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WEATHER

66 45

SOURCE: WEATHER.GOV

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ROSE GANN

SPORTS

Cold Springs, Good Hope and Vinemont open playoffs Friday; Addison and Meek also ready to play

» PAGE 4

Cullman voters favor senior tax amendment as Republicans win statewide races

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

Publisher's note: Statewide and congressional figures reflect unofficial returns checked at 5:23 p.m. Central on Nov. 4, 2026. Alabama Political Reporter listed all 67 counties as fully reported. County figures below retain the Nov. 3 election-night snapshot of 50 of 51 boxes, with smaller reporting totals for district races. Results remain unofficial and subject to certification.

CULLMAN, Ala. - Cullman County voters strongly favored a property tax amendment for qualifying senior homeowners and Republican candidates for local offices, while updated statewide returns showed victories for Tommy Tuberville for governor, Barry Moore for U.S. Senate and Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry for the Public Service Commission.

The local amendment received 23,344 yes votes, or 92.50%, and 1,893 no votes, or 7.50%, in the » PAGE 5

AMRV RC&D, Cullman County Legislative Delegation announce $104,859 in community grants



AMRV RC&D

Grant recipients pose for a photo with delegation members.

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. — The Alabama's Mountains, Rivers and Valleys Resource Conservation & Development Council (AMRV RC&D), in partnership with the Cullman County Legislative Delegation, has announced $104,859 in grant funding for 13 projects serving Cullman County communities.

The grants support improvements ranging from emergency response equipment and accessible library facilities to agricultural education, workforce training and school programs. The legislative delegation includes Sen. Garlan Gudger, R-Cullman, and Reps. Heath Allbright, R-Holly Pond; Cindy Myrex, R-Cullman; and Tim Wadsworth, R-Arley.

Gudger emphasized the importance of investing in local initiatives that address community needs and improve the quality of life for Cullman County residents.

"These grants reflect the strength of Cullman County's communities and the people who work every day to make them better," he said. "Through our partnership with AMRV RC&D, we can help local organizations meet practical needs, strengthen public safety and create more opportunities for our students and families."

The funded projects are:

• St. Paul's Lutheran School — $5,000: Stove unit and hood ventilation fire suppression system upgrade

• City of Good Hope — $5,000: Park sign

• Cullman County Public Libraries — $5,000: Bathroom renovations to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act standards

• Good Hope Primary School — $5,000: Outdoor classroom and STEAM lab extension

• Cullman County Industrial Development Authority — $5,000: Tools of the Trade Career Fair

• Pilot Light Home, Inc. — $5,000: Foster home upgrades

• The Foundry Ministries — $5,000: Workforce development through agricultural training at The Foundry Farm

• Hanceville High School — $7,000: Woodwind instrument acquisition and restoration

• West Point FFA — $10,000: School barn cattle handling system

• Cullman County Soil and Water Conservation District — $10,000: Teacher workshops and water festival

• Holly Pond Fire and Rescue — $22,859: Pumper/tanker equipment enhancement

• Cullman County EMA — $5,000: Smith Lake response trailer

• West Point High School — $15,000: Baseball facility improvements

Wadsworth highlighted the importance of supporting locally driven projects that address specific community needs and deliver meaningful results for Cullman County residents.

"Each of these projects addresses a need identified by people who know their communities well," he said. "Whether it is helping first responders obtain equipment, introducing students to career opportunities or improving local facilities, these investments will provide practical benefits across Cullman County."

The awards combine support for immediate community needs with investments in education and career preparation. School projects will expand learning opportunities in science, agriculture and music, while other grants will improve facilities and » PAGE 2

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80 YEARS

80 YEARS ANNIVERSARY 1943-2023

Thank you, Cullman, for the best 80 years of our lives.

Randall Hogan acquitted of murder in Jeffery Wilhite disappearance case » PAGE 6

Baileyton's Harvest at the Park brings a Stars Hollow kind of magic to Cullman County » PAGE 4

Cullman gathers by candlelight for 'An Evening with Poe' » PAGE 7

4th annual Sydni Helms-Hipp Memorial Barrel Race this Saturday, Nov. 7 » PAGE 5

11th annual Hartselle Holiday Market set for Saturday » PAGE 5

Wallace State hosts annual Let's Pretend Hospital for area students » PAGE 5

PET OF THE WEEK

Nupert is ready to keep your lap warm



CULLMAN COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

Nupert » PAGE 3



CRIME

Arrests and incidents reported Nov. 4

Staff Reports
Contributor

CULLMAN, Ala. – Below are the arrests and incidents reported Nov. 4, 2026. All persons are innocent until proven guilty.

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

CULLMAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

No arrests or incidents reported.

CULLMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

INCIDENTS

Nov. 2

- domestic violence – harassing communications
- criminal trespass-3rd degree; person; Dripping Springs Rd.
- criminal trespass-1st degree; person; Interbitzen St. SW
- harassment; person

Nov. 3

- harassment; person; Ashland Dr. SW

ARRESTS

Oct. 30 – Nov. 3

Baker, Jr., Clinton C.; 70
- possession of controlled substances
- criminal trespass-3rd degree

Mallory, Anijah S.; 26
- GJ – organized retail theft
- GJ – retail theft of property-2nd degree

Richards, Jerry D.; 56
- public intoxication

Howard, Robert M.; 36
- FTA – no signal
- FTA – no seat belt
- FTA – improper passing

White, Charles E.; 39
- FTA – switched tag
- FTA – driving without license (2 counts)
- FTA – expired tag
- FTA – possession of drug paraphernalia

Reeves, Kandace M.; 58
- FTA – driving while suspended

Lee, Stephanie A.; 37
- FTA – theft of property-4th degree
- FTA – driving without license
- FTA – expired tag

HANCEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

No arrests or incidents reported.

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

Wallace State welcomes Morgan County counselors, career coaches for campus luncheon

Krystal Corley
krystal@cullmantribune.com

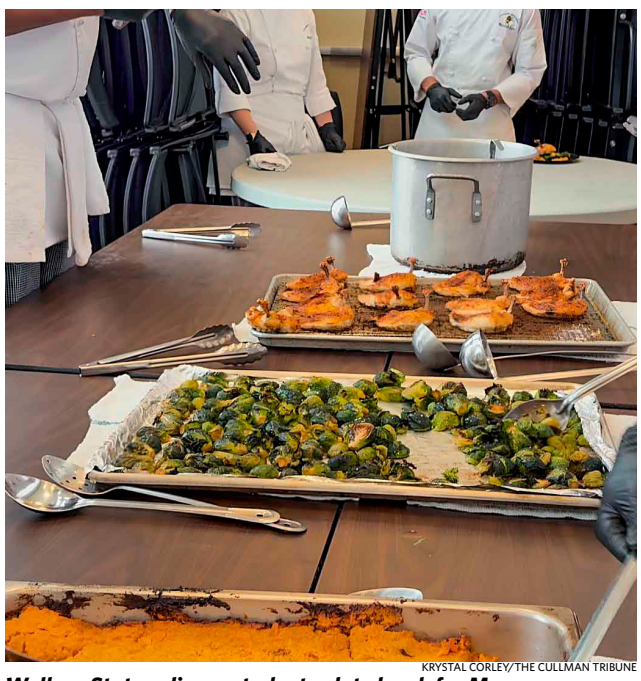
HANCEVILLE, Ala. – Wallace State Community College hosted counselors and career coaches from Morgan County Schools on Wednesday, Nov. 4, for its Counselor and Career Coach Luncheon at the Peinhardt Conference Center in the college's School of Nursing and Center for Science.

"We appreciate Wallace State for hosting Morgan County's counselors and career coaches and for continuing to invest in partnerships that help us better prepare our students for life after graduation," MCS career coaches shared after the visit.

"Today we're here at our Counselor and Career Coach Luncheon, inviting tons of counselors ... ready to showcase all about Wallace State," said Logan Edmonds, Wallace State's director of recruiting. "We're going to go over great updates, admissions processes, scholarships, housing opportunities, all for our students."

Guests began the morning with a general tour and overview of the Hanceville campus, followed by a welcome from Wallace State Vice President for Advancement and Innovation Suzanne Harbin and introductions of the college's deans.

After an icebreaker, guests sat down to lunch, prepared and served by Wallace State's culinary students. The main course featured roasted chicken over mashed sweet potatoes with Brussels sprouts.



KRYSTAL CORLEY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Wallace State culinary students plate lunch for Morgan County counselors and career coaches during the Counselor and Career Coach Luncheon on Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2026.

The afternoon focused on the programs and services counselors can share with their students. Presenters included:

- Jennifer Twitty, admission updates and reminders
- Sean Ryan, FAFSA updates
- Julie Grimes and Logan Edmonds, scholarship updates
- Suzanne Harbin, skills for success
- Whit Rice, Center for Student Success
- Lauren Wilson, dual enrollment
- Lydia Williams, FAME, TITAN and workforce development opportunities
- Logan Edmonds, Juliet Betts, Nora Driggers and Jack Kennedy, recruiting updates

"Building relationships and staying connected to our post-secondary partners helps us better serve our students as they explore what's next," MCS career coaches shared.

For any counselors who couldn't make it, Edmonds had a simple invitation: book a tour.

"We're going to have a great time at Wallace State," he said, "and we're entering our Wallace State era."

