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17 years later, Tabitha Franklin's family still searches for answers

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – On Aug. 13, 2009, Cullman County resident Tabitha Lynn Franklin, then 27, vanished.

She was a mother of three. She was known to family and friends as "Tabby." She was someone who, according to family accounts shared over the years, stayed in contact with her children and her loved ones.

When the phone calls stopped, when days passed and when she did not show up as expected, her family knew something was wrong.

Nearly 17 years later, Franklin's case remains active.

The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency lists Franklin as an endangered missing person. The agency's public alert says she was last seen Aug. 13, 2009, in Cullman and may have traveled to the Hueytown area. The Cullman County Sheriff's Office remains the investigating agency.

Franklin has not been seen or heard from since.

The basic facts of the case have remained largely unchanged since the first days after her disappearance. Franklin was last seen in the Vinemont/West Point area of Cullman County.

Published reports and missing person summaries say she was picked up by an ex-boyfriend or adult male acquaintance. He » PAGE 2



CONTRIBUTED

Tabitha Franklin

Cullman County Sheriff's Office, DA offer $5K reward in Logan School vandalism investigation



FACEBOOK/LOGAN JUNIOR HIGH COMMUNITY CENTER

The Cullman County Sheriff's Office and Cullman County District Attorney Champ Crocker are offering a combined $5,000 reward for tips that lead to the arrest and conviction of anyone involved in the vandalism at the historic Logan Junior High School.

Lauren Estes, Noah Galilee
The Cullman Tribune

LOGAN, Ala. – The Cullman County Sheriff's Office and Cullman County District Attorney Champ Crocker are offering a combined $5,000 reward for tips that lead to the arrest and conviction of anyone involved in the vandalism at the historic Logan Junior High School.

The damage reportedly occurred sometime between Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon, according to a post from the Logan Junior High Community Center on Facebook. The organization said law enforcement had been contacted and a police report had been filed.

Sheriff Matt Gentry said the vandalism and destruction of the historic school building is "repulsive."

"We are shocked and beyond words of why anyone would choose to » PAGE 4



FACEBOOK/LOGAN JUNIOR HIGH COMMUNITY CENTER

CLECS to host 4th annual charity golf tournament Sept. 28 » PAGE 4

Mary Carter Store hosts fun Father's Day workshop



CHASADY WOODS/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

3D printed charms made by Mary Carter Store Manager Jeff Young » PAGE 8

St. Paul's Lutheran School opens enrollment for 2026-2027 school year » PAGE 7

Critter Crew reading program participants leap into week 2



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

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Franklin (from Front)

reportedly told investigators he drove her to his place of business in Hueytown, left to run errands and returned to find her gone.

She never came home.

No one has been charged in connection with Franklin's disappearance, and public records reviewed by The Tribune continue to list the case as unresolved. But the absence of an arrest has never meant the absence of effort.

For Franklin's family, investigators and the people who have followed her case, the years since 2009 have been marked by searches, tips, renewed pleas for information and one painful constant: Tabitha is still missing.

In the early months and years after Franklin disappeared, her family searched wherever they believed answers might be found.

Relatives organized awareness efforts and followed leads. They spoke publicly about their fear that something had happened to her, and they pushed to keep her name from fading into the background of unsolved cases.

By 2011, the search had moved to Smith Lake, where family members and search teams looked into reports of clothing appearing near the water.

ABC 33/40 reported at the time that family members were still spending weekends searching the area, looking for clothing or any other item that might be connected to Franklin. Walker County Search and Rescue assisted in that effort.

The Smith Lake search did not bring Franklin home, but it showed something that would continue for years: her family was not waiting quietly. They were searching.

In March 2014, the case drew renewed public attention when Cullman County Sheriff's Office investigators served a search warrant at 1140 County Road 1136.

The property had been connected to Franklin in prior reporting, and family members said she had lived there at one point and had been seen there before she disappeared.

The search was focused on a front porch.

Then-Sheriff Mike Rainey told WBRC that investigators had developed new information during a three-month investigation, giving them probable cause to search the property.

Crews used jackhammers, sledgehammers and saws to break through thick concrete. Investigators removed concrete and examined the ground below, searching for any evidence that might explain what happened to Franklin.

The Cullman Tribune, then operating as CullmanSense, was at the scene and documented the excavation.

A later Tribune report noted that the 2014 excavation followed two indications by cadaver dogs from HEMSI and a ground-penetrating radar analysis that showed anomalies.

Investigators removed concrete, gravel and material beneath the porch until they reached solid earth. No evidence connected to Franklin was found.

Even so, the 2014 search made clear that law enforcement had not closed the door on the case. Rainey said then that the case was still classified as a missing-person case, but investigators believed Franklin had met with foul play.

The search continued.

In March 2016, investigators searched a property on Mulga Loop Road after receiving another tip. That search also failed to locate Franklin or produce a public break in the case.

Later that year, published reports said Cullman County investigators traveled to Illinois to question multiple people connected to a person of interest who had been questioned in 2009 and later left the area.

Sheriff Matt Gentry said at the time that the case remained a priority for the Cullman County Sheriff's Office.

Years passed. Leads came and went. Franklin's children grew up.

In 2019, ABC 33/40 revisited the case on the 10-year mark of Franklin's disappearance. Hannah and Dawson Franklin, two of her children, spoke publicly about growing up without their mother.

The report noted that Franklin's children, who were young when she disappeared, had become adults. Franklin also has grandchildren she has never met.

That is the weight of a missing person case. It is not just one night. It is not just one report. It is birthdays, school days, graduations, weddings, children and grandchildren. It is every ordinary family moment that happens with one chair still empty.

Franklin's family has long said they want answers. They want to know what happened. They want to bring her home.

In October 2025, the case received another public push when Cullman County District Attorney Champ Crocker announced that a reward for information had been doubled to $20,000.

According to the DA's announcement, the Governor's Office had posted the maximum $10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for Franklin's disappearance.

Crocker said that, after consultation with the Governor's Office and Sheriff Matt Gentry, an anonymous donor agreed to add another $10,000.

The donor, Crocker said, wanted justice for Tabitha and her family.

Crocker asked anyone with information to contact the Cullman County Sheriff's Office or Investigator David Nassetta with the Cullman County District Attorney's Office at 256-736-2800. Tips may also be emailed to tips@cullmanda.org.

The Cullman County Sheriff's Office can be reached at 256-734-0342. Anonymous tips may be reported through the CCSO Secret Witness line at 256-734-0210.

As of 2026, ALEA's public missing person alert remains active. The state alert lists Franklin's case number as 090800281 and asks anyone with information to contact law enforcement or the Cullman County Sheriff's Office.

The public details remain painfully brief.

Last seen: Cullman
Possible travel: Hueytown
Status: Missing
Case: Active

For Franklin's family, however, the case has never been only a case number. It is a daughter, a mother, a sister and a friend.

Later this year, those who loved her and those who continue to seek justice will gather again to remember her.

A remembrance for Franklin is planned for Saturday, Aug. 22, 2026, from 2-4 p.m. at Sportsman Lake Park. The gathering will include barbecue, food, fellowship and memories.

The flyer for the event reads, "Remembering Tabitha Franklin," and describes her as "forever in our hearts." It invites women to wear blue jean miniskirts in her memory and closes with the words, "Honoring her life. Seeking justice. Never giving up hope. Until we find her."

Aug. 13, 2026, will mark 17 years since Franklin disappeared.

Seventeen years since the last confirmed sighting.

Seventeen years since a mother of three vanished.

Seventeen years of searches, tips, heartbreak and waiting.

And still, her family keeps her name alive.

TIMELINE
The disappearance of Tabitha Lynn Franklin

Aug. 13, 2009: Tabitha Lynn Franklin disappears from Cullman County. She is last seen in the Vinemont/West Point area. Published reports say she was picked up by an ex-boyfriend or adult male acquaintance, who later told investigators he dropped her off at his place of business in Hueytown and returned to find her gone.

