Cullman Savings Bank
Working for Cullman County Families Since 1887
Expert Lenders, Smart Solutions.
256-734-1740 | www.cullmansavingsbank.com
MEMBER FDIC EQUAL HOUSING LENDER



Rely on our experienced mortgage team for a smooth, stress-free home loan. Call today and let's make your dream home a reality!

Cindy Kritner - NMLS #2277640,
Tania Albarran - NMLS #1826083,
Sondra Lawrence - NMLS# 43817,
Audrey Harbison - NMLS #2253472

The Cullman Tribune

SERVING CULLMAN – IN THE HEART OF DIXIE – SINCE 1874

VOL. 153 • 50¢ PER COPY | TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026 | USPS 139-700 • NO. 27

WORKING FOR YOU!



SENATOR
GARLAN GUDGER
PD. POL. ADV. GUDGER FOR SENATE
314 2ND AVE. SE, CULLMAN 35055

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

OBITUARIES
Margaret Ann Smith Kilgo, Nellie Ramsey Burks, Edna Washington Leeth, Tony Lee Thompson
» PAGE 6

WEATHER
76 55
SOURCE: WEATHER.GOV
PARTLY SUNNY

Arrests and Incidents
» PAGE 2

Community Calendar
» PAGE 3



CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

–SPORTS–

Fairview's Brian Simmons expects to maintain the Aggies' winning standard as head coach

» PAGE 4

7 93888 98541 4

Cullman Police: Joint operation leads to 5 human trafficking arrests



Left to right are Trevan Levan Jefferson, Ian Grae Carroll, Rodrigo Uriel Hernandez, Timothy James Armstrong and Adrian Neal Horton.

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

» PAGE 3

– PREP BASKETBALL –

Lady Eagles to play in 2A State Championship after defeating 'chaotic' Lanett team 55-43



LUCAS GRAY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Cold Springs' Ella Dickerson

Lucas Gray
lucas@cullmantribune.com

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Cold Springs' Paige Adams won the 2008 State Championship as a player, and she'll get the chance to win one as a head coach in just her first season leading the Lady Eagles.

On Monday afternoon, no. 10-ranked Cold Springs took on Lanett at Legacy Arena in Birmingham with a trip to the State Championship on the line. Behind a 33%-to-58% shooting percentage jump from the first to second half and a suffocating defensive performance, the Lady Eagles defeated the Panthers 55-43.

Lanett came out firing in the first, going 5-9 from the floor while holding the Lady Eagles to just 4-12 shooting. The Panthers' Makenley James scored nine of her eventual 17 points in the period as Cold Springs struggled to settle in early. The period ended with an 11-11 tie.

Opening the second, both teams traded turnovers before Cold Springs began finding an offensive rhythm. While Lanett was still disruptive, Macie Huffstutler opened scoring for Cold Springs with a hard-fought putback to start what would eventually become a 11-4 run for the Eagles. Their ball movement finally began to click, with Aleah Addison finding Hollyn Bruer on a breakaway, then Huffstutler finding Ella Dickerson for a contested mid-range jumper. On defense, they began to tighten up as well, with Bruer and Paizley Whitlow playing suffocating perimeter defense. Whitlow, capping off a 12-2 points-off-turnover differential, pickpocketed a Panther guard and took it all the way home for a lay. Despite still only shooting 4-12 for the quarter again, Cold Springs went into the half leading 22-15 behind their defensive effort, which held Lanett to 2-10 shooting in the second.

The Lady Eagles came out of the break with a new energy. Two straight turnovers led to two straight baskets for Huffstutler and Addison, which » PAGE 4

Court records detail 2014 federal conviction of Cullman Chronicle editor; sheriff candidates decline CC forum participation » PAGE 7

Bremen man killed in single-vehicle crash » PAGE 3

City of Hanceville launching new website, approves Sunday alcohol sales » PAGE 6

Bailey, Jones named CCBOE/AmFirst January Employees of the Month



CULLMAN COUNTY SCHOOLS

Cullman County Schools recently announced Amanda Bailey, left, and Amber Jones, right, as its January Employees of the Month. » PAGE 8

Small Business Spotlight: Iron and Lace



ANABELLE HOWZE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

A new locally owned business in Trimble is offering customers a unique retail concept that blends a firearm store with a multivendor market. Iron and Lace LLC, owned by Ashley Moreland, opened Feb. 1 at the Trimble Super Saver. » PAGE 8



CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported March 2

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Below are the arrests and incidents reported March 2, 2026. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

GJ = grand jury; FTA = failure to appear

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INCIDENTS

Feb. 26

- possession of controlled substance; possession of marijuana; CR 1643
- harassment; Hwy. 69S
- assault; CR 1141
- theft of property; CR 1816

Feb. 27

- harassing communications; CR 597
- domestic violence; Edmondson Rd. NE
- harassment; CR 488
- domestic violence; CR 1718
- domestic violence; CR 38
- burglary; Arkadelphia Rd. NE
- violation of protection order; domestic violence; Meadow Dr.
- theft of property; CR 1127
- trespassing; CR 1043
- possession of dangerous drugs; possession of marijuana; CR 1364

Feb. 28

- assault; criminal mischief; Pine Ln.
- violation of protection order; CR 1371
- unlawful breaking and entering motor vehicle; Kiki Dr.
- domestic violence; Hwy. 278E
- illegal possession of prescription drugs; US. 31
- attempt to elude law enforcement officer; CR 1282

March 1

- burglary; CR 1742
- domestic violence; CR 25

ARRESTS

Feb. 26 – March 1

Bailey, Morgan L.; 22
- FTA – assault-2nd degree-with intent to cause physical injury to health care worker during or as a result of performance of duty

Banks, Alexandria G.; 20
- GJ – assault-child abuse-aggravated-family
- GJ – assault-torture/willful abuse of child-family

Boyd, Lacie M.; 29
- burglary-residence-no force
- theft-shoplifting
- theft-shoplifting, $1500-2500

Engel, Roger D.; 50
- FTA – unlawful breaking and entering a vehicle
- FTA – theft-miscellaneous, less than $500

Freeman, Shane A.; 34
- attempting to elude a police/law enforcement officer-serious injury or death/speed exceeds 20 mph over limit
- attempting to elude a police officer

Harvey, Daniel S.; 42
- assault-domestic-harassment-family

Haynes, Jeremy A.; 38
- FTA – assault with bodily fluids

Hicks, Eric T.; 37
- GJ – receiving stolen vehicle

Holt, John D.; 55
- FTA – theft-miscellaneous
- negotiating worthless instrument

Hughes, Grant L.; 57
- DUI (alcohol)

Hyatt, Tabitha B.; 46
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – unlawful possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance

Jones, Johnathan C.; 41
- GJ – receiving stolen vehicle

Lynn, Brent T.; 36
- burglary-residence-no force

McDonald, Elijah B.; 31
- GJ – sodomy-1st degree

Miller, Jeremy W.; 50
- GJ – reckless endangerment

Moctezuma, Camila M.; 29
- GJ – homicide-manslaughter-family other weapon
- GJ – murder-reckless

Needham, Teresa J.; 52
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

Parker, William A.; 53
- public intoxication

Runyon, Jeremy A.; 38
- possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- possession of dangerous drugs

Sandlin, Corey L.; 36
- FTA – driving while suspended, revoked or canceled

Speakman, Tyler L.; 31
- conspiracy to commit a controlled substance crime
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- unlawful possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance
- tampering with physical evidence
- buying/receiving stolen property

Stephenson, Jonathan A.; 29
- obscuring/defacing/removing vehicles identity
- theft-grand jury arrest warrant

Sturgill, David W.; 31
- GJ – sexual abuse of a child less than 12 years old-forcible fondling
- GJ – sodomy-1st degree

Taylor, Anthony K.; 28
- FTA – illegal possession of prescription drugs
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- FTA – possession of dangerous drugs
- FTA – DUI (controlled substances)
- FTA – failure to signal
- FTA – improper lane usage

Villa, Jr., Antonio; 46
- criminal trespass

Wade, Michela W.; 51
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – possession of dangerous drugs
- GJ – financial exploitation of the elderly-1st degree
- GJ – forgery-checks
- GJ – possessing forged instrument
- GJ – theft-miscellaneous, less than $500
- GJ – theft-grand jury arrest warrant

NOW HIRING TIRE TECHS

SAME DAY APPLICATION AND INTERVIEW + COMPETITIVE PAY

COLLEGE TIRE

315 MAIN ST. NW HANCEVILLE

256-352-2221

Whitten, Walker B.; 24
- GJ – assault-child abuse-aggravated-family
- GJ – assault-torture/willful abuse of child-family

Wimmer, Darryl R.; 63
- possession forged instrument

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

INCIDENTS

Feb. 28

- duty upon striking unattended vehicle; person; damage to '20 Nissan Altima; Olive St. SW
- theft of property-3rd degree; person; construction tool; $800
- duty upon striking unattended vehicle; person; damage to '22 Chev. Colorado; $2,000; Hwy. 157

ARRESTS

Feb. 26-28

Carroll, Ian G.; 29
- human trafficking-1st degree (2 counts)
- electronic solicitation of a child
- traveling to meet a child for unlawful sex act
- possession of unlawful hemp products
- GJ – negotiation worthless instrument

Jefferson, Trevan L.; 35
- human trafficking-1st degree (2 counts)
- electronic solicitation of a child
- traveling to meet a child for unlawful sex act

Horton, Adrian N.; 35
- human trafficking-1st degree (2 counts)
- electronic solicitation of a child
- traveling to meet a child for unlawful sex act

Ward, Linda K.; 49
- FTA – criminal trespass-1st degree

Hernandez, Rodrigo U.; 25
- human trafficking-1st degree (2 counts)
- electronic solicitation of a child
- traveling to meet a child for unlawful sex act

Armstrong, Timothy J.; 37
- human trafficking-1st degree (2 counts)
- electronic solicitation of a child
- traveling to meet a child for unlawful sex act

Mahler, Matthew A.; 27
- GJ – indictment for chemical endangerment of child
- GJ – possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- GJ – possession of drug paraphernalia

Sandlin, Corey L.; 36
- obstructing justice using a false identity

Wright, Jared B.; 31
- GJ – theft of services-1st degree

Kennedy, Rebecca D.; 50
- domestic violence-assault-3rd degree

Stewart. Sr., Kenneth M.; 49
- theft of property-4th degree
- criminal trespass-3rd degree

Crossley, Jermie V.; 26
- FTA – no tag
- FTA – reckless driving

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests or incidents reported.

