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## Alabama's largest fishing expo set to debut at the Cullman OmniPlex Jan. 16-18

**Gauge Day**
gauge@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — The largest fishing expo in Alabama history is set to make its debut in Cullman, Jan. 16–18, at the Cullman OmniPlex. The Ultimate Fishing Expo will feature hundreds of vendor booths showcasing fishing gear, expert-led seminars, exclusive show-only deals and numerous prize drawings for attendees.

The three-day event will run Friday, Jan. 16, from noon-7 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 17, from 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 18, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Vendors will offer a wide range of rods, reels, lures, terminal tackle and accessories for anglers of all interests, including bass, crappie, catfish, trout and more.

"This is truly a weekend dedicated to all kinds of fishing," said expo organizer Jeff Shelton, owner of Spanker Jigs. "If you love fishing but are tired of going to boat shows full of party boats, this is your ultimate fishing weekend!"

In addition to shopping opportunities, attendees can take advantage of exclusive show-only discounts, product bundles and a full lineup of live seminars held throughout the weekend. Seminar topics will include bass, crappie and catfish fishing, live sonar technology » PAGE 8

## A 75th wedding anniversary celebration!






BILL STRANDLUND

*Donald and Mary Strandlund, then and now*

**Bill Strandlund**
Contributor

Donald Russell Strandlund graduated from Moline (Illinois) High School in 1948 and entered four years of service in the United State Navy in Memphis, Tennessee. A friend from Cullman, Alabama invited him to meet "a beautiful girl" during his time in Memphis, so he came to Cullman and courted Mary Magdelene Wood, from Logan, Alabama, who graduated from Cullman High School in 1949.

After his Navy discharge, Don and Mary returned to Moline, Illinois, where he attended Augustana College and later Augustana Theological Seminary.

He was ordained a Lutheran Minister 1961 and served at churches in Minnesota, Florida and Alabama over the next 40-plus years.

They retired to Cullman many years ago to be closer to family and are now residents at Hanceville Nursing and Rehab Center.

They have two children, Bill and Tina Strandlund, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

On that early morning on Oct. 21, 1950, they borrowed a friend's car, and drove to Iuka, Mississippi to get married.

Now, on Oct. 21, 2025, they celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary of 75 years together.

What an accomplishment!

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PET OF THE WEEK
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CULLMAN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

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CRIME

# Arrests and incidents reported Dec. 31

**Cullman Tribune staff**
Contributor

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Below are the arrests and incidents reported Dec. 31, 2025. 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**

**Dec. 29**

- identity theft; person
- theft of property-4th degree; Wal-Mart; general merchandise; $282; Olive St. SW

**ARRESTS**

**Dec. 29-30**

**Howard, Adam R.; 34**

- FTA – expired tag
- FTA – driving without license

**McGaugh, Douglas K.; 70**

- theft of property-4th degree

**Brooks, Scotty W.; 45**

- FTA – expired tag
- FTA – driving while suspended

**HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

No arrests or incidents reported.

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

# Class (from Front)

**Gauge Day**
gauge@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — The North Alabama Agriplex will host a Farm Kids Club program, "Herbal Remedies for Kids, by Kids," on Saturday, Jan. 10, from 10-11:30 a.m. This program provides children ages 5 and up with a hands-on introduction to herbal wellness. Sponsored by Riverwood Farms, the class is part of the Agriplex's monthly Farm Kids Club series, which focuses on engaging, educational topics ranging from nature and gardening to cooking and creative skills.

"Farm Kids Club is a fun and interactive class for children ages 5 and up," said Samantha Catland, manager of Youth & Kitchen Programming at the Agriplex.

"Each month focuses on a new topic, such as animals, nature, gardening, cooking or art and it's held one Saturday a month at the North Alabama Agriplex."

During the January session, participants will explore several common herbs and their uses in simple, kid-friendly remedies.

The class will conclude with a hands-on activity where students create their own tea blends using the herbs they've learned about.

"Students and their adults will get a hands-on experience learning a valuable, practical skill that will hopefully inspire healthy habits and an appreciation for all things handcrafted," she said.

The workshop will be led by Betsy Bayard and Patti Zoppi, longtime friends and homeschool mothers with a shared interest in herbal education.

Zoppi is a certified herbalist, while Bayard brings years of hands-on experience as an herbal enthusiast.

The cost to participate is $15 per child, with one accompanying adult admitted at no additional charge. The higher fee reflects the cost of supplies needed for the herbal activities.

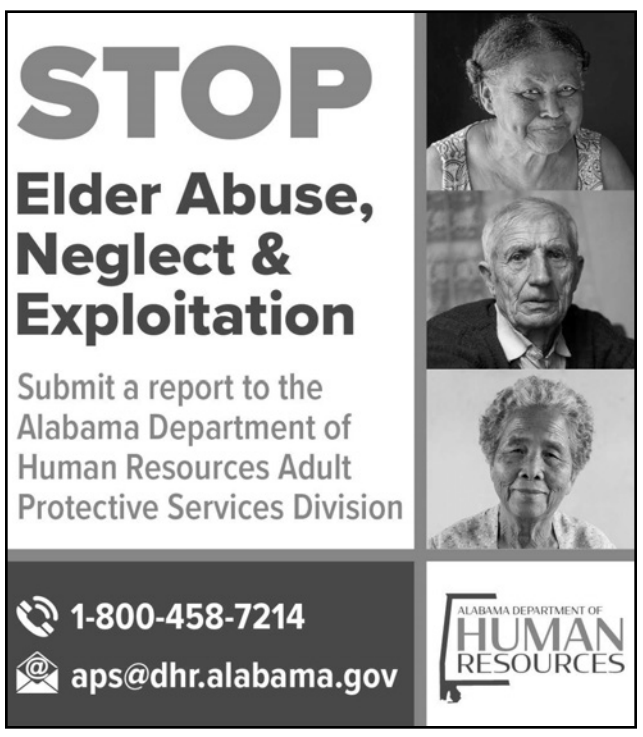
To register, visit https://cullmanrecreation.recdesk.com/Community/Program/Detail?programId=1401. For more information, visit the North Alabama Agriplex website or contact the Agriplex at 256-297-1044 or cullmanag@gmail.com.

The North Alabama Agriplex is located at 1714 Tally Ho St., Cullman, AL, 35055.










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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

**NOTICE FROM CULLMAN CARING FOR KIDS**

The new "Spirit of Christmas" book is available for a $20 donation to Cullman Caring for Kids. This is the newest "Chicken Soup for the Soul" book with a story by local writer Tanya Shearer. They make great Christmas gifts! Your donation will also help provide meals for those in need in our community. Contact Cullman Caring for Kids at 256-739-1111 or Tanya Shearer for delivery.

**The Poetry of Recovery: Recovery Support Group**

Every Saturday at 10 a.m. at 514 Cleveland Ave. SW in Cullman. Facebook/The Poetry of Recovery. Contact Jeff at 727-542-6413 or John at 256-636-0612.

**Cullman County Historical Society Meetings**

We meet the fourth Sunday of the month from 2-4 p.m. at the Cullman County Museum. Each meeting features a specific program or speaker. Join us!

