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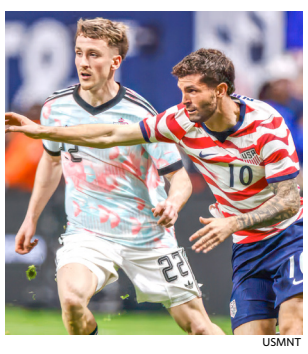
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USMNT

— SPORTS —

U.S. Men's National Team to face Belgium in Round of 16 of FIFA World Cup 2026

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Farmer, Parkside Principal Caleb Elrod selected for elite A.L.F.A. Leaders program

Lydia East
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — Caleb Elrod, a cattle farmer and principal of Parkside School in Cullman County, has been selected to participate in Class VII of Agricultural Leaders for Alabama (A.L.F.A. Leaders) following a strenuous application and interview process.

Elrod is one of 14 participants who will become part of a distinguished network of Alabama Farmers Federation leaders whose involvement and personal growth advanced through the prestigious leadership experience.

Sponsored by the Federation, A.L.F.A. Leaders creates an intensive learning experience by focusing on personal development, political involvement, effective communication and understanding of grassroots leadership.

"Being a principal, I think it's important to continue growing as a leader," Elrod said. "There is no better way to grow your leadership than with the Farmers Federation and A.L.F.A. Lead- » PAGE 8



ALFA FARMERS

Caleb Elrod

Museum celebrates John G. Cullmann's birthday

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — John Gottfried Cullmann was born on July 2, 1823, and died on Dec. 3, 1895, at 72. The Cullman County Museum, houses in a replica of his home, offered free admission July 2 in honor of his birthday.

Room 4 features Cullmann's office. The Cullman County Museum writes, "The furnishings, books and maps reflect the work of planning a growing community during the late nineteenth century. Panels featured in the room explore the importance of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, whose arrival encouraged settlement, commerce and industry while connecting Cullman to communities across the south."

A late-1800s typewriter – an Oliver Typewriter – is displayed in the room, as well as several German-language volumes as a nod to Cullmann's German heritage.

His heritage is also reflected in Room 5, along with aspects of his music and home life. There are parlor instruments that families use before radio and television. An interactive listening station allows visitors to listen to German hymns and more, such as fiddle music.

Room 6 offers a glimpse into Cullmann's life as the public is able to look upon family pieces connected to him. The items and furnishings are all from his original home.

The museum states these pieces "reflect domestic comfort, family memory and 19th century craftsmanship."

His bedspread and parlor settee are featured, in addition to portraits of the Cullmann family.



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

A statue of John G. Cullmann stands outside the Cullman County Museum.

Museum Director Molly Bloom said free admission was a fun way to bring the Cullman community to the museum, but also a way to celebrate Cullman's founder on his birthday.

The museum recently created a tribute display honoring the historic Stiefelmeyer Building, which was tragically lost to fire earlier this year. Stiefelmeyer hats and boxes remain » PAGE 5

2 arrested in Smith Lake Park shooting investigation



CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Michael David Hughes and Kimbley Michelle Cobb » PAGE 2

Alabama Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday set for July 17-19

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408-foot Argosy VI latest addition to Alabama's Artificial Reef Zone



BILLY POPE

The Argosy VI slips beneath the surface of the Gulf of America to add to Alabama's unparalleled Artificial Reef Zone. » PAGE 4

The invisibility cloak: Why some swimsuit colors disappear in the ocean



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

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Summer Concerts at Art Park Thursdays in July

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OP-ED

Mom tips for summer survival

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Cullman's Allen Jiang receives degree from Georgia Tech

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CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported July 2

Cullman Tribune staff
Contributor

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

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

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INCIDENTS

June 29

- assault; theft of property; CR 1845
- domestic violence; CR 1154
- criminal mischief; CR 1391
- domestic violence; Edmondson Rd. NE

June 30

- harassing communications; CR 1082
- harassment; CR 1843
- domestic violence; CR 1258
- theft of property; Commercial St. NE
- harassing communications; CR 438
- theft of property; burglary; CR 447
- harassment; CR 1223
- theft of property; US. 31
- domestic violence; Commercial St. NE

July 1

- possession of controlled substance; possession of drug paraphernalia; I65NB MM 305
- possession of controlled substance; possession of drug paraphernalia; I65NB MM 301
- harassment; CR 1203
- domestic violence; CR 222

ARRESTS

June 29 – July 1

Baker, Tyler A.; 29

- FTA – possessing forged instrument
- FTA – theft-from banking institution
- FTA – theft-miscellaneous, less than $500

Barnett, Candi M.; 37

- FTA – theft-from residence, less than $500

Cammon, Michael E.; 62

- PROBATION VIOLATION – violation of a domestic violence protection order

Chandler, Jordan W.; 29

- FTA – expired tag

Corbin, Mark W.; 51

- FTA – theft-vehicle parts

Cox, Robert W.; 31

- possession of drug paraphernalia

Davenport, William A.; 20

- GJ – kidnapping-unlawful restraint
- GJ – sex offense-rape-other weapon

Foster, Cynthia J.; 61

- harassing communications

Goodwin, Dannial S.; 28

- FTA – assault-domestic-harassment-family

Guzman, Rodolfo; 48

- family offense-causing of delinquency, dependency or need of supervision of children

Howell, Michael H.; 66

- assault-harassment

Jackson, Cynthia L.; 60

- assault-domestic-harassment-family

Kitchens, Timothy J.; 35

- possession of dangerous drugs

Lucas, Aneta M.; 52

- FTA – DUI (alcohol)
- FTA – driving while suspended, revoked or canceled
- FTA – operating vehicle without insurance
- FTA – tinted windows

Mauro, Cailla M.; 34

- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia
- FTA – possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- FTA – possession of dangerous drugs

Mullis, Lorel M.; 37

- possession of methamphetamine
- possession of drug paraphernalia
- possession of marijuana-2nd degree
- promote prison contraband (drugs)

Odeneal, Barbara C.; 58

- FTA – criminal trespass

Wiggins, Joshua R.; 46

- public intoxication

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

July 1

- criminal mischief-2nd degree; City of Cullman; damaged property; $580; 1st Ave. NE
- theft of property-1st degree; person; cash; $56,500
- theft of property-4th degree; harassing communications; person; cash; $362
- assault-3rd degree; person; 2nd Ave. NW
- harassment; person; Logan st. SW

ARRESTS

July 1

Hagood, Gregory L.; 53

- theft of property-4th degree

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests or incidents reported.

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

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Cullman's Allen Jiang receives degree from Georgia Tech

Siobhan Rodriguez
Contributor

ATLANTA — Allen Jiang of Cullman has earned a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science with Highest Honors from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

Jiang was among 7,129 undergraduate and graduate students to be presented Georgia Tech degrees during the Institute's 270th Commencement exercises May 7 - 9, 2026, at McCamish Pavilion (Ph.D. and bachelor's) and Bobby Dodd Stadium (master's).

The Georgia Institute of Technology, or Georgia Tech, is one of the top public research universities in the U.S., developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition.

The Institute offers business, computing, design, engineering, liberal arts, and sciences degrees, as well as professional development and K-12 programs for fostering success at every stage of life. Its more than 56,000 undergraduate and graduate students represent 54 U.S. states and territories and more than 146 countries. They study at the main campus in Atlanta, at instructional sites around the world, and through distance and online learning.