For more information, contact Edmonds at logan.edmonds@wallacestate.edu or visit www.wallacestate.edu.

Grants (from Front)

equipment used by local service organizations.

AMRV RC&D Executive Director Renona Seibert praised the collaboration between state legislators, local organizations, and community leaders in identifying needs and turning local priorities into meaningful investments.

"Our work begins with listening to local communities and helping them move worthwhile projects forward," she said. "We appreciate the Cullman County Legislative Delegation's partnership and the dedication of every grant recipient.

Together, we are helping turn local priorities into improvements that serve people throughout the county."



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

PUBLIC NOTICE:
The Welti Cemetery will be participating in the Wreaths Across American event honoring our deceased veterans. If you know of a deceased veteran buried at Welti whose grave does not have a military marker, please contact Gary Reid at 256-339-7236 by Dec. 1, 2026.

PUBLIC NOTICE:
The Cullman County Special Education Program is seeking to locate children with disabilities ages 0-21 within the Cullman County School District. Ages 0-3 call Kristie Smith, 256-734-3253. Ages 3-21 call Katie Meigs, Special Education Coordinator, 256-739-0486, Ext 2.
The system is also seeking to locate intellectually gifted and talented children, with the emphasis on second-grade students. Contact Special Education Coordinator Katie Meigs at 17600 U.S. Highway 31 N, Cullman, Al 35058.

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 North Alabama Agriplex Heritage Building. 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 Sensible) 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.

Alpha Delta Kappa Invitation
Are you a woman educator looking to connect, grow, serve, and make a difference? We want to invite you to contact our local Cullman chapters Alpha Theta or Beta Delta. Alpha Delta Kappa is a national honorary organization of more than 25,000 women educators who share a commitment to valuing all people and promoting quality education.
- Build lifelong friendships
- Connect with educators who share your passion
- Grow through leadership and professional opportunities
- Serve your school, community and beyond
- Celebrate the important work of women educators

Your dedication to education matters. Your voice matters. You belong with us.
For more information contact President of Alpha Theta Laurita Hogland 256-531-2298 or Presidents of Beta Delta Rhonda Vanzant 256-708-7980 or Lisa Hullett 256-962-4252.

Church Services: Spirit Life Church
- 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman
- 256-739-3326
- spiritlifechurchcullman@gmail.com

FB-Spirit Life Church Cullman
- Friday, Nov. 6 – Celebrate Recovery. Fellowship and testimonies. Hurts, habits and hangups are a part of everyone's life. Come and see how to overcome these and more! Dinner at 6 p.m. Meeting starts at 6:30. Childcare provided. Guest speaker Steven East.
- Saturday, Nov. 7 – 8 a.m. Men's breakfast; 10:30 a.m. Foundry Farm outreach
- Sunday, Nov. 8 – 8:15 a.m. Van runs in 5 Points Area. Call Aimee at 256-841-2060 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.
- Saturday, Nov. 14 – 9-11 a.m. (Pick up) Free community Thanksgiving meal

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.
- Saturday, Nov. 7, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Mud Creek Festival and BIG BOOK SALE
- Wednesday, Nov. 11, Closed in honor of Veterans Day

Wednesdays, 10 a.m. Storytime
- Nov. 18, Susan Melton
- Nov. 25, Closed for Thanksgiving
- Dec. 2, Dorenda Doyle as Mrs. Claus!
- Dec. 9, Anita Whitlock
- Dec. 16, Kerri with Cullman 4-H
- Dec. 23 and 30, No program
- Jan. 6, Beth Ellis will read "The After Christmas Tree"
- We have T-shirts for sale. Children's sizes are $15 and adult sizes are $20. Proceeds to assist the library's programs.

We are looking for community volunteers to read storytime on Wednesdays. Contact Teresa Rivera for details. Volunteers make our library successful, so we thank our local community.

Church Food Bazaar
Friday Nov. 6, from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church (Hwy. 31 North, next to the Cullman Area Technology Academy in Vinemont). Baked goods for sale. Lunch from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Carry-outs available. 205-908-8271 or 256-338-1959. Proceeds benefit the Mt. Zion UMW (women's group).

Holly Pond Lions Club Pancake Breakfast
Saturday, Nov 7, from 6-9 a.m. at the Holly Pond Lions Club Building. Enjoy pancakes, bacon, sausage and coffee or juice by eat-in or takeout for a donation. The proceeds will benefit the HP Lions Club project fund and the food pantry located between town hall and the fire department. Come join us! Everyone is welcome. Thank you in advance for your support.

Cullman Veterans Day Celebration
Saturday, Nov. 7, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Cullman Regional Airport. Hosted by the Cullman Elks Veterans Committee, the celebration will feature historic military aircraft, live demonstrations, military displays and opportunities to honor local veterans. Admission and parking are free, and the event will be held rain or shine. One of this year's new featured attractions will be a Messerschmitt ME-262. Additional historic aircraft scheduled to appear include a D-Day C-47 and a Royal Air Force Spitfire. This year's celebration will also feature retired Chief Warrant Officer Mike Durant, a former U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopter pilot who was shot down during the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia, an operation depicted in the film "Black Hawk Down."

16th Annual Mud Creek Arts & Crafts Festival
Saturday, Nov. 7, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. along Commercial Street, centered at 106 Commercial St. NE, in downtown Hanceville. Street vendors, arts, crafts, food and fun for the whole family.

Cullman NARFE Chapter Meeting with Federal BCBS Representative
Monday, Nov. 9. This meeting will be held at the Cullman Golden Corral. Starting with a senior special Dutch lunch (11 a.m.) followed by the informative meeting. All interested parties are welcome and urged to attend!! 256-708-5326.

Nupert (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – A comfortable seat is even better with someone to share it, and Nupert is happy to volunteer. This large, affectionate cat will settle across your lap like a cozy quilt, ready for some time together.

Nupert, The Cullman Tribune Pet of the Week, is an approximately 4-year-old tuxedo cat available for adoption at the Cullman County Animal Shelter.

This sweet boy loves to snuggle and would rather be close to his person than anywhere else.

Toys are a big part of Nupert's day, too. He enjoys playtime, but companionship is what he seeks most.

For someone who likes a cat to keep them company while they read, watch television or simply unwind, Nupert could be a loving match.

His adoption fee is $35 because he is already neutered. The reduced fee reflects that completed procedure, not the value of the companionship he has to offer. His adoption fee includes vaccinations and microchipping.

To learn more about Nupert or meet him, visit the Cullman County Animal Shelter at 935 Convent Road NE. The shelter is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Contact the shelter at 256-734-5448 or cullmananimalshelter@co.cullman.al.us.

Has Nupert already been adopted? Don't worry! Many more pets are waiting for their forever homes, and your perfect companion may be among them.

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Janet Chandler - Marketing Specialist
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Playoffs (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. - Cold Springs will open the football playoffs at home Friday, Nov. 6, while Good Hope and Vinemont travel for their first-round games.

Neighboring Winston County teams Addison and Meek also begin postseason play, with unbeaten Addison hosting Fayetteville and Meek visiting Loachapoka.

All five games are scheduled for 7 p.m. Central time.

Cold Springs hosts Pisgah in Class 2A, Good Hope visits Fairfield in Class 4A and Vinemont travels to Central-Florence in Class 3A. Addison and Meek compete in Class 1A.

Rankings in this preview reflect the final Alabama Sports Writers Association poll released Wednesday, Nov. 4.

Cold Springs remained No. 10 in Class 2A and Addison remained No. 2 in Class 1A. Loachapoka dropped two places to No. 7 in Class 1A after its overtime loss to Glenwood. Central-Florence received one voting point outside the Class 3A top 10. The other six teams were unranked.

Pisgah at No. 10 Cold Springs

Cold Springs enters the postseason 9-1 after finishing second in Class 2A, Region 5. The Eagles will host a 5-5 Pisgah team that earned Region 8's third seed.

Cold Springs closed its regular season with a 57-20 victory over Tanner on Thursday, Oct. 29.

Cooper Johnson rushed for 124 yards and three touchdowns on 17 carries, while Ethan Day added 88 rushing yards and two scores. Cason Alexander contributed 59 yards and a touchdown on the ground.

Brandon Chasteen completed five of nine passes for 71 yards and a touchdown. Eli Voce caught three passes for 33 yards, including a 20-yard scoring reception.

The Eagles trailed Tanner 7-0 before scoring 27 unanswered points to take a 27-7 halftime lead. They added 30 points after halftime.

Pisgah enters following a 34-12 loss to Sylvania in its regular-season finale.

The Alabama High School Football Historical Society database lists no previous meetings between Cold Springs and Pisgah, including during the five seasons from 2021 through 2025.

Good Hope at Fairfield

Good Hope will travel to Fairfield with a 7-3 record after finishing third in Class 4A, Region 8 at 6-2. Fairfield finished 6-4 overall and 5-2 in Region 5, earning the region's second seed.

The Raiders ended their regular season with a 49-14 loss at Scottsboro.

Parker Johnson returned the opening kickoff 78 yards for a touchdown and later connected with Ayden Young for a 5-yard touchdown pass.

Johnson finished with 52 passing yards and a touchdown on four completions in six attempts. Young caught three passes for 49 yards and a score.

Fairfield had an open date last week after closing its regular season with four consecutive victories. The Tigers defeated Woodlawn 22-14, Dora 13-10, Carver-Birmingham 52-0 and Wenonah 27-24 during that stretch.