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

LEGALS

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

VIN#KL7CJKSB9HB147242 2017 Chevrolet Trax

If not claimed, this vehicle will be sold for towing, repair and work done. Sale date is Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. Call Vance Johnson at 256-339-5752

EST. 1873
CULLMAN
ALABAMA

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

201 2nd Avenue NE
Cullman, Alabama 35055

256.775.7203
www.CullmanAl.gov

City of Cullman
Zoning Board of Adjustments

On Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at Cullman City Hall Auditorium at 5:30 P.M., at the regular meeting of the City of Cullman Zoning Board of Adjustments, a public hearing will be held to allow affected parties to voice their concerns related to the following items:

1. 210 2nd Avenue NW – Auto Zone – addition/expansion
2. 1408 Maple Drive NW – new single-family home – front setback

For further information, contact Brian Landreth or Amber Duke at the City of Cullman Building Department at 256-775-7203.

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of *
DAVID TALLEY, * CASE NO.: PC2025-465
Deceased. *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration having been granted to Anna Cluxton, as Personal Representative of the Estate of DAVID TALLEY, deceased, on the 20th day of February 2026, 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.

Anna Cluxton
Personal Representative

Melvin Hasting
Attorney for the Petitioner
407 2nd Ave SW
Cullman, AL 35055

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 20th day of February, 2026.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN
JUDGE OF PROBATE

Case# PC2026-043
PB MIN Book 241 Page 192
Recorded in Above Book and
02/27/2026 2:07PM
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate
Cullman County, AL
1 Page(s)

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF)
KENNETH DELMER RODEN,) Case Number: PC2026-043
Deceased.)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama

In the matter of the Estate of Kenneth Delmer Roden, Deceased

Letters Of Administration, having been granted to the undersigned on the 27th day of February 2026, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of the Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said Estate are required to file an itemized and verified statement of such claim in the office of the said Judge of Probate within six months from the above date, or said claim will be barred and payment prohibited.

Stacey Lynn Long
Personal Representative

Tonya C. Palmer
Attorney for Personal Representative
1939 Main Avenue SW
Cullman, AL 35055

TO PUBLISHER:

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

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

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of)
MICHAEL ANDREW LEE) CASE NO.: PC 2026 - 055
Deceased.)

WJC

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration have been granted to Robert W. Lee, as Administrator of the Estate of Michael Andrew Lee, deceased, on the 13th day of February, 2026, 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.

Robert W. Lee

Shay Persall
SHAY PERSALL LAW, LLC
611 Seventh Street, SW
Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 841-7800

Attorney for Administrator

TO: The Publisher of The Cullman Tribune:

Please publish the foregoing notice once a week for three consecutive weeks and send an Affidavit of Publication.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
MARY KATE MECHAW, AN INCAPACITATED PERSON
now deceased. CASE NO. PC~~2023-197~~ 2025-013

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Case# PC2025-013
PB MIN Book 240 Page 722
Recorded in Above Book and Page
02/12/2026 2:15PM
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate
Cullman County, AL
1 Page(s)

WJC

THE ESTATE OF MARY KATE MECHAW, DECEASED.

Letters of Administration of said deceased have been granted to Judy Gray on the 12th day of February, 2026, 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.

Judy Gray, 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
Attorney for Petitioner
SMITH & SMITH ATTORNEYS, LLC
P. O. Box 398
Cullman, Alabama 35056-0398
Phone: (256) 734-4721
Fax: (256) 734-4774
e-mail: steve@smithandsmithllp.com

Arrests (from Front)

Lauren Estes
lauren@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Cullman Police Department last week, in conjunction with Cullman County District Attorney Champ Crocker and Covenant Rescue Group, "conducted a proactive child exploitation operation aimed at identifying and apprehending individuals seeking to prey on children," according to the CPD.

The department said five individuals were arrested as a result of the operation.

Trevan Levan Jefferson, 35, of Killen, Texas
- 2 counts of first-degree human trafficking
- 1 count of electronic solicitation of a child
- 1 count of traveling to meet a child for an unlawful sex act

Ian Grae Carroll, 29, of Somerville, Alabama
- 2 counts of first-degree human trafficking
- 1 count of electronic solicitation of a child
- 1 count of traveling to meet a child for an unlawful sex act
- 1 count of possession of unlawful hemp products

Rodrigo Uriel Hernandez, 25, of Maylene, Alabama
- 2 counts of first-degree human trafficking
- 1 count of electronic solicitation of a child
- 1 count of traveling to meet a child for an unlawful sex act

Timothy James Armstrong, 37, of Hamilton, Alabama
- 2 counts of first-degree human trafficking
- 1 count of electronic solicitation of a child
- 1 count of traveling to meet a child for an unlawful sex act

Adrian Neal Horton, 35, of Toney, Alabama
- 2 counts of first-degree human trafficking
- 1 count of electronic solicitation of a child
- 1 count of traveling to meet a child for an unlawful sex act

Cullman Police Chief Joey Duncan said, "We are grateful for the strong partnership with District Attorney Champ Crocker and Covenant Rescue Group. Their dedication and collaboration are instrumental in ensuring that those who target children for immoral and criminal purposes are held accountable."

Said the CPD, "The Cullman Police Department remains committed to protecting the most vulnerable members of our community and will continue to aggressively pursue those who seek to harm our children."

NOW HIRING CLASS A CDL DRIVERS
SAME DAY APPLICATION AND INTERVIEW + COMPETITIVE PAY AND BENEFITS
SFTWI
PLEASE APPLY AT COLLEGE TIRE
315 MAIN ST. NW HANCEVILLE
256-352-2221

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

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.

Church Services: Spirit Life Church of GOD
- 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman
- 256-739-3326
- spiritlifechurchcullman@gmail.com
- FB-Spirit Life Church Cullman
- Wednesday, March 4 – 7 p.m. Children and youth classes. Adult worship, teaching and testimonies in the sanctuary. Free pizza at 6:30. Van runs in the 5 Points Area 5:15-5:30. Call Betty Hays at 256-338-3728 for pickup.
- Friday, March 6 – Celebrate Recovery. Fellowship and testimonies. Hurts, habits and hangups are a part of everyone's life. Come and see how to overcome these and more! Dinner at 6 p.m. Meeting starts at 6:30. Childcare provided.
- Sunday, March 8 – 8:15 a.m. Van runs in 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.

Shirley Burden Public Library in Hanceville
- February is Love Your Library Month, and we are having a BOOK SALE the entire month. The proceeds assist our children's program. The library is open Tuesday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (closed from noon-1 p.m.) and Saturdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Join us on Facebook for weekly details or please feel free to call us at 256-352-0685. Follow Facebook/Hanceville Public Library for event details.
- Tuesday, March 3, at 11 a.m. Spanish class with Alejandra Pena, a 16-year veteran in Spanish instruction with a bachelor's in bilingual education
- Wednesday, March 4, at 10 a.m. Summer with the Cullman Soil and Water District will read Dr. Seuss' "Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?"
- Wednesday, March 11, at 10 a.m. Storytime
- Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Hanceville Irish Festival and BOOK SALE
- Tuesday, March 17, at 11 a.m. Spanish class
- Wednesday, March 18, at 10 a.m. Storytime
- Saturday, March 21, at 10 a.m. Book club
- Wednesday, March 25, at 10 a.m. Lisa L. Ellard, MSN CRNP, RN instructor, Department of Nursing Education at Wallace State Community College, will present a program on first aid for children
- Friday, March 27, at 6 p.m. Poetry Night is back! Calling all amateurs, song writers, performers to share their talents with us!

Heartland Quilt Guild Meeting
Thursday, March 12, at 6 p.m. at Christ Covenant Church. 1310 Saint Joseph Dr. NW in Cullman. Quilters of all experience levels are welcome.

Hanceville Irish Festival
Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. in downtown Hanceville. For more information visit www.facebook.com/hancevilleirishfest.

Cullman County Master Gardners Native Azalea and Wildflower Sale
Saturday, March 21, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at the fairgrounds at Sportsman Lake Park

WWA Wyld Wrestling Alliance Event to Support Cullman County Relay For Life
Saturday, April 11, at noon at the Cullman County Agricultural Trade Center. Doors open at noon. Bell time 6 p.m. General admission is $10, ring-side $15 and kids 5 and younger get in free. Get ready to rumble for a cause! The Cullman County Relay For Life Team Sassy Ladies is teaming up with WWA Wyld Wrestling Alliance for a high-energy fundraiser you won't want to miss! These wrestlers know a thing or two about strength, grit and fighting back — and together, we're channeling that same power straight into our mission to kick cancer's butt. Live music, wrestling and food.

Cullman County Master Gardners Spring Plant Sale
Friday and Saturday, April 17-18, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at the fairgrounds at Sportsman Lake Park

Bremen man killed in single-vehicle crash

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — A Bremen man was killed in a single-vehicle crash Sunday. Alabama State Troopers identified the victim as William L. Rhodes, 56.

Troopers said the crash occurred at approximately 5:35 p.m. They said Rhodes was fatally injured when the 2013 Ford F-150 he was driving left the roadway and struck a tree. According to Troopers, he was not using a seat belt at the time of the crash and was ejected and pronounced deceased at the scene.

The crash occurred on County Road 54 near Bug Tussle Road, approximately 4 miles northeast of Bremen, in Cullman County.

Nothing further is available as Troopers with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency's (ALEA) Highway Patrol Division continue to investigate.

Borden Family Pharmacy
Established in 1999
Borden FAMILY PHARMACY
bordenfamilypharmacy.com
256-734-7535

The Cullman Tribune
Cullman County's Oldest Business, Serving the area since 1874 Publication Number USPS-139-700
Telephone: 256-739-1351 Fax: 1-256-739-4422
HumbleRoots,LLC
Published daily Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 219 2nd Avenue SE, Cullman, Alabama 35055 Entered as periodical material at the Cullman Post Office Periodical postage paid at Cullman, Alabama 35055

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGE TO:
The Cullman Tribune
219 Second Avenue SE
Cullman, Alabama 35055
Email Address: office@cullmantribune.com

ANNUALLY BASED RATES

CULLMAN.....$125.00
OUTSIDE CULLMAN.....$250.00

Noah Galilee - Publisher
Dustin Isom - Associate Publisher
Chasady Woods - Reporter
Lauren Estes - Reporter
W.C. Mann - Reporter
Gauge Day - Reporter
Anabelle Howze - Reporter
Lucas Gray - Varsity Sports Editor
Sammy Confer - JV Sports Editor
Rhonda Richie - Newsroom Manager
Janet Chandler - Marketing Specialist

PREP FOOTBALL

Fairview's Brian Simmons expects to maintain the Aggies' winning standard as head coach

Lucas Gray
lucas@cullmantribune.com

FAIRVIEW, Ala. — After the sudden resignation of legendary Fairview head coach George Redding on Feb. 20, the future of the program was up in the air to those on the outside.

