

Hall sworn in as Laurens school superintendent

By PAYTON TOWNS III  
Senior Reporter

With his wife, daughters and other family looking on, O.J. Hall took the oath as Laurens County's new school superintendent during a ceremony last week at the Old West Laurens School.

His daughter held the Bible while Hall was sworn in by Laurens County Superior Court Judge Trey Taylor.

"I want to thank everybody for coming out to show love and support," Hall said. "I appreciate all of the thank you's, but as I continue to have said since October, I appreciate the prayers even more, and the continued prayers. I'm a firm believer that people have to give you permission to lead them, so I'm thankful for the Laurens County educators and the students in the community and this great board of education who has afforded me this opportunity to lead."

He acknowledged that leadership comes with sacrifice and is thankful for his wife, Erica, and their two daughters, Mya and Morgan, and his parents, sisters, in-laws

and family.

"I wouldn't be up here without them," said Hall, who asked his family to stand and be recognized. "I am thankful for them."

Hall will take the lead position on Jan. 1, replacing Clifford Garnto who is retiring at the end of this year. During Garnto's retirement celebration, that happened before Hall was sworn in, he offered some words to the next LCBOE superintendent.

"To Dr. O.J. Hall, I speak Jesus over your tenure," Garnto said. "May the Lord keep and bless you."

Hall will be the first Black superintendent for the Laurens County Board of Education.

"It's meaningful, and I'm grateful to those who came before me and whose shoulders I stand on," he said. "I'm grateful my family was able to witness this moment in history, but my responsibility is to the entire community. When we unite and come together to do what is best for kids, we can reach unlimited levels of success for our community."

NEW SUPERINTENDENT  
Continued on page 8



Superior Court Judge Trey Taylor swears in O.J. Hall as Laurens County school superintendent. Hall will take over for Clifford Garnto, who is retiring at the end of 2025/PAYTON TOWNS III



HOLIDAY DINNER: RESA HOLDS SECOND CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS CITIZENS

The Heart of Georgia Regional Educational Service Agency held its second Christmas Senior Citizens Luncheon on Dec. 16. Seniors from James Place Assisting Nursing Home heard Christmas songs performed by the Southwest Singers, composed of fourth and fifth graders and led by Jennifer Baggett. The Laurens County Schools Showcase Transition Program served food and drinks to the seniors /PAYTON TOWNS III



The tour offered a look inside some of Dublin's homes all decked out for the holidays/SPECIAL PHOTOS

Seasonal showcase: Green Acres Garden Club holds Christmas Tour of Homes

**SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD**

The Green Acres Garden Club recently held its Christmas Tour of Homes, showcasing homes displaying holiday decorations.

Featured homes included Misty and Maury Beasley, Dr. Don Nelson and Becky Nelson, Grace and Kim Williams, Paige and Will Smalley and Allison and Sean Clark. This fundraiser supports Hillcrest Elementary School Youth Garden Club, college scholarships, community beautification projects and garden therapy.

Homes had beautifully displayed Christmas china, amazing table settings, Christ-

mas trees in all rooms of the homes, Santa, Belkie Bears and ornament collections. The houses also included family heirlooms, magnificent nativity scenes and yearly Christmas collections.

The tours were held on Dec. 7. The day exemplified the Christmas spirit of giving. Homeowners welcomed guests into their home to share their Christmas decor. People from the community gave of their time to view homes and ticket purchases supported the garden club's projects.

TOUR OF HOMES  
Continued on page 8

Coffee with a Cop: Local store honors police with breakfast

By PAYTON TOWNS III  
Senior Reporter

A local store held an early Christmas celebration for the Dublin Police Department and city employees.

Family Dollar, 304 N. Jefferson St., hosted Coffee with a Cop, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 17. Officers were able to drink coffee and eat a meal



City employees partake of a breakfast provided by Family Dollar during its Coffee with a Cop event held Wednesday morning/PAYTON TOWNS III



Family Dollar employees and members of the Dublin Police Department and city of Dublin staff gather for a photo during Coffee With A Cop/PAYTON TOWNS III

pastries.

"We do this in some of our markets to help build relationships with the police department, the city and the community," said Archie Cook, regional asset protection manager with Family Dollar from Savannah. "This way our team members can interact with the police and get them in the store and show that we appreciate what they do."

The breakfast spread the store provided was the best one Cook has seen.

"Lorenzo out did himself," Cook said. "We do this also to show our team members that we appreciate them."

Edwin Adside, marketing investigator with Family Dollar from Milledgeville, liked what he saw.

"This is a great event," Adside said. "It bridges the gap between the community and the police. Sometimes there is a disconnect and we wanted to try to bring them together."



OBITUARIES



Joy Rogers Garner

Mrs. Joy Rogers Garner, age 88, beloved wife of the late William Clayton Garner passed away on Saturday morning, Dec. 20, 2025 at Dublin Square Health and Rehabilitation Center in Dublin.

Born in Soperton, she was the eldest of six children born to the late Curtis Judson Rogers and Mary Lucile Page Rogers. At an early age she became affectionately known as “Skeeter,” a name of affection that remained with her throughout her lifetime. In 1958 she married William Clayton Garner of Soperton. The newlyweds traveled fairly extensively throughout the State of Georgia with her husband’s quest for higher education and his career with her USDA Soil and Conservation Service. No matter where they might be assigned, Treutlen County was always home and where they always returned to.

Joy attended Georgia Southwestern University in Americus and Georgia Southern University in Statesboro and West Georgia College in Carrollton, where she earned her Bachelors, Masters and Specialists degrees in early childhood education and media specialist. She taught in the Treutlen County School System for many years before retiring from Treutlen County High School.

She had been lifelong member of the Orianna Baptist Church.

In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her husband, William Clayton Garner, a son, William Todd Garner, siblings, Curtis “Buddy” Rogers, Johnnie Bryan, Peggy Barrick, and Sylvia Norris.

Miss Skeeter leaves behind, her children, Alton “Al” F. Garner (Jackie), Soperton, Ga., Tammy G. Thigpen (Johnny), Soperton, Ga., James C. “Jimmy” Garner Soperton, Ga., her only living sibling, Sara Cauley (Wayne), Soperton, Ga., brother-in-laws, Kenny Barrick, Kenny Bryan, sister in laws, Jeannie Rogers and Brenda Colston; she also leaves behind nine grandchildren, 22 great-grand-

children and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be conducted at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2025 in the Billy Williams Chapel of Sammons Funeral Home with Pastor Mike Mertz, Pastor Arthur Conley and Sheriff Tommy Corbin officiating.

Mrs. Garner will be laid to rest beside her husband of 56 years, William Clayton Garner, in the Orianna Cemetery.

Serving as pallbearers will be: Caleb Garner, Todd Sheridan, Will Garner, Mercer Garner, Ronald Barrick, Barry Norris, Carey Cauley, Jason Brooks, Luke Brooks and Jody Rogers.

Her family received friends on Monday from 6 – 8 p.m. at Sammons Funeral Home or friends and family may call at the home of her son and daughter-in-law, Al and Jackie Garner.

Please share a memory, leave a condolence message and sign the online guest register at [www.sammons-funeralhome.com](http://www.sammons-funeralhome.com)

**Sammons Funeral Home, Family Owned and Operated Since 1917.**



Richard M. Baker

Funeral services for Deacon Richard M. Baker, of Dublin, Georgia, will be held on Saturday, Dec. 27, 2025, at 11 a.m. at the Turkey Creek Baptist Church, 828 Scotland Road in Dublin. Rev. Dr. Frederick C. Williams will deliver the eulogy. Interment will follow in Dudley Memorial Cemetery.

The family will receive friends at the visitation on Friday, Dec. 26, 2025, 6:00-7 p.m. at Dudley Funeral Home, 617 East Jackson Street in Dublin.

Born on Sunday, June 30, 1940, in rural Georgia to the late Deacon Sam B. and Thirlie Baker, Richard was an ideal example of Christian living. At an early age, he confessed Christ to be his personal Lord and Savior and was baptized at Mount Calvary Baptist Church at the age of 12. Later, in 1960, at the age of 19, Richard became a member of Turkey Creek Missionary Baptist Church because that is the church where the love of his life and wife, Christine, was a member.

During the course of his 65-year church membership, Richard was a faithful and dependable servant who demonstrated his commitment to Christ through his actions and his deeds. Ordained as a deacon in 1968, Richard embodied the spirit of a "Good and Faithful Servant" (Matthew 25:23). He was known for his quiet strength, warm smile and a genuine servant’s heart that touched everyone he met. Faithfully, Richard served at Turkey Creek in various capacities, to include leading and participating in the

men's ministry and various Bible study groups. He also served as deacon, chairman of the board of deacons, church treasurer, TCMB board member, choir member and choir treasurer. Additionally, Richard was a member of the team that ensured the successful land purchase of the additional acreage that surrounds the church today and he was responsible for drawing the church’s remodeling plans that is now reflected in the structure we see today.

Educated at Macon Junior College, Brewton-Parker College, the Professional Academy of Broadcasting and Georgia Tech in FCC Licensure, Richard spent many years working in the television and communications field, retiring in 2003 as a plant manager for what is now known as Charter Communications. Most recently, Deacon Baker worked as Bailiff for the Laurens County Superior Court.

Deacon Baker’s life ministry extended far beyond the church walls as he was also committed to meeting the needs of the community, volunteering, visiting the sick, offering a listening ear, and praying for the pastoral staff and those in need daily. Years of active participation in both community and other outreach programs was a reflection of his belief in that "whatever you do for the least of these, you have done for me" (Matthew 25:40). Some of the organizations or boards to which Deacon Baker belonged include, the Laurens County Board of Tax Assessors, member of the Dublin Planning & Zoning Committee, Board of Trustees HCA Hospital, Georgia Power Advisory Committee, Heart of Georgia Adult Literacy Advisory Committee, United Way Council in Macon, Dublin Helping Hands Committee, Board of Trustees for Volunteers in Medicine, Dublin/Laurens Leadership Academy graduate, Dublin Recreation Department 16-year Volunteer Coach for Youth Baseball, Downtown Dublin Beautification Committee, and he mentored at-risk youth in the Dublin City School System. Deacon Baker was a Prince Hall Mason of Landmark Lodge #64 for 60 years, served 15-years in the position of secretary for the Royal Arch Mason Lodge #8, was a member of Eastern Star Fidelity Chapter #45. As a past Worthy Patron, he also served Dublin District #19 as District Worthy Patron and served as past Grand Trustee and past Grand Associate Patron for the Prince Hall Order of the Eastern Star of Georgia. In his spare time, Richard also enjoyed fishing and farming and of course, sharing the vegetables he grew with family and friends.