Fairfield scored 244 points and allowed 173 over its 10 regular-season games, according to AHSFHS records.

The historical database lists no previous Good Hope-Fairfield meetings, including from 2021 through 2025.

Vinemont at Central-Florence

Vinemont returns from an open week to visit Central-Florence in the Class 3A playoffs. The Eagles finished 6-4 overall and 4-3 in Region 6, securing the fourth seed. Central-Florence enters 8-2 as the Region 7 champion.

Vinemont clinched its seventh consecutive playoff appearance with a 12-7 victory over Susan Moore on Oct. 23. Josh Rhodes threw a 19-yard touchdown pass to Travis Speer on fourth down with 4:17 remaining to give the Eagles the lead.

Rhodes also scored on a 65-yard run on the game's first play from scrimmage. Speer intercepted a pass in the end zone during the third quarter, and Brennan Marlow added a late interception.

Central-Florence closed its regular season with a 35-9 loss to Hatton. The Wildcats received one voting point outside the Class 3A top 10 in the final ASWA poll.

AHSFHS records show no meetings between Vinemont and Central-Florence from 2021 through 2025. Their only recorded matchup came Nov. 26, 1993, when Central-Florence defeated Vinemont 20-14 in the third round of the playoffs.

Fayetteville at No. 2 Addison

Addison will host Fayetteville after completing a 10-0 regular season and winning the Class 1A, Region 7 championship with a 7-0 region record. Fayetteville enters 3-7 as Region 6's fourth seed.

The Bulldogs had an open date last week after defeating Hackleburg 33-7 on Oct. 23 to secure the region title.

Elijah Roberts threw touchdown passes to Judah Wilkins and Zane Smith and added a rushing touchdown against Hackleburg. Wilkins and Smith each scored once rushing and once receiving. Addison intercepted four passes and held Hackleburg scoreless over the final three quarters.

Fayetteville secured its playoff berth with a 55-53 victory at Woodland on Oct. 23. According to the school's athletics website, the Wolves overcame a 17-point deficit and stopped Woodland's potential tying 2-point conversion to preserve the win.

The victory gave Fayetteville consecutive playoff appearances for the first time in school history.

AHSFHS lists no previous meetings between Addison and Fayetteville, including during the 2021-2025 seasons.

Meek at No. 7 Loachapoka

Meek will visit Loachapoka with a 7-3 record after earning the third seed in Class 1A, Region 7. Loachapoka enters 8-2 as Region 6's second seed.

The Tigers defeated Berry 38-28 in their regular-season finale, extending their winning streak to five games.

Loachapoka ended its regular season with a 27-21 overtime loss to Glenwood on Oct. 29.

According to The Observer's game report, Hayden Lipscomb rushed for 193 yards and three touchdowns on 17 carries. Lareaco Echols added 139 yards on 25 carries, giving the Indians 332 rushing yards.

Peter Chenier led Loachapoka with nine tackles. The Indians recorded 12 tackles for loss and three sacks.

The historical database lists no previous meetings between Meek and Loachapoka, including from 2021 through 2025.

The Nov. 4 ASWA poll independently confirms Cold Springs at No. 10, Addison at No. 2, Loachapoka at No. 7 and Central-Florence among the teams receiving votes.

Baileyton (from Front)

Krysal Corley
krystal@cullmantribune.com



KRYSTAL CORLEY/ THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Pumpkins painted by Parkside School students fill the "Picks of the Patch" display at Baileyton's Harvest at the Park on Saturday, Oct. 31, 2026.

BAILEYTON, Ala. – Some towns hold festivals. Baileyton, it turns out, holds its people close.

On Saturday, Oct. 31, Baileyton Town Park filled with hay bales and painted pumpkins, bounce houses and classic cars, sack races and sunflowers for the town's first-ever Harvest at the Park. Neighbors wandered between vendor tents. Children raced from the merry-go-round to the Fun Zone. A principal took the plunge in a dunk tank for a good cause. And as the sun went down, the trunks opened and the candy came out.

For anyone walking in for the first time, it felt a little like stepping into a storybook town, the kind of place where everybody knows your name and the whole community turns out for every season.

That was exactly the point.

Finding Stars Hollow in Baileyton

When Baileyton Council members Kaleigha Fitch and Taran Garrison sat down to plan the town's first Harvest at the Park, they shared the same vision: they wanted it to feel like Stars Hollow, the fictional hometown from the TV show "Gilmore Girls," famous for its cozy town square, its quirky traditions and the way the whole community shows up for one another.

They had just two months to pull it off. Planning began in late August, with no event on the books and no plan already in place. The two women chose to fund the festival themselves, pooling their own money for a $2,000 budget.

They didn't even need all of it. The festival came in under budget, at roughly $800 to $1,000, and yet drew a crowd far bigger than anyone expected. By the Council's count, as many as 1,500 children turned out for the day's festivities and the evening trunk or treat. That number doesn't even count the countless family members, friends and neighbors of all ages, and quite a few costumed pets, who filled the park right alongside them.

A day to remember

From 10 a.m.-7 p.m., the festival had something around every corner, with live music all day from Hudd Music and Jesse Priest.

The morning kicked off with the "Horsepower at the Harvest" car show, where gleaming classic trucks and hot rods lined the fence competing for Best in Show, People's Choice and Most Unique, along with a 50/50 raffle and door prizes. At the same time, players took to the courts for "Pickleball in the Patch," a free doubles tournament.

The afternoon brought a free cornhole doubles tournament and "The Great Harvest Sack Race," with divisions from ages 5 and under all the way up to teens and adults. At 3 p.m., furry friends strutted their stuff in the "Howl-O-Ween at the Harvest" pet costume contest, and at 5 p.m., families showed off their creativity in the "Homemade at the Harvest" costume contest.

All day long, the free Fun Zone offered bounce houses and carnival games, while food trucks and community vendors set up beneath rows of tents and sunflowers stood tall against the fall sky.

Parkside School students had their own moment in the spotlight with "Picks of the Patch," a colorful display of student-painted pumpkins, with the top designs proudly wearing prize ribbons.

From 1-2 p.m., Parkside students got the chance to take their shot at Principal Dr. Caleb Elrod in the dunk tank, and the one who finally sent him splashing was his very own daughter.

"All money raised from the dunking booth benefits Baileyton's Baseball Boosters to assist with awards for the players at the end of the season," Fitch said.

That evening, families returned for Trunk or Treat from 5-7.

A Council meeting with heart

Council meetings are not usually where you expect to find a lump in your throat. But when the Baileyton Town Council met Monday, Nov. 2, and Garrison gave her report on Harvest at the Park, the room changed.

Fitch and Garrison spoke with passion, and at times emotion, about what the festival meant to them and how the community had answered.

They had been floored, they said, that so many people showed up, and that it cost the town practically nothing.

Both women recalled a moment in the middle of the festival when they looked up and locked eyes with each other from across the park, amazed. Families just kept pouring in.

It was so moving, they said, that it brought them to tears, filled with love and gratitude for their community.

Mayor Pro Tem Dewayne Sumner shared something he had overheard from one festivalgoer that seemed to sum it all up: an event like this "does the heart good."

Garrison then asked the Council to put Oct. 30 on the books for next year. Before that vote, the Council took another: a motion that Council members should no longer pay for the event out of their own pockets. Instead, the Council unanimously approved a $5,000 town budget for next year's Harvest at the Park and Trunk or Treat.

Then Councilman Mark McKelvy made the motion to back the women's request, putting Oct. 30, 2027, on the calendar for next year's Halloween festivities. All said aye.

In a world where it is easy to feel disconnected, Harvest at the Park was a reminder of what a small town can do when a few people care enough to start something, and a whole community cares enough to show up.

Also at the meeting

The Council presented organizational support funds to Parkside School, represented by Elrod; the Baileyton Volunteer Fire Department, represented by Chief Zack McGee and Toby Houser; and the Baileyton Senior Center, represented by President Donna Kent and Pat Gilbert.

Mayor Benny Guthrie reported that Sen. Garlan Gudger secured $88,000 to fund road upgrades on Shedd Road and Dove Road. Guthrie said he will reach out to the Alabama Department of Transportation for details and next steps.

The town also made its final payment to Ridgeline for hail damage repairs, completing that project.

The Council also discussed plans for Christmas, including street lights, a tree for the park and a tree lighting ceremony.

Coming up in Baileyton

- Bargain Day: Saturday, Nov. 7, 8 a.m-noon
- Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony: Friday, Dec. 4, at Baileyton Town Park. Gates open at 4:30 p.m., and the ceremony begins at 6. Santa Claus will be there for pictures with the children.
- Town Council work session: Monday, Dec. 7, 6 p.m., Baileyton Town Hall
- Regular Town Council meeting: Monday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m., Baileyton Town Hall

Baileyton Town Hall is located at 55 Fire Station Road. For more information, call 256-796-6447.

What's the Woodland Trade Box?

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – You may have noticed the bright blue box on Woodland Street in Cullman's Woodland Heights subdivision. It's covered in gleeful stickers and reads, "Give a trinket, take a trinket!"

This is no ordinary box; it's a trinket trade box! The "Woodland Trade Box," to be more precise. It's owned and operated by Ashley Mitchell and her family, who moved to Cullman from Florida.