**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.

**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.

**Shirley Burden Public Library – Hanceville**

- Families are invited to join us for fun at the library! Library is open Tuesday-Friday 8 a.m.-5p.m., closed from noon-1 p.m. Saturdays 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Join us on Facebook for weekly event details.
- Tuesdays, Jan. 6, 20 and Feb. 3, 17, from 11 a.m.-noon New! Want to learn Spanish? This language has become the second language in America. Add this very easy language to your skills. Ms. Alejandra Pena has been teaching Spanish for over 16 years. She can teach to all ages. If you want to brush up on this language before college, sign up for the class, too. Call 256-352-0685 to sign up. This is a free class.

**Heartland Quilt Guild Meeting**

Thursday, Jan. 8, at 6 p.m. at Christ Covenant Church, 1310 Saint Joseph Dr. NW in Cullman. Quilters of all experience levels are welcome.

**Cullman County Soil & Water Conservation District Quarterly Board Meeting**

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. at the USDA Service Center, 501 Fourth St. SW in Cullman.

**Cullman Area Chamber Foundation Mardi Gras Parade & Gumbo Cook-Off**

Saturday, Feb. 14, at 1 p.m. in the Art District (Fourth Street Southwest and Cotton Creek area). This family friendly event will feature a colorful Mardi Gras parade, followed by a gumbo cook-off showcasing teams competing for best gumbo and community pride. Attendees can enjoy delicious gumbo tastings, festive décor, live music and the vibrant energy of Mardi Gras right here in Cullman! Grab your beads, bring your friends and family and join us in the Art District.

# Closures (from Front)

**Noah Galilee**
noah@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Cullman County residents should expect government office closures and limited service adjustments on New Year's Day, Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026, with most operations resuming Friday, Jan. 2.

Cullman County offices, including the courthouse, will be closed Thursday in observance of the New Year's Day holiday.

County sanitation services will also be closed that day, resulting in a one-day delay for garbage collection routes for the remainder of the week.

Within the city limits of Cullman, municipal offices will be closed Thursday for New Year's Day.

However, residential and commercial sanitation services inside the city will continue operating on their regular schedules.

As of publication, several municipalities within Cullman County had not publicly posted New Year's Day closure or service delay notices.

Residents in those municipalities are encouraged to monitor official municipal communication channels or contact city or town halls directly for the most up-to-date information.

**CONFIRMED NEW YEAR'S DAY CLOSURES AND DELAYS**

**City of Cullman**

- Municipal offices: Closed Thursday, Jan. 1
- Reopening: Friday, Jan. 2
- Sanitation: Operating on a normal schedule within city limits

**Cullman County**

- County offices and courthouse: Closed Thursday, Jan. 1
- Reopening: Friday, Jan. 2

**Cullman County Sanitation**

- Office: Closed Thursday, Jan. 1
- Garbage collection: One-day delay for all routes during the week of Jan. 1
- Contact: 256-287-1142

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PREP BASKETBALL

# Cullman knocks off Hewitt-Trussville 67-59 in Border Wars Classic

**Sammy Confer**
sammy@cullmantribune.com

**ATHENS, Ala.** — The Cullman Bearcats traveled to Athens to take on the Hewitt-Trussville Huskies in the Border Wars Classic on Monday night. A big second quarter by Cullman helped them take a double-digit lead into the locker room, but a late rally in the second half by Hewitt-Trussville made it very interesting. A pair of big baskets and some big free throws late in the game helped the Bearcats get past the Huskies, 67-59.

After tip-off, Cullman got on the scoreboard first on a rebound and putback by Brooks Loftin, but Hewitt-Trussville scored the next eight points to take an 8-2 lead with 3:54 to go in the opening period.

The Bearcats' offense got going after that, as Sam Dorough nailed a pair of free throws and Colt Fletcher scored five straight points to give them a 9-8 lead. Later in the quarter, Loftin knocked down a trey from the top of the key, and Dorough dropped in a floater to put Cullman ahead, 16-12. A three-point play by the Huskies cut it to 16-15, but Dorough drained a trey from the right corner just before the buzzer sounded to give the Bearcats a 19-15 lead going into the second period.

It didn't take long for Cullman to add onto their lead in the second. Owen Graves knocked down a trey from the left corner, then Hopper scored through a foul and ended up hitting the free throw to stretch their lead to 25-15 less than a minute into the second quarter.

Fletcher drove to the lane and laid it in, and Jonathan Witcher buried a three to make it a 30-18 game. Fletcher added another long-range shot, and Hopper later added a basket after getting the offensive rebound to give the Bearcats a 35-22 lead. Hopper knocked down a three, and later in the quarter, Emery Bonds and Hopper each drilled a trey to increase their lead to 46-26. A three-point play by the Huskies cut it to 46-29 at the break.

Hewitt-Trussville cut into Cullman's lead to start out the third quarter. A pair of free throws, a trey from the top of the key, and a floater made it a 48-38 contest. Hopper and Dorough each knocked down a pair of free throws to give the Bearcats a 52-38 lead late in the third, but four free throws by the Huskies trimmed the deficit to 10 at 52-42 going into the final period.

Hewitt-Trussville hit a pair of free throws and later collected a steal and a layup to cut it to 52-46 early in the fourth. Loftin nailed a pair from the charity stripe to put Cullman ahead, 54-46, but the Huskies scored five straight points, including a three-point play, to make it a 54-51 game with five minutes to go in the contest. Hewitt-Trussville knocked down a trey with 3:38 remaining in the game to cut it to 56-54.

The biggest shots of the game would come from Bonds and Hopper, as their treys from the right and left corner, respectively, gave the Bearcats a 62-55 lead with 2:59 remaining in the game. Graves' rebound and putback made it 64-55. The Huskies hit four free throws to cut it to 64-59, but Loftin hit a pair of free throws, and Costa Burks hit one of his own from the charity stripe to help seal the 67-59 win for Cullman.

Hopper led the way for the Bearcats with 16 points. Loftin added 13 points. Fletcher ended up with 10 points, and Dorough posted nine points.

Cullman (15-2) will take on Chelsea in the Border Wars Classic on Tuesday night.

PREP BASKETBALL

# Cold Springs closes out 2025 with a sweep of Leeds

**Sammy Confer**
sammy@cullmantribune.com

**BREMEN, Ala.** — Cold Springs closed out 2025 with a pair of home games against Leeds on Tuesday night, and both Eagle squads ended up sweeping Leeds. In the varsity girls' game, the Lady Eagles held the lead after one and quickly broke the game wide open in the second quarter, outscoring the Lady Green Wave, 29-2, en route to a 70-19 rout of Leeds. The varsity boys' game was closely contested for most of the night, but some late free throws helped the Eagles get past the Green Wave, 59-53.

**Cold Springs 70 – Leeds 19 (Varsity Girls)**

Ella Dickerson's rebound and putback put Cold Springs on the scoreboard first. Kaydance Williams knocked down a pair of free throws, and Dickerson nailed a three to give the Lady Eagles a 7-2 lead. A 6-2 run by Leeds made it a 9-8 game with 1:30 remaining in the opening period, but Cold Springs finished the quarter strong. Dickerson collected another rebound and putback, Macie Huffstutler put in a basket down low, and Williams scored through a foul and ended up hitting the free throw to put the Lady Eagles ahead, 16-8 going into the second period.

