

# The Courier Herald

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2026

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The raised crosswalk will be constructed from this sidewalk on Woodlawn Drive, just down from Hillcrest Parkway/PAYTON TOWNS III

## Developer footing bill for raised crosswalk near apartments on Woodlawn

### Construction set to begin on Jan. 21

By PAYTON TOWNS III  
Senior Reporter

Work will soon begin for a raised crosswalk across Woodlawn Drive, that will take about a week to complete once construction begins.

Work continued Tuesday on the new apartment complex called MGVG Living Dublin located on

Woodlawn Drive between Hillcrest Parkway and Claxton Dairy Road. A sidewalk from the apartments will connect to a raised crosswalk that will allow pedestrians to traverse the three-lane street.

"As part of them building these apartments, the city asked them to include this in their work," said Dublin Engineering Director

Matthew Bradshaw. "The MGVG developer is paying for this. It will not be paid by the city."

City Engineer James Ivey said it will take approximately one week to complete.

"They will have to demo the street, prepare the site, pour the concrete, let it sit

**CROSSWALK**  
Continued on page 8

## Sworn in: New Dublin councilman, returning members take oaths

By PAYTON TOWNS III  
Senior Reporter

Brandon Chain raised his right hand and placed his left hand on the Bible that was held by his mother, county commissioner Brenda Chain, as he was sworn in to an at-large seat on the Dublin City Council last week.

Chain joins returning at-large members Tess Godfrey and Sara Kolbie, who were also sworn in, during the first Dublin City Council meeting of the year on Jan. 2.

Judge Trey Taylor administered the oath of office Godfrey and Kolbie before doing Chain's individually, since this was his first time being sworn into public office. He was surrounded by family and friends as he took his oath.

"Welcome to the Dublin City Council," said Dublin Mayor Joshua Kight.

Chain shook the hands of the mayor, city manager and council members before taking his seat.

"I'm looking forward to

touching everyone in the community in a positive way," Chain said.

Before Chain was sworn in, Godfrey and Kolbie took their oaths surrounded by family and friends.

"I just wanted to say it has been an honor to serve with the two of you for the last four years," Kight said.

"I'm looking forward to what we have in store for the future. I'm very proud and glad to see you coming back."

Godfrey is thrilled to be back on the council.

"I look forward to working with you, Brandon," Godfrey said. "I'm excited about this upcoming year."

Kolbie was thankful for getting another four years to continue to serve the city.

"I will continue to work with this team, including Brandon Chain," Kolbie said. "I'm thankful to have another four years to serve and to listen."

Councilman Chris Smith gave advice to Chain.

**CITY COUNCIL**  
Continued on page 8



Above: New at-large council member Brandon Chain, with his mother, county commissioner Brenda Chain, beside him holding the Bible, was sworn in by Judge Trey Taylor. Left: At-large council members Tess Godfrey and Sara Kolbie take their oaths during the first city council meeting of 2026/PAYTON TOWNS III



People can place their live Christmas trees in this roll-off bin located at The Home Depot/PAYTON TOWNS III

## KDLB postpones 'Bring One for the Chipper' until this Saturday

By PAYTON TOWNS III  
Senior Reporter

A mix-up with an announcement about Bring One to the Chipper caused Keep Dublin-Laurens Beautiful to push back its annual event one week.

Chip Wilson with KDLB said a news media outlet announced that Bring One For The Chipper, a tree shredding event, was going to be on Jan. 10 instead of the original date of Jan. 3.

"I talked with Georgia Power and the Georgia Forestry people about (the mix-up) and they all decided to move it to Jan. 10," Wilson said.

With the rain pouring down, the only evidence of a Christmas tree-recycling program was an almost overfilled roll-off bin placed at the back of the Home Depot parking lot.

People can also take their live trees to one of the following six county collection centers: Parker Dairy Road, Nathaniel Drive, Valambrosia Road, Bethlehem Church Road, Rentz/Dexter Road and Old Hawkinsville Road. Wilson said people will be allowed to bring their live trees to the collection centers until Jan. 10.