A family man, Deacon Baker cherished his beloved wife of 65 years, Christine. He was a committed husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather who drew the love and respect of his family through his example of integrity and love.

Deacon Ricard M. Baker, a man of unwavering faith, humility, and love, peacefully transitioned to eternal rest on Dec. 19, 2025, at the age of 85. He was comforted by his devoted wife of 65 years, Christine Knight Baker. A true servant leader, Deacon Baker dedicated his

life to God, to his family, and to uplifting the community through decades of faithful service.

He was preceded in death by several siblings: sisters, Mary Lizzie Edwards and Patricia Snell; brothers, Monroe Baker; Sylvester Baker; Rev. Johnny Baker; Curtis Baker; George Baker; James Baker, Ulyssee Baker and brother-in-Christ, Deacon Coleman Smith.

Deacon Baker leaves to cherish his memory his loving wife, Christine Knight Baker; son, Alan Welch (Crystal) Baker; daughter, Tracy Lynn (Michael) Batten; grandchildren; Elisa Baker, Demisha Baker, and Kavin Michael Batten; great-grandchildren, Amariah Taylor, Journee Morris, A’layiah Snead, and Jai’lee Harden. In addition to his wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Richard is survived by sisters, Margaret Drayton and Shirley Massenburg (James), sister-in-Christ, Mrs. Catherine Smith, and goddaughter and godbrother, Faye Maria and Preston Chappell.

While our hearts are saddened by Deacon Richard Baker’s passing, we take comfort in knowing that while he is “absent from the body,” he is now in the presence of his Lord and Savior until we meet again.

Please post your condolences online at [Servicesby-Dudley.com](http://Servicesby-Dudley.com)

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.



Judy Smith Johnson Garrett

Mrs. Judy Smith Johnson Garrett, age 82, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025, at Atrium Health Navicent Medical Center.

Mrs. Garrett was born May 30, 1943, in McRae, Georgia. She was the daughter of the late Preston Albert Smith and Molly Lucile Towns Smith. She was also preceded in death by her two husbands, Vernon Leonard Johnson and Robert Clinton Garrett and her daughter, Pamela Denise Sellars. She was a retired Registered Nurse where she worked for numerous hospitals. She moved to Laurens County in May of 2017 after living in McRae, Georgia for the past 74 years. She was a member of Dublin First Church of the Nazarene where she helped with Sunday School. She was a member of the Rotary Club in Telfair County. She was loving wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She loved her church and absolutely enjoyed making food for the sick and elderly

neighbors.

Mrs. Garrett is survived by her daughter, Vickie (Wayne) Moody; two step-sons, Bobby (Debbie) Garrett and Joe (Caroline) Garrett; a daughter-in-law, Kim Garrett; a brother, Benny (Debbie) Smith; eight grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren.

At Mrs. Garrett’s wishes she will be memorialized by cremation and no formal services will be held.

Stanley Funeral Home and Crematory/Dublin Chapel has charge of funeral arrangements. To sign the Online Register Book please visit [www.stanleyfuneral-home.com](http://www.stanleyfuneral-home.com).



Peggy Sue Monts Baisden

Funeral Services for Ms. Peggy Sue Monts Baisden, 63, of Dublin, Georgia, will be held on Friday, Dec. 26, 2025, at 1 p.m. at the Williams Chapel Baptist Church, 1142 SR-42 in East Dublin. Rev. Kenneth Kates will officiate. Interment will follow in Dudley Memorial Cemetery.

Peggy Sue Monts Baisden was born on Thursday, March 15, 1962, to Vera Monts in Americus, Georgia. She was preceded in death by her mother, great-grandmother, Sue Angry, and nephew, Jalil Walters.

She was employed at the Dublin Veterans Administration Hospital as chief of staff assistant for 10 years. She was previously the manager at Walmart Optometry for Dr. William Cox for many years. She graduated from Americus High School in 1980. She attended University of West Georgia. She enjoyed her one and only son who she loved more than life. She enjoyed shopping, traveling, watching the Atlanta Braves, and reading for fun. She was a previous member of the Book-ish Club. She was a member of Christ Deliverance Temple Church under the leadership of Pastor Kenneth Kates and Reverend Ira Kates. She attended Williams Chapel Baptist Church with her fiancé weekly on Sundays. Ms. Baisden passed away on Dec. 18, 2025.

She leaves to cherish her precious memories her son, Holden Baisden of Austin, Texas; fiancé, Anthony Jones Sr. of Dublin, brother, Carlton Lincoln of Warner Robins, sisters, Clintontine

Monts of Buford, Tracie (Ben) Smith of Americus, Karen Walters of Atlanta, Regina Brown of Americus, aunts, Nancy Adams of Compton, Evelyn Angry Smith of Connecticut, and Kathy (Phillip) Scudder of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; uncles, Clifford Monts (Beverly) Angry and Clinton Adams Jr. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; special niece, Lakeitha Butler-Buford of Albany, godmother, Maurice (Charles) Sizer; best friends, Monica Smith Davis and Sakethia Walters and godchildren, Keith and Iris. She also leaves a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and dear friends.

Please post your condolences online at [Servicesby-Dudley.com](http://Servicesby-Dudley.com).

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.

Sharon Ann Price

Funeral services for Sharon Ann Price were held Monday, Dec. 22, 2025, at Graham Memorial Church of the Nazarene with interment in the church cemetery.

Mrs. Price was born May 13, 1961, in Dublin, Georgia. She was the daughter of the late Robert Lynn Sellars and Sammie Geraldine Warren Sellars. She was also preceded in death by her sister-in-law, Pam Sellars. She was a very smart lady. She loved her children and grandchildren always pushing them to be the best they could possibly be. She was always known for keeping a clean house. She had a love for children and loved babysitting and caring for them. Mrs. Price passed away Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025, at her residence.

Mrs. Price is survived by her husband, Glenn Tanner of East Dublin; three children, Shannon Price of Dublin, Jason (Christin) Price of Dublin, and Allen (Rachel) Tanner of Dublin; three brothers, Robert (Rhonda) Sellars of Rincon, Lynn Sellars of Eastman, and Edward (Nancy) Sellars of Green Bay, Wisconsin; two grandchildren, Makayla Mead, and Landyn Price, and loving pet companion, “Wiggles.”

Stanley Funeral Home and Crematory/Dublin Chapel handled arrangements. To sign the Online Register Book please visit [www.stanleyfuneralhome.com](http://www.stanleyfuneralhome.com)



BIRTHDAYS

Dec. 23  
*Kay Collins  
Bobby Franklin  
Cameron Smith  
Khalia Ja'Dore Wilkins  
Karizima Wright*

Dec. 24  
*Ricky Albritton  
Marcus Green  
Shakira Jones*



Attorney Brian Arnold



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*In Memory of*  
**Michael Dudley**  
3/9/67 - 12/23/24

It broke our hearts to lose you  
but you did not go alone.  
A part of us went with you,  
the day God took you home.  
If tears could build a stairway  
and heartaches make a lane,  
we'd walk our way to heaven,  
and bring you back again.  
In life we loved you dearly.  
In death we love you still.  
In our hearts you hold a place  
no one could ever fill.

*Love you always,  
Mom and  
the family*

**The Courier Herald office will observe reduced hours on Wednesday, December 24th, and be closed on Thursday December 25th and Friday, December 26th.**

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
Your Thursday, December 24th and Saturday, December 27th editions will be a combo paper.

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year**



# Season's Greetings: Wynn's give bright gift

Dublin Courier Herald

The lights are burn- ing again at the E.C. Wynn house, their gift to the chil- dren of middle Georgia.

The holiday spectacle , which attracted more than 600 cars on Christmas Eve last season is even bigger for 1975.

Thousands of multi-col- ored lights, nearly \$2,000 worth, Santa Clauses, rein- deer, snowmen, angels, wise men, Christmas trees, toys, and tinsel make a Christmas display untouched for exu- berance in middle Georgia.

And it's all for children. "If it weren't for the chil- dren, we wouldn't be doing this," Mr. Wynn says.

The lighting project, first started in 1974, takes twelve months to plan and more than a week to erect.

Wynn, a rural letter car- rier, and his wife did it all - the wiring, the poles to hold the hundreds of strings of lights, the motorized Santas on see-saws and swings.

It's their way of giving lit- tle ones a little fun at Christ- mas, but the older ones are known to gawk at the array themselves.

Since the Wynns lost two sons in automobile acci- dents, they have lived to see the amazed faces of children staring at the wonders of their Christmas menagerie.

The Wynn's unsurpassed gift of Christmas is on Geor- gia 29 between Dublin and Soperton in the Rockledge community.

## CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING OPEN

"Ye Olde Carnegie Li- brary Building," situated in the well known triangular mall in downtown Dublin, will again the center of in- terest this Christmas sea- son when citizens of mid- dle Georgia and visitors are urged to participate in a nostalgic trip to the en- chanting era of yesteryear - and in the "Spirit of '76" and the Nation's Bicentennial Celebration.

The Laurens County Historical Society and the Dublin Garden Club are co-sponsors of a "Colonial Christmas" in the old li- brary building.

Many of the hostess- es are wearing quaint and charming costumes of the 18th century.

The two groups have worked for months re- searching and reproducing the various rooms to be on display.

Holiday Baked Foods for sale will be found on the "groaning board" of the Bake Shoppe, including home-made breads, baked pies, cakes, cheese straws, and candies. This area is under the charge of Mrs. Carl Williams, Mrs. James Rawls, Mrs. Don Johnston, Mrs. John Bell, and Miss Ann Johnson.

Near the entrance of the library will be a Williams-

## OBITUARIES

### Arja Niggelie Forester

Arja Niggelie Forest- er, age 94, of Macon, Ga., passed away on Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025.

A graveside service was held at 3 p.m. Monday, Dec. 22, at Orphans Cemetery.

