

CULLMAN AREA

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& VISITOR CENTER**

Official Newsletter

Eyes of PROGRESS

Serving the Community Since 1943

www.cullmanchamber.org

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

State of the State kicking off 2018 Community Luncheon series

January Morning Blend
hoping to help resolutions
last longer in New Year

They're baaaaaack. Yes, we're talking about the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's Community Luncheons, but same goes for Cullman's state delegation, too.

Senator Paul Bussman and Representatives Randall Shedd, Corey Harbison and Ed Henry will be the guests of honor at the Chamber's annual State of the State Community Luncheon on Friday, January 19 at the All Steak Restaurant. The special kickoff event is set for 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. in the banquet room and will feature updates from the capitol from each local legislator.

Tickets are \$15 for Chamber Members and \$20 for future members. Contact the Chamber at 256-734-0454 or info@cullmanchamber.org to reserve your seat. Thank you to our Presenting

COMMUNITY LUNCHEON

State of the State






All Steak Restaurant
Program Begins 11:30 AM | January 19, 2018
Chamber Members \$15 | Future Members \$20
Call 256-734-0454 to reserve your seat!

Presenting Sponsor:



Shirley Quattlebaum
256-255-1515
www.shirleyq.biz

Monthly Sponsor:



**Weichert
Realtors**
Carter & Company

Sponsor, Shirley Quattlebaum – State Farm Insurance, and to our January Sponsor, Weichert Realtors – Carter & Company.

For the second straight year, Community Luncheons will be held on the third Friday of the month in January, February, March, May,

August, September and October. The Chamber's all-day State of Our Communities will take the Luncheon's place on the fourth Friday in April.

Getting back into shape is one of the most common resolutions each and every New Year. It isn't always the easiest goal to obtain, however, especially if your workdays are mostly spent behind a desk. Attending the Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's first Morning Blend of

Presenting Sponsor
Karma's Coffee House
Monthly Sponsor
Anytime Fitness

2018 should make that tall task a whole lot simpler. On Wednesday, January 17 at 8:00 a.m. at Rumors Deli, Cullman Regional Wellness Manager Amanda Satterfield will open

SEE **MORNING BLEND**, P7

The Chamber's
Morning BLEND

Find out what's happening in the Cullman area
Chamber staff welcomes members and visitors to the back room at Rumors Deli every month to discuss various topics.
Topic: 10 Healthy Ways to Improve Your Office Lifestyle
Rumors Deli, 105 1st Ave NE, Cullman, AL

**JAN. 17
8-9AM**

Presented by:
KARMA'S COFFEE HOUSE
WHOLE BEAN COFFEE, COFFEE PASTES, COFFEE SUPPLIES

Sponsored by:
ANYTIME FITNESS

Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 1104, Cullman, AL 35056-1104 | 256-734-0454 | F: 256-531-9434 | info@cullmanchamber.org
www.cullmanchamber.org | www.visitcullman.org

Chamber celebrates successful 'Converging for Success' campaign

Much progress has been made in Year 1 of the Chamber's five-year strategic plan.

One of the only items left to do was celebrate a successful campaign with the very people who helped make it happen.

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center did just that with the Converging for Success Victory Party on November 28 at Stone Bridge Farms. Several state, area and business representatives were on hand as the Chamber reported its progress thus far, recognized campaign leadership and community partners, and laid out its plans going forward.

The Converging for Success tagline, "together we can accomplish everything," was a prevalent theme throughout the evening.

"Our businesses, our schools, our hospital, our communities are depending on us to win — and to win big," said Campaign Co-Chair Jason Grimm, of Drinkard Development, during his opening remarks. "Other communities and states are playing hard, they are competitive, and they are getting creative. Having a plan — together — gives us the advantage."

As tokens of appreciation, Grimm presented campaign leadership with customized leather binders and campaign investors with handcrafted



CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Chair-Elect Susan Copeland, of Wallace State Community College, presents Drinkard Development's Roy Drinkard with a "Think Local" memento for campaign investors during November's Converging for Success Victory Party

pieces of "Think Local" artwork for recipients to hang in their businesses.

