

CULLMAN AREA



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
& VISITOR CENTER

Official Newsletter

Eyes of [www.cullmanchamber.org](http://www.cullmanchamber.org)

**PROGRESS**

Serving the Community Since 1943

Serving:  
BAILEYTON  
COLONY  
CULLMAN  
DODGE CITY  
FAIRVIEW  
GARDEN CITY  
GOOD HOPE  
HANCEVILLE  
HOLLY POND  
SOUTH VINEMONT  
WEST POINT

## Gaga for the new lady - part 2

If you missed last month's article, "Gaga for the New Lady", then you might want to visit the Cullman Times' web page to get yourself up to speed. I talked about how, with the right tools, your company or organization can change their culture in a relatively short amount of time. Culture is the collection of values, attitudes, beliefs, customs and languages of your company. It is what gives your organization its unique flavor. I have been asked by many, "How do I change the climate and direction of my business?" Below you will find a few of the steps I have taken to change company culture.

### 1. FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT THE CULTURE TO BE

Rather than wasting a lot of time trying to analyze your current culture, try to figure out, visualize and then create a roadmap of where you want your company to go. It is very important to get your key people on board with your plans so they can help you drive your vision throughout the entire organization.

### 2. DON'T LET THE EXISTING CULTURE STIFLE YOU

You need to be aware that the current culture has a great deal of influence over what everyone considers permissible and



**LEAH BOLIN**  
CHAMBER PRESIDENT

acceptable. Don't let the existing culture dictate the terms and conditions of how any culture change will be carried out, nor what the culture may eventually become. You need to be able to "break the chains that bind" and create an environment that is best for you and your company.

### 3. DON'T DO IT ALL YOURSELF

If you think that you can bring about this culture change alone, or with help from one or two others, you're kidding yourself. Instead, you need to surround yourself with a sizeable core group of strong supporters. These people have to be talented and tough-minded allies who will stand strong with you in the face of unpopularity, alienation and opposition. Choose them carefully — they can be internal executives as well as "new blood" from the outside.

### 4. MAKE NEEDED STRUCTURAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

If you want to create a new culture, your employees need to see concrete changes in the structure as well as in the administrative practices of your organization. They need to see something better, something that enhances the job environment and the company as a whole. You may have to take small steps in the beginning to complete this transformation, but once you gain the buy-in of your employees, you will be able to accelerate the process.

### 5. HIRE AND RETAIN PEOPLE WHO WELCOME CHANGE

It is very important to hire people who are open to change and who bring to your company a new way of thinking and working. Remember the old axiom, "nothing is as permanent as change."

### 6. REWARD THE BEHAVIORS YOU WANT

First of all, make it very clear to your employees how you want them to behave in the new culture. Then, restructure the rewards and sanctions so that they are consistent with the new company values, attitudes and goals. Only those employees who contribute to the new culture should receive special mon-

Please see **GAGA** Page 4

## 2015 Cullman Area Tourism & Community Improvement awards



Hospitality Volunteer of the Year was given to Rebecca Branch - Christmas in Cullman/Pilot Club. The award recognizes any hospitality industry volunteer (i.e. entertainment venues, museums, and festival and event volunteers) who has made an outstanding contribution.

The 2015 Cullman Area Tourism & Community Improvement awards were presented on Thursday, May 14, 2015 at Stone Bridge Farms. The event consisted of a bountiful breakfast buffet with 14 total tourism awards and 6 annual community improvement awards handed out.

The guest speaker was

Tami Reist, President/CEO of Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association, and the theme was the Year of Alabama BBQ with several interesting elements added in décor and scenery, including a watermelon carved into a pig. The ceremony celebrated the excellence of those in the tourism industry and recognized their efforts.

**See Page 2 & 3 for all the award winners**

## Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 1104, Cullman, AL 35056-1104 | 256-734-0454 | F: 256-737-7443 | [info@cullmanchamber.org](mailto:info@cullmanchamber.org)

[www.cullmanchamber.org](http://www.cullmanchamber.org) | [www.visitcullman.org](http://www.visitcullman.org)



The 2015 Cullman Area Tourism Award Winners are...