Cold Springs quickly broke the game wide open in the second quarter. Aleah Addison knocked down two free throws, and Dickerson buried a short jumper to make it a 20-8 game. Dickerson (one) and Hollyn Bruer (three) drilled the next four threes for the Lady Eagles, as that stretched their lead to 34-10. Dickerson and Huffstutler scored the next eight points to make it a 42-10 contest. Addison laid it up and in before the buzzer sounded to give Cold Springs a commanding 45-10 lead at the half.

Baskets by Dickerson and Williams, plus Bruer's fourth trey of the night, widened the Lady Eagle lead to 54-10. Cold Springs scored eight straight points, with Kotie Calvert scoring half of those points, while Dickerson and Paizley Whitlow added baskets of their own down low, to make it 62-12.

Keiarah Fanning's trey gave the Lady Eagles a 65-15 lead, and they would take a 65-17 lead into the final period. It was a running clock for the entire fourth quarter. Calvert nailed a trey, and Huffstutler knocked down a basket in the paint to put the finishing touches on a 70-19 win for Cold Springs (9-6).

Dickerson finished with a game-high 23 points for the Lady Eagles. Bruer ended up with 15 points. Huffstutler added nine points, while Calvert and Williams each posted seven points.

**Cold Springs 59 – Leeds 53 (Varsity Boys)**

A pair of rebounds and putbacks by Breydon Hallmon and a free throw by Lindan Hill gave Cold Springs an early 5-3 lead. A pair of treys by Leeds cut it to 10-9, and a pair of free throws gave them an 11-10 lead with three minutes to go in the opening period. The Green Wave held a slim 13-12 lead, but Tycen Kilgo buried a trey from the right wing just before the buzzer sounded to give the Eagles a 15-13 lead going into the second.

Another rebound and putback by Hallmon, a floater by Kilgo, and a pair of free throws by Hallmon stretched Cold Springs' lead to 21-13. Leeds went on an 8-1 run to make it a 22-21 game. Ethan Day knocked down a trey from the left wing, and Ayden Black banked in a floater to put the Eagles ahead, 27-21 late in the second quarter. The Green Wave trimmed the deficit to three at 28-25, but Hallmon's fourth rebound and putback of the first half made it a 30-25 game at the half.

Hallmon continued his dominating performance on the glass, as he collected yet another rebound and putback to give Cold Springs a 32-25 lead early in the third. Five straight points by Leeds made it a 32-30 game, but Hallmon scored through a foul and ended up hitting the free throw to put the Eagles ahead, 35-30. Cash Dickerson scored five straight points, and Black added a driving layup to stretch Cold Springs' lead to 42-31. A late basket by the Green Wave cut it to 42-33 going into the final period.

Cooper Johnson nailed a trey from the left corner to give the Eagles a 45-35 lead early in the fourth. Black collected a steal and laid it up and in to make it a 47-35 game and later knocked down a three from the left wing to put Cold Springs ahead, 50-39. Later in the quarter, Day found Hill down low, and his dunk made it a 52-42 contest. A three-point play by Leeds cut it to 52-45 with 2:45 remaining in the game. Hill put in a basket in the paint, and Day added a free throw to give the Eagles a 55-45 lead. The Green Wave, though, made things a little interesting. A pair of free throws and a pair of late treys trimmed the deficit to 58-53, but Black knocked down a free throw, and the defense made some key stops to help seal the 59-53 win for Cold Springs.

Black finished with 20 points for the Eagles.

Hallmon added 15 points, while Hill and Kilgo each chipped in with six points.

Cold Springs (14-1) will take on Southeastern Friday morning at 9 a.m. at Tom Drake Coliseum, and both varsity squads will host Hanceville next Monday night.






# Wandering photographer: 2025

**Enjoy the review of the year for this wandering photographer! From rodeos, events, portrait work, New Hampshire and Oregon, the photo opportunities were numerous! Can't wait to see what adventures 2026 holds!**

PHOTOS COURTESY SHERRY BROWN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
























## Lil Jimmy (from Front)

**Noah Galilee**
noah@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Lil Jimmy is a terrier mix, approximately 1-year-old, who wears his heart on his paw. He's The Cullman Tribune Pet of the Week.

Lil Jimmy is the kind of dog who makes it clear that once he chooses you, you are his everything. There is a pensive, soulful look in his eyes, paired with an affectionate nature.

His sweater fits him perfectly, and he appreciates it, as he feels the cold weather more than most. For such a young dog, Lil Jimmy already shows a strong understanding of leash etiquette, making him a joy to walk. His calm but attentive demeanor lends itself well to consideration as a therapy, companion or hiking partner. He is alert, connected and eager to share the journey alongside you.

Lil Jimmy's adoption fee is $130, which covers his neuter procedure, age-appropriate vaccinations, microchipping and a basic health check. It also supports the ongoing care of other animals while they wait for their forever homes.

If you are looking for a dog who is ready to commit fully, walk with purpose and offer steady companionship, Lil Jimmy is waiting.

Visit the Cullman County Animal Shelter at 935 Convent Road NE. It's open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Contact the Cullman County Animal Shelter at 256-734-5448 or cullmananimalshelter@co.cullman.al.us.

EDITORIAL

# When the mail stops, accountability should not

**Noah Galilee**
noah@cullmantribune.com

For years, residents across Cullman County have endured inconsistent and unacceptable mail delivery. Nowhere has that frustration been louder than in the 35057 ZIP code.

On nearly every print day, customers call our office to report that their newspaper never arrived.

Some go an entire week without delivery, then drive to the post office themselves only to discover their mail and newspapers have been sitting inside the facility the whole time.

This is not a new problem, and it is not anecdotal.

In August, this newspaper addressed the issue directly in the editorial "USPS cannot pick and choose," warning that mail service was being deprioritized in favor of package delivery.

In September, we followed with "Thank your carriers; push management for more," acknowledging improvement while making clear that systemic failures and staffing shortages remained unresolved.

Residents and carriers told a different story than postal management. The pattern has continued.

The issue is not the men and women delivering the mail. Postal workers are being asked to do more than the system allows.

The issue is management priorities and a federal structure that allows essential mail service to fall behind while parcel contracts continue uninterrupted.

One reader came into our office Monday to complain that her husband, a veteran, receives medications through the U.S. Postal Service and that delivery is unreliable at best.

Prescriptions arrive late or not at all. This is not an inconvenience. It is a failure with real consequences.

Federal law is clear on what the Postal Service is required to do.

The United States Constitution grants Congress authority over the postal system. Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 empowers Congress to establish post offices and postal routes. The U.S. Postal Service exists because Congress created it, and Congress retains responsibility for how it functions.

That responsibility was formalized under the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, Public Law 91-375, which created the United States Postal Service as an independent establishment of the executive branch while imposing a legal obligation to provide universal service.

That obligation is codified in Title 39 of the United States Code.