Sept. 17, 2009: ALEA's missing-person alert is issued. The alert lists Franklin as endangered and says she was last seen in Cullman and may have traveled to Hueytown. The alert lists the Cullman County Sheriff's Office as the contact agency.

2011: Family members and searchers look in the Smith Lake area after reports of clothing being found near the water. The search does not resolve the case.

March 2014: Cullman County Sheriff's Office investigators search 1140 County Road 1136. Crews excavate a front porch after new information, cadaver-dog indications and ground-penetrating radar findings. No evidence connected to Franklin is found.

March 2016: Investigators search a Mulga Loop Road property after receiving a tip. The search does not produce a public break in the case.

November 2016: Published reports say Cullman County investigators travel to Illinois to question people connected to a person of interest in the case. Sheriff Matt Gentry says the case remains a priority.
October 2019: Franklin's family speaks publicly about the case 10 years after her disappearance. Her children, adults by then, continue asking for answers.

Oct. 14, 2025: District Attorney Champ Crocker announces the reward has been doubled to $20,000, with an anonymous donor adding $10,000 to the Governor's Office reward.

2026: ALEA continues to list Franklin as an active endangered missing person.

Aug. 22, 2026: A remembrance for Franklin is scheduled from 2-4 p.m. at Sportsman Lake Park, with barbecue, fellowship and a continued call for justice.

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CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported June 22

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Below are the arrests and incidents reported June 22, 2026. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

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

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INCIDENTS
June 18
• trespassing; theft of property; CR 18
• theft of property; Industrial Blve. SE
• possession of controlled substance; possession of marijuana; US. 31

June 19
• domestic violence; Main St. NW Hanceville
• domestic violence; CR 1425
• criminal mischief; theft of property; CR 747
• theft of property; CR 109
• burglary; CR 1203
• harassing communications; CR 1508
• possession of controlled substance; possession of marijuana; possession of drug paraphernalia; CR 1354

June 20
• harassment; CR 1196
• burglary; CR 1354
• dog bite; CR 431
• burglary; assault; Chad Dr.

June 21
• menacing; obstructing governmental operations; CR 658
• burglary; criminal mischief; CR 831
• harassment; Blountsville St. NE
• domestic violence; CR 1807
• theft of property; CR 2110
• attempt to elude law enforcement officer; Arkadelphia Rd. NW

ARRESTS
June 18-21
Caudle, James C.; 51
• possession of dangerous drugs
• possession of marijuana-2nd degree

Gordon, Erica S.; 36
• FTA – possession of marijuana-2nd degree (2 counts)
• FTA – possession of dangerous drugs
• FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
• FTA – illegal possession of prescription drugs
• FTA – giving false identification to law enforcement officer

Harris, Jacob D.; 26
• VIOLATION OF RELEASE ORDER – possession of marijuana-2nd degree
• VIOLATION OF RELEASE ORDER – obscenity-dissemination/display of child pornography (20 counts)
• VIOLATION OF RELEASE ORDER – sex offense-possession of child pornography (20 counts)

Hays, Jennifer L.; 36
• PROBATION VIOLATION – assault-child abuse-aggravated-family
• PROBATION VIOLATION – robbery-street-strong arm

Holcomb, Harley S.; 27
• FTA – possession of methamphetamine
• FTA – attempting to elude a police officer

Hurst, Katelynn N.; 22
• assault-domestic-harassment-family
• assault-aggravated assault family-strong arm
• burglary-residence-force

Jelinek, Levy V.; 27
• FTA – no seat belt

Keaton, Charles K.; 59
• FTA – driving under the influence of alcohol and/or 0.08 percent or more by weight of alcohol in blood

Madaris, Ashley N.; 32
• assault-child abuse-aggravated-family

McKinney, Kyle A.; 51
• FTA – possession of methamphetamine
• FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

McKinnon, Roger K.; 28
• public intoxication

Owens, Kevin M.; 52
• promote prison contraband (drugs)

Pfaff, Peyton L.; 29
• harassing communications

Preston, Daniel C.; 44
• assault-harassment
• stalking-2nd degree

Price, Claude L.; 53
• possession of marijuana-2nd degree
• possession of drug paraphernalia-1st offense

Pugh, Larry B.; 56
• FTA – fail stop sign

Reno, Billy J.; 57
• possession of methamphetamine
• possession of marijuana-2nd degree

Smith, Hannah K.; 30
• assault-domestic-simple assault-family

Wallace, Timothy L.; 36
• FTA – promote prison contraband (drugs)
• FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

Williams, Marcus L.; 36
• assault-harassment

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
June 15
• theft of property-3rd degree; person; cash; $537

June 16
• theft of property-4th degree; Wal-Mart; general merchandise; $31; Olive St. SW
• domestic violence-criminal mischief-2nd degree; person; damaged tires; $540; Main Ave. NE

June 19
• unlawful breaking and entering motor vehicle; person; cash; Lessman St. SW
• unlawful breaking and entering motor vehicle; theft of property-4th degree; person; miscellaneous; 7th St. SW
• assault-3rd degree; criminal mischief-2nd degree; harassment; person; Wellington Cir. SW
• unlawful breaking and entering motor vehicle; person; Fuller St. SW
• unlawful breaking and entering motor vehicle; person; miscellaneous; Fuller St. SW
• domestic violence-3rd degree – harassing communications; person
• harassment; person; 2nd Ave. SW

June 20
• theft of property-1st degree; Billy Ray Taylor Auto Sales; '21 Chev. Corvette; $62,995

ARRESTS
June 19-21
Cooner II, Jimmy A.; 47
• receiving stolen property-4th degree

Porras, Alejandro; 44
• GJ – retail theft of property-1st degree
• GJ – organized retail theft

Holcomb, Harley S.; 27
• FTA – theft of property-4th degree

Raines, Joseph M.; 37
• DUI

Gay, Antoniyo L.; 23
• FTA – speeding
• FTA – fail to register vehicle

Thomas, Dillon B.; 33
• public intoxication
• reckless endangerment

Haney, Michael T.; 29
• FTA – insurance violation (2 counts)
• FTA – speeding
• FTA – expired tag
• FTA – driving without license (2 counts)

Harris, Barbara A.; 37
• GJ – voyeurism (8 counts)

Bolt, Jason R.; 28
• FTA – driving while suspended

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT
No arrests or incidents reported.

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

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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
• 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman
• 256-739-3326
• spiritlifechurchcullman@gmail.com
• FB-Spirit Life Church Cullman
• Wednesday, June 24 – 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, June 26 – Celebrate Recovery. Fellowship and testimonies. Hurts, habits and hang-ups are a part of everyone's life. Come and see how to overcome these and more! Dinner at 6 p.m. Meeting starts at 6:30. Childcare provided. Special guest – The Lovelady Center
• Sunday, June 28 – 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
• 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.
• Wednesday, June 24, 10 a.m. Hanceville Fire Department will be here with firetrucks, fire safety presentations and demonstrations. Get sprayed with the hose! Bring suits and towels.
• Wednesday, June 24, 1:15 p.m. Crochet class
• Friday, June 26, 6 p.m. Poetry Night
• July 1 BREAK
• Wednesday, July 8, 10 a.m. "My feathered friends" with Cullman Soil and Water – Millie Keel
• Wednesday, July 8, 1 p.m. Crochet class
• Wednesday, July 15, 10 a.m. "Raptor Outreach" by Cullman Extension 4-H Kerri Roberts
• Wednesday, July 15, 1 p.m. Crochet class
• Saturday, July 18, 10 a.m. Adult book club
• Saturday, July 18, 11 a.m. Teen Club
• Wednesday, July 22, 10 a.m. "Lasting Impressions- Fossils-artifacts" by Chris & Jake, AL State Museum, Montgomery
• Wednesday, July 29, 10 a.m. "Quest to the Core" McWane Science Center
• Friday, July 31, 6 p.m. Poetry Night
• Wednesday, Aug. 5, 10 a.m. Children's author Ernie Swindle (bringing Matilda the Donkey for petting, located in the back parking lot)
• Friday, Aug. 7, 10 a.m. "Larry the Magician" a happy, interactive program full of laughter. This is his last season performing; he is retiring after this summer.
• Wednesday, Aug. 12, 10 a.m. Storytime Cullman Extension 4-H Kerri Roberts
• Saturday, Aug. 15, 10 a.m. Adult book club
• Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m., Crochet class

Guy Hunt Library Summer Reading Program
• Make plans to join us at Guy Hunt Library in Holly Pond on Tuesdays at 11 a.m. for the Summer Reading Program!
• June 23, Jessie Douglas, Farm Bill Biologist II
• June 30, Snead's Farmhouse
• Drinks and snacks will be provided. For more information contact the Guy Hunt Library at 256-796-5226, or guyhuntlibrary@gmail.com.