The Business Awards



Spirit of Cullman Award was given to Cullman Rest Area. The award recognizes an outstanding tourism or hospitality related business or organization that provides excellent service, exemplifies innovation and causes our region to shine.



Near Nature, Near Perfect Award was given to Cullman Veterans Memorial Park. The award recognizes a business, organization, community or outdoor recreation area that has developed a tourism product/service that best demonstrates the ecological, cultural or historic assets of the region.



Exceptional Festival or Event Award was given to the Cullman County Fair. The award recognizes a festival or event that attracts visitors as well as locals, generates regional and/or state media attention and positively promotes the Cullman area.



Best Attraction Award was given to The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The award recognizes a regional attraction, including museums, performing arts, parks, amusement parks, etc., which attracts visitors and contributes to an outstanding tourism experience.



Rockin' Retailer was given to Three Pears Shoe Outlet. The award recognizes a retailer that provides an outstanding shopping experience for visitors.



Extraordinary Everyday Eatery was given to Johnny's Bar-B-Q. The award recognizes a restaurant offering an atmosphere that provides an outstanding experience for visitors.

Community Improvement Awards

Best Landscaping - Small  
Marx Optical

Best Curb Appeal  
Cullman County Museum

Best New Construction  
Wallace State School of Nursing  
and Center for Science

Building a Sense of Community  
Sportsman Lake Park  
Community Improvement photos  
will be published in July's issue of  
the Eyes of Progress Newsletter.

Best Landscaping - Large  
Webb Wheel Aftermarket

Best Restoration  
Coldwell Banker Hill Real Estate



# The 2015 Cullman Area Tourism Award Winners are...

## The Individual Service Awards



The Silver Spoon Award was given to Preston Wiley - Chick-fil-A. The award recognizes consistent superior service by a restaurant or food service employee.



Savvy Retail Sales Associate Award was given to Jennifer Bennett - Jennifer's Treasures. The award recognizes excellent customer service from a retail sales associate who has first contact with the public.



Superior Service Award was given to Amber Strawbridge - Hampton Inn. The award recognizes excellent customer service by an individual who has first contact with the public. Front desk personnel, concierges and all other guest service employees qualify.



Heart of the House Award was given to Lisa Hall - TP Country Club. The award recognizes an outstanding individual who works behind the scenes to keep their institution, organization or business operating smoothly, creating a superior experience for the public.



Peggy Lowery, left, with Hampton Inn was awarded The White Glove Award. The award recognizes exceptional service from an individual hotel housekeeping staff member.



Rising Star Award was given to Doug Davenport - Cullman County Parks & Rec. The award recognizes an up and coming leader for their exceptional efforts to serve and enhance the experience of the public. Those individuals who have been in the tourism industry for five years or less qualify.



Tourism Professional of the Year Award was given to Shane Quick of Rock the South/Premier Productions. The award recognizes a person who has made a significant contribution to the tourism industry through more than five years or more of innovation, inspiration and industry leadership. Accepting the award on behalf of Quick is Krista DeBruhl.



# GAGA

## FROM PAGE 1

etary payoffs (e.g., pay increase, bonuses and larger budgets) as well as non-monetary (e.g., recognition, favored projects, more of your attention). Make it uncomfortable for those employees who persist in hanging on to the old behaviors that you're trying to extinguish.

### 7. NEVER STOP COMMUNICATING

We warn you now — your change effort will inevitably fail if you continue to rely solely on your normal standard communication processes. The new culture must be talked up and sold on every possible occasion: in meetings, emails, company publications and during everyday conversations. It's imperative that your employees understand the rationale for the culture change, what's down the road for them, how it will affect them personally, and what role they're expected to play in the future.

### 8. BE A ROLE MODEL

You need to be constantly aware that you, as the leader of your company, set the tone for the entire organiza-

tion. Remember that you are always on display, and people are looking to you for guidance. Make sure your attitudes and actions serve as an example for your employees as they struggle to change their own attitudes and actions.