She is survived by her daughters - Lauren Austin, Victoria Coley, and Adrian Giddens (Tim); grandchil- dren - Kate Brown (Tan- ner), Emily Sanders (David), and Marcy Wimbush (Ray- mond); seven great-grand- children; sister - Irene Van Der Pluijm (Ted); and niec- es - Andrea, Leonie and Kristina.

The family received friends at Stokes-Souther- land Funeral Home from 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Mon- day, Dec. 22.

Stokes-Southerland Fu- neral Home of Eastman has charge of arrangements.

burg Parlor, featuring Chip- pendale and Queen Anne furniture, complete with a fireplace bedecked with garlands of natural green- ery. On the mantel and at the windows will be wreaths in the tradition of the early settlers.

There will be a Christ- mas tree topped with a huge red bow, hand-strung ropes of cranberries and popcorn, gilded nuts, and calico cor- nucopias.

Other ornaments - hand- made needlework and home-baked animal cook- ies a well as various bread- twists made of real dough and candles - will highlight the tree.

Assembling this lovely parlor and decorations are Miss Martha Hooks, Mrs. Allen Thomas, Mrs. Lester Porter, Mrs. Al Lamb, Miss Louise Buchan, and Mrs. H.C. Waldron.

The dining room, with Mrs. Bob Shuler, Mrs. R.C. Garrard, and Mrs. John Bell in charge, contains Hep- plewhite furniture with two Chippendale arm chairs from the home of Mrs. Bell's mother, Mrs. W.R. Brigham. Hurricane lamps with candles are on the cre- denza with an antique tu- reen filled with fruits, nuts, and greenery on the dining table. There is a stylized Christmas tree covered with greenery and love apples on the server.

The bedroom features a Jenny Lind bed and coverlet, which is a handmade quilt made by the grandmother of Mrs. Howard Waldron, a hand hooked rug, an old re- finished chest, and a pitcher on a washstand. A grand- mother rocker, Empire and ladder-back chairs are also used here. Garlands of hol- ly decorate the room, under the hostesses, Mrs. Clifton Wilkinson, Mrs. O.W. Lind- sey, Mrs. Howard Waldron, and Miss Louise Buchan.

The pioneer kitchen, done by Mrs. Eubergene Nicholson, Mrs. Steve Mer- cer, and Mrs. Danny Hogan, uses furniture that is strictly functional and not designed for comfort. A quilting frame with a quilt - in the making - is featured. There are reproduced 18th Centu- ry utensils for cooking with pewter pieces.

The Historical Society and the Dublin Garden Club share in sincere ap- preciation to the Dublin High School Coed Y, which cleaned the library win- dows, and to Brown Furni- ture Company and to Ray Lord of East Dublin Uphol- stery Company.

Donations of \$1.00 for adults and 50 cents for chil- dren made be made.

## HESTER WINS CHRISTMAS TOURNEY

Melvin Hester, winner of several other tournaments at the Dublin Country Club in recent years, took another title over the weekend as he won the Christmas Tourna- ment by shooting 74-76-150 to finish one stroke ahead of Larry Thigpen's 75-76-151.

Third place went to Tom Rhea, who posted 79-74-153, while the other three winners in the Champion- ship Flight were Joe Du- rant with 75-80-155; Roger Lunsford, 79-79-158; and Henry Cantera, 81-78-159.

Other flight winners in- cluded:

First Flight - Jim Haw- kins, 83-75-158

Second Flight - Gene Scarboro - 84-80-164

Third Flight - Woody Sullivan - 93-87-180

Special prizes went to the following:

Melvin Hester, a putter for medalist honors

Danny Moore, Golfer of the Day, a putter

Tournament chairman Henry Cantera said that first place prizes were Mo- torola "Quasar" television sets.

Second place prizes were canvas suitcases and duffle bags.

Third place prizes were Green Joy golf shoes.

Fourth place prizes were golf umbrellas.

Fifth place prizes were golf gloves.

Sixth place prizes were three golf balls.

## CHRISTMAS PLAY AT LIBRARY

The Peter Pan Players of the Laurens County Library will present the one-act play, "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" on Tues- day night at 8:30 and on Wednesday afternoon at 4:30 in the Laurens County Library Auditorium.

The play is adapted from the book, "The Best Christ- mas Pageant Ever" by Bar- bara Robinson. This book is a nominee for the 1975- 76 for the Annual Georgia Children's Book Award, sponsored by the College of Education, University of Georgia.

Janice Anderson will be the Assistant Director.

The cast consists of the following:

Annette Brown  
Tina Cherry  
Dori Davis  
Scott Hagler  
Mike Horton  
Owen Howell  
Mark Johnson  
David Killingsworth  
Kelly Matthews  
Dawn Rogers

## GRANT GETS AWARD

At the regular meeting of the Laurens County Board of Education on Thursday, Hugh Grant was award- ed an honorary life mem- bership with the Georgia School Board Association as a token of his distinguished service with the Laurens County Board of Education.

He has served for 12 years and was honored at the Georgia School Board's annual convention banquet on December 5th in Atlanta.

Members of the present

administration of the Lau- rens County Board are Jim- my Kemp, Chairman of the Board; Roger Lord, Tony Johnson, and LaRue Foun- tain.

The current Laurens County School Superinten- dent is William P. Johnson.

## COMMUNITY CHORUS CONCERT

The Dublin Community Chorus presented a concert at the First Baptist Church on Monday evening at eight o'clock.

The Chorus is composed of musicians from Dublin and the surrounding area.

Mr. Nat E. Frazer, Chair- man of the Music Depart- ment of Middle Georgia College, is Director of the group.

Mrs. Nancy Jenkins Claxton, an accomplished concert pianist, is the ac- companist. She also pre- sented several solo selec- tions on the program.

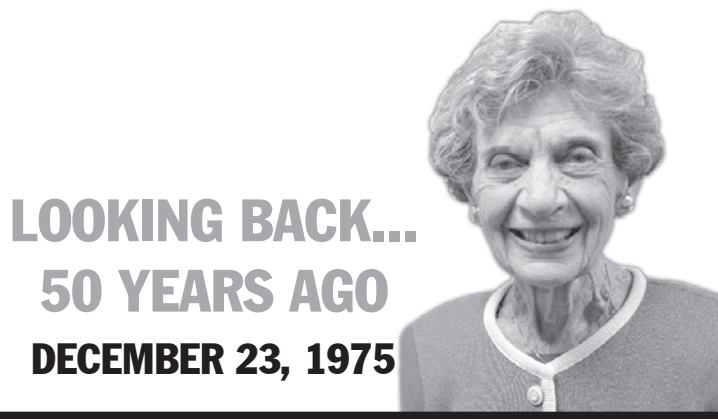
The program was a var- ied one, ranging from Ran- dall Thompson's "Alleluia" and "Last Words of David" to Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music."

Also included were sev- eral madrigals and spiritu- als.

Officers of the Dublin Community Chorus are Dan Doster, President; Mrs. W.H. Champion, Vice Pres- ident, and Howard Cordell, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer.

Other members of the Chorus are June Bowyer, Roberta Day, Rita Hall, Bet- ty Parker, Lattie Price, Car- olyn Register, Vera Smith, Martha Strickland, Bobbye Yauck, Sheryl Askew, Kath- erine Frazer, Rose Rhodes, Cheryl Rutlandr, Juanita Tucker, Thelma Byers,

Lila Frazer, Bunny Hatchett, Karey Kennedy, Catherine Woodydy, Jean Rogers, Belton Hammond, Guy Ingram, Jr., Car-



## By HARRIETT CLAXTON

ey White, Bowman Barr, Charles Caster, Prentiss Green, Jr., and Bob Proctor.

## KIWANIS HONORS WINNERS

The Dublin Kiwanis Club honored the winners of its annual High Yield Corn Contest on Thursday at a lunch meeting of the group.

Andy Cook of Montrose, a West Laurens High stu- dent, claimed first place in the FFA contest division for his yield of 120 bushels per acre.

Jeff White of Cedar Grove, also a West Laurens student, won the first place award for the 4-H division with his production of 109 bushels per acre.

Runners up in the FFA division were Raymond Joyce of Brewton, East Laurens High, 93 bushels per acre; Leland Chafin of Rockledge, East Laurens, 86 bushels; and John John- son of Minter, East Laurens, 83 bushels.

In the 4-H division, the runners-up were Ro- ger White of Cedar Grove, Southwest Laurens Elemen- tary School, 94 bushels per acre; Sam Braswell of Dex- ter, West Laurens, 85 bush- els; and George Coleman of Cedar Grove, West Laurens Junior High, 79 bushels.

Cash prizes of \$50, \$25, \$15, and \$10 were given to the first, second, third, and fourth place finishers.

Plaques were awarded to the two first place winners.

Julian Reynolds, Kiwan- is chairman for the contest, praised the competition, saying, "In this corn project, they can study just about anything they want - chem- istry, physics, and agricul- tural practices."

J.D. Brown, Laurens County Agent, noted that the corn contest was espe- cially appropriate for Lau- rens County which culti- vates more certified seed corn than any other county in Georgia.

"There are more Laurens County farm acres - between 55,000 and 60,000 acres - planted in corn- more than any other crop." Brown also observed that the 4-H Club had its beginning as a corn club in a Georgia high school.

The Kiwanis Club has sponsored the High Yield Corn Contest since 1971 and has honored eight to ten young farmers each year.

This year the contest was co-sponsored by Farmer's Mutual Exchange, Dominy Oil Company, Dublin Seed Company, Southern Peanut and Storage, and Lovett and Brinson.

Virgil Pearson, West Laurens Vocational Agri- culture teacher, and Jimmy Herring, East Laurens Prin- cipal, attended the meet- ing with their students and thanked the Kiwanis Club for their support of the ag- riculture programs in the county schools.



OUR TAKE...