Under 39 U.S.C. § 101(a), USPS is required to provide postal services to bind the nation together. Section 101(e) requires service to all communities, rural and urban, without discrimination. Section 403(a) mandates prompt, reliable and efficient delivery of mail.

There is nothing in federal law that authorizes USPS management to choose packages over mail, or Amazon deliveries over prescriptions, newspapers and bills.

If packages are now a major part of daily operations, then staffing must reflect that reality. The solution is not to overburden postal workers and to hire additional employees and establish dedicated package routes.

Nowhere does USPS define itself as a private delivery service, and nowhere does federal law excuse mail delays because of parcel volume.

Oversight of USPS remains firmly in the hands of Congress through the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Financial and service performance is further regulated under the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006, Public Law 109-435, which established the Postal Regulatory Commission.

This is not a system without rules. It is a system without accountability.

This newspaper has repeatedly raised concerns with Congressman Robert Aderholt, R-Alabama, regarding postal service failures in Cullman County. Letters have been written. Calls have been made. Residents have spoken.

If the congressman represents this district, it is past time for him to visit the Cullman Post Office, speak directly with carriers and management and report back to the people he serves.

If no visit occurs, it suggests concern stops at the surface.

If an entity is created by the federal government, protected by the federal government and governed by federal law, then it must be regulated by that same government.

The ongoing game of hot potato between USPS leadership and Congress has gone on long enough.

Mail service is not optional. Medications are not optional. Reliable delivery is not a luxury.

**HOW TO CONTACT CONGRESSMAN ROBERT ADERHOLT**

**Cullman District Office** - (Office location in Cullman)
- Phone: 205-734-0415

**Washington, D.C. Office**
- U.S. House of Representatives
- Washington, D.C. 20515
- Phone: 202-225-4875

**Online**
- Website contact form: https://aderholt.house.gov (residents can submit comments or requests directly)

EDITORIAL

# An open letter to Congressman Robert Aderholt

**Noah Galilee**
noah@cullmantribune.com

**Congressman Aderholt,**

For months, residents of Cullman County, particularly those in the 35057 ZIP code, have reported inconsistent and unreliable mail delivery through the U.S. Postal Service.

These concerns include delayed newspapers, missed bills and late prescription medications, including those relied upon by local veterans.

This newspaper has raised these issues publicly and directly with your office on multiple occasions. Despite that, the problem persists.

The United States Postal Service is a federal entity created by Congress and governed by federal law.

Under Title 39 of the United States Code, USPS is legally obligated to provide prompt and reliable service to all communities. Oversight of that obligation rests squarely with Congress.

We are respectfully asking you to visit the Cullman Post Office in person, speak directly with postal carriers and local management and provide a public response to the concerns raised by your constituents.

If USPS is struggling to balance mail and package delivery, then federal leadership must address staffing, route structure and management accountability. Deflection and silence only deepen public frustration.

The people of this district deserve more than surface-level concern. They deserve action.

**Sincerely,**
**Noah Galilee**
Publisher, The Cullman Tribune

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LEGALS

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Cullman, Alabama, will hold a public hearing on January 26, 2026, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Lucille N. Galin Auditorium at City Hall, 204 Second Avenue NE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. At this time, anyone wishing to be heard in favor of or in opposition to the adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-16 (set forth in full below) will be given an opportunity to speak. - Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026 – 16**
**TO AMEND THE CITY OF CULLMAN ZONING ORDINANCE**

**SECTION I. PURPOSE**. The purpose of this Ordinance is to modify, amend, or delete portions of the current Zoning Ordinance.

**SECTION II.** The following section of the City of Cullman Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 62, "Zoning," Section 165, "Reconstruction of damaged buildings or structures.," of the *Code of Ordinances City of Cullman, Alabama*, is hereby deleted in its entirety and replaced as follows:

**Sec. 62-165. - Reconstruction of damaged buildings or structures.**

a) Any nonconforming dwelling damaged by fire, wind, flood, or other causes, may be repaired or rebuilt within the footprint and square footage of the nonconforming dwelling. The repairs or reconstruction must be initiated within one hundred and eighty (180) days and completed within three hundred and sixty-five (365) days of such damage. Other nonconforming structures damaged by fire, wind, flood or other causes up to sixty (60) percent of their value prior to the damage, may be repaired or rebuilt within the existing footprint and square footage. If the damage exceeds sixty (60) percent of the value of the structure, the structure must be made to conform to applicable zoning regulations, if repaired or rebuilt.

b) Any accessory structures such as storage buildings, detached garages, and similar buildings which have been damaged by fire, wind, flood, or other causes, must be brought into compliance with the requirements of the zoning district in which they are located.

c) Any single-family dwelling that has been declared a dangerous structure under Section 10-335 of the Code of Ordinances City of Cullman, Alabama, by the Building Official may be rebuilt within the same footprint provided that setbacks comply with the International Residential Code.

d) In order to promote economic vitality, community well-being and public safety, any Blighted Property that is residential may be demolished and rebuilt within the same footprint provided that setbacks comply with the International Residential Code. Blighted Property is defined as any property and/or structure that exhibits one or more of the following conditions:
   1) Structures that are unsafe, uninhabitable, or deteriorated,
   2) Abandoned, vacant, or boarded buildings,
   3) Repeated criminal activity or nuisance behavior involving said property,
   4) Presence of mold, vermin, stagnant water, fire hazards, or other conditions harmful to health or safety,
   5) Neglected, run-down and/or unsightly structures,
   6) Accumulation of trash, debris, or overgrown vegetation, or
   7) Conditions that pose a threat to public health or safety

e) **NOTICE.** The Building Department shall notify all Adjacent Property Owners upon application of the Property Owner for approval of a non-conforming use. Adjacent Property Owners are defined as any property contiguous to the subject property, including properties directly across from said subject property. Said notice shall be given by certified mail or hand delivery within seven (7) business days from the submission of the application. The Building Official shall notify the Property Owner and Adjacent Property Owner of decisions regarding applications for non-conforming use. Said notice shall be given by certified mail or hand delivery within seven (7) business days of the decision.

f) **APPEAL.** The Property Owner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Building Official. Said appeal shall be made in accordance with Ordinance 2-380, Ordinance 2-381 and Ordinance 62-181 et. seq. Any Adjacent Property Owner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Building Official decision within fourteen (14) days of said decision and shall be in accordance with Ordinance 2-380, Ordinance 2-381, and Ordinance 62-181 et. seq.

**SECTION III. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE.** Each and every provision of this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an independent provision and that holding of any provision hereof to be void and invalid for any reason shall not affect any other provision hereof and it is hereby declared that the other provisions of this Ordinance would have been enacted regardless of any provision which might have been held invalid. This Ordinance repeals any prior Ordinance in conflict therewith.

**SECTION IV. EFFECTIVE DATE**. This ordinance shall be effective following its passage, approval and publication as required by law. Submitted by Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA**

IN RE: The Estate of
HELEN MUSTANTE CARY,
Deceased. CASE NUMBER: 2025-430

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary have been granted to PAUL MARSHALL CARY, as the Executor on this 9th day of December, 2025, by the Honorable Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama, 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
SARA DOTY,
Attorney for The Estate of Helen Mustante Cary

TO: The Publisher of The 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

**IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA**

IN RE: The Estate of *
CYRUS MITCHELL LEETH, * CASE NO.: PC2025-443
Deceased. *

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Testamentary having been granted to Juanesta J. Green, as Personal Representative of the Estate of CYRUS MITCHELL LEETH, deceased, on the 15th day of December, 2025, by Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate Court.