### 9. STRIVE FOR QUICK RESULTS

Quick results are more important than you think. The culture change needs to produce tangible improvements in productivity, quality, increased market share, shorter manufacturing time and greater sales, for instance. Intangibles such as increased morale, employee job satisfaction and trust levels are insufficient. You must have quick financial victories to squelch the anti-change folks.

There will be challenges. I have experienced those first-hand. But as our first chamber president, Raymond Yost once said, "We can change, or we can rot and decay." Success is a choice. If Lady Gaga can climb every mountain, so can you!

*Ken Wexley and Doug Strouse*



## Free Estate Planning Workshop

The Workshop will cover frequently asked questions and misconceptions on: What Happens When . . . Covering Wills & Trusts, Medical Directives, Asset Protection, Nursing Home Issues & Medicaid Qualification

# C. Blake West

## Estate and Medicaid Planning for Regular People

**Thursday June 11th at 5:30 PM**

Call for other available dates  
Cullman Chamber of Commerce  
301 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave SW Cullman, AL 35055

1701 Main Ave SW #5  
Cullman, AL 35055

Seating is limited. Reservations are required.

Contact: Whitney Thomas, Client Services  
Direct dial 256-727-8657 or  
whitney.blakewestlaw@gmail.com

(256) 734-0026  
www.cblakewestlaw.com



## 2014-15 LEADERSHIP CULLMAN COUNTY GRADUATION

The 2014-15 Leadership Cullman County class graduated on May 18, 2015 at TP Country Club. Leadership Cullman County begins in September with an opening retreat followed by eight monthly meetings. Each of the day-long monthly meetings examined a different issue such as education, local government, state government, health care, economic development, human services, criminal justice, agriculture, and quality of life. The distinguished program has over 300 graduates and is designed to identify, prepare and build upon leadership resources within Cullman County by bringing leaders together to discuss the present and future direction of our county and to prepare them for greater involvement through volunteer roles in the community. Congratulations to this year's class for their accomplishments!

**RANDY EARNEST - Chick-fil-A**

**MATT GENTRY - Cullman  
County Sheriff**

**NATALIE GODWIN - Wallace  
State Community College**

**DEREK GOSSETT - REHAU  
Construction**

**ASHLEY GRAVES - Cullman  
County Economic Development**

**BEN HARRISON - Cullman  
Regional Airport**

**BETH KIBLER - Jim 'N Nick's  
Community Bar-B-Q**

**BOBBY MORRIS - Cullman  
Regional Medical Center**

**ALEXES MURILLO - Traditions  
Bank**

**JEREMIAH NOLEN - Regions  
Bank**

**CRAIG ROSS - Cullman  
County Schools**

**STEFANI SHADOWENS -  
Shirley Quattlebaum State Farm**

**CECELIA SMITH - Cullman  
Area Chamber of Commerce &  
Visitor Center**

**BRANDON SNIDER - Willow  
Bend Mortgage**

**JEFFREY TAFFAR - Wells Fargo  
Bank**

**BLINDA WALKER - American  
Proteins, Inc.**

**CHARLES F. (RICK) WHITE -  
Retired - Gentiva Home Health**

The Chamber is now seeking nominations for participants in our annual Leadership Cullman County class for the year of 2015-16. Class size will be limited to 30 participants. The tuition fee is \$575, which covers all expenses associated with the program. To nominate someone (self-nominations are also encouraged), please fill out an application online at [www.cullmanchamber.org](http://www.cullmanchamber.org) or call 256-734-0454 for more information. The application deadline is July 31st of each year. Class size will be limited to 20 participants.