Phillips-Compton Reunion
Saturday, June 27, beginning at 10 a.m. Descendants of John Marion Phillips and Frances Compton Phillips and related families will meet at the Brushy Pond Community Center. Covered dish lunch at noon. From Bremen, travel on County Road 222 to Ryans Creek Baptist Church. Turn right next to the church and travel a short distance to the center, which is next to the fire station. Call 256-709-4956 for additional information.

Smith Lake Park 4th of July Fireworks Festival
Saturday, July 4, from 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Fireworks at 9 p.m. There will be a full lineup of live music, including More Cowbell, The Connection, Albert Simpson and Taylor Hicks. There will also be food vendors and arts and crafts vendors all day, plus games and golf cart parade Admission is $5 per person or $20 per vehicle.

Vinemont 4th of July Celebration
Sunday, July 5, at the Vinemont Sports Complex. Gates open at 6 p.m. Fireworks show starts at 9. Celebration of America 250 and 65 years of incorporation for the Town of South Vinemont. Food, kids' play zone and fireworks. Presented by the Town of South Vinemont and Vinemont Baptist Church.

Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church Summer Revival
Sunday, July 5, at 5 p.m. Singing with Refined as our guest. Services will run day and night, Monday, July 6, through Friday, July 10. Morning services at 10:30 and evening services at 7 with preachers from our church preaching. Lunch will be served each day after the morning service and we will have a prayer room at 6:45 before each evening service. All are invited. If you can't come, please pray for us. The church is located on U.S. Highway 278 East approximately 2 miles east of Holly Pond on the left. For more information, call 256-339-1862 or 256-590-1501.

Little Pink Dress Benefit
Tuesday, Oct. 6, from 6-9 p.m. at The Venue at Stone Bridge Farms. Tickets on sale now! www.cullmanbosombuddies.com/service/little-pink-dress-event

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THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JUNE 23, 2026

OmniFootball becoming an OSA staple as flag format surges; REC+ to add new layer of competition

Lucas Gray
lucas@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — As flag football continues to grow, especially among youth, OmniSports Academy's OmniFootball league has seen a surge in participation.

Since its inception in 2018, the league has seen an increase in participation every single season. It peaked last year with nearly 300 participants, making it one of OSA's most popular programs.

"The sport continues to gain momentum nationwide, especially with its inclusion in the 2028 Olympics and the growing number of school-based programs.

"Flag football provides an accessible entry point for young athletes, teaches teamwork and athletic fundamentals, and gives children another opportunity to stay active and engaged.

"We're excited to continue building on that success and introducing even more families to the game," Nathan Anderson, executive director of CPRST, said.

Accessibility is a hallmark of the sport, with age divisions ranging from 3-4 years old all the way up to 13-14, with divisions for both boys and girls.

With the success of the program, OSA announced Rec+, an additional level more focused towards competition, rather than recreation.

Top players from each division will be eligible to join Rec+ after the regular season and compete against other top players across north Alabama in the Alabama Youth Football League, in a format similar to travel sports.

"Our athletics team, led by Ashley Morton, launched the Rec+ initiative, allowing us to build on the fun, accessible environment our recreational league provides while giving players who want more competition the chance to represent Cullman on a regional and state stage," Anderson said.

The NFL-backed league will kick off again this fall, and registration remains open until July 2. More information on the league, as well as registration can be found at omnisportsacademy.com.



CPRST

Youth flag football players

Reward (from Front)

carry out such vandalism," Gentry said. "There have been several social media accounts that have posted pictures from inside and outside the school which show the extent of the damage."

Gentry and Crocker announced Monday, June 22, they are jointly offering a total reward of $5,000 for tips that lead to the arrest and conviction of anyone involved in the case.

"I encourage anyone with any tips on this case to call the Cullman County Sheriff's Office immediately," Gentry said. "We take this level of vandalism to property very seriously and we will work all leads and tips until there is a successful conclusion to this case."

Crocker said anyone who played a role in the vandalism should turn themselves in to the Cullman County Sheriff's Office.

"If they don't turn themselves in, I am confident with this amount of reward money being offered someone will come forward with a tip that leads to an arrest or multiple arrests," Crocker said. "I look forward to prosecuting them when that happens."

The Logan Junior High Community Center, in a Facebook post, described the damage as devastating for those who have worked to preserve and use the former school building for the community.

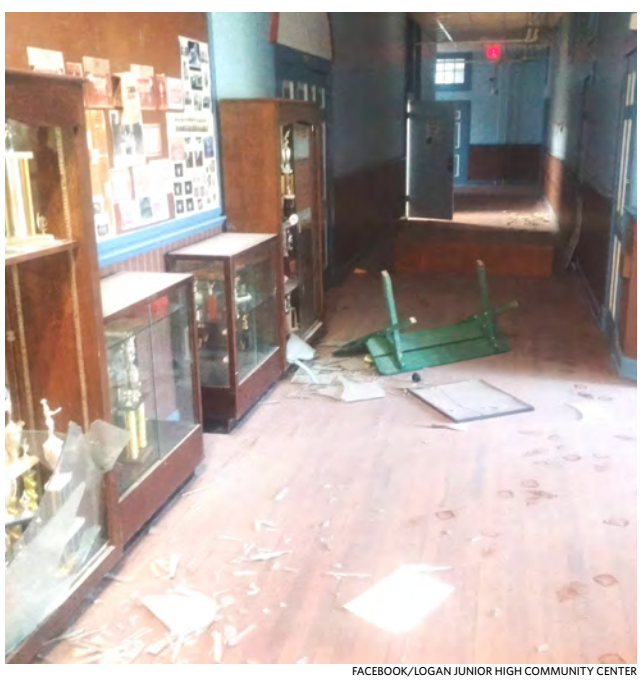
"I really don't have the words," the post stated.

The post said volunteers had spent weeks working and cleaning before the Bluegrass Jamfest held last month.

"We spent weeks working and cleaning before our Bluegrass Jamfest last month and now this," the post stated. "The law has been called and a police report made. If you know who did this please report them. Please share this so that we can get the word out so they can be caught."



FACEBOOK/LOGAN JUNIOR HIGH COMMUNITY CENTER



FACEBOOK/LOGAN JUNIOR HIGH COMMUNITY CENTER

The post also said additional photos had been added, including an image of what the community center described as "a machete that appears to have been used to cause some of the damage." Authorities had not publicly confirmed details about any specific item used in the vandalism as of Monday.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Cullman County Sheriff's Office at 256-734-0342.

Anonymous tips may also be submitted through the CCSO's tip options, including the Secret Witness number at 256-734-0210 or the Nixle Anonymous Tip link.

Around the world of sports: June 23, 2026...

Lucas Gray
lucas@cullmantribune.com

• After winning the 2025-26 National Basketball Championship with the University of Michigan, head coach Dusty May left to become the head coach of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks on Monday. May's tenure in Ann Arbor lasted just two seasons.

• In World Cup group play, the United States shocked Australia with a 2-0 win on Friday that officially earned them a spot in the round of 32, where they'll take on Türkiye on Thursday at 9 p.m.