The box opened earlier this year and runs on a give-one, take-one basis. Mitchell reported that it gained more popularity than expected. She initially started it as a way to bond with her family and neighbors.

"Sometimes there are a line of cars," she said.

The trinket trade box draws children, teens, young adults and even the elderly to participate in the fun.

The box features a spot on the door explaining the trading process:

"Choose a trinket, leave a trinket and keep the process going."

Mitchell's husband, Brad Mitchell, pointed out that some visitors don't even take a prize. "There are people who will stop by and leave stuff and not take anything, so they are just donating."

Items that are best suited for trade include:

- Small toys
- Stickers
- Keychains
- Bracelets
- Mini figures
- Trading cards
- Hot Wheels
- Fidgets
- Handmade treasures

The rules and guidelines advise that the treasures traded in must be clean and gently used, while also promoting good sportsmanship by keeping the trading going and following the "give a trinket, take a trinket" rule.

While any support is welcome there are regulations. The Woodland Trade Box does not accept food or candy, trash or broken items, dirty or sharp items. All items must be appropriate out of respect for the next trader.

Within the box are several shelves. Below the trade box is a shelf for painted rocks. The Mitchell family also leaves notepads in the box for trinket traders to leave messages.

"We've gotten tons of notes," said Mitchell.

Her husband said they've already had to replace the note pad a few times.

Initially the box had only small toys, but it was such a big success that various items were included to match different age groups.

"It's been fun seeing what everyone leaves. There are homemade items, bracelets, crochet, bookmarks and stickers," Mitchell said.

In fact, she said, the box gets so full sometimes that things start falling out when you open it.

You can find Woodland Street Northwest between U.S. Highway 31 North and St. Joseph Drive Northwest, in the Woodland Heights subdivision in Cullman.

Visit https://trinkettradeboxes.com to learn more or to start your own!



Market (from Front)

Krystal Corley
krystal@cullmantribune.com

HARTSELLE, Ala. – Got a holiday gift list that's already growing? Hartselle has just the place to start checking off names.

The 11th annual Hartselle Holiday Market returns Saturday, Nov. 7, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Sparkman Civic Center, 406 Nance Ford Road SW.

The market brings together local makers, artisans and small businesses under one roof, offering everything from festive holiday décor and unique handmade gifts to boutique finds and delicious treats.

"We have something for everyone in the family and on your holiday gift list," organizers said.

Shoppers won't have to leave to grab a bite. Lulu's Loves will be serving hot sausage biscuits for breakfast, with chicken salad, pimento cheese, hot dogs and drinks for lunch.

Holiday shoppers can keep the festive spirit going the next day in downtown Hartselle. The Hartselle Area Chamber of Commerce's Christmas Open House is set for Sunday, Nov. 8, from 1-4 p.m. along Main Street, giving shoppers a chance to stroll downtown and get an early start on their Christmas lists.

For updates, follow Hartselle Holiday Market on Facebook or email hartselleholidaymarket@proton.me.

Run (from Front)

Gauge Day
gauge@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – The fourth annual Sydni Helms-Hipp Memorial Barrel Race will take place this Saturday, Nov. 7, at the Cullman County Agricultural Trade Center on U.S. Highway 31.

Activities will kick off Friday, Nov. 6, with a night ride from 4-8 p.m. for $10 per rider.

On Saturday, gates will open at 7 a.m., with barrel racing exhibitions scheduled from 8 a.m. to noon. Admission for spectators is $5 per person. Concessions, vendors and fundraising activities will be available throughout the day. Exhibition registration will also be available during this time, beginning at 7 a.m., with runs available on a first-come, first-served basis for $5 each.

The competition will begin with the peewee division, followed by youth and open barrel racing. Youth competitors will have the option to roll their times over into the open division. The evening will conclude with poles.

Entry fees are $5 for peewee, $30 for youth, $40 for open and $15 for poles. Peewee competitors will have opportunities to win buckles and other prizes.

The race will feature $1,000 in added money for the youth division and $3,500 for the open division. Of the entry fees, 75% will go toward competitor payouts, while the remaining 25% will support the Sydni Helms-Hipp Memorial Scholarship Fund.

As in year's past, the barrel race will also feature the announcement of this year's $2,000 Sydni Helms-Hipp Memorial Scholarship recipient. The scholarship will be awarded to a participant in the barrel race to help further their education at the school of their choice.

In addition to the competition, a ticket auction will feature donated items, with tickets priced at five for $5 or 25 for $20. Winners will be announced Saturday night during the open barrel racing event. A separate raffle will offer three prizes: a WiseBox speaker, a Western bench and a JC saddle valued at $2,500. Tickets are $5 each or five for $20.

For questions or additional information, contact Angie Payne at 205-522-3409 or Loni Helms at 205-471-4691.

The Cullman County Agricultural Trade Center is located at 17645 U.S. Highway 31.

Hospital (from Front)

Krystal Corley, Chasady Woods

HANCEVILLE, Ala. – Wallace State Community College held its annual Let's Pretend Hospital this week, welcoming area first-graders and more Tuesday-Thursday to the School of Nursing and Center for Science building. The popular event has been happening for more than 20 years now.

In the "Sim Center," rooms were used to provide fun educational opportunities about emergencies and overall health.

The "Operation Room" or "Operating Room" featured a theme from the classic board game, "Operation" along with the movie "Inside Out." Nursing students dressed as emotions from "Inside Out" to display the various things the children might feel when going through a procedure.

A sign on the wall read, "It's OK to feel all the feels!"

This room, along with other stations, provided a chance for the little ones to see that emergency settings don't have to be scary.

Within the "Operation Room" a nursing student dressed as the character "Joy" from "Inside Out" said she was "so happy" to be going through a procedure. When a child asked why she was happy, she responded, "Because I get to be fixed."

This comment seemed to resonate with the goal of the Let's Pretend Hospital: providing a child-friendly look at the reality of emergency scenarios and situations, while offering comfort that doctors and nurses will work to help children get better.

The Hanceville Fire Department joined in on the scene to teach fire safety. In the "Minecraft Room" several safety stations were set up, including helmet safety, fire safety and more.

The "Jungle Patient Room," which featured "Zootopia" themes, provided a scenario in which a doctor is paged to make sure the patient is OK.

Dr. Frog (wearing a frog headband) and Nurse Practitioner Hops (dressed as "Judy Hopps" from "Zootopia") used a stethoscope to listen to a patient's heartbeat. This room also provided a look into hospital stays and nutrition. A tray was presented featuring the balanced, nutritious meals you are provided when you are being cared for at the hospital.

The "Mario Room" featured an obstacle course to show that exercise can be fun and is an essential aspect of health. Participants, when completing the obstacle course, saved "Princess Peach" from "Bowser."



CHASADY WOODS/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Dancing in the operating room at Wallace State's Little Pretend Hospital

Races (from Front)

county's election-night returns.

The measure authorizes a senior property tax exemption for qualifying taxpayers 65 or older under conditions established by Act 2026-141.

The county snapshot recorded 27,356 ballots. It remains the basis for the local totals in this report; statewide and congressional outcomes are based on returns covering the full state or district.

Chad Whaley received 23,516 votes, or 98.62%, for Cullman County sheriff, compared with 328 write-in votes.

Jeremy L. Kilpatrick received 23,520 votes, or 99.06%, for coroner, with 224 write-ins. Mike Pitts received 23,456 votes, or 99.17%, for revenue commissioner, with 197 write-ins.

For the Cullman County Commission, Kenneth Walker received 23,368 votes, or 99.10%, for associate commissioner District 1, with 213 write-ins.

Richard Barnett received 23,321 votes, or 99.13%, for associate commissioner District 2, with 204 write-ins. Both contests were reported countywide at 50 of 51 boxes.

Four county school board candidates also led their write-in opposition. In Fairview District 2, Jeff Lawson received 2,664 votes, or 98.96%, with eight of nine boxes reporting. In Hanceville District 4, Kenny Brockman received 2,978 votes, or 99.10%, with 11 of 12 reporting.

Michael E. Graves received 1,946 votes, or 98.98%, in Vinemont District 6, with four of five boxes reporting. Kerry Neighbors received 2,730 votes, or 99.31%, in Good Hope District 7, with seven of eight reporting. Write-in totals were 28 for Lawson's race, 27 for Brockman's, 20 for Graves' and 19 for Neighbors'.

All nine county candidates were Republicans and the only printed candidates in their respective contests.

Gentry won Public Service Commission Place 1, according to Alabama Political Reporter's race call. Updated statewide returns showed him with 914,850 votes, or 55.1%, to Democrat James O. Gordon's 744,948, or 44.8%. There were 1,196 write-ins.

Republican Jim Zig Zeigler won Place 2 with 909,902 votes, or 54.7%, to Democrat Sheila D. McNeil's 751,315, or 45.2%, with 1,289 write-ins. The commission oversees utility services within its regulatory jurisdiction.

Tuberville won the governor's race with 872,561 votes, or 51.8%, to Democrat Doug Jones' 806,253, or 47.9%, in the updated unofficial returns. Write-ins totaled 5,921. Jones conceded Wednesday and congratulated Tuberville.

"I congratulate Tommy Tuberville on his victory, and I sincerely hope he will work to make life better for every Alabamian," Jones said in a statement published by Alabama Political Reporter.