Fred Mickelson addressed the crowd on behalf of Texas-based consulting firm Funding Solutions and drew hearty applause after proudly announcing the campaign reached its goal of \$1.75 million. This annual investment of \$350,000 will go directly toward tackling the ambitious initiatives pinpointed by the community.

"Your candor and can-do mindset were key to making the goals and objectives on target with the issues you told us were important for the Chamber to lead," Mickelson said. "Bottom line: 'Converging for Success' is truly your plan."

Said plan is centered

around four key initiatives — Community Development, Existing Business Growth & Professional Business Sector Recruitment, Entrepreneurship & Education, and Business & Community Advocacy.

Chamber President & CEO Leah Bolin provided a report on the first initiative, announcing an upcoming housing study to counter the area's significant housing shortage and highlighting the recent successes of many Cullman County municipalities.

Brian Poole, the Chamber's Director of Business Development & Investor Relations, then took the podium to discuss the Existing Business Growth & Professional Business Recruitment initiative.



CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Local high school students Hannah Sanchez (Cullman), T.J. Fallin (Holly Pond) and Averil Wallace (Cullman) field questions from Director of Entrepreneurship & Education Wesley Smith during the portion of the investors report on the Chamber's Young Entrepreneurs Academy.

With so many area residents out-commuting to jobs in Huntsville or Birmingham, Poole said he and Chamber consultant Peggy Smith are planning a study to help keep more employees in Cullman County.

Chamber Director of Entrepreneurship & Education Wesley Smith, Bolin and Wallace State Community College President Dr. Vicki Karolewics each took turns speaking on the third, and arguably most buzzworthy, initiative — Entrepreneurship & Education.

Smith opened with an introduction of EPIC (Emerging Professionals Impacting Cullman), the Chamber's young professionals group, before inviting Holly Pond's T.J. Fallin and Cullman High's Averil Wallace and Hannah Sanchez up to shed light on the Chamber's Young Entrepreneurs Academy, better known as YEA! Fallin spoke of his plans

to start a lawn care business, while Wallace and Sanchez provided details about the faith-based T-shirt company they are looking to launch.

Bolin returned to the microphone to tout the Chamber's Business Resource Center (BRC) and its massive impact on the area's small business community since opening in January. Over that time, more than 60 businesses have utilized the BRC; 66 jobs have been created, with another 96 retained; and \$10 million of small business funding has been closed on, with \$103 millions still in the pipeline to end the fiscal year.

Dr. Karolewics closed the initiative by discussing Cullman's Technology Village, an exciting partnership between the City of Cullman, Chamber, Wallace State and the University of Alabama meant to foster entrepreneurial growth in the Cullman area.

Cullman Electric Cooperative's Tim Culpepper tackled the Business & Community Advocacy portion of the report. Culpepper is the chairman of the Chamber's Governmental Affairs Committee (GAC), which annually travels to Montgomery and Washington D.C. to advocate for Cullman County.

He said the GAC is currently forming a steering committee to expedite the expansion of AL Highway 157 to four lanes and is also focused on extending broadband internet access to the countless pockets of Cullman County still without it.

Guests capped off the Victory Party with a toast to the community's future.

"As you can see, we're already making great progress towards our five-year goals, and we're just getting started," Grimm said. "We have a lot of work left to do."