JoAnna Glover serves as a volunteer during a Communities In Schools Christmas event/PAYTON TOWNS III

Organizations, volunteers come together to help with CIS Christmas event

Jackie Pittman Curtis wanted to have a big Communities In Schools Christmas event last year. There just was not enough time to get everything accomplished. That was not the case this year. CIS, Helping Hands Ending Hunger Inc. and GOOD360 collaborated to bring together a special Christmas event at the Katherine W. Gray Resource Center just a few weeks before Christmas. Curtis called the event “a big day” as the three organizations came together to help bring a tractor-trailer with premium Amazon items to Dublin for families to look through and select. At the end of the day, more than 300 families entered the KWG and looked at new toys, bedding, household items, electronics and baby items. They signed up for times earlier in the week and had 30 minutes to browse around and make their selections. Officials with CIS, Helping Hands Ending Hunger, Inc. and GOOD360 brought the items to our area but they were more than happy to have more than 70 volunteers who helped unload and sort the packages days before and return to help assist the families on the day of the event. Hopefully, the CIS Christmas will become an annual event because it is good to see non-profit organizations and local volunteers come together to help others at this time of year.

– Payton Towns III

YOUR TURN:

Share your opinion on current events, or topics covered in The Courier Herald by emailing us: tchnewsreporter@gmail.com

THOUGHT FOR TODAY...

"Faith is believing in things when common sense tells you not to."  
  
- from "Miracle on 34th Street"

DAILY SCRIPTURE...

"Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."  
  
- Matthew 1:19-21 (NIV)

EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY...

- Dec. 23, 2025 is...
- National Christmas Movie Marathon Day
  - National Roots Day
  - National Pfeffernusse Day
  - Festivus

The Courier Herald

LOCAL MATTERS



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This newspaper is committed to the idea that the press should tell the truth without prejudice and spread knowledge without malicious intent.

Remembering 'for unto us a child is born'

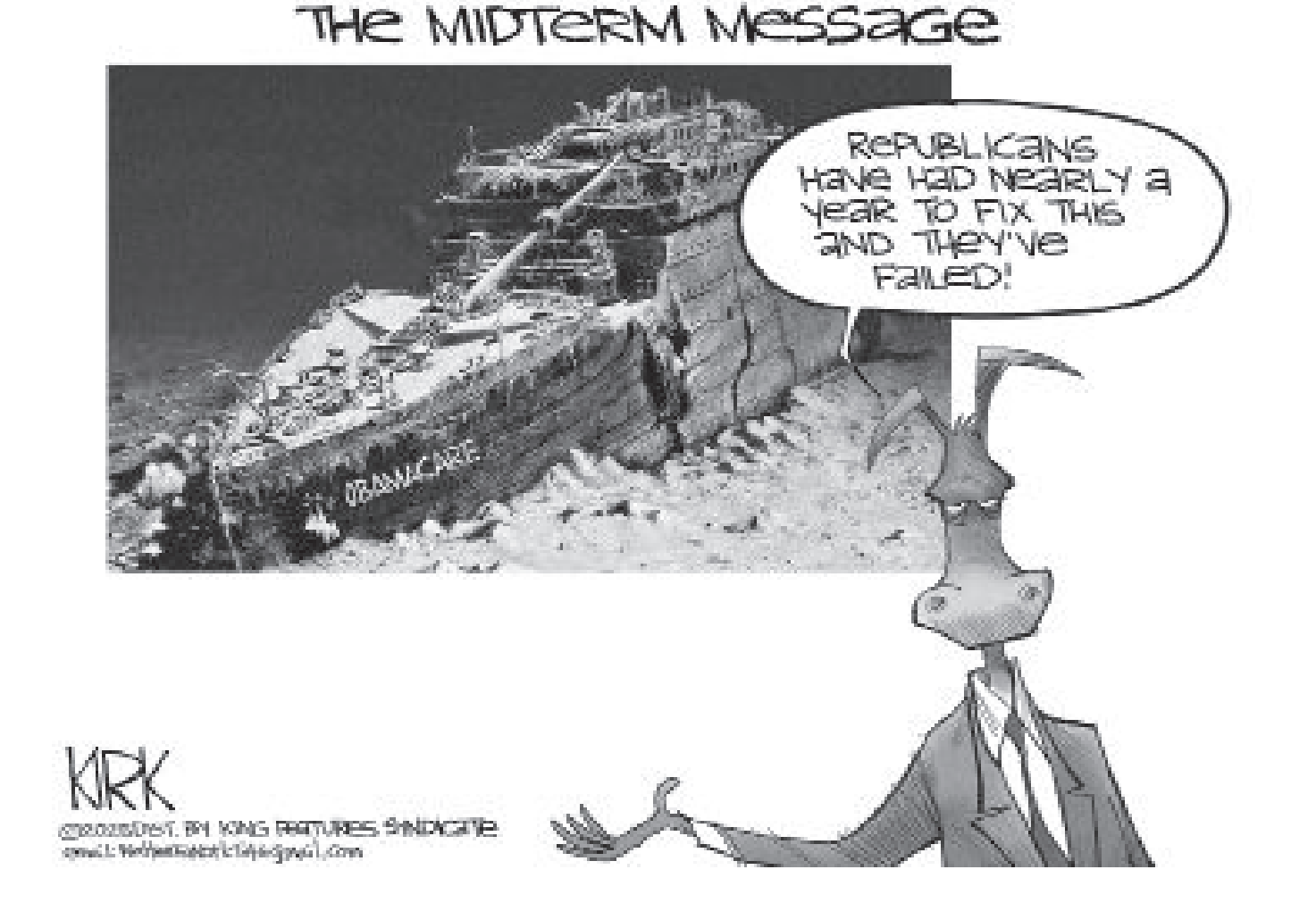
For four performances of “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever” my wife and I got a pretty cool view of watching how the audience reacted to one particular scene. The shepherds had made their way to the manger and Maxine had already said the line that was supposed to prompt Gladys Herdman to do her part, which was to tell the shepherds about Jesus being born in Bethlehem. As the cast looked around for Gladys, played by Caroline Lunzmann, the audience did not know that she was actually behind them in the theater lobby. Then, all of a sudden, Caroline shouts out, “Hey!” which usually made the audience jump because they weren’t expecting it. She runs down to the front of the theatre, picks up the star and points it toward the audience. “Unto you a child is born,” she says as she then bossily pushes them to go see Jesus at the manger. On the first night of the show, the audience clapped and cheered as Caroline said her lines about Jesus with enthusiasm. And why shouldn’t they cheer? After all, the angels



By PAYTON TOWNS III

news to the shepherds was not just good – it was great. Jesus had come to save us from our sins. A few minutes later, the wise men made their way to the front of the theater to join Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and angels and the choir who sang songs on stage. This gave the audience the nativity scene, one of my favorite Christmas decorations. I was thankful director Misty Mullis asked Jill and I to escort Caroline along with the three wise men – Coy Lausch and Breckin and Cavan Kelly - around the theater for all four performances just so that we could see what it looked like from the theatre lobby. The manger scene has always meant a lot to me. We have many nativity ornaments that we hang on our Christmas tree every year. It is always good to open the boxes and see these Christmas decorations that are ready to be put on display or hung on the tree. After Jill and I were married in 1998, we spent a week in Chattanooga, Tennessee. On the last day of our honeymoon, Jill was not feeling good. We wound up going to the Cracker Barrel near the hotel. Our names were put on the wait list, so we browsed around the store, and of course they had their Christmas decorations out. A nativity scene caught

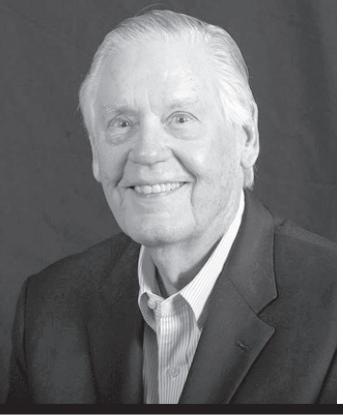
our eyes. It was not anything too fancy. It played “Silent Night” and had a narrator say a few things about the birth of Jesus when you made a noise or clapped your hands. We wound up purchasing this and brought it home. For 27 years, we have unboxed the manger, put batteries in it and for about a month, enjoyed it on the shelf. If I clap at a good play the Bulldogs make, or yell out about something the Atlanta Falcons do, the tune of “Silent Night” will come on to remind me about the real reason for the season. Every year I am filled with excitement when we pull out the box filled with decorations and I find the manger scene still in its original 1998 box. For some reason, I have never seen this particular manger again in any Cracker Barrel or in any store. As we prepare for Christmas this week, may we slow down and look at the decorations, especially those that remind us about the best gift God gave us and try to keep that in our hearts and recall it as we traverse through the rest of this year and into 2026. Just remember: “For unto you a child is born!”



Attorney General Chris Carr talks about running for governor

These words are dedicated to the memory of my late friend, Otis Brumby, Jr., publisher of the Marietta Daily Journal. He encouraged me to run this column each Christmas season. It is also dedicated to those who believe. I wish I had been there. In Bethlehem. I wish I had witnessed the birth of the baby Jesus in that humble setting in a lowly manger. Was it really as cold that night as it is sometimes depicted on our Christmas cards or was it a cool and comfortable evening as it is predicted to be this year in Bethlehem? I wish I could have seen firsthand Mary’s face as she looked lovingly at her new baby and that I could have asked her if she knew how much her life was going to change. Did she really understand what God had wrought? And Joseph. Poor simple Joseph. What must have been going through his mind? He was in Bethlehem only because he was required to register for the census as decreed by Caesar Augustus. I wish I could have talked to both Mary and Joseph and see what they had to say about that night. I wish I could have seen the star that guided people to the manger. Like ev-

everyone else that evening, I am sure I would have been stupefied and afraid, even though angels said not to be. I think even hearing from the angels would have scared me. God’s power is awesome and He showed it that night. I wish I could have observed the shepherds as they came pouring into Bethlehem and headed for the manger to see for themselves what the angels had proclaimed to them in the hills where they were tending their flocks. What did this rough-hewn bunch think when they saw that little baby? The Bible says they went back and told others what they had seen. I wish I could have heard what they said about what they had seen. Shepherding was probably never the same for them after that night. I wish I could have been there when the Magi arrived. That must have been quite an event in Bethlehem when these three kings from the East appeared to pay homage to the little baby and to present him with gifts of gold and myrrh and frankincense. Why those three particular gifts? I am sure the gold had some practical application and frankincense probably helped sweeten the air around the stables,



By DICK YARBROUGH

but myrrh? Did anyone see the irony in the fact that myrrh would be one of the spices that would be offered to Jesus at his crucifixion to dull the pain of the nails and the crown of thorns and later would be used to prepare his body for burial? Was this a sign of things to come? God’s ways are mysterious. I wish I could have talked to the other people in Bethlehem who were there to register for the census along with Mary and Joseph and try to explain to them that a child had been born in their midst that would forever change history. I am not sure they would have believed me if I could have gotten them to listen. Anyway, they probably had no interest in what was go-

ing on in town. They just wanted to get out of Bethlehem and back home so that they could get on with their lives. I wish I could figure out what has happened to us Christians since that fateful night in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago. Where is our awe? Where is our reverence? Where is our wonderment? Why have we allowed the birth of our Savior to morph into cocktail parties, Black Fridays, Santa Claus and gaudy light displays? Why did we permit this sacred event to be hijacked by retailers who make money off of our holy day, but don’t allow the term “Merry Christmas” to be uttered, printed or acknowledged lest they offend someone? And we go along with it as though it doesn’t matter? Shame on us. This is why I wish I had been there. I wish we all had been there. In Bethlehem. With Mary and Joseph and the babe. With the shepherds. With the angels. With the Magi. Maybe if we had seen these things for ourselves, then we would understand how special Christmas really is. You can reach Dick Yarbrough at yarb2400@bellsouth.net or P.O. Box 725373, Atlanta, Georgia 31139.