The administration had their man in mind from the jump, however, and met with long-time defensive coordinator Brian Simmons to offer him the head coaching position last weekend.

By last Monday, the decision was made public, with Simmons stepping into the lead role after 19 years of calling the defense alongside Redding. One of his first acts as head coach came on Thursday when, during a weight room session, he noticed multiple players wearing Hey Dude shoes instead of their athletic-wear.

Simmons pulled the team aside for a meeting, not to scold them, but to affirm that despite a coaching change, the winning standard at Fairview isn't going anywhere.

"Athletically, we're not going to out-athlete people at this level, so we have to be very, very good at details- the details being the right footwear. I said, 'those standards are not changing. We will pay attention to detail, and we will do things at a certain level, one that's higher than most people around us are going to,' That's our goal, and that's been our goal for 19 years," Simmons said.

That standard, the same one Redding adopted from his head coach, Dafford Smith, has the Aggies in the midst of the most successful run in school history. Since the program's rebirth in 1963, Fairview had recorded just one 10-win season in 1994. In Redding's 19-year tenure, they had five, with four of those coming since 2020.

Last season was the best with Redding at the helm, with Fairview going 10-0 in the regular season, senior running back Jake Harper amassing over 2100 yards and the team going to the third round of the state playoffs. The weight of continuing that recent success would be crushing for some, but Simmons pushed back on the idea of pressure. Instead, he called it a "tremendous honor" to get the chance to sustain the Aggies' success.

Stepping into the lead role has been a dream of Simmons' since he played football at West End high school. He pointed to one moment when, as a tenth grader, he and his team were preparing to come onto the field for a game. With the Patriots being their mascot, the team would pump fog into the tunnel, and set off a canon to signal the team to enter the field.

Seeing the crowd and feeling the energy and the passion, he knew he wanted to be a part of the sport for the rest of his life. He knew too, however, that he wouldn't be doing it as a player. In that moment he looked up and saw his head coach, Randy Hallmark join them to lead the team out, and knew coaching was the avenue, with head coach being the ultimate goal.

In the past two decades as the defensive coordinator at Fairview, Simmons said there'd been opportunities to take head coaching jobs elsewhere, but declined them to stay with the Aggies.

"I love everything about Fairview. I absolutely love this community. Our fans are phenomenal, our parents are phenomenal. The students here, even if they don't play ball, they're phenomenal kids. Right now, I'm the athletic director, I'm the head football coach and the head softball coach. I've had people ask me 'How many jobs are you going to take on?' and I tell them 'as many as we need,'" said Simmons on his increasing responsibility in the school and community.

Despite the increased workload as head coach, Simmons said there's still a chance he'll be the defensive play caller, but the staff is looking at all possibilities.

With nearly 20 years at the side of Redding, Simmons had more than just a co-worker, the two are now close friends. With those years together, they learned how to win together and their philosophies have "morphed into the same."

With the change at the top and the loss of some key seniors, some details will be different, but Simmons said "Our goal has not changed, our standards have not changed and our passion has not changed. That's what I've told the team, I say 'why would you change something that's worked for 19 years?' Coach Redding and I did it together for so long, so we agreed that those key things are what we need to be good at and have in order to succeed. The only thing that's changed is who's printing off the schedule."



CULLMAN TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Fairview head coach Brian Simmons

Cullman tennis impresses at Warrior Tournament, girls take runner-up spot

Nathan Bates
Cullman HS Tennis

FLORENCE, Ala. — Cullman's varsity tennis teams competed in the Warrior Tournament in Florence on Saturday. The varsity girls had a strong showing, finishing as runner-up in a loaded field.

Elizabeth Hughes and Kate Preston Bates were #2 doubles champions.

Lucy Williamson and Addie Townson claimed the #3 doubles championship.

Kate Preston Bates also earned the #5 singles championship.

Elizabeth Hughes was the runner-up at #1 singles.

The varsity boys finished 4th overall.

Logan Powell and Zeke Chaney were #3 doubles champions.

Zeke Chaney also captured the #6 singles championship.



NATHAN BATES/CULLMAN HS TENNIS

Cullman's HS Tennis team at the Warrior Tournament on Feb. 28

Lady Eagles (from Front)

kicked off a 12-0 run to open the third quarter. On the stark difference in play from the second to the third quarter, Adams said "We knew Lanett was going to try to speed things up and play chaotic. We played in that chaos in the first half for sure. I told the girls 'if we could just slow it down, be calm in the midst of that storm,' that we would come out on top."

Lanett would eventually find some semblance of offense after Addison capped off the run for Cold Springs. Five points came from free throws, and a put-back and jumper from Nakeriona Hand gave the Panthers life towards the end of the quarter. Dickerson ended the quarter with a driving layup for Cold Springs, who led 42-26 at the end of the third and looked primed to run away with the game.

The Panthers weren't done just yet, however. The Lady Eagles came out in the fourth shaky, and Lanett's desperation-time press defense was a big part of it. Lanett's James took advantage of this, putting up two layups to start the period, one of which she took coast-to-coast after a steal. Serenity Roberts then hit a massive corner three, pulling the Panthers to just a 42-33 single-digit deficit.

With all the energy in the building going Lanett's way, the Eagles looked to their star and leader, Ella Dickerson. Driving down the court, Whitlow found Dickerson on the wing, who, without hesitation, took the deep three. She nailed it, snatching the air out of the Lanett bench and crowd, and putting Cold Springs back up 12.



LUCAS GRAY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



LUCAS GRAY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

"I'm not sure that was the right shot to take," Dickerson said, grinning. She added, "I looked at Miss Adams right before, and I know she has all the faith in the world in me, and I know my teammates believe in me. You just get this feeling sometimes, right before you catch the ball, and I knew we needed a big score- we needed a big basket. I feel like it really helped our confidence."

The rest of the game was a dogfight, with chippy fouls by Lanett attempting to force turnovers, but Cold Springs stayed composed, sealing a 55-43 win over the Panthers to advance to the ASHAA 2A Girls State Championship game on Friday at 9 a.m. at Legacy Arena.

"To be here, and we expected to be here, we put pressure on ourselves to be here. So, being in the coach's chair, obviously I've put a lot of pressure on myself, but- credit to these girls for being relentless and refusing to lose. We've lost ten games this year, played a really brutal schedule, but we've won the ones we needed to win and I'm just really thankful for them," Adams said after the win.

Dickerson led the Lady Eagles with 22 points, three rebounds, one assist and steal each and two blocks. Huffstutler and Bruer were the next highest scorers with seven points a piece.

The Lady Eagles will take on the winner of no. 9 Clarke County vs. no. 1 North Sand Mountain in the State Championship game.

SPORTS EDITORIAL

Netflix's Mayweather vs. Pacquiao announcement is its' latest mockery of a once-respected sport

Lucas Gray
lucas@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Like many kids in Alabama in the 2000s, I didn't grow up in a boxing-centric household. I heard stories of Marino, Sanders and Favre- not Tyson and Foreman.

Regardless, when Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather met in September of 2015, the world stood still, and like many we broke our norm, purchased the Pay-Per-View and stood with it.

The two titans of the sport, both in the twilight of their primes, dealt blows for 12 rounds at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas and were broadcast to the largest Pay-Per-View audience in history, with Mayweather winning by unanimous decision (and the two pocketing a combined $300 million dollars).

Netflix's sports division announced this week that the two would meet again this September, nearly 11 years to the day from their first match, to headline a card for a primetime event that the service's Vice President of Sports, Gabe Spitzer, called a "full circle moment."

So what's the problem? It's 2026.

"Money" Mayweather retired from professional boxing in 2017 with a perfect 50-0 record as one of the richest athletes in history. Now 49 years old, he's decided to return to the ring alongside 47-year old Pacquiao, who also recently came out of retirement.

It's more spectacle than competition, which is nothing new for those paying attention to Netflix's boxing productions.

The streaming service famously platformed 27-year-old YouTube influencer Jake Paul's "boxing match" against a then 57-year-old Mike Tyson in 2024, proudly touting that it was the most streamed sporting event in history in addition to being their first.

Paul, who began boxing in 2018 as part of a trend of "Influencer Boxing," is convinced he's revolutionized the sport with his slew of matches versus has-beens and MMA fighters.

Netflix thinks the same thing for giving it a platform. They're both right, but to revolutionize is not always to change something for the better.

Sure people tuned in, and many will tune in to watch the two men nearing 50 this fall, but it wasn't long ago fans of the sport had the Fury vs. Wilder trilogy, Joshua vs. Klitschko and Alvarez vs. Golovkin to look forward to, among others.

It's not easy to pin-point one event or person that's responsible for this sudden flip in quality.

The impending doom of the outdated and far too expensive Pay-Per-View system certainly plays a role, with more and more fights being paywalled on the ever-growing array of streaming services.

One of those, DAZN, is an overpriced and under-marketed fighting-exclusive platform, featuring some of the great young boxing and MMA talent from across the world for the low price of $30.99/month.

On the topic of marketing, like baseball before Ohtani, Judge and Witt Jr., the sport is in need of young stars for this generation of fans to become invested.

They're out there, but they're being held back by the paywalls they fight behind. Jesse Rodriguez, Shakur Stevenson, Junto Nakatani, Devin Haney- all under thirty years of age.

Netflix had a chance to do something truly revolutionary: to make quality boxing accessible.

With 300 million worldwide subscribers, they're the most popular streaming service on the planet.

By pitting two young stars head-to-head, they could usher in a great new rivalry as well as a generation of fans.

Instead, they've opted to puppeteer these retirees, along with the sport as a whole, in front of us to garner the largest audience it can.

So no, this is not a "full-circle moment," this is a gross pandering of nostalgia to fans of a sport in dire need of young superstars and real competition.