From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, people can bring their undecorated live trees and electronic waste to be recycled.

## Local faith organization kicking off new year with events

### INDEX

By PAYTON TOWNS III  
Senior Reporter

A local coalition is ready to kick off events for 2026.

Let Unity Abound Coalition will hold three events in the next two weeks in an effort to bring the community together.

Coalition leader Andrew Roundtree said they felt God encouraging them to hit the ground running at the beginning of this year.

"We were expecting to do that and we are prepared for it," he said. "We are anxious about what God is going to do. This is just the tip of the iceberg. We're going to have all types of events

for 2026."

The first event will be what he calls Gideon's March from city hall to the court house, beginning at 9 a.m. this Saturday.

"We are going to pray at city hall for local and state government and then we'll march to the courthouse where we'll pray for our nation and international government," Roundtree said. "Everything that we do is with unity in mind. That's the primary goal."

The march is more about facing the enemy.

"I would like to have unity amongst each other in our community and country" Roundtree said.

"If everybody shows up, we should have a wide-range of churches and rehab facilities, businesses and different people from all walks of life. We want to bring in everyone from the community as one."

The coalition continues with its events Saturday evening, hosting the Teen Challenge 2026 New Years Rally at City on a Hill, 2778 Highway 257 at 6:30 p.m. Roundtree said Teen Challenge will be in charge of the program, which will include skits, student testimonies, music and entertainment.



Andrew Roundtree, leader of Let Unity Abound Coalition, said they plan to have more events in 2026/PAYTON TOWNS III

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**UNITY**  
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## OBITUARIES



Yadira Benita Castro

Funeral services for Yadira Benita Castro, 44, will be held at 3 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026, at Liberty Church, with interment to follow at Dublin Memorial Gardens. Rev. Buck Benton will officiate.

Mrs. Castro was born March 21, 1981, in Durango, Mexico. She was the owner and operator of La Joya Mexican Restaurant. She was a member of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Mrs. Castro passed away Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, at Atrium Health Navicent in Macon.

She was the daughter of Jose Martin Lopez Franco and Raquel Escobedo Escobar. She is also survived by her husband, Ruben Castro; 4 daughters, Camily Castro, Aylin Delgado, Celia Castro, and Luna Abigail Castro; and 2 brothers, Luis Carlos Lopez and Arnoldo Lopez.

A Rosary Service will be held starting at 6 p.m. with a visitation to follow until 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2026, at Stanley Funeral Home and Crematory. Pallbearers will be Arnoldo Lopez, Luis Carlos Lopez, Chandler Thomas, Eleazar Martinez Jr., Eleazar Martinez and Adrian Noble.

A memorial fund account has been set up at the Community Bank of Dublin at 605 Bellevue Avenue, Dublin, GA 31021 for her children.

Stanley Funeral Home and Crematory/Dublin Chapel has charge of funeral arrangements.



Gayle Wilson Spikes

But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto his children's children. Psalms 103:17

Mrs. Gayle Wilson Spikes, resident of 502 Marcus Street, Dublin, Georgia, passed unexpectedly, Friday, Jan. 2, 2026. Final rites are incomplete at this time, but will be announced later.

Arrangements entrusted to Wyche's Funeral Home ([www.wychesfuneralhomeinc.com](http://www.wychesfuneralhomeinc.com))

## BIRTHDAYS

Jan. 8  
Addie Graham  
Teresa Hunter  
Curla Ogden

Jan. 9  
Betty Hall  
Kayllina Smith

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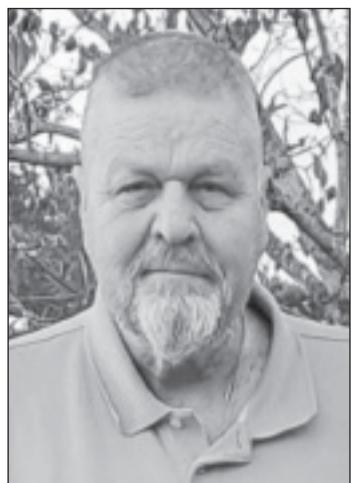
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Ronald Brown

Ronald Brown, a cherished and devoted family man, passed away peacefully in his hometown of Dublin, Ga., on Jan. 4, 2026, at the age of 67. Ronald was born on Aug. 20, 1958, to the late Roger Brown and Gladys Sterling Maddox. His life was a testament to the values of love, dedication and service, leaving a legacy that will be fondly remembered and deeply missed by all who knew him.