The statewide contest was substantially closer than the Cullman County vote. In the county snapshot, Tuberville received 21,992 votes, or 80.91%, to Jones' 5,037, or 18.53%.

Republican John Wahl won the lieutenant governor's race with 911,304 votes, or 54.3%, to Democrat Phillip Ensler's 765,203, or 45.6%. There were 1,782 write-ins.

"Tonight, you sent a farmer from Limestone County to be your voice in Montgomery, and I couldn't be more grateful," Wahl said in a written statement reported by Alabama Political Reporter.

Moore won Alabama's U.S. Senate race with 917,860 votes, or 54.7%, to Democrat Everett Wess' 758,465, or 45.2%, with 2,047 write-ins. The Senate seat carries a six-year term.

"Serving the people of Alabama has been the greatest honor of my life, and I am humbled that they have entrusted me with the opportunity to serve them in the United States Senate," Moore said in a campaign statement supplied to The Cullman Tribune.

"Heather and I are incredibly grateful for the support and encouragement we have received from people across this state. I have never forgotten where I come from or who I work for, and that will not change when I get to Washington."

Republican U.S. Rep. Robert Aderholt won another term representing Alabama's Fourth Congressional District. Districtwide returns showed Aderholt with 160,008 votes, or 74.8%, to Democrat Amanda N. Pusczek's 53,633, or 25.1%. Write-ins totaled 271.

"Serving the people of Alabama's Fourth Congressional District is truly the honor of my life," Aderholt said in his Nov. 3 written statement supplied to The Cullman Tribune.

"I want to thank everyone who supported me and everyone who took the time to vote in this election. Whether you voted for me or not, I am your Congressman, and my commitment is to serve every person in this district."

Republican Corey Hill won the race for commissioner of agriculture and industries, receiving 901,761 votes, or 54.1%, to Democrat Ron Sparks' 764,504, or 45.9%, with 881 write-ins.

In its account of Hill's election-night remarks in Guntersville, 1819 News reported that he pledged to protect the food supply and improve farmers' profits. The department's work includes agricultural programs, food safety and commercial weights and measures.

Republicans also won the remaining statewide executive contests on Cullman's ballot, according to Alabama Political Reporter's calls and updated unofficial returns:

- Attorney general: Katherine Robertson received 920,412 votes, or 54.9%, to Jeff McLaughlin's 753,457, or 45.0%, with 1,324 write-ins.
- Secretary of state: Caroleene Dobson received 909,477 votes, or 54.6%, to Wayne Rogers' 756,490, or 45.4%, with 1,258 write-ins.
- Treasurer: Young Boozer received 917,177 votes, or 55.0%, to Rosilyn Houston's 749,785, or 44.9%, with 1,100 write-ins.
- Auditor: Andrew Sorrell received 918,666 votes, or 55.2%, to Violet Edwards' 744,632, or 44.7%, with 1,030 write-ins.

Republican Cathi Bradford won State Board of Education District 6 with 137,123 votes, or 71.3%, to Democrat Angela Morgan's 54,834, or 28.5%, with 353 write-ins.

The district's return showed eight counties reporting and 249 of 249 county precincts reported.

For Supreme Court Place 8, Republican Greg Shaw received 909,547 votes, or 54.6%, to Democrat Ashleigh Meyer Dunham's 753,978, or 45.3%, with 1,232 write-ins.

Republicans who were the only printed candidates also won five appellate court contests, according to APR.

Brad Mendheim received 998,547 votes for Supreme Court Place 7, with 42,209 write-ins. Benjamin M. Bowden received 997,332 votes for Civil Appeals Place 4, with 40,987 write-ins, while Matt Fridy received 993,998 for Civil Appeals Place 5, with 40,403 write-ins.

Mary Windom received 994,627 votes for Criminal Appeals Place 4, with 39,303 write-ins. Riggs Walker received 991,653 for Criminal Appeals Place 5, with 38,789 write-ins.

In legislative contests, the available Cullman County snapshot showed Republican Garlan Gudger with 23,285 votes, or 97.99%, for Senate District 4 and 477 write-ins.

Republican Heath Allbright received 9,196 votes, or 98.85%, for House District 11, with 107 write-ins and 21 of 22 boxes reporting.

Republican Cindy Myrex received 12,276 votes, or 98.17%, for House District 12, with 229 write-ins and 28 of 29 reporting.

Republican Tim R. Wadsworth received 1,901 votes, or 99.53%, for House District 14, with nine write-ins and five of six reporting.

Those legislative figures are Cullman County totals, not complete districtwide returns. Each candidate was the only printed candidate in the respective contest.

All four statewide constitutional amendments passed, according to APR's calls and updated unofficial returns.

Amendment 1 received 987,299 yes votes, or 65.4%, and 522,130 no votes, or 34.6%. It provides for an election to fill a lieutenant governor vacancy during the first two years of a term. It also addresses legislative authority over certain salaries and approval of legislative travel spending.

Amendment 2 received 759,506 yes votes, or 50.9%, and 732,160 no votes, or 49.1%. It establishes a process for merging adjoining county school systems, including a published impact study and a procedure for objections. It does not itself merge Cullman's schools.

Amendment 3 received 974,645 yes votes, or 62.6%, and 582,918 no votes, or 37.4%. It requires local school board policies for a daily Pledge of Allegiance and policies authorizing student-initiated, student-led prayer.

Amendment 4 received 909,259 yes votes, or 58.6%, and 642,958 no votes, or 41.4%. It requires public K-12 schools to broadcast or sanction a performance of the national anthem's first stanza at least weekly during school hours.

Reporting completion and race calls do not constitute formal certification. The returns remain unofficial.

Hogan (from Front)

Noah Galilee
noah@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – A Cullman County jury found Randall Dewayne Hogan, 71, not guilty of murder Tuesday, Nov. 3, concluding a trial that began more than six years after Jeffery Glenn Wilhite disappeared from the West Point community.

The signed verdict form and Circuit Judge Gregory J. Reid's order confirm the acquittal. Reid's order states the trial began Oct. 27 and the jury returned its decision Nov. 3.

The verdict concerned count one, murder, of Hogan's April 2026 indictment. It followed an earlier murder prosecution that the State dismissed before a scheduled November 2025 trial.

Wilhite, a 59-year-old Vinemont resident, disappeared in April 2020. The Cullman County Sheriff's Office investigated his disappearance for more than three years before Hogan's original arrest. Authorities previously reported that Wilhite's remains had not been recovered.

Hogan was arrested Oct. 30, 2023, following a grand jury indictment for murder. Sheriff Matt Gentry and Cullman County District Attorney Champ Crocker announced the charge at a Nov. 1 press conference, according to The Tribune's coverage at the time.

During that announcement, Gentry and Crocker declined to answer questions, citing the ongoing investigation.

The original prosecution remained pending into 2025. Hogan, who had been released on bond, returned to custody after Circuit Judge Emily N. Johnston revoked his bond May 19, 2025.

Crocker told The Tribune prosecutors sought the revocation after Hogan was arrested on a new allegation while awaiting trial. The ruling followed a contested hearing. Shortly before the original murder case was scheduled for trial in November 2025, the State dismissed it without prejudice, citing newly discovered evidence, The Tribune previously reported. That dismissal allowed prosecutors to bring the case again.

A grand jury returned a new indictment April 13, 2026, alleging murder, abuse of a corpse and tampering with physical evidence in connection with Wilhite's disappearance.

Following an April 21 hearing, the circuit court ordered Hogan held without bond under Aniah's Law.

"After a hearing on Tuesday, April 21, the Circuit Court ordered no bond for Hogan," Crocker said in an April 22 statement.

The case was subsequently assigned to Reid, the presiding circuit judge in Blount County, after the judges of Cullman County's 32nd Judicial Circuit recused themselves.

In a May 29 order, Alabama Chief Justice Sarah H. Stewart assigned Reid to preside over all matters in the case through its final disposition. The assignment order does not explain the reasons for the local judges' recusals.

Reid presided over the trial that began Oct. 27. His Nov. 3 order records that Hogan had pleaded not guilty to murder and that the case was heard by a jury of 12.

The separate verdict form, signed by the jury foreperson and filed with the Cullman County circuit clerk Nov. 3, marks the finding of not guilty on the murder charge. Reid's order recording that verdict was electronically filed at 11:26 a.m. that day.

The acquittal resolves the murder charge in Hogan's favor.

BACKGROUND: www.cullmantribune.com/tag/randall-hogan

LEGALS

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

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

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

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Letters of Administration with Will Annexed (Cum Testamento Annexo) of said deceased having been granted to **Robert Cluxton** on the 4th day of November, 2026, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Probate Court Judge of Cullman County. Notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same within six months after the granting of Letters or within five months from the first publication of this notice, whichever is the latter to occur of the same will be barred.

Robert Cluxton
Personal Representative

Seth B. Thompson
201 Second Avenue SE
Cullman, Alabama 35055

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
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

CIRCUIT COURT OF
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA
LISA MCSWAIN, CLERK

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

HAMMONS VERNA,)
Plaintiff,)
)
V.) Case No.: CV-2026-000021.00
)
WEISSEND ASHLEY,)
RALPH JOHNATHAN,)
Defendants.)

ORDER

MOTION & AFFIDAVIT FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION filed by HAMMONS VERNA is hereby GRANTED.

DONE this 14th day of October, 2026.