• The 2026 NBA Draft starts Tuesday night, and is headlined by one of the most talented lottery classes in recent memory. The Washington Wizards hold the number one pick, and will go on the clock at 7 p.m., with the broadcast on ESPN.



UM ATHLETICS

Former Michigan men's basketball head coach Dusty May

Tournament (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Cullman Law Enforcement and Community Services (CLECS) will host its fourth annual charity golf tournament Monday, Sept. 28, 2026, at Terri Pines Country Club.

The tournament will be played as a four-person scramble, with registration beginning at 8 a.m. and a shotgun start set for 9.

Organizers said the event will offer golfers a day of fellowship, food, prizes and community support, while helping CLECS continue its work in Cullman.

Team registration is $500 per team, with a limit of 36 teams. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

According to the tournament information released by organizers, the day's schedule includes 8 a.m. registration and breakfast, a 9 a.m. start and lunch and prizes from 1-2 p.m.

The tournament will feature prizes for first place, second place and one random-place team, along with door prizes. A $10,000 hole-in-one prize will also be offered, sponsored by Mitch Smith Chevrolet.

Premier Bank of the South is listed as the event's platinum sponsor.

In addition to team entries, several sponsorship opportunities are available.

A hole sponsorship is $100 and includes a sign with the sponsor's name on the course.

A prize sponsorship is $300 and includes a sign on the course and recognition during the prize giveaways.

A meal sponsorship is $1,000 and includes a sign with the sponsor's name on the clubhouse, recognition during meals and one team of four.

A gold sponsorship is $2,500 and includes an individual sign on the course and in the clubhouse, two teams of four and free ball cannon shots for both teams.

Checks should be made payable to CLECS and mailed to 601 Second Ave. NE, Cullman, AL 35055.

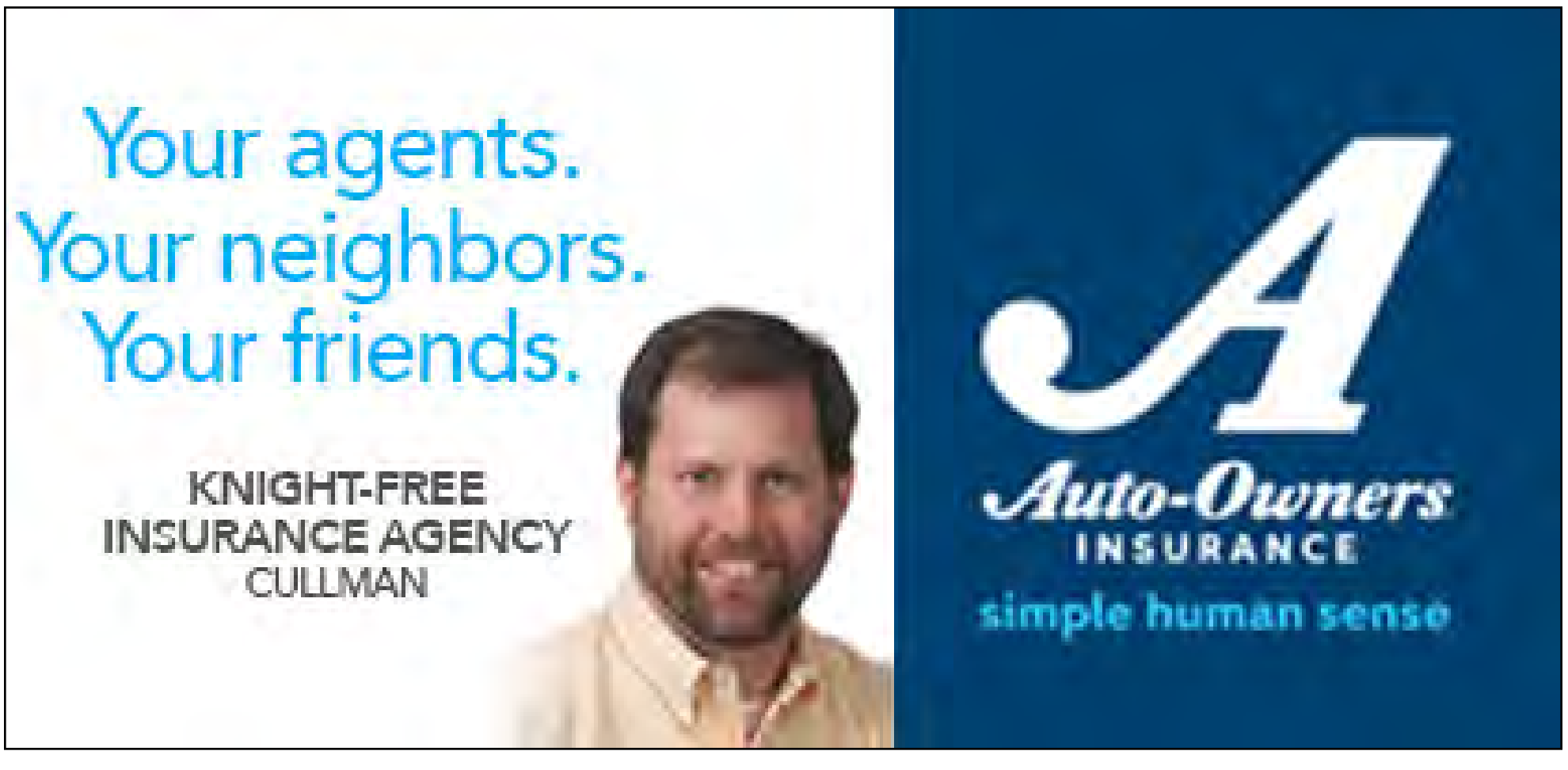
Organizers also noted that a Square payment link can be sent by email for those wishing to pay by card.

CLECS partners with the Cullman Police Department on a variety of community-focused efforts and outreach projects.

Organizers said proceeds from the golf tournament help support those ongoing local initiatives.

Those interested in participating are encouraged to register early, as space is limited.

Get more information at cullmanlecs@gmail.com or (256) 734-1434.



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5754 AL- Hwy 157 North
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Cullman, AL 35055
256•739•4380

Warehouse Discount Groceries
780 Main St. N E
Hanceville, AL 35077
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Prices Effective - Wednesday, June 24 through Tuesday, June 30, 2026

PRE-4TH OF JULY SALE



GROUND CHUCK
Fresh 80% Lean
Family Pack
$5.49 LB.



ASSORTED PORK CHOPS
Fresh Bone-In
Family Pack
$1.99 LB.



RED RIPE WATERMELON
Everyone
Loves Fresh
$3.99 EA.



WASHINGTON STATE CHERRIES
First of the Season
Sweet, Healthy Snack
$2.99 LB.



BAMA MAYONNAISE
30 Oz.
Original or Light
$3.99 EA.



CHARKING CHARCOAL
15.4 Lb. Bag
Original or Hickory
$4.99 EA.



KRAFT CHEESE
5-8 Oz.
Selected Varieties
4 for $10



COUNTRY CROCK SPREAD
45 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$4.99 EA.



RED BARON PIZZA
15-23 Oz. Classic, Brick Oven
or Thin Selected Varieties
$3.99 EA.



MAYFIELD SELECT ICE CREAM
1.5 Quart
Assorted Varieties
$3.99 EA.

**5754 AL- Hwy 157 N
Cullman, AL**

**1615 Town Square S W
Cullman, AL**

**780 Main St. N E
Hanceville, AL**



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TOP SIRLOIN STEAKS
Beef
Family Pack
$8.99 LB.



CHICKEN TENDERS
Fresh
$3.49 LB.



SHOULDER ROAST
Beef
Boneless
$5.99 LB.



CHICKEN WINGS
Previously Frozen
$1.89 LB.



BATTERED CORN NUGGETS
2 Lb. Bag
Restaurant Quality
$7.99 EA.



SMITHFIELD PORK TENDERS OR FILETS
19.2-23 Oz. Marinated
Selected Varieties
$6.49 EA.