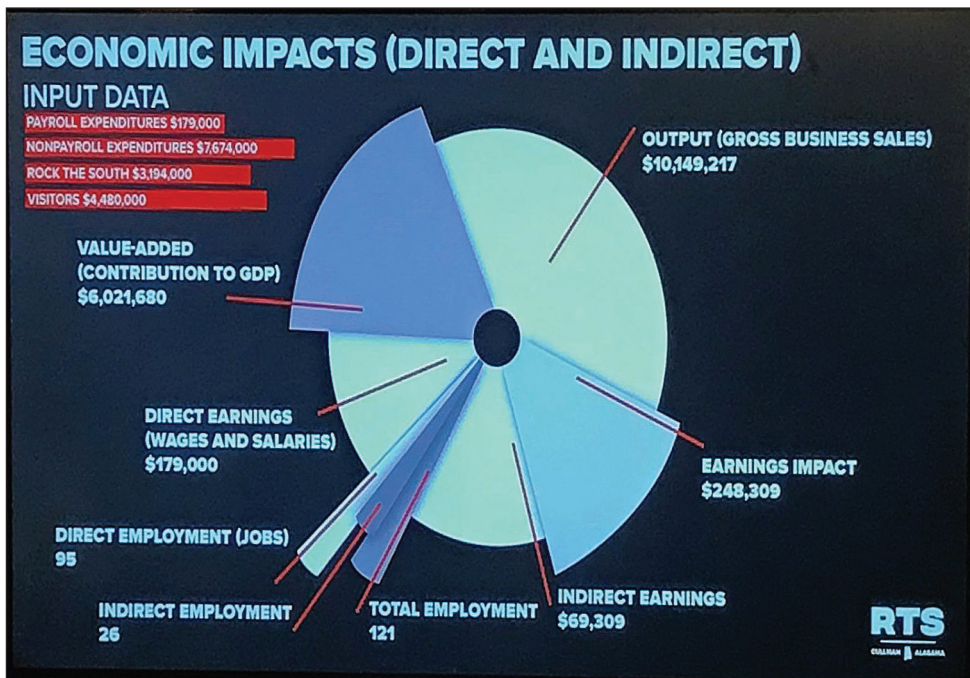
University of Alabama study reveals Rock the South’s local economic impact

It’s long been known Rock the South has a massive economic impact on the Cullman area. Just how much, however, has been a little less clear.

Until now. Shane Quick and Rock the South hosted the media and numerous area representatives on December 6 at Mae’s Food Hall to reveal the findings of a recent University of Alabama study on the economic and fiscal impact of the annual two-day country music festival. The results, compiled using data from the 2016 event, were quite impressive.

- Among the highlights:**
- Economic Impact: **\$10,149,217**
 - Direct employment (jobs): **95**
 - Total employment: **121**
 - Local (city and county) sales taxes: **\$208,260**

University of Alabama Director of Economic Forecasting Ahmad Ijaz presented his department’s findings at the press conference. Other speakers included Premier Production’s Laura Kate Lindsey, Rock the South owner Shane Quick, Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Leah Bolin, The Link of Cullman County’s Dawn



Rock the South and area representatives, including Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce CEO & President Leah Bolin (third from left), pose for a picture following a December press conference revealing Rock the South’s economic impact.

Owens, and Cullman Parks & Recreation’s Nathan Anderson. The most striking number in the report is the \$10.1 million local economic impact, which highlights the growing importance of this event to the Cullman community.

“Ten million dollars is a lot of revenue coming into our community and serves to support it in so many ways,” said Bolin. Certainly, Rock the South produces a notable impact on our community during the event itself. However,

it’s the indirect and continuing results that make it a fundamental part of promoting Cullman and what it has to offer to visitors. “Over the years, we’ve had hundreds of thousands of people coming to our community and being exposed

to what Cullman has to offer in so many ways,” said Bolin. “Rock the South has helped solidify and brand who we are as a community, which is so good for our local economy.”

People coming to the festival see and experience the shopping, restaurants and recreational options our area has to offer and plan return visits. This impact of Rock the South, though more difficult to measure, is probably the most important aspect of what the festival brings to our community.

Since Rock the South’s inception shortly following the April 2011 tornadoes, observers have noted the importance of the event to Cullman’s economy, but its exact impact on our area had remained a mystery.

“You know, we always wondered what kind of economic impact Rock the South was having in Cullman County. So, we brought in a neutral, well-respected outside professional team from the University of Alabama to tell us,” Quick told Cullman Today. “Now we know, and we are blown away.”

With the festival’s exponential growth over the years, we can expect even more good news in the future. “This study was for

2016,” said Quick. “The event grew significantly in 2017, and I would expect these numbers will be even higher next year.”

Considering the remarkable numbers this study has revealed, which range from gross business sales in Cullman to local sales taxes produced during the 2016 event, even bigger returns are likely for 2017 and the foreseeable future.

That bodes well for Rock the South’s continually extending charitable reach, which grew to \$100,000 in 2017.