Ronald was a dedicated member of Orianna Baptist Church, where he found strength and solace in fellowship. His spiritual dedication was a cornerstone of his life, providing guidance and comfort to him and those around him.

Ronald's professional life was marked by a distinguished career as a correctional officer with the Georgia Department of Corrections. His dedication to his work was evident in his approach to every task and interaction, earning him the respect and admiration of both colleagues and those under his watch.

Beyond his career, Ronald's passions painted the picture of a man who embraced life with enthusiasm and never met a stranger. A dedicated Florida Gator fan, he could often be heard cheering, "Go Gators!" with a spirit that was contagious. His love for softball was more than a hobby; he was an avid player, well-known in the community for his skill and sportsmanship.

He is survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Liza Kay; his sons, Justin and Christopher (Kayla); his adored grandchildren, Brayden, Bryson, Ellie and Piper; his brothers, Jimmy (Yvonne) and Michael (Laurie); and many nieces and nephews who will carry forward his legacy of warmth and compassion.

Funeral services were held at 11 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2026, at the Mary Whitaker Townsend Memorial Chapel of Townsend Brothers Funeral Home with Rev. Cole Morris and Rev. Mike Mertz officiating. Burial will follow at Orianna Baptist Church Cemetery in Treutlen County.

The family received friends from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2026 at the funeral home.

Pallbearers will be Chris Brown, Richard Brown, Stephen Brown, Josh Brown, Paul Sterling and Jeff Upshaw.

Please visit [www.townsendfuneralhome.com](http://www.townsendfuneralhome.com) to sign the online memorial register.

Townsend Brothers Funeral Home has charge of the arrangements.

## Neil Jerome Proctor

Neil Jerome Proctor, age 68, of Eastman, Ga., died Monday, Dec. 29, 2025.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9, at Southerland Funeral Chapel, with interment in Orange Hill Cemetery in

Hawkinsville, Ga.

He is survived by his daughters - Jessie Proctor (Taylor White), Kimberly Owens (Phil) and Dianne Elsebusch; five grandchildren; sister - Lujan Proctor; brother - Gary Proctor; and several Extended Family members and Cousins.

The family will receive friends in Southerland Funeral Chapel from 1 p.m. - 2 p.m., Friday, Jan. 9.

Stokes-Southerland Funeral Home of Eastman has charge of arrangements.



Lynda Crooms Clark

Lynda Crooms Clark, left this world on Jan. 4, 2026, leaving behind a legacy of warmth and kindness that will be cherished for generations to come. Born on May 16, 1945, in Montrose, Georgia, she was the daughter of the late Willie Lee Crooms Sr. and Nora Lucinda Bell Crooms. She spent her final days surrounded by her loving family.

Her journey through life was shared with her late husband, Delacy Clark of 52 years. Together, they raised their three children, Christie Clark Brown (Eli), Lucinda "Cindy" Clark Sumner, both of East Dublin, and Eric Brian Clark (Sally Diers) of Dublin; her life further blossomed with the joy of her grandchildren, Michaellyn Michelle Sumner and Christopher James Brown, great-grandson, Zace Octivis Durham, who they called her "NaNa," her sister-in-laws, Peggy Crooms and Francis Crooms, and several nieces and nephews.

A proud graduate of Dublin High School, Lynda was an embodied spirit, resilient and passion, which she carried throughout her life and careers with the Oxford Shirt Factory and Olan Mills. Her work ethic was unparalleled, and her dedication to her craft was evident to all who worked alongside her. As a devout Christian, Lynda found solace and strength in her faith and was a member of the Soperton Church of God, and attended Crossway Fellowship Church in Dublin, where she not only worshiped but also served her community with unwavering commitment.