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.

Juanesta J. Green
Personal Representative

Kalif R. Green, Esq.
Kalif R. Green, Attorney at Law, LLC
107 Bangor Ave. NE
Hanceville, AL 35077

TO: Publisher of THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

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

DONE this 15th day of December, 2025.
Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN
JUDGE OF PROBATE

Judge of Probate
Cullman County, AL
1 Page(s)

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT OF
*
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO.: PC2025-425

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF PRISCILLA ANN STEWART, DECEASED

**NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY ADMINISTRATOR**

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration having been granted to Bruce Turner and Marsha Fallin as Co-Administrators of the Estate of Priscilla Ann Stewart, Deceased, on the 16th day of December, 2025, by the Honorable Tammy Brown.

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.

Bruce Turner
BRUCE TURNER
Co-Administrator of the Estate of Priscilla Ann Stewart, Deceased

Marsha Fallin
MARSHA FALLIN
Co-Administrator of the Estate of Priscilla Ann Stewart, Deceased

PERRY D. KNIGHT
Attorney for the Petitioners
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
TAMMY BROWN
Judge of Probate

**IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA**

IN RE: The Estate of *
PAMELA DAUN BEARD SHADDRIX, * CASE NO.: PC2025-421
AKA PAM SHADDRIX *
Deceased. *

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Testamentary having been granted to MATTHEW DAVID SHADDRIX, as Personal Representative of the Estate of **PAMELA DAUN BEARD SHADDRIX, AKA PAM SHADDRIX**, deceased, on the 29th day of December, 2025, by Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate Court.

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.

MATTHEW DAVID SHADDRIX
Personal Representative

J. Birch Bowdre, Esq.
Attorney for Petitioner
Post Office Box 530910
Birmingham, AL 35253

TO: Publisher of THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

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

DONE this 29th day of December, 2025.
Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN
JUDGE OF PROBATE

OP-ED

# The heart behind Curt's Closet

**Reba Whitley**
Contributor

Death comes to everyone and we all realize that devastating fact. However, there are some deaths that are extremely brutal, and difficult to ever understand. I'm talking about deaths caused by drunk driving! The story I'm referring to happened to the Wilson family on a beautiful Sunday afternoon when Ashley Wilson and her 15-year-old son, Curt, were out driving around, running errands. They were enjoying their mother and son time together, talking about the plans they had for summer vacation, when out of the blue, in the blink of an eye, they were hit, head on, by a drunk driver, alcohol level three times over the legal limit! The driver was a repeat offender!

On this spring day a mother's precious, beautiful son was killed! There are no words that can ever describe the level of sorrow and grief a loss like that carries. It is difficult to wrap your rational thinking around the insanity that would cause such a tragedy. Ecclesiastes 2:22-23 and Psalm 90:10 tell us the human existence is full of pain and sorrow. The Wilson family tragedy is a perfect example of how true that really is! This is a pain that hits and possesses your very soul. It's a crushing ache that one never fully recovers from. These Bible verses remind us this life is rarely easy and we need God and each other to get through the horrible times. God, our Creator, set Spiritual laws into place where we will be blessed and our mental and physical burdens will be lighter if we give with generous hearts and help our fellow man.

The Wilson family is putting those spiritual laws into practice every day. They still suffer greatly from losing their son and grandson on May 7, 2017. His family describes him as a young man who, "had a heart full of kindness and joy. He was always quick to help others and never met a stranger." His family is giving back to their community in Curt's honor. They opened up a place where children can receive new or gently used clothes and other needs, free. It's called Curt's Closet. Their charity was born from a desire to carry forward Curt's same spirit of love and giving. The Wilsons describe this wonderful place of giving as, "A way for Curt's mother, Ashley, to turn heartbreak into hope, and to give back to the community Curt adored and to the community who so dearly loved him in return. Curt's Closet is more than just a place to receive clothes, it's a place where children feel seen, valued and celebrated. The Wilson's set things up in a boutique-style shopping experience where families in need can 'shop' for free clothing, shoes, backpacks, and other essentials in a welcoming, dignified environment." Isn't it precious and wonderfully inspiring how Curt is being remembered every time someone enters the door of Curt's Closet and is blessed by the items they receive?

Today, there are hundreds of places where help is offered through local communities. Many of those places have an annual, or sometimes seasonal, auctions to raise money that makes it possible for them to continue to give to others. Curt's Closet is one of those places in Cullman. I feel it's important to get involved and help these places whenever possible. My family had the opportunity to see them in action through one of their auctions in the spring 2025. People were offered the chance to give items for the Curt's Closet auction and those items we're given to the highest bidder. Such a wonderful and fun time to get together with your friends and neighbors to help others in need!

The Bible says in Acts 20:35, It is more blessed to give than to receive. This verse emphasizes how God blesses a generous, giving heart and selfless service. The grieving Wilson family has shown a massively generous heart through their sorrow. It has been my experience that when you give to others, you receive far more than you give. The joy of knowing that your contribution, whether small or great, has helped someone in need is such an amazing feeling. It is my prayer, that through the Wilson family helping others, their tireless efforts and their generous giving has somehow eased their suffering and helps them better cope with their loss.

Psalm 34:18 tells us, The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The only way we as mere humans can ever cope with a horribly heart-wrenching tragedy like this is with God's help. Philippians 4:7, And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. This verse promises a profound peace that comes only from God, our Creator, our Lord and Savior. It's a peace God offers to the believer, a spiritual peace that surpasses all human comprehension. Verse 6 encourages the believer to deal with our anxiety with prayer and gratitude.

From the efforts I have witnessed in the spring of 2025, charities funded and supported by a community are a wonderful example of putting the Acts 20:35 verse into action! If you ever feel sad, or just need a reason to smile, look up Cullman's Curt's Closet. See if you can get involved in helping someone in need. I am eagerly waiting for the upcoming auction in the spring of 2026 so we can experience the wonderful feeling of togetherness in the Cullman community again. It's a shared responsibility of helping our local children have what they need but can't afford. That's one of the best feeling in the world! The Wilson family says that Curt always wanted to make people laugh and smile. This shared community effort definitely helped my family smile, and I'm certain it will help you as well.

**You can find information about Curt's Closet here:**

- The next auction is: April 30, 2026
- Email: info@curtscloset.org
- Website: www.curtscloset.org
- Wish lists: https://a.co/4AjEOWg
- Phone: 256-735-4557
- Address: 1101 Third Ave. SE, Cullman
- Facebook: Curt's Closet

# LEGALS

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Cullman, Alabama, will hold a public hearing on January 26, 2026, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Lucille N. Galin Auditorium at City Hall, 204 Second Avenue NE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. At this time, anyone wishing to be heard in favor of or in opposition to the adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-21 (set forth in full below) will be given an opportunity to speak. - Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 21**
**TO AMEND THE CITY OF CULLMAN ZONING ORDINANCE**

**SECTION I. PURPOSE**. The purpose of this Ordinance is to modify, amend, or delete portions of the current Zoning Ordinance.

