

Division B Special Sections

First Place (at right)

The Courier Herald, Dublin

Second Place

The Courier Herald, Dublin

Third Place

The Courier Herald, Dublin



HOMETOWN



HEROES



**SALUTING DUBLIN-LAURENS COUNTY'S
TITANS OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

Division C Special Sections

First Place (at right)

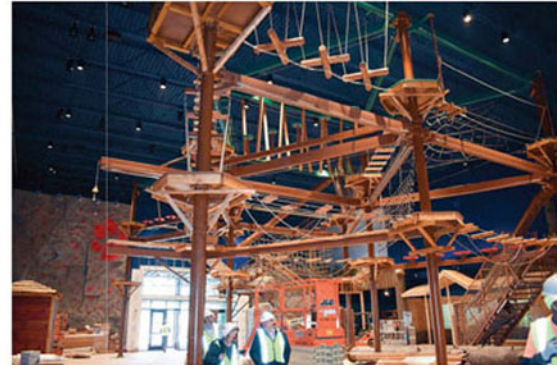
LaGrange Daily News

Second Place

LaGrange Daily News

Third Place

The Griffin Daily News



DEVELOPMENT

PROGRESS 2018



THE LaGRANGE
Daily News

Division D Special Sections

First Place (at right)

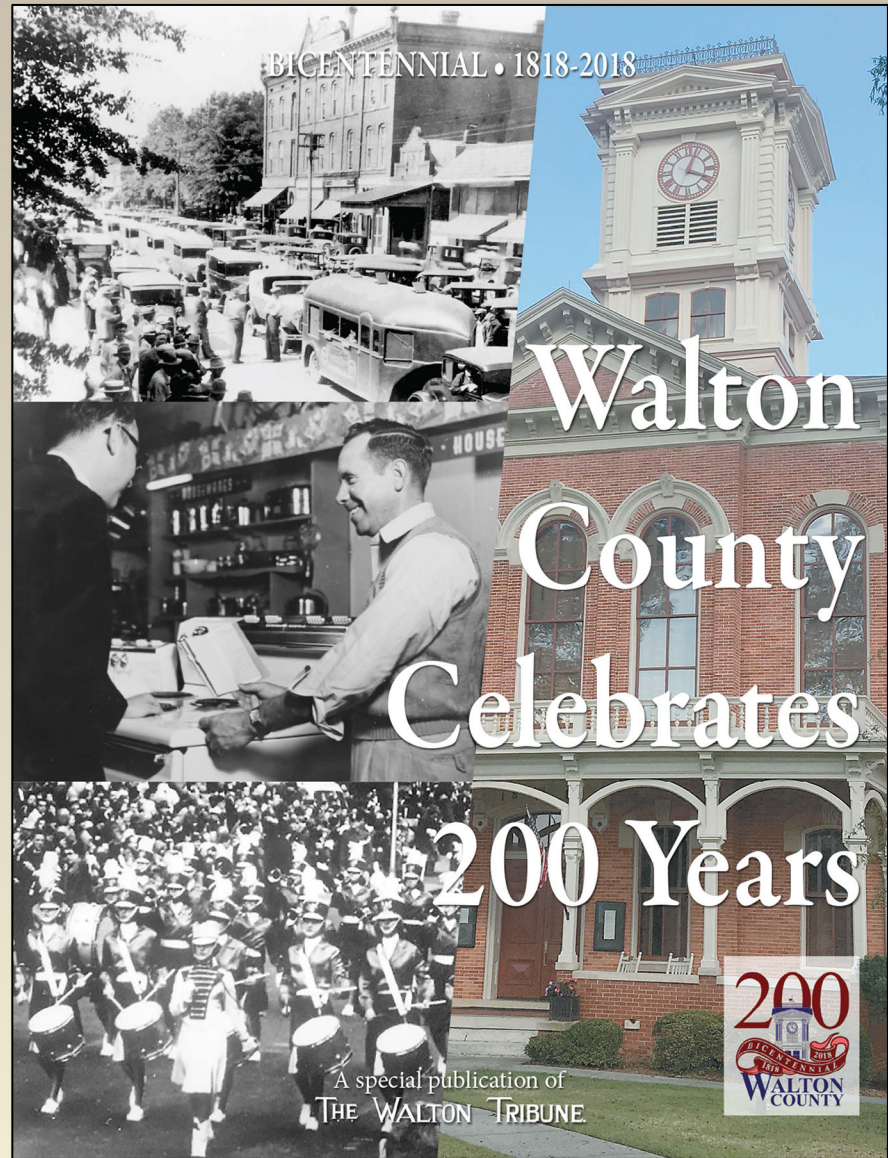
The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Second Place

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

The Walton Tribune, Monroe



Division E Special Sections

First Place (at right)

Americus Times-Recorder

Second Place

Morgan County Citizen,
Madison

Third Place

Ken Gustafson
Americus Times-Recorder



COMMUNITY

2018



WHO WE ARE

Ordinary Doing The Extraordinary

A 2018 publication of the Americus Times-Recorder

Division F Special Sections

First Place (at right)

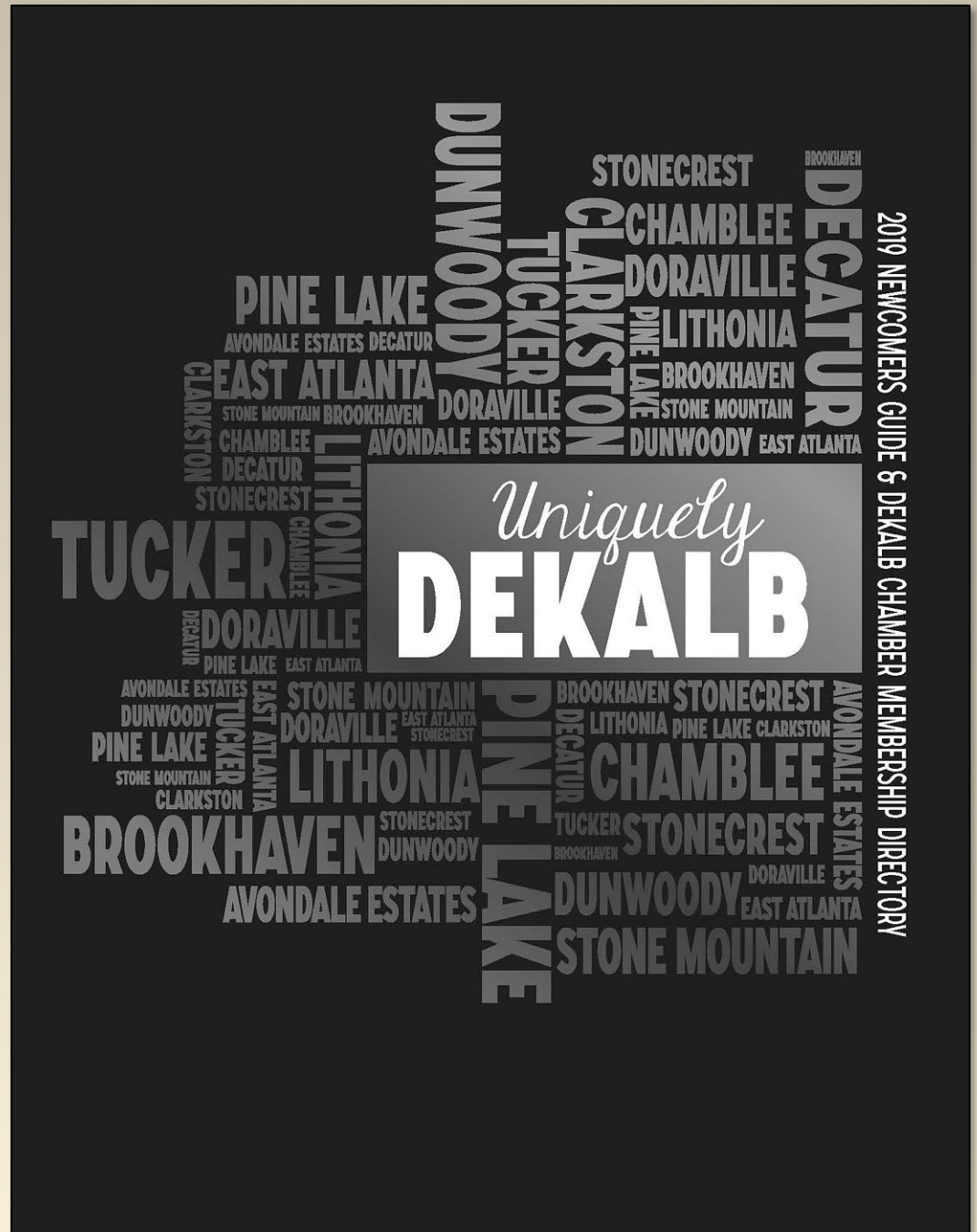
The Champion, Decatur

Second Place

The Clinch County News, Homerville

Third Place

The Clinch County News, Homerville



Division G Special Sections

First Place (at right)

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Second Place

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Third Place

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

ATLANTA Alliance's 'Midsummer' at Atlanta Botanical Garden

Attitude Botanical Garden is the setting for Atlanta's 'Midsummer' festival, a world premiere exhibition of 'Midsummer' by Atlanta's 'Midsummer' artists.

The 10-minute evening program for children is the first in the Atlanta Botanical Garden's 'Midsummer' series. The program is designed to be a fun and educational experience for children. The program is designed to be a fun and educational experience for children. The program is designed to be a fun and educational experience for children.

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The photo is from 'Midsummer' by Atlanta's 'Midsummer' artists. The photo is from 'Midsummer' by Atlanta's 'Midsummer' artists. The photo is from 'Midsummer' by Atlanta's 'Midsummer' artists.

NORTH GEORGIA Arts&Entertainment

SEPTEMBER 1991 | The area's most comprehensive guide to arts and culture | COVERING ATLANTA & NORTH GEORGIA



Blue Ridge again one of Georgia's leading Art Towns

"Recognizing the many and diverse arts offerings, the Georgia Council for the Arts and Georgia Municipal Association have named Blue Ridge as one of the leading Art Towns in Georgia for the second consecutive year."



A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field. A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field. A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field.



A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field. A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field. A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field.



A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field. A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field. A painting of a person in a landscape, possibly a woman in a field.

BY CHRISTOPHER BAKER

The region of artists that Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Association offers has led to the discovery of Blue Ridge Mountain as a center for the arts in Georgia.

Two national award-winning artists, who have been painting in the area for over 20 years, are the founders of the Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Association. The association is a non-profit organization that promotes the arts in the region.

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Division A - Feature Writing

POLLY'S PEOPLE

Family celebrates Lib Gnann's heavenly birthday



Polly Powers Stramm

On a recent Sunday night at a local Mexican restaurant, a group of about 16 men and women laughed, sipped margaritas and held up sweet photographs of a smiling elderly woman wearing a huge sombrero — a special oversized hat that the eatery's servers haul out for birthday celebrations.

The festive occasion included toasts hoisted high, much laughter, traditional Mexican food and margaritas aplenty. It was Elizabeth "Lib" Gnann's

On the web

See more photos with this column at savannahnow.com/accnt/columnists.

89th birthday, and family and friends were honoring a true Southern lady.

Although Lib died in February, her daughter Janet Gnann and her granddaughter Lake Gnann Daigle and a few of their friends who knew Lib — also known as Mama and Grandmother — decided her first birthday in heaven should be both a celebration and the continuation of a tradition that began more than a decade ago.

"Even before Daddy (Jack Gnann) died 10 years ago, I would take Mama



From left, Lisa Gnann, Janet Gnann, Donna Cohen and Donna Orzada celebrate Lib Gnann's first heavenly birthday. Lib's photo is on the sticks they are holding. [PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GNANN FAMILY]

See POLLY, A7

First Place (at left)

Polly Powers Stramm
Savannah Morning News

Second Place

Kim Wade
Savannah Morning News

Third Place

Lauren McDonald
The Brunswick News

Division B - Feature Writing

First Place (at right)

Sarah Fay Campbell

The Newnan Times-Herald

Second Place

Shaka Cobb

Daily Citizen-News, Dalton

Third Place

Rebecca Leftwich

The Newnan Times-Herald

50 years later: Cowetans reflect on King's legacy



COURTESY OF HISTORY.COM

It's been 50 years since the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seen here during the 1965 march from Selma, Ala. to Montgomery.

BY SARAH FAY CAMPBELL
sarah@newnan.com

Clarence "C-Bo" Bohannon's 13th birthday is one he will never forget. It was April 4, 1968 – the day Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. He remembers his family singing Happy Birthday.

But it was the next day, walking home from Ruth Hill School, that really sticks in his head.

"I can just close my eyes and see," he said.

He said he and his schoolmates were walking down Lovelace Street.

"All we could hear, was 'Lord, Lord, what are we going to do now?'" he said. "And tears, and pain and people crying."

He went up to his grandfather's barber shop. Normally in the evenings, there would only be two or three customers there, but that day, it was full that day and for several days after.

"That's all they talked about. It was so much anger and pain. That is something I would never forget," Bohannon said.

His mother, Dora Bohannon, used to tell him she thinks those experiences were what led him to live a life as an activist. Before the shooting, he didn't pay much attention to the things adults talked about or to the Civil Rights Movement.

But when he turned

“The social, economic and education part – he really paved the way for us to have a better life.”

13, that changed.

"I think that day, it really hit me," he said. "After about a week's time, it was like I got hit in the head with a hammer."

After being an organizer of a walk-out at Newnan High School, Bohannon met Hosea Williams. Williams was



DANIEL EVANS | DAILY NEWS

A GLANCE BACK IN TIME: Above, Guy Longshore looks through a book of photos that he took while serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. Below, Longshore's photo shows the B-29 Superfortress in action in World War II.

Longshore's photos offer look back at World War II

AERIAL VIEW

BY DANIEL EVANS
DAILY NEWS

Before he went into the U.S. Army Air Corps as a teenager, Guy Longshore was just a young man on a date at a movie theater in his hometown of Montgomery, Alabama. He happened to be sitting in the lucky seat that night, which meant he won a big prize — \$12.

After the movie, he walked next door to the grocery store and saw an Argus camera for \$12. He tried to buy his girlfriend ice cream instead, but she wasn't interested.

"After the movie, I went next door to the grocery store, and they had some cameras for sale — one for \$12, one for \$16 and one for \$20. I had \$12 in my pocket and I bought the \$12 camera," Longshore said. "She talked me into buying it."

After more than 70 years, the now 95-year-old Longshore is thankful he ended up buying that camera. It went everywhere with him during his service in World War II, and the photos he took with it are now part of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum and the World War II Museum in New Orleans, as well as many other museums.

The color pictures he took of the B-29 Superfortress in action are believed to be among the very few in existence.

"When we were stationed at different bases, I took pictures of pilots standing in front of the airplanes," Longshore said. "There was a big sign there that said no photographs, no cameras. I broke the rules."

Historians are thankful he



SEE AERIAL A7

Division C Feature Writing

First Place (at left)

Daniel Evans

LaGrange Daily News

Second Place

Donna Harris

The Daily Tribune News, Cartersville

Third Place

Patti Dozier

Thomasville Times-Enterprise

Division D - Feature Writing

First Place (at right)

Angela Reinhardt

Pickens County Progress, Jasper

Second Place

Andrew Kenneson

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

Lauren Bearden

The News Observer, Blue Ridge

Peace, love, and 'bust' at Rainbow Gathering 2018

By Angela Reinhardt
Staff writer
areinhardt@pickensprogress.com

It was just after twilight in a meadow where a bonfire and drum circle were swelling to life. A naked man with a didgeridoo appeared from nowhere.

The slender 20-something asked my friend and I if we knew where his pants were (we did not), if we had noticed he was nude (we had), and if I was tripping (I was not). He proceeded to tell us about the Hindu goddess, Kali, who he said is taking over the world.

In any other setting this encounter would be (understatedly) unexpected, but at a Rainbow Gathering I quickly learned rules of the modern world don't apply. The goal of the Rainbow Family is simple, one many might call idealistic — come to nature to celebrate oneness, peace and love through community, music, dance, and meditation. It's a place where, according to the Rainbow Gathering "mini-manual" handed out to participants, anyone with a bellybutton, no matter their race, religion or background, is welcome as long as there is shared love and respect "without anyone getting hurt."

After a discussion with my editor we decided I should head out to the gathering, just 40 minutes from Jasper, to see what it was all about.

The long road to "Welcome Home"

The Rainbow Family of Living Light, a loosely-knit, leaderless group that has been meeting in national forests since 1972, selected the Bull Mountain section of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National For-

See **Rainbow** on 19A



On the walk out a few people, pictured, took donations for volunteers who would stay to clean after the gathering was over. While many "Rainbows" were there several weeks, the event officially lasted July 1-8.

Division E Feature Writing

First Place (at right)

Jason Deal
The Blackshear Times

Second Place

Michael Andrews
Times-Courier, Ellijay

Third Place

Michael Hall
The Hartwell Sun



Patterson resident, Colt Hartt, is living his dream traveling the country, protecting riders and entertaining the crowds, as a professional rodeo clown with the International Professional Rodeo Association, based in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Photo courtesy Lindsay Ogle Photography

After years searching, Hartt finds 'calling' entertaining rodeo crowds

By JASON DEAL
Staff Writer

Colt Hartt is living his dream. He spends his weekends just "clowning" around — literally.

Hartt performs for crowds including throngs clad in western wear and occasionally has had to stare down a 1,400 pound bull.

Hartt makes his living as "Colt45" the rodeo clown. He and his wife, Taylor, live in Patterson with their two daughters. The professional funnyman understands his profession is far from the norm, to say the least.

"I love it!" he exclaims. "I



Hartt gets a helping hand applying his clown makeup from four year old daughter, Gracelynn Rose. Photo courtesy Jen White

enjoy doing what I do. I obviously love trying to be able to make a living at it, but my greatest reward is the crowd reaction — hearing

the laughter. There's nothing like it."

Hartt says his goal is to eventually be the best in the profession.

"My dream is to be the top clown. I want to one day be good enough to be inducted into the rodeo clown hall of fame."

Hartt is currently employed as a clown with the International Professional Rodeo Association (IPRA). The Association hosts rodeos all over the eastern United States and recently branched out into Canada.

Hartt has been around rodeos virtually all of his life. His parents met at a rodeo and married.

"My parents didn't work out, but then my Mom and step-dad married and all of

Continued on Page 2

Division F Feature Writing

First Place (at right)

Parish Howard
Jefferson Reporter/News & Farmer,
Louisville

Second Place

Parish Howard
Jefferson Reporter/News & Farmer,
Louisville

Third Place

Kandice S. Eberhardt
Franklin County Citizen Leader, Lavonia



(Photos of plane spraying by Richard McGinnis)
Pierre Smith sprays a wheat field on the Jefferson-Burke county line.

Coming in for a landing

After 46
years, veteran
cropdusters
Pierre Smith
is preparing to
retire

By Parish Howard
Editor/Publisher

From several hundred feet up, the earth is a quilt with oddly shaped patches in different shades of green stretched out under the great gray-blue nothing above. Each crop is a different shade and texture; the corduroy of mature corn rows, the waving velvet of wheat, rolling and worn stretches of pasture.

Pierre Smith has seen them all from his bumblebee-yellow Air Tractor. He circles his contracted field, scooping out hazards, towers, power lines, dead trees with their leafless limbs, harder to see, but that can snatch a plane out of the sky. He plans his approach and descends on the downwind side of the crop.

He drops in, lower and lower until he skims the swatch of green.

He hits the lever and nozzles along the wings spray the chemicals, trailing white stripes that



(Photo by Parish Howard)

disappear into a killing fog that swirls and billows as it settles on the plants.

Then he pulls up, the horizon tilts and the world leans as he turns, preparing for his next pass.

After 46 seasons of contracted killing, specifically dive-bombing the insects, weeds and fungi that threaten the livelihoods of area farmers, Smith is coming in for a landing. He will be 73 this July and has decided that it is time to retire from crop dusting, or more accurately aerial application, a demanding career that every year costs several experienced pilots their lives.

His near half century view from the cockpit has afforded him a unique perspective on the both the profession and the evolution of farming in east central Georgia.

(See Smith on page 8A)

Agricultural pilot Pierre Smith poses with one of his two Air Tractor airplanes at his hangar at the Louisville airport.



Division A Lifestyle/ Feature Column

First Place (at right)

Diane Churchill
Savannah Morning News

Second Place

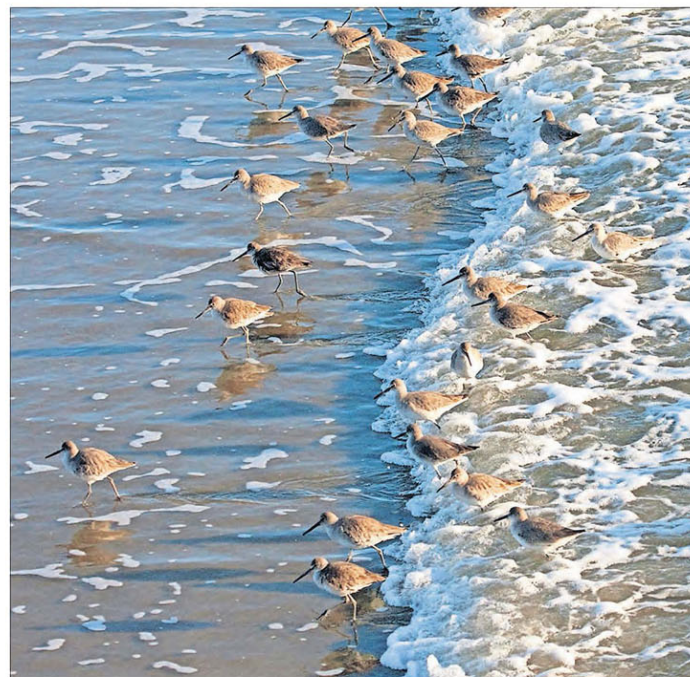
Larry Hobbs
The Brunswick News

Third Place

Joshua Peacock
Savannah Morning News

BIRDER'S EYE VIEW

Willet or won't it?



Flock of western willets feeds together in the surf during the winter. (PHOTOS BY DIANA CHURCHILL/TOR SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS)

Only a handful of shorebird species nest in coastal Georgia



Diana Churchill

My first experience of seeing the large, rather plain, long-legged shorebird dubbed a "willet" came back in the early 1960s during family trips from Savannah to Tybee. My dad used to distract the three squabbling children in the back seat with the offer "first one to see a kingfisher gets a nickel." However, in the summer when the kingfishers moved inland to nest, the offer changed to "first one to see a willet gets a nickel."



Two subspecies of willet pose side by side – western on the left and eastern on the right.

Willetts are a non-descript brownish-gray, about the same color as the telephone poles they liked to perch on top of. Only if one of them took off, hollering "pill-willet, pill-willet" would we get to see its secret beauty – a broad

black and white wing stripe distinct from the wing pattern of any other shorebird. Willetts are one of only a handful of shorebird species that nest in our area, the others being oystercatchers, killdeer and Wilson's plovers. What I

On the web

Watch a video with this column at savannahnow.com/accnt/columnists.

didn't know back then is that the willets that nest along the East Coast in the summer are not the same willets that can be found here in the winter. All the eastern nesting willets leave the continent and head south to the islands and Central and South America for the winter. Then many of the western willets that nest on inland lakes in the center of the country migrate to both coasts for the winter.

I went to Fort Pulaski

See CHURCHILL, B7

Division B Lifestyle/ Feature Column

First Place (at right)

Mimi Gentry
Times-Georgian, Carrollton

Second Place

Will Scott
Daily Citizen-News, Dalton

Third Place

Tina Bartleson
Rome News-Tribune

The living history of the new South

Today I saw living history. Not in a settler's museum, where spectacled ladies with their hair pulled into prim buns show gawking tourists the lost arts of spinning and bread making. This was real history, living and breathing, wrapped

around the bones of a quiet, Southern man. I spied him at a local convenience store. I had stopped for gas and a tenderloin biscuit. He had dropped in for a pack of smokes. Dressed in the all-white uniform of a painter, he was, for the most part, unremarkable.

It was his hair that caught my attention, hair the color of fire. As we stood in line to pay for our purchases, I studied him with a sideways glance. His arms were flecked in white paint and cinnamon freckles. His hands were work-hard; nails dirty from the toil of the day. But it wasn't in his work-stained clothes that history shone. I found it in his face. He had a noble face, like the ancient kings of Ireland.

In that moment, I crossed thousands of miles of ocean, crossed thousands of years past to glimpse the wild clans of Celts who herded cattle and fought passionate, bloody battles for control of the British Isles. It was those same people who came, a millennium later, to settle the Southeastern United States. Taking one look at our rolling hills, they saw a twin to the green land that they had left behind, so they put down fresh roots along the spine of the Appalachian Mountains.

They were a musical folk, bringing their

fiddles and mandolins across the wide ocean to reel and jig their way into a new style of music. And it was there that they left their mark. We hear them to this day, in our music — in reeling bluegrass fiddles, in the grim and sorrowful ballads of Appalachian

Mountain music. We can still see their bloodlines in the pale skin and firebrand hair of some of our southern children.

Today I saw living history. Not in a regiment of immaculately uniformed soldiers marching off to choreographed death and glory. This was real history residing beneath the skin of a busy Southern woman. I saw her at a soul-food

café. She was the owner, knocking out blue-plate specials during lunch rush. I sat at the counter, watching her work. Wielding her slotted spoon like a sorcerer's wand, she served up heaping helpings of squash casserole and steaming collards. Oven doors flew open, filling the air with the down-home smell of cornbread and biscuits.

She stopped for a moment to rest, wiping the Martha White flour off her large, hands. And although her kitchen's mouthwatering charms spoke of a rich heritage of Southern cooking, it didn't hold a candle to the history that I saw in her broad, beautiful face. It was as dark as the rich, fertile soil that lay beneath a zebra-trod Savannah. Her delicate, almond shaped eyes

spoke of an ancient land, of Africa, the cradle of human existence.