Lynda's zest for life was reflected in her various interests and hobbies. She enjoyed playing Bingo, her laughter infectious to all around her. An avid fan of gospel sings, she took delight in the harmonious melodies that lifted her spirit. Lynda's baking and cooking brought people together, creating memories that lasted a lifetime. She enjoyed watching the Atlanta Braves and eating banana split blizzards.

In every aspect of life, Lynda embodied love. She took on the role of caregiver with ease, whether it be through or babysitting or cleaning houses. Her hands, always willing to work, were also quick to comfort and care. She leaves behind a community that admired her for her charitable nature and a family that looked up

to her as both a role model and cornerstone.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2025, in the Mary Whitaker Townsend Memorial Chapel. Burial will follow in Walnut Creek Baptist Church Cemetery. Rev Bill Crooms will officiate. Lynda's family will receive friends on Thursday from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. at Townsend Brothers Funeral Home.

Dale Crooms, Raymond Crooms, Joey Burnett, Josh Rentz, Brandon Johnson and Allen Wilson will serve as pallbearers.

Please visit [www.townsendfuneralhome.com](http://www.townsendfuneralhome.com) to sign the online memorial registry.



Betty Hazel Wyatt Bracewell

Betty Hazel Wyatt Bracewell, affectionately known as Hazel to her friends and family, passed away peacefully at the age of 88, on Jan. 6, 2026. Born on Sept. 27, 1937, in Dublin, Georgia, Hazel was a beacon of love and creativity throughout her life.

She was the cherished daughter of the late James and Nobie Wyatt, and the loving wife of the late Jimmy Bracewell. She was also predeceased by her son, Jerry Wayne Bracewell, and siblings, Billy Wyatt (Janice), Lester Wyatt, and Lou Wyatt Smith (Jimmy), as well as her brother-in-law, Hugh Melton.

Hazel is survived by her sons, John R. Bracewell Sr. (Kathy) of Blairsville, Ga., and Michael Lee Bracewell of Hawkinsville, Ga.; her adoring grandchildren, Pamela Bannister (Joe) of Moultrie, Ga., and John R. Bracewell Jr. of Albany, GA; and her great-granddaughter, Kaitlyn Bracewell of Moultrie, Ga.

She is also survived by her step-grandchildren, Joey and Angie Lamb, both of Swainsboro, Ga.; step-great-grandchildren, Tyler Bannister of Box Springs, Ga. and Brady Bannister of Port Wentworth, Ga.; her beloved sister, Becky Wyatt Warren (Kenney) of Rentz, Ga.; sisters-in-law, Betty Ann Bracewell Melton of Dublin and Jane Bracewell Holzemer (Don) in Altamont Springs, Fla., and several nieces and nephews.

Hazel's interests were as varied as they were passionate. She was an avid gardener and bird watcher, finding peace and solace in the beauty of the plants she grew and birds she fed. She also enjoyed sewing, fishing and was a lover of nature. She was rarely seen without her camera, capturing the simple wonders of the world around her.

Music filled Hazel's life with joy, and she enjoyed singing in the church choir at Snow Hill Baptist Church in Cadwell, where she was a member. She was also a former member of the Red Hat Society, where she embraced the fellowship and fun the group provided.

Services will be held at 2:30 p.m., on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026, in the Mary Whitaker Townsend Memorial Chapel at Townsend Brothers Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 1:30 p.m. until the service hour at the funeral home. Pastor Jeffrey Wyatt and Pastor Richard Wyatt will officiate.

Mrs. Bracewell will be laid to rest privately at Mt. Zion Baptist Church Cemetery in Rentz, Ga.

Please visit [www.townsendfuneralhome.com](http://www.townsendfuneralhome.com) for service updates and to sign the online memorial register.



Ella Mae Holliman

Funeral services for Mrs. Ella Mae Holliman of Dublin, Georgia, will be held on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, at 11 a.m. at the Wabash Church of God, 500 Telfair Street in Dublin. Prophetess Tracie Holliman will deliver the eulogy. Interment will follow in the Dudley Memorial Cemetery.

