

The Cullman Tribune PRESENTS

# COMMUNITY MATTERS

MAY - JULY 2023

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CULLMAN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
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# It's OK to feel overwhelmed... at least that's what I tell myself

**Noah Galilee**  
noah@cullmantribune.com

Running a newspaper is hard gig but one I'm proud to have held down for over 12 years. That's a longer stint than many others, especially those who see news as way of self-promotion and profit.

Over that time I've met some great individuals and some that wouldn't even make the cut to lackluster if needed. Many have been thoughtful, helpful and wanting to aid in growth and development. You honestly cannot ask for any better people than those who see the vision and want to help shape it.

However, there are the times when you come across the self-serving types who just want to make a name for themselves no matter the cost to you or those around you. I have no time, respect or care for these types as they're the kind who would drive in a puddle just to soak you while walking on the sidewalk.

The vast majority of the time has been spent happily working to provide local news to the

public and not the typical police scanner jargon or ambulance chasing that truly takes no skill or talent to write up. This is the fun part as it challenges the crew to think about the communities they serve and what's important to those residents.

Over the years it's been fun to watch as reporters make bonds with residents and local officials to better get the word out about events and ways to better keep the public informed with facts, not PR whitewashing.

So what would have me overwhelmed? An expanding industry complete with complex changes can make a difficult job just a bit more taxing. However, the best part comes when all is set in place, the lights are cut on, mics go hot and then it's something new in news for residents.

While it may be overwhelming at times, by the end of the process I always know that the feeling of too many changes will shift to "Why didn't I change this earlier?" proving the process was true and correct.

But what's next? I guess you'll just have to watch and see!

## Community Matters

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# Growing city, big plans

**Tiffany McKoy**  
tsmckoy@cullmantribune.com

The city of Cullman has been growing rapidly, and local leaders Woody Jacobs, Dale Greer, Ben Harrison and Nathan Anderson have big plans for the future.

### Mayor Woody Jacobs

One project Jacobs is proud of is Skate Depot, the city's new skate park. The project was in the works for nearly 20 years and when Jacobs was elected, he said, it was one of the first things he wanted to get done. It was important to Jacobs to get the skating community involved in the planning of it.

"One of the things we wanted to do and learned through the whole process is

that if you get your skating community involved on the planning of it, they will take ownership," Jacobs stated.

Jacobs is focused on roads. He said he hears the complaints from residents and understands that this is their no. 1 complaint. He explained that he tries to make the process as smooth as he can by working on the waterlines at the same time as the streets. "One of the projects that we are working on right now is trying to get better ADA compliance," he said.

Jacobs also mentioned the new cardboard recycling program for commercial sanitation customers that will begin June 1.

**Cullman Economic Development Agency Director Dale Greer**

Greer said he's thrilled with the progress Cullman has been making recently.

"What the community has done to position itself for growth in the last 30 or 40 years has put us where we are, but I think we are just on the cusp of being able to really expand this community and have great things," he said.

Going forward, Greer would like to expand by partnering with the County on a new industrial park. According to Greer, the City and the County have a very positive relationship and many reasons to work together to achieve this goal.

Greer said he sees much potential in Cullman's future. He wants to focus on the quality of life of city residents.

"It's just rewarding to watch where it's gone and where we

are still going with it," he said. "Growing a community and progressing takes the entire community. It's not an individual thing. Nothing happens because of one person or one entity."

### Cullman Regional Airport General Manager Ben Harrison

Harrison has been with the Cullman Regional Airport since 2012, overseeing many improvement and expansion projects. One of the current projects is a hangar aircraft maintenance operations.

He explained, "We are still working on our ALP (airport layout plan) that will give us a road map of options for the next 7-10 years. The ALP update is our project for this fiscal year."

According to Harrison, going forward the next »



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big construction project is the north apron. Once it is complete, all of the airport's main movement areas will have been rebuilt. "We have various projects scheduled through 2027, and once the ALP is finalized that should give us a good idea of what projects will be planned to carry us through 2031/2032," Harrison said.

**Cullman Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism Executive Director Nathan Anderson**

One of the latest projects Anderson's department completed is the city's waterpark, WildWater. "Last year we had wild success, no pun intended, on attendance," he laughed. He noted there were some issues with food service lines last year, but said modifications have been made to improve that this summer.

Anderson said while he is happy with the success of WildWater, he is looking forward to the next project, the indoor sports complex and civic center combination. He said he is hoping contract bids will be complete by the end of June.

While it was designed to be used for sports, recreation and as an indoor meeting space, Anderson said he wants it to be more versatile.

"We want to cover as many of our local programs as possible (sic), not just in the traditional sports, but also in the arts programming, after-school programming, summer camp programming. We want to cover as many community needs as possible with the use of this space."

The eventual goal will be for the new space to be used on weekends as an economic driver with sports and event tourism. Anderson said the city wants to build on what

it's already done with Heritage Park, the Field of Miracles, WildWater and annual events like the Strawberry Festival.

"We've worked hard to stretch what we offer from

facilities and programs. We want to have something for every child and every adult to do. Not everyone is interested in baseball or football; they may have art interests or skating

interests," he said. "We want to make sure as a park and rec agency we give every child an opportunity to explore new ideas, new interests through our parks and facilities."

**CITY OF CULLMAN**

MAYOR  
**WOODY JACOBS**

**CITY COUNCIL**

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# Taziki's Mediterranean Café to open May 30

## Restaurant will be located in historic Klein's Dairy Products Building in Cullman



TAZIKI'S

**Taziki's will be located at 421 Third Ave. SE, Ste. 110 in the historic Klein's Dairy Products Building in Cullman.**

### Noah Galilee

noah@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Cullman residents will soon be able to enjoy healthy, fresh Mediterranean cuisine with a Southern flare as Taziki's Mediterranean Café prepares to open its doors May 30. Taziki's Founder Keith Richards shared his excitement for the new location in the newly remodeled historic Klein's Dairy Products Building.

"We have had a home on Smith Lake for the past 10

years, and two of our children are graduating from Saint Bernard this May," Richards said. "Over the years, we have formed relationships with a lot of folks in Cullman. During the Covid quarantine, we delivered family meal dinners to different areas around Birmingham, and Cullman had the largest showing. This meant the world to us, and we knew at that point it was time to bring Taziki's to this area."

Richards expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be a

cornerstone business inside the historic Klein's Dairy Products Building. "Knowing the history behind this building, it was a privilege to be asked. We feel incredibly blessed to be able to be a part of this community."

Taziki's Mediterranean Café in Cullman will operate from Monday through Saturday, from 11 a.m.-9 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. The ribbon-cutting date is still to be determined.

In addition to bringing its delicious cuisine to Cullman,

Taziki's is also looking to partner with a local charity.

"Anytime Taziki's opens a new location, we like to choose a charity to partner with," Richards explained.

"We are currently searching for our new community partner where we can help make a difference."

This year, Taziki's Mediterranean Café celebrates its 25th anniversary.

Taziki's in Cullman will be located at 421 Third Ave. SE, Ste. 110.



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# CULLMAN

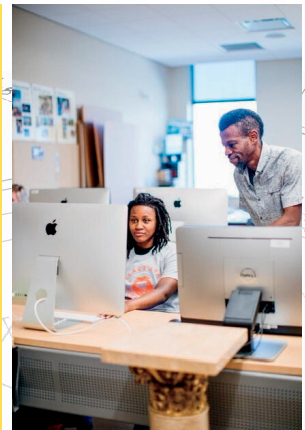
Economic Development Agency

**NEW AND EXPANDING INDUSTRY INFORMATION WITH RANKINGS IN ALABAMA**

NEW	EXPANDING	TOTAL
Projects: 4 (#2)	Projects: 19 (#1)	Projects: 23 (#1)
Jobs: 62 (#13)	Jobs: 608 (#3)	Jobs: 670 (#6)
Investment: \$35,297,297 (#11)	Investment: \$253,496,490 (#7)	Investment: \$286,793,787 (#8)

**CULLMAN IS RANKED #3  
MICROPOLITAN IN AMERICA  
AND #1 IN ALABAMA  
FOR PROJECTS**

BY SITE SELECTION MAGAZINE  
Cullman industry has produced over 5,000 jobs  
over the past decade and we are still going. There  
are always plenty of opportunities in Cullman!



Workforce development bridges the training needs of individuals and employers, to enhance the workforce with qualified workers, and to build and sustain the economic development of the region. Partnerships with business, industry, K-12 school systems, and the Alabama Career Centers are integral to success and provide pathways from education to employment, as well as funding to support these pathways. CEDA and Wallace State enjoy a strong partnership working on a variety of projects and initiatives to support the new, current and emerging workforce. Their team of professionals are exceptional to work with and so much of the success of Cullman, Wallace State and our community can be directly attributed to their work."

**Suzanne Harbin**  
Vice President for Advancement and Innovation  
Wallace State Community College

Workforce development is important because it leads to prosperous employees, businesses and local communities. By upskilling our workforce, industries are subject to growth opportunities- not to mention support growth for the economy as a whole."

**Dale Greer**  
Director, Cullman Economic  
Development Agency



# Cullman County Economic Development Director Matt Kinsland: A lifelong commitment to public service

**Tiffany McKoy**

tsmckoy@cullmantribune.com

**M**att Kinsland is one of the individuals responsible for driving progress in Cullman County. With a background in political science and history, and a passion for public service that dates back to his high school years, Kinsland has dedicated his career to improving the lives of those in his community.

It was during his high school years that Kinsland's passion for public service first emerged. Running as a candidate for probate judge in a mock election, he won an impressive 97% of the vote. This early experience ignited a lifelong commitment to helping others, a commitment he carries with him to this day.

Born in Scottsboro, Alabama, Kinsland graduated from the University of Alabama in 2007 with a double major in political science and history. After a brief stint in retail management, he embarked on a journey that would take him to the heart of the nation's capital, where he interned for Congress in the summer of 2007. This experience only solidified his commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.

Upon returning to Alabama, Kinsland was approached by a friend about an opening in the Cullman County Economic Development Agency. In 2013, he began working as a project coordinator, focusing on

community development and assisting with industry recruitment and retention. After a five-year hiatus in Nashville, he returned to Cullman in 2021, eager to continue his work in the community he loves.

As part of his role, Kinsland works closely with local municipalities and the county commission to secure grant funding for various projects, such as roads, water and sewer systems. He also collaborates with volunteer fire departments to apply for grants, further emphasizing his dedication to the well-being of his community.

Kinsland admitted that one of the most challenging aspects of his job is dealing with grant rejections for passionate community members. He emphasized the importance of learning from these experiences, seeking feedback and not letting setbacks discourage future attempts. Building relationships with elected officials, agency directors and staff is crucial to secure funding for community projects.

Kinsland has worked diligently to foster a collaborative environment within the Cullman County Economic Development Agency, creating a strong network of professionals who share his vision of a thriving community. The agency has experienced significant growth and success, securing funding for essential projects and attracting new businesses to the region.

As a testament to his



**Cullman County Economic Development Director Matt Kinsland is seen in his office.**

TIFFANY MCKOV/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

dedication, Kinsland has participated in numerous professional development programs, including leadership training and economic development courses. These experiences have not only expanded his knowledge and expertise but have also allowed him to develop a more strategic approach to his work in community development.

Beyond his commitment to community development and public service, Kinsland shares his hobbies, interests

and the challenges he faces in his role as a project coordinator. A self-proclaimed gardening enthusiast, Kinsland enjoys tending to his vegetable garden and has recently expanded into growing blueberries. His love for gardening extends beyond his backyard, as he also serves as the vice chair of the Foundation Board for the North Alabama Agriplex, dedicating his free time to promoting local agriculture and sustainable living.



# **DOCTORS DIET PROGRAM X**

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# What's on tap in Cullman County

**Tiffany McKoy**  
tsmckoy@cullmantribune.com

**C**ullman County Commission Chairman Jeff Clemons, Commissioner Garry Marchman, Commissioner Kelly Duke and Commissioner Kerry Watson recently came together to share their thoughts on the challenges facing the County, their goals for improvement and recently completed projects.

When asked about the biggest issue they face, all four commissioners identified road maintenance and infrastructure as significant challenges. With 1,800 miles of roads to maintain, Clemons said the commission is working hard to address the issue, while Marchman noted that bureaucracy and limited funding often slow progress.

Marchman also shared that the misalignment of road districts with commission districts creates confusion and inefficiency when it comes to prioritizing and managing road maintenance.

In addition to infrastructure, Marchman brought up his goal of improving the county's parks and recreation facilities. Clemons agreed with him, stating, "We want to make our parks better, where they'll be sustained. We're trying to set examples."

Despite facing challenges, all four leaders said they find their jobs rewarding when they can make a positive impact on the community. Marchman recalled the recent senior Fish-O-Rama in Hanceville, where one senior told him it



**Clarkson Cabin, the recently transformed top part of the building that once housed a gristmill near the historic Clarkson Covered Bridge, features three bedrooms, a full kitchen and easy access to walking trails. The rental property is available through VRBO under the name "Clarkson Cabin."**

was the most fun she'd had in a long time. Clemons, Duke and Watson echoed this sentiment, sharing their dedication to transparency, open communication and addressing the concerns of the community to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Marchman also discussed the need for improved employee training, expressing concern about the lack of formal training for employees who are moved into supervisory positions within the County. He believes that these employees should be provided with the necessary

resources and training to excel in their roles and manage their teams effectively. Over the past couple of years, the County has

started offering basic supervisory skills courses, and all four commissioners have ensured that every supervisor »


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attends these classes. However, they acknowledge that more training opportunities are needed to enhance the skills and knowledge of County employees.

When it comes to local attractions, the commissioners pointed out the recently

renovated Clarkson Cabin. The County has transformed the top part of the building, which once housed a gristmill, into a picturesque rental property.

Located near the historic Clarkson Covered Bridge, the house features three bedrooms, a full kitchen and

easy access to walking trails. The rental property is available through VRBO under the name "Clarkson Cabin."

The members of the Cullman County Commission said they are committed to making Cullman County a better place to live and work.

They said they are dedicated to providing transparency, open communication and promoting local attractions.

**Note: Commissioner Corey Freeman did not respond to The Tribune's request to be interviewed for this story.**



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



In 1943, when the Paul R. Knight Insurance Company opened its doors in downtown Cullman, there was no way of knowing what the future would bring. Paul Knight was a 30-something father of three, registered for the World War II draft, with no idea that his new venture would not only succeed but would ultimately pass down through three generations of his family. Then his son-in-law Elliot Free joined the business in 1970, the agency was re-named Knight-Free, and the rest is history.

But it's a history that wouldn't have happened without you, Cullman. We never forget that. For 80 years, you've trusted us to insure your homes, your cars, your businesses, your lives. You've become our friends, our neighbors, and our reason to turn up at the office every day. You're also the reason that, after all these years, Elliot's son Wescoat Free is still running the independent insurance agency that bears his family name. And, for that, we can't thank you enough.



Your agents. Your neighbors. Your friends. For three generations.