Without a doubt, Rock the South is one of the crown jewels of the Cullman community. However, the real takeaway is the event is quickly becoming a crown jewel for the entire Southeast, which will only increase Cullman’s brand and name awareness for years to come.

As a matter of fact, Rock the South recently snagged the No. 6 spot in Billboard’s national list of Top 10 Country Music Festivals for 2018. The festival’s seventh edition is set for June 1-2, with artist announcements starting on January 22.

For more information on Rock the South, follow the festival on social media or visit rockthesouth.com.

January
Small Business
of the Month

Winner - Drinkard Development


DRINKARD DEVELOPMENT, LLC

Supporter -
Cullman Area
Chamber of
Commerce &
Visitor Center


CULLMAN AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& VISITOR CENTER

Cabin Fever - Good Hope named December Small Business of the Month

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center would like to congratulate Cabin Fever Beverages - Good Hope as December's Small Business of the Month, sponsored by College Tire.

Cabin Fever prides itself on quality customer service and loyalty, both musts in a very competitive market. Custom orders, weddings and events have truly helped the small business grow and stay creative. Cabin Fever Beverages'

Cabin Fever Beverages
1536 County Road 437
Cullman, AL 35055
256-775-0076

reach expands much further than Cullman County. Over the years, its level of service has gained much attention on Smith Lake and from the surrounding areas. Cabin Fever not only sells from multiple brick fronts but manages events — from concerts with 40,000 attendees to high-end galas and parties — from Huntsville to Birmingham and is always looking forward and adapting to new trends and models.

Now in its 13th year, Cabin Fever Beverages' product selection is the biggest it's ever been. From select bourbons to craft beers and wines, each location is consistently stocked with the industry's latest and greatest items. Additionally, the 13-employee staff at Cabin Fever is trained to be knowledge-



Sponsor: College Tire

able on all products, which better serves the customers' needs. Cabin Fever is involved with several Chamber events throughout the year, including the Annual Meeting & Gala, 2nd Fridays, Samplers in the Breezeway, the EPIC Christmas Sweater Party and more. The small business also gives back to the community in a variety of ways, including

donations to local food banks, the Cullman County Sheriffs Rodeo, local school systems and a number of other organizations serving Cullman County. Each month, a sponsoring business helps celebrate and acknowledge the Small Business of the Month winner. If you have a local business you would like to nominate for their outstanding service, please contact Brian Poole at bpoole@cullmanchamber.org. Monthly winners will be automatically nominated for the annual Small Business of the Year Award, which is presented at the Chamber's Annual Meeting & Gala.

2017 Small Business of the Month Recap

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center

Thursday, March 8th at Stone Bridge Farms.

would like to congratulate each Small Business of the Month recipient from 2017! "Some communities might struggle to find deserving candidates for every month of the year, but the Cullman area is blessed to have a surplus of small

The Small Business of the Year Award, will be presented at the Chamber's Annual Meeting & Gala Thursday, March 8th at Stone Bridge Farms.

businesses with owners and employers who truly make Cullman County a special place to live, work and play," said Chamber Director of Business Development & Investor Relations Brian Poole. Monthly winners are automatically nominated for the Small Business of the Year Award, which will be presented at the Chamber's Annual Meeting & Gala on

- JANUARY
ED WHITE JEWELERS
- FEBRUARY
BETTER THAN BEFORE
- MARCH
YELTEK
- APRIL
CULPEPPER REAL ESTATE
- MAY
ALL STEAK RESTAURANT
- JUNE
KARMA'S COFFEE HOUSE
- JULY
TRIDENT MARINA
- AUGUST
IN-N-OUT SELF STORAGE
- SEPTEMBER
WILLOUGHBY SHEET METAL & ROOFING, INC.
- OCTOBER
CULLMAN CHRYSLER DODGE JEEP RAM
- NOVEMBER
CULLMAN VETERINARY HOSPITAL, P.C.
- DECEMBER
CABIN FEVER BEVERAGES - GOOD HOPE

Leadership classes set for New Year after November, December sessions

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's Adult and Youth Leadership classes closed out the year with jam-packed sessions in November and December. Leadership Cullman County's 2017-18 Presenting Sponsor is American Proteins, while Youth Leadership Cullman County's is R.E. Garrison Trucking.