WAREHOUSE DISCOUNT GROCERIES

Saving You Money Is What We're All About!

Warehouse Discount Groceries
5754 AL- Hwy 157 North
Cullman, AL 35055
256•739•4310

Warehouse Discount Groceries
1615 Town Square S W
Cullman, AL 35055
256•739•4380

Warehouse Discount Groceries
780 Main St. N E
Hanceville, AL 35077
256•352•6245

We Welcome Food Stamp Shoppers & W.I.C. Vouchers Accepted

Prices Effective - Wednesday, March 4 through Tuesday, March 10, 2026

March FROZEN FOOD Month

Spring forward MARCH 8TH



RIBEYE STEAKS
Boneless Family Pack
$9.99 LB.



WRIGHT BACON
1.5 Lb. Stack Pack
Selected Varieties
$6.99 EA.



LARGE MAG CANTALOUPES
Del Monte
2 for $5



MICHIGAN GROWN APPLES
3 Lb.Bag Fuji or Red Delicious
$2.99 EA.

99¢ Sale

FOOD CLUB BREAD & BUTTER CHIPS
16 Oz. or Hamburger DIll Chips
99¢





FOOD CLUB INSTANT MASHED POTATOES
4 Oz. Pouch
Selected Varieties
99¢



RO★TEL TOMATOES
10 Oz.
Selected Varieties
99¢



CHEF BOYARDEE
7.25-15 Oz.
Selected Varieties
99¢

FOOD CLUB PASTA SAUCE
24 Oz. Jar
Selected Varieties
99¢



RONCO PASTA
12-16 Oz.
Selected Varieties
99¢



HUNT'S MANWICH
15 -15.5 Oz.
Original or Bold
99¢





STARKIST TUNA
5 Oz. in Oil or Water
Chunk Light
99¢



BANQUET POT PIES
7 Oz. Original or Breakfast
Selected Varieites
99¢



TINA'S BURRITOS
4 Oz. Breakfast or 8 Oz. Big Selected Varieties
99¢

5754 AL- Hwy 157 N Cullman, AL

1615 Town Square S W Cullman, AL

780 Main St. N E Hanceville, AL



Product Availability May Vary • Good Only While Supplies Last • We Reserve The Right to Limit Quantities • Not Responsible For Typographical Errors • No Sales To Dealers At These Prices



RIBEYE STEAKS
Beef Boneless
Family Pack
$13.99 LB.



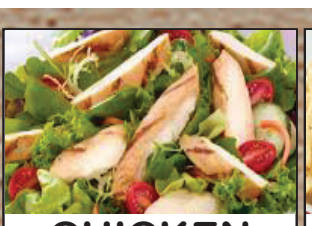
GROUND CHUCK
Fresh 80% Lean
Family Pack
$4.99 LB.



BOSTON BUTT PORK ROAST
Fresh
Whole
$1.99 LB.



BOTTOM ROUND ROAST
Beef
Boneless
$5.99 LB.



CHICKEN TENDERS
Fresh
$3.49 LB.



BABY BACK PORK RIBS
1 Piece
Previously Frozen
$3.49 LB.



CHICKEN BREAST FILLET PATTIES
3 Lb.
Restaurant Quality
$6.99 EA.



BRYAN BOLOGNA
12 Oz.
Regular or Thick
$2.39 EA.



BALL PARK BEEF FRANKS
15 Oz. Regular
or Bun Size
$4.99 EA.



ECKRICH SMOKED SAUSAGE
13-14 Oz.
Seleted Varieties
$3.29 EA.



BEEFSTEAK TOMATOES
Hothouse Grown
$1.99 LB.



RED ONIONS
2 Lb. Bag Good for
Salads & Salsas
$1.99 EA.



DOLE FRESH GARDEN SALAD
12-14 Oz. Bag or Classic Coleslaw
or Diced Southern Slaw
$1.49 EA.



CALIFORNIA NAVELS
4 Lb. Bag Sweet, Seedless
Great Source of Vitamin C
$3.99 EA.



HASS AVOCADOS
Del Monte
99¢ EA.



FOOD CLUB CHEESE
6-8 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



FOOD CLUB BISCUITS
10 Ct. Butter Me-Not or Texas
Style Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



FOOD CLUB SPREAD
45 Oz.
$2.99 EA.



SIMPLY JUICE
46-52 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$3.99 EA.



NESTLE COFFEE MATE
32 Oz. or 14 Oz. Cold Foam
Selected Varieties
$2.99 EA.



TOTINO'S PIZZA ROLLS
100 Ct. Pepperoni
or Combination
$9.99 EA.



JIMMY DEAN BREAKFAST SANDWICHES OR ROLL-UPS
4-8 Ct., 12-18 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$5.99 EA.



FOOD CLUB PEANUT BUTTER
16 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



CRAV'N FLAVOR SALTINE CRACKERS
16 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



NABISCO RITZ CRACKERS OR CRISP & THINS
11-13 Oz. or Toasted
Chips Selected Varieties
$3.99 EA.



DALE'S STEAK SEASONING
16 Oz. Original or
Reduced Sodium
$2.99 EA.



ACT II POPCORN
6-12 Pk.
Selected Varieties
$2.99 EA.



KOOL-AID JAMMERS
10 Pk.
Selected Varieties
$2.99 EA.



HUNT'S TOMATOES
28 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



HORMEL COMPLEATS
7-10 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



IDAHOAN FAMILY SIZE MASHED POTATOES
8 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$1.99 EA.



FOOD CLUB COOKING OIL
40 Oz. Canola
or Vegetable
$2.99 EA.



PIT BOSS HARDWOOD PELLETS
20 Lb.
Selected Varieties
$7.99 EA.



GAIN LAUNDRY DETERGENT
46 Oz. Liquid, 16 Ct. Flings! or 120 Ct. Dryer Sheets
or 44 Oz. Liquid Fabric Softener Selected Varieties
$4.99 EA.



SUN DROP, 7•UP, RC COLA OR A &W
12 Pk.
12 Oz. Cans
$6.99 EA.



SUNBELT GRANOLA VALUE PACK
14.26-15.85 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $8



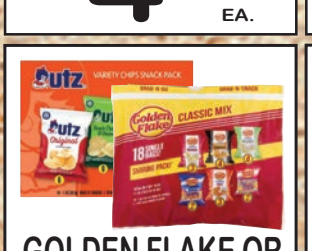
LAY'S POTATO CHIPS
4.75-8 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $5



FRITO LAY DORITOS
6-10.75 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $7



UTZ VARIETY PACKS
28 Ct.
$9.99 EA.



GOLDEN FLAKE OR UTZ VARIETY PACKS
18 Ct.
$8.99 EA.

LEWIS BAKE SHOP 1/2 LOAF BREADS
12 Oz. Honey Wheat
or Whole Wheat
2 for $4

LITTLE DEBBIE MINI MUFFINS
8.27-8.44 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $5

BLUE BELL ICE CREAM
Half Gallon
Selected Varieties
$6.99 EA.

BLUE BELL ICE CREAM
12 Pk. Cups
Selected Varieties
$6.49 EA.

COORS LIGHT OR MILLER LITE
12 Pk.
Cans or Bottles
$13.59 EA.

MICHELOB ULTRA
24 Pk.
Cans or Bottles
$26.99 EA.

SUTTER HOME WINE
1.5 L
$11.99 EA.

CUPCAKE WINE
750 mL
$9.79 EA.

Deli & Bakery Specials — Hanceville Location

BRYAN CAJUN ROAST BEEF
Deli Sliced
$9.99 LB.

MICKELBERRY'S HAM
Deli Sliced
$5.79 LB.

CHARTER RESERVE SMOKED GOUDA
or Havarti
Deli Sliced
$8.99 LB.

J. SKINNER CINNAMON ROLLS
22 Oz.
Family Pack
$5.69 EA.

STRAWBERRY CREME CAKE
28 Oz.
Benson's
$8.99 EA.

FRIED CHICKEN
Fresh 8 Piece
Bone-In
$8.99 EA.

Wallace State Health Science Programs opening application process

Special to The Cullman Tribune

HANCEVILLE, Ala. — Wallace State Community College Health Science programs are now accepting applications for fall 2026 admission. The college offers more than a dozen pathways to careers in the medical field.

"Anyone with an interest in working in the health science field can find a path to a rewarding career at Wallace State," said Dr. Jim Malone, dean of Health Sciences.

"Even someone who may prefer a more behind-the-scenes role over direct patient contact can find an area of interest through programs such as Health Information Technology or Medical Laboratory Technology."

Most of the programs will accept applications from March 1 to June 1, except for the Nursing program, which will take applications from March 15 to May 15.

The new Speech-Language Pathologist Assistant program is currently accepting applications through April 1 for summer admission of its first cohort.

Programs accepting applications and their minimum requirements to apply include:

• Dental Assisting requires a GPA of at least 2.3 and a minimum ACT of 16; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Dental Hygiene requires a GPA of 2.5 and a minimum ACT of 18; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Diagnostic Imaging and Radiation Therapy require a minimum ACT of 19; 2.5 GPA on pre-requisite courses that should be completed before applying.

• Diagnostic Medical Sonography requires a minimum GPA of 2.5 and a minimum ACT of 19; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Emergency Medical Services requires the student be able to enroll in English 101 and Math 100 courses and a minimum ACT of 17.

• Health Information Technology requires a GPA of 2.5 and minimum ACT of 17; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Medical Assistant requires a 2.0 GPA and a minimum ACT of 17; no pre-requisite courses are required.

• Medical Laboratory Technician requires a 2.5 GPA and a minimum ACT of 18; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying; the two-semester Medical Lab Assistant option requires a 2.0 GPA, but an ACT score is not required.

• The Nursing program offers a number of pathways for students, including a new evening option for the first three semesters of the traditional ADN/PN option at the main campus starting this fall and day classes for the same at the Oneonta Academic Center.

o Traditional ADN/PN and Mobility options for Nursing require a minimum ACT of 18 to apply, a minimum GPA of 2.0 at native institution or 2.0 cumulative at institution from which the student is transferring and 2.5 GPA for nursing required academic courses. A minimum GPA of 2.5 high school cumulative from high school is required for students without prior college courses (GED will be used if applicable).

o The UAB/WSCC Nursing Joint Enrollment and Joint Enrollment Mobility require a minimum ACT of 20, a minimum cumulative 2.5 GPA on all college work as well as a 2.5 GPA on nursing required academic core courses. All academic courses must be completed before the application deadline. Joint Enrollment and Joint Enrollment Mobility students must be admitted to both UAB and WSCC.