# Georgia Power expansion OKed

By TY TAGAMI  
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — State regulators granted Georgia Power the authority for an historic expansion of its capacity to generate electricity in a unanimous vote Friday.

The decision by the five elected members of the Public Service Commission allows the privately-owned monopoly to build five gas-powered plants and supporting infrastructure mostly to serve anticipated demand by data centers.

The company asked for and got permission to add 10 gigawatts of generating capacity, saying its forecasts showed voracious future need by tech companies that are building more server warehouses to power the internet and artificial intelligence.

Critics contended that the forecast revenue, based

on “trade secret” information that the public cannot see, was overly optimistic. If the demand does not materialize, they said, all of Georgia Power’s other customers would be left with the bill for the construction of that unneeded capacity.

To offset those concerns, the company pledged to shield “organic” customers — meaning existing customers and those who would have become customers through traditional economic growth — from the cost of the expansion through 2031.

“Large load” data centers will pay for the build out through the rates they pay but there remains a risk that the data centers do not come. Georgia Power addressed that by saying it would allocate costs based on the current revenue forecasts that assume they will. This would create “downward pressure” on

rates for the typical residential customer amounting to \$8.50 a month, the company said.

Lawyers for opponents, including environmental organizations and renewable energy advocates, contended that there were hidden numbers in Georgia Power’s calculations that would create “upward pressure” on residential bills, amounting to \$8.50 or more.

They wanted Georgia Power to put all its forecast assumptions into the record for the agreement, so the commission could more easily hold the company to account for its pledge in the future.

Jason Shaw, chairman of the commission, denied the request, saying his agency already had all the necessary information from Georgia Power. Then the commissioners voted 5-0 for the expansion.

**Dublin Police Department**

– Vickie Rena Truelove, 47, was charged with theft by shoplifting on Highway 80 West at Walmart around 6 p.m. on Dec. 2.

An officer met with the loss prevention at their office and was shown video footage of a woman wearing a green long-sleeve shirt and camo pants grabbing a Hart lithium battery and walking out of the store without paying.

In the video footage, the officer could see the woman tuck the battery underneath her armpit before trying to leave the store. The items were recovered from her and given to loss prevention.

Truelove was taken to the police department where she was fingerprinted and released on a citation.

– On Dec. 5, officers were dispatched to RaceTrac on U.S. 441 South in reference to a disturbance.

Officers met with the store manager who said a man identified as Willy Joel Cox, 46, had been screaming in the parking lot. The manager told Cox that he needed to leave, but he refused and began yelling obscenities at him.

Another customer stepped into assist the manager in de-escalating the



## POLICE BEAT...

situation, but Cox got into that man’s face and continued to scream obscenities. Cox pointed his finger in the man’s face multiple times before the man punched him in the face. The man told the officer that when Cox closed in on him he also called him a derogatory word before the man punched him.

Cox continued attempting to engage in a physical altercation with the man and asked the officer if he could punch the man due to him getting punched. Cox was arrested and transported to the Laurens County Jail.

– Taze Worthen, 18, was charged with theft by shoplifting at Walmart on Highway 80 around 6:19 p.m. on Dec. 6.

An employee stated that a man was in the security office for shoplifting. The officer reviewed the video footage and saw Worthen at the self-checkout. He scanned two jackets, but for the third one, he used a barcode valued at \$4.98.

Worthen was transported to the police department, fingerprinted and released

on summons.

**Laurens County Sheriff’s Office**

– A deputy responded to a walk-in at the sheriff’s office around midnight on Dec. 7 about an incident that happened on Louis Parker Road.

– A deputy went to a location on Highway 80 west in reference to a theft that happened on Dec. 6.

– An animal complaint was made around 10:49 a.m. on Dec. 4 on Snellbridge Road in East Dublin.

– A deputy responded to Highway 29 South in East Dublin to someone stealing property around 3 p.m. on Dec. 8.

– A deputy talked with a person at the sheriff’s office about an incident that happened on Walke Dairy Road around 10:25 a.m. on Dec. 8.

– Travis V. Blackshear, 52, of Lathonia, was charged with DUI drugs after a deputy pulled over a silver Dodge Journey in reference to suspended registration on I-16 around 10:09 a.m. on Dec. 7.

**Does Dublin still have a street sweeper?** I haven’t seen one in my neighborhood in two years. I guess it is all downtown.

**In case y’all forget,** don’t forget the reason for the season.

**Why do we have a planning and zoning board** if they go a total vote against something and the city council goes a total vote for it? I don’t see a reason to have a planning and zoning if they can’t do the work.

**Why is everything supposed** to be done downtown? Our tax dollars need to be spent all over town - not just downtown.

**I see where our** (state) Rep. Matt Hatchett was in Dublin, Georgia. He did not address the Dublin City Schools. I do not understand why, the school system in the condition it is in, that Matt Hatchett and State School Superintendent Richard Woods don’t demand that they consolidate the schools. There is no point in them laying off teachers when they should be laying off the administrative bunch who caused this mess.

**To the persons who** called in multiple times about spreading the wealth around and not just doing it downtown. They have spread the wealth. Speed cushions are in various areas throughout the city and renovations at Pritchett Park and Hilburn Park, both of which are not downtown Dublin. They have placed roundabouts in areas that are not downtown and they have plans for Springdale Park.

**For those wanting the** city to spend money elsewhere besides downtown, why don’t you give an example of what you want to see in other areas. A blanket statement of just spend money elsewhere is not good enough. Say what you want!

**The Dublin City BOE** and City Government (mayor and council) operate independently, as do the county commission and LC-BOE. They are all separate entities, and confusion is leading to misinformation.

**Walking around Downtown Dublin** at night is like a Hallmark movie! So beautiful!

**I can’t believe LCBOE** agreed to give a bonus but our taxes went up. They get a check for working. Why a bonus? A lot of people work without bonuses. This is so wrong and it is up to tax payers to pay.

**Dublin City acting**



**like** Richard Woods visit is an honor. He has to visit because Fred and the board screwed up the system so bad. That is not the reason to be on his radar.

**Dublin City board** still crickets ... other than the chair playing victim and blaming others. Anybody else want to stand up and be honest?

**Dublin still hasn’t cut** the program they could never afford - the IGA. They misused funds to make it happen in order to recruit “top kids.” They can’t afford IGA.

**(IGA principal) wants** to play elf on the shelf while people are being fired, losing money and a system in shambles. IGA needs to go.

**Why can’t anyone** at Dublin City admit they allowed Fred Williams to move money around to pay for things they couldn’t afford. IGA, daycare, way too many positions, random bonuses and Fred’s salary.

**Will anyone on the board** stand up and say “we over spent, we did things we couldn’t afford, and we paid Fred way too much?”

**How can Mrs. Pool** and others say “It’s Okay.. Let’s more forward ..don’t worry” when I am losing my income, my benefits and a job I loved. I was promised the moon and left with nothing.

**Mrs. Pool has yet to** meet with the whole Dublin staff and be transparent. We are still in the dark.

**I am so sorry/angry** that boosters can pay the salaries of three coaches to keep them but other staff are being fired. How is that legal or moral? Oh I forgot - it’s Dublin City - those things don’t matter.

**No one will ever see** Dublin City Schools as anything other than crooks who can’t manage a system or be honest about anything, no matter how many positive social media posts you try to make.

**How is the school system** really recovering when you took out advances to pay debt? It’s like bad payday loans. You will never catch up because there is no more advancements.

**Dr. Hall is 100% the** best person to now lead as superintendent in Laurens County. It should have never been a question as to who was best for the job.