Leadership's November session focused on Healthcare. The class traveled to Westminster Assisted Living for a tour before spending the rest of the day at Cullman Regional. There, participants took a tour of the hospital, enjoyed lunch with the Cullman Regional marketing team, received health screenings and heard from Hospice of Cullman County's Kim Pace, Cullman County Health Department Clinic Supervisor Anita Batemon, Cullman Regional President and CEO James Clements, Cullman Regional Marketing & Public Relations Manager Lindsey Dossey, WellStone Behavioral Health (formerly Mental Healthcare of Cullman) Executive Director Chris Van Dyke and Good Samaritan Health Clinic Director Jolanda Hutson. Breakfast was sponsored by Waldrop Chiropractic Clinic.



The 2017-18 Youth Leadership class takes a group picture with Cullman County Sheriff Matt Gentry during December's Public Safety Day.



This year's Leadership class gets ready to close December's session with Christmas activities at Karma's Coffee House.

Lunch was sponsored by Cullman Regional. December's Leadership session was Criminal Justice Day. Classmates met at Karma's Coffee House for breakfast and a roundtable discussion with Cullman Police Chief Kenny Culpepper and Cullman County Sheriff Matt

Gentry before heading to the Cullman County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) and Detention Center. Participants listened to a DEA presentation at the CCSO training facility and then ate lunch at the Chamber while entertaining speakers from the Cullman County District Attorney's

Office. The rest of the session was spent receiving a tour and taser demonstration at the Cullman Police Department (CPD) and enjoying Christmas activities back at Karma's Coffee House. Lunch was sponsored by Cullman Electric Cooperative. Youth Leadership's

November session was Quality of Life Day, sponsored by Jet Pep. Students heard from United Way Director Sammie Danford and Assistant Director Becky Goff before making stops at Cullman Caring for Kids, First United Methodist Church's Knapsacks for Kids, the Cullman County Center for the Developmentally Disabled

(Margaret Jean Jones Center), The Link of Cullman County, Cullman Regional and WellStone Behavioral Health. Breakfast was sponsored by Cullman County Youth Advocate Programs. Lunch was sponsored by Jet Pep. December's Youth Leadership session was Public Safety Day, sponsored by CCSO. Students had the opportunity to meet Sheriff Gentry and tour the Detention Center before going to Cullman Fire Rescue's Fire Station No. 1 for a fire safety demonstration. The class's next — and last — stop of the day was the City Police Department, where students took in self-defense training, a taser demonstration and helicopter fly-in, and a tactical team presentation. Breakfast was sponsored by J & R Feed Service. Lunch was sponsored by CCSO.

Courteous and Respectful Service is what I promise you!

See me for your next
New or Pre-owned Vehicle

DYLAN FULLILOVE
Sales and Leasing Consultant

256-736-3368

1940 Second Ave. N.W.
Cullman, AL 35055
www.billsmithbuickgmc.com

Chamber 201 teaching members how to maximize Chamber investment

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor held its most recent Chamber 201 class on December 5 and is excited to have two more planned for 2018!

Chamber 201 is facilitated by Director of Member Services Magan Bartlett with help from the entire Chamber staff. The event serves as a basic introduction to what the Cullman Chamber does and educates new and old members alike on how to maximize their membership. Chamber 201 lasts from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., includes a free lunch — December’s was from Sweet Peppers Deli — and covers a vast variety of information.

- Topics include, but certainly aren’t limited to:
- Member Services
 - Events
 - Leadership Opportunities
 - Communications & Marketing
 - Community Development
 - Entrepreneurship & Education
 - Business Development & Investor Relations
 - Business & Community Advocacy
 - Tourism
 - Finance & Administration



CULLMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Communications Manager Rob Ketcham gathers Chamber 201 attendees for a fun group selfie during last month’s informative event. The next class is scheduled for March 28.

Chamber President & CEO Leah Bolin always loves seeing just how much attendees have learned once they’ve been through Chamber 201.