• Occupational Therapy Assistant requires a GPA of 2.5 and a minimum ACT of 20; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Physical Therapist Assistant requires a GPA of 3.0 and a minimum ACT of 20; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Polysomnographic (Sleep Lab) Technologist requires a 2.0 GPA and a minimum ACT of 17; no pre-requisite courses are required.



WALLACE STATE

Wallace State Community College Health Science programs are now accepting applications for fall 2026 admission. The college offers more than a dozen pathways to careers in the medical field.

• Respiratory Therapy requires a GPA of 2.5 and a minimum ACT of 18; pre-requisite courses should be completed before applying.

• Speech-Language Pathologist Assistant requires a GPA of 2.5 or better on all general required pre-SLPA courses and a minimum ACT of 20.

Students may apply to more than one health science program, but it is suggested they apply to no more than three.

To review Health Science Division programs, visit www.wallacestate.edu/health.

Visit www.wallacestate.edu for more information or call 256-352-8236 or email lioncentral@wallacestate.edu.

'We are grateful for the continued support that allows us to care for these children'

Anabelle Howze
anabelle@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Since its founding in 1981, the Pilot Light Home has provided short- and long-term foster care placements for children through the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

Pilot Club of Cullman Board President Peggy Harris said the nonprofit home, which can accommodate up to six children, was built entirely through community donations and paid for upon completion. A house parent is employed to oversee daily operations, and additional funding comes from DHR stipends, local fundraising efforts and private donations.

Harris said many of the children placed at the home have experienced trauma, developmental disabilities or behavioral challenges. While living at the home, they attend school, participate in church and extracurricular activities and share in daily responsibilities in a structured, supportive environment.

Operating costs remain significant. Insurance expenses alone total nearly $23,000 annually, in addition to maintenance and transportation costs. Recently, the organization received funding from the Alabama Mountains, Rivers, & Valleys (AMRV) Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council to install new flooring, completed by O.F. Richter and Sons.



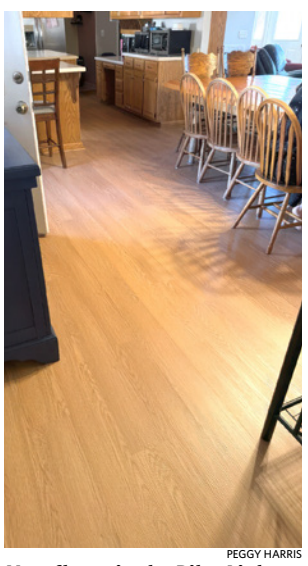
PEGGY HARRIS

A new couch and furniture for the Pilot Light Home were purchased with donated funds.

The home is in need of community support. Local civic groups, businesses and volunteers regularly assist with fundraising, landscaping and maintenance projects, but Harris said any and all assistance is greatly appreciated. Ongoing needs include food, paper goods and personal care items.

Donations may be mailed to Pilot Light Incorporated, P.O. Box 221, Cullman, AL 35056.

"Our home has always belonged to the community," Harris said. "We are grateful for the continued support that allows us to care for these children."



PEGGY HARRIS

New floors in the Pilot Light Home were funded by a grant from the Alabama Mountains, Rivers, & Valleys (AMRV) Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council.





EDITORIAL

Standards matter in news, especially when trust is involved

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

There is a difference between launching a Facebook page and operating a newsroom.

In recent days, a newly created local social media news platform generated significant attention and praise for its rapid growth and assertive tone. Within 24 hours, publicly available information surfaced showing that the individual leading the effort had prior sexual offense convictions and was listed on the sex offender registry.

Shortly after that information became widely known, the page shut down.

Those facts are not presented for shock value. They illustrate something larger.

Accredited news organizations do not simply begin publishing and hope for the best.

They conduct background checks. They vet staff. They carry liability insurance. They operate under established ethical standards. They answer to advertisers, readers, professional associations and, when necessary, the courts.

Those standards exist to protect the public.

When a newsroom hires someone, there is a documented process. When a story is submitted, it is reviewed by editors. When allegations are made, documentation is required. When errors occur, corrections are issued in writing.

Unregulated blogs and social media pages are not required to follow those procedures.

They are not required to disclose ownership structures. They are not required to vet contributors. They are not bound by institutional policy or professional oversight.

That difference is not academic. It is practical.

Readers often focus on speed. Who posted first. Who went live quickest. Who generated the most reaction.

But speed without structure creates risk.

This episode demonstrates how quickly public perception can shift when due diligence is absent. Applause turned to condemnation within a single news cycle.

Accreditation is not a decorative label. While the United States does not license journalists, established media outlets typically operate within recognized professional frameworks.

They adhere to published ethical codes. They maintain corporate filings. They pay taxes. They carry insurance. They can be held civilly liable for defamation, invasion of privacy and other legal violations.

There are tangible consequences for failure.

A Facebook page can disappear overnight. A newspaper cannot.

It is also worth considering where elected officials choose to communicate. Established newsrooms ask follow-up questions.

They request records. They fact check claims. They publish context alongside statements.

Social media pages and unregulated blogs may simply post what they are given.

Public officials have every right to choose their communication channels. Voters, however, should notice when those channels avoid structured scrutiny.

The public should ask a simple question before trusting any source of information: Who is responsible if something goes wrong?

In established media, that answer is clear. Names are attached. Offices exist. Policies are written. Liability is real.

In unregulated social media ventures, accountability can vanish as quickly as the page itself.

This is not about suppressing new voices. It is not about competition.

It is about standards.

In an era where information spreads instantly, process matters more than ever. Vetting matters. Oversight matters. Consequences matter.

Trust is not built by volume or bravado.

It is built by structure.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Setting the record straight: Our commitment to the community runs deeper than a box

Cullman Electric Cooperative

A letter to the editor recently questioned Cullman Electric Cooperative's motives behind our Community Cupboard initiative. While we welcome open dialogue, it's important that our members and neighbors have the facts.

The Community Cupboards were not created as a publicity effort but out of compassion and a genuine desire to help address food insecurity in our communities. These pantries provide immediate, no-barrier access to food and essential items — no paperwork, no questions asked. They exist to serve those who may not qualify for traditional assistance programs but still face tough moments between paychecks or during emergencies.

Cullman Electric funded the construction, installation and ongoing maintenance of each Community Cupboard at our Cullman and Addison offices. In fact, the "boxes" are old electrical boxes that were going to be thrown away, and the support beams were donated by a local business, Rustic Lodge Works in Hanceville. Our cooperative and donations from our employees also financially support and provide items to keep the shelves stocked each week, ensuring these resources remain available to anyone in need. We've simply invited community members to join us in this effort if they are able because cooperative spirit is rooted in neighbors helping neighbors. The goal has never been to shift responsibility, but to multiply impact through shared generosity.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, every dollar we collect from members goes toward maintaining reliable service and improving infrastructure. Rate changes are driven primarily by factors outside our control, including wholesale power costs from the Tennessee Valley Authority, inflation in materials and national supply chain pressures. What remains within our control is how we serve our community, and we choose to act with compassion and purpose.

The Community Cupboards are one small example of that commitment, alongside our continued support for local schools, scholarships, safety education programs and broadband expansion through Sprout Fiber Internet.

Our members deserve the truth: Cullman Electric isn't pretending to care. We've been serving, supporting and investing in this community since 1936 and that's something no opinion can change.

Cullman Electric Cooperative

Editor's note: This Letter to the Editor is in response to one that was published Feb. 27, 2026: www.cullmantribune.com/2026/02/27/letter-to-the-editor-cullman-electric-cooperatives-food-pantries-arent-corporate-responsibility

Hanceville (from Front)

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com

HANCEVILLE. Ala. — The Hanceville City Council at its last meeting announced a new city website will launch soon.

The key takeaways of the new website are:

- If you need to know where to pay your light, water or gas bill the proper facilities addresses and their phone numbers will be listed accordingly. The same goes for vehicle and mobile home property renewal tags.
- "Where do my taxes go?" is an available tab that breaks down tax distribution.
- There is a staff directory that lists everyone that works for the City of Hanceville such as the mayor, council members, city staff, attorney and clerk. This also includes their contact information.

"Down on Main Street we had a light out and I didn't know who to call," Councilman Robert Powell explained. He said there is a form for outdoor reports and, for this situation, the Cullman Electric Cooperative would respond to the issue.

"The website should go live in a week," Powell stated.

There are many features on the website that will assist residents with things like locating storm shelters, proper zoning and paying their bills, though it will also inform the public of local events, eateries and council meetings.

"One of the things we're trying to get started here is, 'Eat, Sleep, Shop, Local,'" Powell said. "Right now there are only two listed, but the idea is that every restaurant you can go to will be on here."

Sunday alcohol sales

Next on the agenda Mayor Nolan Bradford reviewed Ordinances No.2026-3 and No.2026-4 with the council. These would allow alcohol sales in Hanceville on Sundays from 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

In public comments, some individuals suggested it wouldn't be in the best interest of the city to have alcohol sales on Sundays close to churches, while others stated it will benefit city revenue.

The council said businesses have requested it to be approved so as to not negatively affect their revenue. Ultimately, the council motioned to waive the rules for No.2026-3 and No.2026-4 and the ordinances were approved.

Recognitions

The City posted to its Facebook page: "Tonight, the City of Hanceville had the honor of recognizing Hanceville Elementary School as one of the Top 25 Most Improved Schools in the State of Alabama, with an incredible 16-point increase in just one year. That kind of growth doesn't happen by accident; it's the result of hard work, strong leadership, dedicated teachers, and students who are rising to the challenge.

"We were also proud to recognize Lauren Bentley, who was recently named Cullman County Elementary Teacher of the Year. This is a well-deserved honor and a reflection of the impact she makes in the classroom every single day.

"Our schools are a vital part of our community, and achievements like these show what Hanceville is capable of when we work together. Congratulations to the faculty, staff, students, and families who made this possible. We are proud of you."

Upcoming events

Joey Smith, owner of Smokin' Joes BBQ, spoke before the council to suggest the Food Truck Night event be every Thursday from 4-8 p.m. starting April 2. He stated there will be food trucks in rotation each time so there is always something new for the public.

"I want to see something come into Hanceville," Smith stated.

Bradford replied, "Absolutely."