Again I crossed time and tides to glimpse foreign lands. I saw nations of proud people who sired the very first civilizations. They also came to our verdant, Southern land, but they didn't follow their own dreams. They came here to toil for others. And for generations, Southeastern agriculture and industry prospered from their forced labor. Eventually, when the shameful system of slavery that forced them here came to an end, those strong people stayed on and continued to contribute to the future of our region.

It was these and other races of people who came together to become the melting pot of the old South. They

lived and died here, spilling blood and tears into our stubborn, red clay. Victory and defeat found them, hunger and plenty made them who they were. And together they became the people of the South. When, as a region, we look into our social mirror, we see that our culture has evolved from them.

Webster's New World Dictionary defines history as "what has happened in the life or development of a people, country, or institution." Looking backwards shows us that. But what about things to come? Lately new folks have made this place their home. We've welcomed new races, new creeds. North from Canada,

south from Mexico, from the Far East and the Wild West they flock here, bringing their own broad

dreams to our green land. What strengths do they contribute to our culture? What traditions will they add to our Southern way of life? And what will we give them in return?

Different winds brought us here — brought our ancestors here. Winds in sails, winds pushing behind wagons, winds under the wings of flying ships. We come from different bloodlines, different cultures, and hold different truths to be self-evident. But what we all have in common is our enduring love for this fertile place. And together we will make new history — the history of the New South.

Mimi Gentry, a Carroll County resident, writes a weekly column for the Times-Georgian.



MIMI
GENTRY

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- University of West Georgia Alumni
- Carrollton Resident



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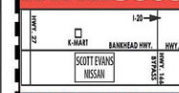


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Division D

Lifestyle/Feature Column

First Place (at right)

Mahdi Al-Husseini

Douglas County Sentinel, Douglasville

Second Place

Mahdi Al-Husseini

Douglas County Sentinel, Douglasville

Third Place

Mark Stokes

The Press-Sentinel, Jesup

An ode to the useless machine

Gears spinning aimlessly,
sensors sensing mindlessly
You do not do, what is
thought of you
While it's true that you
try, you fail every time
But fun you provide, that
much is true

What is to be made
of a machine that
does not work
as anticipated?
If fixable, we
consider it
salvageable. If
its parts may be
used elsewhere,
then we consider
it recyclable.
Otherwise, we
call it plain ole
junk.

We judge how
useful a machine
is, seemingly fairly, by
its ability to work. What
good is a vehicle that
breaks down repeatedly?
By nature that which
is useless should have
little value. Unless, we
want the machine to be
useless — which at least
one person does. OK,
including me, at least
two.

Simone Gierzt is
a Swedish inventor
of useless machines.
Though the machines
Simone develops
function in a mechanical
sense, they fail to be
practical. Simone has
developed all kinds of
wonky contraptions to
include a toothbrush
helmet, an alarm clock
that repeatedly hits the
sleeper to wake them, a
lipstick applicator, a robot
that serves soup and a
hair-cutting drone.

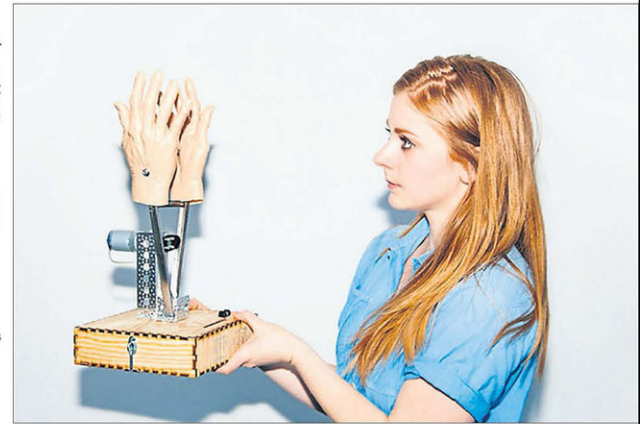
Machines are almost
always subjugated
to the realm of
functionality. What
Simone and others have
demonstrated, however,
is that mechanically
functioning machines
that fail to provide

practical use may have
significant educational
and entertainment value.
The educational value
comes from the process
of developing something
that may not function as
expected, without worry
of failure. As Simone
says in her 2018 TED
Talk, "And as soon as
I removed all pressure
and expectations
from myself, that
pressure quickly
got replaced by
enthusiasm, and
it allowed me to
just play (build
robots)."

What more,
useless machines
are incredibly
entertaining,
as has been

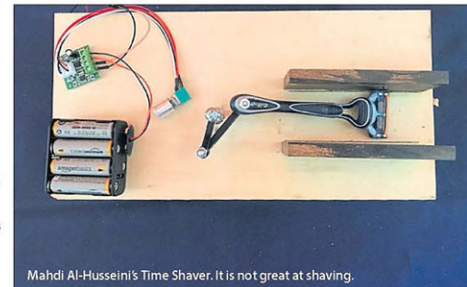
demonstrated on
Simone's social media,
but also on television
and in movies. There is
something inherently
fun about a machine
with a personality, as so
many of these useless
machines seem to have.
My favorite useless
machine was presented
on The Colbert Report
with Stephen Colbert
in 2010. The machine
consists of a box with
a switch on top. If you
flip the switch, a mechanical
hand reaches out from
inside the box and flips
the switch back off — as
if to say the machine
would like to be left
alone!

My Georgia Tech
education develops
engineers that invent or
innovate upon machines
intended to be useful in
some capacity. Naturally,
we do not want our
engineers to design
bridges and pacemakers
with educational or
entertainment value
in mind. Nonetheless,
Simone offers up an
interesting proposition.
Intrigued, I decided



Photos special

Simone Gierzt and her Applause Machine. It is not great at clapping.



Mahdi Al-Husseini's Time Shaver. It is not great at shaving.

to develop a useless
machine of my own.

Traditionally,
identifying the problem
is the first step.
This is followed by
the development of
hundreds of different
design concepts. Those
design concepts are
whittled down into a
short-list of three or
four using quantitative

tools. Finally, after
lengthy discussions
with various users,
one of the remaining
designs is selected, and
then prototyped and
refined. A provisional
patent is filed for good
measure, and you have
yourself the beginning
of a bonafide, clinically
useful invention.

As is tradition, I

problem, and develop
a multitude of design
concepts. I selected to
tackle the bothersome
nature of shaving.
Rather than narrow
down the designs using
meaningful metrics, I
instead placed sticky
notes with each design
concept on a piece of
plywood and had my
brother Ali throw a dart

what I would invent. I
made it a challenge to
develop a functioning
prototype in two hours
or less. Thus was born
the Time Shaver, a
battery powered motor
driven by a mechanical
switch connected to a
3D printed crankshaft
with a razor attached.
The crankshaft
transforms the rotational
motion of the motor to
the linear motion one
would want for shaving.
The switch allows the
user an opportunity to
determine how fast (and
terrible) of a shave they
would like.

Show some love to
the useless, outcast
gadgets among us. The
good Lord aside, no
one — and nothing — is
perfect.

Mahdi Al-Husseini is a
biomedical engineer, an
aspiring computer scientist,
and a medical evacuations
helicopter pilot for the U.S.

Division E

Lifestyle/Feature Column

First Place (at right)

Abigail Cutchshaw

White County News, Cleveland

Second Place

Whitney Sherrill

Times-Courier, Ellijay

Third Place

Halei Lamb

The Forest-Blade, Swainsboro

ASK LULA BELLE

The truth about Santa Claus

*Dear Lula Belle,
How can I explain to my kids that Santa Claus brings some kids computers, phones, game systems, and fancy electronics, and other kids just stuff they need? I am a single mom and I don't want to spoil my kids anyway, but when they go back to school after the break, they always wonder about it. Should I tell them the truth? – Concerned mom in Cleveland*

Dear Mom,

I wrote a column about this a few years ago. I did some extensive research and even got through to the North Pole workshop. I didn't speak to Santa Claus personally, but I did get a chance to speak to the head elf at the workshop, who is in charge of operations. His name is Jimmy.

Jimmy told me that many children around the world have forgotten that Santa's Workshop makes a lot of wonderful things, but they do not make computers, phones, tablets, and game systems. They tried it several years ago and Apple, Nintendo, and others filed a lawsuit. In the legal

agreement, Santa has to go through a third party and needs helpers like parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles to fulfill those items on a child's list.

The elves make hundreds of different kinds of toys, musical instruments, bicycles, candy, books, clothes, shoes, coats, and art supplies, but not fancy electronics. In fact, many of the items you see at the store are actually made by elves. That's how they stay in business. Throughout the year, they sell their toys and clothes to big stores like Target and Walmart.

It is very special for Santa Claus to bring you a toy or article of clothing that was made with love by the elves, rather than something your parents had to buy just because it was on your list. Santa Claus is very wise and knows that it is not good to spoil children. He likes to keep things simple.

Jimmy told me that Santa gets kinda sad when he goes down the chimney to

a house and sees that the parents have already put so many gifts out that they claim are "from Santa."

Jimmy said that Santa would rather a child have a few special gifts that the elves made especially for the child, than for the child to have a bunch of devices that will end up taking away from important family time

anyway. Jimmy said that children these days spend hours and hours playing video games, and their imaginations and creativity are suffering. That is why Santa likes bringing toys that are tools to help children's minds grow, like Legos, Play-Doh, puzzles, board games,

books, action figures, blocks, and so forth.

Jimmy mentioned that one awesome thing that many children these days don't know about, which is that even though the North Pole is extremely cold, there are magic fruit and nut trees that grow there. In the olden days, Santa used to

fill stockings with oranges, apples, plums, and walnuts. The fruit that grows at the North Pole is very rare and it is so delicious. It is truly a treat if you get some in your stocking.

So my advice is to ask your children to make two lists this year. One list is for Santa and one list is for parents. Dream big.

Let your children ask for whatever their heart desires. Just make sure the Santa list includes things that the elves actually make in their workshop. This way you can explain that all families have a budget, and like Mick Jagger says, "You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you get what you need."

Need advice? Ask Lula Belle by sending your questions to: asklulabelle@windstream.net. Lula Belle's latest book, Ask Lula Belle, Inside My Heart is for sale at Meaders Mercantile on Helen Highway. It is a collection of her favorite columns from the past 10 years, along with sweet and funny personal stories that weave it all together. It makes a great Christmas gift.



By
LULA
BELLE

Division G

Lifestyle/Feature Column

First Place (at right)

Robin Conte
Springs Publishing

Second Place

Joe Earle
Springs Publishing

Third Place

Bob Anderson
Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Celebrating the Super Bowl with a 'Snackadium'

Robin's Nest

Robin Conte is a writer and mother of four who lives in Dunwoody. She can be contacted at robinjm@earthlink.net.



This is about an architectural feat so grand that I must make mention of it in this column, even though I did not have a hand in its creation.

This is about Snackadiums.

And this is about my friend and neighbor, Cathy.

Cathy was hosting the Super Bowl party last year and asked me if I would like to help her cook for it. Since Cathy has five children at home, and since my nest is practically empty, and since Cathy is also excellent company, and since, as we all

know, it's more fun to cook at your neighbor's house than your own, I agreed.

I don't have a favorite, and I'm not going to talk about it at all.

This is only about the accompaniments to the game — that is, the props, the décor, and specifically, the food that complete the experience and make the recreational viewing of the game so enjoyable.

I spent the rest of that week proudly announcing to my kids that I was going to build a Snackadium.

Now here's the thing. Cathy can do anything she puts her mind to. She could make an Eiffel tower out of cream puffs and pretzel sticks. She could make the Taj Mahal from Cheez Doodles and Ding Dongs. She could recreate the Matterhorn using a Toblerone bar and a few jars of marshmallow fluff.

Basically, Cathy is extraordinarily capable, whereas I am not. I, in fact, need help opening a bottle of wine.

So my kids may not have believed me, but the extent of my incompetence is precisely why I was so stoked about having a hand in the creation.

I arrived at her house on the Saturday before the game and found, to my amazement, a fully constructed Snackadium. She was correct, of course, in not waiting until the day before the game to build

the thing. Why, I have since learned that grown men spend months planning and building their own food-filled fields.

She soothed my ego by stating that she needed help decorating it and filling it.

OK! I'm still in!

We focused on the field. We nixed the guacamole green AstroTurf, opting instead for a very tasty dead Bermuda, in the form of Velveeta dip and my Vidalia onion dip (derived from a recipe which I'm sure you've tried, but which I have tweaked to perfection).

But her teenage daughter made the compelling argument that Cathy's outstanding structure would not be complete without a green football field, and this we could not deny.

So Cathy whipped out her X-Acto knife and cut a foam board to the exact dimensions needed, then whipped up some guacamole schmear and topped the field with mayo lines and olive and onion helmets. At pregame, she covered the dead Bermuda dips with the avocado football field for the photos, and at game-time we removed the field and dug into the underlying dips.

The whole thing was a sensation.

The point is, I can't take credit for any of it; I can only take credit for having a very clever friend. I did, FYI, glue-stick some decorative logos onto the side



Robin, left, and friend Cathy enjoy the "Snackadium" for last year's Super Bowl.

of the stadium, and I also provided some carrots and the onion dip, so I guess you could say that I was an accomplice.

And because I'm very fond of you, dear reader, and because I know you're wondering, I will now share my recipe for Sweet Onion Dip:

- 2 cups roughly chopped Vidalia or sweet onion
- 1 cup shredded Swiss and Gruyere cheese, combined
- 1 cup grated Parmesan and pecorino Romano cheese, combined
- ½ cup mayo
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce

Mix together. Pour into baking dish and bake at 375 for 20-30 minutes, until bubbly and beginning to brown on top.

And so, as Cathy dusts off her Snackadium and prepares to fill it for another game, I hope I have inspired you to create one of your own. If not, you can still make onion dip.

Division A Layout and Design

First Place (at right)
Savannah Morning News

Second Place
The Brunswick News

Third Place
Gwinnett Daily Post, Lawrenceville

Savannah Morning News.

Friday, May 4, 2018

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VICTIMS IDENTIFIED



The site the morning after a Puerto Rico Air National Guard C-130 Hercules cargo plane crashed on Ga. 21 in Port Wentworth. (STAFF PHOTO BY SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS)

All 9 killed in Port Wentworth plane crash on Wednesday were members of Puerto Rico Air National Guard

By Brittini Ray
bray@savannahnow.com

Officials have identified the nine airmen killed in the fatal military plane crash that shut down Ga. 21 in Port Wentworth indefinitely. Just before 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, a WC-130 Hercules, also known as a Hurricane Hunter, crashed on Ga. 21 near Crossgate Road shortly after taking off, said Col. Pete Boone, vice wing commander of the 165th Airlift Wing.

The plane, which was leaving from the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport, was carrying members of the Puerto Rico Air National Guard. The Puerto Rico National Guard identified the victims of the crash as Maj. José R. Román Rosado, Maj. Carlos Pérez Sierra, First Lt. David Albador, Senior Master Sgt. Jan Paravisini, Master Sgt. Juan Andúfrez, Master Sgt. Mario Braña, Master Sgt. Victor Collin, Master Sgt. Eric Cárdenas, and Senior Airman Roberto Espada. "Our condolences go out to the families of everyone involved,"

See CRASH, A3



Col. Pete Boone, vice wing commander of the 165th Airlift Wing, conducts a press conference the morning after the fatal crash of a Puerto Rico Air National Guard C-130 Hercules cargo plane. (STAFF PHOTO BY SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS)

ON THE WEB

Go to savannahnow.com for video, images and audio from the crash site, including what impact it could have on the next few weeks of traffic.



THE VICTIMS

The Puerto Rico National Guard has released the names of the victims of the WC-130 aircraft accident.

1. Maj. José R. Román Rosado - Pilot - 38 years of service - from Marietta, Ga. He is survived by his wife and two sons.
2. Maj. Carlos Pérez Sierra - Navigator - 23 years of service - from Cardenas, Pa. He is survived by his wife, two sons and daughter.
3. 1st Lt. David Albador - Co-Pilot - 16 years of service - from PA, recently residing in Madison, Alabama. He is survived by his wife and daughter.
4. Senior Master Sgt. Jan Paravisini - Mechanic - 21 years of service - from Cardenas, Pa. He is survived by two daughters and son.
5. Master Sgt. Juan Andúfrez - 16 years of service - from Cardenas, Pa. He is survived by his wife and two sons.
6. Master Sgt. Mario Braña - Flight Engineer - 12 years of service - from Bayamon, Pa. He is survived by his mother and daughter.
7. Master Sgt. Victor Collin - 22 years of service - from Santa Isabel, Pa. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.
8. Master Sgt. Eric Cárdenas - Loadmaster - 31 years of service - from Rio Grande, Pa. He is survived by his wife, two step-daughters and son.
9. Senior Airman Roberto Espada - three years of service - from Suisun, Pa. He is survived by his grandmother.



SPORTS | B1
HALL OF FAME
CLASS OF 2018:
EX-SCD STAR
'KAT' DOTSON



WEATHER | A2
SUNNY
HIGH 85, LOW 59
Drawing by Julian, Heard Elementary

Stylist to help mothers affected by gun violence

By Brittini Ray
bray@savannahnow.com

Beaute' Marks & Loe's hairstylist Austin Brown knows all too well the impact of gun violence in Savannah. The Savannah native was one of the bystanders shot in City Market in August 2015 after an argument and

showing match between two men escalated in Ellis Square.

Now, the hairstylist is looking to bring some joy to those affected by the city's gun violence for Mother's Day with a special day of pampering. Five women will receive a special makeover, catered

dinner and gifts on May 6 under Brown's Mother's Day Give Back program. The event will be held at the Kasbide Community Center on Goshall Avenue.

"I picked mothers that lost their children to gun violence," he said. "And so it feels good when someone you don't know just comes

and just gives you a new look. It makes you feel good. It makes you think, 'Wow someone was really thinking about me.'"

"I had them submit their stories to me. They'll come to the salon and get their hair done. Their makeup will be done by Verando - one of the best makeup artists in

Savannah. At the community center, they'll be able to bring family members and they'll receive gifts ... It's just going to be a lot of fun."

See STYLIST, A2

168th year, Issue 109
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Comics A6
Crosswords A7, C1
Obituaries B9-10

Opinion A8-9
Sports B1-6
The People A5

For errors of fact, call Executive Editor Susan
Cotnam at 912-952-0127. For subscriptions,
delivery or billing questions, call 912-238-0127.



Division B

Layout and Design

First Place (at right)
LaGrange Daily News

Second Place
The Moultrie Observer

Third Place
Jason Greenberg
The Daily Tribune News, Cartersville



LaGrange Daily News will be closed
in remembrance of Memorial Day
Monday, May 28

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Memorial Day services announced

*LaGrange,
Hogansville to honor
fallen soldiers*

BY GABRIELLE JANSEN
DAILY NEWS

Memorial Day weekend will include local remembrance services for fallen soldiers in both LaGrange and Hogansville. The West Georgia Veterans Council will hold a service at Restlawn Memory Gardens in LaGrange at 11 a.m. Organizer Bernard Hledose said they have held the service for decades. "LaGrange has been very fortunate and all of the veteran's organizations work together whenever we're doing a community event," Hledose

SEE MEMORIAL 8

Council hears proposal to upgrade meter readers

BY ALICIA B. HILL
DAILY NEWS

The LaGrange City Council heard a proposal Tuesday to upgrade meter readers in the city to automatically collect consumption, diagnostic and status data. The upgrades are estimated to cost around \$14.3 million plus \$300,000 a year for maintenance for the water, gas and electric meters and transmitters and other upgrade expenses. "This is where we would convert our meters to the radio read system," City Manager Meg Kelsey said. "This is just an estimate because we might get a little competition involved on the pricing, but what he gave me as a budgetary number was \$14.3 million, which is a big item." Kelsey said that because of the variety of utilities involved,

SEE READERS 1



PHOTO BY DANIEL ELLIOTT, DAILY NEWS

CONGRATS CLASS OF 2018: Troup teacher Jennifer Ward flips Abby Michelle Taylor's tassel after she walks across the stage during Friday night's graduation. Below, 2018 STAR student Anna Leah Davis gives opening remarks.

TURN YOUR TASSELS

Storms hold off for Troup County High graduation

BY GABRIELLE JANSEN
DAILY NEWS

Although Troup High School's graduation time moved to 6:30 p.m., 274 students enthusiastically received their diplomas at Callaway Stadium Friday night. Students were supposed to walk at 8 p.m., however due to possible inclement weather, the time was changed. Senior class president Ryan Ellis welcomed those who attended, and STAR student Anna Leah Davis gave opening thoughts. "We may have no way of knowing what the future will hold, but we do know this — we've been given the tools to bring about a future that's brighter than our present," Davis said. Salutatorian Grace Cotton related the school to home and talked about its motto "Believe in THIS." "We weren't sure what to think of it first or how long it would last," Cotton said. "Once it started showing up everywhere, from Facebook to newspaper articles, this motto slowly started to make a difference in our school and in our hearts. We learned to believe in ourselves. We learned to believe in each other, and we learned that our teachers, at times, believed in us more than we did in ourselves." Valedictorian Nicholas Ryan talked about how he and



SEE TROUP 7



Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia
Home of the 2019 Sorento



GOOD MORNING:
Good morning to Jeremiah Black, who attended the FACES Community Festival in LaGrange last weekend.

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TODAY'S WEATHER ARTIST:
Today's weather artist is Christopher Villano, a fourth-grade student at Long Cane Elementary School.

Division D Layout and Design

First Place (at right)

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Second Place

The News Observer, Blue Ridge

Third Place

Mary Beth Yeary and Becky Taylor
The Tifton Gazette

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The Walton Tribune

WaltonTribune.com

Covers Walton County Like The Sunshine

Wednesday, May 23, 2018 • \$1



Booth Fowler / The Tribune

From left, seniors Tanner Green, Bay Witchee, Seth Clark and Joseph Brandon take a selfie with the Class AAAA state championship trophy after the Red Devils dispatched

Buford in two games Monday. It was Loganville's second straight championship and fourth in the past 11 seasons.

Red Devils sweep Buford to clinch second straight state title

ATHENS — Loganville cemented its place as the state's premier high school baseball program Monday by winning its second straight state championship and fourth in 11 seasons with a sweep of

Region 8-AAAAA rival Buford at UGA's Foley Field. The Red Devils won 13-3 and 5-2 to complete a dominant playoff run. In 10 playoff games, all victories, Loganville allowed

just 14 runs. No team managed more than three runs in a single game against the Red Devils. In fact, six times the Red Devils allowed no more than a run in a game.

Like Loganville's other playoff foes — East Paulding, North Springs, Leacuse Grove and Stuart's Mill — the Wolves just could not solve a deep and talented Red Devil pitching rotation.

This trophy will stand alongside those from the 2008, 2012 and 2017 campaigns in Loganville's bulging case. Get complete coverage in Sports, Section B, and at WaltonTribune.com.

CLASS OF 2018

Salute to Graduates

See graduates from every high school in Walton County plus a pair of students adopted from Russia graduate. Inside today!

Congratulations!

Loganville Christian Academy Class of 2018

Complete results from Tuesday's primaries can be found at WaltonTribune.com, Facebook and the weekend edition.

SINCE 1900 Get breaking news updates, manage your subscription, place an advertisement and read the e-edition at WaltonTribune.com

Division E Layout and Design

First Place (at right)
Monroe County Reporter, Forsyth

Second Place
Jackie Gutknecht and Brian Worton
The Covington News

Third Place
Newton Citizen, Covington

THIS WEEK'S INSIDE DEALS >>> SMARTSOURCE • LOWE'S • TRACTOR SUPPLY • SEARS • CVS • INGLES

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OUR VIEW >>
On the Park... 4A
On the Outside looking in... 3A

SPORTS >>>



Golf Dawgs make state tourney

SEE PAGE 4B



Forsyth remembers Billy Graham

SEE PAGE 2C

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

Jessica Strebek
Barbara Baker
Joshua Ayer
Jo A. Davis
Julian McCarty
Cade Hendricks
Miriam Freeman
Mike Seidler

NEW SUBSCRIBERS OF THE WEEK

DEATHS >>> 6A

Robert "Rocky" Brown &
William Scotty Hawkins
Thomas James Clemmon
Roy L. Bonkston
Dorothy Ann Davis
Doris Ogilvie
Willie B. Chambers

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the Monroe County Reporter

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www.MyMCR.net • Vol. 47 • No. 19 4 Sections • 28 Pages • Wednesday • May 9, 2018

Cafeteria worker accused of inmate sex in walk-in freezer

By Will Davis
publisher@mymcr.net

A cafeteria worker at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC) in Forsyth has been arrested and charged with having sex with a prison inmate in the walk-in freezer of the cafeteria.

Adalyn Vanier Jones, 33, of 237 Juliette Road, Apt. 7, Forsyth, was arrested Thursday, May 3 and charged with sexual assault against a person in custody and giving tobacco to



JONES



BENTON

an inmate. Warrants accused Jones of having sex with inmate Robert Jamel Benton, 34, in the walk-in freezer

from March 29 to April 27. Corrections officials are also reportedly executing a search warrant on Jones' phone looking for more evidence of wrongdoing and more charges are possible. Inmates from the Al Buhras prison are used as trustee labor in the kitchen and other places at GPSTC. Benton, who has been in and out of prison six times, was charged with having tobacco. He's serving a 4-year sentence for fleeing police in Semanah, and has previous convictions

for drugs, obstruction and traffic offenses. GPSTC officials said Jones had worked there for five years. A source close to the situation said Jones would sometimes disappear for a few hours after her shift and that GPSTC added surveillance cameras throughout the facility. A supervisor reportedly told the cafeteria staff about the arrest last week and told them anyone else caught doing the same would be going to prison.



About 200 south Monroe County residents register their opposition to low-income apartments by raising their hands last Tuesday. Commissioners unanimously shut down a variance for the apartment plans.

'Leave us the h--- alone'

By Richard Dumas
forsyth@mymcr.net

Monroe County Commissioners rejected by a 4-0 vote on Tuesday, May 1 plans for a 72-unit, low-income apartment complex just inside the New Forsyth Road while also voting to update the county's commercial zoning ordinance.