**SECTION II.** The following section of the City of Cullman Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 62, "Zoning," Section 163, "Nonconforming Lots," of the *Code of Ordinances City of Cullman, Alabama*, is hereby deleted in its entirety and replaced as follows:

**Sec. 62-163. Nonconforming lots.**

(a) *Vacant lots.* If the owner of a nonconforming vacant lot owns adjoining land that may be combined with it in order to comply with the requirements of this chapter, the lots must be combined before the city issues a building permit or any approval required by this chapter for development of the lots.

If the owner of a nonconforming vacant lot of record does not own sufficient adjoining land to enable compliance with the area and dimensional requirements of this chapter, one building and its accessory structures may be built provided they conform as closely as possible, **as determined by the Building Official**, to the requirements of the applicable district, and further provided that no side yard, where required to be greater than five feet, may be reduced to less than five feet.

(b) *Occupied lots.* Where multiple dwellings existed on one lot in the R-1 or R-2 District, on the effective date of Ordinance No. 848, the owner may apply for a variance to subdivide the lot, so that each dwelling may be on its own lot, though the resulting lots may be smaller than required by this chapter. If a dwelling on such a lot is destroyed by fire or natural disaster, it may be rebuilt provided it conforms as closely as possible, **as determined by the Building Official**, to the district requirements.

**(c) REPORTING.** All determinations by the Building Official shall be reported to the Council at the next council meeting following said determination(s).

**(d) NOTICE.** The Building Department shall notify all Adjacent Property Owners upon application of the Property Owner for approval of a non-conforming use. Adjacent Property Owners are defined as any property contiguous to the subject property, including properties directly across from said subject property. Said notice shall be given by certified mail or hand delivery within seven (7) business days from the submission of the application. The Building Official shall notify the Property Owner and Adjacent Property Owner of decisions regarding applications for non-conforming use. Said notice shall be given by certified mail or hand delivery within seven (7) business days of the decision.

**(e) APPEAL.** The Property Owner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Building Official. Said appeal shall be made in accordance with Ordinance 2-380, Ordinance 2-381 and Ordinance 62-181 et. seq. Any Adjacent Property Owner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Building Official decision within fourteen (14) days of said decision and shall be in accordance with Ordinance 2-380, Ordinance 2-381, and Ordinance 62-181 et. seq.

**SECTION . SEVERABILITY CLAUSE.** Each and every provision of this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an independent provision and that holding of any provision hereof to be void and invalid for any reason shall not affect any other provision hereof and it is hereby declared that the other provisions of this Ordinance would have been enacted regardless of any provision which might have been held invalid. This Ordinance repeals any prior Ordinance in conflict therewith.

**SECTION V. EFFECTIVE DATE**. This ordinance shall be effective following its passage by the council, approval and publication as required by law. Submitted by Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Cullman, Alabama, will hold a public hearing on January 26, 2026, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Lucille N. Galin Auditorium at City Hall, 204 Second Avenue NE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. At this time, anyone wishing to be heard in favor of or in opposition to the adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-20 (set forth in full below) will be given an opportunity to speak. - Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 20**
**TO AMEND THE CITY OF CULLMAN ZONING ORDINANCE**

**SECTION I. PURPOSE**. The purpose of this Ordinance is to modify, amend, or delete portions of the current Zoning Ordinance.

**SECTION II.** The following section of the City of Cullman Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 62, "Zoning," Section 32(d)(1), "Lots, yards and open spaces," of the *Code of Ordinances City of Cullman, Alabama*, is hereby deleted in its entirety and amended and replaced as follows:

**Sec. 62-32. Lots, yards and open spaces.**

(d) Exceptions and modifications.

(1) Where a lot of record does not conform to the requirements of the applicable district, the lot may nonetheless be used as a building site upon approval by the Building Official so long as they conform as closely as possible to the requirements of the district.

(e) **REPORTING.** All determinations by the Building Official shall be reported to the Council at the next council meeting following said determination(s).

(f) **NOTICE.** The Building Department shall notify all Adjacent Property Owners upon application of the Property Owner for approval of a non-conforming use. Adjacent Property Owners are defined as any property contiguous to the subject property, including properties directly across from said subject property. Said notice shall be given by certified mail or hand delivery within seven (7) business days from the submission of the application. The Building Official shall notify the Property Owner and Adjacent Property Owner of decisions regarding applications for non-conforming use. Said notice shall be given by certified mail or hand delivery within seven (7) business days of the decision.

**(g) APPEAL.** The Property Owner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Building Official. Said appeal shall be made in accordance with Ordinance 2-380, Ordinance 2-381 and Ordinance 62-181 et. seq. Any Adjacent Property Owner shall have the right to appeal any decision of the Building Official decision within fourteen (14) days of said decision and shall be in accordance with Ordinance 2-380, Ordinance 2-381, and Ordinance 62-181 et. seq.

**SECTION III. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE.** Each and every provision of this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an independent provision and that holding of any provision hereof to be void and invalid for any reason shall not affect any other provision hereof and it is hereby declared that the other provisions of this Ordinance would have been enacted regardless of any provision which might have been held invalid. This Ordinance repeals any prior Ordinance in conflict therewith.

**SECTION IV. EFFECTIVE DATE**. This ordinance shall be effective following its passage by the council, approval and publication as required by law. Submitted by Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Cullman, Alabama, will hold a public hearing on January 26, 2026, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Lucille N. Galin Auditorium at City Hall, 204 Second Avenue NE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. At this time, anyone wishing to be heard in favor of or in opposition to the adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-18 (set forth in full below) will be given an opportunity to speak. - Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 18**
**AMENDING THE CURRENT ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF CULLMAN, ALABAMA, TO RE-ZONE CERTAIN PARCELS OF PROPERTY AS SET FORTH HEREIN**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CULLMAN, ALABAMA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Under the authority of Chapter 52, Articles 1 through 4, Section 11-52-1 through Section 11-52-84, Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, and specifically Sections 11-52-77 and at the request of property owner, Big Sky Trading, LLC, the following describe the tracts or parcels of land, to-wit:

PPIN: 8563. Parcel No.: 09-08-33-2-005-007.000. Property Address: 2211 Second Avenue NW.
Commence at the intersection of the west right of way line of US Highway No. 31 with the north line of the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 33, Township 9 South, Range 3 West, then go in a southerly direction along said right of way line a distance of 976.7 feet to the point of beginning: thence go 90 degrees 00 minutes right a distance of 150 feet; thence go 90 degrees 00 minutes left a distance of 100 feet; thence go 90 degrees 00 minutes left a distance of 150 feet to a point on the west right of way line of U.S. Highway No. 31; thence go 90 degrees 00 minutes left along said right of way line a distance of 100 feet to the point of beginning. The above described land lies in the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 33, Township 9 South, Range 3 West, in Cullman County, Alabama. Source of Title: Deed Book 539, Page 53.
within the city limits of Cullman, Alabama, and lying and being in Cullman County, State of Alabama, designated as AG-1 Agricultural District on the Zoning Map of the City of Cullman, Alabama under Ordinance No. 2004-03 and as may be reflected in any comprehensive master plan for the City of Cullman, Alabama, be, and is hereby changed from R-1 Residential District to B-3 Business District.