Ella Mae Holliman was born on Sunday, June 13, 1937, to the late John and Doretha Hodges. A woman of quiet strength, steadfast faith, and deep love for her family, Ella Mae lived a life marked by grace, perseverance, and devotion.

She was a dedicated employee of Biljo for many years and took great pride in her work. Ella Mae shared 65 years of marriage with her beloved husband, Paul Holliman, whom she married on Dec. 5, 1959.

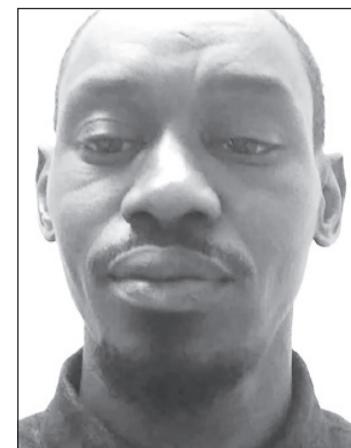
On Monday, Jan. 5, 2026, Ella Mae Holliman peacefully entered into eternal rest, answering her heavenly call.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Paul Holliman; her brothers, Willie Paul Hodges and Grady Hodges; and her daughter, Amy Holliman DeVoe.

She leaves to cherish her memory her children: Larry (Vernetta) Holliman, Ronnie (Tracie) Holliman, Gregory (Vanessa) Holliman, Danny (Lydwina) Holliman, Cassandra (Ansley) Pitts, and Noah Holliman; her sisters, Rita Mae Brown, Charlie Mae Exum, and Inise Holliman; along with a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Ella Mae Holliman will be remembered for her faith, strength, and unwavering love for family.

Please post your condolences at [ServicesbyDudley.com](http://ServicesbyDudley.com).



Joseph Burch Jr.

Funeral services for Mr. Joseph Burch Jr., "Yogi", will be held on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026, at 11 a.m. at God's Divine Vision Ministry, 600 Telfair Street in Dublin. Interment will follow in the Sun Hill Cemetery in Cadwell.

Joseph Burch was born on Friday, Sept. 8, 1978, to Joseph Burch Sr., and Gentece Walker Burch. He attended Laurens County public schools. He passed away on Saturday, Dec. 27, 2025.

Joseph was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Albert and Naomi Burch, his maternal grandparents, Henry Walker Jr., and Maetta Walker, and by his aunts, Gertrude Edmond and JoAnn Walker.

Joseph is survived by his wife, Marketa Charles-ton-Burch of Dublin, his mother, Gentece W. Burch of Dexter, Father Joseph Burch Sr. (Dublin, GA), His six children, J.J. Burch, Joel Burch, Jashod Jacobs, Chasity Williams, Dorian Darden, and Jahalea Burch, his sisters, Gwendolyn Burch Bigelow and Tariyah Shipman of Statesboro, brothers, Trailshunn Burch of Macon, and Gabriel Brazil, Jonathan Brazil and Antonio Marion, his aunts, Henretta George, Dorothy Mitchell of Cadwell, Gladys Boston, Daisy Givens, Mary (Roy T.) Nelson, Martha (Terrance) Davis (Terrance), uncles, Johnny Burch, Mathew Burch, Salomon Burch of Eastman, Paul Burch, Albert Burch, Sammie Lee Robinson, and J.T. Burch of Florida, two grandchildren, and by a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, relatives and friends.

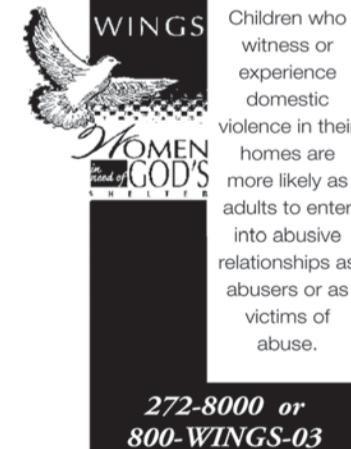
Please post your condolences at [ServicesbyDudley.com](http://ServicesbyDudley.com).