FRESHLAND SAUSAGE
1 Lb. Roll
Mild or Hot
$3.69 EA.



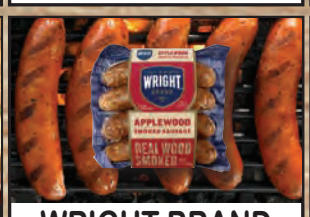
WRIGHT BACON
24 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$8.99 EA.



ECKRICH FRANKS
12 Oz.
Original
4 for $5



ZEIGLER BOLOGNA
16 Oz.
Regular or Thick
$3.69 EA.



WRIGHT BRAND SMOKED SAUSAGE
4Ct., 12 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$4.99 EA.



CAROLINA PRIDE SMOKED SAUSAGE
14 Oz.Pkg. Regular or Polska Kielbasa or Cocktail Smokies
$2.99 EA.



ZEIGLER SMOKED SAUSAGE
12 Oz.
Southern Style
$3.79 EA.



DEAN'S SAUSAGE PATTIES
18 Ct.
$5.49 EA.



DEAN'S SAUSAGE BALLS
15 Oz.
Country Style
$4.99 EA.



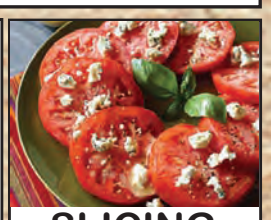
BI-COLOR OR YELLOW CORN
Great on the Grill
3 ears $1



RUSSET POTATOES
5 Lb. Bag
U.S. #1 Colorado
2 for $5



DOLE GARDEN SALAD
Bag or Shredded Lettuce or Classic Coleslaw
$1.29 EA.



SLICING TOMATOES
Red
Ripe
$1.49 LB.



YELLOW ONIONS
3 Lb. Bag
Good for Cooking
$2.49 EA.



FOOD CLUB SOUR CREAM
16 Oz.
Original
2 for $4



FOOD CLUB BISCUITS
5 Ct. Butter Me-Not or Texas Style
4 for $5



MRS. SMITH'S OR EDWARDS PIES
24-37 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$5.99 EA.



EGGO WAFFLES OR PANCAKES
24 Ct.
Selected Varieties
$5.99 EA.



CRAV'N FLAVOR POTATOES
19-32 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $7



PETER PAN PEANUT BUTTER
16-16.3 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $5



SWEET BABY RAY'S BARBECUE SAUCE
18 Oz. Selected Varieties or 14 Oz. Dipping Sauce
2 for $4



FOOD CLUB SOFT DRINKS
12 Pk., 12 Oz. Cans
Selected Varieties
3 for $12



FOOD CLUB BAKED BEANS
28 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $4



FOOD CLUB RELISH
10 Oz.
Sweet or Dill
99¢ EA.



CHEF BOYARDEE PASTA
7.25-15 Oz.
Selected Varieties
4 for $5



CHEF BOYARDEE SKILLET MEALS
5 Oz.
Selected Varieties
4 for $5



BRYAN VIENNA SAUSAGE
4.6 Oz.
Original or Chicken
5 for $5



MALT O MEAL BAG CEREAL
23-30 Oz. Family Size
Selected Varieties
$3.99 EA.



MARTHA WHITE MUFFIN MIX
7 Oz.
Selected Varieties
4 for $5



NABISCO FAMILY SIZE COOKIES OR CRACKERS
11-20 Oz.
Selected Varieties
$4.99 EA.



PLANTERS DRY ROASTED PEANUTS
16 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $5



FOOD CLUB TOMATOES
10-15 Oz.
Selected Varieties
5 for $5



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



SUN DROP, 7•UP, RC COLA OR A&W
2 Liter Bottles
2 for $4

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

TOSTITOS SALSA OR DAIRY DIP
15-17.25 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $7

GOLDEN FLAKE CHEESE CURLS, PUFFS OR PUFF CORN
or Pork Skins 3-6 Oz.
Selected Varieties
3 for $5

GOLDEN FLAKE POTATO CHIPS
4.6 Oz.
Selected Varieties
3 for $5

GOLDEN FLAKE, UTZ OR ZAPP'S CHIPS
7-8 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $4

LEWIS BAKE SHOP BUNS
8 Pk.
Burger or Hot Dog
2 for $5

LITTLE DEBBIE OLD FASHIONED DONUTS
15.43 Oz. Big Pack
Original or Chocolate
2 for $9

SUNBELT GRANOLA OR SOFT BAKED BARS
7.61-11 Oz.
Selected Varieties
2 for $6

BLUE BELL ICE CREAM SANDWICHES
12 Pk. Regular or 16 Pk. Mini
$5.99 EA.

BLUE BELL FROZEN BARS
12 Pk. Mooo, Fudge or Krunch
$4.99 EA.

MILLER HIGH LIFE
12 Pk.
Cans or Bottles
$11.99 EA.

MICHELOB ULTRA
24 Pk.
Cans or Bottles
$25.99 EA.

OYSTER BAY WINE
750 mL
$12.99 EA.

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CHARTER RESERVE VIRGINIA BRAND HAM
Deli Sliced
$8.39 LB.

CHARTER RESERVE PEPPER JACK CHEESE
Deli Sliced
$5.29 LB.

KENTUCKIAN GOLD ROAST BEEF
Deli Sliced
$14.99 LB.

KING'S ORIGINAL HAWAIIAN ROLLS
or Savory Butter
12 Pk.
$3.99 EA.

GORDO'S CHEESE DIP
16 Oz.
Mild or Queso
$5.29 EA.

QUALITY APPLE PIE
28 Oz.
$6.99 EA.

CAFÉ VALLEY CAKES
26 Oz.
Assorted Flavors
$6.99 EA.

4TH OF JULY BIG COOKIE
12-Inch
Decorated
$12.49 EA.

FRIED CHICKEN
Fresh Bone-In
16 Piece
$15.99 EA.

Critter Crew reading program participants leap into week 2

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Critter Crew program participants take part in a frog and toad race.

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Critter Crew brought week two of its reading program Tales & Tails to Cullman Christian School on Wednesday, June 17, featuring several amphibious friends.

Critter Crew member Cassidy Wright set the course for the morning with reading time.

"I have not one, but two books to read today!" She announced.

The books were "Frog on a Log" by Kes Gray and Jim Field and "Cookies" from the 1972 book "Frog and Toad Together" by Arnold Lobel.

After the reading session the frogs and toads were to be walked around the room. Wright instructed that this would be a hands-off activity.

"Amphibian skins are very sensitive," she explained, "The oil from our skin can really hurt them."

Critter Crew member Brianna Horton showed some of the wildlife ambassadors to those around the room.

While the frogs and toads were shown, Wright explained cutaneous respiration. This is the process in which frogs breathe directly through skin. She said when they are held, the oil from our hands can damage their glands and ability to breathe.

Once the critters were placed back on their safe shelves, it was time for an outdoor activity – a frog and toad race!

In the courtyard, the participants lined up at the starting line and were instructed to hop like a toad until they made it to the halfway point. From there they were instructed to leap like a frog to the finish line.

Afterward, they gathered inside once more to receive their "Tales and Tails Week 2 Take Home Challenge."

This list consisted of the following tasks:

- Tell a friend one fact you learn about frogs and toads
- Listen for a frog or toad call
- Observe a frog or toad(-from a distance)
- Count how many jumps it takes to cross your yard like a frog
- Spot a place where tadpoles might live

As the day neared its end, program participants grabbed a refreshing cup of "pond water." This consisted of blue Hawaiian Punch, Swedish fish at the very bottom to enjoy after and "lily pad" garnish, which was a lime on the rim. This was prepared by Cullman Christian School's Science Club.

Wright gave a special thanks to the club members for volunteering.

The next reading program will take place on Wednesday, June 24, from 9-10 a.m. at Cullman Christian School, 1803 Beech Ave. SE, Cullman.

Critter Crew describes itself: "Where curiosity meets critters! We offer STEAM programs featuring native and exotic wildlife — many rescued or surrendered that now serve as ambassadors for education. Partnering with schools, homeschool groups, and community events across North Alabama."