About 200 citizens attended the meeting, which was moved to the Monroe County Conference Center to accommodate the crowd, to express opposition to Alabama-based Vantage Development's proposed project at the location identified as 101 Prosser Court, LaBock, Texas-based Wilburson Group LLC owns the 18.5-acre tract located just east of New Forsyth Road

abutting the Cross Creek subdivision. Jordan Whitehead of Vantage Development asked commissioners for a conditional use variance in commercial to build a complex that would consist of 12 one-bedroom units, 40 two-bedroom units and 20 three-bedroom units. Following a 45-minute long hearing, District 3 commissioner John Ambrose, who

represents the district where the complex would have been constructed, motioned to deny Vantage's request. After District 2 commissioner Eddie Rowland seconded Ambrose's motion, commissioner chairman Greg Tapley called for a vote. All four commissioners in attendance unanimously denied Vantage's request, causing the crowd to erupt into applause.

Near the conclusion of the May 1 meeting two hours later, Ambrose made a separate motion to place a 90-day moratorium on all mixed-use or high-rise-oriented commercial development projects within the county. Ambrose said he wanted the county's outdated zoning ordinance to

See REJECTED • Page 7C

What do you love about MC?

Monroe County will celebrate Founders Day the week of May 13-19, and for the sixth year in a row, residents can win big prizes by submitting an essay on the topic, "What I Love about Monroe County." The essays are due at 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 10. Monroe County residents Todd and Stacy Tolbert, owners of Tolbert & Associates, an insurance and financial planning firm, are offering \$700 in prizes for the "What I Love about living in Monroe County" essay contest. Judges will name a first and second place in two categories, youth (up to 18) and adult (over 18). Essays must be at least 400 words and may be emailed to publisher@mymcr.net, faxed to 994-2359 or mailed to P.O. Box 796, Forsyth, GA 31029. The deadline is 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 10. The winning essays will be published in the May 16 edition, along



with Founders Day information including specials offered by local businesses encouraging Monroe County residents to shop at home. The county will celebrate its 197th birthday this year as it was created by the Georgia legislature on May 15, 1821.



Look who's back
About 88 young men grades 8-11 hit the Many Persons practice field on Monday for the first day of spring practice. Coach Brian Nelson's Bulldogs, after making the Final 4 in back to back seasons, are expected to have another strong year.

The Lanier County Advocate, Lakeland

100

Division A - Photo Essay

First Place (at right)

Will Peebles
Savannah Morning News

Second Place

Adriana Iris Boatwright
Savannah Morning News

Third Place

Bobby Haven
The Brunswick News



Division B Photo Essay

First Place (at right)

Joshua Jones
Athens Banner-Herald

Second Place

Clay Neely
The Newnan Times-Herald

Third Place

Derrek Vaughn
The Valdosta Daily Times



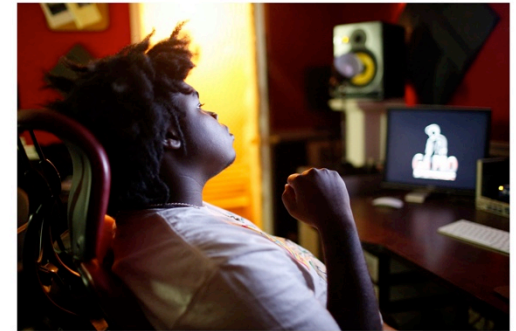
Blanco, right, gets in his car with his sister Jaquita Blakely to take her to school early in the morning in Athens, Ga., Thursday, May 17, 2018. Blanco's mother gave him his car and also helped him find his way to music. She wanted better for him and moved so he could go to Cleveland Road Elementary School. "If I didn't go to Cleveland Road I probably wouldn't even be rapping right now," Blanco said. He found out he could sing early on at the school where he fell in love with crowds at fourth- and fifth-grade talent shows. [Joshua L. Jones/Athens Banner-Herald] Photo 8 of 18.



A photo from Blanco's first downtown Athens show with Travis 'Dictator' West in February of 2017. The Athens music scene has changed a lot over the last 10 years, especially when it comes to Hip Hop. "When I was coming up you had to grind and get money to get CDs made and now-a-days you can find an artists music with the click of a button. I tell Blanco it's about your drive and working hard," West said. "As for shows. There's way more Hip-Hop shows period in Athens now, let alone someone his age ... shutting down bars that normally wouldn't even let him in. It's really something. I just felt that night when I put him on stage for the first time, I had been in the studio with him and seen his work ethic and once I put him on that stage it was game on." [Joshua L. Jones/Athens Banner-Herald] Photo 10 of 18.



Blanco poses for a photo at the Boys & Girls Club in Athens, Ga., Thursday, May 17, 2018. Going into the sixth grade he started going to the Boys & Girls Club where talent shows were held every Friday, with all week to practice over the summer, he won several talent shows and grew his love for performance. He started free-styling later in the ninth grade and in the 10th grade he recorded his first song. [Joshua L. Jones/Athens Banner-Herald] Photo 9 of 18.



Blanco looks through his catalog of songs at GA Pro Entertainment sound studio in Athens, Ga., Thursday, May 17, 2018. Blanco's uncle started the studio when he was only a baby so as a boy he grew up surrounded by music and only a short drive away from a studio. He has worked with his family at GA Pro to record all of his music. [Joshua L. Jones/Athens Banner-Herald] Photo 11 of 18.



Division E Photo Essay

First Place (at right)

Greg Finan Jr.

The Dahlonega Nugget

Second Place

Casey Parrish

The Eatonton Messenger

Third Place

Emily McClure

Lake Oconee News, Greensboro



Division F Photo Essay

First Place (at right)

Wesleigh Sagon

The Madison County Journal, Danielsville

Second Place

Gale Gay

The Champion, Decatur

Third Place

Chuck Thompson

The Jones County News, Gray

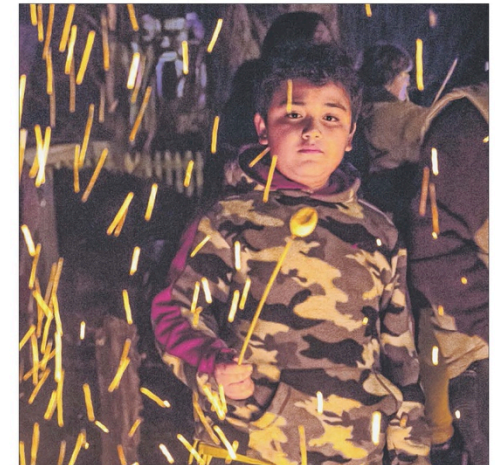
Christmas, Colbert style



Hay rides around downtown Colbert were offered Friday night during the seventh annual old-fashioned Christmas celebration. See more photos on page 3A. Photos by Wesleigh Sagon



Emily Umbehant, 4, was excited to see Santa Friday at Colbert's seventh-annual old-fashioned Christmas celebration. Here, she is shown with a stuffed animal that was given to her by Santa. The stuffed animals were anonymously donated in memory of the person's parents.



A visitor roasted marshmallows over an open fire Friday night at Colbert's seventh-annual old-fashioned Christmas celebration.

Division G Photo Essay

First Place (at right)

Wesleigh Sagon
The Braselton News

Second Place

Wesleigh Sagon
The Braselton News

Third Place

Wesleigh Sagon
The Braselton News

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

The Braselton News

Page 9A



Mayor speaks
Mayor Theresa Kenerly did the welcoming and acknowledgements at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony Sunday afternoon.



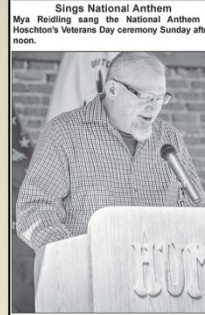
Stars and stripes
A young boy held an American flag while reciting the Pledge of Allegiance Sunday at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony. Photos by Wesleigh Sagon



Sings National Anthem
Mya Reidling sang the National Anthem at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony Sunday afternoon.



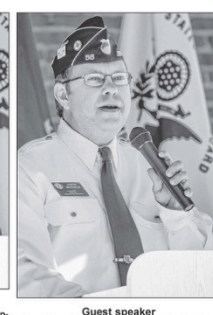
Salute to the services
Mill Creek High School's brass ensemble band gave a salute to the services Sunday at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony.



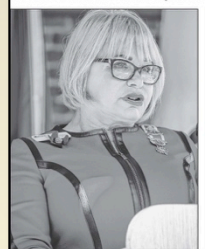
Invocation
Pastor Steve Carroll of The Way Church did the invocation at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony.



Introduces guest speaker
James Lawson of Lawson's Funeral Home introduced guest speaker, Jason Mergole, adjutant of American Legion Post 56, at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony.



Guest speaker
Jason Mergole, adjutant of American Legion Post 56, was the guest speaker at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony Sunday.



Introduces keynote speaker
Susan Gwaltney, Sunbury Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, introduced Keynote speaker, George Rishfield, a Holocaust survivor. Here, she is shown at Hoschton's Veterans Day ceremony.



Thanks veterans during event
Jim Cleveland, Hoschton City Council member, thanked veterans and closed the ceremony.



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Division A - Education Writing



Allatoona High School senior Carsyn Gambrell isn't sure what her near future holds and may be thinking of a "Plan B" for her college education, after her ACT test, along with over 200 more, have been misplaced by the shipping company and never arrived to the ACT offices in Iowa City, Iowa. She is missing scholarship deadlines, and entrance exam period without her score. For a video, visit mdjonline.com / Staff-Kelly J. Huff

IN JEOPARDY

More than 200 ACT tests taken in Cobb misplaced

SHADDI ABUSAID
sabusaid@mdjonline.com

The collegiate fate of some Cobb high school seniors hangs in the balance after more than 200 ACT tests were misplaced last month.

The test, which covers English, math, reading and science, is administered at area high schools and used by admissions departments at colleges across the country to determine which students are accepted. It is scored out of a possible 36 points and contains an optional writing section.

But a box of tests taken Jan. 6 at

Lassiter High School was lost by FedEx, a spokesman for the standardized test company confirmed.

"Unfortunately, a package containing approximately 220 answer sheets from the Jan. 6 ACT test date at Lassiter High School in Marietta is missing," said Ed Colby, the company's senior director of media and public relations. "Two packages containing answer documents were sent by the ACT test coordinator there after testing was completed, but only one of them has arrived at ACT. The other package is currently missing in the Federal Express system."

Carsyn Gambrell, an 18-year-old

Allatoona High School senior, was supposed to take her test back in December, but had to wait a month after metro Atlanta got blanketed in snow. While she said she admittedly isn't the most confident test taker, she thought she did well on last month's ACT make-up and was college-bound.

But after a month of not hearing back, she began to worry, her mother said.

Now, Gambrell, who hoped to enroll in Kennesaw State University's early childhood education program this fall, isn't sure what her future holds.

SEE ACT, A5

First Place (at left)

Shaddi Abusaid

Marietta Daily Journal

Second Place

Ann Meyer

Savannah Morning News

Third Place

Gwinnett Daily Post,

Lawrenceville

Keeping Students



KATELYN UMHOLTZ | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES
Rodney Carr, Valdosta State University vice president of student success, said the Odum Library renovations should be complete before the start of spring semester.

VSU hopes library upgrade will up retention rates



valdostadailytimes.com;
see "VSU LIBRARY"

BY KATELYN UMHOLTZ
katelyn.ummholtz@gallnews.com

VALDOSTA — Odum Library is undergoing renovations that will expand tutoring opportunities for Valdosta State University students.

The main floor of the library will become the new Academic Support Center and learning commons complete with tutors, interactive whiteboards and seating to accommodate students and faculty.

The project will cost VSU almost \$1 million, but Rodney Carr, VSU vice president for student



KATELYN UMHOLTZ | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES
Chere Peguesse, director of the Academic Support Center, said moving the tutoring service center from Langdale Hall to the new main floor of Odum Library will benefit students.

success, said the benefits of the library's new main floor is worth every penny. VSU retention rates are

currently at 69 percent, much lower than comparable universities such as Kennesaw State University

and Georgia Southern University.

See VSU on 6A

Division B Education Writing

First Place (at left)

Katelyn Umholtz

The Valdosta Daily Times

Second Place

Lee Shearer

Athens Banner-Herald

Third Place

Clay Reynolds

The Courier Herald, Dublin

Division C - Education Writing

First Place (at right)

Daniel Evans
LaGrange Daily News

Second Place

Isabella Alves
Times-Georgian, Carrollton

Third Place

Donna Harris
The Daily Tribune News,
Cartersville

'THIS IS NOT A NEGOTIATION'



FILE PHOTO | DAILY NEWS

ASKED TO RESIGN Former Troup County Schools Superintendent Cole Pugh was asked to resign, or face termination of his contract, according to email records.

Emails show former superintendent Pugh was asked to resign

BY DANIEL EVANS
DAILY NEWS

Former Troup County Schools Superintendent Dr. Cole Pugh was given an ultimatum, resign or face the termination of his contract. According to emails between members of the Troup County School Board in the week leading up to Pugh's official res-

ignation, Pugh was given the opportunity to resign, but the directive of the board was clear — Pugh would not remain the school system superintendent moving forward.

Pugh and the board officially agreed to a mutual resignation on Aug. 13, but email correspon-

SEE PUGH A2

New superintendent could be in place as early as January

BY DANIEL EVANS
DAILY NEWS

The superintendent position has not been officially posted yet, but the school system is starting the process to hire a permanent replacement.

The school system posted to its website Wednesday that it is looking for a search firm to guide the search.

Applications must be submitted by Sept. 5.

SEE NEW A2

Division D Education Writing

First Place (at right)

Ellen Harrison
Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Second Place

Smoke Signals

Third Place

Stephen Milligan
The Walton Tribune, Monroe

BY ELLEN HARRISON

Before dawn, August through June, part-time school employees climb into the cabs of their big, yellow Blue Bird buses and begin their weekday routes, crisscrossing the foothills of Northeast Georgia, as they do all over American neighborhoods. Once the morning route is done, many go off to other tasks and jobs during the day, to return again, each afternoon, to do it all again.

In 1985, when Governor Joe Frank Harris crafted the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act in an attempt to equalize economic disparities and ensure each of Georgia's children could attain a "quality," or at least, equally funded education, Blue Bird produced only bus bodies, and local systems bought their chassis from International. Bodies and chassis were joined at a plant in Fort Valley, Ga. The closest approximation for the average cost of an entire bus from that era is about \$45,000.

In 2018, with many additional safety features, including push out windows and emergency exits, fire retardant cushion upholstery, electronic components, "ABS brake systems, rear motorist alert signs, noise suppression switches to deactivate all electronic noise making devices at railroad crossings and the sleeping child check system," wrote Pat Schofill, the Department of Education's Director of Pupil Transportation, adding flashing, strobe lights, GPS and even wifi—the average, base Blue Bird is now \$77,000. That cost, said Schofill, climbs to \$85,000, and at times, upwards of \$90,000, depending upon specialized equipment.

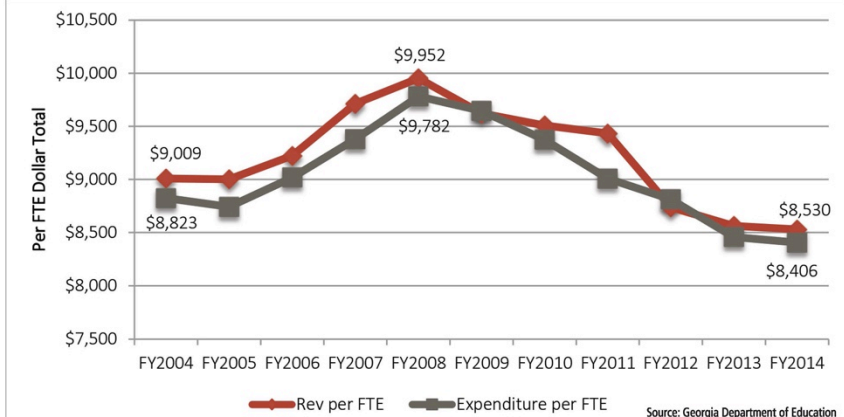
No one knows the number of upgrades and changes and their ability to outstrip state coffers better than Schofill, of Cleveland, Ga. "My father worked at Blue Bird, and my grandfather retired from there." From his daily commute to Atlanta's Sloppy Floyd buildings where the DOE oversees the state's schools, he discussed (during a phone interview Tuesday, Oct. 16) his recent, detailed report to elected representatives under the capitol's gold dome, "Georgia Department of Education Pupil Transportation Division Legislative Report, July 21, 2017."

In that report, the actual, 100 percent

Education and Taxes

What's the real cost of quality basic education?

Georgia K-12 Revenue and Expenditures Per FTE, 2004-2014 (2014 Dollars)



Austerity cuts, according to the Georgia Public Policy Foundation, represent the "difference between the funding level determined by the state's funding formula [QBE] and the amount actually funded."

The burden of funding schools is constitutional: "Article VIII, Section 1

to programs covered under grant programs, dog-eared for specific purposes, rather than general maintenance and operation. Title I, for example, funds programs that meet the needs of children from low-income families, to build bridges to the American dream.

In Telfair County, the shares are 27.31 local, 61.91 state and 10.77 percent federal. The five-mill fair share in those counties is not listed on their budget illustrations, and phone messages to those offices went unanswered.

Pennies add up

Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) revenues provide an alternative revenue source for capital outlay, which is separate from maintenance and operations. SPLOST issues are based on the consumers' ability to buy goods and services—rather than the ability to own property or earn money—and those projects are clearly defined in each referendum, voted on by county constituents.

Artificial turf, bricks and mortar buildings, and additional technology purchases for instruction all qualify for funding under these "progress for pennies" revenues.

The third installment in this series will examine the impacts of these projects on a school system's bottom line, as well as their missions to prepare boys and girls for their life's work.

School mold issues date back to 2017

Employee says mold was found on library books

BY KATIE TILLER

Teachers at Oconee County Elementary School have been combating mold growth the 2016-2017 school year.

On May 4, 2017, an OCES employee composed an email with the subject line stating, “AC problems in the library,” according to documents obtained in an Open Records Act request.

“Also, do [school officials] know they need to keep the air running in the media center in the summer? If they don’t, books will mold and mildew,” stated the email. “I’m starting to see that in

the collection with a number of books.” When asked, Oconee County Schools Communications Director Anisa Sullivan Jimenez said that the air-conditioning unit in OCES is turned off during the summer months, except when work is being done in the school.

On May 12, 2017, the district employee who received the aforementioned email sent another email to the maintenance crew, saying that a work order had been placed and the teacher who was previously concerned about the condition of the books “has again expressed concern about the books being ruined by mildew.”

“Apparently this has happened in another media center, so she has a heightened concern,” reads the email.

SEE MOLD PAGE A3



Photos of the carpet of a classroom were included emails [Submitted photo]

Division E Education Writing

First Place (at left)

Katie Tiller

The Oconee Enterprise,
Watkinsville

Second Place

Tribune & Georgian, St. Marys

Third Place

Heather Middleton

Henry Herald, McDonough

Division F Education Writing

First Place (at right)

Richard Harris
The Journal, Buena Vista

Second Place

Heather Middleton
Clayton News, Jonesboro

Third Place

Heather Middleton
Clayton News, Jonesboro

Stewart Celebrates Opening of New Educational Complex



The gym pictured above is just one of the new buildings at the K-12 campus in Lumpkin.

New construction/renovation is seen as a big step forward for K-12 campus

By Richard Harris

Many local residents and officials gathered in Lumpkin on Monday, July 23 to celebrate the official opening of the Stewart County Educational Complex, which is the culmination of years of study and work to add new buildings to the former Stewart County Elementary School to transform it into a K-12 campus.

It includes a brand new high school, as well as an addition to the middle/elementary school, *and* renovation of the existing buildings. In total, it was around a 103,000 square foot project that cost around \$12.7 million (with the majority – \$7.4 million) coming from state funding.

The new construction portion includes a new middle/high school administration area that includes an entrance, reception area,



Superintendent Dr. Valerie Roberts (left) and Stewart County Board of Education Chairman Darius Brown speak to the crowd.

For Many More Photos: www.tjournal.com

principal's office, science lab, health clinic, and storage vault. Just behind that new building is the new 18,671 square foot high school building, which is designed as a CTAE (Career Technical Agricultural Education) multi-purpose building. The building is much larger than it appears from the highway, as part of it cannot be seen from that angle. Once inside, however, it's easy for visitors to realize that it is definitely large

enough to be considered a new school by itself.

There is also a nice, new gym at the far left side of the campus. That is where officials and guests gathered for a special Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Monday.

Dr. Valerie Roberts, Superintendent, thanked the School Board, which she described as the hardest

See **OPENING**, Page 11

Division A

Editorial Writing

First Place (at right)

Jon Gillooly
Marietta Daily Journal

Second Place

Savannah Morning News

Third Place

The Brunswick News

Marietta Daily Journal

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J.K. Murphy, VP, Content

Wade Stephens, Associate Publisher

Dave Gossett, Circulation Director

Travis Knight, VP, Advertising/Marketing

EDITORIAL ■ OUR VIEW

Where have all the conservatives gone?

True colors will show with Wednesday's millage rate vote

The Cobb Board of Commissioners, which used to be known as a responsible body, is expected to raise taxes on Wednesday.

There are more than a few who share the blame for this reckless indulgence, but the daddy rabbit is Chairman Mike Boyce, a man who charmed the public into thinking he opposed tax hikes on the campaign trail only to reveal his true colors once elected.

Speaking to the East Cobb Civic Association in 2012, for instance, Boyce emphasized he was a Republican, the party of "fiscal responsibility," as he blasted then-Chairman Tim Lee for raising taxes in 2011.

"What we did last year, what the chairman led last year, is not a Republican government," Boyce said. "We raised taxes. Nothing he says after that is going to eliminate the fact that we raised taxes as Republicans. We can't sit here as Republicans and criticize President Obama's administration for raising taxes and cutting benefits and do the same thing here in Cobb County and think that we're different. We're not. It's time to hold people accountable. If you voted for a tax raise last year, you need to be held accountable. That's why I'm in this race."

So much for campaign rhetoric. Yet before Boyce's political future

And we won't even get into the \$750 million Cobb voters approved in 2014, renewing once again the endless 1 percent special purpose local option sales tax cycle for the government to spend, spend, spend.

Perhaps if Birrell and the rest of the commission hadn't saddled the county's budget with \$10.4 million in annual raises to county staff, along with monthly agenda books chock full of questionable expenses, they wouldn't be in financial straits.

Of course, one would have no inkling of Cobb's largesse by listening to the 12-minute oration Cupid gave on Tuesday in which she, channeling Dolores Umbridge in all but the pink outfit and purring kittens, expressed how "saddened, disheartened and disappointed" she was in Cobb residents who didn't value things they believed served little purpose. County employees, Commissioner Cupid lectured, her finger wagging at the crowd, her feet planted firmly on a soap box, "were exhausting themselves to provide the same level of services" and "being asked to turn straw into gold. ... But it's not enough."

You'd have thought the county bureaucrats had just been awarded Purple Hearts the way she spoke of them doing the kind of jobs they're perfectly well

Division B

Editorial Writing

First Place (at right)

Jamie Jones

Daily Citizen-News, Dalton

Second Place

The Newnan Times-Herald

Third Place

The Valdosta Daily Times

DAILY CITIZEN-NEWS

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Keith Barlow
Publisher

Jamie Jones
Managing Editor

Unsigned editorials represent the view of the Daily Citizen-News. Members of the newspaper's editorial board are Keith Barlow, Wes Chance, Jamie Jones and Victor Miller. The community member is Cathy Holmes. Columns and letters to the editor are the opinions of the authors.

OUR VIEW

We ask you to
speak out against
baseless claims of
'fake news'

"Fake news! Fake news! Fake news!"

The chants have cascaded seemingly daily at Republican political rallies across the country as President Donald Trump, some of his supporters and his enablers seek to discredit the news media that covers him. The baseless fake news accusations are leveled against the entire industry. Trump lumps everyone in the media into one broad category, no matter the medium, and no matter the size of each.

He recklessly calls the media "the enemy of the people." Yes, he reserves that brazen term for fellow Americans practicing a craft enshrined in the First Amendment. The roll call of those producing fake news, in our president's eyes, includes television stations, radio stations, online news sites, magazines, citizen journalists and newspapers.

That includes us.

Until Thursday, the Daily Citizen-News had not been a direct object of those attacks (although passive-aggressively we have, as a sign in the Whitfield County Republican Party headquarters in Dalton states, "I support President Trump. Not fake news," with the word "media" circled and with a red line through it).

On Thursday, those derisive chants hit home. A

Division D

Editorial Writing

First Place (at right)

The Press-Sentinel, Jesup

Second Place

Stuart Taylor
The Tifton Gazette

Third Place

David Clemons
The Walton Tribune, Monroe

The Press-Sentinel

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THE P-S OPINION

Janet Royal should resign

It's time for Janet Royal to tender her resignation as a member of the Wayne County Board of Education.

Royal—who represents District 2 on the school board—was indicted last week for theft by taking in connection with her former job of Screven city clerk.

Of course, an indictment is not a conviction and does not automatically remove an elected official from office. Royal is presumed innocent until found guilty, after all.

By the same token, though, an elected position is not a basic right. Indeed, when several different people run for the same office, only one can be elected in the first place.

And this indictment is certainly a major distraction. So it's reasonable for people to expect Royal to remove that distraction by stepping down.

At this point in her term, it's unclear what would happen upon her resignation. The immediate effect, though, would be to leave her seat vacant.

Yet would that be any worse than having Royal remain in office without attending meetings until her term ends in December—effectively depriving her constituents of representation even while she retains her seat?