As a leading technological university, Georgia Tech is an engine of economic development for Georgia, the Southeast, and the nation, conducting more than $1 billion in research annually for government, industry, and society.

For more information, visit www.gatech.edu.

Investigation (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Two people have been arrested in connection with the Wednesday, July 1, shooting incident at Smith Lake Park, according to the Cullman County Sheriff's Office. The CCSO said investigators obtained arrest warrants Thursday, July 2, for Michael David Hughes, 20, and Kimbley Michelle Cobb, 20, both from Cullman.

Both were taken into custody without incident and transported to the Cullman County Detention Center.

Hughes and Cobb are each charged with attempted murder and shooting into a vehicle.

Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry commended the investigators and deputies involved in the case.

"The safety of our community remains our highest priority," Gentry said. "I am extremely proud of our investigators and deputies for their outstanding work in identifying these suspects and taking them into custody."

No additional details were immediately released.

After the incident occurred on July 1, the CCSO said: "On July 1, at approximately 3:30 p.m. deputies with the Cullman County Sheriff's Office responded to the area of Smith Lake Park following reports of a civil disturbance involving multiple individuals. During the incident, occupants of one vehicle discharged a firearm toward another vehicle. Fortunately, no injuries have been reported."

All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

Tips (from Front)

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com



CHASADY WOODS/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Diaper bag items

Summer heat is no joke and nothing to handle unprepared. Though it's not so easily avoidable, especially when you have children.

Here are some tips to keep the hassle at bay by preparing for the unexpected!

First things first, the diaper bag.

Mastering your diaper bag is the holy grail of any outing. It's all about you and your baby's needs. If you don't have a bag, my suggestion is to find one that can fit your necessities and a little more. Make sure you have the basics: diapers, wipes, pacifiers, etc. (This will include the specifics of your child's daily routine.)

Always keep a change of clothes or two in the diaper bag or car for yourself and your baby. Accidents happen to everyone and it's no one's fault. For the longest I just brought clothes for my baby, but, more times than not, if he had an accident of some sort – I was target practice! To make it easier on myself I always fold a few spare grocery bags within the baby outfits to conceal any soiled items.

In addition to the Walmart bags, I also keep a few large Ziplock bags handy. Ziplock bags are great for dirty on-the-go bottles, empty snack containers, ultra messy clothes and dirty diapers.

I also keep a small trash can in my car for the dirty diapers. It's a small, bathroom-sized trashcan with a scented bag to contain any odor for the trip home or whatever the day has in store for us.

When it comes to the blowouts, a portable changing pad is a lifesaver. Not every bathroom will have a changing station, let alone a clean one. I cannot recommend the purchase of a changing pad enough! Get one with all of the bells and whistles.

Changing pads that fold and conveniently hold diapers and wipes are a must. Some even have extra padding and a pillow so your little one isn't feeling the surface they are momentarily placed on. How innovative!

Having a spare towel in your vehicle for changes, along with the wipes and diapers in your bag, works just as well, but may not be the most enjoyable during the heat. Though it is an option, nonetheless.

Include a wireless charging bank with an extra charger in your bag, too. Even if you keep a charger inside your car at all times, it's best to have one in your bag as well in case one stops working. Then if your car's charging port stops, you have the wireless charger to use.

And of course, my favorite – portable fans. You can have fans that plug into your charging bank or go the battery-powered route. If you go with the latter, pack extra batteries in the event of an emergency.

Fans are also made that clip to headrest bars. This can benefit children who are rear or front facing, as well as any adult passengers.

Don't forget those boiling hot belt buckles! In extremely hot temperatures take the extra time to buckle your seatbelt or car seat buckles before leaving the car. This keeps the metal cool and can prevent unwanted burns or general discomfort. While it may seem tedious, it's better to put the extra time into this than potentially burning yourself or your child during load-up.

In addition to burns, if your child is prone to accidents be sure to keep a first-aid kit in your vehicle. It can also be included in the diaper bag for the unexpected moments when you can't walk back to the car.

Speaking of accidents and vehicles – be prepared for car troubles! Have the proper tools to make changing a flat quick and time efficient. Purchase a portable jump starter and anything that will keep you and your family off the road and out of danger.

In cases such as these, having a way to charge your phone to call for help, portable fans to stay cool and even having extra water in your vehicle can make all the difference. So plan for the unexpected and have a good summer!







Concerts (from Front)

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism will host "Summer Concerts at Ark Park" every Thursday through the end of July.

CPRST writes: "Join us for an evening of live music featuring talented local bands, great company and fun community atmosphere."

Bands will perform from 6-9 p.m.

- Just In Case on Thursday, July 9
- Mojo Hand and the Gypsy Queen on Thursday, July 16
- The Salty Strings on Thursday, July 23
- The Overtones on Thursday, July 30

These are free, family-friendly events for all to enjoy.

Those who attend are advised to bring lawn chairs, blankets, food or drinks, as well as any necessities to ensure an enjoyable evening.

Art Park is located at 1031 Second St. SW, Cullman.

Follow www.facebook.com/cullmanparksrec for any updates and be mindful of any changes that may occur due to weather.

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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
• Friday, July 3 – 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, July 5 – 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. Prayer service at 2 p.m.

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, 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! Drinks and snacks will be provided. For more information contact the Guy Hunt Library at 256-796-5226, or guyhuntlibrary@gmail.com.

Dripping Springs DAR Celebrates America 250 – Dedication of DAR Revolutionary War Monument
Friday, July 3, at 10 a.m. at Veterans Memorial Park at Sportsman Lake Park, 1544 Sportsman Lake Road NW, Cullman. Questions? Contact Dr. Nancy C. Horton at 256-309-1936.

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.

America 250 Genealogy Workshop
Thursday, July 9, 1-3 p.m., Thursday, July 9, at the Traditions Bank Annex, 109 Second Ave. NW. Open to the public. Bring your laptop if you wish. Sponsored by Dripping Springs Chapter DAR.

Heartland Quilt Guild Meeting
Thursday, July 9, at 6:30 p.m. at Christ Covenant Church, 1310 St. Joseph Dr. NW Cullman. Quilters of all experience levels are welcome.

Annual David Speegle Family Reunion
Sunday, July 12, 2026, at the Speegle Family Point (334 County Rd 321, Crane Hill, AL 35053) beginning around 10:30 a.m. Please join us and bring a covered dish for lunch at noon. Contact Judy Shannon (256-338-0676) or Terry Phillips (256-656-3327) if you need additional information. Come eat and enjoy the day with us at the beautiful Speegle Family Point.

Cullman County Soil & Water Conservation District Quarterly Board Meeting
Tuesday, July 14, at 9:30 a.m. at the USDA Service Center, 501 Fourth St. SW, Cullman.