SECTION 2. That this ordinance be published at least once a week for two consecutive weeks in advance of its final passage in a newspaper with general circulation within the City of Cullman, Alabama, the first publication of said notice and ordinance being verbatim and the second publication either verbatim or synopsized, with the last publication being at least 15 days prior to the date set for public hearing and passage of said ordinance.

SECTION 3. That a public hearing be held relative to the passage of this ordinance on the 26th day of January, 2026 at 7:00 p.m., at which time interested parties and citizens shall have the opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance and any changes relating thereto.

SECTION 4. That all notices as required by law be given by the City Clerk concerning said public hearing, and in addition thereto, a certified letter be sent by the Clerk to all contiguous property owners at their last known addresses as shown by the tax records for the City of Cullman, Alabama.

SECTION 5. That upon final passage of this ordinance, all zoning maps, master comprehensive plans or any other documents of the City of Cullman, Alabama, in conflict with this ordinance are hereby changed and amended to reflect the changes and amendments herein.

SECTION 6. Should any part or portion of this ordinance be held invalid, unenforceable or unconstitutional, for whatever reason, by a court of competent jurisdiction, such ruling shall not affect any other part or portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage or adoption as required by law, including notice, publication and public hearing, all in accordance with Section 11-52-1, et seq., Code of Alabama 1975, as amended. Submitted by Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Cullman, Alabama, will hold a public hearing on January 26, 2026, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Lucille N. Galin Auditorium at City Hall, 204 Second Avenue NE, Cullman, Alabama 35055. At this time, anyone wishing to be heard in favor of or in opposition to the adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-19 (set forth in full below) will be given an opportunity to speak. - Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - 19**
**AMENDING THE CURRENT ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF CULLMAN, ALABAMA, TO RE-ZONE CERTAIN PARCELS OF PROPERTY AS SET FORTH HEREIN**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CULLMAN, ALABAMA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Under the authority of Chapter 52, Articles 1 through 4, Section 11-52-1 through Section 11-52-84, Code of Alabama 1975, as amended, and specifically Sections 11-52-77 and at the request of property owner, Nguyen & Ha Properties, LLC, the following describe the tracts or parcels of land, to-wit:

PPIN: 90179. Parcel No. : 17-08-28-0-001-011.002. Property Address: Ellsworth Drive SW.
Lot #1 as shown on the attached survey prepared by Kelly L. Whitfield which is more particularly described as follows: A parcel of land being in the SE ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 28, Township 10 South, Range 3 West, Cullman County, Alabama, described as commencing at the locally accepted northwest corner of the SE ¼ of the NE ¼ of said Section 28, Township 10 South, Range 3 West; thence S 00°21'35" W 15.00 feet to a found 5/8" capped rebar "PLS 23340"; thence S 89°39'44" E 741.79 feet to a set ½"capped rebar "LS 19901", being the point of beginning; thence continuing S 89°39'44" E 322.29 feet to a set ½" capped rebar "LS 19901"; thence S 33°21'31" E 109.53 feet to a set ½" capped rebar "LS 19901"; thence S 25°55'23" E 64.64 feet to a set ½" capped rebar "LS 19901"; thence N 89°39'44" W 366.49 feet to a set ½" capped rebar "LS 19901" (being N 00°16'32" E 49.90 feet from a found ½" capped rebar); thence N 00°16'32" E 149.09 feet (passing a found ½"capped rebar at 144.14 feet), back to the point of beginning.
within the city limits of Cullman, Alabama, and lying and being in Cullman County, State of Alabama, designated as AG-1 Agricultural District on the Zoning Map of the City of Cullman, Alabama under Ordinance No. 2004-03 and as may be reflected in any comprehensive master plan for the City of Cullman, Alabama, be, and is hereby changed from AG-1 Agricultural District to R-3 Residential District.

SECTION 2. That this ordinance be published at least once a week for two consecutive weeks in advance of its final passage in a newspaper with general circulation within the City of Cullman, Alabama, the first publication of said notice and ordinance being verbatim and the second publication either verbatim or synopsized, with the last publication being at least 15 days prior to the date set for public hearing and passage of said ordinance.

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SECTION 5. That upon final passage of this ordinance, all zoning maps, master comprehensive plans or any other documents of the City of Cullman, Alabama, in conflict with this ordinance are hereby changed and amended to reflect the changes and amendments herein.

SECTION 6. Should any part or portion of this ordinance be held invalid, unenforceable or unconstitutional, for whatever reason, by a court of competent jurisdiction, such ruling shall not affect any other part or portion of this Ordinance.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage or adoption as required by law, including notice, publication and public hearing, all in accordance with Section 11-52-1, et seq., Code of Alabama 1975, as amended. Submitted by Wesley M. Moore, City Clerk.

# Ivey: Alabama secures more than $203M for Rural Health Transformation Program

**Staff Reports**
Contributor

**MONTGOMERY, Ala.** — Governor Kay Ivey on Dec. 29 announced Alabama has officially received its award number from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for the federal Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP), formally approving Alabama's plan and unlocking $203,404,327 in first-year funding. The five-year program, seeking to help improve health care access, quality and outcomes in the state, will be administered by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA).

"We are very pleased Alabama will be awarded more than $203 million in the first year of the Rural Health Transformation Program. After President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act into law in July, Alabama got to work preparing for this program so we could hit the ground running once our state's new comprehensive rural health strategy was approved," said Ivey. "Now that it has been approved, we will take the next steps to ensure our citizens and communities benefit for generations. Making America healthy again begins in rural America, and I look forward to being able to improve health care across Alabama."

The RHTP was established under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which Congress passed in July and was signed by President Trump. Shortly after the law's passage, Ivey directed state agencies to begin developing a comprehensive rural health strategy to ensure Alabama was prepared once the program launched.

"Governor Ivey knows how important this program will be to the people of Alabama, and ADECA appreciates the trust she has placed in us to administer it," said ADECA Director Kenneth Boswell.

In November, Ivey announced Alabama's plan had been submitted to CMS for approval. In December, she signed an executive order establishing the Alabama Rural Health Transformation Advisory Group to advise on implementation, policy development and oversight so the state would be positioned to move quickly upon approval.

**The plan includes 11 initiatives:**

- Collaborative Electronic Health Record (EHR), IT and Cybersecurity Initiative
- Rural Health Initiative
- Maternal and Fetal Health Initiative
- Rural Workforce Initiative
- Cancer Digital Regionalization Initiative
- Simulation Training Initiative
- Statewide EMS Trauma and Stroke Initiative
- EMS Treat-In-Place Initiative
- Mental Health Initiative
- Community Medicine Initiative
- Rural Health Practice Initiative

It was developed with the input and collaboration of the Governor's Office, ADECA, the Alabama Department of Finance, the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the Alabama State Health Planning and Development Agency, along with dozens of stakeholders, health care experts and lawmakers.