Division E

Editorial Writing

First Place (at right)

Michael Prochaska
The Oconee Enterprise,
Watkinsville

Second Place

David Clemons and Jackie
Gutknecht
The Covington News

Third Place

Roy F. Chalker Jr.
The True Citizen,
Waynesboro

OUR OPINION

O'Dillon firing marks end of an era

There has always been controversy and gossip in Watkinsville but mostly in small doses, just enough to draw comparisons to the fictional town of Mayberry. Police Chief Lee O'Dillon reminded many a visitor of Andy Griffith: welcoming, neighborly and often chatty. He exuded "small town America" with an outwardly attitude of goodwill infused with just the right amount of gossipy tendencies.

Except there is no "right amount" of gossipy tendencies for someone in his position. Those kind of quirky towns characterized by eccentric personalities exist only in movies and TV.

O'Dillon treated Watkinsville quite informally, almost like it was impervious to real tragedy. Did he think that the city could just hum along with minimal preparation for the horrors of violent crime?

Behind his do-gooder demeanor was a policeman with an old fashioned approach to small-town policing.

Regardless, his small-town approach was a liability.

There is no doubt Watkinsville Mayor Dave Shearon clashed with O'Dillon the minute Shearon took office. Shearon has many goals for the city, but in broad terms, his ultimate goal is to propel Watkinsville into the



future.

Shearon is preserving some of Watkinsville's charm, like downtown art and pedestrian pathways, but it seems as if he wants to purge inefficiencies by uprooting Watkinsville's insular, small-potatoes character.

Shearon denies hiring an overqualified code enforcement officer for the sole purpose of auditing the Police Department.

But the fact remains that after only several months on the job, his hire was allowed to audit the Police Department.

And after successfully ousting the police chief, Watkinsville will soon hire a city administrator for the first time in its history.

Shearon's new-found reputation for leaving no stone unturned has earned him respect from some and resistance from

others.

Still, he is right to modernize the Police Department in a time when law enforcement officers are scrutinized when they have to use deadly force.

"The agency generally functions on practices and shortcuts, most of which have not evolved over time," Code Enforcement Officer Steve Davis said in his summary of the investigation. "Written policies and procedures, a standard fixture in most law enforcement agencies, were minimal at Watkinsville Police Department under O'Dillon."

The danger posed by these policy deficiencies was not something the mayor and city council would tolerate.

When children are being abused and suspects refuse to cooperate with police officers, the smallest weakness in a police force may very well result in a preventable tragedy.

Watkinsville is evolving into something that no longer resembles the easygoing, folksy days of old.

We now live in a time of vigilance and preparation, and most of all, professionalism.

Editorials represent the position of The Oconee Enterprise and are written by the publisher, editor and staff writers.

Division F

Editorial Writing

First Place (at right)

Shane Scoggins
Franklin County Citizen Leader,
Lavonia

Second Place

John Hewitt
The Champion, Decatur

Third Place

Wil Petty
The Baldwin Bulletin,
Milledgeville

Our View ▶

Randall deserves better

The Franklin County Board of Education's decision to effectively fire Superintendent Wayne Randall is risky and should have been handled in a much better way.

A majority of the school board decided in November not to renew Randall's contract after this school year. Randall wasn't informed until Dec. 4 and made the news public this week.

As Board Member Alan Mitchell, a Randall supporter, said, this is not the best time to make a change in the overall leadership of the system.

The school system is currently working to complete a College and Career Academy at Franklin County High School, is finishing up plans to build onto Carnesville Intermediate School, merge the two Carnesville campuses and is trying to solve the puzzle of where to put a new Royston Elementary School.

made, the board should have had the courage to do so publicly but instead followed some bad advice.

State law allows the board to talk about personnel matters, including the superintendent's evaluation, outside of public view, and the school board's attorney said that since Randall's contract would not be renewed, no vote was necessary.

But the legalities don't factor in that Randall is a native of Franklin County who has worked his entire career in our school system. As posts on social media show, he is a beloved former teacher and principal.

Three members of the school board decided in that closed meeting to make a change.

Only after they told Randall nearly a month later and he announced his intended retirement did it become public.

Division A

Humorous Column

First Place (at right)

Dean Poling

The Valdosta Daily Times

Second Place

Jane Fishman

Savannah Morning News

Third Place

Dick Yarbrough

Marietta Daily Journal

Don't sit on Invisible Tommy

Across the room, the children shared their proper requests with the Sunday school class. Children asked for prayers for relatives, friends, help with school, until it came to the youngest child's turn.

A 4-year-old, this boy was younger by at least a year than anyone else in the class. He made his proper request with as much earnestness as any of the other children.

"I'd like to pray for my invisible friend Tommy's dad," the 4-year-old said. "He got hit by a snake."

Everyone laughed at this request, with the exception of the 4-year-old, who was quite serious, and the little boy's 8-year-old big brother, who, hoping to outpace the family's reputation, said sleepily of his little brother: "He's away."

Replying, perhaps, that just

because the youngest brother believes in invisible people doesn't by virtue of his age mean that the 8-year-old or anyone else in the family necessarily does.

Though, reply that this was not necessarily true either.

While the rest of the family didn't believe in invisible people, you wouldn't necessarily tell it by their comments and actions.

Hearing about the Sunday school proper request for invisible Tommy's dad, the 4-year-old's dad couldn't help but ask his youngest son, "What happened to Tommy's dad? Heard he was bitten by a snake."

"Well," the 4-year-old said,



DEAN POLING

"my invisible friend Tommy's dad went to the bathroom, and he sat down on the toilet, and the toilet was a snake's mouth, and that's when my invisible friend Tommy's dad got bit by the snake."

In addition to being challenged by invisibility, Invisible Tommy's family apparently faced some serious plumbing challenges, too.

As for the 6-year-old's family, they faced the challenge of an invisible boy living in their house and accompanying their youngest everywhere he went.

At the supper table, an additional place was set for Invisible Tommy.

The mother asked out what over the 6-year-old said Invisible Tommy wanted to eat.

The father found the 4-year-old on one side of him and Invisible Tommy on the other; the father also, believed Invisible Tommy's

brother, at the 4-year-old's request.

The 8-year-old brother asked the Invisible Tommy's mother if Invisible Tommy's head being stuck until both the father and the 8-year-old explained that it was apparent, given how long the head had sat untouched on Invisible Tommy's plate, that Invisible Tommy wasn't going to eat it.

A good thing, too, the 8-year-old insisted.

"If Tommy ate the bread, we'd see it all showed up in his stomach," the 8-year-old explained, "since he has invisible guts."

And so it went.

The father would sit in his chair, and the 4-year-old would yell that Daddy was sitting on Invisible Tommy. The father would have to get up to free the potentially crushed Invisible Tommy. The father would kiss his

youngest son good night, and the 4-year-old would start that Invisible Tommy got a kiss, too. The father would go to kiss the air by the 4-year-old's head, and the 4-year-old would laugh.

"Don't be silly, Daddy, that's Tommy's bed."

Invisible Tommy was apparently sleeping with his head at the foot of the bed.

The mother and father didn't mind that 4-year-old son's invisible friend Tommy because, having two other sons, they knew all too well that Invisible Tommy would vanish as quick as the years of childhood.

All in the blink of an eye, if you aren't paying attention to the time and to where Invisible Tommy is sitting.

Dean Poling is an editor with The Valdosta Daily Times.

Division C Humorous Column

First Place (at right)

Winston Jones
Times-Georgian, Carrollton

Second Place

James Swift
The Daily Tribune News, Cartersville

Third Place

Joe Garrett
Times-Georgian, Carrollton

Doling out more daily drama

Dear Diary,
It's been quite a busy day for me today. First, I got up early so I could do some grocery shopping. After getting up, I dressed in my best jeans and put on my official "Make America Great Again" cap, made in China.



WINSTON
JONES

After driving to the store, I realized I had left my driver's license in my other billfold. I had to drive all the way back home to retrieve it, then back to the store.

I was planning on buying some cereal and everybody knows, you have to have a photo ID to buy cereal.

When the cashier placed my Quaker oatmeal on the counter, without being asked, I quickly produced my ID. The cashier seems a little perplexed. Doesn't she pay attention to our great leader in Washington? Doesn't she watch Fox News?

She looked at it and smiled, saying, "Are you sure you're old enough to be purchasing cereal?"

Division D

Humorous Column

First Place (at right)

Christina Paige Santee
The Northeast Georgian,
Cornelia

Second Place

Caleb Smith
Pickens County Progress, Jasper

Third Place

Glenn Harbison
The News Observer, Blue Ridge

A moving morning

In my 29 years of life, I'd never truly felt prepared for future motherhood – until that fateful day.

My alarm clock went off like any other deadline day – an hour earlier than normal – and I dragged myself out of bed to let our yellow lab, Riley, and German shepherd, Zoey, out for a walk. It's the first thing I do each morning, followed by saying "good morning" to our stray-turned-spoiled kitty, Stella.

I'd made a pot roast the night before, and it was no surprise I still smelled hints of red wine and onion in the air. The aroma usually lingers after baking it for three-plus hours in the oven, but the smell was – off.

Suddenly, I realized what the "extra ingredient" was, and I ran to flip the switch to shed light on the situation in our sunroom. My eyes widened and my jaw dropped as I took in what was the start to, quite literally, the crappiest day I've had in a while.

One of the girls had gotten sick, which left behind a mess reminiscent of horror straight from a Stephen King novel.

I flipped back and forth between crying and laughing as I FaceTimed my boyfriend, who was celebrating his birthday by hitting the lake for some early morning fishing. His dad was laughing so hard (at me), he had to walk away for fear of choking on his biscuit. Then, holding back tears, I called Alan to tell him I'd be late, trying my best to explain the reason professionally – if that's even possible.

It. Was. Everywhere. The floor. The walls. The doors. The air vent. The furniture. A true crap-tastrophe, if you will. Even "Foxy," Zoey's beloved stuffed companion, couldn't escape the fecal fiasco. How devastated she must have been. Probably as devastated as I was throwing out the brand-new dog bed-turned-sponge I'd purchased the week earlier.

And the only reason why I wasn't upset about them tearing down the blinds? It was proof the guilty party had tried to force their way



Christina Santee

outside to handle their business. I mean, there were claw marks in my walls for goodness' sake.

With no bandana or face mask in sight, I grabbed a pair of clean boxer britches and tied them around my face like a ninja prepping for battle. They didn't

help, and The Police's "Every Breath You Take" came to mind as I gagged with every breath, every move, every swipe, every scoop. You know it's bad when your dog lays down in front of the glass door and watches you, giving you that "You poor thing – hang in there" look. Her obvious look of pity told me she wasn't the culprit, but her younger sister, Riley, who was nowhere in sight.

One roll of paper towels, one mop head, one pair of rubber gloves, one can of Lysol disinfectant spray later and four "I can't do this" delays later, I only wanted to scrub down the sunroom 100 times more. Air fresheners and candles stood no chance against the funk, and we struggled

to breath in our own home the next several days. I even tried the ole match trick, but to no avail.

But the following day brought a new dawn – until I flipped the switch to realize it'd happened again.

For fear horrible things come in threes, we made the garage as cozy as possible, and I tried to walk them every hour I was awake.

Well, horrible things do come in threes, and the following morning, I was asking myself how sad I'd be without the furbabies in my life. Stella's the best-behaved anyway.

But after realizing this incident followed a kibble change, I assumed responsibility and – after going three days with no accidents – let the girls back in the comfort of the sunroom.

The silver lining? Clean-ups got easier the more I had to do them, which gives me hope for the future and the human babies it brings.

So the next time you think you're having a crappy day – think again.

Christina Santee is editor of The Northeast Georgian. Email her at csantee@thenortheastgeorgian.com.

Division E Humorous Column

First Place (at right)

Matt Aiken

The Dahlonega Nugget

Second Place

Emily McClure

Lake Oconee News, Greensboro

Third Place

T. Michael Stone

Lake Oconee News, Greensboro

The Tardy Boys

Matt Aiken

Publisher



The Clipboard of Shame is gone.
In its place, is the Laptop of Shame.

Yes over the past two and a half years I have been all too familiar with the clipboard that once sat on the counter of the Lumpkin County Elementary School front office.

It was there, when I would fail to get my child to school on time, that I would enter.

Eyes downcast. Shoulders stooped. Head low.

I would shuffle over to the Clipboard of Shame and enter all the required details.

My name. Kid's name. Teacher. Grade. But there was one line that I would always leave blank.

Reason for Tardiness.

I wasn't trying to be evasive. It's just I needed more than a mere line to properly explain the situation.

If given the space it would probably sound something like this:

"My troubles with school tardiness began in eighth grade at Tucker High School. First period was in A-Wing but my locker was in C-Wing and I always had a hard time with my locker combination. Also in DeKalb County there was no middle school. You went straight from elementary to high school. It was a jarring transition that was hard to adjust to..."

I could go on like that until Bowen missed the entire school day.

Well now the clipboard has mod-

Division F

Humorous Column

First Place (at right)

T. Gamble III
The Dawson News

Second Place

Len Robbins
The Clinch County News, Homerville

Third Place

Lisa W. Manus
Franklin County Citizen Leader, Lavonia

I'm beginning to believe the entire cause of the break down in American society is the result of 24 hour news, weather, sports, entertainment etc. Long ago a dumb politician would say something completely ridiculous like, "I think we should kill all people who weigh over 300 pounds." The nightly news would mention this for one minute because it only had an hour to tell about everything else happening in the world. The next day you'd hear nothing about the dumb politician because the news had to tell you about the next day's stuff in an hour. But now, oh my, they have 24 hours to fill so you hear about this statement approximately 62 times and then the news has fat folks on to analyze the statement. Special interest obesity groups are interviewed and folks talk about how they have been damaged by the statement and on and on it goes.

But, the sports world may now have topped the cake concerning the need to televise something, anything, for 24 hours. ESPN now shows Cornhole tournaments with a play by play announcer and a color

T. Gamble, III *Contributing Columnist*



analyst announcer as well. I repeat myself. ESPN has now made Cornhole a televised event. Yes, Cornhole. In case you do not know Cornhole is a game with two boards that are slanted upward with a hole at the end. Competitors try to throw bean bags through the hole for points, sort of like horseshoes for the very weak.

Growing up, if you told me to come over for some Cornhole, I would probably call the police. But, the modern version is different, thank God. But really, a televised tournament? Let's face it, Cornhole requires the athletic ability of a three toed sloth. One can play Cornhole or sit in a recliner and channel surf with the remote and burn about the same amount of calories. Eight year

old little girls can compete against 40 year old drunken men. But here it is, all sponsored by Jimmy Johns Subs no less.

I watched the most recent tournament which should tell you all you need to know about both my mental and physical health. The only thing worse than playing Cornhole is being a spectator at a Cornhole event. And what about the announcers? Is there a lower rung on the totem pole than being a play by play announcer for this? I think Matt Lauer may be one soon. "Well John, that was some toss right there. Nailed it right on the fly. Little Suzy is really tossing that bean bag tonight." And the color commentator, "Yes Sam, Johnny looks a little nervous tonight. I

think he'll have to change to Schlitz Malt Liquor tonight to have any real chance to win this thing."

I was actually stunned to see that Cornhole could be played without a beer in your hand. I'd never seen that before. Two guys, one slim and one quite large, battled it out. I did not make it to the end to see who won as I had to take a nap. Last year the winners were Stacie Pugh, crowned Queen Cornhole and Jeff Reynolds, King Cornhole. I have aspired to be many things in my life but, I'm pretty sure if I win King Cornhole I'm out of my father's will. I can't even allow myself to think about my daughter being crowned Queen Cornhole.

I may decide to begin getting in shape for a tournament myself a little later this year. Maybe they'll even have a senior tour further enhancing my odds of winning the grand prize, whatever it is. Yep, with 24 hour sports we can all be champs. But Cornhole Champ? I think I'll pass.

(Send your email comments to T@colliergamble.com.)

Division G

Humorous Column

**"I think, as a not-so-funny-joke,
the nurse believed it would be cute to use a red bandage. Red, as in Rudolf."**

Christmas party pooper

**Snapshots:
Tales Of Big Canoe**

BRENT CARROLL

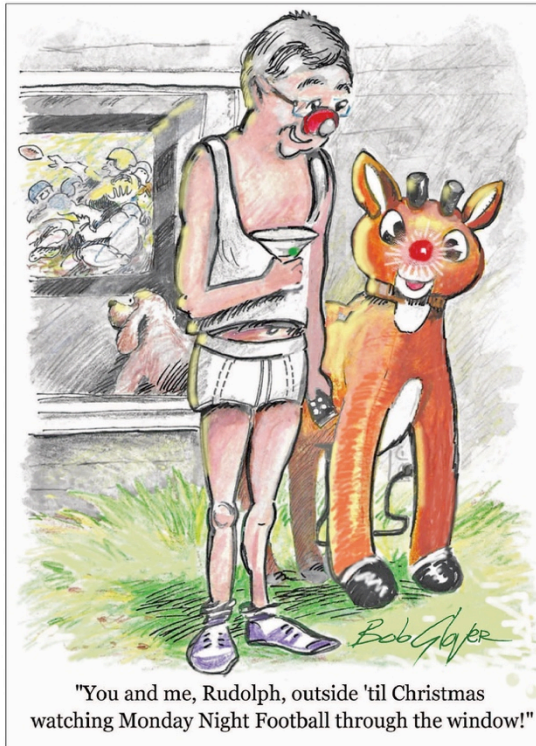
To date, I've attended five Christmas parties, all here in Big Canoe. Most of the host homes have been golf/bridge/book club/Sunday school friends of Joan. Well, most. I know a few of them.

Anyway, as a good husband should, I've been to all of them. All of them. Five. Until today. Rosie and her husband, Marv (who recently had an infected corn removed from his little toe) are having a 6 p.m. sit-down dinner, like, right now. The infected corn thing is important because Marv is an avid bowler who explains to everyone how very critical toes are when making the 2-7 baby split.

Rosie—who occasionally comes to our house for bridge—drenches herself in some kind of really toxic perfume that leaves a residue for 36 hours. Dixie, our Scottie, breaks out in hives as soon as Rosie shuffles the cards. After a couple of hours, my eyes stop watering and I'm OK, but poor Dixie suffers for three days. A real dog's life.

So, I'm scheduled to get all dressy again tonight to go to the fancy Rosie Dinner, which will make six. Six. But, a savior. This morning, I noticed an itchy, teensy-weensy hickey on the very tip of my nose. "Cancer!" I said to myself and off I went to the dermatologist, who did a biopsy shave. You know, that's when they take a small sample of the hickey to send off to the lab. Well, I came home with a big bandage on my nose tip.

I think, as a not-so-funny-joke, the nurse believed it would be cute to use a red bandage. Red, as in Rudolf. When Joan saw it she said, "There is no way I'm going to a sit-down dinner party with you and that awful nose bandage looking like that." So, off she goes with



**"You and me, Rudolph, outside 'til Christmas
watching Monday Night Football through the window!"**

herself. How's that for 46 years of marriage?

You might be asking why, as a good husband, I couldn't change the bandage to a simple flesh-colored one straight from Walgreen's. Answer: I told Joan the doctor advised I must "... not remove this beautiful red one before Christmas Day."

So, tonight I'm going to have a

vodka martini and watch Monday Night Football in my underwear.

Brent and Joan Carroll moved to Big Canoe in 2014. He is an avowed frustrated writer, recognized by mixed tenses, copious commas and run-on sentences. Still, he is widely published—in his own mind.

First Place (at left)

Brent Carroll

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Second Place

Robin Conte

Springs Publishing

Third Place

Julia Grochowski

Appen Media Group

Division A

Sports Feature Photograph



First Place (at left)

Kelly J. Huff

Marietta Daily Journal

Second Place

Kelly J. Huff

Marietta Daily Journal

Third Place

Bobby Haven

The Brunswick News

Division B

Sports Feature Photograph



First Place (at left)

Joshua Jones

Athens Banner-Herald

Second Place

Derrick Davis

The Valdosta Daily
Times

Third Place

Joshua Jones

Athens Banner-Herald

Division C

Sports Feature Photograph



First Place (at left)

Nadav Soroker
Times-Georgian,
Carrollton

Second Place

Matthew Brown
The Moultrie Observer

Third Place

Nadav Soroker
Times-Georgian,
Carrollton



Division D Sports Feature Photograph

First Place (at left)

Brett Fowler

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Second Place

Becky Taylor

The Tifton Gazette

Third Place

Becky Taylor

The Tifton Gazette

Division E Sports Feature Photograph

First Place (at right)

Ben Munro

The Jackson Herald, Jefferson

Second Place

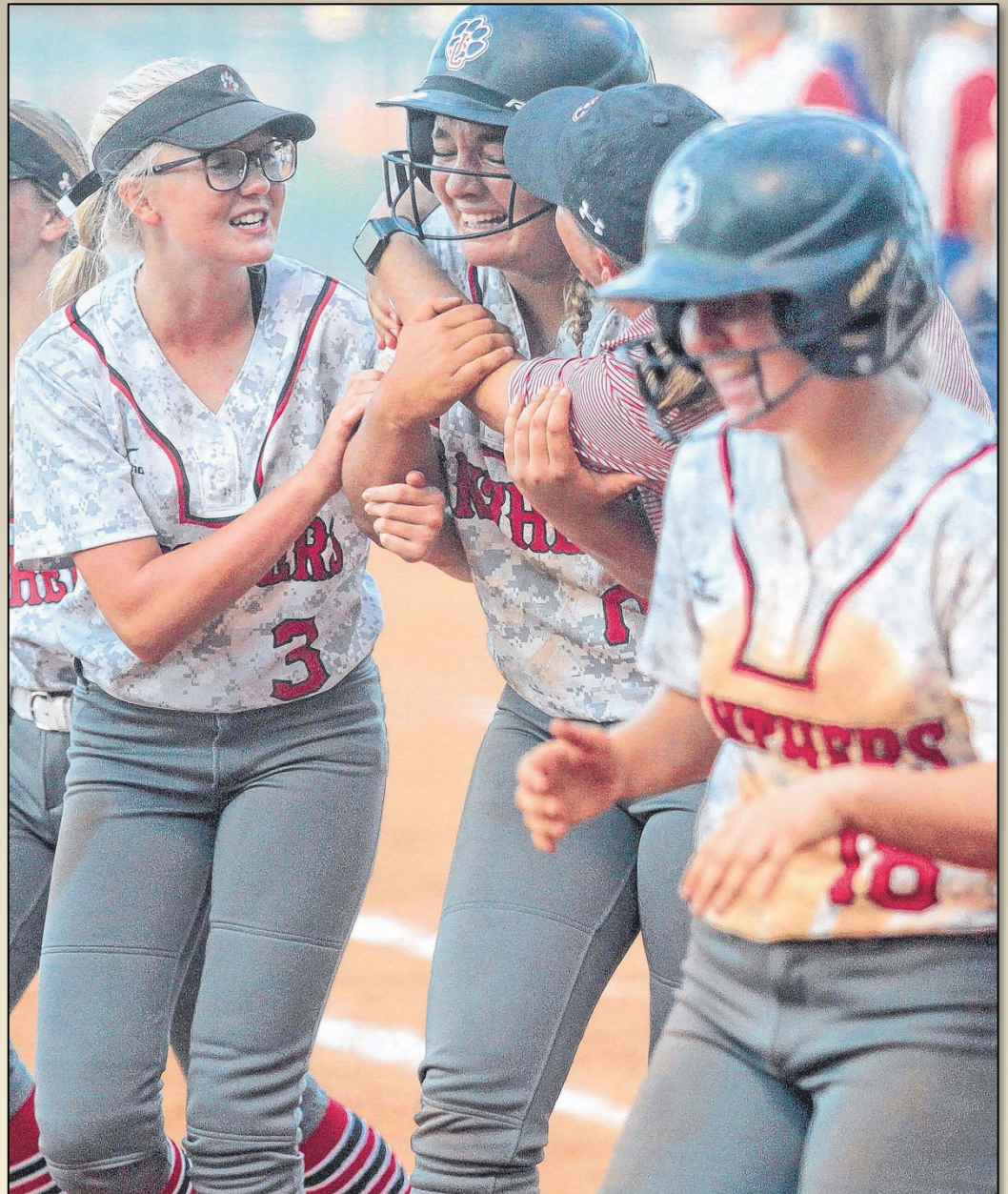
Ben Munro

The Jackson Herald, Jefferson

Third Place

Ben Munro

The Jackson Herald, Jefferson



Division F

Sports Feature Photograph

First Place (at right)

Scott Thompson
Barrow News-Journal,
Winder

Second Place

Shane Scoggins
Franklin County Citizen
Leader, Lavonia

Third Place

Shane Scoggins
Franklin County Citizen
Leader, Lavonia



Paulding's Erna Wallace during
on Saturday in Macon. (Photo)

Division B Sports Section

First Place (at right)
The Courier Herald, Dublin

Second Place
Athens Banner-Herald

Third Place
The Valdosta Daily Times

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

The Courier Herald

Section B



Football:
Georgia Tech, UGA suffer tough conference losses
-3b

Sports

•Scoreboard2b
•On The Air2b
•More prep football2b

Trinity in 4th straight Final Four

Lady Crusaders rout Southland, 9-1 and 13-0, to advance

By **RODNEY MANLEY**
The Trinity Christian Lady Crusaders made quick work of Southland on Saturday to earn their fourth straight trip to the GISA AAA state softball Final Four.

The Lady Crusaders jumped out to big early leads, then rode dominant pitching and stout defense to claim an easy sweep of the second-round series. Trinity battered around in the second innings of both games to advance with 9-1 and 13-0 wins.

"I am so proud of the way our girls competed today," said Trinity head coach Kristina Maslunas. "In both games we fielded the ball well behind a stellar pitching performance

by Gracey Thompson and Addie Moss. We also hit the ball well today."

Thompson hurled a four-inning gem in the opener, and the Lady Crusaders played error-free defense behind her to claim the win in five innings. She walked one batter and struck out five.

Moss allowed just three hits over four innings to pick up the win in Game 2. She did not walk a batter and struck out one.

The two also teamed up to get the Lady Crusader offense off to a fast start.