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
JULY 4, 2026

U.S. Men's National Team to face Belgium in Round of 16 of FIFA World Cup 2026

United States Men's National Team

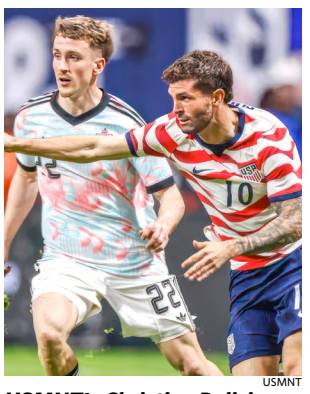
With its 2-0 win against Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Round of 32, the U.S. Men's National Team is through to the Round of 16 of the FIFA World Cup 2026 for the fourth time in as many tries. The result means the Stars and Stripes will face Belgium on Monday, July 6 at 5 p.m. PT / 8 p.m. ET in Seattle, Wash. as they look to remain unbeaten at the cavernous venue.

The win against Bosnia and Herzegovina was the second World Cup knockout stage victory in program history. Additionally, the result snapped a 12-match winless streak against European opposition.

In the group stage, the USMNT constructed a 2W-1L-0D record thanks to victories against Paraguay and Australia. The Stars and Stripes concluded the group stage with a narrow 3-2 loss against Türkiye in which a USMNT-record nine changes were made to the starting lineup from the Australia match.

The USMNT has faced the Red Devils on seven prior instances. The first meeting—the United States' lone victory—came in the form of a 3-0 victory at the inaugural 1930 World Cup in Montevideo, Uruguay. That contest nearly 100 years ago marked the USMNT's first-ever match at a World Cup and still stands as the joint-largest margin of victory for the Stars and Stripes at the World Cup, recently matched by the USMNT's three-goal victory against Paraguay to open this year's tournament.

Since then, the United States has lost six consecutive matches against Belgium, with the two most recent encounters coming in the Round of 16 of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil and a pre-World Cup tune-up in Atlanta earlier this year. A win in the Round of 16 would see the United States progress to the Quarterfinals of the World Cup for the first time since 2002.



USMNT

USMNT's Christian Pulisic vs. Bosnia-Herzegovina in the World Cup Round of 32.

Zone (from Front)

David Rainer
Ala. Dept. of Conservation and Nat. Resources

ORANGE BEACH, Ala. — Alabama's unparalleled artificial reef system added another jewel to its crown this week when the Argosy VI, a former riverboat casino from Indiana, was deployed as the state's newest artificial reef about 23 miles south of Orange Beach.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (ADCNR) Marine Resources Division (MRD) is overseeing the project that started with towing the 408-foot vessel from its temporary home in Bayou La Batre, where the vessel was gutted and prepared for deployment, into the Gulf of America. On Wednesday, Argosy VI was scuttled to make a trifecta of large artificial reefs as it joined the New Venture and Lulu vessels that were deployed in the same general vicinity, about 23 miles south of Orange Beach. The Argosy VI reef is located at N29° 52.206′, W087° 34.984′ (or in decimal degree 29.8701, -87.583067) in 120 feet of water with 62-64 feet of water above the top of the vessel.

"I am excited to add this huge reef to our already legendary Alabama Artificial Reef Zone," said Conservation Commissioner Chris Blankenship.

"This sinking completes the dream we started back in 2013 with the reefing of the 272-foot-long LuLu. Our goal at MRD, along with the Alabama Gulf Coast Reef and Restoration Foundation, was to build three large ship size reefs in fairly close proximity and use the synergies to drive dive operators and fishing business opportunities.

"In 2018, we reefed the 250-foot-long New Venture, and we have been looking for the right vessel to complete the planned three vessel program.

"The Argosy had been in Bayou la Batre for years and had been a target for reefing, but the owner had other plans for the vessel.

"Over the past year, the stars aligned, and we had an opportunity to work with the owner and agree to purchase the vessel for this 408-foot-long, four-deck-high artificial reef.

"I am thankful the Argosy is now on the bottom of the Gulf and will produce fishing and diving opportunities for decades to come.

"I would like to thank former Marine Resources Director Scott Bannon for his work to make this happen in the early stages. I am also thankful for the work of MRD Biologist Craig Newton and Artificial Reef Coordinator Russell Rigby for their work to get this across the finish line.

"Governor (Kay) Ivey approved this project for GoMESA (Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act) funding in 2025, and the disbursement was managed by our State Lands Division. MRD Director Kevin Anson and ADCNR Assistant Deputy Commissioner Billy Pope worked this week with our MRD Enforcement staff to get the media, dignitaries and others out to witness and document the sinking.

"It has really been a team effort within ADCNR to get this done."

The Argosy VI has a beam of 80 feet, significantly wider than the Liberty ships, retired World War II merchant vessels, that were deployed in the mid-1970s off the Alabama Gulf Coast.

Craig Newton, MRD District supervising biologist, said the Argosy VI will offer anglers and divers a new experience.

"The Liberty ships were 440 feet in length and about 50 feet wide," Newton said. "The casino vessel is 80 feet wide, and it will provide a more vertically complex type of habitat than what the Liberty ships provided. The Liberty ships have undergone some wear and tear over the years. They've been reefed for more than 50 years, and you can imagine the storm damage and being in the harsh marine environment.

Newton said two casino boats ended up docked at Bayou La Batre before Hurricane Sally in 2020.

"People were constantly asking me about repurposing those casino barges into reefs," he said. "Now five or six years later, here we are. It was not the intention for those boats, but through some opportunities provided through GoMESA funds, we were able to work out an agreement with the owner."

The vessel underwent an extensive cleaning with the removal of all grease, fuel and hydraulic fluid or other material that could be corrosive to the marine environment. Large holes were cut through the sides and floors of the vessel to accelerate the reefing process and to provide access to divers and the living resources that will use the structure as habitat.

With all that work completed, the Argosy VI was towed this week to the reef site, where it was flooded and deployed in 120 feet of water.

"The Argosy is strategically located in relatively close proximity to two other highly attractive reefed vessels, the New Venture and the LuLu," said Newton, who turned over the reins of the artificial reef program to Russell Rigby.

"It will be within 7.5 miles of both of those reefs so that any dive trip or fishing vessel can easily visit the Argosy site and enjoy a day of diving or fishing on all three of those highly complex structures.

"We anticipate the top level of the casino barge to be sitting in right at 60 feet of water, which will allow a wide range of diver experience levels to access the reef site," Newton said.

"We expect the large void spaces in the vessel to be utilized by all the reef fish we like to catch like gray snapper, red snapper, grouper species and gray triggerfish. It will be highly suitable for species like vermilion snapper because of the size and vertical complexity.

"It could be a place where you could stop by on a day of red snapper fishing and supplement your box with some different types of fish."

Rigby, who previously served as MRD's Geographic Information Specialist, said the nooks and crannies of the Argosy VI will hopefully be home to a variety of grouper species that have been difficult to attract to the smaller reefs. He expects activity around the reef will begin almost immediately.

"You can get some transitory fish within a couple of hours, fish that are moving between reef structures in the area," Rigby said. "It will probably be about a year before we have a complete community of species designated only to this reef. We're hoping with all the openings and overhangs, it will provide suitable habitat for grouper. We're excited about this one. It will have lots of vertical relief, so species like amberjack and species of pelagic fish should use the structure. It will attract all the species our fishermen are interested in, so we're looking at a structure that will last 30 to 50 years and provide the people of Alabama a great resource."

Newton said the reason the reef site was selected on the eastern side of Alabama's artificial reef zone south of Orange Beach was because of the clearer water associated with a sandier bottom.