# ACES: Tips for planning the perfect picnic



ALABAMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

**Dustin Duncan**  
Contributor

**A**s the weather warms up and the sun starts shining brighter, many people look forward to spending time outside with loved ones. What better way to enjoy the outdoors than with a picnic? Picking the perfect location, selecting foods that everyone enjoys and planning fun activities can help put together the perfect picnic. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is here to help whether you're looking to host a small picnic for two or a fun family gathering.

## Planning ahead

Planning is key to a successful

picnic and choosing foods that are easy to prepare and travel well is essential. Fruits like strawberries, blueberries and blackberries are excellent picnic companions. Getting little ones involved in the preparation process can be fun. Selecting vegetables like baby carrots, celery sticks or bell peppers with a cool dip or salsa can be a hit. "Trail mix is a great picnic-friendly food and can be customized with your favorite textures and flavors," said Sofia Sanchez, an Alabama Extension SNAP-Ed specialist. "Some good options include unsalted nuts, dried coconut flakes, no-sugar-added dried fruit or air-popped popcorn."

## Finding the perfect spot

The location of the picnic is as important as the food. Wide-open spaces with plenty of shade are ideal for laying out a blanket and enjoying a meal. For families with children, nearby playgrounds, walking trails or open spaces to run around are also excellent choices.

## Getting active

After the meal, consider getting moving with activities like throwing a football or frisbee, playing tag or taking a walk. Spending time in the sun helps the body make vitamin D, which is essential for healthy bone development and a strong immune system.

## Perfect recipes for a picnic

Live Well Alabama offers great

picnic recipes, such as Picnic Pasta Salad, Melon and Mint, Everyday Broccoli Salad and Cool Cucumber Salad. These easy-to-make dishes can satisfy the family's appetite and taste buds while being perfect for a picnic.

Overall, with some planning and creativity, a perfect picnic can be a great way to enjoy the outdoors with loved ones while making memories that will last a lifetime.

## More information

For more recipes for a picnic or nutrition information, visit [LiveWellAlabama.com](http://LiveWellAlabama.com) or follow Live Well Alabama on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.



# FEMA: Beware of fraudulent contractors

## Staff Reports

Contributor

**F**EMA cautions disaster survivors to be aware of post-disaster fraud and scams. Attempts to scam residents can be made over the phone, by mail or email, through the internet or in person. It is important to remain alert, as con artists are creative and resourceful. If an offer sounds too good to be true, it should be questioned.

### Be alert to potential scams

Fake or unlicensed contractors may try to take advantage of the situation to scam residents affected by the Jan. 12 severe storms, straight-line winds, and tornadoes. As insurance settlements, grants and loans put homeowners in a position to pay for work on their homes, residents need to be sure the people they hire are authorized to do the work, will complete it and will do a good job. Out-of-town scam artists may arrive at your front door after a disaster. Do your research. To find out if a potential contractor is licensed to work in Alabama, contact the Alabama Licensing Board for General Contractors at <https://genconbd.alabama.gov/DATABASE-SQL/roster.aspx> or the Better Business Bureau at [www.bbb.org/us/al](http://www.bbb.org/us/al) to find accredited contractors. FEMA does not certify contractors.

### Be aware of these contractor scams and warning signs

- Door-to-door solicitations
- Inadequate references
- Verbal agreements or no written contract
- High pressure sales or scare tactics
- Out of state, no permanent place of business or no insurance
- Demand for cash, unusually large down payments or advanced full payments
- Special deals or extremely low bids

### Ways to protect yourself

- Do your research. Scam artists will usually come to you to offer their services — either at your door, on the phone or through email — so be especially wary of solicitors.
- Ask for references from past customers.
- Reputable contractors will provide the customer with a written contract detailing the scope of work, the general time frame of when the work will be done, and the cost of the project. Do not sign documents that give a contractor right to your insurance claims.
- Verify insurance. Contractors should have disability and workers' compensation

insurance. If they don't, you may be liable for accidents on your property.

- Make sure contractors have the proper licensing and are bonded.

- Ensure the contractors obtain the necessary permits to do the job.

- Take a picture of your contractor, their vehicle and license plate.

- Take a picture of your contractor's business card and driver's license.

- Do not sign insurance checks over to a contractor. Be sure to get an invoice from your contractor and pay them directly, preferably with a credit card, so that charges may be disputed,

if necessary.

- Demand satisfaction. Don't sign completion papers or make final payment until the work is done correctly.

If you believe you are the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your local police or sheriff's department or contact the Alabama Office of the Attorney General by calling 800-392-5658. To file a fraud complaint, go online to [www.alabamaag.gov/consumercomplaint](http://www.alabamaag.gov/consumercomplaint).

If you suspect fraudulent activity involving FEMA, you can report it to the FEMA Fraud Branch at [StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov), (fax) 202-212-4926 or by writing the FEMA Fraud and Internal Investigation Division, 400 C St. SW Mail Stop 3005, Washington, D.C. 20472-3005.



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# SIGHTS FROM STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL 2023



SHERRY BROWN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



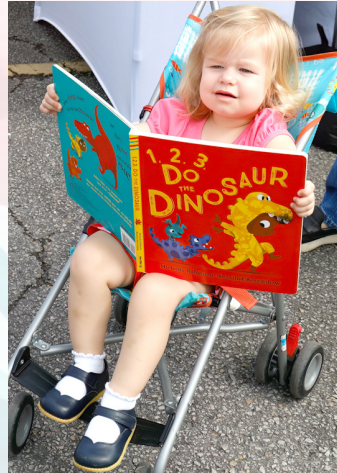
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# Local summer activities for kids

**Cayla Grace Murphy**  
caylagrace@cullmantribune.com

## FREE ACTIVITIES

### Programs at local libraries

The Cullman County Public Library System is a far-reaching system serving Cullman, Garden City, Hanceville, Colony and Holly Pond. Along with thousands of books and resources available to check out, each library has its own schedule of activities: story time on Tuesday mornings, craft classes, various summer reading programs to enhance reading and literary skills during the months where children are not in school and so much more.

Library cards are free for community members 16 and older with a valid ID and recent mail with a permanent address in Cullman County.

### Outdoor scavenger hunts

Cullman County is rich in outdoor recreation peppered with native flora and fauna. Add in some educational value this summer while getting the kids outdoors by incorporating a scavenger hunt to identify local plants and animal species in our local parks and trails; double up the fun by doing a color-coordinated hunt or challenging your young learners to seek out a specific species of tree. You'll be surprised at how much you'll brush up on your identification skills, too!

For those with bigger kids, check out Smith Lake Park or Hurricane Creek Park. Parks with stroller-friendly trails for those with little ones include Heritage Park, Depot Park, and

Sportsman Lake Park.

### Swim and picnic at Smith Lake

One of the largest, most easily accessible and cheapest (read: free) places to cool off this summer is Smith Lake. The lake boasts 500 miles of shoreline, which is plenty of space for splashing and swimming. To encourage the kids to get out of the house and absorb some much-needed sunshine, pack a light lunch and hit the beach at Smith Lake Park; there are plenty of grassy areas to chill and munch. Don't forget the sunscreen!

## PAID ACTIVITIES

### A day at the Cullman County Museum

Cullman County Museum, opened in 1975 and built as a replica of Cullman founder John G. Cullmann's home, boasts a collection of artifacts of many eras of Cullman area history. Spanning from early Native Americans, pioneer settlers and the impact of the American Civil War on the area to natural history and special exhibits, there's something for every interest.

The museum is located at 211

Second Ave. NE in Cullman and is open Monday through Friday 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Admission is \$3 for children and \$5 for adults.

### Heritage skills classes at North Alabama Agriplex

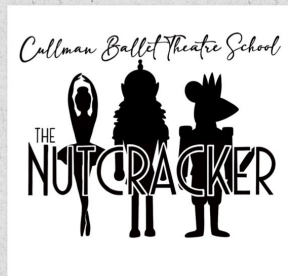
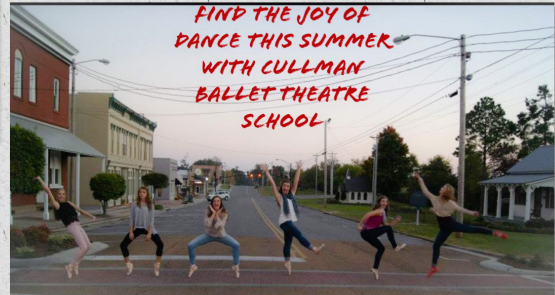
The North Alabama Agriplex offers many heritage skills and informational classes for farmers of all ages. Its Little Farmers classes are open to farmers ages 3-5, and feature crafts, educational segments, produce tastings and play. Admission for these »

[www.cullmanballettheatre.com](http://www.cullmanballettheatre.com)



Registration for the 2023-2024 class season opens online June 1

Questions call: 256-734-7775



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Aug. 26 & Sept. 9

Dance Camp, June 6-8:  
ages 3-8  
Strictly Ballet  
Workshop:  
June 12-16  
Mini-Intensive: Ballet,  
Jazz,acro, lyrical:  
July 10-Aug. 3  
Contemporary  
Workshop:  
August 4-5  
Performance: August 4  
at 2 pm

classes is \$5, and registration is required. For kids older than 5, consider joining in on its Farm Kids Club program, where you can make your own herb garden, learn which soil is best for growing strawberries and more. Admission for these classes is \$10, and registration is required. Learn more

about North Alabama Agriplex and the programs it offers at <https://agriplex.org/WPtest/services/>.

**Interact with animals at Snead's Farmhouse**

Snead's Farmhouse is an educational farm experience in the Cullman area, welcoming

families for tours with open arms. See the farmhouse's residents, ranging from the typical chickens and cows to some more unique species like peacocks and even a tortoise! Children will learn fun facts about animal husbandry and poultry hatching, and of course, have photo opportunities with

the animals at each stage of the tour. Tours are roughly two hours long, and available Thursday through Sunday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person, and children 1 and younger free. Tours must be booked at least 24 hours in advance at [www.sneadsfarmhouse.com](http://www.sneadsfarmhouse.com).



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# 10 ways to reach your fitness goals

**Lauren Estes**

lauren@cullmantribune.com

**T**here are many ways to optimize your health now with access to online workouts and personal trainers and meal prep companies available at an arm's reach.

Finding a form of accountability in a fitness community near you, creating a habitual workout regimen that you can maintain and prioritizing eating foods that fuel your body will put you on the fast track to a healthier lifestyle.

Here are 10 ways to get and stay fit.

## 1. Practice and master the basics

Start by selecting a workout split (days of the week) that you can commit to exercising. Even if you initially commit to walking 30 minutes, three times weekly- then do that. Pick three days and three time frames that you won't decommit from.

## 2. Use food for fuel

Not great at cooking or eating healthy foods? Start small. Cut out fast food and soft drinks. Buy more lean proteins instead of fat/cholesterol heavy meats. Implement more leafy veggies and good carbs into your diet and choose to bake or grill them instead of frying. Take small steps toward making your diet healthier.

## 3. Stay hydrated

How much water do you drink

daily? Do you know that to be adequately hydrated as a male, you need to drink 125 ounces of water daily, and for females, you need 91 ounces daily? Then, if you add additional activity/effort to your schedule, you will need to increase your hydration/electrolytes. Make staying hydrated a priority.

## 4. Hire a personal trainer

Uncomfortable in a gym setting or need assistance creating or doing workout movements? Find a personal trainer near you who can assist you in reaching your goals and/or hold you accountable in your nutrition. There are many local gyms that offer one-on-one personal training sessions or group sessions that can monitor proper techniques/form and make you more comfortable in a public gym atmosphere. They can also make sure that you are lifting and eating to meet your goals.

## 5. Make sure to get your Zs and recover

Do you sleep enough at night? Are you taking enough time to properly recover between your workout splits? Making sure you initially use active rest days to allow your muscles to recover is vital for muscle development. Adding in massage sessions, chiropractic visits, etc. and foam rolling/ stretching will greatly benefit your recovery efforts.

## 6. Invest in a fitness watch/

## mobile phone trackers

There are so many fitness watches, monitors, phone apps and online programs to help you monitor your daily steps, calories burned and effort given. Not all systems are 100% accurate since a lot of factors come into play, but using these options can give you a rough estimate of where you are physically on a daily and weekly basis.

## 7. Spend more time in the sunshine

Taking the time to be in the sunlight 5-15 minutes a day has proven to help your immunity, bone health, boost your brain's serotonin and help you sleep better. Some sunshine a day can benefit your overall health and can make you feel better/happier.

## 8. Get more steps in

Why will walking 10,000 steps a day help your health? Getting those steps in will improve brain function, help regulate your blood sugar levels, boost your mood and can help with weight management/fat loss and increasing muscle tone. If you increase your steps overtime, you may find yourself being healthier overall.

## 9. Set realistic goals/expectations

Setting fitness and health goals is super important as you make lifestyle changes, but putting realistic goals in place to hold you accountable and see more reasonable

results will keep you in the game. Want to lose 50 pounds? That's great! But work on the first 5 pounds, then 10 and watch yourself stay committed toward the bigger ultimate goal. Want to run a marathon and you are just starting to run? Awesome! Train for a 5K race first and then increase your running distances steadily so your body responds appropriately. Checking off small goals leads you to setting even bigger goals!

## 10. Don't quit if you're tired

One of the old sayings goes, "You can slow down, pause or break- but just don't quit." Staying active when it's difficult is a great way to build habits and gain discipline. If you're constantly starting over because the challenge of living a healthier lifestyle becomes hard, you will never truly be all in and experience success with a new workout program or meal plan. Starting over after failure is completely different from starting over after quitting. Failure teaches you ways not to do something- and gives you an opportunity to try to succeed in a new attempt. Quitting is giving up because the emotion you felt when you started is no longer there. Slow down- but never quit.

I hope these tips will help put you on your way to build a healthier lifestyle as we approach the halfway point of 2023!



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# Summer meal prep

**Lauren Estes**

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**T**his summer, change up your at-home prepared meals with some healthy, fresh alternatives.

The route to creating more variety within your healthy diet starts with utilizing new options!

Along with exercising at least 30 minutes a day, three times weekly, nutrition is key in bettering your overall health and wellness.

By managing your workout regimen, staying hydrated and getting appropriate sleep, along with a healthy diet and exercise, you will not only feel better, but also boost your immunity, allowing you to recover faster, carry less stress and overall, feel better.

One of my favorite quotes says, "A healthy diet is much like a relationship- you can't cheat on it and expect it to work."

One way to incorporate a healthier mindset is to get others involved by having accountability from the people you define as your tribe.

Here are a few healthy and family-friendly recipes to make your summertime that much more fun.



BEACHBODYONDEMAND.COM

## SWEET POTATO HASH WITH EGGS

This sheet pan sweet potato hash with eggs is an easy, high-protein breakfast!

### MEAL SPECS

- Prep time: 20 mins
- Cook time: 30 mins
- Total time: 50 mins
- Servings: 4
- Calories: 353

### Ingredients

- Parchment paper
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 medium red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup black beans, drained, rinsed
- 1 cup corn kernels
- 1 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1/4 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp. ground smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt (or Himalayan salt), divided use
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper, divided use
- 8 large eggs
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh cilantro

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.