“I am often surprised to find out that members do not really understand the role of a Chamber of Commerce or how many

benefits are associated with this membership organization,” she said. “Membership has its privileges, but if you do not know what those are, it is hard to take advantage of them. Chamber 201 provides the history of the Chamber, the Chamber’s program of work, and an overview of

who we are and who we aren’t.”

The next Chamber 201 will be here before we know it on Wednesday, March 28. It’ll again include a complimentary lunch from Sweet Peppers Deli and take place in the Chamber’s Wal-Mart Distribution Center Room. Reservations for this free event are on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact the Chamber at 256-734-0454 or info@cullmanchamber.org to save your spot today.

Keep calm and update your account

Is your business changing locations in 2018? Do you have new hours of operation or any changes in staff? Then make sure you update the Chamber! You can do so by logging into your Membership Information Center. Please contact Director of Member Services Magan Bartlett for your username! Log in to your

Membership Information Center by visiting cullman-chamber.org, selecting “The Chamber” tab and clicking “Member Login.” There, you’ll be able to access how-to videos, business reports and update your information. By updating your business’ information, you’ll be helping others find you!

MAYTAG®

It’s got the best warranty in the business. Not that you’ll need it.

No matter what season it is, Maytag heating and cooling products create the perfect home environment. Plus, our systems offer a 12-year Worry-Free Limited Warranty. Contact us and relax in the comfort of your very own Maytag heating and cooling system.

iQ Drive is a registered trademark and iQ Zone is a trademark of Nortek Global HVAC LLC.



iQ Zone iQ Drive



BAMA AIR SYSTEMS
256-734-4181

Ask for Aaron Coffey



For a Great Deal on your next New or Used Vehicle!

Business: 256-734-4472
Cell: 256-339-1400

Bill Smith Buick GMC
1940 Second Ave. N.W. | Cullman, AL 35065
www.billsmithbuickgmc.com



BUICK



0702001292010



www.maytaghvac.com

®Registered Trademark/™Trademark of Maytag Properties, LLC or its related companies. © Nortek Global HVAC LLC. All rights reserved. Manufactured under license by Nortek Global HVAC LLC, O’Fallon, MO.



City of
CULLMAN
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD



Hanceville's Louisiana-Pacific Corp. to host quarterly Industry Tour

The Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce's quarterly Industry Tour will take attendees to Louisiana-Pacific Corporation (LP) in Hanceville on

Quarterly Sponsor
REHAU

Thursday, January 11th. The event is sponsored by REHAU and will start at 10:00 a.m., though participants are encouraged to arrive by 9:45 a.m.

Because of the nature of the tour, jewelry



LP
BUILDING PRODUCTS

JANUARY 11, 2018
Meet at LP | 9:45 AM
FREE | Registration Required

LIMITED SPACE!

No jewelry or open-toe shoes

Thanks to our Industry Tour Sponsor:




and open-toe shoes are prohibited. Please also take into account that hard hats will be required while touring

the facility. LP is located at 902 Main Street SE in Hanceville. Going south on U.S. Highway

For more information or to register, contact the Chamber at 256-734-0454 or info@cullmanchamber.org.

31, turn left on Industrial Boulevard and take the first right to the parking lot.

Industry Tours are free to attend. Space is limited, however, so registration is required. For more information or to register, contact the Chamber at 256-734-0454 or info@cullmanchamber.org.



Louisiana-Pacific Corp.
902 Main St. SE
Hanceville, AL 35077

Directions
Going south on U.S. Highway 31, turn left on Industrial Boulevard and take the first right to the parking lot.



30th Anniversary

Premier Bank of the South

Premier Bank of the South | 101 1st Ave. NW, Cullman, AL 35055 | 256-737-9900

For Your **BEST DEAL** on a New or Pre-owned Vehicle



Call Or Come See
KYLE HAGA
256-347-1777

BILL SMITH BUICK GMC
1940 Second Ave. N.W.
Cullman, AL 35055
www.billsmithbuickgmc.com





MULLINS
BODY SHOP LLC



24-Hour emergency roadside assistance and towing.



More than 50 years of collision repair experience.



Take advantage of our FREE repair estimates.

11042 US Hwy. 31 S., Cullman, AL

Where Quality is the Difference
256-734-1353

Monday to Friday:
7:30am - 5:00pm