/s/ J. CHAD FLOYD
CIRCUIT JUDGE

Cullman Towing & Recovery Inc.

821 Al Highway 157

Cullman, Al 35058

Notice of Sale

Abandoned vehicle sale Cullman Towing & Recovery Inc., 821 AL Highway 157. Cullman, Al 35058 In accordance with Motor Vehicle Code 32-13-1, the following vehicles may be sold at 821 Al Highway 157, Cullman, AL, 35058, on Thursday August 27, 2026 to the highest bidder for purpose of collecting fees against said vehicle. Any Questions Call 256-734-0433.

1LNHM82V97Y629603 2007 LINCOLN SGL MAROON

3FTZF17261MA15331 2001 F-150 WHITE

2C1MR2467M6724926 1991 GEO METRO WHITE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE: The following self-storage units containing household and other goods will be sold for cash by Legacy Self Storage 106 13th Street SW, Cullman, AL 35055 to satisfy a lien on November 18, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. on Storagetreasures.com: Unit 373378 Magan Bender, Unit 1095 Ashley Smith, Unit 535 Christina Campbell, Unit 928 Zachary Lewis.

NOTICE OF
MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

STATE OF ALABAMA
COUNTY OF CULLMAN

Default having been made of the terms of the loan documents secured by that certain mortgage executed by James Israel, an unmarried person, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for The Federal Savings Bank, its successors and assigns dated March 31, 2022; said mortgage being recorded on April 5, 2022 in Deed Book 2008, Page 749 in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama. Said Mortgage was last sold, assigned and transferred to U.S. Bank National Association by assignment recorded in Deed Book 2121, Page 809 in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Cullman County, Alabama.

The undersigned, U.S. Bank National Association, under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in said mortgage, will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the main entrance of the Court House in Cullman County, Alabama during the legal hours of sale (between 11am and 4pm), on March 12, 2026 the following property, situated in Cullman County, Alabama, to-wit:

Lot 2, according to the Survey of Cotton Row, as recorded in Map Book B, Page 63A in the Probate Office of Cullman County, Alabama.

Said property is commonly known as **123 County Road 1407, Cullman, AL 35058**.

Should a conflict arise between the property address and the legal description, the legal description will control.

Said property will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), the right of redemption of any taxing authority, all outstanding liens for public utilities which constitute liens upon the property, any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, easements, rights-of-way, zoning ordinances, restrictions, special assessments, covenants, the statutory right of redemption pursuant to Alabama law, and any matters of record including, but not limited to, those superior to said Mortgage first set out above. Said property will be sold on an "as-is" basis without any representation, warranty or recourse against the above-named or the undersigned. Bidders must perform their own due diligence. The successful bidder must present certified funds in the amount of the winning bid at the time and place of sale.

Alabama law gives some persons who have an interest in property the right to redeem the property under certain circumstances. Programs may also exist that help persons avoid or delay the foreclosure process. An attorney should be consulted to help you understand these rights and programs as a part of the foreclosure process.

ATTENTION ALL PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS: On March 1, 2026, the data collection and reporting requirements under the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) new Anti-Money Laundering Rule (the "Rule"), found at 89 FR 70258, went into effect. The Rule applies to certain residential real estate sale transactions (including nonjudicial foreclosures) where the transfer is to a legal entity or trust, and which includes cash purchases, private financing or financing provided by an institution not subject to a federal Anti-Money Laundering or Suspicion Activity Report requirement. As part of this Rule, purchasers and sellers are required to provide additional information and documentation about themselves, their legal entities, and the source of funds used in the reportable transaction, if applicable.* The collection of this information and documentation is required to comply with the Rule's federal reporting requirements, if applicable. This notice is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. You are encouraged to consult with your own independent legal counsel if you have questions about how the FinCEN Anti-Money Laundering Rule affects your transaction and whether your transaction is reportable.

* The Rule is the subject of ongoing litigation in several jurisdictions. We suggest that you seek your own legal counsel if you have questions about the status of the Rule and its applicability to your sale, if any.

The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Mortgage, and (3) to confirmation that the successful bidder has timely provided all information required for reporting under the Rule, 89 FR 70258, if applicable.

U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
as holder of said mortgage
McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLP
505 20th Street N, Suite 1775
Birmingham, AL 35203
Telephone: (205) 216-4238
FT21@mccalla.com
File No. 25-07966AL
www.foreclosurehotline.net

Cullman Tribune
01/29/2026,02/05/2026,02/12/2026,04/09/2026,05/14/2026,06/04/2026,08/13/2026,09/29/2026,11/05/2026

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

The sale date under the above mentioned Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed until April 23, 2026, and public notice thereof having been given, the above notice is hereby republished with this amendment.

Cullman Tribune, April 9, 2026

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

The sale date under the above mentioned Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed until June 4, 2026, and public notice thereof having been given, the above notice is hereby republished with this amendment.

Cullman Tribune, May 14, 2026

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

The sale date under the above mentioned Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed until July 16, 2026, and public notice thereof having been given, the above notice is hereby republished with this amendment.

Cullman Tribune, June 4, 2026

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

The sale date under the above mentioned Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed until August 27, 2026, and public notice thereof having been given, the above notice is hereby republished with this amendment.

Cullman Tribune, August 13, 2026

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

The sale date under the above mentioned Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed until October 8, 2026, and public notice thereof having been given, the above notice is hereby republished with this amendment.

Cullman Tribune, September 29, 2026

AMENDMENT TO NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

The sale date under the above mentioned Notice of Mortgage Foreclosure Sale has been postponed until November 19, 2026, and public notice thereof having been given, the above notice is hereby republished with this amendment.

Cullman Tribune, November 5, 2026

25-07966AL

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF) **IN THE PROBATE COURT OF**
) **CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA**
ROY H. DRINKARD, deceased.) **CASE NO PC 2026-422**

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Letters Testamentary having been granted on the Last Will and Testament of the decedent to JUDY K. WHITE and JERRY D. KIMBROUGH, the Co-Personal Representatives of the deceased, on the 27th day of October, 2026, by the Honorable Tammy Brown, Judge of the Probate Court of Cullman County, Alabama, notice is hereby given that all persons having claims against such estate are required to file an itemized and verified statement of such claim in the office of such Judge of Probate within six (6) months from the above date or the same will be barred and payment prohibited.

JUDY K. WHITE and JERRY D. KIMBROUGH,
Co-Personal Representatives,
Estate of ROY H. DRINKARD, deceased

Elizabeth H. Hutchins
Dentons Sirote, PC
2311 Highland Avenue South
Birmingham, Alabama 35205

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
TAMMY BROWN, JUDGE OF PROBATE
CULLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

Cullman County, AL
1 Page(s)

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF CUILLMAN COUNTY, ALABAMA

IN RE: THE ESTATE OF *
EVELYN JOY SAMS, * **CASE NO.: PC2026-387**
Deceased. *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Letters of Administration having been granted to DANNY FELTON SAMS as Personal Representative of the Estate of EVELYN JOY SAMS, deceased, on the 20th day of October, 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.

Danny Felton Sams
Personal Representative

Jeremy P. Summers, Estate Attorney
1275 Center Point Parkway, Suite 100
Birmingham, Alabama 35215

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

IN RE: The Estate of *
DONNA JO BUTLER, * CASE NO. PC 2026 - 412
Deceased. *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TAKE NOTICE: Letters Testamentary having been granted to David H. Butler as Personal Representative of the Estate of Donna Jo Butler, deceased, on the 19th day of October, 2026, 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.

David H. Butler
Personal Representative

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

Attorney for Personal Representative

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 to the Judge of Probate.

Tammy Brown
TAMMY BROWN, PROBATE JUDGE

Poe (from Front)

Krysal Corley
krystal@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – The night came on, as November nights do, cold and early and quiet. Inside Jubilee Kitchen + Bar, the candles were already lit.

Tall tapers flickered against dark walls. Deep crimson cloth pooled across the tables like spilled wine, and a single red rose waited beside each small glass vase. At the bar, beneath a chandelier glowing like a cluster of pale moons, cocktails with names borrowed from the grave were shaken and poured.

And then, as the hour of six drew near, the room fell still, and the voice of Edgar Allan Poe returned to the living.

Jubilee and the Cullman County Public Library joined forces Monday, Nov. 2, for "An Evening with Poe," a night of cocktails and dramatic readings celebrating the 19th-century master of mystery and the macabre. Guests gathered for a cocktail hour at 5 p.m. before readings began at 6.

Even the drinks were steeped in dread. Jubilee's "An Evening with Poe" specials menu, marked with a perched raven, offered five cocktails inspired by the author's darkest works:

- The Black Cat: vodka, chocolate liqueur, cherry and heavy cream
- The Raven: blanco tequila, Cointreau, blackberry and lime
- The Pale Blue Eye: gin, elderflower liqueur, lemon and simple syrup
- The Nevermore: cherry-smoked whiskey with lemon and lime
- The Midnight Dreary: vodka, espresso, Kahlúa, Baileys and chocolate

Cullman County Public Library Assistant Director Shelby Creekmore opened the evening by thanking guests and Jubilee for hosting a program the library had been dreaming up for some time.

"We're very excited that you all can get to hear some very fun stories tonight," she said, before promising a few spooky ones as well.