"The reef site is more attractive to the dive community," he said. "Along with the complexity of the vessel, the accessibility to a wide range of scuba divers and the clearer water, we anticipate this will be a highly attractive dive site. Scuba divers who are making a trip offshore can see a traditional shipwreck, and within the same day, see an old riverboat casino."

Kevin Anson, MRD Director, said the reefing of the Argosy VI is another effort in the goal of continuing to build Alabama's artificial reef zone, which encompasses 1,100 square miles with more than 12,000 reef structures.

"DCNR still wants to supplement the reef structures we have in the artificial reef zone," Anson said.

"Typically, we deploy small reefs like pyramid-shaped reefs, so having these types of reef structures brought into the system periodically helps maintain diversity and what the reef system can offer for Alabama fishermen and divers."

ADCNR Deputy Commissioner Charlanna Skaggs was able to inspect and explore the Argosy VI in Bayou la Batre during the media day before the vessel was towed to the reefing site. MRD boats from Orange Beach and Dauphin Island carried numerous media outlets to the deployment site.

"This will make a great addition to our artificial reef zone," Deputy Commissioner Skaggs said.

"This will be one of our larger reefs at more than 400 feet. We're excited about the fish species that will utilize this reef and for the divers and anglers who will get to take advantage of this."

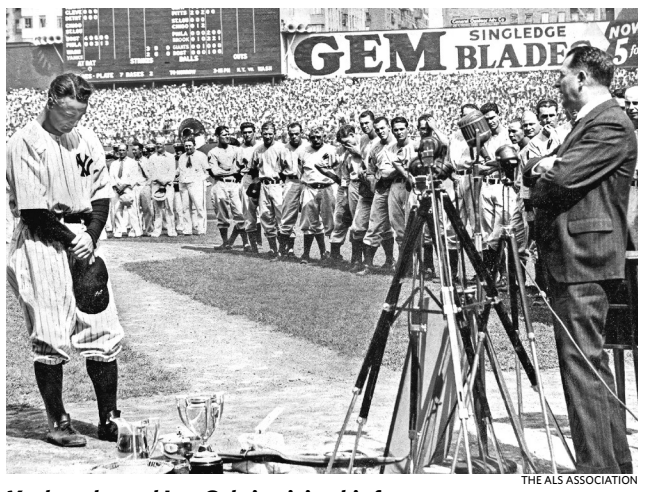
Looking back at some of July 4's most iconic sports moments

Lucas Gray
lucas@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — There's plenty for us to thank the United States for, but sports fanatics, little tops its contribution to sports on an international scale. Housing all four major leagues, of course, is one of them, but the creation of the games of baseball and American football will forever be paramount.

While falling in the middle of summer limits what sports are actually being played, the nation's birthday has given us a handful of iconic sports moments. Here's a few of them:

• **Lou Gehrig's iconic "Luckiest Man" speech, 1939:** After 17 seasons with the New York Yankees including six World Series rings, being part of the legendary 1927 "Murderer's Row" alongside Babe Ruth and a 2,000-plus games played streak, Gehrig delivered an address to Yankees fans following his diagnosis with ALS. With his health declining and the press speculating, he set things straight with the 60,000 fans in attendance, finishing the speech with, "For the past two weeks you have been reading about a bad break. Yet, today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth."



THE ALS ASSOCIATION

Yankees legend Lou Gehrig giving his famous "luckiest man" speech on July 4, 1939.

• **Kevin Durant signs with the Golden State Warriors, 2016:** On Independence Day, 2016, the sports world was rocked when Oklahoma City Thunder superstar Kevin Durant chose to depart the Thunder for Golden State Warriors in free agency. The Warriors, led by Steph Curry and Klay Thompson, had defeated OKC in seven games in the prior season's Western Conference Finals and gone on to win the NBA Finals. The move has forever Scarred Durant's legacy as a Thunder, and was the first step into the "Super-Team" era of the NBA.

• **Serena Williams defeats Venus to secure her third Wimbledon singles title, 2009:** With a resume already supporting her claim as one of the all-time great tennis players, Serena Williams took on her older sister, Venus, in the Wimbledon women's singles title match on the nation's birthday in '09. The sports icon wrapped up the victory and jogged to the net to shake her Venus' hand, who then grabbed her arm and pulled her in for an embrace at mid-court after her sister had secured her third Wimbledon championship.





Museum (from Front)

intact for visitors.

Bloom stated she browsed the museum's inventory when she came across boxes labeled "Stiefelmeyer" after the fire. "It was like Christmas morning and I found all of these amazing hats!" she said.

The museum aims to have pieces of the building's remains showcased in the future with details of its history.

The museum recently hosted an interactive workshop, and Bloom said they hope to hold more events in future, with plans for holiday-themed tours.

For more, visit www.facebook.com/cullmancomuseum or www.cullmancountymuseum.com.

The Cullman County Museum is located at 211 Second Ave. NE, Cullman.



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

A dress is displayed in front of an American flag at the Cullman County Museum.



EMILY MCMUNN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

An old Cullman Tribune photo and article are displayed behind medicine bottles at the Cullman County Museum.

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The American Revolution and today – immunization saves lives

Dr. Scott Harris
ADPH

As Americans celebrate our nation's semiquincentennial, we are grateful to our forebears for a multitude of reasons, including the public health advances that have improved our life expectancy and quality of life over the past 250 years. Often topping the list of public health achievements is vaccination and disease eradication. Infectious microorganisms that once caused deaths from diseases such as diphtheria, tetanus, yellow fever, dysentery, typhoid fever, polio, malaria and smallpox have been dramatically lowered, and countless lives have been saved.

During the Revolutionary War, soldiers were more likely to die from epidemics and other illnesses than from enemy combat.

Smallpox was widespread and had a mortality rate of about 30%. In 1777, General George Washington took the brave risk of requiring all soldiers to be inoculated against smallpox.

Washington's mass immunization efforts were significant: The campaign reduced the death rate from smallpox among the troops to less than 2%.

Historians credit Washington's important decision with helping save the Continental Army and contributing to American victory.

As events this year focus on our country's history, keep in mind that vaccinations for diseases such as measles safely and effectively protect children and vulnerable immunocompromised people from suffering from potential illnesses, complications and preventable deaths.

More than 2,000 cases of measles have been confirmed in the U.S. this year, and about 93% are in children or adults who are unvaccinated or have an unknown or incomplete vaccination status.

About 6% of those infected have required hospitalization in this alarming resurgence, the largest since 1992.

In 2025, there were three confirmed deaths from this highly contagious airborne disease in the U.S.; all were in unvaccinated individuals.

Vaccination is the most effective way to equip a child's immune system to stay healthy and to keep others healthy.

Parents and caregivers need to ensure their children's immunizations are current as we approach the usual back-to-school rush. If a child has missed doses or fallen behind, this month provides some needed time to allow for make-up vaccinations.

To learn more about vaccination clinics offered by county health departments and to view flyers about vaccine-preventable diseases, go to www.alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/index.html.

Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H.
State Health Officer



ADPH

State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris

Cloak (from Front)

Emily McMunn
emily@cullmantribune.com

When you're packing your beach bag, you probably think about sunscreen, towels and snacks. But it turns out that the color of your swimsuit could actually save your life.