For more information, visit Facebook/Critter Crew.

'We're just kind of one of those little hidden jewels'

Anabelle Howze
anabelle@cullmantribune.com



ANABELLE HOWZE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



ANABELLE HOWZE/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

On the morning of Saturday, June 20, 2026, customers cut fresh flowers, sampled local honey and made their own bouquets at a customer appreciation event at Hite's Honey and Cut Flowers.

CRANE HILL, Ala. — On the morning of Saturday, June 20, customers cut fresh flowers, sampled local honey and made their own bouquets at a customer appreciation event at Hite's Honey and Cut Flowers. The event offered a two-for-one flower-picking deal, honey tastings and bouquet-making demonstrations. Guests walked through the flower fields, picked their favorite blooms and arranged bouquets with help from owner Neva Hite.

"We enjoy it, and everybody's happy once they get here," Hite said. "They're happy when they leave."

Hite and her husband, Hopson, started the business after many years of beekeeping. Hopson has worked with honeybees for about 40 years and Neva began the flower-picking side after she retired and wanted a new project.

The farm often welcomes visitors from Alabama and other places. Hite said guests have come from California, Chicago, Boston and even Belize. Many find the farm while visiting Smith Lake nearby.

Hite said about 200 people visited the flower farm last season.

This was the second year for the customer appreciation event, but the farm offers flower-picking throughout the growing season. Hite said people can usually visit on Saturdays or make appointments for private visits, group outings or special events. During a visit, guests get a container, learn how to cut flowers and make their own bouquets. They can also bring vases from home.

Besides the you-pick flowers, the business sells honey from the Hites' beehives and sometimes has ready-made bouquets at local pop-up events and markets. Hite said the flower farm has grown mostly thanks to word-of-mouth, social media and returning customers.

Hite hasn't made plans for next year yet, but she expects to keep hosting customer appreciation events.

"We're just kind of one of those little hidden jewels," she said.

Visit Facebook/Hite's Honey for more information. Hite's Honey and Cut Flowers is located at 12 County Rd. 4212, Crane Hill, AL 35053.

Family Nerf War!

Shots from the Family Nerf War, held Saturday, June 20, 2026, at The OmniPlex



MIKE WITCHER/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



MIKE WITCHER/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



MIKE WITCHER/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JUNE 23, 2026

COLUMN

It wasn't my time

Joe Hobby
Contributor

There are moments in life when the distance between an ordinary day and tragedy is measured in inches.

I've thought about that a lot lately.

A few days ago, my wife Carol, my son Matt and I went to a funeral home to pay our respects to a family of dear lifelong friends who had just suffered a loss of their own.

As strange as it sounds, it turned into one of those bittersweet gatherings that reminds you how deeply connected your life is to other people. We saw old friends we hadn't laid eyes on in decades. There were hugs, old stories, laughter and the kind of catching up that somehow picks right back up where it left off. A wonderful gathering, though it was wrapped in sadness.

Afterward, the three of us went to eat. Nothing fancy, just a pleasant meal and good conversation before heading home. It felt like a completely normal evening. Ordinary in every way.

And then, within a matter of seconds, it almost wasn't.

We pulled up to a traffic light and waited.

When it turned green, I did what I always do – paused for a second or two before easing into the intersection. I've always believed that extra moment can save you from somebody trying to beat the light.

As we pulled out and began a left-hand turn, I caught movement out of the corner of my eye.

A full-size Chevy truck was barreling toward the intersection at what I'd estimate was 40 or 50 miles an hour. He wasn't slowing down. My guess is the driver was on his phone, though I'll never know for certain.

What I do know is this: he was absolutely going to run that traffic light and slam into us at a high rate of speed.

Most people, when danger appears suddenly, slam on the brakes. That's human nature. But by the grace of God, my instinct did the opposite. I floored it.

Our little Honda CR-V lunged into the intersection. The truck driver swerved ever so slightly at the last possible second, and somehow – somehow we cleared him. Barely.

I kept waiting to feel the explosion of metal against the rear of the car. I can still feel that sensation today – the certainty that impact was coming. But it never did. He missed us by inches. Just inches.

I pulled off the highway seconds later because I was too shaken to keep driving. Carol and Matt were shaken, too, though thankfully unharmed. We sat there quietly for a minute, each of us replaying what had just happened.

And the truth hit me hard.

If I hadn't accelerated, that truck would have T-boned us directly on the driver's side door. A full-size truck traveling that fast into a Honda CR-V would not have ended well for me. In fact, I'm almost certain I wouldn't have survived it.

I know because I've lived through something similar before.

This near-collision tore a scab off an old wound. My mother was killed in a T-bone automobile accident years ago.

So, when I say I understand the violence of that kind of impact, I do. It's not abstract to me. I've already seen the devastation it leaves behind.

This morning, Carol and I talked about the accident again. I asked her, "Do you think that driver would've gone to jail?"

"Yes. Most likely involuntary manslaughter."

And she's right.

What struck me afterward was how one careless act – not malicious, not intentional, just irresponsible – could have changed the course of so many lives forever. Mine. My family. The driver's. My friends. In an instant, over half a dozen futures could have been rewritten.

That's the frailty of life.

We make plans. We assume tomorrow is waiting for us. We complain about small inconveniences and put off important conversations because we think there will always be another opportunity.

Then suddenly, a truck runs a traffic light.

Yesterday simply wasn't my time. I understand that, and I'm grateful for it. More grateful than I can properly express.

But I'll also tell you this: when you come within inches of never seeing your family and friends again, it changes you a little. It reminds you that even ordinary moments are not guaranteed. They are gifts.

And sometimes, you don't fully realize that until you almost lose them.

Joe Hobby is a barbecue-loving comedian from Alabama who wrote for Jay Leno for many years. Find more of Joe's stories on his blog: www.mylifeasahobby.blogspot.com. Follow him on Facebook at Joe Hobby Comedian-Writer.

Obituary Announcements: June 20-22

Mary Ann Schwaiger, 84
Funeral service for Mary Ann Schwaiger, age 84 of Cullman, will be at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home, with Pastor Zack Freeman and Scotty Cofer officiating. Burial will follow at Cullman Memory Gardens. Visitation was held from 6 -8 p.m. on Monday, June 22, 2026, at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. Mary Ann passed away on Friday, June 19, 2026, at Hanceville Nursing Home. She was born on Sunday, Sept. 7, 1941, in Cullman, Alabama to Asa Martin Smith and Ruby Jewel Smith. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Franklin D. Smith; husband, James Fred Schwaiger; sons, Edward Lawrence Smith, and Curtis Patrick Schwaiger; sister, Linda Jean Thompson; brothers, Pete Smith, Bob Smith, Jerry Smith, Bill Smith, and Elmer Smith. Survivors include her sons, Richard Brian Smith (Stephanie), James Michael Schwaiger (Angela); grandchildren, Shaina Tiffany Cruz, Randy Smith, DeeDee Gordin (Jake); great-grandchildren, Zoey Cruz, Braxton Cruz; sister, Alice Jewel Linton (Morris).