Creekmore also invited guests to help write the library's own next chapter. The library recently launched Every Chapter Matters, a yearlong capital campaign to renovate and expand its main building, and is asking residents to take a community survey sharing how they use the library and what they would like to see in the new building.

Before the first story was read, Ben Johnson South stepped to the podium in a bow tie to introduce the man behind the macabre.

Poe, he told the crowd, was born into a theatrical family, the son of traveling actors, and was orphaned as a young child. Raised by family in Richmond, Virginia, he spent a single year at the University of Virginia before gambling debts ended his studies, and a brief stint as a cadet at West Point fared no better. He married his young cousin, Virginia, whose death from illness haunted much of his work, and he died in Baltimore in 1849 under circumstances that remain a mystery to this day.

Between the sorrows, South lightened the mood with a few groan-worthy "dad jokes," including why Poe never needed a GPS: he simply followed his dark instincts.

Then, as the laughter faded, the readings began. From a lone podium, lit softly against the shadows, readers brought four of Poe's most famous works to life, beginning with "The Black Cat."

There was "The Tell-Tale Heart," in which a narrator swears he is not mad, even as a heart beats louder and louder beneath the floorboards. There was "The Raven," Poe's 1845 poem of grief and a midnight visitor who answers every plea with a single word. There was "The Black Cat," a tale of guilt that will not stay buried. And there was "The Cask of Amontillado," a story of revenge carried out, brick by brick, in the catacombs.

Guests listened from their candlelit tables, glasses in hand, as the stories crept through the room one by one.

The evening found a fitting stage in Jubilee, a locally owned restaurant and bar on the ground floor of the historic Flying Fifty Hotel in downtown Cullman. The sister company of Karma's Coffee House, Jubilee describes itself as "a gathering place for friends, family, and neighbors." Jubilee is owned by Katie Fine, and its kitchen is led by Executive Chef Becky Watkins.

For the Cullman County Public Library, the night carried its love of stories beyond the library's walls and into one of downtown's gathering spots, proof that a good tale, told well, can still make a room hold its breath.



KRYSTAL CORLEY/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Ben Johnson South shares the strange and sorrowful life of Edgar Allan Poe from the podium during "An Evening with Poe" at Jubilee Kitchen + Bar on Monday, Nov. 2, 2026.

Coming just after Halloween, the evening offered Cullman one last shiver of the season. And as guests stepped back out into the November dark, more than a few may have glanced over their shoulders, listening for a tapping, gently rapping, somewhere in the night.

To learn about upcoming events, follow Facebook/Jubilee Kitchen and Bar and www.facebook.com/cullmancountypubliclibrarysystem, or visit www.jubileekitchenandbar.com and www.cullmanlib.org.

Prior to entering any Alabama school or child care center, an up-to-date Certificate of Immunization must be submitted for each child.

www.alabamapublichealth.gov/imm

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Obituary Announcements: Nov. 3-4

Charles Darrell Parker, 81
Charles Darrell Parker, age 81, of Vinemont, Alabama, passed away on Nov. 1, 2026. Darrell was a quiet man by nature, but anyone who watched a basketball game with him knew that quiet could quickly change when he felt the referees weren't making the right calls. His family will surely remember those moments with a smile. He enjoyed the simple things in life, including working Sudoku puzzles, hiking, and watching sports on television. He also shared a special love with his wife, Ernestine, for attending Sacred Harp singings. For many years, the two made it a weekly tradition, sharing in the music and fellowship that meant so much to them. Above all else, Darrell loved his family, especially his grandchildren. He was their biggest supporter and could always be counted on to be there, often the first one to show up, cheering them on in whatever they chose to do. Whether it was a sports game, academics, an activity, or a graduation or wedding his grandchildren knew they could look out into the crowd and find him there. His love and unwavering support were among the greatest gifts he gave them. Darrell was preceded in death by his parents, Charlie and Verla Parker; his infant daughter, Catherine Jane Parker; and his daughter-in-love, Christy Binkley Parker. Those left to cherish his memory include his loving wife; his son, Jimmy Parker (Mandy); his daughter, Mary (Danny) Thornton; and his grandchildren, Sarah Perry, Sara (Brandon) Rodgers, Will Parker, Tom Parker, Anastasia Parker, Danica Thornton, and Micah Thornton. He also leaves behind his beloved great-grandsons, Nathan Yoder, Cooper Rodgers, Lincoln Rodgers, Oliver Rodgers, and Randall Lacks; his brother, Jerry (Phyllis) Parker; his sisters, Margie Trapp and Sandra Hinkle; and a host of nieces and nephews. Darrell leaves behind a family who loved him dearly and countless memories that will be treasured for years to come. He will be remembered for his quiet nature, his love of family, his dedication to showing up for those he loved, and, of course, his occasional conversations with basketball referees from the comfort of his living room. Though he may no longer be sitting in the stands cheering on his grandchildren or enjoying a weekly Sacred Harp singing with his wife, his presence will remain in the hearts of all who loved him. The family will be accepting visitors at their home through the week. If you need directions contact a member of the family. A visitation will begin at 10 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 6, at the home, with a funeral following at noon. Graveside services to follow at Friendship Methodist Church in the Battleground Community. In lieu of flowers, please consider making donations to Fasola Sacred Harp Musical Heritage Association, Pam Nunn, Treasurer, 8717 Hallwood Drive, Montgomery, Alabama 36117 or Friends of the Smokies.org, P.O. Box 1660, Kodak, TN 37764. Cullman Funeral Home is honored to serve the Parker family.

David Warren Wyatt, 75
David Warren Wyatt, of Tuscaloosa, passed away peacefully in his home on the morning of Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2026, at the age of 75. Born Jan. 20, 1951, David grew up in Cullman, Alabama and graduated from Cullman High School in 1969 prior to attending The University of Southern Mississippi. He married Charlotte Schiehl in 1971 and together they had a daughter, Christy. Though their marriage ended, they remained cordial over the years, united by their love for their daughter. He eventually moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where he would meet Voni Brown, who he married in 1984. They shared 32 years of marriage and had a son, William. Even after they were no longer together, their friendship endured through the years. Throughout his life, David rarely missed a day of work and always prioritized providing for his family. David was fiercely passionate about college football, specifically the Alabama Crimson Tide. As a decades-long season ticket holder, he loved gathering friends and family for a quality tailgate. Those who knew him best would agree that he never missed a good party, and was usually the reason it was one. He was a loving father and great neighbor for many years, always willing to play kick the can or shoot fireworks with the children of Northwood Lake. He was immensely proud of his own children and grandchildren - watching them grow both personally and professionally. He always encouraged them to chase their dreams, wherever they might lead, and remained their biggest supporter even from afar. He was preceded in death by his parents, Warren and Linda Wyatt, as well as his sister, Debra Self. He is survived by his sister, Diane Vardaman; two children, Christy (Derrick) Davis and William (Hollie) Wyatt; and two grandchildren, Abigail and Isabella Davis; and many other loving family members and friends. The family is especially grateful to Voni Wyatt and Janis Gleason for their steadfast love and care. David never took it for granted. A celebration of life will be announced in the coming weeks.

Wade Wells, 52
Funeral service for Wade Wells, age 52 of the Gold Ridge community, is Friday, Nov. 6, 2026, at 2 p.m. at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home, with Bro. Tim Lipsey and Bro. Shane Hicks officiating. Visitation will be held on Friday, Nov. 6, 2026, from noon-2 p.m. at Cullman Heritage Funeral Home. Mr. Wells will be laid to rest at Center Grove Cemetery. Cullman Heritage Funeral Home is honored to serve the family. Wade Wells was born to Gerald Wells and Dorothy Ann Yearwood Wells on Dec. 26,1973. He passed away on Monday, Nov. 2, 2026, at Cullman Regional Hospital. He is preceded in death by his mother, Dorothy Ann Wells. He is survived by his wife, Jennifer Graham Wells; sons, Pryce Wells and Kenson Wells; father, Gerald Wells; sister, Chandra Johnson; nieces, Shay Sullivan, Marlana Graham, Shana Johnson, and Savannah Foster; nephews, Tanner Burdette, and Shannon Graham; a host of aunts and uncles, cousins, family and friends.

Howard Buford Riddle, 84
A visitation for Howard Riddle, 84, of Blountsville will be Thursday, Nov. 5, from 6-8 at Hanceville Funeral Home. Mr. Riddle was born to the late Ernest and Esther Riddle in Morehead, Kentucky on Aug. 8, 1942. He passed away at his residence on Oct. 31, 2026. Hanceville Funeral Home is honored to serve the Riddle family.

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MOM CORNER

The bump is none of your business!

Chasady Woods
chasady@cullmantribune.com

I remember the first time I felt uncomfortable with the way someone disregarded my physical boundaries while pregnant. I have never been fond of being touched or having my personal space invaded, and when you're expecting you wouldn't think that would be a concern. Though, sadly, it is – but it shouldn't be! Growing a human isn't a universal invitation to put your hands on another person.

The first time someone touched my bump, which wasn't even a bump yet, I immediately said, "I don't like to be touched, don't do that."

Not rude or anything. Just to the point – a 5-year-old would understand it!

Of course, it was met with a roundabout way of attempting to blame me for being "mean." They explained that they were just trying to show my baby and I love and affection.

I thanked them, but pointed out that they could show the baby affection when the baby was born. As of right now my baby, my child, was safe growing within me and I had every right to set a boundary for myself and my body. Plus, I hadn't even known this person for very long.