THEGIRLONBLOOR.COM

2. Line large sheet pan with parchment paper. Set aside.

3. Combine sweet potatoes, onion, garlic, bell pepper, beans, corn, oil, chili powder, cumin, paprika, 1/4 tsp. salt and 1/4 tsp. pepper in a large bowl; toss gently to blend.

4. Place sweet potato mixture on pan. Bake for 18-20 minutes, stirring after 10 minutes.

5. Create eight wells in sweet potato mixture. Gently crack an egg into each well.

6. Season eggs with remaining 1/4 tsp. salt and remaining 1/4 tsp. pepper. Bake for 8-10 minutes, or until eggs are set.

7. Garnish with cilantro; serve immediately.

www.beachbodyondemand.com/blog/12-recipes-that-make-summer-meal-prep-simple

## STRAWBERRY AND SPINACH SUMMER SALAD WITH CHICKEN

### MEAL SPECS

- Calories: 455kcal
- Carbohydrates: 11g
- Protein: 45g
- Fat: 26g

### Ingredients

- Olive oil - any neutral oil like sunflower or avocado oil will work
- Chicken cutlets - you can also use chicken breast cut thinly in half
- Salt and pepper - to taste
- Baby spinach - romaine lettuce, baby kale or mixed greens will also work in this recipe
- Strawberries - blackberries, figs and mandarin oranges would also be delicious in this salad
- Red onion - if you're not a fan of red onions, feel free to use shallots or leave them out



entirely

- Feta – goat cheese is a great alternative
- Almonds – walnuts, pecans, sunflower seeds, pine nuts, roasted chickpeas or popped lentils can also be used in place of almonds

#### For dressing

- Olive oil – see substitution notes above
- Red wine vinegar – balsamic or apple cider vinegar can be used in place of red wine vinegar
- Honey – agave syrup or maple syrup will also work in this dressing
- Dijon mustard – stone-ground mustard will provide a similar (but milder) flavor
- Salt and pepper – to taste

#### Directions

1. Grill the chicken.
2. Make the dressing.
3. Chop up the ingredients.
4. Add the fruits and veggies to a large bowl.
5. Top with goat cheese and chicken.
6. Serve fresh or store in mason jars for later.

[www.google.com/amp/story/s/thegirlonbloor.com/web-stories/meal-prep-summer-salad-recipes](http://www.google.com/amp/story/s/thegirlonbloor.com/web-stories/meal-prep-summer-salad-recipes)

### SUMMER STUFFED PEPPERS

#### MEAL SPECS

- YIELDS: 6 serving(s)
- PREP TIME: 20 mins
- TOTAL TIME: 20 mins
- CAL/SERV: 427

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup uncooked rice

- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 (14.5-oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 6 bell peppers, tops and cores removed
- 1 cup shredded Monterey jack
- Freshly chopped parsley, for garnish



PARKER FEIERBACH

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. In a small saucepan, prepare rice according to package instructions. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Cook onion until soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomato paste and garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute more. Add ground beef and cook, breaking up meat with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, 6 minutes. Drain fat.
2. Return beef mixture to skillet, then stir in cooked rice and diced tomatoes. Season with oregano, salt, and pepper. Let simmer until liquid has reduced slightly, about 5 minutes.
3. Place peppers cut side-up in a 9x13 baking dish and drizzle with oil. Spoon beef mixture into each pepper and top with Monterey jack, then cover

baking dish with foil.

4. Bake until peppers are tender, about 35 minutes. Uncover and bake until cheese is bubbly, 10 minutes more.

5. Garnish with parsley before serving.

[www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a23014857/classic-stuffed-peppers-recipe](http://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a23014857/classic-stuffed-peppers-recipe)

### BASIL AVOCADO SHRIMP SALAD WRAPS AND SWEET POTATO CHIPS



PARKER FEIERBACH

#### MEAL SPECS

- YIELDS: 4 serving(s)
- PREP TIME: 20 mins
- TOTAL TIME: 50 mins

#### Ingredients

##### For the sweet potato chips

- Cooking spray
- 2-3 medium sweet potatoes, sliced into 1/8"-thick coins
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

##### For the shrimp salad

- Cooking spray
- 20 large shrimp, peeled and deveined (about 3/4 lb.)
- 1 1/2 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 1/4 small red onion, finely diced
- 2 avocados, diced
- 4 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 large heads butterhead or romaine lettuce

##### For the marinade

- Juice of 2 lemons
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil or avocado oil
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

#### Directions

1. Make sweet potato chips: Preheat oven to 375°F and grease a large baking sheet with cooking spray. Arrange sweet potatoes in an even layer and season with salt and pepper.

2. Roast 15 minutes, then flip and roast until crispy, 15 minutes more. Let cool, then transfer to a resealable container until ready to eat.

3. Meanwhile, make shrimp salad: Grease a large skillet over medium heat with cooking spray. Add shrimp and cook, stirring occasionally, until pink and no longer opaque, 2 minutes per side. Set aside and let cool.

4. Make marinade: In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, garlic, basil, vinegar, oil, and paprika and season with salt and pepper.

5. In a large bowl, stir together tomatoes, onion, avocados and basil. Fold in shrimp. Pour marinade over shrimp salad and toss until coated.

6. Store shrimp salad in the fridge in a resealable container. Serve in lettuce cups when ready to eat.

[www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a25564220/avocado-shrimp-salad-lettuce-wraps-recipe](http://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a25564220/avocado-shrimp-salad-lettuce-wraps-recipe)



# Summer fashion trends

## Tiffany McKoy

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**A**s we approach summer, fashion enthusiasts are eagerly awaiting the latest fashion trends that will dominate the season. From bold prints to relaxed silhouettes, the summer of 2023 is set to be a season of experimentation, creativity and comfort.

Here are some of the top summer fashion trends for 2023:

### Bold prints

Bold prints are set to dominate, with everything from animal prints to abstract patterns taking center stage. Expect to see vibrant prints on dresses, tops, skirts and pants, as well as accessories such as scarves and bags. Whether you prefer tropical prints, geometric patterns or floral designs, there's a bold print for everyone this season.

### Relaxed silhouettes

Comfort is key for summer 2023, and relaxed silhouettes are a must-have for anyone looking to stay cool and comfortable in the heat. Think oversized T-shirts, loose-fitting pants and billowy dresses that allow for plenty of movement and breathability. Flowy maxi dresses and skirts, in particular, are set to be a major trend, with their effortless elegance and versatility making them perfect for everything from beach days to evening events.

### Sustainable fashion

Sustainability has been a major focus in the fashion industry

in recent years, and summer 2023 is set to be no different. More and more consumers are looking for eco-friendly and ethically-made clothing options, and designers are responding by creating collections that prioritize sustainability. From using recycled materials to reducing waste and carbon emissions, sustainable fashion is a trend that's here to stay.

### Pastel colors

Soft pastel colors are always a popular choice for summer, and 2023 is no exception. From pale pink to baby blue, pastel hues add a touch of femininity and whimsy to any outfit. Whether you choose to incorporate pastels into your accessories or wear them head-to-toe, these light and airy shades are perfect for the summer season.

### Cut-outs

Cut-outs have been a trend in recent seasons, and they're set to continue in summer 2023. Whether it's a subtle cut-out at the waist or a more daring design that shows some skin, cut-outs add an edgy and playful touch to any outfit. Expect to see cut-outs on everything from dresses to tops, as well as in swimsuits and other beachwear.

### High-waisted bottoms

High-waisted bottoms are a timeless trend that's perfect for summer 2023. From high-waisted shorts to pants and skirts, this flattering style elongates the legs and cinches the waist, creating a sleek and sophisticated silhouette. High-waisted bikinis are also a popular choice for the beach,

with their vintage-inspired look and ability to accentuate curves.

### Oversized hats

Oversized hats are a must-have accessory for summer 2023, providing both style and sun protection. From classic straw hats to wide-brimmed fedoras and floppy sun hats, there's a style for every taste and occasion. Not only do oversized hats add a touch of glamour to any outfit, but they also provide shade for the face and neck, keeping you cool and protected in the summer sun.

### Chunky sandals

Chunky sandals are a comfortable and stylish choice

for summer 2023, with their thick soles and sturdy straps providing both support and fashion-forward flair. Whether you prefer platform sandals, slides, or gladiator styles, chunky sandals are perfect for everything from casual outings to more dressed-up events.

Summer fashion trends are always a fun way to liven up your wardrobe, experiment with new styles and pairings and have fun. If your wardrobe needs a bit of a refresher or you're curious about trying out new styles, try the above-mentioned summer fashion trends which will have you feeling inspired and ready to take on summer in style.

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# Summer gardening in Alabama

**Tiffany McKoy**

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Summer gardening in Alabama brings its own set of challenges and opportunities for those who love to grow their own vegetables, fruits and flowers. With hot and humid temperatures, pests and diseases and frequent afternoon thunderstorms, it takes a bit of planning, patience and resilience to have a successful garden in the summer. However, with the right knowledge, tools and mindset, anyone can enjoy the delicious and colorful rewards of summer gardening in Alabama.

First of all, it's important to choose the right plants for the summer season in Alabama. Some vegetables and fruits thrive in the heat, while others wilt or fail to set fruit. Tomatoes, peppers, okra, eggplant, corn, cucumbers, beans and squash are among the most common and productive summer crops in Alabama. They love warm soil and sunlight, and they can withstand the occasional drought or flood. However, they also attract pests such

as aphids, spider mites and tomato hornworms, and can suffer from diseases such as blight and blossom end rot. To prevent or minimize these problems, it's important to keep the plants well watered, mulched and fertilized, and to spray them with organic remedies such as neem oil, insecticidal soap or Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) as needed.

In addition to vegetables and fruits, many flowers also thrive in the summer heat of Alabama. Sunflowers, zinnias, marigolds, cosmos, petunias and begonias are among the most popular and colorful summer flowers that can add beauty and diversity to any garden.

They attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies, and can also repel pests such as nematodes and Japanese beetles. However, they need to be dead-headed regularly, meaning that their faded flowers should be removed to encourage more blooms. They also need to be watered deeply and frequently, especially during heatwaves or droughts, and to be fertilized with a balanced fertilizer every few weeks.

Another important aspect of summer gardening in Alabama is irrigation. While rain may be plentiful in the spring and fall, it can be scarce in the summer, especially during the months of June, July, and August. To keep the plants hydrated and healthy, it's crucial to have a reliable and efficient irrigation system, such as drip irrigation, soaker hoses or sprinklers. These methods can save water, reduce disease, and deliver water directly to the roots where it's most needed. However, it's important not to overwater, which can lead to root rot or fungal diseases, and to water early in the morning or late in the evening, when the sun is not as strong, to minimize evaporation.

A fourth aspect of summer gardening in Alabama is crop rotation and soil health. Growing the same crops in the same soil year after year can deplete the nutrients, increase the pests and diseases, and reduce the yield of the plants. To avoid this problem, it's recommended to rotate the crops every year, meaning that each bed should have a different crop than the previous year. For example, if you grew tomatoes

in one bed last year, you can grow beans or peas in that bed this year, and then plant peppers or squash in that bed next year. This allows the soil to recover, replenish, balance its nutrients and reduce the risk of pests and diseases.

Finally, summer gardening in Alabama can be a joyful and therapeutic activity that connects you with nature, community and yourself. Whether you have a small patch of land or a large backyard, or even just a few pots on a balcony, you can cultivate your own food, flowers or herbs, and enjoy the satisfaction of seeing them grow, mature and bloom. You can also share your bounty with your neighbors, friends or family or donate it to a local food bank or charity. Moreover, you can learn from other gardeners, attend workshops or join a gardening club to expand your knowledge and skills, and to build a supportive and inspiring network. Above all, summer gardening in Alabama can remind you of your connection with the seasons, the cycles and the mysteries of life and to celebrate the wonder and beauty of the natural world.

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# Freshening up outside

Give your weather-beaten outdoor furniture a whole new look

After a few seasons, the sitting area in anyone's backyard, patio or balcony space can begin to look grimy and old — particularly if you live in a more humid environment. But there's no need to buy a whole new set of furniture. With the right preparation, the right paint, favorable weather conditions and a little elbow grease, you can get it all looking good as new.

**Clean surface**

Make sure you have a clean

surface, otherwise the paint won't properly adhere to wood, metal or plastic. Wipe away all dust and dirt, as well as any rust or old paint flakes. Try to remove or smooth over any other imperfections. For wood, lightly sand before painting. Wash everything after each step. If hardware is in place, remove it and label everything for easy reattachment later.

**Right tools**

Make sure you have the right tools before work begins. For instance, brush-on paint may require a pan and stir sticks. You may also need rollers or smaller brushes to get paint in tight spaces within the furniture.

Table tops and bulkier items are more easily painted with large rollers. Invest in gloves, painters tape or masking tape, drop cloths and protective eye wear, as needed.

**Many choices**

There's a difference between paints formulated for indoors and outdoors, and plastic furniture requires its own special products in order to bond properly. Make sure you buy the right version. Brush-on paints work best with primer, and make sure both are applied smoothly. Thinner coats go on more easier, while also drying more quickly. Two coats is usually a good rule of thumb on any painting project.

There's no need for primer if you choose a spray paint option. Keep the can the recommended distance from the furniture as you paint, working in bursts to avoid drips.

**Where you paint**

Check paint can guidelines for temperature ranges, then pay close attention to the weather forecast. Some formulations won't adhere if it's too hot or wet outside. Make sure you paint in a well-ventilated area to avoid the accumulation of potentially toxic fumes. A shady spot will give you a break from the heat while encouraging the paint to dry more evenly. Don't forget to hydrate!



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# SENIOR VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Beverly Wilkerson

**Cayla Grace Murphy**

caylagrace@cullmantribune.com

To know Beverly Wilkerson is to know a strong, graceful and service-minded woman. A Cullmanite since May 1984, she has continually improved her community through being a member of countless boards, committees and clubs.

Wilkerson's volunteer resume is stacked. She has always been very active in her church, but after her daughter Mandy's diagnoses, she started a long and tenuous journey of advocacy, specifically for individuals with disabilities and special needs. She has worn many hats over nearly 48 years of disability and brain injury-centered advocacy: performing vision and hearing screenings for special education referrals, substitute teaching in special education classrooms and performing administrative duties for various civic-minded committees and clubs.

The most impactful for her, she said, was her first interaction with the Pilot Club of Cullman.

Pilot Club of Cullman promotes the awareness and prevention of brain-related disorders and improves the lives of those with such disorders through education, volunteerism and financial support. While attending West Elementary School, Wilkerson's daughter Mandy began participating in the Special Olympics. Wilkerson said she was blown away by how the Pilot Club supported her daughter and other athletes with special needs.

"The Pilot Club of Cullman members, they sponsored the whole thing- providing shirts,

ribbons, lunch. They were cheering them on, too! I was so moved. So impressed by their generosity," she remembered fondly.

Over the years of her continued advocacy after her daughter started attending the Margaret Jean Jones Center, she made several connections with other like-minded individuals, one of them a reading specialist who was involved with Pilot Club. This member invited Wilkerson to join in 2002, which she did "joyfully," in her own words, as she remembered their involvement with the Special Olympics all those years ago.