Food Truck Night will take place at Tucker Park.

New business

The council motioned for the library to surplus a magazine rack and two tables, with funds returning back to the library.

Community festival

The Hanceville Irish Festival will be held in downtown Hanceville on Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information visit www.facebook.com/hancevilleirishfest.

Upcoming meetings

The next council meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 12, at Hanceville City Hall. The public is welcome to attend.

Obituary Announcements: Feb. 28 - March 2

Margaret Ann Smith Kilgo, 90
Margaret Ann Smith Kilgo age 90 of Arley, Alabama passed away Feb. 26, 2026. She was born April 4, 1935, in Ardell, Alabama. Margaret was proceeded in death by her parents Armie E. and Pernie Smith, husband John Kilgo, sisters, Peggy Collins and Juanita Harbison, daughters, Cindy Calvert, Nann Jones, Rhonda Hogland and grandson Robbie Calvert. She is survived by her brother Ron Smith, son, John Keith Kilgo, grandchildren, Jeremy Hogland, Jennifer (Ryan) Woodard, Dustin (Mia) Jones, Josh Hogland, Clint Jones, nine great grandchildren, two great-great grandchildren, and a host of loving relatives and friends. Margaret's life began on a farm and she was the third child born in her family. Church was a big part of her life and she always said that growing up, "If the doors were open, we were there." Bethany Baptist Church was her church home for many years and she often told about how her parents worked hard selling calves, cotton, and pigs to help build the church. She graduated from Cold Springs High School in May of 1953 and married John Holland Kilgo on July 2, 1953. They were married 60 years until his passing in 2013. They loved traveling, spending time with family, and serving in the church together for many years. She was also very passionate about her job as a school bus driver for 26 years. Known to her family as "Granna", she always had an open door and a roast on the stove for anyone to come for lunch! She had a love that ran deep for her family and having them come over, eat, and spend time was one of her greatest joys. As the matriarch of her family, she made a lasting imprint on the hearts of all who knew her, and her love will continue to guide us for generations to come. We find peace knowing she is now reunited with all of our loved ones in Heaven.

Nellie Ramsey Burks, 89
Graveside service for Nellie Ramsey Burks, age 89, of Cullman, will be Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 1 p.m. at Missionary Grove Cemetery. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. Mrs. Burks passed away on Friday, Feb. 27, 2026, at her residence surrounded by her loving family. She was born Aug. 18, 1936, to Redo and Ola Cupp Ramsey. She is preceded in death by her parents; husband, BW Burks; sisters, Mava Painter and Mary Lois Guthrie. She is survived by her daughters, Lois Cillo (Mike) and Rita Owens; son, Billy Burks (Kathy); grandchildren, Michael Cillo, Jonathan Cillo, Angie Cillo, Scotty Burks, Kandi Burks, April Owens, and B.J. Owens; twelve great-grandchildren and one on the way.

Edna Washington Leeth, 74
A memorial service for Edna Washington Leeth, 74, of Hanceville will be 1 p.m. Saturday, March 7, at Hanceville Funeral Home Chapel. Visitation will be prior to the service from noon-1 p.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home. Edna Washington Leeth, born on Nov. 21, 1951, peacefully passed away on Feb. 25, 2026. She was born to the late Elder Lee Washington and Celesta Weeden Washington. On Dec. 27, 1970, Edna was united in marriage to the late Larry Eugene Leeth, Sr.. From this loving union, three children were born: the late Larry Eugene Leeth, Jr., Margerita Leeth Rolfsen (Robert), and Mary Leeth Woods (Jill). Edna was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, her son, and three brothers and one sister. She leaves to cherish her precious memory her loving daughters; her four grandchildren, Matthew Rolfsen, Julie Rolfsen, Jonathan Woods, and Jazymn Woods; her siblings, Jimmy Washington, Lonnie Washington, Billy Washington, Margie Smith, Sally Debose, Gwen Malcom, and Rosetta Isaac; along with a host of nieces, nephews, and dear friends. Edna devoted her professional life to caring for others through her work as a nurse. With compassion, patience, and a servant's heart, she provided comfort and healing to those entrusted to her care, viewing her work not just as a profession, but as a calling to serve. Edna will be remembered for her devotion to her family, her deep love for Jesus, and her unwavering commitment to spreading the message of His love to everyone she met.

Tony Lee Thompson, 65
Memorial service is incomplete at this time for Tony Lee Thompson, 65, of Vinemont. Cullman Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. Tony passed away Feb. 28, 2026 at his residence. He was born Feb. 24,1961 to Billy Charles Thompson and Doris Jean Higginbotham Thompson. He enjoyed fishing, camping, watching westerns, and Alabama football. He loved his family. He was preceded in death by his parents; his brothers, Wayne Thompson, Danny Thompson and, sister-in-law, Tammy Thompson. Survivors include his son, Michael (Mollye) Graves; step-daughter, Jessica (Matt) Stephens; brother, Billy Thompson; grandchildren, Jaxson and Jace; nieces, nephews, family and friends. Friends may sign the online guestbook at www.cullmanfuneralhome.com.

Cullman Funeral Home and Crematory
– "Sincere Compassionate Care" –

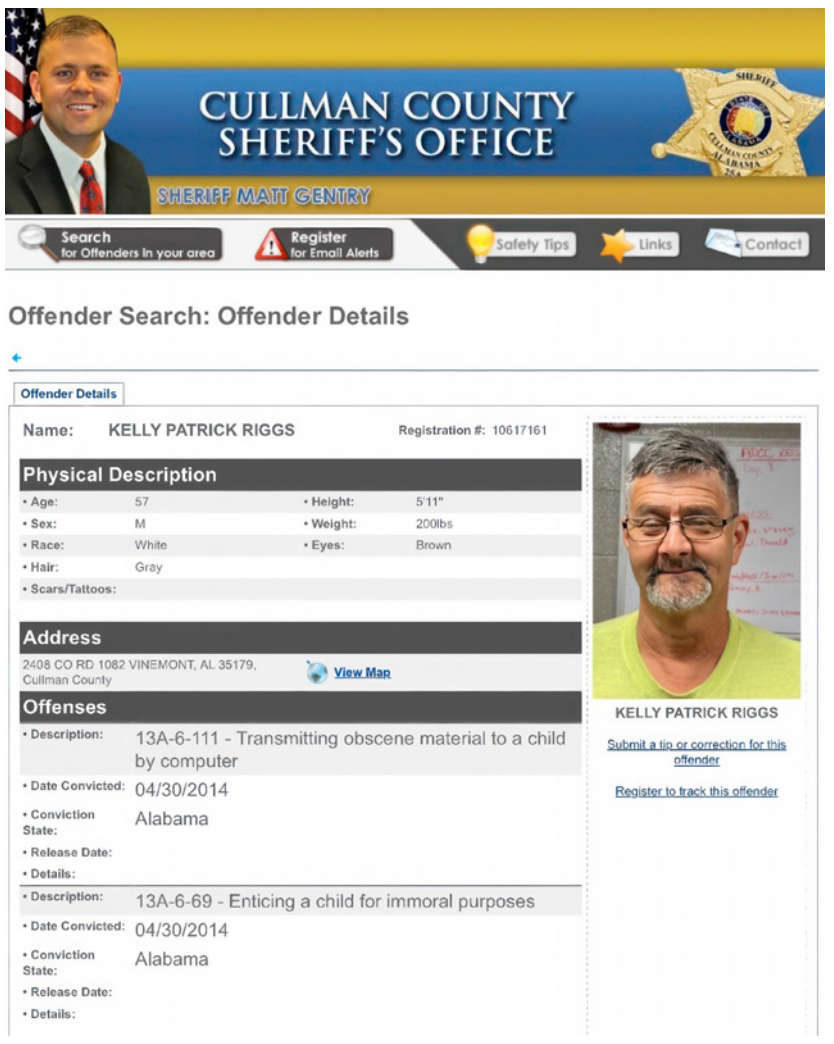
CULLMAN'S ON-SITE STATE OF THE ART CREMATORY NOW OPEN
DIRECT CREMATION $1,695 | NO HIDDEN COSTS

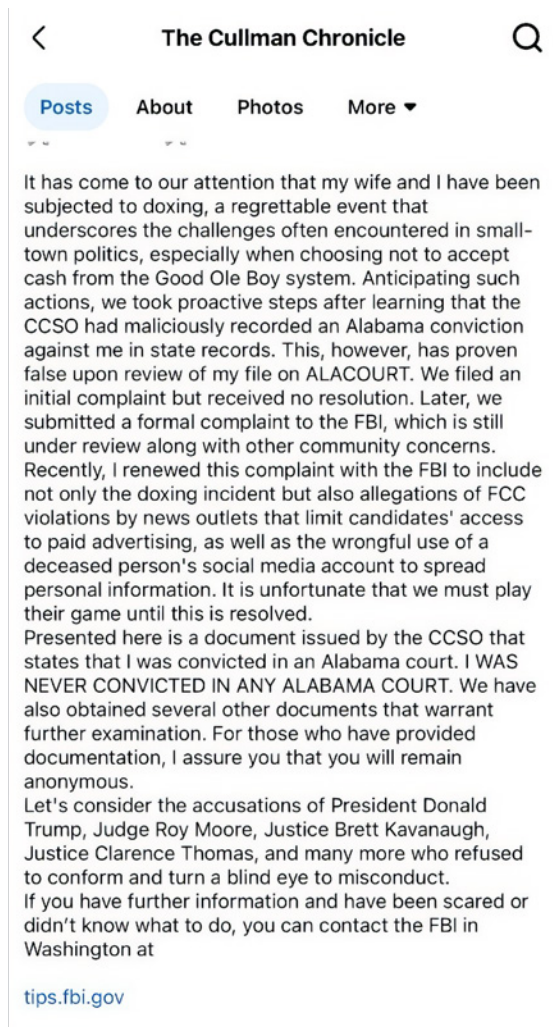
100% Locally Owned & Operated
by Steve and Hilda Rodgers