Thompson led off the bottom of the first in Game 1 with a double and later scored on a passed ball, and Moss struck

an RBI double with two outs in the inning to stake Trinity to a 2-0 lead.

The Lady Crusaders won the next two straight hits to start the second inning. Taylor Allen, Abby Foster and Logan Oliver all singled before Thompson smacked a two-run double. Irisie Moss and Charlie-Rose Wages followed with RBI singles.

With two outs, Addie Moss smacked another RBI double that stretched the lead to 7-0.

Southland got on the board in the fourth, leading off the inning with three straight singles to load the bases and pushing a run across with a

See TRINITY page 2b



Trinity's Addie Moss asks the ump for time after sliding safely into third.

Irish storm past Patriots, 48-0

By **BALE SMITH**

MACON — Despite having to contend with school closures due to Hurricane Michael, the Dublin Patriots Irish showed no ill effects from the hectic week, shutting out the Southwest Patriots, 48-0, on Friday night at Henderson Memorial Stadium.

With the win, the Irish improved their season record to 7-1 and remained unbeaten in Region 3AA with a 4-0 standing.

"I thought our defensive play was really sharp throughout the game," said Dublin head coach Roger Holmes. "All in all, it was a good night, and a good win, although I do believe our offensive line and running backs could have done a better job blocking."

The Irish defense limited the Patriot offense to 87 total yards. Southwest gaining just 29 yards rushing and 57 yards through the air, with two Patriot quarterback completions only 7 of 20 passes.

The Dublin defensive unit recorded four quarterback sacks, while forcing the Patriots to punt after three-and-out possessions five times during the first half. Outside linebacker Jermaine Cooley and safety Rodriguez Martin with put points on the board with pick-6 interceptions, and the punt return team blocked two punts that set the Irish offense for touchdowns.

With the game scoreless



Dublin's Tyler Strickland (left) follows teammate Jaquez Evans (9) into the end zone for the first of his three touchdowns.

deep into first quarter play, a punt like by Jaquez Evans dominated the Irish in scoring the first points of the game. After setting up shop at the Patriot 20, Dublin scored on the second play from scrimmage, with Greg Jones crowning the goal line on a 12-yard run.

Shemar Dallas's extra-point kick gave the Irish a 7-0 lead with just over 2:00 remaining in the quarter.

After a deep kickoff and punt return coverage by Dublin, Southwest began its

running offensive series at its 17-yard line. The Irish defense dominated the line of scrimmage and forced the Patriots to punt after Evans recorded a quarterback sack on first downs and two punts after full incomplete.

The Irish offense gained possession at the Patriots 21-yard line.

Tyler Strickland scored the first of his three touchdowns on a reverse to give Dublin a 13-0 lead with seconds remaining in the quarter.

With just over 6:00 remaining in the third quarter, the Irish took control of the region matchup when Cooley picked off a pass and ran 62 yards to give Dublin a three-touchdown lead. Martin passed to Evans for two points to make the score 21-0.

In the final two minutes of the half, Martin threw two touchdown passes, first to tight end Steve Linton and then Strickland, to increase the Irish lead to 36-0. Both receivers were wide open, with

Jermaine Cooley (21) returns an interception 42 yards for a Dublin touchdown.

Linton moving in a 12-yard quarter play, and neither

completion at 1:42 mark and Strickland scoring on a 27-yard reception, with 0:13 remaining in the half.

"I thought Martin did a great job throwing the football, and the way our receivers ran their routes," said Holmes. Southwest kept stacking the box, I guess the Patriots

as thought our quarterback's arm was still holding him."

Martin's 28-yard return of an interception with 9:43 remaining in the third quarter put the game to bed, starting a running clock that continued for the game's duration.

The Irish scored their final points of the game midway through the quarter, on Martin's third touchdown strike, with Strickland leading in the 56-yard reception. All starters were out of the contest during the fourth

Royals outgun Falcons, 56-21

By **JAMES TIDWELL**
COLUMBIANA — Thanks to Hurricane Michael, fans of both Bleckley County and East Laurens got to experience a football game on a Monday night football game.

In a GISA Region 3AA matchup that was moved from Friday after Royals Stadium was left without power, the Royals played host to the Falcons on a homecoming night with both teams were searching for their first region win.

Bleckley County found it, scoring the first 21 points and never looking back as the Royals rolled to a 56-21 victory.

The Royals struck first as running back Nykies Farrow scored on a 1-yard run with 27:7 seconds remaining in the first quarter. The key play of

the drive was a 45-yard pass from quarterback Royce Bailey to wide receiver

Daunte Pitts. Royce was intercepted by starter Zach Laurens on the scoreboard with 12 seconds left to put the deficit at 21-7 at the half.

Bleckley County answered with 8:26 left in the third quarter as Farrow scored on a 19-yard touchdown run.

The Falcons tried to respond, but Bleckley defended as Jermaine Hayes intercepted Morris and returned it 55 yards to set up Bailey's 5-yard TD run with 7:59 left in the third quarter and a 35-7 lead.

On the next East Laurens offensive play, Morris was intercepted again by

See FALCONS page 2b



Quarterback Alex Moss (11) provided a spark for the Falcons, throwing a pair of touchdown passes in his first action of the season.



EL's Danielle Lowther delivers a strike.

Missed scoring chance, errors doom Lady Falcons

By **RODNEY MANLEY**

VIDALIA — East Laurens hit a big-time scoring opportunity slip away at the start of Saturday's opener in the AA state softball playoffs, and the Lady Falcons never quite recovered.

East Laurens loaded the bases with one out in the first inning but could never get the bats going in the 4-0 loss. The Lady Falcons were eliminated in the second game of the GISA AA doubleheader, but their exit was engaging 7-0.

"If we could have gotten those runs across in that first inning, it would have been a totally different ballgame," said East Laurens head coach Danielle Bertram, whose

squad finished the season 15-9. "We didn't make the adjustments we needed to make to stay on top."

The Lady Falcons managed just one hit in Game 1 — a sharp single to left by

See LADY FALCONS page 2b

the game open in their next at-bat, using a pair of singles, a pair of walks and a pair of errors to push across five runs and take a 7-0 lead.

"We made a few errors, but they were costly errors," said Bertram.

Vidalia added the run needed to end the game early in the bottom of the sixth.

Connecticut singles brought in McRae to the plate with one out, and the Lady Falcons walked her intentionally to load the bases.

The strategy paid off initially as Lowther finished a grand slam at second and tried to catch

See LADY FALCONS page 2b

grander to short, but the throw to the plate was late.

Vidalia took the bat out of the hands of East Laurens shagger Danielle Lowther for most of the first game, walking her in the first inning to load the bases, then intentionally

walking her with two outs and the bases empty with the game still scoreless in the third.

With a 3-0 first-inning lead in Game 2, the Lady Indians decided to pitch to Lowther, and she made them

After Jalecia Wright singled with two outs, Lowther launched a bomb over the fence in left to end the deficit to 3-2.

See LADY FALCONS page 2b

BARTOW COUNTY FOOTBALL

CANES TAKE REGION TITLE



A Trup County defender can only watch as Cartersville sophomore Davonte Ross runs into the end zone on a 46-yard touchdown in Cartersville's 43-10 win for the Region 5-A AAAA title Friday night at Weisman Stadium.

Cartersville tops Trup for 7th-straight perfect region season

By NICHOLAS SULLIVAN
nicholas.sullivan@daily-tribune.com

The most highly anticipated game of Cartersville's regular season was over before it began.

When a pair of teams are battling for a region title in the final week of the year, it's generally expected to be a good game. When said teams are undefeated and ranked in the top five of their classification, it's generally expected to be a great game.

Friday's contest between Cartersville and Trup County was neither good nor great. It was a one-sided beatdown from the opening whistle. Well, the first play from scrimmage.

Following Kaleb Chismore's modest opening kickoff return, Marcus Gray took a handoff and ran through a hole as large as the entire field, "they could fit a whole car in there." The running back went untouched for a 77-yard touchdown for a 7-0 lead just 16 seconds into the game.

See CANES, PAGE 2B



RANDY PARKER/THE DAILY TRIBUNE NEWS
Multiple Cartersville defenders get in on a tackle Friday night as the Canes take home their 7th straight perfect region season.

CARTERSVILLE
43
TRUP COUNTY
10

Woodland's season ends with loss at Kell

By VIKTOR TYN
Special Contributor

KELL
41
WOODLAND
18

The Longhorns from Kell High School moved to be too much for the Woodland Wildcats as they traveled to a 41-18 victory Friday night.

After a 4-0 record start, the Wildcats struggled against Region 7-A AAAA opponents and ended the season on a six-game losing streak.

Despite the sour ending to the season, Woodland head coach Tony Plett said running back Justice Carter reached the 1,000 mark rushing yards for the season, having

rushed for 90 yards and one touchdown against Kell.

"I'm proud of our kids, with the last game of the season upon us, it would have been easy for them to check out mentally and just go through the motions but they didn't do that, actually, they did the complete opposite," Plett said. "They played hard, which is something they have done all season. They gave a great effort and played well against a really good football team. Kell is probably one of the hottest teams in the state right now."

Wildcats quarterback Jakob Fox went 3-for-7 for 17 yards and one score. Demarcus

Williams had 22 carries for a seven-point touchdown.

The Wildcats got off to a new perfect start as head coach Rod Freidley recovered a fumble by Kell's quarterback Evan Casley inside the red zone less than two minutes into the game.

But unfortunately for Woodland, Carter and Williams were held to only five yards in total on the next three plays. But kicker Ronny Ramirez gave the Wildcats a 3-0 lead with 8:25 left in the first.

See CATS, PAGE 2B

Paulding County defeats Cass in heartbreaker

By JAMES SWIFT
james.swift@daily-tribune.com

The final game of any season is usually a bit more experience for the Cass Colangelo, Friday night's 17-14 loss to Paulding County (1-9 overall, 1-7 in region) was just plain bitter.

"This one's going to be hard to swallow," said Cass head coach Bobby Hughes. "They're hurt, and I can't ask our kids to play any harder than they played. It's heartbreaking, it's heartbreaking."

At the heart of that heartbreaking loss were two questionable referee calls late in the fourth quarter. On fourth-and-8 from the Cass 18, junior defender Cameron Hill intercepted a deep shot in the end zone from Paulding County quarterback Hunter Jennings. However, an official called a personal foul penalty on a Cass player near the Colangelo 10 — yet despite that penalty appearing to have occurred after the turnover, the referee nonetheless gave possession of the ball back to the Patriots.

Another suspicious call occurred with about 90 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. On a fourth-and-10 from the Colangelo 20, senior quarterback Kent Moore tossed an incomplete. Moments later, however, a yellow flag hit the gridiron, indicating an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against the Patriots.

On fourth-and-8 from the Cass 18, junior defender Cameron Hill intercepted a deep shot in the end zone from Paulding County quarterback Hunter Jennings. However, an official called a personal foul penalty on a Cass player near the Colangelo 10 — yet despite that penalty appearing to have occurred after the turnover, the referee nonetheless gave possession of the ball back to the Patriots.



RANDY PARKER/THE DAILY TRIBUNE NEWS
Cass senior linebacker Rodney Richards tackles a Paulding County ballcarrier during Friday's game at Doug Cochran Stadium.

Trapheagen, Lady 'Cats win 2nd state title in 3 years

By JASON GREENBERG
jason.greenberg@daily-tribune.com

All the miles cross country runners trek during summer workouts, morning runs and weekend meets, and the state championship came down to the last 500 meters.

It was with 500 meters to go Friday morning in Carrollton when Woodland High girls cross country coach Matthew Landolt did the math. As the first group passed where he was stationed out on the course, his calculations suggested his No. 2-ranked Lady Wildcats trailed No. 1 McIntosh by five points.

My communication to them at that point with under 500 to go was, "It's a no-point race. You need to make those last passes," Landolt said. "Don't quit now."

He respects the idea of this group of Woodland runners quitting is unconscionable. It's mostly the same group that was a state title two years ago. It's the same group that Landolt watched outwork, out-tough and flat out beat the competition time and time again.

However, the margin between Woodland and McIntosh was razor thin. And it wasn't until a parent informed the girls during a cool-down run about 15 minutes later that the team discovered the news they had been working all season to hear: Woodland is the GHSA Class 5A state champion.

"It's surreal. It's incredible. It's completely indescribable," said McKenna Trapheagen, who capped a remarkable season with an individual state championship and a time of 19:07, 40 seconds ahead of her closest competitor.

"It means the entire world. Oh my gosh, it's so amazing," Carl Clymer added of winning a state title.

There weren't many words said immediately after the girls heard the news, just screams of joy that drew glares of admiration from onlookers across the Carrollton Elementary School field. Clymer dropped to the ground in tears, while Baylie Evans and Trapheagen immediately embraced, and their teammates soon followed.

It was a state title two years in the making. After Woodland took the crown in 2013, the Lady Wildcats placed second to McIntosh in 2017, and there was never any doubt the 2018 championship would come down to the same two teams. In the end, it was crucial passes made in those final 500 meters that earned a 56-59 victory.

They made those little passes at the end," Landolt said. "And even if you don't feel like it's a big deal to get one person here or there, when there's five of you passing one or two, suddenly you win by three instead of losing by five."

The only Wildcat who didn't pass someone late in the race was Trapheagen, but only because she led wire to wire, methodically increasing her lead throughout until emerging over "separation shape" without another runner in the picture.

"Once the starter handed me the baton that started our race, he looked at me and said, 'This is the last that started your race' and he looked at me a few questions," Trapheagen said. "It hit me then that I'd just won."

Of course, Trapheagen knew as soon as she crossed the finish line she won an individual state championship, but she cringed waiting to hear the team results to "holding your breath under water."

The McIntosh coach told Landolt Woodland was won before all the runners had even made it out of the finish-line chute. But, after a mistake last year at state in which the results were misread and Woodland prematurely thought it had won, Landolt was hesitant to relay the message to his team.

See CHAMPS, PAGE 2B



JASON GREENBERG/THE DAILY TRIBUNE NEWS
Baylie Evans hugs her big sister Baylie after the Class 5A state championship cross country race in Carrollton Friday morning. Woodland High held on for the narrow win to secure its second state title in the last three years. Both Evans sisters placed in the top 20.

Division C Sports Section

First Place (at left)

Jason Greenberg, Nicholas Sullivan and Randy Parker
The Daily Tribune News,
Cartersville

Second Place

Times-Georgian, Carrollton

Third Place

The Moultrie Observer

AOW: CHEROKEE'S OLIVIA HERRERA, CREEKVIEW'S EVAN GRANFALA HONORED • B3

BOYS BASKETBALL: COUNTY REPRESENTED BY THREE TEAMS IN STATE TOURNAMENT • B3

ADOLESCENT BASKETBALL
STATE TOURNAMENT

Cherokee leads the charge for playoffs

Lady Warriors roll into tournament with just two losses on season

ALEX RESNAK
aresnak@cherokeetribune.com

All six Cherokee County girls basketball teams are continuing their seasons this weekend in the state tournament. Cherokee will have the best chance to advance and can be counted among the state's top contenders after winning the Region 4AAAAAAA championship.

The Lady Warriors (14-2) enter the tournament on a 12-game winning streak and will host North Cobb (20-7) tonight. It is a rematch of a Nov. 28 game won by Cherokee 58-44, but coach Matt Cates said, "Both teams are vastly different from when we played."

"Both teams are vastly different from when we played," Cates said. "We know they're very athletic and well-coached. They're going to play hard, so we're going to have to be on top of our game. They won 20 games this year, so they are a good team."

The biggest change may be for Cherokee, which lost Sydney Watts to a season-ending injury during the Region 4AAAAAAA tournament. The Lady Warriors still have plenty of depth, with Charliann Brown and Annie King bringing playoff experience to fill the void alongside experienced starters Olivia Herrera, Laiken Wade and Lacie McCoy.

"Someone else just has to step up and play," Cates said. "We can't worry about the things we can't control. The next person just has to step up and be ready to go."

Woodstock will also be at home tonight against Marietta. The Lady Wolverines (16-10) earned a home playoff game behind the efficient play of Sophia Singer and a scoring burst from Carly Henderson, and while the Lady Blue Devils (13-12) can score with anyone thanks to Taylor Smith, Woodstock coach Jared Hagins said the extra week of preparation will help his team prepare to slow a dynamic scorer.

"We hope we're prepared for the style of play they're going to bring," Hagins said. "It's going to be fast. It's going to be tough. It's going to be in-your-face. Having those extra couple days after the

SEE CHANGE, B3



After rolling through the regular season and region tournament, Olivia Herrera and her Cherokee teammates may stand the best chance at having a deep state tournament run. / Staff-Alex Resnak

BASEBALL • SEASON PREVIEW



With Drew Waters now in the Atlanta Braves' system and Andrew Keene playing at Georgia State, Elbow could have to rely more on Ethan Underwood, center, and members of its pitching staff if it hopes to defend its Class AAAAAA state championship. / Staff-Bea-July 1, Staff

IN THE FUTURE

Etowah, Woodstock not resting on past after runs to state championship series

ALEX RESNAK/aresnak@cherokeetribune.com

Baseball season got underway this week, which meant teams in Cherokee County set about reaching the high lefty goal with the kind of teams we have around here.

Pitching should again be a strength for the Eagles, who return starters Ethan Underwood and Nick Torres. Jackson Sisk, Bryant Madden and Whelan Campbell all return to lead the offense, but Elbow will likely have a different look offensively after losing Drew Waters and Andrew Keene from the middle of its order.

"You don't replace a Waters and Keene with just two guys," Robinson said. "You definitely play a different kind of ball. Those guys had so much power and were big kid guys. That's why our pitching has to be permanent this year. You can't count on the home run production those two guys gave us."

We haven't had one of those here in eight years. Getting one of those is a lefty goal with the kind of teams we have around here.

The team with the most to live up to will be Elbow, but coach Greg Robinson is not thinking this early in the season about defending his state championship.

"We play in such a competitive county and region," Robinson said. "We play so many good teams, I don't think we'll get too caught up in trying to defend. We would like to compete for a region championship."

Woodstock will also have to do some retooling after reaching the championship series last year, though the Wolverines do return 13 seniors. Coach Jeff Brown said the game plan will again rely on defense and pitching, with Ashton Slagel — who pitched several big games in last year's playoffs — anchoring a rotation that lost both Brent Hunter and Jared Staples to the college ranks.

Offensively, Caleb Bartolomeo will lead an offense that features Justin Bailey, Brennan Milose and Spencer Keefe, and has plenty of motivation. "They learned what it takes to get there," Brown said. "You have to play consistent baseball throughout the season, and you have to play really

SEE FUTURE, B3

WRESTLING • BLESSED TRINITY

Title bittersweet for Canton resident

ALEX RESNAK
aresnak@cherokeetribune.com

As Vincent Baker stood atop the podium at last week's wrestling state championships in Macon, it was a bitter-sweet moment.

The Canton resident and junior at Blessed Trinity Catholic High School, had just won his second state championship — this one coming at 140 pounds in Class AAAA. It was the culminating moment of a season filled with hard work, but the one thing missing was his mother and biggest fan, Louise, who died 11 days earlier after a two-year battle with colon cancer.

"It was really hard, but I just had to dig down deep," Vincent Baker said. "She was a fighter, and she inspired me. She got me started in wrestling, so I knew I had to

finish for her."

"The defending state champion at 140 pounds, Baker had little trouble working his way through the regular season."

Despite having a target on his back in every match, he lost just one match all year and was gearing up for a tough sectional tournament when tragedy struck.

Just two days before the tournament, Louise Baker died, but Vincent said he never considered sitting out one of the biggest tournaments of the year, instead opting to use his mother's memory as inspiration.

"I knew it wouldn't be right for me to quit everything I was working for," he said. "I wanted to hold on to those great memories of my mother and use them as inspiration."

SEE TITLE, B2



Vincent Baker, a Canton resident who wrestles at Blessed Trinity, celebrates with his father and sisters after winning his second straight state championship last Saturday in Macon. / Twitter

Division D
Sports
Section

First Place (at left)

Alex Resnak

The Cherokee Tribune, Canton

Second Place

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

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CLASS AAAA BASEBALL STATE FINALS



REVELING IN THE MOMENT

Jefferson once again prevailed in a Game 3 in the state playoffs last Wednesday, beating Cartersville 6-3 in the rubber game of the Class AAAA state finals to win the school's first-ever baseball championship.

Photo by Ben Munro

THE CHAMPS

Dragons down Cartersville to win first-ever state title

By Ben Munro

ROME — Billy Finch said after the last out was recorded, he couldn't immediately go join his teammates. He just laid down on the turf, overcome with emotion.

Jefferson won its first-ever state baseball championship with a 6-3 victory over Cartersville last Wednesday in Rome, and the Dragons' second baseman tried to take in the weight of what had just happened.

"There's not a feeling that I can put into words to describe it ... I don't even know that this is real life," Finch said.

But it is very much real.

With the victory, one of the most successful baseball programs in Northeast Georgia for the last two and a half decades now has its championship.

Having won 11 region titles, fourteen 20-win seasons, two trips to the Elite Eight, three Final Four appearances and a state runner-up finish all since 1994, the Jefferson baseball team's trophy case is finally complete with its state finals triumph.

Center fielder Justin Cole said just reaching the state finals wasn't enough. Jefferson's 2015 team had already accomplished that feat.

"It's exciting and as a team, our mentality was if we're just runners-up, we're just going to be up there next to 2015," he said. "We wanted to go above and beyond and be the first one to do that."

The Dragons earned the championship by taking two of three games from a 32-win Cartersville team that boasted a star-studded roster of college signees, commits and one potential first-round draft pick.

"They're way more talented than we are," Finch said. "I'll tell that to you right now. They are way more talented, but I haven't seen a team yet that can play like us together."

The victory unfolded as many of Jefferson's other big wins in 2018 did. Faced with a must-win situation in a Game 3 winner-take-all, the Dragons did just that, jumping on Cartersville with five first-inning runs and keeping the Hurricanes at arm's length the rest of the way.

"These kids are not scared of anything," coach Tommy Knight said. "When their backs are



CELEBRATION TIME

Jefferson third baseman Lane Watkins leaps in the air after throwing out a runner for the final out of the Dragons' 6-3 win over Cartersville last Wednesday to win the Class AAAA state championship.

against the wall, that's when they're at their best."

Vanny Farley and Will Wood combined to work the first 3 1/3 innings on the mound before turning it over to Patrick Hickox. With only 36 pitches left before he reached his pitch-count limit for the series, the unflappable Dragon ace worked the final 7 2/3 innings, allowing one run on five hits, to preserve the win.

Hickox said having the opportunity to close out the game with his teammates "was huge."

"It was a perfect ending to a perfect season," Hickox said. "It really was. It was super special."

continued on page 2B

Opinion

Jefferson baseball's finest hour

There's a really cool scene in the movie *Apollo 13* when a pair of NASA officials are quietly predicting disaster for the Apollo 13 spacecraft upon re-entering the earth's atmosphere. Overhearing this, a resolute Gene Kranz — a NASA flight director played by Ed Harris — turns to one of the men and delivers my favorite line of the movie.

"With all due respect, sir, I believe this is going to be our finest hour."

Jefferson baseball coach Tommy Knight could have spoken similar words to anyone who doubted his team Wednesday.

Things had certainly gone a bit haywire for the Jefferson baseball team in the second of a best-of-three game series against Cartersville. Jefferson did some very un-Jefferson-like things in Game 2, like walking seven batters and committing five errors in a 9-3 loss.

But the Dragons responded with the program's finest hour — or two and a half hours to be precise — in Game 3, winning 6-3 over a knackered Cartersville team in Rome to bring home a long-awaited state championship in baseball.

If this spring taught us anything, it's never bet against the 2018 Dragons with something on the line. You will lose.

Time and time again, often with reporters huddled around, Knight predicted resilience from his team whenever a

loss left something in jeopardy. And he was right every time. The Dragons bounced back from a loss to Madison County during the final week of the regular season with a win over the Red Raiders — 11-1 no less — to clinch the region title. They answered the bell in the first round of the state playoffs, beating a plucky Chestnut team

with a Kade McNally walk-off homer in a dramatic Game 3. They never flinched after a Game 2 loss in the quarter-finals against fourth-ranked Woodward Academy, routing the War Eagles 10-5 in Game 3.

Then, with their backs against the wall in a winner-take-all Game 3 for the state title, Jefferson jumped on second-ranked Cartersville with five first-inning runs. From this reporter's perspective, you might as well have started engraving Jefferson's name in metal on the state title trophy right there. That's no disrespect to Cartersville. This was simply a Jefferson team that wasn't to be denied.

Sure, there were some tense moments in getting to the finish line in Game 3, but nothing proved so tense for this team all year.

Patrick Hickox, the epitome of cool under fire, served up a lead-off homer in the



ben munro

continued on page 4B

Division E Sports Section

First Place (at left)

Ben Munro

The Jackson Herald, Jefferson

Second Place

Greg Finan Jr.

The Dahlonega Nugget

Third Place

Jeremy Johnson

The Oconee Enterprise, Watkinsville

Barrow News-Journal

INSIDE THIS SECTION

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Section B

★★★★

Football

It's win or go home...

The Apalachee defense will need another strong effort this week to slow an explosive Habersham Central offense, and the Wildcats need a win in their regular-season finale to have any shot at the state playoffs. Kickoff Friday is 7:30 p.m. in Mr. Almy. Photos by Scott Thompson

Wildcats need victory at Habersham, possibly help

By Scott Thompson
Sports Editor

The Apalachee football team knows at a minimum it needs to win its regular-season finale at Habersham Central on Friday to have any shot at snatching a nine-year postseason drought.

Whether or not that will be enough remains to be seen, but for all intents and purposes, this is a playoff week for coach Tony Lott and the Wildcats.

"You either win or you're done, so we're trying to take advantage of that situation and promote that mindset," Lott said Monday. "For us, none of our guys have seen a playoff week so we're trying to get them in that mentality. We've still got to go to get a win."