Billy Hugh Phillips, 56
Billy Hugh Phillips, a beloved husband, father, Pawpaw, brother, mentor, and friend, passed away on June 18, 2026, leaving behind a legacy that is larger than life. Funeral services will be held on June 22 at 9 a.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home Chapel. Burial will follow the service at Laodicea Cemetery in Hanceville. The viewing will be on Sunday, June 21, from 5-8 p.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home. Born on Dec. 25, 1969, Billy was a man known for his incredible work ethic, his passion for cars, and most importantly, his unwavering love for his family. The impact he made on those around him will never be forgotten. Billy had a lifelong love for restoring old cars and could often be found working on his pride and joy, his "Old Girl" rat rod, before taking it to car shows wherever the road led him. For him, cars were more than machines, they were a way to create memories, connect with others, and share something he loved. He was one of the hardest-working people many had ever known. Billy was always willing to lend a hand, offer advice, or help someone in need. He was the kind of person who told you the truth, not always sugar-coated, but always with a heart that wanted the best for you. His wisdom, humor, and guidance touched countless lives. Billy was preceded in death by his grandparents, Billy and Inez Moore; his father, Cephus Phillips; and his mother, Virginia Landmon. He leaves behind his loving wife, Laura Phillips; his brother, Christopher (Samantha) Phillips; and his children, Savannah (Terry) Farley, Brody Phillips, Dawson (Kaiden) Phillips, Courtney (Brian) Duke, Brittany Sims, and Maddie Oliver. He also leaves behind his grandchildren, Tanner, Sophia, Ivy Jo, Walker, Bree, Graisey, and Maisey, who he loved more than life itself. The hole left by Billy's passing is impossible to fill. His legacy will live on through the family he loved so fiercely, the people he helped, the lessons he taught, and the memories created along the way. He will be deeply missed and forever loved.

Ralph 'Shorty' Ingram, 82
Mr. Ralph "Shorty" Ingram, age 82 of Falkville, passed away on Friday, June 19, 2026, at Decatur Morgan Hospital. A memorial service with military honors will be held at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home, date and time to be announced. Shorty was born in Dry Ridge, Kentucky on Jan. 1, 1944, to Andy Ingram and Dorothy Richardson Ingram. He is preceded in death by his parents, three brothers, and three sisters. He is survived by his loving wife of thirty-five years, Denita Ellis Ingram; sons, Eddie Ingram (Brooke), Steven Washam, Michael Washam (Tela); daughters, Mendi Catlett (Robert), Megan Williams (Dustin), and Kassi Ingram; twelve grandchildren; one great-grandchild; a host of nieces and nephews, cousins, family and friends. Shorty loved his family with all his heart, and they were the center of his world. He was a brave soldier in the Korean War, serving in the United States Army. Before and after his military service, he was an over the road truck driver for Kroger, Howard Bare out of Tennessee, and Yellow Freight out of Birmingham. He received the much-deserved honor of the "1,000,000 Safety Miles Award" during his trucking career, which consisted of decades of driving with no accidents. He was also an avid gun and knife lover. He was a man who was very loved and who loved others. He will be greatly missed.

Carol Dezort, 82
Carol Dezort, age 82 of Good Hope, passed away on Friday, June 20, 2026, at Cullman Regional Medical Center. There are no services planned at this time. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. Carol was born March 31, 1944, to Marion Holyfield. She is preceded in death by her mother. She is survived by her daughter, Delisa Graves (Travis); granddaughter, Jessica O'Neal.

Tommy Smith, 63
Tommy Smith, age 63 of Decatur, passed away on Saturday, June 20, 2026 at the Decatur Morgan Hospital. He was born on June 8, 1963 in Chicago, Illinois to Sammy Ray Smith and Marilyn Brashier Smith. Tommy is survived by his son, Charles Lynx Smith, step children, Jacqueline Barch, Derek Logan Clark and Catherine George; his mother, Marilyn (James) Hall; sister, Sandra Sue (Michael) Ray and brother, Gary (Allison) Smith; a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father, Sammy Ray Smith and brother, Mickey Smith. The family will have a memorial service at a later date and time. Decatur Brown Service Funeral Home assisting the family.

Rebecca Long deQuesada, 70
Rebecca Long deQuesada, age 70 of Decatur, passed away on Sunday, June 21, 2026, at Huntsville Hospital. She was born on May 6, 1956 in Chicago, Illinois to William and Mary Long. She was a registered nurse for 25 years serving at various hospitals and nursing homes in the area. Her most recent was a Health South Medical in Huntsville. Rebecca enjoyed camping, traveling and cooking. She is survived by her husband, John Scroggins; son, Carlos deQuesada; brothers, Joe and Charles Long. She was preceded in death by her sons, Armando and Rauel deQuesada; parents, William "Bill" and Mary Long. The family has no services scheduled at this time. Decatur Brown Service Funeral is assisting the family.

Dean Cotton Procter, 93
Dean Cotton Procter, 93, of Alabaster, formerly of Cullman passed from this life June 20, 2026, at Shelby Ridge Nursing Home. Cullman Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. A Celebration of Life will be Thursday, July 2, 2026, at 2 p.m. with the family receiving friends from 1-2 p.m. at Cullman Funeral Home Chapel, Rev. Wade Maynard officiating. Dean was born March 30, 1933, to L.P. and Rossie Millis Miller. She was preceded in death by her parents and her brothers, Basil Miller, Gordon Miller, Lewis Miller and James Miller, sisters, Pauline Hollis, Maggie Briscoe and Addie Miller. Survivors include her two sons, Jack (Renee) Cotton, Jason Procter; grandchildren, Bradley (Jennifer) Cotton, Lauren Cotton; great-grandchildren, Mackenzie Cotton, Mallory Cotton, Jackson Cotton, family and friends. She dearly loved her family and found great joy in spending time with those she cherished most. She had a passion for gardening, a deep love for animals, and a special affection for her hometown of Cullman. She was a member of Northbrook Baptist Church and lived her life guided by her faith. She dedicated more than 40 years to the banking industry, concluding her distinguished career with Wells Fargo Bank. Her kindness, work ethic and devotion to her family, church and community will be remembered by all who knew and loved her. Friends may sign the online guestbook at www.cullmanfuneralhome.com.

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

St. Paul's Lutheran School opens enrollment for 2026-2027 school year

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — St. Paul's Lutheran School is now enrolling students for the 2026-2027 school year, inviting families to learn more about its Christ-centered classical education, small class sizes and family-oriented school community.

The school, located at 510 Third Ave. SE in Cullman, serves children from 3 years old through eighth grade. Its mission, according to the school, is "cultivating the mind" and "nourishing the soul."

Administrator Erin Smith said St. Paul's offers families something she believes is becoming increasingly rare.

"St. Paul's Lutheran School offers something increasingly rare in education today: a truly Christ-centered classical education," Smith said. "Our mission is to cultivate both the mind and nourish the soul, helping students grow academically, spiritually and morally."

Smith said St. Paul's differs from schools that focus primarily on test scores or career preparation by intentionally forming students around what the school describes as "good, true and beautiful" through a rigorous curriculum grounded in scripture and faith.

Students also have access to opportunities beyond the traditional classroom, including piano and ballet through the school's conservatory offerings.

"I would encourage any family considering St. Paul's to come visit us in person," Smith said. "Tour the classrooms, meet our teachers, talk with our students and families and experience the atmosphere for yourself. There is something truly special about St. Paul's that is best understood when you walk through our doors and see it firsthand."

According to Smith, the school's Christ-centered approach shapes each part of the student experience.

"At St. Paul's, faith shapes every part of the school day," Smith said. "Christian truth is integrated across all subjects, helping students view learning through a biblical worldview."

Students worship together in daily chapel and regularly interact with the Rev. John Bussman, senior pastor, through chapel and religion classes. Smith said those experiences help strengthen students' understanding of Scripture and their relationship with Christ.

The school's faith-centered environment also guides the way students and staff interact with one another.

"Our faith-centered environment also guides how we treat one another, emphasizing kindness, respect, forgiveness and service," Smith said. "The goal for our school is not only academic excellence, but also developing students who are grounded in faith, strong in character and prepared to serve God and others."

St. Paul's classical curriculum is designed to build both academic knowledge and critical thinking skills.

"Our classical education teaches students how to think, not just what to think," Smith said.

Students study language, literature, history, math, science and the arts while developing communication, problem-solving and analytical skills. Smith said the approach is intended to prepare students for long-term academic success while also helping them grow in wisdom and character.

"Through rich content, meaningful discussions and a Christ-centered perspective, students learn to analyze ideas, pursue truth and grow in wisdom and character," Smith said. "This approach prepares them for academic success and equips them to become confident leaders, lifelong learners and faithful servants of Christ."

She said small class sizes are another defining part of the school's culture.