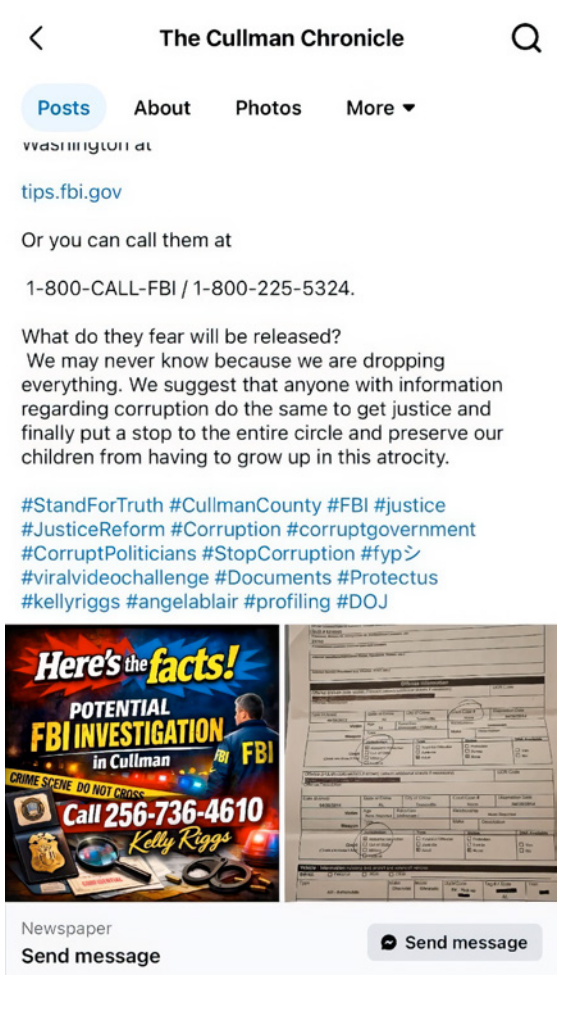
(256) 734-3144
461 U.S. Highway 278 East
Cullman, Alabama 35055
www.cullmanfuneralhome.com

FREE OBITUARY LISTINGS
HAVE YOUR FUNERAL HOME CONTACT US
Email: obits@cullmantribune.com
Complete obituaries may be found free of charge at CullmanTribune.com/obituaries.

Hanceville Funeral Home
100 Michelle Street Northwest,
Hanceville, Alabama 35077
(256) 352-3130







CULLMANSHERIFF.ORG, FACEBOOK/THE CULLMAN CHRONICLE

An image from the sex offender registry linked to the Cullman County Sheriff's Office website shows Kelly Patrick Riggs as a registered sex offender; two images show a post made to The Cullman Chronicle Facebook page.

Conviction (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

Public records reflect 2014 federal conviction, denied appeal, registry classification, candidate withdrawals and district attorney response

As of time of publication, the forum to be hosted by The Cullman Chronicle has been canceled and all information from The Cullman Chronicle's Facebook page has either been deleted or archived, no longer accessible to the public.

CULLMAN, Ala. — Federal court records reflect that Kelly Patrick Riggs, editor of The Cullman Chronicle, entered a guilty plea in United States District Court in connection with online communications with an undercover law enforcement officer posing as a 14-year-old girl.

The case was prosecuted in federal court, not in Alabama state court.

In a recent Facebook post to The Cullman Chronicle, which has now been deleted, Riggs wrote:

"I WAS NEVER CONVICTED IN ANY ALABAMA COURT."

According to court documents filed in the federal case, Riggs entered into a plea agreement with the government and agreed to plead guilty to charges brought under 18 U.S.C. § 2422(b), which involves using interstate communications to attempt to persuade, induce or entice a minor to engage in unlawful sexual activity.

The plea agreement states that on May 23, 2012, Riggs responded to an internet advertisement and communicated with an undercover officer whom he believed to be a 14-year-old girl.

Court records show that over several days he exchanged messages, sent nude images and arranged to meet the purported minor at a bowling alley on May 26, 2012. When he arrived at the location, he was arrested by law enforcement officers.

Federal court records reflect that a judgment of conviction was entered in the case in 2014. Federal court records further show that an appeal was filed in 2015 and was subsequently denied.

As part of the federal sentence, court documents show that Riggs was required to comply with the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 20913.

According to the Cullman County Sheriff's Office public registry, Riggs is listed as a registered sex offender.

The registry entry reflects an April 30, 2014, conviction date and includes offense classifications under Alabama Code § 13A-6-111, transmitting obscene material to a child by computer, and § 13A-6-69, enticing a child for immoral purposes, for state registry purposes.

The registry reflects Alabama registration and offense classification in connection with the federal conviction.

The Cullman County District Attorney's Office also noted that certain federal offenses mirror corresponding Alabama statutes.

In a follow-up clarification, District Attorney Champ Crocker stated that while the conviction occurred in federal court under federal law, the conduct underlying some federal offenses mirrors Alabama criminal statutes.

When federal authorities prosecute a case, the offender is charged under the corresponding federal statute, even if the conduct aligns with similar provisions under Alabama law.

The Alabama Sex Offender Registry may reference Alabama Code classifications for tracking and registry purposes, even when the conviction itself occurred in federal court.

The Cullman Tribune submitted written questions to Crocker regarding federal registration requirements, Alabama registry obligations and enforcement under state law.

"The Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) is a federal law establishing national standards for sex offender registration to improve public safety, and requiring offenders to register and regularly update their information," Crocker said. "I am not familiar with underlying cases against Kelly Patrick Riggs, but an individual with that name is listed as convicted on April 30, 2014, of violating both Alabama Code 13A-6-111, transmitting obscene matter to child by computer and Alabama Code 13A-6-69, enticing a child for immoral purposes, on the publicly accessible sex offender registry on alea.gov and/or cullmansheriff.org."

Crocker further addressed registration requirements for individuals convicted under federal statutes who reside in Alabama.

"SORNA is a federal statute that requires offenders convicted under both state and federal statutes to register as sex offenders," he said. "What is required of those offenders can vary based on the level of the offense, the age at the time of conviction and other factors."

Regarding enforcement under Alabama law, Crocker stated, "Failure to register as a sex offender is a state felony offense under SORNA. The first case I tried as district attorney in February of 2023 was against a convicted sex offender who failed to maintain his registration (State of Alabama vs. David Lee Moore, CC-2019-292). While I was appalled that someone who had sodomized a child in the 1990s and committed other crimes since wasn't in prison, we tried him for violating SORNA, got the conviction, and Mr. Moore received a 75-year prison sentence. SORNA is the law of the land, and as long as I'm district attorney, it will be enforced in this county."

Cullman County Sheriff candidate Chad Whaley addressed the matter publicly in a statement posted to his campaign Facebook page, announcing he would not participate in a March 21, 2026, political forum hosted by The Cullman Chronicle at the Brandin' Iron in West Point.

"It has recently come to my attention that Mr. Kelly Patrick Riggs — a registered sex offender convicted in 2014 of transmitting obscene material to a child — is the editor of The Cullman Chronicle and owner of Riggs Publishing," Whaley stated.

"After careful consideration, I will NOT be attending any political forum hosted by a convicted sex offender."

Whaley referenced his background in law enforcement and school safety.

"As a father of three young children and someone who spent 12 years serving as a School Resource Deputy protecting our students, I have dedicated much of my career to standing between predators and our children," he stated. "I will not legitimize or support any event organized by someone convicted of crimes against a child — especially under the banner of 'prison reform.' If it was up to me there would be no punishment harsh enough for anyone who harms a child!

"When it comes to crimes against children, I believe accountability must be strong and unwavering. Protecting our children is not political — it is a moral responsibility," he concluded.

Whaley stated he plans to participate in other political forums, including the upcoming Cullman Tribune political forum in May.

Cullman County Sheriff candidate Tim Creel also issued a statement on his Facebook page announcing he would not attend the same upcoming political forum hosted by Riggs.

Creel said he reviewed information related to the event before making his decision.

"Over the past few hours, information has come to light that required review. When concerns involve the safety and well-being of children, I do not speculate; I verify and I take action. I examine facts and make decisions accordingly."

Creel stated that he had previously accepted an invitation to participate in the forum, but reversed that decision after what he described as reviewing credible information.

"I was previously invited to participate in an upcoming political forum focused on prison reform with other candidates and had accepted that invitation. However, after reviewing credible information regarding associations connected to that event, I have made the decision to not attend," he said.

He said he would not align himself with individuals or organizations connected, directly or indirectly, to crimes against children.

"I cannot in good conscience, align myself with any organization or individual that may have ties direct or indirect to crimes against children," he said.

Creel emphasized that he has no affiliation with the individuals referenced in his statement. "Let me be absolutely clear; I have no relationship, affiliation or association with any individual involved in these allegations."

He further stated that protecting children remains a priority in his campaign.

"I stand firmly and (unequivocally) against crimes targeting children. Protecting children is not a political talking point for me; it is a moral line that will never be crossed."

Creel added that children in the community deserve vigilance and transparency from public officials.

"Our grandchildren, and every child in our community, deserves our vigilance, transparency, and adults who are willing to step away from anything questionable. In a world where appearances can be deceiving discernment matters."

He said he remains committed to participating in appropriate public forums moving forward.

"I remain committed to engaging with the public in appropriate and responsible settings. We appreciated the opportunity to participate in past meet and greets and forums and we look forward to future public conversations."

"Our most valuable asset is and always will be the children. Every decision we make will reflect that priority."

The Cullman Tribune attempted to contact Riggs for comment prior to publication. No publicly listed contact information was available on The Cullman Chronicle Facebook page at the time of publication.

The Tribune's reporting is based on publicly available federal court records, registry documentation and attributed public statements.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

May 23, 2012
Court records show Kelly Patrick Riggs responded to an online advertisement and began communicating with an undercover officer posing as a 14-year-old girl.

May 26, 2012
Court records show Riggs arranged to meet the purported minor at a bowling alley and was arrested upon arrival.

April 30, 2014
Federal court records show a judgment of conviction was entered following a guilty plea under 18 U.S.C. § 2422(b).

2015
Federal court records show an appeal was filed and later denied.

Post-conviction
Court documents show Riggs was required to comply with federal Sex Offender Registration requirements. The Cullman County Sheriff's Office registry reflects Alabama registration and offense classification associated with the federal conviction.

As of publication, March 2026
Cullman County Sheriff candidates Chad Whaley and Tim Creel have publicly announced they will not participate in a March 21 political forum hosted by The Cullman Chronicle.

UNDERSTANDING FEDERAL AND STATE JURISDICTION

Federal court
Federal criminal cases are prosecuted by the United States government in U.S. District Court under federal statutes. Convictions are entered by a federal judge.

Alabama state court
State criminal cases are prosecuted under Alabama law in Alabama circuit or district courts.