"Even more opportunities to volunteer became available through the club," she noted. Over the years, she has served in most positions available in the club, all the way up to governor-elect of the Alabama district, responsible for overseeing the 19 clubs in Alabama at the time. Most recently in her 21-year tenure, she was the recipient of the Jo Vaughn Leadership Award, a prestigious award for those leaders who are exemplary at the club and district levels.

For a few years, when Wilkerson wasn't serving her community, she dedicated her spare time to taking classes at Wallace State Community College. "All the science classes!" she declared, "Sociology, biology, microbiology, chemistry... I became a member of Phi Beta Kappa, too. My plan was to continue on, but I became a little sidetracked with other activities" she laughed.

When asked how she "does it all," Wilkerson emphasized the importance of her faith, and said she always puts her family first. "I have never hired

a babysitter.

"Everything I do and have done has been worked around my family's schedule." She shared that after her husband's retirement in 2015, she was able to start attending even more meetings than before.

It would be extremely difficult if not impossible to estimate how many lives Wilkerson has touched through the years. She

stated, very matter-of-factly, that her faith has gotten through every hardship and is her major motivator to continue impacting the lives of community members around her by being the hands and feet and serving where she is needed.

"I always look forward to serving my community, as much as I can, and when I can," she smiled.

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**Beverly Wilkerson**

CONTRIBUTED



## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

# Emily Bussman

## 'Throw kindness (and paint) around like confetti'

**Cayla Grace Murphy**

caylagrace@cullmantribune.com

If you stroll through the Warehouse District in Cullman on any given weekend, you will come across a studio splattered with paint, dotted with stretched canvases and filled with joyful tipsy giggles of clients following classical techniques taught by Sips n Strokes Owner Emily Bussman.

Through two-hour classes and seasonal motifs, Bussman shares her love for art and relaxation with clients of all walks of life, from Sunday school paintings and fundraisers for nonprofits to office team-building activities.

Bussman said the opportunity to become a studio owner fell into her lap after she became disenchanted with her office job.

"When I graduated from graphic design in Auburn, I was very fortunate to have an awesome design career for about a year or so before I realized the office environment was just, not for me!" she laughed.

She said her passion for teaching art, a lifelong hobby for her, came from a place of wanting to share joy, and offer a bit of reprieve from the day-to-day lifestyle that many can become bored with.

"I fell in love with being able to teach people and see people become encouraged," she smiled. "I feel like so many people today are stressed

about things, so offering that escape is so fulfilling!"

She noted the studio often becomes a place where people surprise themselves, and she makes it a point to empower her students in their own artistic abilities, especially if they struggle with the canvas at hand. "When people get frustrated with a certain technique or maybe their painting isn't turning out how they envisioned, I always bring up that everyone is blessed artistically in some way," said Bussman. "I tell people all the time, there's so many forms of art, not just painting. Music, writing, drawing."

Along with being a studio owner, she also bears the titles mom, wife and wellness coach. With her pastor husband, two sons and a steadily growing side gig of health and wellness coaching, Bussman stays busy and cherishes the time she gets to relax in the studio.

When asked how she stays sane during all these endeavors, her reply was honest. "I don't know if I know the answer to that yet," she exclaimed. "Off the top of my head, finding the balance is a little like finding a unicorn. It's probably, not possible. Give yourself a little grace."

Bussman said she believes in total wellness of the mind, body and spirit; painting, or any form of art, can be beneficial to health in the form of relief from screaming cortisol levels or worries at home.

She said personal growth

and wellness have become more important to her now more than ever, and she believes art has a place in the holistic approach to wellness.

"I never considered personal growth as important as I do now," she said. "I can acknowledge now that growing in one area will bleed over into other areas, for sure."

When asked what business advice she would give to another woman trying to start her own entrepreneurial

journey, Bussman was very frank and delivered an unsurprising truth: "I am not business minded at all! I just want to make people feel good and have fun." She believes she has enjoyed so much success from her studio by simply believing and being passionate about what she does. "Have 100% passion about what you're doing, whatever you're doing."

Find Bussman on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/sipsnstrokescullman](http://www.facebook.com/sipsnstrokescullman).

# HANCEVILLE

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COUNCIL MEMBERS LEFT TO RIGHT

Jimmie Nuss, Kim Brown, Mayor Pro-Tem Jimmy Sawyer, Mayor Kenneth Nail, Patty Dean, John Stam





***Sips n Strokes Owner Emily Bussman paints a canvas in her studio.***

CONTRIBUTED





# WUNDERGARTEN!

## The Legend of the Miracle Garden, part 2

An original fairytale by Ben Johnson South

**Continued from the February-March-April edition of Community Matters...**

**S**oon, Fritz' Frog Prince greenery became the talk throughout the entire, German community there in the uplands of Alabama. Once the Governor came to Frau Ruehl's home to view the beautiful, green beast which now ruled over a kingdom of toadstool mushrooms. On a "Frog Prince picnic" outing the village school children foraged mountain huckleberries to encircle the bullfrog's green neck like a hug.

Encouraged by the delight of Frau Ruehl and the smiles of ZeeBeth, Fritz continued his inspired clipping.

Where once stood the forbidding wall of hedge that blocked one's view, there now stood an enchanting collection of Brothers Grimm storybook characters which Fritz remembered his mother and father reading to him in their warm home.

"I spy 'The Pied Piper' playing his flute," one awestruck visitor would shout with glee. "And I spy Rapunzel's tower and the blossoming vines are her long, flowing hair," swooned another.

There was an utterly charming cow from the adventures of "Thumbling," so true-to-life it could almost squirt green milk; and "Hansel and Gretel" with a tempting, leafy green, gingerbread house. A juniper-clipped fox came slinking through the trees and a giant, green dragon belched red-leaf fire.

A family from a nearby county brought their blind child to enjoy the garden. Fritz gently took the child's hands to trace the outlines of the folktale characters and shared the magic and the miracles in the stories, as his parents had made learning such pleasant work for him.

On mornings when a new surprise was unveiled, the scene would be the same. Frau Ruehl would cheer "Danke! Thank you! Danke! A dozen thanks!" and applaud Fritz' new addition to the fantasy forest garden. ZeeBeth would beam the sweetest smile, and Fritz would bow and say, "You are most welcome, my sweet friend." Then all would enjoy warm pumpernickel and wildflower honey surrounded by the growing, green masterwork. Somedays, a German baker, Herr Bontrager, in the village made miniature animal crackers spread with goat cheese and green herbs for them to savor.

Still, something bothered Fritz. Although Frau Ruehl's young daughter seemed happier and more content, she seemed no stronger.

Fritz wished with all his heart he might do something to help make ZeeBeth strong enough to fully enjoy the warm people »



and pleasures of life in this real and lovely place, like other young people their age.

Eventually, he had shaped every inch of the extraordinary hedge which had been thick-bristled as a giant's hairbrush. Then, Fritz began clipping the trees and shrubs which grew near Frau Ruehl's cabin. Tall cedars became pillars and columns, while other native evergreens were clipped into nesting birds and flying birds. American boxwood shrubs became green throne chairs, a stringed harp and a German flugelhorn.

Alabama oakleaf hydrangeas formed a lush, green, labyrinth maze with fluffy, white blossoms. There were tiered shapes like great, green wedding cakes.

Other plantings in the yard were clipped into giant spirals which twisted and turned into a whimsical version of Mad King Ludwig's castle in Bavaria. It was surrounded with nectar plants and a Monarch king butterfly, which wintered in Mexico but returned to Alabama in the warm months, flitted over the castle moat, across the tiny drawbridge and as with "Abracadabra!" magic, escaped through the green parapets.

Fritz positioned two flags to fly over the turrets of this plant palace, one was German and the other American. Both cultures took root here.

In fact, a forest full of butterflies flitted and floated in and out of the sunlight like fairies in this fantasyland.

It was springtime, the sunshine woke the earth which woke the seeds, which woke the seedlings, which woke the gardens, which woke the vegetables, and woke the orchards, which woke the blossoms, which woke the fruits and woke the grains, grasses and



The Original All-Ages Folktale by Ben Johnson South

wildflowers over hill and dale.

Fritz' garden wizardry became quite famous throughout the countryside and visitors oftentimes brought plants to add to Fritz' art and the Ruehl farm.

One morning when Fritz came back from the village, a beautiful, small tree with large roots had been left near the picket fence gate that opened to Frau Ruehl's small but neatly manicured lawn.

Fritz assumed Colonel Cullman, the founder of this unique, German county in Alabama, one of the Ruehl family's dearest friends and a passionate plantsman himself, had left the little tree for him to plant.

When the Colonel wasn't busy helping the community grow, he was happiest gardening. Advancing in age, he quoted the American President, Herr Jefferson, "I am an old man but a young gardener."

He, the Colonel, had a "wunderkammer," a cabinet of wonders, a cupboard like Old Mother Hubbard in his greenhouse in town where he stored his botanical curiosities. He collected Indian corn from

Native Americans, melon seeds, peanuts and okra from African Americans, peach pits from Swedish Americans, and peas from French Americans.

On previous occasions, a busy Colonel Cullman had left plants at the Ruehl farm which were intended for Fritz to add to the "wundergarten." Fritz decided this newly gifted shrub would be perfect for clipping into a charming, floppy-eared rabbit, or a hare as they were called in olden days. He remembered the image of the rabbit in his childhood storybook, the oft-told tale of "The Hare and the Hedgehog."

Once he weeded the vegetable patch and watered the lilies, the geraniums and roses, and then plucked each peach, apple, pear and plum; Fritz picked up the tree that had been left by the gate.

He planted it close by the porch near where ZeeBeth rested. Then, he began clipping the little tree into a floppy-eared bunny.

At the end of the day, the small tree indeed looked like the rabbit Fritz fondly recalled from "The Hare and the Hedgehog" story.



GOOD HARE

As fat quail chicks huddled under the holly bushes, across the way, Fritz was visited by a brown-eyed dove peacefully watching high above the lacy, alabaster white dogwoods from his tall pine tree aerie which reached nearly to the heavens.

The geese in the gooseyard were asleep with their heads under their wings. The dove cooed, "Uuu-be-uuu. Uuu-be-uuu." As a tired but satisfied Fritz went to his own happy nest in the garden shed to sleep. The silver moon shone through the window and lit up his smiling face.

The following morning, Fritz came to the porch expecting the same scene as always. Cheers, hurrahs, Frau Ruehl delightedly danke-ing, "Danke! Thank you!"

Then, he would bow graciously, and all would enjoy breakfast while they admired the floppy-eared bunny, the newest addition to the Ruehl farm's splendid, fairytale garden.

But this day was different. The small tree was still planted near the wide planks of the cabin porch, however the limbs and twigs Fritz clipped had seemingly sprouted »



new growth overnight.

The small tree looked little like the floppy-eared rabbit that Fritz had wished "Guten Nacht, goodnight," when he left the garden the evening before.

So, after Fritz finished his farm and garden chores this day, he clipped the small tree again until it became a floppy-eared bunny, once more.

Tired but satisfied, Fritz dusted off his hands, washed them with a bucket of well water and went home to the garden shed to get a "guten nacht" sleep as the brown-eyed dove watched over him from the pine tree perch across the way.

The next morning, Fritz the farm boy was even more bamboozled when he came to the cabin porch. Again, the small tree he'd planted near the porch and clipped into a floppy-eared bunny had sprouted new growth overnight.

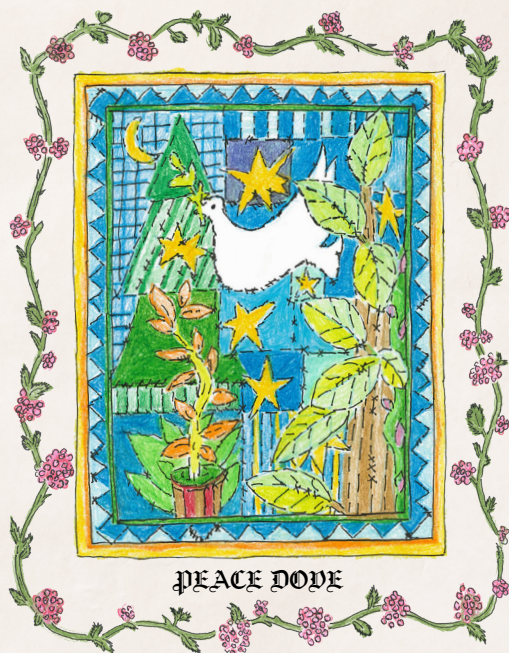
"Oh, fiddlesticks!", said Fritz. This shrub did not look like the rabbit in "The Hare and the Hedgehog," but only appeared to be a slightly larger tree. It was a thriving tree, but it was not the bunny Fritz had wanted to make his young friend smile.

Fritz wondered if he might be losing his touch.

He felt better once he closely examined Rapunzel's tall, green tower; the now fully grown "Pied Piper," "Cinderella's" slipper; the newest addition of "Snow White and Her Seven, German Garden Gnomes," and the rest of the magical garden.

But, the fact remained, the tree he very much wanted to be a floppy-eared bunny seemed determined to remain a tree.

After Fritz had watered the storybook hedge, fed the goldfish in the lilypond, and gathered a basket of kale and cucumbers for Frau Ruehl, he set about once and forever to clip the little tree into a hare, a bunny shape that would remain.



PEACE DOVE



BAD HARE

Ye gads! That next morning, the little tree had once again sprouted new growth overnight. It, this troublemaker, looked nothing like a bunny and had now grown so large that its branches were above the rough-hewn railing on the cabin porch. Fritz became even more discouraged.

As good fortune would have it, Colonel Cullman arrived that morning at the Ruehl farm with a wagonload of shade tree saplings in tubs--oaks, elms and hickories. Frau Ruehl wanted to plant them to help cool her cabin during hot, Alabama summer times.

The Colonel also brought young pines to renew some trees that had been felled by the axe to clear land for crops and for the timber.

At breakfast, Fritz told Colonel Cullman of his worry. "I'm sorry you are fretting, Fritz Frederick," said The Colonel, "but it was not I who left the puzzling plant."

"I fear I'm losing my touch," Fritz sighed.

"Bless my soul, I do not think so, young Fritz," said Colonel Cullman.

"You have the rest of your long life to become a ripe, old man like me. Just look at your wondrous garden, "der wundergarten," and this beautiful view you've opened up across the amber waves of wheat, clear to the shining steeples on the village churches and to the majestic mountains beyond."

The Colonel continued in a consoling tone, "The world is a wundergarten when we are awake to the joy. Your gardening art has awakened the spirit of this place."

The Colonel with great bombast continued, "We throughout the county proudly proclaim, you are 'Fritz, The Miracle Gardener! Fritz, The Wundergaertner!'"

Humble Fritz grinned and appreciatively nodded but he could feel his face redden because of such high praise.

Colonel Cullman continued, "Still, perhaps my dear boy you need a change of pace. You could help me check on some of the other farms a bit.