"One of the greatest benefits of small class sizes is that every student is truly known," Smith said. "At St. Paul's, students are known by name, valued as individuals and supported according to their unique strengths and needs."

She said smaller classes allow teachers to build stronger relationships with students, offer more individualized instruction and tailor learning experiences to student interests. Students also have more opportunities to collaborate, learn and socialize with one another.

That same close-knit atmosphere extends to families.

"We view parents as partners in their child's education and encourage families to be involved through chapel services, field trips, sporting events and other school activities," Smith said. "These shared experiences build a close-knit community where students, families and staff support one another and help make St. Paul's a special place to learn and grow."

As families consider enrollment for the upcoming school year, Smith said she wants them to know St. Paul's is focused on providing a safe and loving school environment rooted in Christian principles.

"As enrollment opens, I want families to know that St. Paul's is a safe, loving community where students are known, valued and encouraged to grow academically and spiritually," Smith said. "Rooted in Christian principles, our school has a rich history and strong traditions that have shaped generations of students, myself included."

Smith's connection to St. Paul's is also personal. The school announced in May that Smith, a St. Paul's graduate, had been named its new administrator. The school said she attended St. Paul's from kindergarten through sixth grade and has a background in education, leadership and professional development.

"Our admissions process is designed to be simple for families," Smith said. "Enrollment can be completed online at stpaulscullman.com or in person at our front office."

St. Paul's participates in the Alabama CHOOSE Act, which may provide Education Savings Account funding for eligible families. The school also lists scholarship opportunities through Scholarships for Kids, a state-recognized scholarship-granting organization.

"We encourage families to schedule a visit, tour the school and ask questions so they can determine if St. Paul's is the right fit for their child," Smith said. "There is something truly special here, and we would love the opportunity to welcome you."

For more information, visit www.stpaulscullman.com or call 256-734-6580.



IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF)
SUSAN CLUXTON RIX,) CASE NO PC 2026-081
Deceased.)

NOTICE OF HEARING
PETITION TO STAY PROCEEDINGS UNTIL HEARING ON PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION WITH WILL ANNEXED

TO: JASON MURPHREE, JACKIE MURPHREE COUCH, NIKKI DALE WILBOURN and all known and unknown heirs of the estate of SUSAN CLUXTON RIX, deceased.

The Petition of Robert Cluxton to admit to probate the Last Will and Testament of Susan Cluxton Rix, deceased, has been set for hearing on the **22nd day of July, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.** before Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County Courthouse, Judge of Probate Office, Room 101.

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

Done this the 22nd day of June, 2026.

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

To the Publisher: The Cullman Tribune
Please publish the above notice three (3) successive weeks in said newspaper and send an affidavit of publication to the Judge of Probate.

Seth B. Thompson
Attorney for Petitioner
201 Second Avenue SE
Cullman, AL 35055

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT
*
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO. PC 2026-212

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF JOHN DAVID STARK, DECEASED.

Case# PC2026-212
PB WIL Book 138 Page
Recorded in Above Book
06/08/2026 12:19PM
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate
Cullman County, AL
1 Page(s)

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Letters Testamentary on the Estate of said deceased have been granted to Judy Ann Stark on the 8th day of June, 2026, by the Hon. 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 Ann Stark
Personal Representative

To the publisher of *The Cullman Tribune*:

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

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate

Sherry H. Barrett
Smith & Smith Attorneys, LLC
Attorneys for Personal Representative
328 1st Avenue SE
Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 734-4721

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF)
FLOYD DYER,) CASE NO.: PC2025-446
Deceased.)

NOTICE OF HEARING
PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL, AMENDED PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL and OBJECTION TO THE ESTATE BY PAMELA DYER PIERCE

TO: SCOTT DYER and all Known and Unknown Heirs of the estate of FLOYD DYER, deceased.

The Petition of Pamela Dyer Pierce to admit to probate the Last Will and Testament of Floyd Dyer, deceased, has been set for hearing on **24th day of September, 2026, at 10:00a.m.** before Tammy Brown Judge of Probate, Room 101.

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

DONE this 22nd day of June, 2026.

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

To the Publisher: The Cullman Tribune
Please publish the above notice three (3) successive weeks in said newspaper and send an affidavit of publication to the Judge of Probate.

Thomas E. Drake, II
Attorney for the Petitioner
419 2nd Avenue SW
Cullman, Alabama 35055

STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT
*
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO. PC 2026-251

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF KENNETH RAFIE HOLLINS, DECEASED.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

WJL

Letters Testamentary on the Estate of said deceased have been granted to Cynthia Hall on the 17th day of June, 2026, by the Hon. 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.

Cynthia Hall
Personal Representative

To the publisher of *The Cullman Tribune*:

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

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate

Sherry H. Barrett
Smith & Smith Attorneys, LLC
Attorneys for Personal Representative
328 1st Avenue SE
Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 734-4721

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF)
TED WAGNON,) CASE NO PC 2024-283
Deceased.)

NOTICE OF HEARING
PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT
AMENDED PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT and
AMENDED PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT

TO: MIKE WAGNON and all known and unknown heirs of the estate of TED WAGNON, deceased.

The Petition for Final Settlement, Amended Petition for Final Settlement and Amended Petition for Final Settlement of Dawn Wagnon for the estate of Ted Wagnon, deceased, has been set for hearing on the **25th day of August, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.** before Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County Courthouse, Judge of Probate Office, Room 101.

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

Done this the 5th day of June, 2026.

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

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STATE OF ALABAMA * IN THE PROBATE COURT OF
*
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO.: PC 2026-185

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF WILBURN PAUL KNIGHT, DECEASED,

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY ADMINISTRATOR

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration having been granted to MICHAEL W. KNIGHT, as Administrator of the Estate of WILBURN PAUL KNIGHT, Deceased, on the 5th day of June, 2026, 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.

MICHAEL W. KNIGHT
Administrator of the
Estate of Wilburn Paul Knight,
Deceased

PERRY D. KNIGHT
Attorney for the Petitioner
412 First Avenue SE
Suite 101
Cullman, AL 35055
256-734-4090

TO: The Publisher of THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

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

Tammy Brown
Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate

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ALABAMA

BUILDING DEPARTMENT
201 2nd Avenue NE 256.775.7203
Cullman, Alabama 35055 www.CullmanAl.gov

City of Cullman
Planning Commission

On Tuesday July 7, 2026, at Cullman City Hall Auditorium at 5:30 P.M, at the regular meeting of the City of Cullman Planning Commission, a public hearing will be held to allow affected parties to voice their concerns related to the following items:

1. Conditional use request at 117 2nd Avenue NE for the relocation of The Link

2. Short form subdivision – County Road 1473 – divide one parcel into two parcels

3. Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 62 Section 38 – walls and fences

4. Short form subdivision – 20 County Road 499 – move property line

5. Preliminary subdivision – Brock Trace Subdivision – County Road 1464 & County Road 1466

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

THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE
JUNE 23, 2026

Mary Carter Store hosts fun Father's Day workshop



CHASADY WOODS/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

3D printed charms made by Mary Carter Store Manager Jeff Young

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Mary Carter Store on Saturday, June 20, held a special "Make & Take" workshop for Father's Day. The activity encouraged participants to get hands-on, crafting personalized keychains to celebrate a day all about dads and father figures.

Business Development Lead Melissa Jones said the workshop was very busy. Custom 3D printed items were made by Manager Jeff Young.

"When we run low, he has been printing more," she said that day.

The keychains featured charms such a fishing bobbers, fish and keepsake items reading "#1 Dad."

Not only did the event offer a fun, family experience, but it also gave back to the community. Fifty percent of the proceeds will go to local nonprofit The Link of Cullman County.

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STK# 64111
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- Ventilated Front & Rear Seats
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STK# 68501
- 6.2L EcoTec3 V8 Engine
- Speed Sensing Steering
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NOW $72,804
SAVE $15,500!

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STK# 69149
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- Super Cruise
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