Imagine having a superpower that makes you instantly invisible. Sounds cool, right? But if you're swimming in the ocean, being invisible is the last thing you want. You want lifeguards, your family and your friends to be able to spot you easily in the waves.

Believe it or not, picking the wrong swimsuit color can act like a real-life invisibility cloak once you dive underwater or, heaven forbid, you're pulled under by force.

Let's focus on the "Do not wear" list:

• Blue and light blue: This is the ultimate disappearing act. Because the ocean is already blue, blue swimsuits act like camouflage. In a blink of an eye and just below the surface, you completely blend in with the water.

• White: This color is very misleading; you may think it's a safe choice but guess what, it's not. When the sun hits the ocean, it creates a bright glare and lots of reflections on the surface, much like glass. White also blends in with seafoam, bubbles and sunlight glare, making it very difficult to spot you.

• Black, gray and dark greens: Dark colors may appear bold on land, but underwater is a different story. Underwater these colors look like shadows, dark rocks, clumps of seaweed and other underwater debris.

So, why exactly does this happen? Well it all comes down to contrast – which is just a fancy word for how well two things stand out from each other. Water absorbs light differently than air. When sunlight travels through water, it gets scattered by waves, bubbles and tiny bits of sand or algae. Within just a few inches of water, many colors lose their brightness and fade away.

If your swimsuit is a color that matches the ocean like blue or matches the reflections like white, your contrast drops to zero. You disappear!

And now you're probably thinking, if blues and whites are out, and I can't wear bold dark colors either then, where does that leave me?

Don't worry, we got you; if you want to be a safety superstar, you want to wear high-visibility neon colors. That's right, break those rave clothes out.

The number one choice is neon orange; it's the ultimate contrast color to blue water. It's the reason hunters and fishermen wear orange vests, or why traffic cones are a bright orange. The next runner up is neon yellow and lime green – fluorescent colors actually absorb invisible light and re-emit it, giving them that glowing effect.

Next time you go shopping for a swimsuit be sure to get that knock-out color. Who knows, maybe you could even make it a fun trend with your beach-going friends. Who can "blind" whom with the boldest color. Turns out, looking like a glowing neon highlighter is the safest way to ride the waves.

Holiday (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. — Alabama shoppers will have a chance to save on certain back-to-school purchases during the state's 21st annual Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday.

The sales tax holiday begins Friday, July 17, at 12:01 a.m. and ends Sunday, July 19, at midnight, according to the Alabama Department of Revenue.

During the holiday, certain school supplies, computers and clothing may be purchased free of state sales tax. Local sales tax may still apply in some areas, depending on whether the county or municipality participates. The Alabama Department of Revenue lists Cullman, Cullman County, Dodge City, Fairview, Garden City, Good Hope, Hanceville and South Vinemont among the participating localities.

Eligible clothing items must be $156 or less per article. The category includes general-use clothing such as belts, boots, caps, coats, diapers, dresses, gloves, gym suits, hats, hosiery, jackets, jeans, pajamas, pants, raincoats, robes, sandals, scarves, school uniforms, shirts, shoes, shorts, socks, sneakers and underwear.

Some clothing-related items are not eligible, including accessories, protective equipment and sports or recreational equipment.

Noneligible items include belt buckles sold separately, briefcases, cosmetics, handbags, jewelry, sewing supplies, sunglasses, umbrellas, wallets, watches, masks, helmets, protective gloves, safety glasses, ballet or tap shoes, band instruments, cleated athletic shoes, sports gloves, goggles, skates, shoulder pads, ski boots, waders and wetsuits.

Computers, computer software and school computer supplies are eligible when sold as a single purchase of $1,173 or less. Eligible computer items may include a laptop, desktop or tower computer system, along with components sold as part of a computer package, such as a monitor, keyboard, mouse and speakers.

Computer parts and devices not sold as part of a package with the computer's central processing unit do not qualify for the exemption. Furniture, recreational computer systems, recreational software, recreational peripherals and noneducational video games are also not eligible.

Textbooks are eligible at a sales price of $47 or less per book for noncommercial purchases. For the holiday, a book is defined as a set of printed sheets bound together and published in a volume with an ISBN number. Magazines, newspapers, periodicals and other documents printed or offered for sale in a non-bound form are not eligible.

School supplies, school art supplies and school instructional materials are eligible at a sales price of $78 or less per item for noncommercial purchases.

Eligible school supplies include binders, blackboard chalk, book bags, calculators, cellophane tape, compasses, composition books, crayons, erasers, folders, glue, paste, paste sticks, highlighters, index cards, index card boxes, legal pads, lunch boxes, markers, notebooks, protractors, paper, pencil boxes, pencil sharpeners, pencils, pens, rulers, scissors and writing tablets.

Eligible school art supplies include clay and glazes, paints, paintbrushes for artwork and sketch and drawing pads.

Eligible school instructional materials include reference maps and globes, as well as required textbooks on an official schoolbook list with a sales price of more than $47 and less than $78.

For more information, visit www.revenue.alabama.gov/sales-use/sales-tax-holidays.

LEGALS

Legal Notice

In accordance with Chapter 1, Title 39, Code of Alabama, 1975, notice is hereby given that First Team Construction Co., Inc., Contractor, has completed the Additions & Renovations to Cullman Middle School at 800 2nd Ave NE Cullman, Alabama 35055, for Cullman City Board of Education, Owners, and have made request for final settlement of said Contract. All persons having any claim for labor, materials, or otherwise in connection with this project should immediately contact Lathan Associates Architects, P.C., 300 Chase Park South, Suite 200, Hoover, AL 35244.

First Team Construction Co.Inc.
475 North Dean Road
Auburn, AL 36830

Legal Notice

Notice is hereby given to all owners, secured parties and lienholders of the following described motor vehicles, which I have a right to sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, in accordance with the State of Alabama abandoned motor vehicle law, Statues, Chapter 13, Section 1-8, Title 32 and Alabama Law Act Number 83-494-S-80, as per Legislative Act 2015-470:

2012 Chevrolet Cruze vin:1G1PH5SC4C7308174
2008 Jeep Patriot vin: 1J8FF28W58D786906
2016 GMC Canyon vin:1GTG6DE36G1310245
2011 Nissan Rogue vin:JN8AS5MT6BW565681
2016 Kia Soul vin:KNDJP3A57G7237601
2003 Ford Explorer vin:1FMZU62K83UC35316
2013 Hyundai SONATA vin:5NPEB4AC2DH532195
2000 Dodge Ram 1500 vin:1B7HC16Y7YS518751
2007 Ford Edge vin:2FMDK39C87BB25567
2005 Dodge Durango vin:1D4HD38N05F545437
2011 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 vin:3GCPKSE31BG383114
2007 Chevrolet Suburban vin:1GNFK16347J178033

These vehicles will be sold on August 3, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. for towing/storage fees if not claimed. Located at Hammock Auto Sales, 17 County Road 406, Cullman, Alabama 35057, 256-775-3754.

STATE OF ALABAMA Cullman County, AL 1 Page(s) IN THE PROBATE COURT
*
CULLMAN COUNTY * CASE NO. PC 2026-250

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF JANICE EASON TUCKER, DECEASED.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT TO BE PUBLISHED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Letters Testamentary on the Estate of said deceased have been granted to JANA T. MCAFEE and RITA A. RODGERS 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.