"I have a pocketful of upland rice I'd like Herr Kress to consider for his granary; and please bring Frau Ruehl back a

sack of the magical buckwheat flour from his gristmill so she may bake her famous German pancakes on our feast day."

"If you say so, sir," said Fritz. "But before I ramble, I will work hard and try one last time to give Frau Ruehl's sleeping beauty the floppy-eared bunny which will surely give her a rousing smile."

"I think you may be a little sweet on sweet ZeeBeth, Fritz," said Colonel Cullman with a knowing wink.

"You know, beauty in nature itself is a healer. I admire how you and Frau Ruehl value both usefulness and beauty on this farm."

He paused, "My son, please do not let this one stubborn shrub trouble you so. Find yourself some joy each day. Remember, we German Americans work hard but we also play hard. As my grandpapa used to say, we shall rest in the life beyond."

Look for part three of "WUNDERGARTEN: The Legend of the Miracle Garden" in the August-September-October edition of Community Matters.



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## STATE TRACK MEET

# Cold Springs Eagles, Lady Eagles capture 2A State Championships; locals shine in Cullman, Gulf Shores

**Nick Griffin**  
nick@cullmantribune.com

**CULLMAN, Ala.** — Another state track meet is in the books and this year the Cold Springs Eagles and Lady Eagles are your Class 2A state champions. The Eagles outpaced Sand Rock by 45 points to claim their state title and the Lady Eagles raced past Francis Marion by 34 points. Addison’s boys put on a great performance in Class 1A as well, finishing second behind Loachapoka by just two points and in Class 3A, Vinemont’s boys placed third just behind Flomaton and Madison Academy.

There were a lot of gold medals won and new records set by locals over the weekend. Cold Springs’ Ethan Edgeworth won gold and set new 2A state records in the 800-meter dash, 1600-meter run and 3200-meter run. Edgeworth was also part of the Eagles 4x800 meter relay team that claimed gold as well.

Cameron Nunn collected a gold medal for Cold Springs by besting the field in the pole vault and Reagan Parris brought home gold with a win in the 3200-meter run. Parris also helped lead the



COLD SPRINGS RUNNERS CLUB

**The Cold Springs Eagles and Lady Eagles captured 2A State Championships at this year’s State Track Meet.**

Lady Eagles’ 4x800 meter relay team to a gold medal as well.

Holly Pond’s Daniel Figueroa had a big weekend in Class 2A too, racking up four gold medals in the ambulatory javelin throw, discus throw, 200-meter dash and 100-meter dash.

In Class 1A, Addison’s Bradley Willette and Brian

Berry each won gold medals in the discus throw and long jump, respectively while the Bulldogs’ 4x100 meter relay team placed first as well.

Vinemont’s Ethan Lemons had another standout performance at the state meet in Class 3A, winning gold medals and setting new state records in both the 1600-meter and 3200-meter runs.

In Gulf Shores, West Point’s Aiden Dujoud topped the rest of the 5A field to bring home a gold medal in the discus throw.

### COLD SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL (2A)

#### Girls 100-meter hurdles

- 3rd - Ella Dickerson »



(17.36)

**Boys 110-meter hurdles**

- 3rd - Cameron Nunn (15.72)

**Girls 300-meter hurdles**

- 6th - Ella Dickerson (51.05)
- 10th - Cheyenne Bishop (53.39)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 4th - Claire Huffstutler (2:39.43)
- 5th - Reagan Parris (2:39.84)
- 15th - Paizley Whitlow (2:43.80)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 1st - Ethan Edgeworth (1:54.76) (State Record)
- 11th - Jayden Allred (2:07.60)
- 12th - Justin Caffee (2:08.10)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 1st - Ethan Edgeworth (4:11.96) (State Record)
- 3rd - Jayden Allred (4:34.78)

**Girls 1600-meter run**

- 2nd - Paizley Whitlow (5:46.99)
- 6th - Macie Huffstutler (5:57.91)
- 7th - Reagan Parris (6:00.92)

**Girls 3200-meter run**

- 1st - Reagan Parris (12:25.05)
- 2nd - Paizley Whitlow (12:36.46)
- 11th - Macie Huffstutler (13:12.07)

**Boys 3200-meter run**

- 1st - Ethan Edgeworth (9:18.47) (State Record)

- 2nd - Jayden Allred (9:41.38)

- 10th - Sage Nelson (10:35.28)

**Boys discus throw**

- 13th - Bailey Gann (105-10)

**Girls discus throw**

- 13th - Ellanora Slusser (82-06)
- 20th - Makenna Taylor (74-11)

**Boys high jump**

- 4th - Nic Fallin (6-00.00)
- 7th - Cameron Nunn (6-00.00)

**Girls javelin throw**

- 6th - Kaley Barger (91-09)
- 12th - Holly Bruer (79-07)
- 13th - Aidan Freeman (79-03)

**Boys javelin throw**

- 6th - Cody Jewell (136-11)
- 13th - Josh Winfrey (125-11)

**Boys long jump**

- 7th - Nic Fallin (19-09.50)

**Girls pole vault**

- 2nd - Ryleigh Wright (8-06.00)
- 4th - Claire Huffstutler (7-06.00)

**Boys pole vault**

- 1st - Cameron Nunn (13-00.00)
- 2nd - Nic Fallin (12-00.00)
- 5th - Blake Belcher (9-06.00)

**Girls shot put**

- 15th - Ellanora Slusser (27-05.00)

- 20th - Erin Bailey (25-08.00)

**Boys triple jump**

- 7th - Nic Fallin (40-03.50)

**Girls triple jump**

- 5th - Ella Dickerson (31-03.50)

- 16th - Boys 4x800 meter relay (4:00.63)

- 2nd - Girls 4x400 meter relay (4:28.53)

- 1st - Girls 4x800 meter relay (10:36.40)

- 1st - Boys 4x800 meter relay (8:15.99) (State Record)

**ADDISON HIGH SCHOOL (1A)**

**Boys 100-meter dash**

- 3rd - Brian Berry (11.27)

**Girls 100-meter hurdles**

- 5th - Jasmine Daniel (18.87)

**Boys 300-meter hurdles**

- 6th - Jacob McLamb (44.40)

**Girls 300-meter hurdles**

- 8th - Jasmine Daniel (51.91)

**Girls 400-meter dash**

- 13th - Ava Bartlett (1:09.79)

**Boys 400-meter dash**

- 11th - Jordan Hubbert (55.82)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 10th - Peyton Holland (2:15.14)
- 15th - Ryan White (2:19.17)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 2nd - Charlotte Vayda

(2:38.02)

**Girls 1600-meter run**

- 2nd - Charlotte Vayda (6:00.21)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 8th - Peyton Holland (5:16.23)

**Girls discus throw**

- 5th - Gracie Manley (87-01)
- 17th - Olivia Gober (68-02)

**Boys discus throw**

- 1st - Bradley Willette (144-10)

**Boys high jump**

- 2nd - Briley Hayes (6-00.00)

- 9th - Brady Gilbreath (5-08.00)

**Girls high jump**

- 4th - Jasmine Daniel (4-10.00)

- 7th - Ava Bartlett (4-10.00)

- 11th - Mattie Johnson (4-02.00)

**Girls javelin throw**

- 9th - Mattie Johnson (86-11)

**Boys javelin throw**

- 3rd - Malaki Blakely (137-04)

- 9th - Dave Tuggle (120-10)

**Girls long jump**

- 8th - Brilyn Dover (13-10.00)

- 13th - Ava Bartlett (12-07.00)

- 17th - Hadley Butler (12-01.00)

**Boys long jump**





- 1st - Brian Berry (22-03.50)
- 6th - Jedediah Wilkins (19-09.50)
- 12th - Josh Netherton (18-04.50)

**Girls shot put**

- 13th - Olivia Gober (26-05.00)
- 17th - Kendall Wyatt (25-03.00)

**Boys shot put**

- 12th - Bradley Willette (36-10.00)
- 17th - Isaiah Treece (32-04.00)

**Girls triple jump**

- 5th - Hadley Butler (31-00.00)
- 9th - Katie Barrett (30-03.75)
- 12th - Brilyn Dover (28-06.00)

**Boys triple jump**

- 4th - Josh Netherton (39-07.50)
- 5th - Jedediah Wilkins (39-06.75)
- 7th - Briley Hayes (38-05.25)

**3rd - Girls 4x100 meter relay team (53.88)**

- 1st - Boys 4x100 meter relay team (43.86)
- 3rd - Boys 4x400 meter relay team (3:38.95)
- 2nd - Boys 4x800 meter relay team (9:11.15)

**VINEMONT HIGH SCHOOL****Girls 400-meter dash**

- 13th - Natalie Foell (1:05.37)
- 18th - Whitney Quick (1:06.98)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 12th - Natalie Foell (2:35.02)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 2nd - Ethan Lemons (1:58.28)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 1st - Ethan Lemons (4:12.24) (State Record)
- 9th - Brady Johnson (4:46.64)

**Boys 3200-meter run**

- 1st - Ethan Lemons (4:12.24) (State Record)
- 5th - Brady Johnson (10:20.29)
- 14th - Andrew Landreth (11:25.03)

**Girls discus throw**

- 10th - Gracie Goodwin (83-06)

**Boys discus throw**

- 6th - Dalton Thomason (112-07)
- 8th - Tatum Brown (111-05)
- 13th - Alex Salazar (103-03)

**Girls high jump**

- 3rd - Caroline Miller (4-06.00)
- 5th - Carley Stephens (4-04.00)

**Boys javelin throw**

- 2nd - Ayden Thomason (151-09)
- 14th - Dawson Wilhite (121-04)

**Girls javelin throw**

- 9th - Addison Holcomb (91-04)

**Girls long jump**

- 13th - Caroline Miller

(14-02.00)

**Boys pole vault**

- 2nd - Dawson Wilhite (10-00.00)

**Girls shot put**

- 16th - Gracie Goodwin (26-09.00)

**Boys shot put**

- 8th - Alex Salazar (41-10.00)

**Boys triple jump**

- 14th - Logan Ford (36-05.00)
- 15th - Dawson Wilhite (35-11.00)

**Girls triple jump**

- 9th - Caroline Miller (30-10.50)
- 10th - Girls 4x400 meter relay team (4:37.67)

**MEEK HIGH SCHOOL (1A)****Girls pole vault**

- 2nd - Audrey Barnett (7-06.00)

**Boys shot put**

- 10th - Jarrett Benson (37-05.00)

**Girls triple jump**

- 10th - Audrey Barnett (28-09.25)

**Boys triple jump**

- 6th - Dawson Beasley (39-02.00)

10th - Boys 4x800 meter relay team (10:19.09)

**ST. BERNARD PREP (2A)****Girls 100-meter hurdles**

- 7th - Abbi McBride (18.11)

**Girls 300-meter hurdles**

- 7th - Abbi McBride (51.10)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 22nd - Bruna Parolin (2:52.25)

**Girls 1600-meter run**

- 3rd - Madilyn Kerber (5:48.64)
- 8th - Mary Ella Cockerham (6:01.98)

**Girls 3200-meter run**

- 3rd - Madilyn Kerber (12:40.57)
- 10th - Mary Ella Cockerham (13:07.21)

**Boys 3200-meter run**

- 13th - Parker Guthery (10:42.27)
- 14th - Cash Daly (10:47.38)
- 18th - Sean Daly (11:05.79)

**Boys discus throw**

- 10th - Xavier Pautler (111-03)

**Girls high jump**

- 5th - Abbi McBride (4-08.00)

**Boys javelin throw**

- 14th - Xavier Pautler (124-11)

**Girls triple jump**

- 11th - Abbi McBride (29-05.75)

- 3rd - Girls 4x800 meter relay team (11:01.20)

- 4th - Boys 4x800 meter relay team (9:08.46)

**HOLLY POND HIGH SCHOOL (2A)**

»



**Boys 100-meter dash ambulatory**

- 1st - Daniel Figueroa (16.41)

**Boys 200-meter dash ambulatory**

- 1st - Daniel Figueroa (32.83)

**Boys 300-meter hurdles**

- 7th - Emery Barnett (43.67)

**Girls 400-meter dash**

- 14th - Presli Carr (1:07.11)

**Boys 400-meter dash**

- 3rd - Travis Barnett (52.22)
- 7th - Gunnar McBee (53.43)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 3rd - Travis Barnett (1:57.37)
- 15th - Kohl Horton (2:10.55)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 12th - Mila Edmonson (2:42.94)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 2nd - Travis Barnett (4:32.63)
- 17th - Joshua Putman (5:08.66)
- 19th - Matthew Putman (5:13.45)

**Girls 1600-meter run**

- 5th - Mila Edmonson (5:55.98)
- 13th - Caroline Lamoureux (6:09.90)

**Girls 3200-meter run**

- 4th - Mila Edmonson (12:44.00)
- 14th - Caroline Lamoureux (13:46.93)

**Boys 3200-meter run**

- 4th - Travis Barnett (10:06.74)

- 12th - Joshua Putman (10:42.50)
- 16th - Matthew Putman (10:55.35)

**Boys discus throw ambulatory**

- 1st - Daniel Figueroa (47-08)

**Boys discus throw**

- 9th - Diego Arreguin (113-10)

**Boys high jump**

- 17th - Caden Moody (5-04.00)
- 17th - Ethan Fox Westall (5-04.00)

**Girls high jump**

- 10th - Ellie Burks (4-04.00)
- 11th - Presli Carr (4-04.00)

**Boys javelin throw ambulatory**

- 1st - Daniel Figueroa (79-05)

**Boys long jump**

- 20th - Gunnar McBee (17-06.75)

**Girls triple jump**

- 23rd - Ellie Burks (24-11.00)
- 6th - Girls 4x800 meter relay team (11:19.25)
- 5th - Boys 4x800 meter relay team (9:16.84)

**CULLMAN HIGH SCHOOL (6A)**

**Boys 400-meter dash**

- 20th - Owen Heinze (53.00)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 23rd - Giselle Gibbs (2:34.92)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

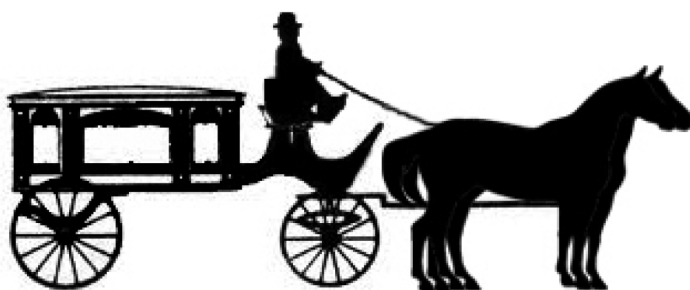
- 19th - Lane Hopper (2:04.78)

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**Girls 1600-meter run**

- 12th – Mabry Free (5:27.09)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 11th – Andrue Barnett (4:31.48)
- 21st – Lane Hopper (4:41.69)

**Girls 3200-meter run**

- 18th – Khloe Nalley (12:49.61)

**BOYS 3200-METER RUN**

- 11th – Andrue Barnett (9:55.29)
- 23rd – William Nichols (10:28.85)

**Boys discus throw**

- 2nd – Patrick Adcock (153-04)