Entering GHSA Region 6-AAAAAA play Friday, region champion Duval and Lanier have already locked up playoff spots, while Winder-Barrow has

HOLDING ONTO PLAYOFF HOPES

Habersham Central (5-4, 2-2 region) and Gainesville (2-7, 2-2) are currently tied for third with Habersham owning the head-to-head tiebreaker, while Apalachee (2-6, 1-3) is in fifth but still in the hunt.

If Apalachee wins Friday and Gainesville pulls off an upset at Lanier, the Wildcats would be the No. 4 seed while Gainesville would be No. 2. Lanier would be No. 3, and Habersham would be eliminated.

If Apalachee wins and Gainesville loses, that would create a three-way tie for the final two spots between the Wildcats, Lanier and Del Ruple, and a "plus-minus-12" system between the three teams would be used to break the tie. After the No. 3 team is determined, the procedure would revert back to head-to-head results between the other two teams to determine the fourth spot.

See **Wildcats** on Page 38

Apalachee senior Cameron Hoffman had a 60-yard punt return for a touchdown in the Wildcats' 7-6 loss to Gainesville last week.

RETURN THREAT

Apalachee senior Cameron Hoffman had a 60-yard punt return for a touchdown in the Wildcats' 7-6 loss to Gainesville last week.

Cross Country

WBHS boys finish third, AHS girls take fourth in region to qualify for state

The Winder-Barrow boys and Apalachee girls cross country teams qualified for the state meet this weekend after finishing in third overall at the GHSA Region 6-AAAAAA championship meet at Russell Middle School last Thursday.

The Bulldogs boys finished third out of six teams with 66 points, behind Gainesville (34) and Duval (50), and the girls (following at 17:31.18), other top-20 finishers for the 18:15.05. Jacob Sweet, Mike Bryson and Ryan Keeler will be joining those four at the state meet.

The Apalachee boys finished sixth, missing out on the state meet. Kevin Ellington was the Wildcats' top finisher, finishing 20th (18:17.40). Austin Nigman, Nathan Woodland, Adam Crocker, Lee Kellogg, Alex Edwards and Jason Sanders also competed for the Wildcats.

Gainesville's Michael Lopez edged Duval's Ben Brucher by a handspan of a second for the individual title (16:57.31 to 16:57.32).

Duval's Aidan Wells won the girls race, finishing in 20:01.41, while Gainesville's Ashley Thompson followed in second (20:21.00). Apalachee's Jade Pineda finished seventh (22:09.01) out of 35 runners to lead the Lady Wildcats, while Lady Karsen placed 12th (23:24.13). Chelsea Nance-Parks, Joanna Green, Michelle Manick, Katie Silva and Abigail Boyd will also be competing at state. Winder-Barrow finished fifth to close out its season. Headed Fara (18:28.09) and Brittany James (19:28.45) led the Lady Bulldogs with top-20 finishes. Sadie McWhorter, Rebecca Nicholson, Summer Shaw, Katie Hausa and Callie Webb also competed.

Apalachee's Jade Pineda, left, finished seventh and Winder-Barrow's Headed Fara, center, was 18th in last week's region meet. See more pictures from the meet on page 6B. Photo by Scott Thompson

Sullivan signs with Philadelphia Eagles

Former Winder-Barrow High School and Georgia State University football standout defensive back Chadron Sullivan was promoted last week from the Philadelphia Eagles' practice squad to the 53-man roster.

The move came as the team placed defensive end Derek Barham on the Injured Reserve List.

A former three-time All-San Jose Conference player at Georgia State, where he started for four years, Sullivan signed with the Eagles as an undrafted free agent this spring. He finished his college career with an interception during the preseason, and though he didn't make the 53-man cut, he was kept on the practice squad.

The Eagles defeated Jacksonville 24-18 on Sunday in London. They are off this week before hosting Dallas on Nov. 11. That game will be televised on NFLN, 8:20 p.m.

Dogs hope to end season on high note

By Scott Thompson
Sports Editor

It has undoubtedly been a disappointing season for the Winder-Barrow Bulldogs, who have lost five straight games and will miss its first postseason since 1993.

The Bulldogs (2-7, 6-4 AAAA Region 6-AAAAAA) will put that aside Friday as they look to end the season on a high note with an upset at region champion Duval.

"We're trying to finish strong, and we want to go prove that we belong on the field with these guys," Winder-Barrow coach Ed Dudley said. "It's been a tough year with some interceptions and injuries, but I'm proud of the way the team has persevered and kept fighting hard. A lot of our younger players have gotten some good experience through better circumstances and that's very valuable because it will make them better players for the future."

Upsetting Duval will be a tall task for the Bulldogs. The Falcons (7-1, 4-0), who have yet to lose a game since the current region came into alignment in 2010, have been dominant over the last six games, including a 23-14 shutout of Lanier last week that clinched the region title.

Four-star senior cornerback Lann Perry, who was formerly committed to Georgia and is now exploring other options, signed with the Chicago (Michigan and South Carolina) are his current leaders, head a stout Duval defense and is also a key player at receiver for the Falcons. James quarterback James Jenkins has been a strong and accurate passer while distributing the ball to a number of players and junior running back Trenton Jones has a powerful rushing attack.

"We're a first class program," Dudley said, "and we're a tremendous 3-4 defense." The run game is the heart of what the school has developed, but they've got some of the best skill kids in northern Georgia they can get to the ball, and that presents a great challenge.

"We've got a great team and we've got our own coaches out for us. We've got to be able to play better and go on our own and win what we can get done."

Several Bulldogs players, who have been multi-year starters for the program, will be playing their final high school game Friday.

Among those are all-state defensive end and Clemson commit Logan Chas and all-region running back James Jenkins, who has rushed for over 500 yards for a third straight season while also flourishing in his first year as a defensive starter as a senior.

CLOSE SHAVE



Meadowcreek head coach Curtis Gilleylen and his team celebrate their victory over Grayson in the semifinals of the AAAAAAA state tournament Saturday at Buford Arena. Below, Meadowcreek's Dequarius Nicholas looks to score. (Photos: David McGregor)

Meadowcreek boys survive 57-55 in semifinal thriller against Grayson

By DAVID FRIEDLANDER
david.friedlander@
gwinnettdaily.com

BUFORD — After losing a handful of key games on last-second shots this season, Meadowcreek boys basketball coach Curtis Gilleylen wasn't going to leave anything to chance in his team's Class AAAAAAA state semifinal game against Grayson. "We didn't want to take a chance on a buzzer beater anymore," Gilleylen said after the Mustangs held on for a 57-55 win Saturday at Buford City Arena. "Even with a half-court one,

we didn't want to take a chance."

With the memories of two Kyle Sturdivant 3-pointers that broke their hearts in losses to Norcross in the last month still fresh in their minds and clinging to a three-point lead, the Mustangs fouled D.J. Williams with 1.3 seconds left to send him to the line for two shots.

"Really at the end, (Gilleylen) told us to get ready," said Mustangs forward Cory Hightower, who finished the night with 18 points, nine rebounds and five assists. "We knew it was coming off the

backboard. ... We knew a rebound would take us to the state championship."

Sure enough, after Williams made the first free throw, the 6-foot-7 senior corralled the intentional miss of the second, allowing the clock to run and send Meadowcreek (24-6) to its first state championship game.

The Mustangs will face a fourth meeting with Region 7-AAAAAAA nemesis Norcross next Saturday at Georgia Tech's McCamish Pavilion. The last frenetic seconds symbolized the two biggest themes of the game,

and especially the fourth quarter — free throw shooting woes and a tough, physically-exhausting effort from both teams.

The Rams (22-7) were the first to suffer from struggles at the charity stripe, connecting on just 11 of their first 20 to fall into a hole in the fourth quarter before rallying to nearly climb out of that hole and finish the night at a respectable 22 of 31.

Meanwhile, the Mustangs went to the line just nine times on the night and were just 1 of their first 6

See **MUSTANGS**, Page 7B



Division A Sports Coverage Story

First Place (at left)

David Friedlander

Gwinnett Daily Post, Lawrenceville

Second Place

John Bednarowski

Marietta Daily Journal

Third Place

Travis Jaudon

Savannah Morning News

BETTER WATCH OUT



MATT HAMILTON/Daily Citizen-News

North Murray High School's Mary Trejo celebrates a victory by pin over Southeast Whitfield's Belen Estrada Thursday in Chatsworth.

Local athletes from Southeast, North Murray prove wrestling not just for boys

BY EMMALEE MOLAY
emmaleemolay@
dailycitizen.news

CHATSWORTH — North Murray High School's Mary Trejo took her time, going a full two minutes against Southeast Whitfield's Belen Estrada before defeating the Lady Raider by pin on her home mat Thursday night.

For Trejo and Estrada, wrestling is nothing to have mixed feelings about. They are proud to represent their schools and proud to do so with the encouragement of their fellow male wrestlers.

"I've been wanting to do this for a while now," Trejo said. "Even though it's my first year doing it, I wanted to prove people wrong. I've had a lot of people doubt me, but honestly

it just gets me more hyped up." Trejo, now a sophomore, said she was first interested in wrestling after watching her older sister compete. Her brother, Edwin, is also a wrestler for the Mountaineers.

This is the first season that the Georgia High School Association has recognized girls wrestling as an official sport, giving competitors a chance to win state championships. To be eligible for achievements on the regional and state level, a girl will wrestle another girl. However, during a varsity match within the regular season, girls are eligible to earn points for their team by wrestling boys.

Estrada, a freshman, agrees

> Please see WATCH, 4B



MATT HAMILTON/Daily Citizen-News
Southeast Whitfield High School's Belen Estrada stares down North Murray's Mary Trejo during a wrestling match Thursday in Chatsworth.

Division B Sports Coverage Story

First Place (at left)

Emmalee Molay

Daily Citizen-News, Dalton

Second Place

Jeremy Stewart

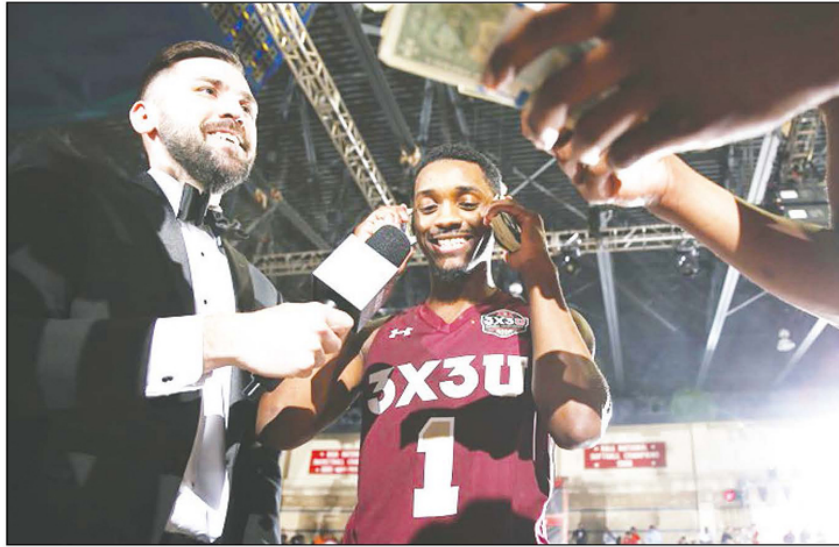
Rome News-Tribune

Third Place

Jeremy Stewart

Rome News-Tribune

CASHING IN



3X3U NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP/SPECIAL
Cartersville High grad A.J. Mosby holds wads of cash after winning a game at the 3X3U National Championship on March 31 in San Antonio. After a stellar two years at Alcorn State, Mosby said he will hire an agent and has spoken to three NBA representatives about possibly playing in the NBA summer league.

A.J. Mosby transitioning to pro career

BY JASON GREENBERG
jason.greenbrg@daily-tribune.com

For years, A.J. Mosby has been playing in the SEBL summer league on Aubrey Street in Cartersville. This summer, Mosby hopes he'll be playing summer ball in Las Vegas with the NBA logo on his uniform.

That may seem far-fetched for a player who was the third-leading scorer on his Cartersville High team as a senior in 2014. However, after a stellar college career at Chattahoochee Tech and Alcorn State, and an impressive showing at the 3X3U National Championship on ESPN2 last weekend, Mosby spoke with scouts from the Brooklyn Nets, Toronto Raptors and Los Angeles Clippers.

"I had a few NBA scouts come up to me and talk to me," Mosby said. "As of right now, I'm working to improve my body weight, to change the way I eat to prepare myself for these training camps and these workouts to hopefully get with these teams. They said they were going to look into me getting a shot at the summer league. If that doesn't go as planned, then I'll definitely be looking to go overseas



3X3U NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP/SPECIAL
Former Cartersville High and Alcorn State basketball player A.J. Mosby, right, and his SWAC teammates celebrate after winning a game in the 3X3U National Championship on March 31 in San Antonio.

and get my name out there. So that's the plan."

Mosby has had several agents offer to represent him as he turns pro, and he expects to sign with one this week.

"This is a big decision. This is a business decision. This is real life," Mosby said of hiring an agent. "So

this process has been a little stressful because it's like, 'Should I trust him, should I trust this company?' That's why I've been taking my time with the whole agent process."

Mosby garnered some of the attention he's been getting by playing on national television on Easter Sunday

in the 3-on-3 tournament. The three-day event wrapped up on April 1 in San Antonio, not all that far from where the Final Four was held on the same weekend.

In its first year, the 3X3U National Championship featured four select college seniors from each Division-I conference in a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, with the winner taking home \$50,000. Mosby's team won \$3,000 to share among the four players.

Mosby's SWAC team won its pool with a 2-1 record, and then won the quarterfinal game on Mosby's game-winning floater. That put the SWAC in the semifinals, where the team lost to the Big 10.

The top-four finish was impressive considering the SWAC was seeded 32nd out of 32 teams, and Mosby's squad had to upset teams from bigger conferences to reach the semifinals.

"We knew the whole time that people were going to doubt us because we were from the SWAC," Mosby said. "Out of 32 conferences in Division I, we were picked dead last. We knew that coming in.

SEE MOSBY, PAGE 3B

Division C Sports Coverage Story

First Place (at left)

Jason Greenberg

The Daily Tribune News, Cartersville

Second Place

Kevin Eckleberry

LaGrange Daily News

Third Place

Kevin Eckleberry

LaGrange Daily News



With the addition of more offensive weapons and more size down low, including 6-foot-3 freshman Kate Johnson (42), Cherokee is 16-2 and enjoying one of the strongest starts the program has had in the 18-year tenure of coach Matt Cates (below). / Staff - Alex Resnak and Carlton D. White

WARRIOR ROLL

'Few more pieces in our puzzle' have been a boost to Cherokee girls' success

ALEX RESNAK / aresnak@cherokeetribune.com

Things have felt different around the Cherokee girls basketball team this season.

The Lady Warriors have built an impressive resume in recent seasons, with a 3-2 record in the playoffs over the last two years, along with a Region 4AAAAAAA title last season. However, with some key new additions, they look poised for their most successful season in years.

"It's obviously a veteran group coming back," said longtime Cherokee coach Matt Cates, who is in his 18th season at the helm. "It does seem a little bit different, though. We have a few more pieces in our puzzle that we're happy to have, so it does seem a little bit different from years in the past."

It is not often a region champion loses five seniors to graduation and comes back stronger the next year, but that is exactly what Cherokee (16-2, 5-0) has done.

The biggest difference came on the



interior, where all-county selection Sydne Watts transferred from Etowah. She has add 8.3 points and 6.0 rebounds per game to a rotation that also includes 6-foot-3 freshman Kate Johnson.

SEE WARRIOR, B3

Division D Sports Coverage Story

First Place (at left)

Alex Resnak

The Cherokee Tribune, Canton

Second Place

David Clemons

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

Brett Fowler

The Walton Tribune, Monroe



JUSTIN HUBBARD/Staff

Senior catcher Trey Patterson drives a ball toward center field, which kicked off the wall and ultimately allowed Patterson to run all the way around the diamond for an inside-the-park home run.



JUSTIN HUBBARD/Staff

Diamond Dogs sophomore Ethan Stamps celebrates as he trots to home plate after smacking an opposite-field home run to tie up game one against East Hall.

Diamond Dogs sweep East Hall to advance in playoffs

Justin Hubbard
justin@lakeoconeenews.us

For 363 days, Morgan County's baseball players carried a burden on their shoulders.

Last Friday, they were finally able to put it down. The Diamond Dogs swept East Hall, two games to none, to win their opening Class AAA state playoffs series. Morgan steamrolled its way to the playoffs last year but

lost to Calhoun in the opening series, two games to one.

The Diamond Dogs talked throughout this season about their desire to make up for their first-round exit. They did it in emphatic fashion against East Hall.

"We kind of got the monkey off our back from last year," head coach Merritt Ainslie said. "I told the guys, 'Once you get one series out of the way, the competition gets tougher

but it becomes easier to play 'because you're supposed to win this series - a 1-seed is supposed to beat a 4-seed.'"

Junior Hunter Lane, who pitched the first game of last Friday's double-header, said the Vikings "paid for" his and his teammates' frustrations stemming from the 2017 playoffs.

Lane went the distance in game one, which was a 6-1 victory for Morgan. He said he was firing on all cylinders despite the run allowed.

"I had all three of my pitches working for me, just keeping them off-balance," Lane said. "They couldn't hit it really well."

Ethan Stamps, a sophomore, tossed a complete game shutout in game two, which ended 2-0, earning his first career playoff victory. His outing against East Hall followed a loss the Saturday before

SEE BASEBALL » C5

Division E Sports Coverage Story

First Place (at right)

Justin Hubbard

Lake Oconee News, Greensboro

Second Place

Ben Munro

The Jackson Herald, Jefferson

Third Place

Gabriel C. Stovall

The Covington News

Division F Sports Coverage Story

First Place (at right)

Scott Thompson
Barrow News-Journal, Winder

Second Place

Shane Scoggins
Franklin County Citizen Leader, Lavonia

Third Place

Carla Parker
The Champion, Decatur

High School Basketball

Another heartbreaker



TIED UP

Winder-Barrow senior Olivia Nelson-Ododa is surrounded by Lovejoy defenders during the first half of Tuesday's GHSA Class AAAAAA quarterfinal game. Lovejoy went on to win 68-67 in overtime. The Lady Doggs finished the season 24-5. Nelson-Ododa, in her final high school game, had a triple-double, finishing with 24 points, 21 rebounds and 10 blocks in the loss. See more photos inside.

Photos by Scott Thompson

Lady Doggs fall to Lovejoy in OT in Elite 8

By Scott Thompson
Sports Editor

The Winder-Barrow High School girls basketball team started this season with the ultimate goal of winning the state championship that had eluded them during a dominant run in the last two-plus years.

Those hopes and dreams came to an excruciating end Tuesday as the No. 2 Lady Bulldogs fell to top-ranked Lovejoy, 68-67 in overtime, at home in the GHSA Class AAAAAA quarterfinals.

The Lady Wildcats (30-1) will face Northview in the semifinals Saturday afternoon at the University of West Georgia.

Tuesday's loss was a gut punch for a Winder-Barrow program that is now

74-18 dating back to the start of the 2015-16 season.

That year the Lady Doggs snapped a two-decade state-playoff skid and went on a magical run to the Class AAAAAA state championship game, only to lose by a single point to Southwest DeKalb.

Last season, without its best player available due to injury, Winder-Barrow, which had won its first region championship in 52 years, fell in the AAAAAA quarterfinals to eventual state champion Mays.

And then came Tuesday's defeat which ended another region championship season. One point. Again.

"They don't deserve this feeling again," Winder-Barrow coach Kimberly Garren said after the loss.

It was a wild swing of emotions for much of the night for the Lady Doggs (24-5), who led 25-24 at the break, then overcame a seven-point second-half deficit and forced overtime when Chellia Watson nailed a 3-pointer with 8.9 seconds left in regulation to tie the game at 56-56. Lovejoy tried to get the ball down the court for a final shot but the ball was batted away and the Winder-Barrow bench mobbed Watson, a junior sharpshooter who scored 12 points in the first half but was held scoreless until the clutch dagger.

The Lady Doggs kept the momentum going to start the extra period. All-American senior post player Olivia Nelson-Ododa was fouled three straight times and went 3-of-5 from

the free throw line to give her team the lead. After a Lovejoy miss on the other end, Watson drove almost the entire length of the court, weaved her way through traffic and laid it in off the glass to boost the lead to 61-56 with 2:41 remaining.

See WBHS on Page B8

INT
KI
STRONG
FOR

SPARTAN SHEPHERD



Tim Vick, who led Greater Atlanta Christian to a state title as the boys basketball head coach, is leaving the Norcross private school after 43 years of service. (Photo: GAC Archives)

Tim Vick fostered family environment as GAC athletics flourished during his decades as AD

By CHRISTINE TROYKE | christine.troyke@gwinnettdailypost.com

When Tim Vick arrived on the campus of Greater Atlanta Christian in 1975, he drove up on the single-lane gravel road — Indian Trail — to a piece of woodland with one building, a gym and some Quonset huts.

The story goes that the school bought the huts from the government and transported them back in trucks with students sitting on top of the metal pieces to keep them from flying out.

"He was here when it was real humble beginnings," longtime Spartans coach Jimmy Chapp said. "You look at the campus now and it's 80 acres, but it hasn't always been that way. Jesse Long and David Fincher were the keys, but Tim was right in the midst of it."

"He's been here 43 years and the school is 50 years old. That's a legacy."

Vick is leaving the Norcross private school which he shepherded to athletic prominence to be closer to family



Greater Atlanta Christian had a celebration dinner earlier this month to honor outgoing athletic director Tim Vick, left, for 43 years of service to the small private school in Norcross. (Photo: GAC Athletics)

and teach in Little Rock, Ark. He and his wife Kim are moving as soon as their house sells — about 38 years later than they expected when Vick took the job as an assistant basketball coach and teacher.

A week after he and Kim married in August 1975, they

moved to Atlanta and planned to be here for five years.

Vick's high school coach in Valdosta was good friends with Jackie Bradford, GAC's first athletic director, and hired him right out of college.

The school was seven years old and Bradford had already

guided the Spartans to a boys basketball state title (in 1971).

"It had to begin with the founder, Jesse Long," said Vick, who would much rather talk about others' accomplishments than his own. "He had a dream, a school that was God's school. He felt we could be champions while at the same time having excellence in academics."

"He brought in Jackie Bradford, who did it all."

Two years into Vick's tenure at GAC, he was part of his first state championship with Bradford still at the helm. Since he became AD in 1982, the Spartans have won 40 state titles and were runner-up more than 60 other times.

Vick also coached track, cross country, golf, tennis and, for one semester, cheerleading.

"In 1987, I was the head coach and we were state runner-up and lost by one point," Vick said. "I always

See VICK, Page 2B

Division A Sports Feature Story

First Place (at left)

Will Hammock

Gwinnett Daily Post, Lawrenceville

Second Place

Dennis Knight


Savannah Morning News

Third Place

Travis Jaudon

Savannah Morning News

Division B Sports Feature Story



HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL

View from first

Former Mountaineer pitcher embraces new role after injury

By JACOB HOAG
jacobhoag@dailycitizen.news

CHATSWORTH — It's a different vantage point for North Murray High School senior Waylyn James, who approached the season as the Mountaineers' potential pitching ace.

He no longer looks down off the mound he's grown so comfortable standing atop, shaking off his catcher's signs and trying to outsmart batters. Instead he stands, hands on his knees, eyes squinted under the brim of his black helmet, looking over the opposing first baseman's shoulder, searching for clues as North Murray's first base coach.

James felt a sharp pain in his elbow while throwing during a travel baseball game this past summer. He recently had Tommy John surgery to repair the torn ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) in his pitching arm, ending his playing career at North Murray.

"Sitting here watching, it isn't fun," James said. "I'd give anything to be out there playing with them right now. But coaching and helping coach (Preston) Poag, it makes you look at the game a whole lot differently with a different perspective. Much more studying."

After playing through the pain in the Mountaineers' first 10 games — in a primarily non-throwing capacity, mostly playing first base — James is rehabbing after his March 13 surgery and has a new role with the team.

"Waylyn's gonna be a good coach," said Poag, who suggested to James that he give coaching a try. "He's played a lot of baseball and knows baseball, so I switched things up and put him on first. We miss him playing, but at least he can stay in the game. He shows up every day to practice and is still a big part of the team."

James, who was also a member of the school's football and basketball teams, played center field and pitched in 2017. He was also the leadoff hitter and hit three home runs with 24 RBIs.

It's different, no question. He's no longer in the thick of the action, but "coach" James enjoys the opportunity to remain with the team and help the Mountaineers (5-15, 2-8 Region 6-3A) make a playoff push.

"Now that I can't throw, (coach Poag) is giving me opportunities to get ready," James said. "I'm loving it. I just like being out here with the guys and being a part of it somehow."

The new role comes with its learning curves, but with years of experience playing the sport, he brings plenty of expertise. James has been a four-year starter for North Murray as well as playing travel ball with Exposure Baseball.

Rather than looking for keys, trends and tips to use in his own at-bats or base running, he spends the majority of the game looking for ways he can help his team get the upper hand. Things like when to take off on a steal or what pitches the opposition likes to throw at certain times.

He has the ability to pick up on the minor details and relay them to his teammates.

"I make sure no one gets in run downs and keep everyone into the game and paying attention," James said. "Make sure they don't get lost on the bases and have smart base running. I've played baseball my whole life and that's

TONY MALUSO/Daily Citizen-News

North Murray High School's Waylyn James, right, the newly-appointed first base coach, talks with junior Preston Poag Jr. after he reached base against Sonorville High School on Monday.

> Please see JAMES, 3B

First Place (at left)

Jacob Hoag

Daily Citizen-News, Dalton

Second Place

Ryne Dennis

Athens Banner-Herald

Third Place

Rodney Manley

The Courier Herald, Dublin

COMMUNITY RADIO



WBHF football broadcast team provides voice of Cartersville on Friday nights

BY JASON GREENBERG
jason.greenberg@daily-tribune.com

On fall Friday nights, the small city of Cartersville becomes the exemplar of the backdrop to every high school football movie ever produced.