JANA T. MCAFEE and RITA A. RODGERS
Joint Personal Representatives

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 Representatives
P. O. Box 398
Cullman, AL 35056-0398
(256) 734-4721

Legal Notice

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

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF * CASE NO PC 2025-460
GLADYS L. CARR, *
Deceased. *

NOTICE OF HEARING
PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL

TO: GLENDA BRUAZ, KEVIN YATES ANDANY KNOWN OR UNKNOWN NEXT-OF-KIN OR INTERESTED PARTIES OF GLADYS L. CARR

Petition for Probate of Will, filed by Brian Carr, Petitioner, through Attorney Warren "Bo" Burke, Jr., has been scheduled for the **18th day of August, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.,** before Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate, Cullman County, Alabama.

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

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

Done this the 17th day of June, 2026.

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

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CUILLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF *
MAXINE H. ELLIOTT, * **CASE NO.: PC2026-037**
Deceased. *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Letters Testamentary having been granted to BRANDON L. ELLIOTT as Personal Representative of the Estate of MAXINE H. ELLIOTT deceased, on the 30th day of June, 2026, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Probate Judge.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all persons having claims against the said Estate are hereby required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

Brandon L. Elliott
Personal Representative

Brandon L. Elliot
PRO SE

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

Please publish the above Notice once a week for (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 1 Page(s)

In Re the Estate of)
)
Kyle Byno Absher,) Case No. PC 2025-433
)
Deceased)

Notice to Creditors

TAKE NOTICE that Letters Testamentary having been granted to Iva Absher Thomas as Personal Representative of the Estate of Kyle Byno Absher, deceased, on the 25th day of June, 20____, by the Hon. Tammy Brown, Judge of Probate,

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all persons having claims against the said Estate are required to present the same within the time allowed by law or the same will be barred.

Iva Absher Thomas
Personal Representative
Iva Absher Thomas

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

Tammy Brown
Judge of Probate, Tammy Brown
Cullman County, Alabama

G. Edward Coey
Attorney for Personal Representative
P.O. Box 834
Hanceville, Al 35077
256-352-2090

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: The Estate of)
)
MAX BLANE DANIEL) CASE NO.: PC 2026 - 248
)
Deceased.)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE that Letters of Administration have been granted to Douglas E. Harris, as Administrator of the Estate of Max Blane Daniel, deceased, on the 17th day of June, 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.

Haley Hosk
Petitioner

Hunter Daniel
Hunter Daniel
Petitioner

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

Attorney for Co-Petitioners

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

BILLY BOB'S STORIES AND STUFF

Happy Birthday, everyone

Bill King
Tribune
Contributor



July, July – my, oh my – is it really July? – Christmas was only last week – and now the new year is half gone – the month has come when we all were born – So, if you are a red-white-and-blue-blooded American – Happy Birthday! – you don't look so bad to be 250 years old!

July is the birth month of us all. Now, if we're talking about individuals, in the United States, August is the month that consistently records the highest number of births, but it is usually followed by July or September. I was born in July...the 28th to be exact. My favorite (one and only) grandson was also born in July. He was born two days after me on July 30. Actually, he was born two days and a several years after me. Drew and I will be reversed ages this year...he will turn 17 and I will turn 71.

On the Fourth of July, we, as a nation, will celebrate our 250th birthday. Two-hundred-fifty years may seem like a long time, but in reality, we are not all that old. If you visit in the lands of our forefathers you will see buildings still standing that are centuries older than our country. These United States is like the younger kid brother among the much older siblings. The youngest sibling is often called "the baby." At 250, the United States is not the youngest nation, but we are still a baby nation.

For those of us who are around my age, we easily remember when we celebrated our 200th birthday back in 1976. It was the year of the bicentennial. We had all kinds of special parades and celebrations. They minted bicentennial coins for the anniversary. Instead of having one date, some coins had two...1776-1976. The most popular bicentennial coin was the quarter, but they minted half-dollars and silver dollars, too. I still have several of those quarters and half-dollars. Occasionally, you will still see one in circulation.

The 250th birthday or anniversary is called a semiquincentennial. There probably won't be as much celebration as there was with the bicentennial, partly because nobody can spell semiquincentennial and hardly anyone can pronounce it...especially if they are wearing dentures.

My spell check didn't even recognize the word as a word. They certainly couldn't have engraved that on our coins because none of them are large enough. Can you imagine trying to print that on a penny? Did you just ask, "What is a penny?" The semiquincentennial may be remembered as the year we did away with the penny.

So, whose birthday is it? It is my birthday. It is your birthday. It is our birthday. It is the birthday celebration of "We the People." 1776 was more than the birth of a new nation, it was the birth of a new government: a government of the people, by the people, for the people. It was an experiment...known as "The American Experiment." It was a nation of self-governance, or self-rule, and not one ruled by a king or dictator. We do not have a "top down" form of government but a "bottom up" one. We are an independent, do-it-yourself people, yet governed by the people as a whole. We answer to the people and, ultimately, to God Almighty, in whom we trust.

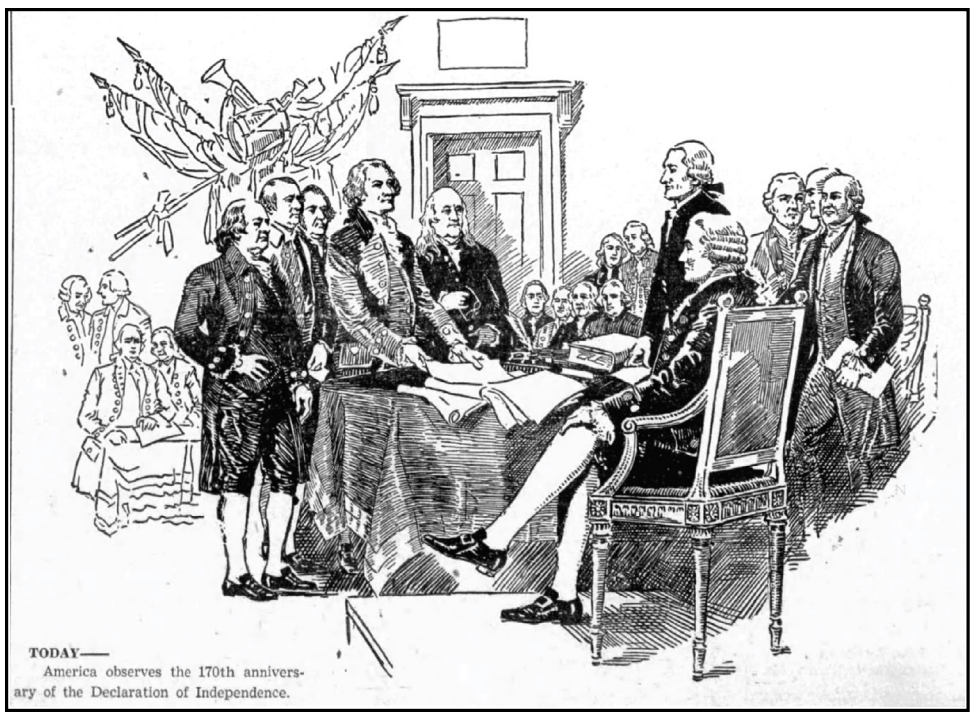
For 250 years the experiment that many said would never work has worked; not without its problems, but it has indeed worked. We do have our share of issues, but I am still proud to be an American...where at least I know I'm free. So, Happy Birthday, my fellow Americans!