**Boys high jump**

- 12th – Nate Zills (6-00.00)

**Boys javelin throw**

- 14th – Ryan Skinner (139-09)
- 15th – Sawyer Trimble (137-07)

**Boys shot put**

- 12th – Patrick Adcock (44-08.00)

**Boys triple jump**

- 16th – Joshua Ellerbee (39-06.50)

- 11th – Girls 4x800 meter relay team (10:40.57)
- 11th – Boys 4x800 meter relay team (8:35.50)

**FAIRVIEW HIGH SCHOOL (5A)****Girls 300-meter hurdles**

- 21st – Allyson Hill (51.96)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 8th – Alex England (2:02.94)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 10th – Alex England (4:38.48)

**Boys 3200-meter run**

- 11th – Alex England (10:22.66)

**Boys discus throw**

- 23rd – Jayden Pineda (106-00)

**Girls discus throw**

- 2nd – Kabri Redding (114-02)
- 13th – Laci Segrest (87-03)

**Girls high jump**

- 5th – Kailyn Redding (5-00.00)
- 13th – Kabri Redding (4-10.00)

**Girls long jump**

- 18th – Allyson Hill (12-04.75)

**Girls shot put**

- 3rd – Laci Segrest (33-00.50)
- 19th – Kabri Redding (27-10.00)

**Girls triple jump**

- 16th – Allyson Hill (30-03.50)

**GOOD HOPE HIGH SCHOOL (4A)****Girls 200-meter dash**

- 13th – Bailey Keef (26.84)

**Girls 300-meter hurdles**

- 15th – Cadence Watson (51.89)

**Girls 400-meter dash**

- 8th – Bailey Keef (1:02.72)
- 12th – Bailey Tetro (1:03.56)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 14th – Drake Nichols (2:04.65)

**Girls 800-meter dash**

- 10th – Rudi Derrick (2:31.88)

**Girls 1600-meter run**

- 19th – Rudi Derrick (5:49.78)

**Girls High jump**

- 3rd – Cadence Watson (5-00.00)

**Girls javelin throw**

- 3rd – Addie Stripling (115-03)
- 6th – Macey Denton (108-03)

**Boys pole vault**

- 11th – Hank Hudson (10-06.00)

**Girls pole vault**

- 14th – Cadence Watson (7-06.00)
- 20th – Alexis Marshall (7-00.00)

**Girls shot put**

- 14th – Zoe Marks (29-04.75)

**Boys shot put**

- 4th – Colton Lindsey (45-03.50)

- 6th – Girls 4x400 meter relay team (4:21.04)

**HANCEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL (4A)****Boys 100-meter dash**

- 2nd – Zach Campbell (10.91)

**Boys 200-meter dash**

- 2nd – Zach Campbell (22.42)
- 20th – Marquies Leeth (23.95)

**Boys discus throw**

- 10th – Connor Pitts (120-05)
- 11th – LJ Smith (120-02)
- 17th – Eli Akin (114-10)

**Girls discus throw**

- 4th – Kate Sterling (98-08)

**Boys high jump**

- 3rd – Will Calvert (6-02.00)

**Boys triple jump**

- 18th – Brosnan Ward (37-11.00)

**WEST POINT HIGH SCHOOL (5A)****Girls 200-meter dash**

- 17th – Jaelyn Faulkner (27.36)
- 20th – Kaylee Faulkner (28.29)

**Boys 800-meter dash**

- 12th – Gabriel Laney (2:05.89)

**Boys 1600-meter run**

- 11th – Rene Moreno-Tovar (4:38.79)

**Boys 3200-meter run**

- 9th – Rene Moreno-Tovar (10:15.37)

**Boys discus throw**

- 1st – Aiden Dujoud (153-02)



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## COUNTY BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

# West Point fends off Fairview 5-4 to secure 5th straight county title

**Nick Griffin**

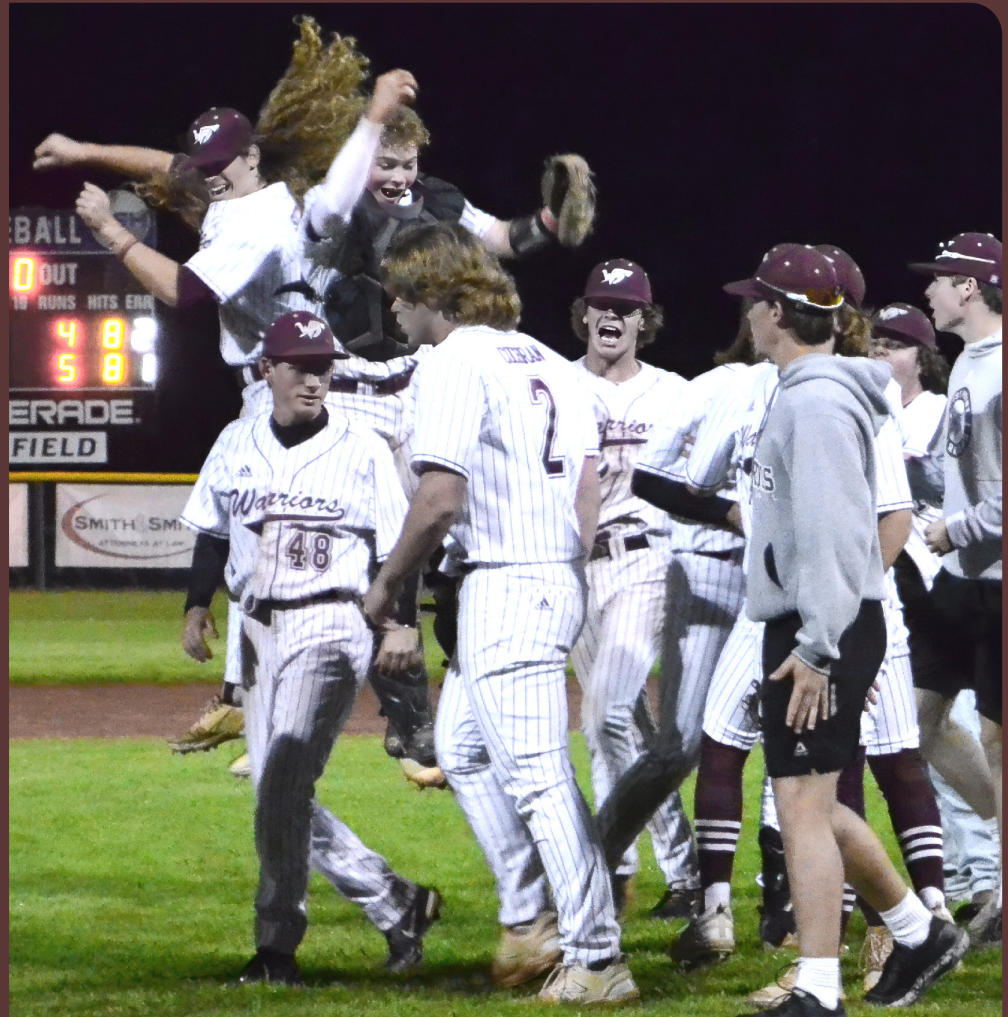
[nick@cullmantribune.com](mailto:nick@cullmantribune.com)

**BREMEN, Ala.** — For the fifth consecutive season, the West Point Warriors are Cullman County Tournament Champions and they had to hold off a late push from Fairview in the final frame of the championship game to secure this year's county title. The Aggies trailed 5-2 going into the top of the seventh and were able to cut the lead to 5-4 with a pair of hits but that was as much as they could chip away, and the Warriors held on to win it 5-4.

Brody Freeman got the start for West Point on the mound and earned the win after tossing 6.1 innings, allowing four runs on six hits and striking out eight batters. Freeman also added a pair of hits at the plate and earned Tournament MVP honors as well as this year's Cullman County Baseball Coaches Association Scholarship.

West Point fell behind 2-0 in the first two innings before pulling ahead later in the game and Warriors Head Coach Drew Bryson was proud of his guys for staying calm and focused after a slow start.

"We knew we were playing a good squad over there in Fairview and their guys are scrappy and they're going to compete very similar to ours and we didn't hit the panic button. They scratched two runs across, and they



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

**The West Point Warriors defeated Fairview 5-4 Monday night to capture this year's Cullman County Tournament Championship.**

earned them and did a good job of getting guys on, but our guys just did a good job of not getting into panic mode and doing what we do," Bryson said. "We got into some trouble early trying to run and being over aggressive on the bags and got ourselves thrown out but at the same time we didn't press. I didn't

feel like the guys were nervous and earlier in the season there have been times where we did get nervous and uptight, but I feel like tonight we stayed relaxed and just did what we needed to do to win. Hats off to them, it was a great baseball game all the way around."

The Warriors are returning

home with the county title for the fifth straight season and even though they didn't play a perfect game against the Aggies, Bryson was pleased to see his guys step up and make big plays in big moments.

"That's something that's hard to do. It's hard to be consistent year in and year out and this season we have »

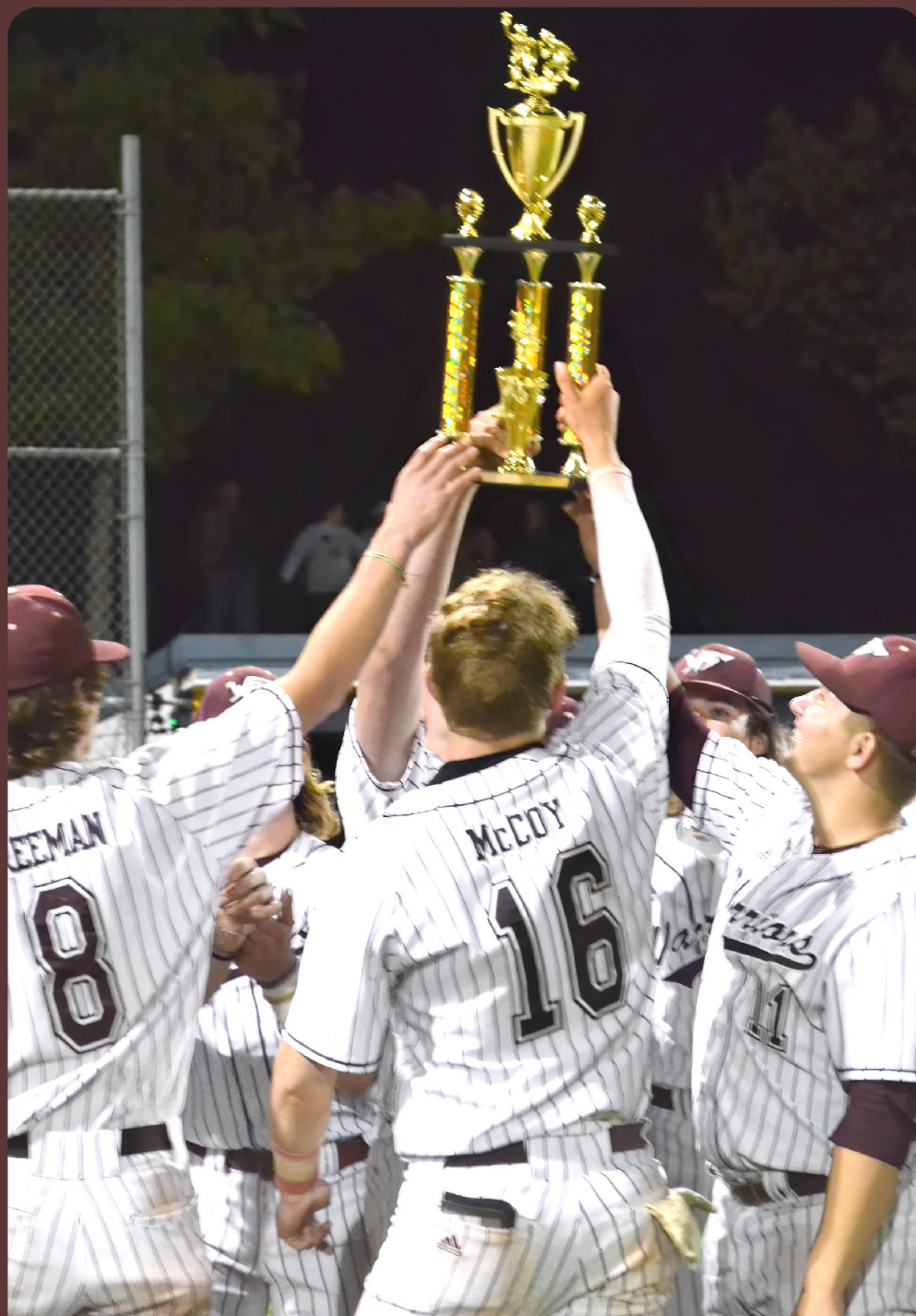


single to make it 2-0. Andrew Putman added a sacrifice fly on the first pitch he saw as the Warriors pushed their lead to 3-0.

Good Hope countered in the top of the third. Colten Whatley reached on an infield single, then Carter Naramore drew a one-out walk. After Sutter struck out Caden Drake, Russell Wooten reached on catcher's interference to load the bases for Eli Clements, who lined a bases-clearing triple to left field to tie the game up at three. The Warriors was the team that ended up breaking the tie in the bottom of the fifth. An error and a single had West Point in business early, then Brody Freeman scored on a passed ball to give them a 4-3 lead. They loaded the bases with one out, then Jay Lamar drew a bases-loaded walk to force home a run as West Point now had a 5-3 lead.

The Warriors broke the game wide open in their next at-bats. Andrew Putman drew a leadoff walk, then after Putman stole second, Brody Freeman reached on an infield single, putting runners on the corners. Putman scored on a Good Hope error to push their lead to 6-3. Back-to-back hit batters loaded the bases once again, then Philyaw brought home Freeman on an RBI infield single to make it 7-3. Lamar and Boston Freeman drew consecutive walks with the bases loaded as their lead was now at six at 9-3. Philyaw retired Good Hope in order in the top of the seventh to end the game as the Warriors moved on to the championship game with a 9-3 win over the Raiders.

Boston Freeman finished



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

with a hit and two RBIs for West Point. Lamar collected a pair of RBIs in the contest. Philyaw added a pair of hits and an RBI. Sutter posted a hit and an RBI as well. Putman added an RBI. Ashley ended up finishing with three hits, while Brody Freeman, J.D.

Cochran, and Colton McCoy each chipped in with a hit of their own. Sutter went five innings, gave up two earned runs, walked four and struck out eight. Cochran and Philyaw each pitched a scoreless inning for the Warriors.

For Good Hope, Clements

finished with a hit and three RBIs. Ayden Black added a pair of hits, while Whatley and Dakota Overton each collected a hit in the contest as well.

**Fairview 12 – Cold Springs 2 (Semifinals)**



Fairview struck first in their opening at-bats. Crimson Wright hit a leadoff single, then stole second and ended up scoring on a Cold Springs error to give the Aggies the early lead. Lucas West got hit by the pitch, then with one out, Gannon Black hit a two-run double to left field as that made it 3-0. Fairview added to their lead in the second. Caden Jennings hit a leadoff single, stole second and moved to third on a sacrifice bunt by Devyn Ellis. Wright drove him in on an RBI groundout to give Fairview a 4-0 lead.