## STATE TRACK MEET HOSTED IN CULLMAN



PHOTOS BY MAGAN F. BARTLETT

Cullman was proud to host the AHSAA (Alabama High School Athletic Association's) track event at Cullman High School on May 1st and 2nd. Roughly 10-15,000 people experienced the Cullman area through restaurants, retail, lodging and pastimes. Since Cullman was selected, they will retain the outdoor track and field championships for the next three years for classes 1A, 2A and 3A. This will be hosted at CHS on the main field at Oliver Woodard Stadium. The community is thrilled and honored to have this prestigious event on our home turf. Always looking to grow our reach and support local endeavors, the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Cullman and Cullman City Schools are proud partners of this event.





# Washington Fly-In

By Matt Kinsland

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
MEMBER/ CULLMAN COUNTY ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT

On May 7, 2015, members of the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce and elected officials from Cullman City and Cullman County traveled to Washington, D.C., for the annual Washington Fly-In. During the trip, community leaders representing, healthcare, education, business and industry met with Alabama delegates that represent Cullman County on the Hill in order to discuss issues concerning Cullman County.

Upon arriving in Washington, the group met with Senator Jeff Sessions, Senator Richard Shelby, and Congressman Robert Aderholt to discuss various issues around Cullman County. One of the main issues discussed during the meetings with the Alabama delegates were the current and future road projects taking place around the county. The group discussed the County Road 222 interchange and the widening project on Highway 157 and Highway 278. Members also discussed the County's current application with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program. If awarded, the TIGER Grant would provide funds to rehabilitate eleven roads within the county that are highly traveled by the agriculture industry and were damaged by the April 27, 2011 tornadoes. In addition to discussing current and potential road projects, the group discussed the Duck River Dam project, small business needs, the state of healthcare, new and expanding industries, the status of Pell Grants for Wallace State Community

College students, and Cullman County School's strategic partnership with Wallace State Community College and industry partners to provide career ready education through college dual enrollment and industry apprenticeships.

Following the meetings with the Alabama delegates and their staff, the group joined Congressman Aderholt and staff members from all the delegates' offices for dinner. During dinner, the Chamber presented a video that showcased what going on in Cullman County. The video highlighted the county's low unemployment rate, the retail growth taking place, and new and expanding industries within Cullman County. Overall, the visit to Washington was extremely useful in sharing the current state of affairs within the County with our local delegates.

Business Leaders included: Jason Grimmatt, Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce/Cullman County Industrial Development Authority/Drinkard Development; Leah Bolin, Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce; Stephen Parker, Parker & Parker Attorneys at Law /Cullman County Industrial Development Authority; Annette Parker, Parker & Parker Attorneys at Law; Cherrie Haney and Matt Kinsland, Cullman County Economic Development; Mayor Max Townson, City of Cullman; Mark Bussman, Cullman - Jefferson Gas/ Industrial Development Board of the City of Cullman; Chairman Kenneth Walker, Cullman County Commission; Kristen Holmes, Wallace State Community College; Superintendent Dr. Craig Ross, and T.J. Franey, Cullman County Commission on Education; Mike Manning, Cullman Power Board; Shawn Crider, HH Technologies; and James Clements, Cullman Regional Medical Center.

# Community Luncheon

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's June Community Luncheon, formerly called Fourth Friday, will be held on Friday, June 26 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Banquet Room at the All Steak restaurant. The Speaker will be Dr. Rusty Wright, Extension Specialist from the School of Fisheries, Aquaculture & Aquatic Sciences at Auburn University. He will be speaking on Fisheries in Alabama: the challenges of managing a tremendous resource. Dr. Wright has been a part of Auburn's faculty since 1997. His research focuses on fishes and fisheries in small impoundments, larger reservoirs, and estuaries. He currently has projects in the coastal waters, reservoirs, and ponds



Dr. Rusty Wright

throughout the state. His extension efforts focus on pond management, recreational fisheries, aquatic conservation, and youth engagement. Reservations are required, with limited seating available at the door. Please come and join us for our Community Luncheon!

To reserve tickets, please email [info@cullman-chamber.org](mailto:info@cullman-chamber.org) or call 256-734-0454. Tickets are \$15 for chamber members and \$20 for future members. Presenting Sponsor for 2015 is Shirley Quattlebaum - State Farm Insurance and the monthly sponsor is Charter Spectrum.