Bill King can be reached at bkpreach@yahoo.com.

HISTORY

Files from Yesteryear: July 4, 1946

From the files of July 4, 1946



TODAY—
America observes the 170th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Simcoe News
Norman Deese of Akron, Ohio, is spending his vacation with his parents, the A. J. Deese.

Maurice Drake, S2-c, was home on leave after finishing basic training at Great Lakes, Ill.

Walt Childress and family of Akron, Ohio are visiting relatives here.

Joe Schnittker and family of Birmingham visited his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Schnittker, recently.

John H. Schnittker of Akron, Ohio is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Schnittker.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Ross of Atlanta, Ga. recently visited her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Pat Ford.

Mt. Pisgah News
Mr. and Mrs. Junior Pearson and Clark of Waverly, Fla. are visiting Mr. and Mrs. Noah Brown.

Mr. and Mrs. Warner Huddleston have been visiting their sons, Silas and Ben in Pascagoula, Miss.

Hurshell and Basel Moses are ill with the measles.

Mr. and Mrs. George Newell and Mr. and Mrs. Will Newell of Lagrange, Ga. are visiting relatives here.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dye spent Saturday night with Mr. and Mrs. Charlie G. Huddleston.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie W. Huddleston visited Mr. and Mrs. Buren Talley, Sunday.

Cpl. Doris M. Jackson is still stationed at Oliver General Hospital, Augusta, Ga.

Good Hope Club Amazed At Mrs. Reid's Home
Members of the Good Hope Home Demonstration Club met on June 25 with Mrs. Herman Reid.

The group was amazed at the beauty of the Reid's four room house which they had completely redecorated for the summer.

Mr. Reid, who is a recently discharged War Veteran, will enter college this fall but he and his wife wanted to keep house until they left. Therefore, they papered the walls, finished in white a number of discarded pieces of furniture and have proved that an attractive and livable home can be fashioned from odds and ends.

Among the attractive pieces of furniture are a radio cabinet made into a book case, an old fashioned wooden bed cut down and refinished into a modern one; a large packing case enameled white and curtained makes a nice closet; an old ice box is a roomy linen chest and a discarded incubator makes an attractive table.

North Vinemont News
Mr. and Mrs. Hollis Wilhite and children and Mr. and Mrs. Purvis Wilhite and children and Clarence and John D. Wilhite spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Summerford of Falkville.

Mr. and Mrs. Grady Mardis and Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Murphy visited Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Ray, Sunday.

Marie Haynes returned home last week from Rome, Ga. where she visited her sister.

John Austin Loyd spent last week with Mr. and Mrs. Atla Drake and Mrs. Clara Lindsey.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Monk spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Elvis Ray.

POET'S CORNER

America the Beautiful
By: Katarine Lee Bates - 1893

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for halcyon skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the enameled plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
Till souls wax fair as earth and air,
And music-hearted sea!

CULLMAN TRIBUNE WORD SEARCH
JULY 4

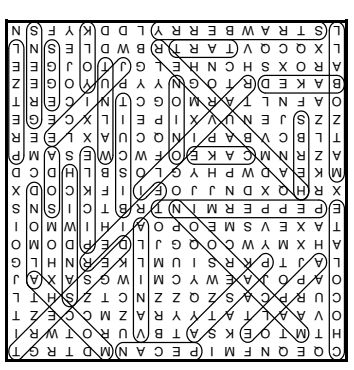
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O	V	A	A	L	T	A	T	Y	Y	R	A	Z	M	C	C	E	Z	T
C	U	R	P	C	A	S	Z	Q	Z	Z	N	C	T	Z	S	H	T	L
O	A	P	O	J	A	E	W	Y	C	M	I	W	G	S	A	X	A	J
L	A	J	T	P	K	R	S	I	U	M	L	K	E	R	N	H	L	G
A	H	X	M	Y	W	C	O	Q	G	J	L	D	E	P	D	O	M	O
T	A	X	E	V	S	M	E	O	P	O	A	I	H	I	W	M	O	I
E	P	E	P	P	E	R	M	I	N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

Almond
Apple
Baked
Biscuit
Cake
Chocolate
Dessert
Eggs
Frier
Greens
Hamburger
Herbs
Juice
Macaroon
Matzo ball
Mocha
Onion
Pasta
Pecan
Peppermint
Pickle
Pretzel
Ravioli
Sandwich
Soda
Strawberry
Tart
Vanilla
Walnut
Yolk

CULLMAN TRIBUNE SUDOKU
JULY 4

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

ANSWERS:



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

Elrod (from Front)

ers."

Program graduates have gone on to become county presidents, board members, legislators and other leaders at the local, state and national level.

More than 300 difference-makers have graduated from A.L.F.A. Leaders and its predecessor, the Alabama Agriculture and Forestry Leadership Development Program.

"A.L.F.A. Leaders is Alabama's premier ag leadership initiative," said Federation Ag Leadership Programs Director Hunter McBrayer, who is a Class IV graduate. "It is refining leadership and creating better advocates for agriculture across local communities, Alabama and our country. A.L.F.A. Leaders changes lives."

The program begins in September and will conclude with a capstone project presentation and graduation at the 2028 Farm & Land Conference.

Participants were chosen by an independent selection committee comprised of former class members and stakeholders with a deep-rooted commitment to agricultural leadership development.

Selection is based on community involvement, personal ability and character. The program is designed for agricultural leaders ages 25 to 45.

Members of A.L.F.A. Leaders Class VII are:

- Shelby Easterling, Barbour County, poultry, cattle and sheep farmer
- Charlie Langley, Chambers County, cattle farmer and logger
- Karah Skinner, Cleburne County, cattle farmer and social media influencer
- Jonathan Sanders, Coffee County, row crop and cattle farmer
- Caleb Elrod, Cullman County, cattle farmer and school principal
- Amanda Baker, Fayette County, cattle ultrasound technician and meat market owner
- Tyler Walker, Geneva County, commercial beekeeper
- William Stewart, Jackson County, row crop farmer
- Hunter Rogers, Limestone County, agriscience teacher
- Kristen Roberson, Marshall County, county Extension director
- Jake Tucker, Monroe County, cattle farmer and agricultural lender
- Laura Jean Mitchell, Montgomery County, agricultural communicator
- Ben Johnson, Randolph County, poultry, cattle and row crop farmer
- Levi Noles, Randolph County, agriscience teacher



Obituary Announcements: July 2

Cheyenne 'Becky' Rebecca Hilbert, 72
Cheyenne "Becky" Rebecca Hilbert, age 72 of Cullman, passed away on Wednesday, July 1, 2026, at her residence. She was born, July 25, 1953, to Terry Wayne Burcham and Marjorie Anne Burcham in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Daniel Hilbert, sister, Terry Rasmussen; and brother, Stephen Burcham. Survivors include her brother, Mark Burcham; sister, Karen Burcham Russell; fur babies, dogs: Smokey, Dog and Ace; horse, Natch and mule, Jessie; nieces and nephews, William (Rachael) Burcham, Wesley (Alisa) Burcham, Wyatt Burcham, Nicole (John) Pessoney, Jeremy Burcham, Rachel (Josh) Tepps, Daniel (Jenn) Rasmussen, Matt (Alli) Rasmussen, Sam (Shelby) Rasmussen, Lindsey (Jay) Riffel, Brooke Burcham, (Jake) Morris; and a host of other family and friends. In lieu of flowers please make donations to the American Cancer Society.