Cold Springs pushed across a run in the top of the third inning. Brodee Bartlett hit a one-out single and later scored on a Fairview error to trim the deficit to three at 4-1. The Aggies answered right back in their half. Connor Scott hit a one-out single and Carson Jones drove him in with an RBI single to stretch their lead to 5-1.

Jones stole third and ended up scoring on a sacrifice fly by Caden Jennings to make it a 6-1 game. The Eagles got something going with two outs in the top of the fifth inning as Bartlett reached on an infield single, then Josh Winfrey punched an RBI double to left field to cut it to 6-2.

Fairview broke the game wide open in their half as Colton Jennings hit a two-run single to left field, then after a hit by pitch, Nicolas Gregory added a two-run double to center field to push their lead to 10-2. The Aggies ended things in the bottom of the sixth as Black and Daniel Hostetler scored on an Eagle error to give them the 12-2 win over Cold Springs. Fairview

will face off against West Point for the championship.

Jones finished with two hits and three RBIs for Fairview. Gregory (two hits), Black (one hit), and Caden Jennings (one hit) each added a pair of RBIs in the game. Wright and Colton Jennings each posted a hit and an RBI as well, while Scott chipped in with a pair of hits of his own. For Cold Springs, Winfrey finished with a pair of hits and an RBI. Bartlett added a pair of hits, while Cole Bales, Cody Smith, and Matt Williams each collected a hit as well.

Sammy Confer contributed to this article.



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## COUNTY SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

# West Point downs Holly Pond 14-8 to capture 9th consecutive county crown

**Nick Griffin**

[nick@cullmantribune.com](mailto:nick@cullmantribune.com)

**VINEMONT, Ala.** — After topping Vinemont and Good Hope Monday night to secure a spot in the county title game, the West Point Lady Warriors squared off against Holly Pond Tuesday night with this year's county championship on the line. The Lady Broncos jumped out to a 3-1 lead in the opening frame, but West Point maintained its focus and plated seven combined runs in the third and fourth innings to pull ahead 8-3 and the Lady Warriors continued to put runs on the board on their way to a 14-8 win over Holly Pond and their ninth consecutive county championship.

Macayla Wilkins scored on a sacrifice fly from Brinlee Phillips to give the Lady Warriors a 1-0 lead in the top of the first but the Lady Broncos answered in the bottom half of the inning. An error allowed Samantha Giles to score and tie things up at 1 and later in the inning, another West Point error allowed Madyson Rickman and Maycie Black to cross the plate, putting Holly Pond in front 3-1 going into the second.

After a scoreless second inning, the Lady Warriors started to get the bats going in the third. An RBI triple off the bat of Macie Brown trimmed the lead to 3-2 and Bethany Minck followed with an RBI double to tie the game at 3.



NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

**The West Point Lady Warriors defeated Holly Pond 14-8 Tuesday night to win their ninth consecutive Cullman County Championship.**

A few pitches later, Liberty Shadix drove in another run with a single into right field and West Point moved ahead 4-3. The Lady Warriors added to their lead in the fourth when Katie Yovino scored

on a wild pitch to make it a 5-3 game and Ella Minck scored on an error to make it 6-3. Phillips tacked on two more runs with an RBI single into center field and West Point took an 8-3 lead into the fifth

inning.

A 2-run single from Wilkins stretched the lead to 10-3 in the top of the fifth but the Lady Broncos were able to chip away a bit in the bottom half of the inning. An RBI »





NICK GRIFFIN/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

single by Maggie Nail drove in Black to make it a 10-4 game and Molly Neal scored on a fielder's choice to cut the lead to five going into the sixth.

West Point got those runs back and then some in the top of the sixth. Liberty Shadix scored on a wild pitch to give the Lady Warriors an 11-5 lead and Bailey Brock scored on a fielder's choice just a few pitches later to make it 12-5. Brown barreled up a 2-run double later in the inning to extend the lead to 14-5 and sent West Point to the bottom of the sixth with a 9-run advantage.

An RBI double from Rickman, an RBI single by Nail and a sacrifice fly RBI from Lexie Smith trimmed the lead to 14-8 going into the final

frame but that was as close as the Lady Broncos could get and West Point held on to claim its ninth consecutive county championship with a 14-8 win.

Kortni Baker earned the win in the circle for the Lady Warriors after allowing three runs (unearned) on five hits in three innings. Kara Jones tossed the other four innings for West Point, allowing five runs (three unearned) on five hits and striking out two.

At the plate, Phillips (one hit) and Brown (two hits) each posted three RBIs in the win and Wilkins (two hits) and Bethany Minck (one hit) each drove in a pair of runs as well.

Nail (one RBI), Rickman (one RBI) and Neal (one RBI) each finished with a pair of

hits for Holly Pond in the loss.

### 2023 ALL-COUNTY SOFTBALL TEAM

- Ciara Calvert, Cold Springs
- Isabella Spinks, Hanceville
- Arleigh Thomason, Vinemont
- Angela Harris, Vinemont
- Addi Phillips, Fairview
- Jaycee Aleman, Fairview
- Campbell Koch, Good Hope
- Lizzy Stead, Good Hope
- Molly Neal, Holly Pond
- Madyson Rickman, Holly Pond
- Maggie Nail, Holly Pond
- Bethany Minck, West Point
- Brinlee Phillips, West Point
- Macayla Wilkins, West Point

**Holly Pond 8 - Fairview 3**

### (Game 10)

Holly Pond and Fairview faced off against each other to start out Day two of the Cullman County Softball Tournament and the Lady Broncos struck first in their opening at-bats. Bai Widner drew a one-out walk, then she moved up to second on a passed ball.

Three pitches later, Madyson Rickman launched a two-run home run over the right field fence to give them a 2-0 lead. Holly Pond added to their lead in the top of the second as Ella Crider and Ellie Burks each scored on back-to-back Fairview errors to make it a 4-0 lead for the Lady Broncos. They made it 6-0 a pitch later as Aliyah Ryan and Samantha Giles each scored on another Lady Aggie »



error.

Maggie Nail scored on another Fairview error in the top of the third to push the Holly Pond lead to 7-0. The Lady Broncos added another run in the top of the fifth inning on an RBI groundout by Lexie Smith as that stretched their lead to 8-0.

The Lady Aggies got their offense going in the bottom of the sixth inning as Ayda Payne scored on a wild pitch, Allison Davis scored on a Holly Pond error, and Jordan Simmons lined an RBI triple to left field to cut it to 8-3. Holly Pond didn't allow Fairview to cut into their lead any more after that as they would go on to knock off the Lady Aggies 8-3.

Rickman finished with a hit

and two RBIs for Holly Pond, while Smith pitched in with an RBI of her own. All but four Lady Bronco players scored a run in the contest. Smith and Nail combined to allow just one hit and two earned runs; they walked nine and struck out nine. Simmons finished with the only hit and RBI for Fairview.

#### **Holly Pond 7 – Good Hope 4 (Game 11)**

After a scoreless first inning, Good Hope put up the first runs of the game in the bottom of the second inning. Molly Benefield scored on a Holly Pond error, then Addyson Burgess scored on a passed ball two pitches later to give the Lady Raiders a 2-0 lead. Holly Pond countered in the

top of the third as they put up their first run of the game with two outs as Giles scored on a Good Hope error to cut it to 2-1, then Nail's two-run triple to center field gave the Lady Broncos a 3-2 lead.

Giles stole home with two outs in the top of the fifth as Holly Pond now had a 4-2 lead and they added to their lead in the sixth. Nail hit a leadoff double on the first pitch, then Molly Neal did the same in her at-bat as her RBI double brought home Nail to help increase their lead to 5-2.

Ryan later added a two-out RBI single to left field to make it a 6-2 game. The Lady Raiders cut into the deficit in their half as Benefield and Jolee McHan each scored on a passed ball to make it

a two-run game, but Holly Pond would put up a run in the top of the seventh on an RBI single by Nail. The Lady Broncos would hold Good Hope scoreless in their final at-bats as they went on to defeat the Lady Raiders 7-4 and move on to the championship game against West Point.

Nail finished with three hits and three RBIs for Holly Pond. Ryan added a pair of hits and an RBI, while Neal chipped in with a hit and an RBI of her own. For Good Hope, Lay finished with a pair of hits, while Natalie Miller, Burgess, and McHan each added a hit of their own in the contest.

**Sammy Confer contributed to this article.**

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## PREP SPORTS

# 'I want to continue to be an example for others'

## Good Hope's Ivey Maddox talks junior year

**Sammy Confer**

sammy@cullmantribune.com

**GOOD HOPE, Ala.** — The past school year has been another great one for Good Hope athletics and one its leaders, Raider volleyball and basketball standout Ivey Maddox, shared some of her favorite experiences from her junior seasons. Her junior year began with volleyball in the fall and after putting together a run to the state tournament in 2021, Maddox and her team were anxious to get back on the court in 2022.

"It felt surreal my 10th grade year going to the Elite Eight because it hadn't been done in a while and it was my first time going to the volleyball regional tournament. I learned you have to be the best to beat the best, you have to come in prepared, and you have to limit mistakes. This past season, it was still very special, especially with the seniors. I learned new atmospheres and once you get to the regional tournament, you have to be all in," Maddox said. "It was really special playing with this team, especially the five seniors. We had so much fun this past season. They taught me »



**Good Hope's Ivey Maddox**

MARTHA NEEDHAM/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE



patience, self-control, and they always lifted me up."

Maddox has played for coach Natasha Holder for four years now and talked about what she has learned from her so far. She played with some great seniors this past season and talked about playing with them, plus some great memories they made together, and what it was like playing alongside Bailey Keef for five years.

"She's very supportive and is always working to get us to be our best. She's taught me discipline and to be mentally tough when faced with adversity. She has helped me turn into a leader for the team," Maddox said. "They each brought something special to the team, whether it was uplifting someone, someone to look up to, or just needing a friend. I will definitely miss how easily we all got along on and off the floor. There was never a dull moment. Our best memories probably would be playing at the beach this past season, beating Priceville and getting ranked before post-season. My favorite game playing with them would have to be the Priceville game. We had so much energy and everyone played so well."

She added, "But going to Regionals with your team and getting to stay in the hotel with them, there is nothing like it. You all create such strong bonds with each other that will never fade away. I will definitely remember all the times we would laugh and cut up. No matter what we were doing, something was

always funny. I'll definitely remember Bailey Keef and her dedication and determination to the team and her teammates. I really looked up to her the most."

"I played volleyball with her since the 7th grade. I admired how respectful and thoughtful she was. She never gave up on any play, game, or practice. She was a strong competitor and hated to lose, just like me. That's why I loved playing with her so much. She taught me how to be a leader, how to compose myself on the floor, to be mentally tough, and stand up for myself. She never doubted me and was by my side through everything."

Maddox talked about what will make this team special to watch next season and the growth she saw from the younger players.

"It's going to be special, considering me, Emma, and Charly will be seniors next year. We have younger girls that will have to step up and fill in shoes to make this season happen. I'm really excited to see what we do this upcoming season," she said. "They really developed a lot of character and found their identity on the volleyball court, even the JV. Some of them got moved up to varsity at the end of last season. I'm not worried about them adjusting because I believe they will be ready for the challenge."

The basketball team had another amazing season too, finishing 31-3, adding another county and area title to their trophy case and made it to the



MARTHA NEEDHAM/THE CULLMAN TRIBUNE

Sweet 16 for the third straight season. Maddox talked about that season and what all she learned.

"I look forward to the postseason every year. There is nothing like playing at Wallace and the atmosphere it has brought. The sweet 16 games we have played in these past few years have always been battles with the other team. Even though it is great to get to that spot, I know our team is capable of going farther," she said. "I've learned these past few years that if you want something bad enough, you have to put in the work to get there.

You can't control how you play every game, but you can always control your effort and attitude. My main takeaway from these past seasons is to not take any of it for granted and to always play like it's your last game, because you never know when it could be."

Maddox played with an incredible group of girls these past several seasons and has been blessed playing for coach Justin Aby, coach Holder, and coach Nina Moss so far.

"I've played with all these girls since the seventh grade and it's just a great group of girls. They are all »



hard-working and there's never a dull moment with them. It's been so fun progressing and making statements with this team. I've played with Heather and Bailey since the fifth grade, and I would pick them two over anyone. The connection not only with them, but the whole team, is just really special," she said. "It's been a learning experience for sure. They have all taught me several ways to become a better player and have done so much for me, whether it's unlocking the gym, getting my name out there, or just being there for me when I needed someone. It's very obvious they just want what's best for each of us. They each bring something different to the program and I'm very thankful for their dedication."

Maddox played with some great seniors the past two years, and she talked about what it was like playing with them.

"I always looked up to the seniors I played with, from my first year on varsity to now about to be a senior. I can't even begin to describe all the ways each of them have impacted me these past few years. Rudi has always been by my side since the beginning and she always let me know I was good enough and that I could do anything, no matter how young I was or what other people said. I played with her for five years and it's going to be very different without her. She has really left an impact on me," she said. "I played volleyball with Bailey for six years and

basketball for one. She was the most uplifting and driven person I've ever met. She may not have played a lot this season, but she impacted the team just as much as anyone else."

She added, "Playing with Rudi and Bailey, I will always remember their positive attitudes and that they never backed down from anything. They always believed there was a way even when it didn't look like it. The season before, I was very close with Kyndall, Desire, and Renee. They drove me around everywhere, bought me food, and made sure I was okay after games and practices. I especially had a connection with Kyndall, considering she is my first cousin. We just knew each other better than anyone. Renee and Desire were my best friends. They always made me laugh and always told me I was the best, which is why I am so confident in myself today. I'm so grateful I got to play with them because they helped me grow since I was younger."

Maddox has gotten so many awards during her time on varsity and got a huge accomplishment last season as she surpassed the 2,000-point plateau. She talked about those accomplishments, plus how much she has seen her game continue to grow throughout the years, and what she will work on to get ready for her senior year.

"God has really just blessed me with the ability to play this sport and accomplish all these things, including getting 2,000 points. It wouldn't have

been possible without Him, my teammates, and coaches. With one more year to go, I'm so thankful I've surpassed that goal. I hope to accomplish even more goals and I know that not only I, but our team will do big things once again," she said. "I've definitely gained a lot more confidence on the floor and being consistent with each game. I hope to improve on the skills that I lacked this past year. If a stat was low, I hope to get it higher this next season, and I want to continue to be an example for others and someone to look up to."

Maddox talked about her goals and the team goals, what has made this team special to watch over the past three years, and what will make them special to watch this upcoming season.

"Individually, all I really want is a state championship and to play at the next level. Our only team goal is a state championship," she said. "What has made this team special to watch over the past three seasons is that we have played at this level since a young age and have just really connected on the court. We don't care who scores the most points, we aren't selfish. We just want to see each other succeed so in the end; we can reach the ultimate goal. What will be special about this next season is the fact that it's our last season at Good Hope playing together, and we will be doing a lot of our last things together. We've really built something amazing over these past few

years and I know next season will be the best one yet."