Registration requirement
Individuals convicted of qualifying federal offenses may be required to register under federal law. Alabama law requires registration for qualifying offenses and may classify offenses under Alabama Code for registry purposes.

A federal conviction does not constitute a state court conviction, but may still require registration in the state where the individual resides.

VIRGIL B. FOWLER
Real Estate and Insurance
AGENCY
Quality Since 1935
734-3821
vbfowlerinsurance.com
Successors to
WILLIAM RICHARD & SON INSURANCE
" Established 1885 "
Virgil B. Fowler 1895-1978 - Virgil B. Fowler Jr. 1937-2019 - Dorothy S. Fowler - Jason S. Fowler

Small Business Spotlight: Iron and Lace

Anabelle Howze
anabelle@cullmantribune.com



ANABELLE HOWZE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

A new locally owned business in Trimble is offering customers a unique retail concept that blends a firearm store with a multivendor market. Iron and Lace LLC, owned by Ashley Moreland, opened Feb. 1 at the Trimble Super Saver.

TRIMBLE, Ala. — A new locally owned business in Trimble is offering customers a unique retail concept that blends a firearm store with a multivendor market. Iron and Lace LLC, owned by Ashley Moreland, opened Feb. 1 at the Trimble Super Saver.

Moreland said the idea developed from her family's experience renting booths at flea markets and vendor events.

"We wanted a place of our own," Moreland said. "We've always enjoyed doing vendor markets, so we decided to start one and see if it worked. At the same time, we realized we could also operate a firearm store in the same space."

The dual concept allows customers to shop a variety of products while also browsing firearms and related items. Moreland said many couples appreciate the setup, as it offers something of interest for different shoppers under one roof.

Moreland said community involvement is a priority. Having relocated to Alabama about a year ago, the family views the store as a way to connect with residents and become active in the area.

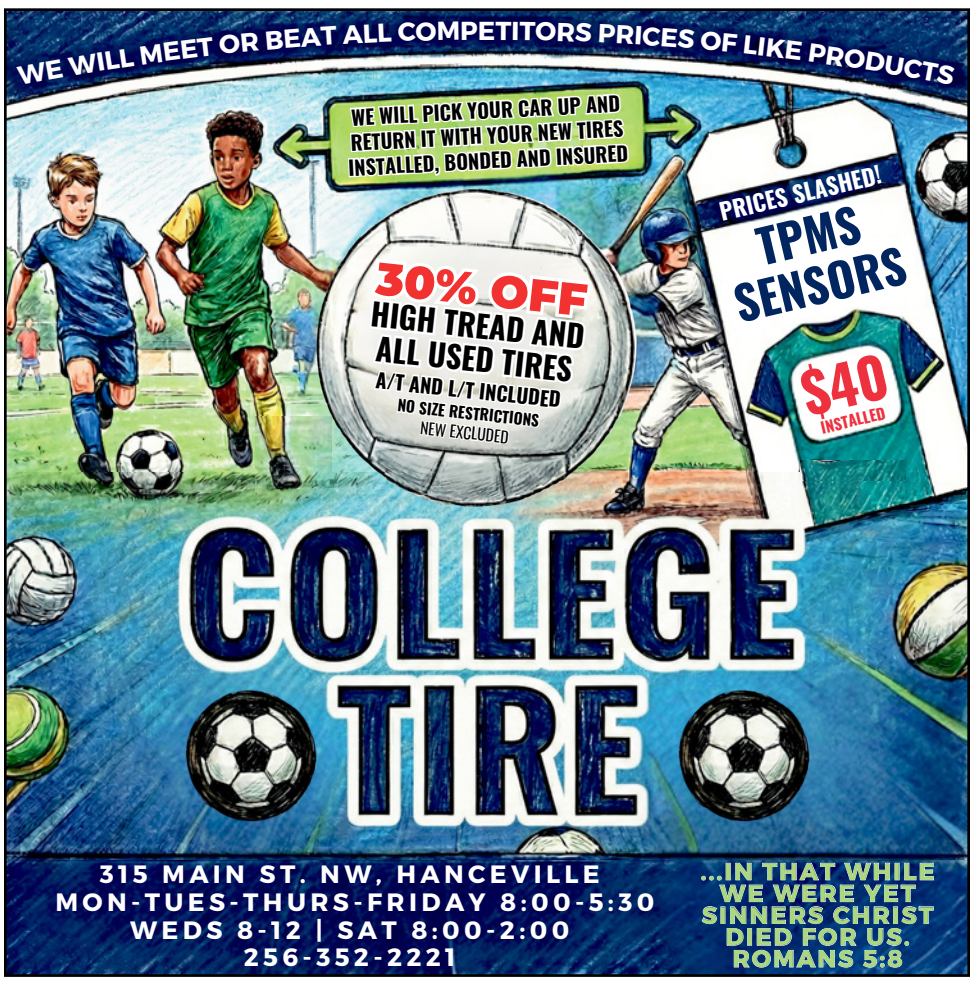
"We want to be part of the community," she said. "We try to offer competitive prices and build relationships with people here."

The vendor market features a wide range of merchandise, including antiques, clothing, ceramics and other specialty items. Vendors rent booth space and are encouraged to offer a variety of products.

Looking ahead, Moreland said the current location serves as a proof of concept. If successful, the family hopes to relocate to a larger space to accommodate additional vendors and expand operations.

Those interested in becoming a vendor can contact Iron and Lace through its Facebook page at Facebook/Iron and Lace or by calling 256-962-0301.

Iron and Lace is located at the Trimble Super Saver at 5981 County Road 222, Cullman, AL 35057.



Chamber Lunch & Lean focuses on impacts of One Big Beautiful Bill tax provisions

Anabelle Howze
anabelle@cullmantribune.com



ANABELLE HOWZE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Zack Bennett, CPA, PFS, from Kassouf Wealth Advisors, speaks at the "From Legislation to Strategy: Understanding the OBBBA and Your Taxes" Lunch & Learn session at the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 24, 2026.

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce recently hosted a Lunch & Learn focused on the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," signed into law last July. The session was titled, "From Legislation to Strategy: Understanding the OBBBA and Your Taxes."

Guest speaker Zack Bennett, CPA, PFS, from Kassouf Wealth Advisors, provided an overview and explained how the changes affect individuals and businesses. Bennett is the director in Kassouf's Healthcare Tax and Advisory Group.

Bennett noted that many provisions from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act were set to expire at the end of 2025.

According to him, the new legislation makes several of those tax rates permanent and introduces additional updates.

On the individual side, he highlighted continued lower income tax rates, an increased standard deduction and a new $6,000 deduction for seniors age 65 and older, subject to income limits.

Other changes, he said, include:

- Raising the state and local tax (SALT) deduction cap from $10,000 to $40,000
- Allowing up to $10,000 in auto loan interest deductions for certain new U.S.-assembled vehicles
- Deductions for up to $25,000 in qualified tip income
- Deductions for up to $12,500 in overtime pay ($25,000 for joint filers)
- An increased child tax credit of $2,200 per qualifying child

Several provisions include income-based phase-outs.

For businesses, Bennett said the 20% qualified business income deduction was extended, and 100% bonus depreciation was restored, allowing companies to immediately deduct qualifying equipment purchases.

Section 179 expensing limits were also increased. He also shared tax planning strategies, including qualified charitable distributions from IRAs, Roth conversions, short-term rental strategies and cost segregation studies to accelerate depreciation.

Bennett encouraged people to evaluate how the changes apply to their individual situations and businesses, emphasizing that proactive planning can maximize available benefits.



CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS

Students at Cullman City Primary School took part in the school's annual Book Buddy Adoption, giving K-2 students a chance to make a new friend while finding new ways to love reading.

'Book Buddy Adoption' for Read Across America at CCPS

Staff Reports
Contributor



CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS



CULLMAN CITY SCHOOLS

CULLMAN, Ala. — Students at Cullman City Primary School took part in the school's annual Book Buddy Adoption, giving K-2 students a chance to make a new friend while finding new ways to love reading.

Each student adopted a special stuffed puppy or kitten to take home "forever" to snuggle, hug and "feed with words" through reading. This tradition kicks off Read Across America Week and fosters a lifelong love of books in a cozy, memorable way.

The activity was inspired by Lisa Papp's 2016 children's book "Madeline Finn and the Library Dog," and students learned that reading aloud builds confidence and that even the quietest listener can be the best audience.

"A heartfelt thank you goes to parents and the PTO for providing over 750 stuffed puppies and kittens, ensuring every child had a Book Buddy to read to and love," CCPS Media Specialist Hilary Nix said. "Through moments like these, Cullman City Primary continues nurturing confident, joyful readers one story at a time."

Read Across America is a national initiative for teachers and schools across the nation to promote reading and literacy among young students.

Month (from Front)

Staff Reports
Contributor



CULLMAN COUNTY SCHOOLS

Pictured with students are, left to right, Robert Strane (Welti Elementary School principal), Amanda Bailey (AmFirst Teacher of the Month), Dr. Shane Barnette (Cullman County Schools superintendent) and Daniel Boggan (AmFirst Cullman Branch manager).



CULLMAN COUNTY SCHOOLS

Pictured left to right are Elizabeth Watwood (Hanceville Middle School principal), Brent Barnett (Hanceville Middle School assistant principal), Amber Jones (AmFirst Staff Member of the Month), Dr. Shane Barnette (Cullman County Schools superintendent) and Daniel Boggan (AmFirst Cullman branch manager).

CULLMAN, Ala. — Cullman County Schools recently announced Amanda Bailey and Amber Jones as its January Employees of the Month.

TEACHER OF THE MONTH

Amanda Bailey, Kindergarten teacher, Welti Elementary School

Amanda Bailey teaches Kindergarten at Welti.

"Mrs. Bailey is exceptional," said Robert Strane, Welti principal. "She demonstrates what it means to teach with heart, creativity and purpose every day."

STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Amber Jones, secretary, Hanceville Middle School

Amber Jones is the secretary at Hanceville Middle School.

"She is truly the heart of our front office and our school - always smiling, even on the toughest days, and greeting everyone who walks in with kindness and warmth," said Elizabeth Watwood, Hanceville Middle School principal.

Assistant Principal Brent Barnett added, "She is a real asset to Mrs. Watwood and myself, and plays a big part in our successes."

Cullman County Schools thanked AmFirst for donating a $100 gift card to each Employee of the Month.