There's the material setting of the grandiose stadium ascending from the landscape in the center of a small town, just a few blocks away from a picturesque downtown.

Then there's the intangible football-centric climate created by the proud tradition of the local high school program and all that comes with it — the rabid fan base, the star athletic talent and the unification of the community into a central focus.

At its best, a Friday night during the fall in Cartersville combines the enthusiasm for football from the movie "Friday Night Lights" with the small-town feel of Mayberry from "The Andy Griffith Show."

And in perhaps the biggest Hollywood trope of all, the mayor of the small town does the play-by-play call for the local radio broadcast.

"It's one of those things that kind of continues to have that hometown feel," Cartersville Mayor Matt Santini acknowledges.

In more ways than one, the WBHF AM 1450 and FM 100.3 football broadcast team of Santini, Josh Brock, Jack Howell and Don Startup embodies the relationship between football and the Cartersville community. One way or another, all four personalities found themselves broadcasting Cartersville games, not out of ambition to be the voices of one of the state's most prestigious high school football programs, but because of their sense of duty to serving the community.

Division C Sports Feature Story

First Place (at right)

Jason Greenberg

The Daily Tribune News, Cartersville

Second Place

Nicholas Sullivan

The Daily Tribune News, Cartersville

Third Place

Mason Wittner

Times-Georgian, Carrollton

The WBHF radio team, clockwise from top, Matt Santini, Don Startup, Jack Howell and Josh Brock.

RANDY PARKER/THE DAILY TRIBUNE NEWS

SEE RADIO, PAGE 2B

Division D Sports Feature Story

First Place (at left)

Brett Fowler
The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Second Place

Alex Resnak
The Cherokee Tribune, Canton

Third Place

John Eden
The Press-Sentinel, Jesup



The Gwinnett Daily Post

Walton County resident T. McFerrin, who is the only coach to lead four different schools to the state finals, was selected to the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame last week.

McFerrin gets HOF nod

Football | Legendary coach honored by selection

By **Brett Fowler**
brett.fowler@waltontribune.com

Legendary Georgia high school football coach and Walton County resident T. McFerrin was selected to the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, it was an-

nounced Tuesday morning.

"It's the pinnacle. It's a big deal," McFerrin said. "The Coaches Hall of Fame was nice, but that's voted on by your peers which is great, but this thing in Macon is really something else."

McFerrin is one of the best football coaches in Georgia high

school football history. His record of 340-102-4 ranked fourth all time among coaches in the state when he retired. He is the only coach in state history to take four different teams to the state finals.

The coach won two state titles with programs that had never

See **McFerrin** » Page B2

Division F Sports Feature Story

First Place (at right)

Carla Parker
The Champion, Decatur

Second Place

Lisa W. Manus
Franklin County Citizen Leader, Lavonia

Third Place

Parish Howard
Jefferson Reporter/News & Farmer,
Louisville

SPORTS

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FOOTBALL

DOGS AND CATS UNITE

Rival schools join to raise funds for childhood cancer

BY CARLA PARKER

carla@dekalbchamp.com

The annual Golden Spike rivalry between Chamblee Charter High School and Dunwoody High School has become more than just another rival game the past couple of years.

Since 2016, students from the two schools have temporarily put school pride and differences behind them to bring awareness to childhood cancer. The two student bodies sold gold t-shirts to have a "gold out" at the game on Aug. 31, which was dubbed "Dogs and Cats Unite to Fight Childhood Cancer." Proceeds from the t-shirt sales were donated to Chip's Nation Pediatric Cancer Foundation.

The foundation was started by Chip Madren and his family. Madren, 21, is an eight-year survivor of brain cancer. He was 13 years old when he was diagnosed with stage four anaplastic metastatic medulloblastoma. The Madren family created the foundation to raise money and awareness to help organizations which support children and their families as they battle through the trials of pediatric cancer and other life-threatening illnesses.

Jenna Hogan, a 2017 Dunwoody graduate and a family friend of the Madrens, came up with the idea to bring Chamblee and Dunwoody together to raise awareness and money for childhood cancer.

"September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, so I was like how can Dunwoody and Chamblee do something together? I was trying to think of a way I could help give back and I thought this is something our whole school could do," she said.

Hogan was in Dunwoody's Academy of Finance, a two-year program in which students gain specialized preparation in the field of finance while completing their normal course curriculum, according

to the school's website. She was tasked to "take on a business and I took Chip's Nation on as my public relations' business."

"My dad and I were talking, and we thought it would be a great time for us to bring these two schools together and sell t-shirts," Hogan said. "Both schools got excited. We didn't raise as much money our first year as they did this year, but it was awesome. It was the most packed game of the season. I'm super excited to see that they brought it back."

The schools raised \$5,000 for Chip's Nation after selling t-shirts for \$10 and presented a check to Madren at halftime. Madren said it feels good to see two rival schools come together to support him and other children who are living with cancer or cancer survivors.

"I'm the lucky one," he said. "I'm here for all of the other people [who have cancer] that I've met and those who can't be here tonight."

"We just feel like we're the lucky ones," his mother Lea said. "We get to be here and there are so many kids who are in the hospital, who have died. One in 285 kids will get cancer before they're 21 and seven kids die in the United States every day from cancer. That's a lot of kids."

Hogan said the funds raised by the students will go toward an event the foundation hosts every year to raise money for pediatric cancer.

"This is all going to go to our February event and we're super excited about that," she said. "It's amazing because Chip has gone through so much. It's amazing to see him be able to give back to the people who helped him and because of schools like [Chamblee and Dunwoody] and events like this he's able to do that. It's little things coming together to make a big difference."



The schools raised \$5,000 from t-shirt sales and presented a check to Chip Madren, second right, at halftime.



Chamblee and Dunwoody (pictured) students wore gold t-shirts to raise awareness for childhood cancer. Photos by Travis Hudgins

Pushing himself to the limit

JCCHS coach
completes rigorous
30-mile test
through mountains
of Vermont

By Ben Munro

After a day of eating turkey on Thanksgiving 2017, Jason Powers came to a decision — one he joked might not have been totally based upon rational thinking.

The Jackson County wrestling coach signed up for a 30-mile obstacle course race that would take him up-and-down the mountainous landscape of Killington, Vermont.

"I decided in a moment of, I don't know if it was insanity or what, that I would sign up for this thing," he said.

Nearly 10 months later, he has a medal to show for it. Powers finished the unforgiving Spartan Ultra course — complete with 68 obstacles — on Sept. 15 in 14 hours and 11 minutes.

"Right when wrestling season was over, I started trying to get in shape for it," he said, "and went up there (last) weekend and got it done," he said.

The coach was quite familiar with the Spartan series of obstacle-course races, having competed in them for the last four to five years.

"They're fun to do, and it gets me running," he said. "I'm not necessarily a big-time runner."

But none of them were the 30-mile variety, like the one in the Green Mountains of Vermont.

Seeing it as a "huge challenge," Powers decided to give it a try.

Once the 2017-18 wrestling season concluded,



Powering to the finish

Jackson County wrestling coach Jason Powers (right), pictured with his wife Amy, recently completed a 30-mile obstacle course in the mountains of Vermont. The course featured 68 obstacles. Submitted photo

Powers devoted himself to the training. He was already maintaining a five-day-a-week lifting regimen — but he didn't change — but he had to prepare for the extensive running that awaited him in Vermont. Since he had no access to a stair climber, the suggested training method, he settled for a marathon-training schedule to prepare his legs to withstand the mileage and elevation

changes. Powers had never run more than 12 or 13 miles at a time, so this presented a sizable challenge.

"This was way outside my realm ... I am not a runner at all," he said. "But that was something I wanted to try to accomplish."

Powers, a three-time state champion as a high school wrestler in the early 2000s, said it had been a long time since

he'd been that mentally locked into training for an event. He knew a race with only a 30 percent completion ratio would present a major physical and mental challenge. And it did.

When race day arrived, Powers began at 6:15 a.m. in cool 57-degree Vermont morning temperatures and finished the two-loop course around dark at 8:42 p.m. Half of the grueling 30-mile race

was uphill, presenting an estimated 17,000 feet of elevation change in the race.

"It was extremely hilly — not many places you actually could take off and run," he said.

After a while, the downhill became just as bad as the uphill, straining different muscle groups.

He also learned that those on the trail with him weren't your normal athletes. Powers talked with one person who'd completed a 100-mile run the previous week-end.

"I was like 'You did what? I'm like, 'what have I gotten myself into?'" Powers said.

Powers' strength came in performing the different obstacles — be it scaling eight-foot walls, raising 155-pound sandbags on pulleys, carrying sandbags, rope climbing or hanging obstacles. But by the end, the eight-foot walls seemed like 15 feet, Powers said. He didn't make it over all of them. The penalty was performing 30 burpees.

Powers had to lean on his support system to dig deep to finish the extreme endurance test. His wife, Amy, made the trip with him and provided what turned out to be crucial vocal support.

"I probably would not have finished without her being there, being able to see her at certain locations throughout the race," he said. "She was able to walk around and talk to me and encourage me."

Powers placed among the top two-thirds of all finishers, "but I finished, and that was my goal."

The male winner of the race completed the course in seven hours

and 45 minutes, while the female winner finished in eight hours and 48 minutes.

"My second lap was eight hours," Powers noted.

When it was over, Powers said he felt "a little bit of everything at that point." There, however, was no celebration.

"Lord, no," he said. "It was a good hug, a couple of pictures and 'How can I get in the car and go back to the motel?'"

Powers said he slept "like a rock that night" and did not want to move once morning came. He could hardly walk that day.

"It took a toll on my body," he said.

Aches and pains aside, Powers called the Spartan Ultra "an amazing experience."

"I learned a lot of really, really valuable lessons about goals and support groups, and there are so many people who helped me along the way in this thing," Powers said.

In the aftermath of the race, he's hoping obstacle-course racing will pique the interest of some of his wrestlers and JCCHS students. Powers' 7-year-old son is even doing obstacle-course races. The coach plans to continue on with shorter-length obstacle-course races.

As for another go at the 30-mile run course in Vermont, Powers will pass.

"That's what I told some people as I was running," he said. "I was like, 'I'm here to get this medal, and I'm done with this course' ... As far as going back to Killington and doing that again, nah, I've got a check in that box."

Division G Sports Feature Story

First Place (at left)

Ben Munro

The Braselton News

Second Place

Randy Waters

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Third Place

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Division A Sports Column

First Place (at right)

John Bednarowski

Marietta Daily Journal

Second Place

Travis Jaudon

Savannah Morning News

Third Place

Buddy Hughes

The Brunswick News

Return a 'different' feeling' for Garcia

Spaniard hopes to beat distractions that come as reigning champion

JOHN BEDNAROWSKI

sportseditor@mdjonline.com

AUGUSTA — Sergio Garcia enjoyed his practice round Monday and found himself reflecting on last year's final-round 69, which secured his first green jacket.

"It was amazing," the 38-year-old Spaniard said. "Lots of memories. A lot of things come back — the positions of where you were, the clubs that I hit."

Garcia, though, said the best part was not the memories, but the response he got from the fans as the defending champion.

"It was a different feeling," he said. "The receptions that I got on every tee and every green were special."

When the tournament tees off Thursday, Garcia will try to become only the fourth player to become a back-to-back champion, joining Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo and Tiger Woods. Between now and then, he said there are only two things to do — host the annual Champions Dinner tonight and then get ready to play Thursday.

Division B

Sports Column

First Place (at right)

Ryne Dennis
Athens Banner-Herald

Second Place

Matthew Brown
The Moultrie Observer

Third Place

Kevin Eckleberry
LaGrange Daily News

Augusta feels like the right place



Ryne Dennis

AUGUSTA—Sundays at my grandparents' house were always the same.

Grandma sat on the left side of the couch, Grandpa on the right, and we'd gather in their small living room and chat.

Subjects varied.

They'd ask how Little League baseball was going or if I was making straight A's in school.

My answer to the first question was always more positive than the second.

Invariably, the subject of small talk always came back around to what was on the television.

My grandparents never missed a golf tournament, and you knew what you were going to be watching on Sunday afternoons.

Grandpa sat there, pack of Red Man beside him at times, and explained the game.

He'd point at the television with his middle finger, a digit that turned into his pointer after losing his index finger in a factory incident, and tell you exactly what club a player was going to use before the announcer did.

He explained to me how match play worked and what on earth it meant to win 3&2.

He told me what the announcer meant by an up-and-down, that a green in regulation is good and that a coin on the green wasn't loose change that I could pick up.

Like everyone, the Masters was his favorite.

When the Masters fell on Easter Sunday, he was glued to the TV. Because of him, we all were.

He's the reason I fell in love with the tournament.

Tuesday marks one year since he passed away.

He was out of it at this time last year, but he made it to the Monday after the Masters, giving me hope that he knew what was happening.

Now here I am, one year later, at Augusta National for the first time.

I have been on the Bulldog beat, so to speak, following the four former Georgia players as they have been hot and cold this weekend.

I've stood at Amen Corner then watched Brian Harman nearly ace No. 16.

I caught Bubba after good and bad rounds, his sarcastic interviews nearly identical after both.

I've admired azaleas and dogwoods, rubbed my hand along the flawless grass and enjoyed pimento cheese, egg salad, ham and cheese on rye and Masters Club sandwiches.

Growing up, Grandpa told me how he and Grandma went out to a few practice rounds and once sat out in the rain and waited for the

See DENNIS, B2

Division D

Sports Column

First Place (at right)

David Johnson

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Second Place

Brett Fowler

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

David Johnson

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

David Johnson correspondent

The 2008 Red Devils a special group to me

It was with mixed emotions that I looked forward to the Loganville-Buford baseball game at Red Devils Field last Friday evening. And it had nothing to do with the enormity of the showdown between two powerhouse programs battling for region supremacy.



Rather, I wavered between excitement, nostalgia, and denial when I pondered the ceremony planned prior to the first pitch.

Loganville used the occasion to honor members of the 2008 team that won the school's first-ever state baseball championship. It's been a decade since that unforgettable moment when a walk-off home run signaled the beginning of a perennial powerhouse.

The Red Devils have added two more championships since then, but for me, none was as special as that first one. That's because my connection with the team began more than a decade before they became state champs.

Most of the players on the 2008 squad were some of my son's best friends growing up. He played with and against them during his recreation baseball career, from T-ball through pony league.

They went to the same schools starting from kindergarten through eighth grade and attended each other's birthday parties and sleep-overs. And they pushed each other to give their best on the baseball diamond.

Drew Payne, the hero of Loganville's opening-game win over Griffin in the state finals best-of-three series, was among my son's best friends, and his Dad and I

usually partnered to coach a team. When we transitioned from coach-pitch to kid-pitch, Drew immediately emerged as one of the league's best pitchers. That he was a lefty made him even more effective.

In what turned out to be his final high school pitching appearance, Drew held Griffin, an offensive juggernaut that was averaging eight runs a game, to a single run and four hits while striking out six.

I was relieved to see my inept coaching didn't stunt his development.

Of course, the moment Red Devils fans remember most fondly was the end of Game 2, in which Blake McCullers clinched the title with a walk-off home run. It was a fitting conclusion to a grade-school career that began the same way.

In my first game as a T-ball coach, we faced off against the Giants at the former recreation fields adjacent to the old middle school.

I'm standing in the outfield when the first batter steps up and launches a ball high and deep over the

See Johnson » Page B3

Division E Sports Column

First Place (at right)

Ryne Dennis

The Oconee Enterprise, Watkinsville

Second Place

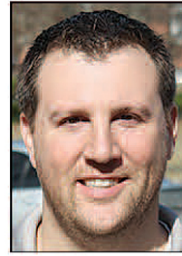
Jeremy Johnson

The Oconee Enterprise, Watkinsville

Third Place

Greg Finan Jr.

The Dahlonega Nugget



**Ryne
Dennis**
*Outside
the Box*

Winning SMS titles meant the world

Malcom Bridge boys coach Randy Cain made an interesting on-the-record comment to me Friday night following the Lightning's Northeast Georgia Athletic Association championship victory, and in an odd way it provided a bit of nostalgia.

Cain was honest, saying, and I'll paraphrase somewhat, that he was aware of how a middle school championship is perceived by many—and in a way it might have been a shot, reasonably so, at us at the newspaper—to not be as important as other championships.

He followed that comment, however, with the statement that took me back 20 years.

“But for a kid who's 13 years old, there's nothing bigger.”

Oh, coach. You don't know who you're talking to.

I was the son of a middle school coach.

Division F Sports Column

First Place (at right)

Len Robbins

The Clinch County News, Homerville

Second Place

Chris Bridges

Barrow News-Journal, Winder

Third Place

Shane Scoggins

Franklin County Citizen Leader, Lavonia

Humanity shines under 'Friday Night Lights'

My wife and I have developed a custom after home games of our local high school football team.

We come home, sit in the living room, and discuss what we just witnessed. I do the radio broadcast for our team, and don't always get to see what happens away from the ball. She fills in the details, particularly every movement of our oldest son, from pre-game warm-ups to after-game handshakes. I then answer any technical questions she has – most often the difference between a field goal and an extra point, which she finds perplexing. We wait for our son to come home, and then interrogate him about his point of view from the field.

This past Friday was a little different. Her report ended up being more substantial.

First, some background. We were playing one of our closest, oldest rivals. The game isn't always competitive between these two, but the favored team would hate to lose to this particular opponent, and it would make the underdog's

entire season if they won. Think Georgia/Georgia Tech.

My wife opened with: "I wish the world could be more like Friday nights in Homerville."

"Huh," was my intelligent reply.

"I used to think that team sports divide us more than it unites us, but I didn't see that out there tonight."

I asked her to explain. She did.

She detailed how she saw people from all walks of life, every demographic imaginable, every color of skin, every socioeconomic status – the richest of the rich, the poorest of the poor – cheer, laugh, eat, high-five, clap, and bond.

"I thought to myself, this is the power of the common enemy," she said. "Then I realized I was wrong when our stands fell silent when

one of their players was injured. When he got up, our side, and their side, both cheered with collective relief."

She saw it again at halftime, when the opposing crowd gave our band's soloist a standing ovation. And another thunderous ovation when our school recognized former players, cheerleaders, coaches and band members on the field for the 30th anniversary of our school's "Triple Crown" – state championships in football, boys basketball, and baseball during the 1988-89 school year.

"They didn't have to do that," she said of the Atkinson County fans. "And I didn't expect them to. But they did."

She told me about how our German exchange student, who had never played, or maybe even seen,



Len Robbins
EDITOR & PUBLISHER

lrobbins@theclinchcountynews.com

American football, until he came here two months ago, was called into the game to kick an extra point. After he made it, an older man came down to the fence next to the sideline, got the young man's attention, and congratulated him, saying something to the effect of "I'm proud of you."

"There were a million things that could have divided the people in that stadium, must less sitting on different sides of the field and wearing different uniforms and colors," she said. "But for the people in that stadium, from what I saw, there was an unwritten, unspoken understanding that being human is the first and greatest team we are all on."

Wow, I thought to myself, taking mental notes for this column.

"You know, we think we're on separate teams, but we're really on one team. And that one team's goal should be to love one another," she said, concluding her sermon from the couch.

Amen.

© Len Robbins 2018



Division A Sports Photograph

First Place (at left)

Bobby Haven

The Brunswick News

Second Place

Derrick Davis

The Brunswick News

Third Place

Kelly J. Huff

Marietta Daily Journal

Division B

Sports Photograph



First Place (at left)

Joshua Jones

Athens Banner-Herald

Second Place

Emmalee Molay

Daily Citizen-News,

Dalton

Third Place

Joshua Jones

Athens Banner-Herald

Division C

Sports Photograph



First Place (at left)

Nadav Soroker
Times-Georgian, Carrollton

Second Place

Matthew Brown
The Moultrie Observer

Third Place

Randy Parker
The Daily Tribune News,
Cartersville

Division D Sports Photograph

First Place (at right)

Davontay Wilson
The Press-Sentinel, Jesup

Second Place

Brett Fowler
The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

Brett Fowler
The Walton Tribune, Monroe



Division E

Sports Photograph

First Place (at left)

Ben Munro
The Jackson Herald,
Jefferson

Second Place

Mark Turner
White County News,
Cleveland

Third Place

Greg Finan Jr.
The Dahlonega Nugget



Division F

Sports Photograph

First Place (at right)

Shane Scoggins
Franklin County Citizen Leader,
Lavonia

Second Place

Lisa W. Manus
Franklin County Citizen Leader,
Lavonia

Third Place

Cindy Rewis
The Clinch County News,
Homerville



Division G

Sports Photograph

First Place (at right)

Karen Attaway
Smoke Signals, Big Canoe

Second Place

Joe Parker
Appen Media Group,
Alpharetta

Third Place

Smoke Signals, Big Canoe



Division A

Investigative Reporting

Public comments slam spaceport proposal



An artist's rendering depicts the proposed Spaceport Camden.

Some elected officials support Camden County project

By Mary Landers

mary.landerson@savannahnow.com

More than 15,000 people and organizations commented to the Federal Aviation Administration about its draft

Environmental Impact Statement on Spaceport Camden, a proposed rocket launch facility in Camden County.

"The number of comments received is greater than previous EISs, in

which we received a few hundred," FAA spokesman Hank Price wrote in an email. For comparison, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' environmental impact statement on the deepening of the

Savannah harbor drew about 1,100 comments when it was released in 2010. The Spaceport Camden EIS evaluates the potential environmental

See SPACEPORT, A5

First Place (at left)

Mary Landers

Savannah Morning News

Second Place

Isabel Hughes

Gwinnett Daily Post,
Lawrenceville

Third Place

Ross Williams

Marietta Daily Journal

Division B

Investigative Reporting

A SunLight Project Special Report

Gangs Behind Bars

Crimes don't stop just because gang members are arrested



BY TERRY RICHARDS
terry.richards@afnews.com

VALDOSTA — Carol Jensen is a worried mother. Her son has spent the last 17 years of his life in Georgia prisons and will never again see the outside world. He was sentenced to life plus five years for kidnapping, false imprisonment, aggravated sodomy and impersonating an officer, all in north Georgia, according to Georgia Department of Corrections records.

Six weeks ago he was transferred from Baldwin State Prison in Milledgeville to Valdosta State Prison, Jensen said. What scares mother and son about Valdosta, she said, are the gangs.

"He never had problems with gangs at the other Georgia prisons," she said. "He says gangs have about taken over (Valdosta State Prison)."

The SunLight Project team — representing newspapers in Valdosta, Thomasville, Moultrie, Milledgeville, Ga., and Live Oak,



See Gangs on 8A

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DERREK VAUGHN

First Place (at left)

Terry Richards

The Valdosta Daily Times

Second Place

John Bailey

Rome News-Tribune

Third Place

Rebecca Leftwich

Rome News-Tribune

Division C

Investigative Reporting

First Place (at right)

Daniel Evans
LaGrange Daily News

Second Place

Daniel Evans
LaGrange Daily News

Third Place

Daniel Evans
LaGrange Daily News

Coming together

Man's short time in
Hogansville leaves
lasting impression

BY DANIEL EVANS
DAILY NEWS

Many questions remain about a man who was hit and killed by a train near Hogansville last week, but one thing is clear — in the hours before his death, he received help from local residents.

Sadly, it wasn't enough to save David Josh Pursley's life, but those who interacted with him say the time greatly impacted their own perspective on life.

Pursley, 38, died after being struck by a train on the night of Sept. 21, after two days of

SEE HOGANSVILLE A2

Division D

Investigative Reporting

First Place (at right)

David Clemons
The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Second Place

Mark Stokes
The Press-Sentinel, Jesup

Third Place

Eve Copeland and Stuart
Taylor
The Tifton Gazette

City, Glass part ways now

By David Clemons
dvc44.demons@waltontribune.com

MONROE — Although he retains the title of public safety director through year's end, Keith Glass' last day on the job is Sunday.

Glass — a nearly 25-year employee of the city — signed an 11-page "Retire-

Safety director will be adviser until year's end

ment, Separation and Release Agreement" on Sept. 17. That was six days after he sent out a brief statement saying he would retire at the end of the year.

But he'll be turning in all city equipment — including

his badge — except a city-issued cellphone on Monday, when Assistant Chiefs R. V. Watts (police) and Bill Owens (fire) assume leadership of their respective departments on an interim basis.

Between Sunday and Dec. 31, Glass' duties as public safety director "shall be limited to an advisory role only, and he shall not be responsible for day-to-day oversight

See **City** » Page A8

Division E

Investigative Reporting

First Place (at right)

Michael Prochaska
The Oconee Enterprise,
Watkinsville

Second Place

Jill Helton
Tribune & Georgian, St.
Marys

Third Place

Tia Lynn Ivey
Morgan County Citizen,
Madison

Watkinsville fires 32-year police chief

BY MICHAEL PROCHASKA
Under Watkinsville Police Chief

Lee O'Dillon's watch, two of his officers witnessed children nailed into a crib and after unsuccessfully trying to reach the Department of Family and Children's Services, they left the children in the custody of the offender.



O'Dillon

"Don't do this again," they told the parent.

Only after a civilian called the Oconee County Sheriff's Office was the parent arrested and children taken into protective custody.

Of the seven employees under O'Dillon's leadership, only Sgt. William Horton had read the Child Abuse Protocol.

At its Oct. 17 meeting, the Watkinsville City Council voted 3-1 to fire O'Dillon. Councilman Dan Matthews abstained, and Councilwoman Connie Massey cast the dissenting vote.

"After working with [O'Dillon] the past four to five years and getting to know him, I wasn't 100 percent convinced by what I was told and heard," Massey said in a written letter delivered to The Oconee Enterprise this week.

O'Dillon, who had been the chief of police for the city of Watkinsville for 32 years, was suspended Aug. 3 when Shearon presented him with a memorandum titled "loss of confidence in your ability to command."