Premiere Sponsor

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State Farm



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## JUNE'S SMALL BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

**WINNER: STATE FARM SHIRLEY QUATTLEBAUM**

**SPONSORED BY BURKS POOL**



### 2ND FRIDAYS

It's the shop late, eat local event you have all come to love. 2nd Fridays features extended hours of shopping with great drawings and discounts, restaurants with specials and entertainment, as well as a chance to experience downtown nightlife like never before. Starting every second Friday in March through October, from 4-8 p.m., come see what the Cullman area has to offer after dark. Experience a fun night of shopping, entertainment, and dining in the Cullman Central Business District. The Chamber has partnered with Coca-Cola & Rock the South to bring Battle of the Bands to downtown Cullman. Join us for a downtown concert experience listening to bands battle it out for a chance to play on

the Rock the South stage. Our kick-off for Battle of the Bands was held in March where we garnered several nominations for bands who duked it out in the months of April and May, and now is the time we've all been waiting for – where the final two bands will battle it out at the June 2nd Fridays, just 1 week before Rock the South comes to Cullman. April's winner Brick Avenue will square off with May's winner Free Range on June 12 at the Festhalle in downtown Cullman. Come out, enjoy some incredible music and company, great food and shopping deals, and see what downtown Cullman has to offer. For more information, go to [www.cullmanchamber.org/fridays](http://www.cullmanchamber.org/fridays).

## ESTATE PLANNING SEMINAR

The Chamber's ABI (Agriculture, Business, & Industry) committee is hosting an Estate Planning Workshop on Tuesday, June 23rd from 6:00pm - 8:00pm. The workshop will focus on estate planning and inheritance tax information. Keep up to date on current laws and inheritance taxes. Tony Glover, Cullman County Extension Coordinator, is our host organizer. Our main presenter will be Dr. Robert Tufts of Auburn University.

Dr. Robert Tufts, Emeritus Professor, Auburn University,

has more than 30 years' experience teaching in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences. Dr. Tufts is also an estate-planning attorney and will present information on the importance of estate planning, writing a will, when a trust is needed, as well as other estate planning topics.

The event is free and open to the public. Register at [www.cullmanchamber.org](http://www.cullmanchamber.org) or contact Derek Lane, Director, Small Business & Workforce Solutions, at [DLane@cullmanchamber.org](mailto:DLane@cullmanchamber.org).

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Thank you for your  
support & investment  
in the Cullman Area!**

**Signature Smiles of Cullman  
256-531-9983**

**Creations Salon and Spa Cullman  
256-734-4362**

**Cullman Auto Mall  
256-841-5577**

**Barnett Tax Service  
256-734-6911**

**Beck and Call Home  
Tending Service  
256-962-6698**

**The Chamber's  
Morning  
BLEND**

Find out what's happening in the Cullman area

Presented by: **June 17 | 8-9AM**

Chamber Building Commons Room

Sponsored by: **Blocher Co.**

Come join us on Wednesday, June 17 for delicious coffee and great discussion at our Morning Blend, held every second Wednesday of each month from 8-9 a.m. in the common room at the Chamber. Chamber staff will welcome members and visitors to the Chamber building every month to discuss the hottest topics in business and share tips, ideas and viewpoints. The Chamber's Morning Blend is presented by Starbucks and is sponsored by Blocher company.



READY FOR BUSINESS

CULLMAN AUTO MALL



1303 2nd Ave SW Cullman, AL 35055

RUSSELL MARINE



690 AL HWY 69 S, Hanceville, AL 35077 ( Dodge City)

SIGNATURE SMILES



1965 AL HWY 157 Suite A Cullman, AL 35058

STORM SHELTERS



Cullman City - Sportsman Lake Rd NW

STONY LONESOME OHV PARK



10075 AL Hwy 69 South Bremen, AL 35033

O-BABY



2130 2nd Ave NW Cullman, AL 35055

SIPS N STROKES



111 1st Ave N.E. Cullman, AL 35055