**Well it’s December** and still no audit results. This is taking longer than White House classified documents.

Classifieds

Employment

**PRO SHOP WORKER PART TIME**

The City of Dublin has an opening for team members with positive attitudes and initiative. A Pro Shop Worker for the Golf Course is needed. This individual will collect all green and cart fees, keep records and assign starting times. This is a part-time position and individual will work as needed. Starting Salary is \$13.00 per hour. Applicants must be available to work on Saturday and Sunday. Successful applicant must have a high school diploma or GED, pass a drug screen, and have a valid Georgia Driver’s license. Applicants may apply online through our [www.cityofdublin.org](http://www.cityofdublin.org) website until position is filled. The City of Dublin is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**EQUIPMENT OPERATOR PUBLIC WORKS**

The City of Dublin is accepting applications for an Equipment Operator in the Public Works Department. This Team Member must have a positive attitude and initiative. Work involves the responsibility for the safe and efficient operation and maintenance of moderately heavy or specialized equipment. This employee must be able to operate and maintain a diverse range of equipment which includes a variety of trucks and construction equipment. The operation of this equipment requires considerable manipulative skill and the ability to perform specialized tasks to which the equipment is assigned. During slack periods, workers may perform various unskilled/semi-skilled duties. Supervision is received from the Public Works Director and/or Street Supervisor who makes oral or written assignments and inspects work while in progress and upon completion. Applicants must have a valid Georgia Commercial Driver’s License, High School Diploma or GED, and successful applicant must pass a drug screen. Salary range for this position is \$38,705.37 – 59,993.33 annually. An extensive fringe benefit package including health, dental and life insurance is also offered. Applicants may apply online through our [www.cityofdublin.org](http://www.cityofdublin.org) website until position is filled. The City of Dublin is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1990

City of Dublin, Georgia Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax-2024											
Annual SPLOST Report for Period Ending June 30, 2025 Projects Funded With Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax											
Project	Year Approved	Original Estimated Cost	Current Estimated Cost	Expenditures		Total Amount Expended	Excess Proceeds	Project Behind Schedule	Project Underfunded	Estimated Completion Date	
				Prior Years	Current Year						
Road, Street, Bridge, and Drainage Improvements	2023	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	No	No	June 2030	
Water, Sewer & Gas Improvements	2023	\$ 4,800,000	\$ 4,800,000	\$ -	\$ 242,116	\$ 242,116	N/A	No	No	June 2030	
Public Works & General Government Facilities & Grounds Improvements	2023	\$ 3,400,000	\$ 3,400,000	\$ -	\$ 5,440	\$ 5,440	N/A	No	No	June 2030	
Public Safety Facilities and Equipment	2023	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 2,800,000	\$ -	\$ 481,609	\$ 481,609	N/A	No	No	June 2030	
City Parks & Recreation Improvements	2023	\$ 4,700,000	\$ 4,700,000	\$ -	\$ 72,494	\$ 72,494	N/A	No	No	June 2030	
Public Works & General Government Vehicles & Equipment	2023	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 1,300,000	\$ -	\$ 547,669	\$ 547,669	N/A	No	No	June 2030	
Total 2024 SPLOST Projects		\$ 21,000,000	\$ 21,000,000	\$ -	\$ 1,349,328	\$ 1,349,328					



# Wings, clipped...

## Eagles bring Falcons back down to earth, snip win streaks in Friday-night sweep

By **CLAY REYNOLDS**  
Sports Editor

Two sizzling East Laurens teams got cooled off a degree or two Friday night in a set of non-region tests against nearby GIAA powerhouse Brentwood.

The Eagles, facing arguably their toughest competition so far this season, measured up favorably in confident wins to sweep the Falcons in their final games of 2025.

The loss halted a five-game win streak for the East Laurens girls, who got down big early, but mounted a late challenge that Brentwood endured to prevail 57-47. The Eagles tore up a three-gamer for the Falcon boys after pulling free in the fourth quarter of a tighter game for the 57-52 win. Members of Brentwood's veteran front court – all-state selections Cadence English and Bailey Barron – were a bigger problem for the East Laurens girls defensively than they were offensively, though the pair executed well on both ends of the court at a level the home team couldn't match.

The Lady Falcons (6-2, 3-0 region 2-High A) held their own physically, but struggled to score at the same clip as English and Barron, who were among four Brentwood producers to reach double-figures, near the basket.

East Laurens, going the other way, found itself grasping at straws to convert as the two defenders prevented many drives from getting directly to the rim, and altered plenty more passes and close-range shots.

The Lady Falcons, partly as a result of Barron's six blocked attempts, shot only 29 percent from 2-point range, and 26 from the field as a whole (they were 0-for-9 from 3).

Brentwood, at a clip of 46 from the floor, was considerably more effective getting the ball home out of half-court sets, with English (12 points) and Barron (11) delivering five field goals each, and combining to make five out of nine at the free throw line.

Camryn Hancock scored a team-high 13, and Kaylee Rizner 11, from further out (Rizner and Callie Jones combined to sink three 3-pointers that proved valuable) to balance things out.

The Lady Eagles simply expedited the tempo in transition for most of their early edge, a sizable 21-10 after a quarter.

East Laurens responded with plenty of good possessions, but not many made baskets as it lost another five points of ground.

Full-court pressure was a lifeline for the Lady Falcons, and they cranked it up late in the second to briefly alter the course, but Brentwood remained on fire, and Jones sunk a 3 to stretch its lead to 19 ahead of the final minute.

The number was back at 16 going to halftime, but East struggled to do much more work on it despite creating some more vital takeaways as Brentwood took its turn missing some opportunities in a painstaking third quarter.

Its lead swelled to 20

before the Lady Falcons finally got some traction – early in the fourth – and narrowed it back to a single-digit on a layup by Deanna Lowther (who led scorers with 20 points, and chalked up 13 rebounds for a double-double) near the four-minute mark.

But they'd make no further progress as the Lady Eagles broke through the pressure for key baskets, and led by no less than 10 the rest of the way.

Garyunna Mitchell contributed 11 points and Zahmaria Robinson nine, though East Laurens was out-rebounded – and that's hard to do – by a count of 35-34. English had nine boards, Rizner eight and Barron seven.

The Lady Falcons had 19 steals, but turned it over just as many times.

Friday's was the closest final score, and most competitive fourth quarter (Brentwood led the eight-minute stretch 15-11) the Eagles have seen so far this season. But East Laurens (5-3, 2-1 region) also couldn't find the basket when it needed to the most as Tristan Robinson (25 points) and Baylor Cobb (18) closed things out down the stretch.

In any league, it'd be hard to find a couple of athletes more poised and polished than Brentwood's top two, and both all-state selections delivered plenty of their usual star power as this one unfolded.

But the Falcons did well to utilize their advantage in length running mostly across the board against an Eagle lineup averaging about 5-foot-11.

And until the grinding game turned into a shootout late in the first half, East enjoyed an early edge as its wings battled to the bucket and connected on some early attempts to grab momentum – the early surge apexing with a Zion Dixon bank-in that made it 11-6 with two and a half minutes to go in the first.

But Brentwood got things turned around as the game turned to a home run derby early in the second quarter.

A Robinson triple late in the first started the period with an Eastside lead of 13-9, and shooters continued to hit bottom from either end in the next few minutes.

The Falcons' Jeremiah Rozier started out the firefight with a try from deep downtown on right wing, and Marcus Hudson knocked another one down from the left corner to put East up 21-13 before Brentwood – staying close with back-to-back Zyion Andrews finishes – got a 3 from Robinson, then another by Cobb from straight away, to cut a somewhat comfy East Laurens lead down to 25-23.

After that, Robinson responded to a Caleb Jackson bucket from deep on the right to cut it to one. Brentwood got a stop, then Cobb connected again from the right corner to put Brentwood back up, 29-27.

The teams traded one more basket each, with



**SECOND-QUARTER SHOOTOUT:** Jeremiah Rozier lifts a 3-pointer to start off one of the hottest stretches for either team in the mostly defensive-dominated game. Multiple made triples flew back and forth as Brentwood erased an eight-point Falcon lead before going on top by two just before the half/**CLAY REYNOLDS**



**RHYTHM, AND BLUES:** A lack of tempo on the offensive end – largely due to the defense of Brentwood forwards Bailey Barron (5) and Cadence English (34) that ground things to a halt in their half-court sets for lengthy measures – led to some sour notes, and a lot of percussion as the ball hit iron, for the Lady Falcons in Friday's game. Garyunna Mitchell (top left), Zahmaria Robinson (right), Deanna Lowther (bottom left) and Alasia Wiggins (bottom right) are shown trying to find some decent looks against the challenge of either or both, whose presence in the paint was problematic all night/**CLAY REYNOLDS**



Robinson's pull-up from the free throw line breaking a 29-point tie to give the Eagles a two-point edge going to the half.

Coming back out, it turned back to a defensive struggle.

Brentwood's Jones Sheppard knocked down a 3 for about the only field goal of a quiet first four minutes. East Laurens crept back from four down to within a point by the 2:33 mark of a third quarter dominated by tip-backs, and that margin remained to start a fourth quarter in which the Falcons saw multiple openings, but couldn't capitalize.

Two Cobb free throws, then an Andrews finisher got the Eagles up eight with just under three minutes to go. And East Laurens couldn't find a way to force the ball in to respond.

Dixon's pull-up found the net with 31 seconds left to make it a six-point game, but by that point, it was too late for any chance at a comeback.

Brentwood knocked down some late free throws to seal it, and keep the margin significant until Skyler Snead's 3 with a few seconds

left cut the final gap back down to five.

### Harlem 52, West Laurens girls 39

A confident opening run wasn't enough to get the Lady Raiders through an erratic first half.

Harlem, which went ahead for good on a 10-0 run to take back control of the game late in the first, chalked up surpluses of six points in both opening quarters to lead by a dozen at the half.

West Laurens (4-5, 3-3 region 4-AAA) made up some of the ground on separate rallies in the second half, only for 8-0 Harlem runs in response to each (the second an 11-0 stretch to cut the Bulldogs' lead to nine) got the home lead back to double figures, and out of the Lady Raiders' reach.

### Harlem 86, West Laurens boys 34

The Bulldogs dominated the first quarter 26-2, and the third and fourth by double-digits each, in a thorough whipping to complete Friday's sweep.

Harlem, with Ty Shine

(18), A.J. Williams (15) and JoVaun Napier (11) leading scorers, came up with 20 steals and turned the ball over only six times in return.

### Dublin girls 42, Wilkinson Co. 30

Jordan Renfro's 18 points helped push the Lady Irish over the top in a rematch with Wilco that was considerably lower-scoring than the teams' first meeting earlier in the month.

Dublin (3-5, 1-2 region 2-High A) led wire-to-wire, through a mutually sluggish first half and a quicker-moving second that culminated with a 15-9 fourth quarter.

Keasia Jackson had 12 of the team's 27 rebounds, and Ja'Niya Freeman was credited with six of 17 Lady Irish steals.

Jackson and Kayleigh Rozier contributed seven points each to the total.