Maddox has been blessed to play alongside some great teammates over her five years on varsity and talked about her role models growing up, plus the best advice that she's ever been given.

"It's been amazing. We've grown together and become best friends on and off the court. I would choose this team over anyone in the world. It really is something special, from where we've started to now. I wouldn't trade it for anything. We progressed very quickly from the first season to the second, and from there, I think we just kept on putting goals on top of goals and being determined to reach them," she said.

"My role models growing up were definitely my brother and sister, Drew and Kaylee, because I watched them play growing up and learned a lot from them and their work ethics. My dad, Jody, was another one of my role models. He's been my coach since I started playing in the 3rd grade. He has taught me everything I know about the game, and I would not be the player I am today without him."

She added, "My mom has always told me that if I go into a game and don't mess up, I wasn't giving 100%, so she always tells me, 'You better mess up,' before any game, practice, or camp. That has always shown me that it's okay to make mistakes because that's how you get better and grow."



## SENIOR LIVING

# Driving in your golden years

The challenges pile up, but you can still remain independent

**B**eing able to drive is a key element in maintaining self-sufficiency as we age. You want to be able to visit friends, pop in at the market, pick up prescriptions and take part in social gatherings — all of which are critical to our larger well being.

But among the things that change with age is the experience we have out on the road. It becomes harder to see and hear things clearly, in some cases. It may become more difficult to physically handle operating the vehicle. Memory

issues can lead to confusion about the routes there and back home.

### Why it's harder

Statistics show that older drivers are more apt to commit traffic violations and to get into an accident than those in middle age. Decreased vision, slower reflexes and impaired hearing are often to blame, according to experts. Issues with coordination and flexibility may play a role.

Acknowledge and accept these limitations, then keep a close eye on how you're doing behind the wheel. Regular exercise can help ensure that you remain strong and flexible enough to drive.

### Safety tips

Visit the doctor as scheduled to maintain both your good health and to monitor key stats that govern your ability to drive. If you wear corrective lenses, make sure the prescription is current and still providing the best possible sightline. Hearing should be regularly checked too; those with hearing aids should always wear them when operating a vehicle. Make sure all of your safety equipment is operational, including windshield wipers, headlights, taillights and mirrors. Turn the lights up in your instrument panel to make it easier to see.

### When to stop

Oftentimes, we know when

it's time to give up the keys, despite how hard that can be.

Even with all of these elements in place, seniors may simply lose too much cognitive or physical ability to manage the stress and complexity of driving — in particular in big-city traffic. If friends or family express concerns, understand that it's because they love you.

There's no shame in taking responsibility for the safety of yourself and other drivers. Besides, there are some upsides to life without a vehicle: You no longer have to pay a car note, insurance premium or maintenance bills. And walking is one of the very best forms of exercise for seniors.

## SENIOR LIVING

# Seniors and the sun

Older adults can sometimes be more likely to develop skin cancer

**A**s seniors live longer than ever, their exposure to the sun has only lengthened. So has the incidents of melanoma or skin cancer. But protecting yourself from this everyday danger often comes down to a little preparation before heading out to that backyard barbecue or beach day.

### Inside the numbers

The Centers for Disease Control found that only 15% of seniors

regularly used recommended forms of skin protection. Men were more apt to wear long pants, while women stayed in the shade. Sunburn rates have soared among the senior population, coming in at nearly double the national average. Sunburn, in fact, was reported across all ethnic and racial groups in the CDC's study.

### Helpful products

Sunscreen is always recommended, but these products are not all alike. Look for lotions with a sun-protection factor (or SPF) of 30 or more. They should also protect you from both UVA and UVB rays. Apply sunscreen roughly half an hour before you expect to be out in the sun, and then reapply

throughout the day as pool water, sweat or ocean currents wash it away.

### Dressing for it

Dermatologists don't simply recommend sunscreen. They also stress covering up as much as is possible — in particular for those who are exposed to sun light all day. Seniors should choose lightweight, light-colored fabrics that are both comfortable and cool. Purchase a wide-brimmed hat as well, since it will provide shade for your face and scalp. As many as 20% of cataracts are caused by extended exposure to UV rays, according to the National Institutes of Health. So, don't forget some properly rated sunglasses.

### Other important tips

Try to schedule your time in the sun for mornings and afternoons. The sun is at its most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when it's extraordinarily easy to overheat or get a sunburn. Seek out shade, either under a tree or tent, in order to lower the risks. Take breaks while doing yard work or golfing and find a covered area to rest. Immediately find a cool place if you begin to experience heat stress symptoms like dizziness, extreme fatigue, nausea, headaches and cramps. Seek immediate attention from a health-care professional if someone around you begins to show signs of mental confusion, high heart rate and flushed skin.



# 'God has a plan for you in His life'

## Good Hope students establish Good Hope Daughters of Christ



RUDI DERRICK

### Good Hope Daughters of Christ

#### Sammy Confer

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**GOOD HOPE, Ala.** — An all-girls Bible study group led by Good Hope High School students Rudi Derrick, Maddie McKenney, Chloe Eisner and Reese Fox called Good Hope Daughters of Christ has been growing at Good Hope

High School and the group's founders are excited to share the story of how it came to be.

"I'd been thinking about it since December, and I finally got the courage to ask Dr. John Hood if we could have it. He agreed on it and I didn't want to not listen to the Holy Spirit telling me, 'Keep pushing.' I was really scared to ask, but

we got the green light. We do it before school," Derrick said. "We started the group in January, and we normally have them on Friday mornings before school. I just wanted something that girls would be in, that we can get close to, we can get more personal in a girls' group. We can talk about anything we need to, and I feel like people

would be more comfortable when it's just girls. I give myself no credit at all. It's all God. He's so great and I just really felt in my heart that it was a turning of the page. God was speaking to me, like, 'Start this in your school.' God used me to do this. When I finally got the courage to ask permission, I immediately felt peace after. This »



was clearly God telling me to step out of my comfort zone and try to spread His word. None of this glory goes to me. It's all God's glory."

"Being able to participate, I'd been able to attend our bible studies with coach Drew Adams. With Rudi, it's with girls and it's also with peers. It's easier to relate to somebody that is your peer and talk about things that are going on in our society, so we can relate." McKenney said. "I think Rudi's an inspiration to other girls to step out of their comfort zone, be bold and brave, seek God, and try to do what He tells you because God has a plan for you in His life. You just need to always listen to Him because He'll tell you exactly what you need to do."

"I feel like it's easier to connect with people and you can share your testimony with those people." Eisner said. "Even if Rudi doesn't want to give herself credit, we do give her credit for stepping out and having the courage to do this because God is using her and I'm glad that she's letting Him use her."

"I think it's easier when it's with one of your peers and I like it better when it's all girls because you can relate and it's more comfortable with everybody," Fox said. "We have been studying about women in the Bible, so you can also learn from them."

They talked about the attendance of this group, how it has continued to grow, and they hope that it will continue to grow over the years.

"There was five people the first time we met, but we have grown since then. The most we've had was 15, so it's really good because I didn't know how many people would show up.

We made an Instagram page, and I was just trying to get it out there, but we have grown. It's been exciting and we've even gotten middle schoolers to come now. We've got three middle schoolers, so it's really fun. I enjoy it." Derrick said. "I do lead the group, but I really like it when people jump in and help speak. I know Maddie has spoken a few times, so has Chloe and Reese. I want it to be an open forum. I might say what verses we're in, but people can talk when they want to. We're in there as a group and we're just trying to be a small group of girls just talking."

She added, "I hope that it continues to grow. Just to have that group, it's good for the freshman to come, whether they are believers or not. We want people to hear the Gospel just to have a group to go to where it's comfortable, so I really hope it continues. It's great to see this group continue to grow. The fact that people want to hear about God, they want to build a relationship with Him. I feel like that's the most important thing is having a relationship with God. It really makes me happy to see new girls because someone told them about it or they saw it and they do want to grow their relationship with God, plus have Christian friends. One of the hardest things out there is spreading the Gospel because you get scared. It says in the Bible, 'Make fishers of men' and they grow to be disciples. It can be hard, but when you have a group of people that you know that has the same beliefs as you, you get more comfortable."

"I'm very hopeful that the group will continue to grow after we graduate. God sees us and sees what we're doing

in Good Hope, and I pray about it. I hope that girls find Jesus in our group. I hope they become saved, and I really believe that God will allow this to continue and develop over the years," Derrick continued. "We see all over the world right now: Revival. I just feel like it's crazy to think like when we started this group, Revival started spreading. I believe there will be a Revival in our school because it's here and open to anybody that wants to come."

"It's good that we're going to the younger people because once we graduate, they can continue it and keep it going." Eisner said. "You can all put in your input in how you received it, and you can get a better understanding of it. In the Bible, it talks about how you surround yourself with other Christians and I think this is a really good way to do that. The younger girls can bring their friends and they can get to know the upperclassmen. I also think that this is going to help bring God back into our schools. This is a really good way because it starts before school."

"It's also good to have a good example like Rudi to be able to come in to girls because it's not always easy to spread God's word to other people. It's easy to get degraded because you're a Christian, so it takes a lot of courage for Rudi to do this, and I really appreciate that. I'm glad that she's able to help spread God's word to people in our grade and in our school." McKenney said. "It's good to be a light in a lost and dying world."

"I think it's good to make connections because people who may not be as comfortable as you are look up to you and they can learn from you," Fox said. "Especially in this

generation, it's hard following God, so be able to help others and spread the Gospel can help a bunch of people."

They gave some advice to those girls that may be nervous about joining the group.

"You're going to have to step out. I feel like that's how life in general is. It's hard to break boundaries and make yourself comfortable in situations, but once you do, it can calm your nerves. You can also build relationships," Derrick said. "Some of these girls might be freshman and they might not have many friends, but they can learn from the upperclassmen, and it can calm them down in high school in general to know some other girls that walk the high school with them."

"It's like being an athlete, in the band, or in any other club. When you step out and meet new people, you're getting involved in new things and it's a great opportunity to expand who you are and your knowledge," McKenney said. "It's not even having older girls. It's having Christian friends and to have people around you that are Christians, it helps you in your faith. They can pray for you when you're going through tough situations. It's someone that you can always lean on and just know that they have faith in you and they're from God."

"If you start to step out and start going, then your other friends can start coming and that'll help build a new group too," Eisner said.

"It's hard to get out of your comfort zone, but once you do, you can meet new people," Fox said. "They can look up to you and it can help them as well."

The girls think that this group will definitely be something that will change these young girls' lives. »



"I hope and pray that it does change girls' lives. We did a sermon series of women in the Bible and there's a lot to learn from them. Esther was so favorable, and God just shined her light on her. She was chosen out of all the other women in the castle. We can definitely all learn from them. The Word is the Word of Life. It's Jesus's word. I feel like we can all learn something from the Bible, and I do think that it will help girls."

"I think it's a first step for girls because knowing Jesus is something you do by yourself. Other people can guide you and plant that seed, but you have to read your Bible. You have to pray to God because only you and God truly know what's in your heart," McKenney said. "All we can do is pray for you and tell you the Word of God, but they have to take it upon

themselves to seek God."

"I think this group is really good, encouraging girls and this will hold you accountable. Having Christian friends in this group is only going to help them in their faith too," Eisner said.

"I have a younger sister in middle school, and I hope that she, along with her friends, will start coming and they want to encourage and help keep this group growing. It's a really good thing to have in our school."

"The Bible commands us to shine our light onto others, so it helps other people too. We need to always encourage others and let them know what you know," Fox said. "Even if they don't know anything, just always encourage them and help them along the way."

The girls talked a little bit about how they came up with the name, plus how the younger

girls would go about joining the group.

"We're God's children, so we're daughters of Christ," Eisner said. "That's why we named it Good Hope Daughters of Christ."

"It kind of helps the younger girls that like even if you don't have a father figure in your life, He is your Godly father. He's always going to be there, and you can always go to Him," Fox said. "We're consistent about where we meet, so even if you miss a week, you can still come next week and you're always able to join. We will welcome you."

"With Good Hope Daughters of Christ, I just feel like you feel so much peace knowing that you have the Lord in Heaven, the Father. You're protected. We're daughters of His creation. We were created

by Him in His image," Derrick said.

"One young girl actually messaged me on Facebook about it and her mom messaged me. I was like, 'Okay, you can come and tell your middle school friends if they want to come.' Three middle schoolers have come, and I was telling them to let all of their friends know about it. I just post about it and if I see a middle schooler, I invite them and help spread the Gospel as much as possible.

"Just to know that middle schoolers can come and hear the Gospel once a week, I hope it will help plant a seed and realize, 'I should do this on my own time. I should build a relationship with God.' As long as you're putting in the effort to listen to God's word, you're doing something right."

"We're consistent »

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about where we meet. It's in the Data room at 7:30," McKenney said. "If any middle schooler or anybody wants to know, we meet in the Data room at 7:30 on whatever day Rudi decides to do it on."

Reese, Chloe, and Maddie talk about how happy to see Rudi get this group started.

"I think it's great because not a lot of people today are able to step out of their comfort zone, especially in this generation because it's hard to be a Christian today," Fox said. "To be able to wake up every Friday and get your morning started with the Gospel and being

surrounded by other Christian girls, it's really amazing."

"With her being an athlete, little girls already do look up to her and want to be like her. With her also being a Christian, that's kind of like using her platform and her starting this just really says a lot," Eisner said.

"The little girls are going to start coming and the group's going to continue to grow."

"Rudi is not only the leader of Good Hope Daughters of Christ, she's one of my best friends. She's just a great Christian friend to have. It's just awesome to know that I can

come talk to her about God and other situations that are going on in my life," McKenney said.

"I can always lean on her and it's amazing to see her try to

reach more people, specifically other women. It's so amazing to see someone so bold to really step out of their comfort zone and spread God's word."



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# 2023 COUNTY PARKS & REC CALENDAR

## MAY - JULY 2023

- May 6 - Stony Lonesome Night Ride
- May 6 - ABA Barrel Race - Ag Center
- May 13 - ASDR (Dog Show) - Ag Center
- May 13 - Stony Lonesome 5K Mud Run
- May 20 - Horse Show - Ag Center
- May 27 - Memorial Day Festival - Smith Lake Park
- May 27 - Stony Lonesome Night Ride
- June 10 - Stony Lonesome Night Ride
- June 17 - Sportsman Lake Summer Yard Sale
- June 22-24 - Kiko Goat Association - Ag Center
- June 24 - Stony Lonesome Night Ride
- June 30 -August 1- Firecracker Futurity Livestock Show - Ag Center
- July 4 - Firework Festival - Smith Lake Park
- July 8 - Stony Lonesome Night Ride
- July 8 - XMC- Ag Center
- July 22 - XMC - Ag Center
- July 29 - Stony Lonesome 24-Hour Night Ride

\*DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE



CULLMAN COUNTY COMMISSION 256-775-4878 | CULLMAN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 256-775-4696 | SPORTSMAN LAKE PARK 256-734-3052 | SMITH LAKE PARK 256-739-2916 | STONY LONESOME 256-287-1183 | CULLMAN AG CENTER 256-739-4959  
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