"I have become increasingly concerned about your management of the police department," Shearon wrote. "Any improvements implemented have been done grudgingly and under duress from my office. In fact, the more I have observed the operation of the

Timeline of events

- Aug. 3:** Police Chief Lee O'Dillon is suspended.
- Aug. 5:** Georgia Police Officers Standards and Training Council is contacted.
- Aug. 5:** Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office Professional Standards Unit agrees to assist.
- Aug. 6:** Sgt. Lopatin Slaymaker submits his resignation.
- Aug. 31:** Acting Police Chief William Horton is suspended.
- Sept. 6:** Horton is reinstated. No wrongdoing is found.
- Sept. 12:** Officer Cullen Bailey submits his resignation to spend more time with his family.
- Oct. 17:** Watkinsville City Council votes 3-1 to fire O'Dillon with one abstention.
- Oct. 17:** Watkinsville Mayor Dave Shearon announces a forthcoming Public Safety Commission.

Division F

Investigative Reporting

Will DeKalb complete sewer assessments on time?

BY HORACE HOLLOMAN

horace@dekalbchamp.com

In June 2020, the consent decree DeKalb County signed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) will expire.

Before the expiration date, DeKalb County officials must fulfill certain obligations such as clean, repair, enlarge and maintain its sanitary sewer pipes so sewer overflows are reduced and eliminated.

The president of the South River Watershed Alliance (SRWA) said DeKalb County won't be able to complete one of its tasks before the deadline ends.

In an interview with *The Champion*, **Jacqueline Echols**, president of the SRWA, said DeKalb County won't complete its sewer assessments program by June of 2020.

"I'm not adversaries with DeKalb County. That's not my intention. My only concern is that we do the right thing. This is about protecting the environment," Echols said.

Echols said she was told by a "reliable source" that the sewer assessment program is 31 percent complete.

"With such a small percentage of the priority sewer area completed, it is not possible to complete this requirement by June 2020," Echols said in a letter to the

EPA and EPD.

The Priority Sewer Assessment and Rehabilitation Program is a requirement of the consent decree that requires the county to "provide for the identification, delineation, assessment, prioritization, and rehabilitation of Priority Areas."

DeKalb County officials held a public meeting prior to a board of commissioners meeting to discuss consent decree updates.

According to the county, DeKalb fell behind on its consent decree obligations due to failing to address high personnel turnover and having seven different watershed directors over a 10-year period.

DeKalb had emerged as an urbanized juggernaut, but county departments were mired in post-World War II operational mindsets.

DeKalb CEO Michael Thurmond

The county also failed to properly classify sanitary sewer overflows and failed to develop or continue critical

maintenance contracts.

"The mass turnover of [personnel] exposed the absence of a discreet but critical fail-safe. Written standard operating

procedures were all but nonexistent. DeKalb had emerged as an urbanized juggernaut, but county departments were mired in post-World War II operational mindsets. Ground zero in this public debacle was the much-maligned Department of Watershed Management," said DeKalb County CEO **Michael Thurmond** in an opinion piece for the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*.

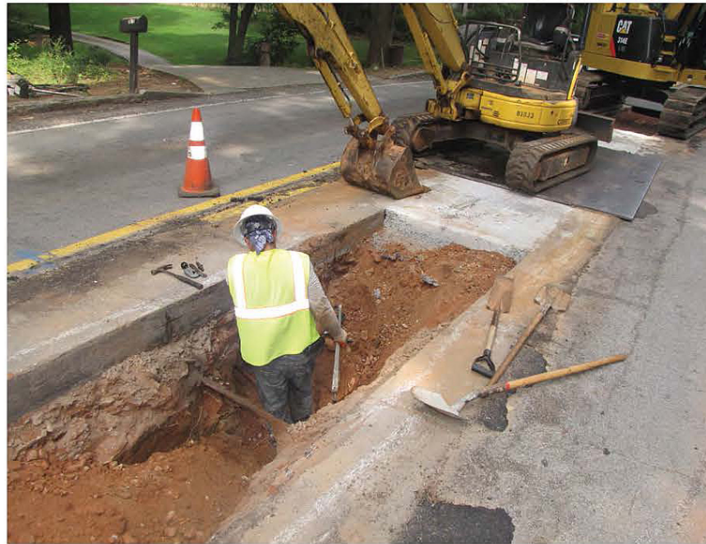
The Champion contacted DeKalb County officials and asked what the approximate level of completion for the Priority Areas Sewer Assessment and Rehabilitation Program is.

County officials responded, "In 2017, critical positions

were filled, nearly 100 percent of all priority pipes were assessed and \$28 million was invested in sewer upgrades. The county cleaned 220 miles of sewers, removed 5.1 tons of debris, completed 1,821 stream crossing inspections, replaced 3,000 manhole covers, held the first consent decree public update and hosted 280 other events."

Echols said the county will not tell her a percentage of completion for the program.

"You never get a definitive answer from them," Echols said. "They use words like 'substantially' complete. If you're looking for a percentage, it's not going to happen."



DeKalb County officials say they are working to fulfill the obligations of the consent decree which ends June 2020.

First Place (at left)

Horace Holloman

The Champion, Decatur

Second Place

Horace Holloman

The Champion, Decatur

Third Place

Enoch Autry

Sylvania Telephone

Division G

Investigative Reporting

First Place (at right)

John Ruch
Springs Publishing

Second Place

Patrick Fox
Appen Media Group

Third Place

Joe Parker
Appen Media Group

North End task force is told to boost retail, avoid gentrification

BY JOHN RUCH

johnruch@reporternewspapers.net

The city's North End Revitalization Task Force kicked off its brainstorm for redevelopment of northern Roswell Road on May 16 at Pontoon Brewing — the sort of hip, trendy business leaders want to see proliferate in the area of today's aging shopping centers and apartment complexes.

A city-hired facilitator sketched out a tentative schedule of public meetings for the task force, starting July 11 and running to year's end, when a report is expected. And Mayor Rusty Paul, who convened the task force, spoke in detail about its challenging concept — attempting to boost higher-end retail, which hinges on a wealthier customer base, without displacing the working-class residents of the city's perhaps most diverse area. In his most nuanced and strongest public statements so far, Paul

See NORTH on page 12

Division A

Community Service

First Place (at right)

Jan Skutch

Savannah Morning News

Second Place

Marietta Daily Journal

Third Place

Marietta Daily Journal

Man involved in shooting had lengthy court record

**Cooper, now 20, in jail
pending additional
charges**

By Jan Skutch

jan.skutch@savannahnow.com

A Savannah man involved in Friday's shooting in which a bystander was killed was recently released from prison and had been in court systems since he was 12.

Chantz Alexander Cooper,



Cooper

now 20, was released from state prison in June for obstructing three law enforcement officers in the Baldwin County juvenile detention facility.

Cooper was involved with the juvenile court system since May 2011, most recently involved in

gang-related activity stemming from two assaults on his fellow student at the Ombudsman Alternative Learning School on Brampton Road, Chatham County Juvenile Court records obtained by the Savannah Morning News showed.

Cooper is in custody at the Chatham County jail

See COOPER, A4

Division B Community Service

First Place (at right)

Jim Zachary

The Valdosta Daily Times

Second Place

The Newnan Times-Herald

Third Place

The Newnan Times-Herald

Chairman: SGMC culture must change

BY THOMAS LYNN
tom.lynn@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The chairman of South Georgia Medical Center's governing body said Monday the culture at SGMC must change or there will be consequences.

The Joint Commission, that accredits hospitals, told the Hospital Authority during a teleconference it must focus on improving these cultural issues within a 45-day deadline imposed last week.

The Hospital Authority of Valdosta and Lowndes County met at noon for the conference call with Dr. Ana Pujols McKee, chief medical officer with the Joint Commission, which accredits and certifies about 21,000 hospitals and health-care organizations across the U.S.

The Joint Commission issued a preliminary denial of accreditation effective Sept. 17 "due to existence at the time of survey of a condition, which in the Joint Commission's view, poses a threat to patients or other individuals served," according to an email from Katie Looze Bronk, communications

and media relations, Joint Commission.

Joint Commission accreditation and certification is considered to be a basic standard for hospitals.

The Monday meeting immediately went into executive session for an hour and a half. During the session, only board members and some staff were permitted in the discussion with the Joint Commission.

Chairman Sam Allen gave a brief statement after the executive session ended around 1:30 p.m.

Allen said the board's main concern is the quality of health care provided by the hospital.

"Also, the culture of this organization has to change," Allen said. "One of (the) things that we are dedicated to is making sure that we support our staff. There are a number of things that this board has to do, and we will implement those things."

He said the hospital authority has already moved forward on some items the commission asked the board to implement.

See SGMC on 6A



FAREWELL: Cole Pugh speaks at the Callaway High School graduation earlier this year. The Troup County School System voted to accept Pugh's resignation on Monday night.

STEPPING DOWN

Pugh resigns as superintendent of TCSS

BY DANIEL EVANS
DAILY NEWS

The Troup County School System accepted Superintendent Cole Pugh's resignation Monday night. Pugh had served as the superintendent of the Troup County School System since 2011, when he moved from Fort Worth, Texas.

Board members Alfred McNair, Joe Franklin, Cathy Hunt, Allen Simpson, Kirk Hancock and Brandon Brooks voted unanimously to accept Pugh's resignation in a special called meeting before Monday's board work session. Board member Ted Alford was not at either of Monday's meetings.

The special called meeting started at 5 p.m. and the board immediately went into executive session, a period that lasted 16 minutes. The public portion of the meeting lasted less than a minute.

"We have two items to come out of our discussion. The first item is to entertain a motion to hereby accept Dr. Pugh's resignation, effective today, and to authorize the board to move into a resignation agreement," Hancock, the board chairman said.

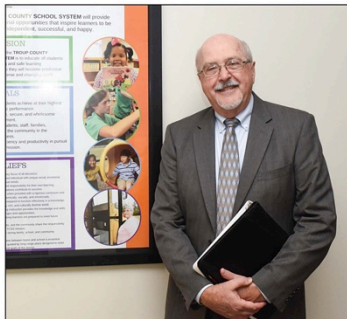
The second item was to authorize Dr. Roy Nichols as the interim superintendent for the school system. Nichols was approved unanimously, and the special meeting ended.

The regularly-scheduled board meeting started five minutes later and began with Hancock introducing Nichols, who served as superintendent of Troup County School System from 1999 to

FILE PHOTO | DAILY NEWS

SEE PUGH 2

Nichols to serve as interim superintendent



STEPPING IN: Roy Nichols is taking over as interim superintendent of the Troup County School System.

BY BAKER ELLIS AND
DANIEL EVANS
DAILY NEWS

The new interim superintendent for the Troup County School System will be a familiar face to many.

Roy Nichols served as Troup County Schools Superintendent from 1999-2004 before leaving to take a position at the University of West Georgia, where he became an educational leadership professor and the department chair in that field of study. He left UWG in 2007 to become the superintendent of the Mobile County School district in Mobile, Alabama, and served there until his retirement in 2011. During his tenure in Mobile, Nichols was seen as a steady hand, guiding a troubled

school district through challenging times. He moved back to LaGrange after his retirement in 2011, where he has been ever since. Since moving back to LaGrange, Nichols has spent time engaging in other activities outside of the school system, until he was contacted one week ago.

"I knew that the board was about to make a change. I was called a week ago Monday and asked if I would come in and have a conversation with them," Nichols said after Monday's board meeting. "When I retired from Mobile in 2011, we intentionally came back here. This is what we consider home," Nichols said. "This is my home system, and I was not going to let it flounder. They [the board] said

SEE NICHOLS 2

Division C Community Service

First Place (at left)

Daniel Evans

LaGrange Daily News

Second Place

The News Observer, Blue Ridge

Third Place

Eve Copeland and Stuart Taylor

The Tifton Gazette

Division E Community Service

First Place (at right)

Monroe County Reporter, Forsyth

Second Place

David Maxwell
Donalsonville News

Third Place

The Covington News

MONROE COUNTY SCHOOLS

Substitute's molestation conviction was from previous teaching post

How was he hired?

By Will Davis
publisher@mymcr.net

One week after first being disclosed by The Reporter, Monroe County schools haven't clarified how they hired a substitute teacher who had been convicted of offering oral sex to a 13-year-old boy when he last

worked as a sub.

The Reporter has obtained the 119-page criminal file of Jarvis Jabon Stewart, the 35-year-old who had been working in Monroe County classrooms as a sub since November. It shows Stewart had passed notes to a 13-year-boy in his class when he taught at Appling Middle School in Macon in April

See **MOLESTER** • Page 7A

Sheriff Conway joins Trump at White House

Sanctuary cities discussed at roundtable event

By ISABEL HUGHES
isabel.hughes@gwinnettdailypost.com

When Gwinnett County Sheriff Butch Conway received a call from a White House staffer Monday asking him to join President Donald Trump's roundtable discussion focusing on the topic of sanctuary cities, he couldn't

say no. "When the president calls, you respond," Conway told the Daily Post on Thursday. "It wasn't a big decision to make. I just had to arrange how to get there."

On Tuesday, Conway joined more than a dozen law enforcement officials, members of Congress, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen



Butch Conway

Nielsen, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Acting Director Thomas Homan with the President and attendees specifically noting crimes that have been committed by "criminal aliens."

"Sanctuary cities release

thousands of criminal aliens out of our prisons and jails and back into our communities," Trump said, introducing the discussion. "They go into those sanctuary cities when they see them; they go there because they feel

See CONWAY, Page 7A

Suspected car thief captured after chase

Man allegedly attempts to run down officer

By ISABEL HUGHES
isabel.hughes@gwinnettdailypost.com

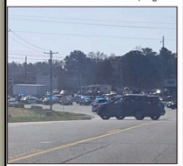
A 23-year-old accused of stealing a car from a parking lot in Lilburn early Thursday morning is being charged with aggravated assault after allegedly attempting to run over a police officer during a pursuit.

Brian Ngo, of Lawrenceville, was arrested on West Pike Street after leading Gwinnett and Lawrenceville police, sheriff's deputies, Georgia State Patrol troopers and Georgia Gwinnett College officers on a chase that started in the Collins Hill Library parking lot, according to

Cpl. Wilbert Rundles, a spokesman for the Gwinnett County Police Department.

"Shortly after 4 a.m., a vehicle was stolen from a parking lot in the city limits of Lilburn," Rundles said. "The victim left his Toyota Corolla running for a brief moment when he first arrived at work and the vehicle was stolen. A few hours later

See CHASE, Page 6A



A Lawrenceville man who was accused of stealing a car from a parking lot in Lilburn early Thursday morning allegedly attempted to run over a police officer during a pursuit. A resident captured a photo of the incident at Ga. Highway 128 and Old Norcross Road. (Special Photo: Jami Jones)



Police pilots Cpl. Michael Duncan and George A. McLain received the Purple Heart Award at the Gwinnett Chamber Valor Awards on Wednesday afternoon. (Photos: Anthony Stalcup)

Gwinnett's finest

Public safety officials honored at Chamber's Valor awards

By ISABEL HUGHES
isabel.hughes@gwinnettdailypost.com

They come from different backgrounds — some former military personnel, some whose family members have law enforcement, fire or paramedic training, and some who became a first responder simply to help others.

They wear different colors — beige for the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office, blue for the Gwinnett County Police Department, navy for the Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services, and light maroon for the 911 Center.

Their jobs, however, are all the same. Gwinnett police pilot Cpl. Michael Duncan said: "All (they're) doing is saving people."

On Wednesday, the Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce



honored county and city first responders at its 13th annual Valor Public Safety Awards, which brought more than 200 public safety officials and their families to Duluth's Infinite Energy Forum.

The event recognizes the men and women who put their lives on the line daily to protect

See VALOR, Page 6A

Lawrenceville names police HQ in honor of retiring chief

By CURI YEOMANS
curyeomans@gwinnettdailypost.com

When a person retires, their employer might give them a gold watch or some other trinket on their last day, but Lawrenceville Police Chief Randy Johnson got something bigger and more permanent: his name on a building.

On Thursday — Johnson's last day as police chief — city officials announced that the Lawrenceville police headquarters



Randy Johnson

will be renamed the L. Randy Johnson Lawrenceville Police Headquarters. The city cited his 33 years of police service, including spending the last 21 as Lawrenceville's police chief, as the reason for renaming the headquarters.

"As one of the longest stand-

ing Chiefs of Police for any department in Georgia, this tribute to his legacy is both well-deserved and appropriate," Mayor Judy Jordan Johnson said in a statement. "We appreciate and want to remember his service to our community and a dedication of this facility to Chief Johnson's honor is an excellent way to preserve his legacy and honor a true leader who has contributed over



See JOHNSON, Page 7A

The Lawrenceville Police Headquarters is shown in this undated photo. City officials announced Thursday that the building will be renamed the L. Randy Johnson Lawrenceville Police Headquarters in honor of retiring Police Chief Randy Johnson. (Special Photo)

Division A

Local News

Coverage

First Place (at left)
Gwinnett Daily Post, Lawrenceville

Second Place
Savannah Morning News

Third Place
Marietta Daily Journal

The Newnan Times-Herald

ISSUE 140 | NEWNAN, GA | SINCE 1885

Concerned citizens form 'Preserve Coweta'

BY SARAH KATY CAMPBELL
newnan@timesherald.com

After a Coweta County Commission meeting discussing a proposed high-density residential development in Poplar Road, a group of local residents began to talk about preservation and development in Coweta.

They attended two public meetings on Coweta's rural identity, where a consensus was added to their list: they want to preserve the rural identity of Coweta.

And Preserve Coweta was born.

Preserve Coweta is a group of local residents who are concerned about development in the county, and are working to inform people about upcoming planning.

"We're a work in progress. We're just residents," said Sara Freeman, who moved to Coweta a few years ago and lives in Dunwoody, an affluent suburb of Atlanta. Freeman lives on 27 acres on Poplar Road and sees commercial and high-density residential development threatening to diminish the rural identity.

"Then we went to the planning and zoning meeting and we just kept hearing people's voices," said Freeman. "One of the things we talked to was like 'we're not happy with this.' They decided there should be a land-use plan. Most people don't have the time to go to every meeting."

SPRING - 2A



Sara Freeman and Emily Yeager discuss the newly formed 'Preserve Coweta' organization.

Youth outreach program reaffirms the power of music

BY CLAYTON
newnan@timesherald.com

A police training room was filled with a mix of police and hope for the future of the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office.

For four years, the Newnan Police Department has kept the mission of hope through music, and it's now being shared with the next generation of law enforcement.

The Gwinnett Sheriff's Office was founded in the late 1970s by Lt. and Sgt. Williams, who are now in their 40s.

They started the program as a way of showing the power of the program to the next generation of law enforcement.

"Music is a coping mechanism," Freeman said. "It's a way to express your feelings and emotions."

SPRING - 2A



Adriana Costa smiles after receiving her production certificate for completing the summer season of Guitars Not Guns.

Guitars Not Guns celebrates 4 years of sharing music and community

BY CLAYTON
newnan@timesherald.com

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SPRING - 2A

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SPRING - 2A

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LAW OFFICE OF MICHAEL WEST

Division B Local News Coverage

First Place (at left)

The Newnan Times-Herald

Second Place

Daily Citizen-News, Dalton

Third Place

Athens Banner-Herald

Division D Local News Coverage

First Place (at right)

The News Observer, Blue Ridge

Second Place

The Walton Tribune, Monroe

Third Place

Pickens County Progress, Jasper

SERVING FANNIN COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND EAST POLK COUNTY, TENNESSEE

HAPPENINGS

Welcome magazine features events,
tour of Swinging Bridge ■ Inside



REBELS WIN

Fannin County opens football season
with win over rival Gilmer Bobcats ■ C1

THE NEWS OBSERVER

Blue Ridge, Georgia

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2018

90 Pages • 4 Sections • 75 Cents

Longer hours, drink specials approved

Blue Ridge ordinance amended

By LAUREN BEARDEN
lauren@thenewsobserver.com

here's how Council members voted on the amendments:
• The City may require any license holder subject to the 50 percent food to alcohol sales ratio to produce a statement prepared by a certified public accountant. Passed 5 - 0 with Nathan Fitts, Rhonda Haight, Harold Herndon, Kenneth Gaddis and Robbie Cornelius in favor;
• An employee permit shall be valid for one year and may be renewed for no less than \$30. Passed 5 - 0.
• No member of City Council who holds more than 10 percent interest in any establishment selling alcohol shall vote on any matter involving or

See ALCOHOL A2■

RODEO FUN



New Observer photo: Lauren Bearden
Anisley Barnett of the Stars N Saddles Drill Team holds the United States flag during the opening prayer and the national anthem at the Kiwanis Club Rodeo, Saturday, August 18.

See C8 for more rodeo pictures■

Families seek answers in murder-suicide

By MATTHEW OSBORNE
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A seven-hour standoff ended in tragedy Tuesday morning, August 14, as a woman was shot to death before her alleged killer took his own life in the early morning hours. The aftermath has left the families of both victims, one from Blue Ridge and one from Blairsville, seeking answers. Officers from multiple agencies waited outside a home on Twin Pond Road in the Hiwassee Dam community of Cherokee County, North Carolina, almost all night on Thursday, August 16, as Blue Ridge and Blairsville sought answers. When Emergency Medical Services and Cherokee County sheriff's deputies arrived, there were no signs of life in the victim, home on Twin Pond Road in the Hiwassee Dam community of Cherokee County, North Carolina, almost all night on Thursday, August 16, as Blue Ridge and Blairsville sought answers. When Emergency Medical Services and Cherokee County sheriff's deputies arrived, there were no signs of life in the victim, home on Twin Pond Road in the Hiwassee Dam community of Cherokee County, North Carolina, almost all night on Thursday, August 16, as Blue Ridge and Blairsville sought answers. When Emergency Medical Services and Cherokee County sheriff's deputies arrived, there were no signs of life in the victim, home on Twin Pond Road in the Hiwassee Dam community of Cherokee County, North Carolina, almost all night on Thursday, August 16, as Blue Ridge and Blairsville sought answers.

See ANSWERS A2■

Student hopes for return of lost leg

By LAUREN BEARDEN
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College student Stephen Pensoneau lost his prosthetic leg while tubing in the Toccoa River and is hoping someone finds it. Hailing from Cape Coral, Florida, Pensoneau and his family were vacationing in Blue Ridge the last week of June. The family was staying in a cabin from Ed Gregory, who first reported the lost leg early this month. While tubing down the Toccoa River from the Toccoa Valley Campground, Pensoneau had repositioned himself on the inner tube and lost the prosthetic leg, which supports him from the knee down. The river was flowing so fast to immediately retrieve the prosthetic or pole leg. He and campground representatives searched the area and down-river for hours. Gena Golden of Toccoa Valley Campground echoed the story of the lost leg and said her husband, Ray, was one of those who helped search for it. The shin portion of the prosthetic is a pole of translucent plastic, he said. The foot portion of the prosthetic was wearing a black and blue water shoe. Despite the many weeks that have passed, Pensoneau hopes the leg will be found. He said, "Any help would be appreciated. Anyone who finds it may call 239-677-1888."

Talent needed as FCLC show nears

By LAUREN BEARDEN
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Got talent? Every church that is part of the Fannin Christian Learning Center is invited to enter contestants into the FCLC Annual BBQ and Youth Talent Show, September 22. Two age categories are available for the talent show, 12 and under and 13 to 26. Executive Director Tina Lee said contestants must be entered by September 14. "Send the contestant's name and talent to me at tina.fclc@gmail.com, or call 706-258-3940," she said. The barbecue dinner, which includes a drink and dessert, is \$8 for adults and \$4 for those 10 and under. The meal will be served at the downtown Blue Ridge City Park from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and the talent show will follow across the street at the First Baptist Church Youth Center after dinner. Lee said, "Bring your lawn chairs and come and enjoy some fun entertainment and some good barbecue at a great price supporting a worthy cause!" Tickets may be purchased from the FCLC office at 2224 East First Street or any Board member. Board members include: Steve Bailey, Kathy Brownlee, Kimberly Coshow, Tom Eads, Glenn Patterson, Bill Rowe, Chrissy Strathern, Cami Wood and Ken Wood. Call 706-258-3940 for more information.

McCaysville residents to see streets paved

By GLENN HARRISON
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McCaysville residents will soon see parts of several streets paved and be able to insure their homes against leaks following action August 14 by the City Council. Five paving projects costing just over \$210,000 were awarded to Johnson paving. Paving will include:
• Kingston Street from North Church to McCay Street, \$35,852.00;
• Brookhaven Lane from Kingston to Bice Lane, \$45,407.00;
• Brookhaven Trail from top of hill to cul-de-sac, \$51,863.00;
• Police Department and Post Office parking lots, \$35,821.00; and,
• Culvert and assorted work on Kingston and Berry streets, \$19,977.00.

Those projects total \$210,580. The bids from Johnson Paving were the only ones received for the work, although Councilman Rodney Kendall pointed out three other paving contractors were contacted personally in addition to published advertisements for bids. After months of considering a leak insurance plan, council members voted to move forward with ServLine to provide coverage to customers on the city water system. Councilman Richard Wagner said \$2.00 per month will be

added to each customer's utility bill to provide the coverage. However, any customer who decides not to keep the coverage can opt out of the program. Wagner said when a leak occurs, the insurance will pay to fix the leak and pay the coverage in the water bill caused by the leak. See LEAKS A2■



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DOGS, CATS NEEDING HOMES
ADOPT A PET
Plenty of dogs, cats in need of good homes • A2



Chronic heartburn? Get help here.

If you have severe heartburn, also known as gastroesophageal reflux disease or GERD, that is unresponsive to medication, you owe it to yourself to find out more about surgical treatment options available. Prolonged bouts of GERD can harm the lining of the esophagus and cause long-term damage, so don't wait. For a consultation, call 706-632-4217.

Jonathan Bloch, M.D., FACS, Board-Certified, Fellowship-Trained General Surgeon with a focus in reflux surgery

BLUE RIDGE MEDICAL GROUP
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Pamela Smith, M.D., is a board-certified general surgeon with the specialties and subspecialties of bariatric procedures and hernias.