### Dublin boys 56, Wilkinson Co. 54

Glen Harris hit a step-back 18-footer, off the skip pass of Chris Dixon, to break a late tie with a second and a half to go, and

## SCOREBOARD

**GIRLS HOOPS**  
**Friday**  
Brentwood 57, East Laurens 47  
Dublin 42, Wilkinson Co. 30  
Harlem 52, West Laurens 39  
Westfield 64, Trinity 58

**Saturday**  
George Walton 61, Trinity 50

**BOYS HOOPS**  
**Friday**  
Brentwood 57, EL 52  
Dublin 56, Wilkinson Co. 54  
Harlem 86, WL 34  
Westfield 50, Trinity 47

**Saturday**  
George Walton 58, Trinity 51  
Jordan Christian Prep 86, WL 54

**Sunday**  
Hilton Head Island 69, WL 40

## PREP SCHEDULE

**BASKETBALL**  
**Monday**  
West Laurens (girls) at Mary Persons/11:30 a.m.

**Dec. 29**  
Trinity vs. Stratford /12 p.m.

**Dec. 30**  
Trinity at Tattnall Square /3 p.m.

**CONTACT US:**  
Email sports information to [tchsports77@gmail.com](mailto:tchsports77@gmail.com), or call (478) 272-5522, ext. 403

## BULLETIN BOARD...

**EDRD extends winter soccer registration thru Dec. 31**  
East Dublin Recreation has extended registration for its winter soccer league, which will be coordinated in tandem with Johnson County Recreation, until Dec. 31. All registration forms can be dropped off at East Dublin City Hall during regular business hours or placed in the night deposit at the drive through. ALL Laurens County residents are eligible to participate. For more info, please contact Dawn Wood at (478) 609-4381.

the Irish hung on to pick up their second win of the season at the Palace.

A 23-point fourth quarter got Dublin (2-5, 0-3 region) back from eight points down and into a ping-pong match of clutch baskets covering the last three minutes.

Jaydon McRae hit a 3-pointer to tie it at 46 and complete the initial comeback early in the sequence before two Irish baskets by Harris, one by Quantavis Lovett and a pair of Dixon free throws answered triples by Wilco's Hayden Collins and Quenterriion Sanford, and a 2 by Daverie Walker, in the final dead heat.

### Next...

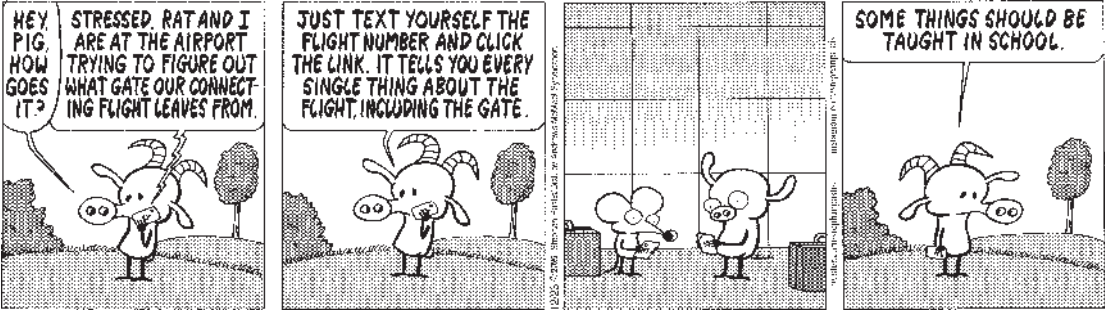
The West Laurens boys (2-9, 1-5 region) continued play with a couple of games over the weekend at the Hilton Head Island Seahawk Holiday Classic, starting with an 86-54 loss on Saturday to Jordan Christian Prep. They'd fall to host Hilton Head Island 69-40 on Sunday afternoon.

The Lady Raiders visit Mary Persons on Monday, and Trinity will play two more post-Christmas in a tournament at Tattnall Square, to wrap up the county's hoops action for the 2025 calendar year.



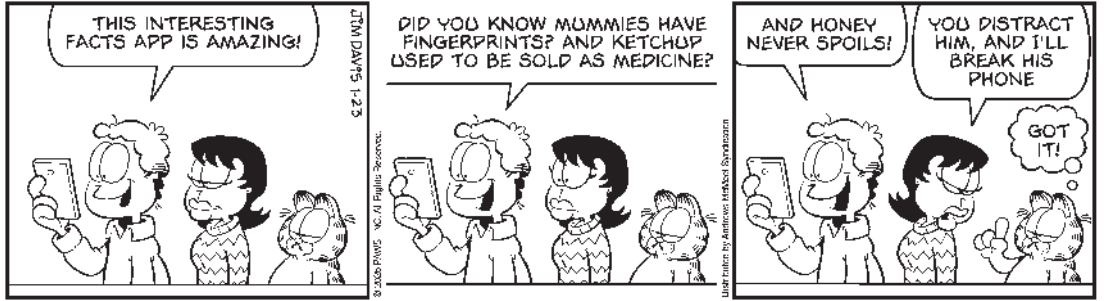
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS



GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



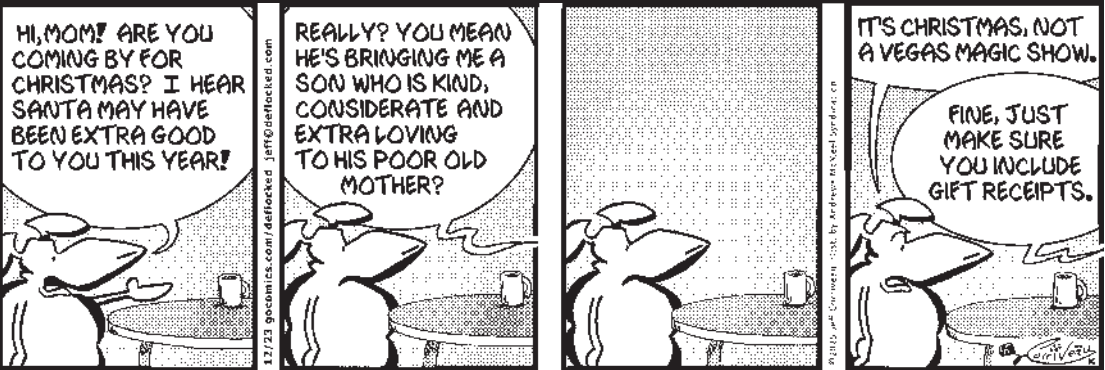
OVERBOARD

BY CHIP DUNHAM



DEFLOCKED

BY JEFF CORRIVEAU



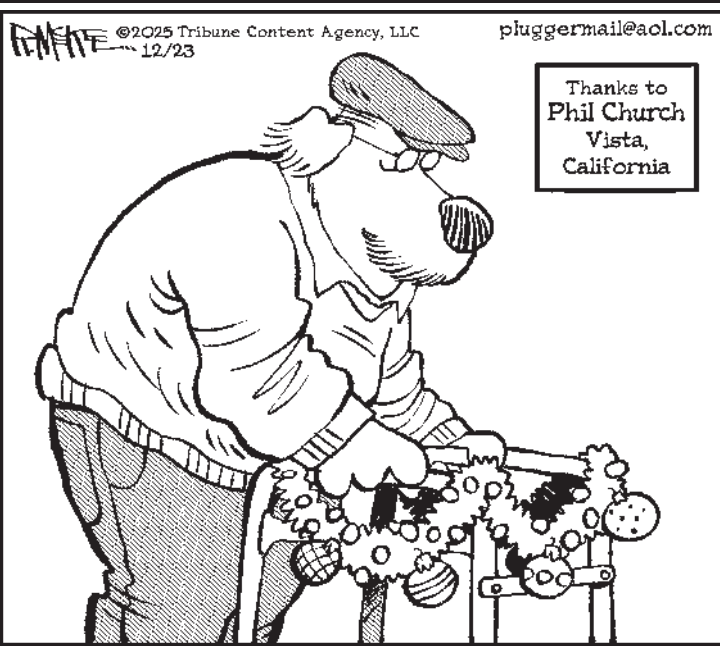
ZIGGY

BY TOM WILSON



PLUGGERS

BY JEFF MACNELLY

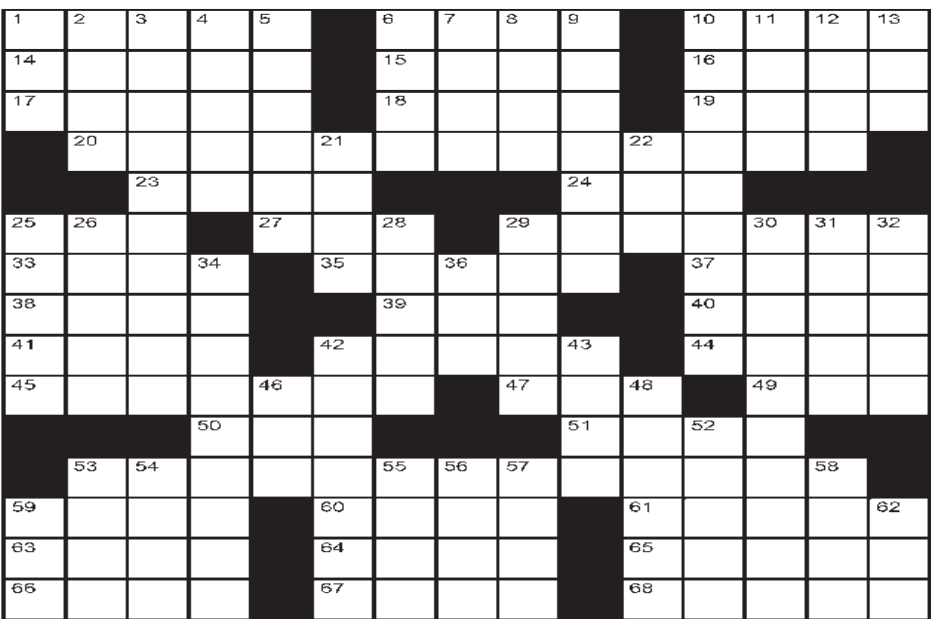


Pluggers decorate their walkers to celebrate the season.