ADECA has created a webpage for the program and will update it as more information becomes available: www.adeca.alabama.gov/alruralhealth




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# Expo (from Front)

and even demonstrations on pouring custom soft plastics.

A Ranger RT188P boat, valued at approximately $40,000, will serve as the grand draw prize and will be wrapped live at the expo for attendees to watch the process.

Tickets are $15 for ages 13 and up. Children 12 and younger are admitted free with a canned food donation benefiting Cullman Caring for Kids.

Seniors ages 65 and older and veterans may attend for $8.

Each ticket includes one entry into the prize drawings, with additional entries available for purchase for $5.

Food will be available throughout the weekend, with the OmniPlex café open during show hours and food trucks planned if crowds exceed expectations.

The event will also include celebrity appearances and guest speakers, including Hannah Barron, along with professional anglers Brandon Lester, Jordan Lee and Wes Logan. Additional speakers scheduled to appear include Crappie Dan, Wilson "The Professor" Frazier, Tyler Moses, Chad Buechler, Stacey Gaston and Brandon Crimmons.

Shelton said the idea for the expo began close to home. "The inspiration for putting this together came from my girlfriend, Christy," he shared.

"We've traveled to shows all over the place with Spanker Jigs, and one day she asked, 'Why don't we do our own show?' That question planted the seed, and it just kept growing."

He added, "As it began to grow, I realized that this is the most fishing stuff that has ever been under one roof in Alabama.

"We want this to be an annual event and are in the process of booking the same weekend every year, hopefully for many years to come."

For full details, including vendor lists, seminar schedules, floor plans, parking information and prize drawings, visit www.ultimatefishingexpo.com or follow Alabama's Ultimate Fishing Expo on Facebook.

# Obituary Announcements: Dec. 30-31

**Charlotte Ann White, 77**
Charlotte Ann White, of Blountsville, Alabama, entered the presence of our Lord and Savior on Dec. 28, 2025, at the age of 77. Ms. White was born in Trussville, Alabama, on Jan. 1, 1948. Charlotte is preceded in death by her parents, Joy Albert Inzer and Sarah Christine Taylor Warren; husband, Bobby Gerald White; brothers, Joy Taylor Inzer, and Billy Coy Warren. Those left to cherish the memory of Ms. White include her sisters, Rose Self, and Morna Furlong (Michael); grandson, Michael Sproles (Jamie); great-grandson, Ian Sproles; several special nieces and nephews; and a loved and cherished church family. Charlotte was an active member of Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church where she led the WMU program for several years. She enjoyed being a part of the Ladies Tuesday Morning Prayer Group and loved worshiping her Savior alongside her friends and neighbors. Ms. Charlotte had a true servant heart, and her love for God was visible in the way she placed Him first in her life. Charlotte was an amazing cook, and her Mexican cornbread was one of her most requested dishes. Ms. White enjoyed sharing her cornbread, along with her many other incredible culinary creations, with her family and friends. Friends are invited to join the White family for a time of visitation on Friday, Jan. 2, 2026, from 1 p.m. until services begin at 2 p.m. Services will be held at Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church where Pastor Earl Harper and Rodney Ray will officiate. Ms. Charlotte will be laid to rest in Holly Pond Cemetery following funeral services, where Adam NeSmith, Christopher Roll, Jacob Roll, Mark Browning, Rodney Ray, and Mike Sproles will serve as pallbearers. Holly Pond Funeral Home is honored to serve the White family.

**Margie Veal, 93**
Funeral Service for Margie Veal, age 93, of Cullman, will be at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home with Rev. Wendell Bennett officiating; burial at Oak Level Cemetery. Visitation will be from 1 p.m.-2 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Mrs. Veal passed away on Sunday, Dec. 28, 2025, at UAB Palliative Care. She was born March 22, 1932, in Cullman, Alabama, to Alvin and Lydia Howard. She was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Thomas Lester Veal; son, Keith Veal; and parents. Survivors include her son, Kelvin (Angie) Veal; grandson, Jaret (Amie) Veal; grandson, Jake (Erica) Veal; granddaughter, Katie (Alex) Williams; great-grandchildren, Evie Veal, Waylan Veal, Emmarie Veal, Marlee Veal, and Chessy Williams; and host of nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

**Donna Joyce Rakestraw, 85**
Funeral Service for Donna Joyce Rakestraw, age 85 of Cullman, will be at 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 3, 2026, at Fairview First Baptist Church with Dr. David Chambers officiating; graveside services and burial will be at First Baptist Church of Fairview. Visitation will be from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 3, 2026, at Fairview First Baptist Church. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Mrs. Rakestraw passed away on Monday, Dec. 29, 2025, at her residence. She was born Feb. 10, 1940, to Calvin and Ruby Dye. She was preceded in death by her parents and most recently, her husband of 65 years, Morris Keith Rakestraw. Survivors include sons, Derek (Tracie) Rakestraw and Daren (Vanessa) Rakestraw; daughter, Marisa (Chris Durst) Mitchell; grandchildren, Whitney (Ben) Halbrooks, Landon (Naomi) Rakestraw, Nicki (Zach) Taunton, Lucas Rakestraw, Alden Rakestraw, Alex Rakestraw, Weston Rakestraw, Lila Mitchell and Bennett Mitchell; great grandchildren, Remi, Rylee, Ruthie and Jett Halbrooks and Matthew Taunton; sister, Hilda (John) Thurston; brothers, Ken Dye, Darrell (Donna) Dye; and a host of nieces, nephews, family and friends. Donna was a devoted Christian, wife, and mother. She retired from the Cullman Social Security office in 1995. After retirement, she enjoyed traveling with Morris, working in her flower garden, and especially spending time with her children and grandchildren. She was their biggest fan and greatest supporter. Their home was always filled with good food and an abundance of love and hugs. Donna will be greatly missed by her family and everyone who had her in their lives. Special thanks to her neighbors, friends, church family, and especially to her wonderful caregivers, Andrea, Tammy, and Joy, who were such a blessing to her and the family during such a difficult time. Donations may be made to Fairview First Baptist Church or The Arthritis Foundation.

**Terry Allen Benefield, 53**
Terry Allen Benefield, also known as "Beanie" age 53 of Vinemont, Alabama passed away Dec. 26, 2025. Terry was preceded in death by his father Hollis Benefield, and a host of aunt and uncles. Terry is survived by his mother Dolly Ruth, brother David (Pam) Benefield, aunts and uncles Becky and Dean, Cheri (Teach) Frida Verily and James, nieces and nephews Kristen, Brooke, Samantha, Ash, Harley, Dolly, Amber, Lilly, and jade, and a host of great nieces, nephews and aunt and uncles. Terry was by all means a man of faith. One of his favorite things to do was spend time with God. Terry read his bible and wrote in his journal every day consistently. He loved his dogs Kai and Budro and dedicated much of his time to taking care of them. More than anything his nieces, nephews and great-nieces and nephews were his whole world. He especially loved playing darts with his nephew Harley. Terry was a light to those around him and will be deeply missed. A memorial service will be announced at a later date. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 "This too shall pass."

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