for generations to come. Friends are invited to join the family for a time of visitation on Monday, May 19, 2025, from 11 a.m. until services begin at 1 p.m. All services will be held in the Holly Pond Funeral Home Chapel, with Pastor Earl Harper officiating. Burial will follow services in Etha Cemetery where Mr. Gregory will be laid to rest alongside his wife, Joyce. Ronald Nunnelley, Braxton Lewis, Kenny Gregory, Marvin Gregory, Delton Gregory, Jeff Jones, and Johnathan Jones will serve as pallbearers. Holly Pond Funeral Home is honored to serve the Gregory family.

Terry Wade Dutton, 68

Terry Wade Dutton, age 68 of Vinemont passed away on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at Cavalier Nursing Home. He was born Nov. 26, 1956, to Earnest Dutton and Elizabeth Dutton. He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Rickey Dutton & Cary Dutton and nephew, Joshua Dutton. Survivors include his daughter, Crystal (Matthew) Wray; grandchildren, Georgiana Wray and Elijah Wray; sister, Sherry (Tommy) Day, sis-in-law, Melinda Dutton; nieces and nephews, Shane Dutton and family, Paul Day, Tommy Wade Day & family, Mary Beth Asherbranner & family, Andrew Dutton and Katie Dutton. Terry will always be remembered as an amazing father, grandfather and friend. Terry's wishes were to forgo a service in favor of a celebration of life, to be planned at a later time.

Free Obituary Listings

Have your funeral home contact us

Email: robin@cullmantribune.com • Phone: 256-739-1351

Complete obituaries may be found free of charge at CullmanTribune.com/obituaries.