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Stella Zawistowski

ACROSS

- 1 Book of maps
- 6 Poet Silverstein
- 10 "Waterloo" group
- 14 \_\_\_ common denominator
- 15 Resurface, as a road
- 16 Banister
- 17 Hard work
- 18 Swedish furniture chain
- 19 White of "White Lotus"
- 20 Texas: 3 wds.
- 23 Actual
- 24 Stayed out of sight
- 25 Transcript number: Abbr.
- 27 Damage
- 29 Ceases
- 33 Actress Hayworth
- 35 "Grizzly" animals
- 37 Chicago business district
- 38 DNA segment
- 39 "That's all \_\_\_ wrote"
- 40 Spot for canoeing
- 41 Come by honestly
- 42 Secret hoard
- 44 Unlock
- 45 Auditions
- 47 DC politician: Abbr.
- 49 Can. province
- 50 Airport security group: Abbr.
- 51 Hoarse sound
- 53 Intensely shocked
- 59 Very funny person
- 60 Oahu party
- 61 Christmas song
- 63 If not
- 64 Actress Moran
- 65 Best effort
- 66 Give a meal to
- 67 Boys in a family
- 68 Fresh start



Created by Stella Zawistowski

DOWN

- 1 \_\_\_ or nothing
- 2 Blue-green color
- 3 Chemist's workplace
- 4 In unison: 2 wds.
- 5 Use Hulu
- 6 Saliva
- 7 Maori dance
- 8 At any time
- 9 Dogs' restraints
- 10 Mammal with tough plates
- 11 Worms, in fishing
- 12 Cyclist's vehicle
- 13 Pub drink
- 21 Thick slice
- 22 "\_\_\_ the season!"
- 25 Say hi to
- 26 "Up" studio
- 28 Takes a breather
- 29 Put clothes on
- 30 Daytime dramas: 2 wds.
- 31 Old subway coin
- 32 Tired out



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- 34 Wrote in the margins
- 36 "I've got it"
- 42 Horse barns
- 43 Zeus' wife
- 46 PC port type: Abbr.
- 48 Daytona Beach group: Abbr.
- 52 Play venue
- 53 Dossier
- 54 Misplace
- 55 Coin in Croatia
- 56 Wet weather
- 57 With \_\_\_ blazing
- 58 Ford Field feature
- 59 NFL official
- 62 Permit

Relationship with sister goes downhill



DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

has received a legal eviction notice that gives her eight months to go. My fiancé says we may have to call the sheriff to escort her out. -- DREADING IT IN ARIZONA

DEAR DREADING IT: Your sister has eight months to make other living arrangements, so she isn't going to be "out on the street" overnight. Discuss this messy problem with an attorney and enlist their help. If you can manage it, document the condition of the house she's occupying. Your fiancé may be right about your sister, so when the time comes for her to leave, consider having law enforcement present to ensure she doesn't damage your property.

DEAR ABBY: I am a widow. Most of my friends are married. What do you

think about them calling and touching base with me only when they are in their cars running errands? They never call from home while they're with their husbands. Are they hiding the fact that they are calling their single friend? I think it's rude to call someone while fighting traffic and making stops like the bank drive-up window.

I have thought about asking them to call me back when they get home, but they sound like they are just too busy to do that. I'm getting to the point where I just don't answer their calls. I also have a married friend who only texts and never talks on the phone. -- AFTERTHOUGHT IN FLORIDA

DEAR AFTERTHOUGHT: Your friends may have busy schedules and little free time, which is why they call you from their cars. They may also prefer that what they discuss with you be just between the two of you, with no one else listening in. I do not think you should take this as personally as you seem to have taken it. For a definitive answer to your question, you must ask your friends why they do this.

Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES  
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

Q 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K J 9 2 ♥ A J 6 ♦ 8 7 5 3 ♣ A 6

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
1♣ 1♦ 1♥ ?

What call would you make?

A - There are only 40 points in a deck, so somebody is bidding without full values. Bid 1S and listen to another round of bidding. The culprit may emerge.

Q 2 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K Q 8 3 ♥ A 9 6 3 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ Q 5

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST  
INT Pass 2♣ Pass  
2♠ ?

What call would you make?

A - How do you make a forcing spade raise? Experts do it by bidding the other major at the 3 level. Bid 3H.

Q 3 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ J 10 6 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ Q 7 6 2 ♣ Q 6 4

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH  
1♠ DBL 1♣ INT  
2♠ Pass 1♠ ?

What call would you make?

A - You were all in with your first bid. If you didn't bid 2D then, don't bid it now. Further action was up to partner. Pass.

Q 4 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K 10 7 ♥ A Q 4 2 ♦ K Q 2 ♣ Q 7 6

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST  
1♠ 1♣ 1♥ ?

What call would you make?

A - Partner has a minimum with a heart fit. Is this hand worth a slam try? We don't think so. Bid 3NT, giving him a choice of games.

Q 5 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K 9 8 ♥ Void ♦ K 7 6 4 ♠ A Q 10 7 6 3

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST  
1♥ 1♣ 2♣ ?

What call would you make?

A - Your king of spades and your heart void may both be wasted. Still, there is slam potential. Bid 3D and see what partner does.

Q 6 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

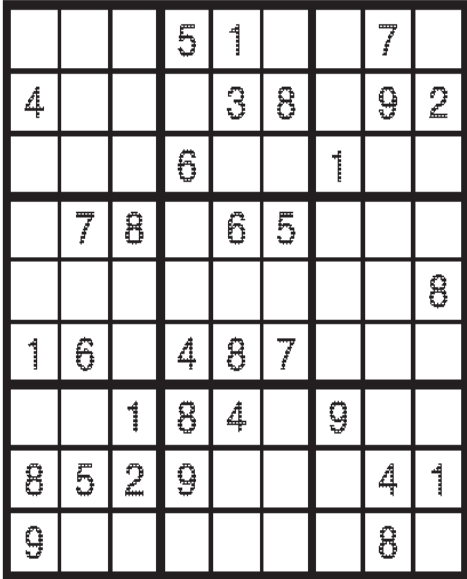
♠ A K J 10 ♥ K 9 6 4 ♦ K J ♣ Q 9 8

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
INT Pass 2♥ ?

What call would you make?

A - Partner's bid is a slam try with a diamond control, but it denies a club control. You don't have one either, so you must sign off. Bid 4H.

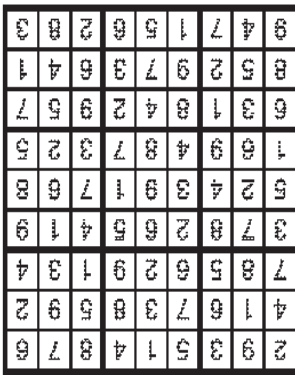
SUDOKU



Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!



ANSWER:



NEW SUPERINTENDENT  
Continued from page 1

Hall thanked his brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and his Prince Hall Mason brothers who were in attendance.

“They were the first individuals who taught me how to run a meeting under Robert’s Rules of Order,” Hall said. “I have learned a lot from both of those organizations and those men.”

He also thanked the educators in the community and those who had walked along side of him on what he called his “leadership journey.”

“I look forward to upholding everything that was in that oath,” Hall said. “I look forward to serving and I look forward to continuing on the great success that will be built on the strong foundation that Mr. Garnto has laid. I’m supper excited and I look forward to leading this great community.”

Taylor was honored to swear in Hall.

“I know Dr. Hall to be a man of high integrity and just the upmost character,” Taylor said. “Members of the board, you have made an incredibly wise decision in choosing him to be the man to lead the Laurens County School System moving forward.”

Former WLHS Principal Hugh Kight hired Hall out of college.



A large crowd was on hand last week as O.J. Hall took the oath of office to become Laurens County’s new school superintendent/PAYTON TOWNS III

“He started teaching and coaching for us,” Kight said. “He has been a great asset for Laurens County. I’m proud to have seen him grow up and be a superintendent. It is a good thing that he has been on both the East and West sides. It is good for him to have been in both of those communities.”

Board members Chairman Jarvis Wilcher, vice-chai Tony Johnson, Kevin Malone, Kenny Payne and Kathy Sweat watched Hall take his oath.

“He is very innovative,” Wilcher said about Hall. “I do think he will continue to

lead us in the right direction that we need to go as a district and bring in more light to the great things that we have here to offer in Laurens County.”

Hall was born and raised in Laurens County, graduating from West Laurens High School in 2002. He went to Georgia Southern University, where he graduated with an undergraduate degree in history education, and he also graduated from Georgia College & State University, where he obtained his master’s at educational specialist degree in educational leadership. He returned

to GSU for his doctorate in education and curriculum studies.

He returned to WLHS where he taught U.S. history, American government and world history before becoming the assistant principal and head basketball coach there. He became the

principal at East Laurens Middle in 2015 before serving as ELHS principal from 2016-2018 before being principal only at the high school for 2019 and beginning of 2020.

“I’ve worked on both sides,” Hall said. “I have strong roots invested in both of those communities.”

Payne believes Hall will do “very well.”

“A lot of people like him and I think he can deliver the message very effectively,” Payne said. “One of the good things he had going for him is he was principal at East Laurens High and he had worked a long time on the Westside and rose through the ranks and did a very good job at all of the places he has been. He is very well liked by the community and especially the students.”

Recently, Hall received his contract of \$190,000 to be the system’s superintendent. He has been in the Laurens County School District for 20 years. The superintendent role, though,

was never on his radar.

“I have done so many things in this district that I fell in love with,” Hall said. “When I was the head basketball coach and assistant principal at West Laurens, I could have stopped there and been forever grateful with that. But God saw fit to continue to allow others to see me (in other roles). And the board of education saw potential in me to be the next superintendent. It has been quite the journey and I’ve been grateful and thankful to God for all of it.”

“People say if you really want to hear God laugh just tell him your plan,” he added. “That would really be my story. I love history, and I love sports. I was at peace and grateful for that season. I thought that was something I would do for a long time. God and other leaders saw something in me that pushed me forward to what I am today. We never know the steps the Lord will have for us, and we have to be open and in tune to listen to Him.”



TOUR OF HOMES  
Continued from page 1

Green Acres Garden Club’s mission is one of servanthood to the Laurens County area. Members gave to the Kid’s Cup toy drive and the Dayspring Church Homeless

ministry. They also light every year a Tree of Hope at Fairview Hospital to shine the light of Christmas.

Green Acres Garden Club thanked the community for supporting the Christmas Tour of Homes and displaying the spirit of Christmas through giving.

we wish you a very  
**Merry Christmas**  
and Happy New Year



Back Row, left to right: Alan Green, Dana Hardison, Lindsay McLeod, Kelly Newsom, Wendy Brooks, Brooke Player, Kelly Tuten, Brandi Deaton, Lauren Padgett. Front Row, left to right: Regina Andrews, FNP-BC, Surender Malhotra, M.D., Shannon Gay, FNP-C

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