There seems to be this fixation on touching an expecting mother's bump. I want to say I see pictures of family members doing this and I think it is very sweet! I'm not saying all forms of affection should cease for pregnant women and unborn children. My point is you should ask someone before invading their space and touching their body. Better yet, wait for the mother to offer first.

Just because a sweet, tiny bundle of joy is growing within them doesn't give you free reign to violate a woman's bodily autonomy. It doesn't matter if you are a relative, close family friend, honorary sibling or have known the expecting mother since grade-school. You still need to get consent before you touch someone.

Can you imagine going up to someone and grabbing their stomach and talking to it? That's weird! The fact that people try to defend doing so when there is a tiny human, unable to speak or consent for itself in the womb is even weirder.

Pregnancy is a beautiful thing and you shouldn't insert yourself into someone's experience and touch their body without their permission. The bump in none of your business.



Aquatic hobbyist? Cullman Aquatics Society has a place for you – event set for Nov. 8

Gauge Day
gauge@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – The Cullman Aquatics Society will host its next meeting Sunday, Nov. 8, at 2:30 p.m. in the conference room at the Cullman OmniPlex. The meeting is open to anyone interested in learning the ins and outs of aquatic life, regardless of their experience level. Attendees will have an opportunity to meet fellow hobbyists, exchange knowledge and participate in an auction featuring fish, aquatic plants and aquarium accessories.

Founded by Judy Thomas and Jeff Still, the Cullman Aquatics Society began as a tropical fish group and has since expanded its focus to include all aspects of aquatic life. Now with 23 members strong and continuing to grow, the club welcomes aquarium and fish enthusiasts from all sides of the tank who want to expand their knowledge and enjoy the hobby as a community.

"The Cullman Aquatics Society was started with a simple idea: to bring together people who share an interest in aquatic life and create a place where everyone can learn, share experiences and enjoy the hobby together," said Interim President Zach Higgins.

While connecting fellow hobbyists is a key part of the club's mission, Higgins said the group also aims to provide educational opportunities through monthly meetings, guest speakers, demonstrations and discussions covering different aspects of aquarium keeping.

Just as important, he said, is creating an environment where people feel comfortable learning from one another, regardless of how much experience they bring to the table.

"One of our biggest goals is to create a community where people feel welcome, regardless of their experience level," Higgins shared. "You might be someone who has kept aquariums for 30 years, or someone who just bought their very first fish tank. We want both of those people to feel like they belong."

So perhaps you are Interested in freshwater fish? Saltwater aquariums? Outdoor tubs? Aquatic plants? Fish breeding or outdoor ponds? The club's upcoming meeting has a place for you.

"Our Nov. 8 meeting is going to be a great opportunity for people to come out, meet other hobbyists and experience what our club is all about. We'll be featuring a fish auction, which is always an exciting part of the aquarium hobby," Higgins said.

He continued, "It's an opportunity for attendees to see different fish, discover new varieties, connect with other hobbyists and potentially take home something new for their aquariums. It's also a chance to talk with people who have experience keeping and breeding different species and learn from one another."

Auction transactions will be cash only. A small percentage of the proceeds will go toward supporting the club's room rental costs, guest speakers and future events.

And for those who have never been to an aquatics club meeting before and need a little reassurance, Higgins has you covered.

"For anyone who has never attended an aquatics club meeting, my biggest message would be don't be intimidated, and don't feel like you need to know anything about fish to come," he said. "You don't have to be an expert; you don't even have to own an aquarium yet. If you're curious about the hobby, you're welcome."

As the Cullman Aquatics Society continues to grow, Higgins hopes the organization will become a unique place where people can truly find their community amongst other like-minded aquatic hobbyists.

"Ultimately, we want the Cullman Aquatics Society to become a place where people don't just come to talk about fish, but where friendships are formed, knowledge is shared and people feel like they're part of something," he said.

"We want people to walk through the door and feel like they've found their people."

For meeting updates and additional information, follow the Cullman Aquatics Society on Facebook or contact Jeff Still at 256-339-8439.

The Cullman OmniPlex is located at 1634 Field of Miracles Dr SW, Cullman, AL 35055.

A little extra cheer: How to stock Cullman's food pantries this holiday season

Liz Tankersley
liz@cullmantribune.com

CULLMAN, Ala. – The holidays are right around the corner, bringing with them twinkling lights, family gatherings, favorite recipes and the familiar question of who's bringing the green bean casserole. But while many families are busy planning Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas celebrations, others are wondering how they'll put their next meal on the table.

Fortunately, Cullman County is a community that knows how to lend a helping hand, and this holiday season offers plenty of opportunities to spread a little extra cheer.

Local food pantries and charitable organizations work throughout the year to help neighbors facing food insecurity, but the holiday season can bring additional challenges. Between rising grocery bills, colder weather and the added expenses of celebrating, even a little assistance can make a meaningful difference.

And while canned green beans, boxed stuffing and jars of peanut butter are always welcome additions to a donation box, some of the most helpful items are the ones people might never think to give.

Think outside the canned goods

When most people picture a food pantry donation, they imagine rows of canned vegetables, pasta and soup. Those staples are important, but a thoughtfully packed donation bag can provide something beyond basic nutrition: a little comfort, convenience and normalcy.

Consider adding a few unexpected items to your next donation:

• Birthday cake mix, frosting and candles: Everyone deserves to feel celebrated on their birthday. A box of cake mix, a container of frosting and a pack of candles can help a family create a special memory without stretching its grocery budget.
• Cooking oil, flour, sugar and spices: A pantry full of ingredients isn't much help without the basics needed to prepare them. Salt, pepper, cinnamon, cooking spray and other kitchen staples are easy to overlook.
• Can openers: Canned food is only useful if someone can open it. Manual can openers can be especially helpful for households without reliable kitchen equipment
• Condiments and sauces: Ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salad dressing and other flavor boosters can turn simple pantry staples into meals that feel a little more like home
• Shelf-stable milk: Powdered milk and shelf-stable cartons can help families prepare cereal, macaroni and cheese, baked goods and other everyday favorites
• Breakfast foods: Oatmeal, pancake mix that only requires water, syrup, cereal and breakfast bars can make busy mornings a little easier
• Kid-friendly snacks: Applesauce pouches, crackers, granola bars and individually packaged snacks can help fill lunchboxes during the school week.
• Holiday treats: Hot cocoa packets, marshmallows, cookie mixes and candy can help bring a little holiday magic to families who might otherwise have to skip the extras.
• Personal hygiene products: Toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo, soap, menstrual products and toilet paper are everyday necessities that can be difficult to afford.
• Baby supplies: Diapers, wipes and formula can be especially valuable when an organization is equipped to accept and distribute them.
• Pet food: Four-legged family members need to eat, too. Donations of unopened dog and cat food can help families care for their pets during financially difficult times.

Another thoughtful idea is to put together a complete meal kit. A box of pasta, a jar of sauce and a can of vegetables, for example, can provide most of what a family needs for dinner. A Thanksgiving-themed bag might include boxed stuffing, instant potatoes, canned green beans, gravy mix and cranberry sauce.

For families with limited cooking facilities, ready-to-eat meals and foods requiring little preparation may be particularly useful.

Before donating, check with the receiving organization about its current needs and what it can accept. Unopened, unexpired food in its original packaging is generally the safest choice.

Where to give in Cullman

For residents looking to make a donation, several local organizations provide food assistance throughout Cullman and the surrounding communities.



MELIKE B/PEXELS

Consider adding a few unexpected items, like holiday treats, to your next donation.

• Cullman Caring for Kids: 402 Arnold St. NE, Cullman. 256-739-1111
• The Pantry at The Link: 708 Ninth St. SE, Cullman. 256-775-0028
• St. Vincent de Paul: 201 Third Ave. SE, Cullman. 256-737-5131
• The Caring Center: 1629 Second Ave., Cullman. 256-737-7757
• First Baptist Church of Cullman: 501 Second Ave. SW, Cullman. 256-734-5632
• Spirit Life Church of God: 1650 St. Joseph Dr. NW, Cullman. 256-739-3326

Residents can also contribute to Little Free Pantries throughout the county, including locations near Mary Carter in downtown Cullman, Good Hope City Hall and the Hanceville Police Department.

Cullman Electric Cooperative also operates a 24-hour Community Cupboard at 1749 Eva Road NE.

These locations are identified in local food-assistance directories and community resource listings.

Donors should contact organizations directly to confirm donation hours, accepted items and holiday needs.

A little kindness goes a long way

Giving doesn't have to mean filling an entire shopping cart. Picking up one or two extra items during a weekly grocery trip can make a difference, especially when neighbors work together.

Church groups, workplaces, classrooms and community organizations can also organize small food drives, with each participant contributing a few items.

For those who would rather skip the shopping, monetary donations can be particularly valuable. Food pantries may be able to purchase supplies in bulk, fill specific inventory gaps and obtain fresh foods that are difficult to collect through traditional donation drives.

The holidays are often described as the season of giving, but generosity doesn't have to come wrapped in shiny paper or tied with a bow.

Sometimes it looks like a jar of peanut butter, a bag of groceries or a box of birthday candles tucked into a donation bin.
And for a neighbor who needs a little extra help, that small act of kindness might be the brightest part of the season.