Melvin Ray Barbee, 83
Funeral Service for Melvin Ray Barbee, age 83 of Cullman, were at 10 a.m. on Friday, July 3, 2026, at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home with Roland Belew officiating; burial at New Hope #2 Cemetery. Visitation was from 9-10 a.m. on Friday, July 3, 2026, at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. Mr. Barbee passed away on Wednesday, July 1, 2026, at Cullman Regional. He was born, December 21, 1942, to Clarence Barbee and Willie Lawrence Barbee. He was preceded in death by his parents and son, Anthony Murks. Survivors include his wife, Wilma Barbee; sons, Stanley (Jeanette) Murks, Steve (Tina) Barbee, Michael Barbee; daughter, Sandra Kay Barbee; daughter-in-law, Tracey Murks and grandchild, Joshua Murks.

Brittney Lynne Campbell, 45
Some people leave a mark on the world simply by being kind. That was Brittney. On June 27, 2026, after an epic battle with cervical cancer, Brittney gained the ultimate victory and went home to be with Jesus. Cancer may have taken her life, but it never took her joy, her faith, or the love she poured into everyone around her. If you asked anyone who knew Brittney to describe her, the answer was almost always the same: she was the sweetest, kindest person you'd ever meet. She didn't just see the good in life—she lived as though every day was a gift. Even when life became unimaginably hard, she found reasons to smile, reasons to laugh, and reasons to make everyone around her feel loved. When cancer suddenly took away the use of her legs, Brittney refused to let it take away her spirit. She continued to fight with incredible strength, determination, and grace. On May 16, 2026, she married the love of her life, "Huggy" Shofner, proving once again that love is bigger than any diagnosis. One of her final wishes was beautifully simple: one more trip to the beach with her family-to hear the waves, feel the ocean breeze, and watch her precious grandson, Solomon, experience the beach for the very first time. Those moments meant everything to her because the people she loved were always what mattered most. Brittney never met a stranger. She was the first to show up when someone needed help, the first to offer encouragement, and somehow always found something positive to say. Whether she was making a thoughtful handmade gift, planning a family gathering, or simply checking in on someone having a hard day, she loved with her whole heart. Before cancer changed her mobility, Brittney loved Sunday Jeep rides with her dogs, motorcycle rides with her beloved and her Candy Aces family, camping trips, music festivals, crafting, and. making gifts that people still treasure today. She found joy in the little things and believed the best memories were made with family and friends. She also spent years caring for elderly individuals, and true to who she was, many of them quickly became family. Even throughout her own illness, nurses, physicians, therapists, and caregivers frequently commented on her kindness. No matter how much pain she was in, she never stopped thanking those who cared for her or greeting them with the same warm smile that everyone came to know and love. Brittney is survived by her loving husband, "Huggy" Shofner; her father, Rickey Campbell and wife Dawn Campbell; her mother, Ginger Gamble and husband Charles Gamble; her sister, Ashley Drake and husband Brandon Drake; her brother, Jason Lee and wife Sherry Lee; her sons, Eli Ratliff and wife Toni, and Lee Ratiff; her treasured grandson, Solomon Ratliff; her grandmother Mabra Hulsey; her stepchildren, Jonathan Shofner and Dylan Shofner; her maternal step-siblings, Allison, Aubrey, Sarah, Katherine, Jessica, Chan, Casey, Matthew, and Ben; her paternal step-siblings, Jeffrey Frederick, J. (Stacey), Jamie Frederick (Christy), and Zach Self (Melissa); her beloved aunt, Tammy Harman; and countless other aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, -extended family members, and dear friends whose lives were forever changed by knowing and loving her. If there is one thing Brittney would want everyone to remember, it is to love your people well. Don't wait to take the trip. Don't put off making the memories. Tell people you love them often, laugh whenever you can, and find joy even when life is hard. That is exactly how she lived. Our hearts are broken, and life will never be the same without her. But we are grateful beyond words that God allowed us to love her, learn from her, and call her ours. We take comfort in knowing that she is no longer hurting, no longer confined by illness, and is finally whole again. Please join us in celebrating Brittney's beautiful life during a memorial gathering on Thursday, July 2, 2026, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at Hanceville Funeral Home. We invite everyone who knew and loved her to come share stories, laughter, tears, and memories of a woman whose light will continue to shine in all of us. Though she didn't quite reach her 46th birthday, Brittney spent every one of her 45 years showing those around her what unconditional love, kindness, and courage truly look like.

Cary van Mark Bennett, 64
Lifelong Cullman resident, devoted parishioner of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, and beloved chiropractor, Cary Bennett, born Sept. 21, 1961, to Margie and Dwight Bennett, entered into eternal rest on Friday morning, June 26, 2026. A lifelong member of the Sacred Heart parish family, Cary lived his faith through a life of service to others. He owned and operated Bennett Chiropractic Clinic on Graham Street, where he faithfully cared for generations of families. Throughout his years of practice, he became much more than a skilled chiropractor—he was a compassionate caregiver, a trusted confidant, and a steadfast source of comfort and encouragement to countless patients. Patients and friends will fondly remember Cary for his quick wit, his caring conversations, and the genuine interest he took in their lives. He delighted in asking about their families and eagerly shared in the joy of his own, especially as he looked forward to welcoming his first grandchild. His warmth and kindness made everyone feel known, valued, and loved. Known for his generous spirit, warm smile, and genuine concern for others, Cary lived a life of service. His patient-first approach reflected the compassion of Christ, reminding all who knew him that true healing begins with kindness, humility, and a servant's heart. His legacy will live on not only in the lives he helped heal physically, but also in the hope, friendship, and love he shared so freely. While his absence leaves a profound void, we take comfort in the hope that comes from our faith in the Risen Christ. We pray that the Lord will welcome him into His eternal kingdom and grant comfort, strength, and peace to all who grieve, especially his family and friends. Cary is survived by his loving wife, Amy Edwards Bennett; his daughter, Mary Claire (Joe David) Brown; his son, Kramer Bennett; his grandson, Bennett Keith; and his five siblings: Wendy (Carson) Glasscock, Ken (Lisa) Bennett, Leanna (Scott) MacRae, Todd (Catherine) Bennett, and Kristi (Mike) Wilson. As we commend Cary to the loving mercy of God, may we find comfort in Christ's promise: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live" (John 11:25). Arrangements for Cary follow. All services at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church. Tuesday, July 7, 2026: 4:30 p.m. - Reception of the Body; 5-7:30 p.m. - Visitation with the Bennett Family; 7:30 p.m. – Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Wednesday, July 08, 2026: 10 a.m. - Mass of Christian Burial; Burial to follow at Sacred Heart Cemetery. In memory of Cary's spirit of giving and the love for his community, in lieu of flowers please donate to your local charity of choice. Eternal rest grant unto Cary, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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