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.

## Susie Wiggins

Mrs. Susie Wiggins of Dublin, Georgia passed away on Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2026. Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time.

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



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# Seeking a cure for scarlet fever

On March 1, 1947, the United States Navy established the McIntire Scarlet Research Unit at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Dublin. The Navy, with the urging of Cong. Carl Vinson, of Milledgeville in his capacity as Chairman of the Naval Armed Services Committee, sought to extend the usefulness of the hospital long after the end of World War II.

Named for Vice-Admiral Ross T. McIntyre, Surgeon General of the United States Navy during World War II, and the personal physician of President Franklin D. Roosevelt from his inauguration until his death. The unit was informally established with no namesake on May 31, 1946. It was Dr. McIntyre who accompanied Eleanor Roosevelt to Warm Springs, Georgia, shortly after the President's death.

McIntyre was concerned that in California alone, there were 3,000 cases of the fever in the Naval Hospital.

The commissioning ceremony was led by Rear Admiral L.T. Dubose, Commandant of the Sixth Naval District. Dr. Paulin, Dr. C. D. Graves, Carl Vinson, and Dublin Mayor C. Flannery Pope, himself a World War II veteran, took part in the opening of the new section of the hospital.

The Naval Hospital had a meager staff to attempt to cure and alleviate the painful symptoms of the diseases. Included in that early staff was Robert Cade, who would not turn 18-years-old until early autumn of 1945. Cade joined the United States Navy. His first assignment in the Navy was as a research assistant with Naval Medical Research Unit Four in Dublin, Georgia. After one year, Robert transferred to serve aboard the USS Gherardi and finally aboard the USS Rochester. Cade's three-year hitch ended in September 1948. With the rank of pharmacist's mate third class, Cade's path to his journey was set. In the late summer of 1965, Cade, a highly respected figure at the University of Florida, furnished a chemical concoction to the football team to help with dehydration. That simple liquid would become the icon of sports energy drinks, Gatorade.

The Unit, with more than 350 patients, was the largest of its kind in the world. After the end of the war, Rheumatic Heart Disease was the leading killer of men under 30 years of age in America. For three decades, the cause of the dreaded disease had eluded American physicians. It

was presumed to be a result of hemolytic streptococcus infection. The trouble was that there were at least 46 kinds of that infection known.

Researchers determined that the infection mainly attacked children between the ages of 7 and 12. The local unit conducted a study on some four hundred elementary school students in the Dublin area and discovered that about one-percent or four had the disease, which was often hard to detect in its early stages, sometimes manifesting itself as a severe sore throat or tonsillitis.

The Dublin research group was headed by six Navy doctors, three local physicians, a dozen enlisted men, and three technicians, a virologist, a pathologist, and a biochemist. From the beginning, the unit was recruiting more personnel to meet the growing needs of the patients.

The Navy chose Dr. John R. Seal, a veteran doctor who served in the Navy during the War. Dr. Seal and his comrades reported to the War Department that scarlet fever was the 12th leading cause of disabilities of veterans.

John R. Seal was a prominent physician and researcher, known for his significant roles at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (NIAID) in the 1970s and 80s, serving as Deputy Director and focusing on disease prevention before transitioning to other impactful roles, leaving a legacy in infectious disease research and public health initiatives.

Dr. Seal held leadership positions at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), including Scientific Director and Deputy Director, from August 2, 1975, to October 1975, when he was involved in major discoveries like identifying the hepatitis virus.

Dr. Seal, a native of Charleston, W.Va., and a graduate of Davidson College, established and directed a new Disease Prevention Research Program for the NIH, Seal interned at Strong Memorial Hospital and later pursued further training. His peers recognized his ability to supervise intensive research projects.

Before the war, Dr. Seal studied at Cornell Medical Center in New York. He received four battle stars during his service as the Medical Officer of the USS Anthony in the Central and South Pacific Ocean. After he left Dublin, he transferred to Great Lakes and Cairo, Egypt. Seal served



## Pieces of Our Past

By SCOTT B. THOMPSON SR.

for two years as head of the Navy's Communicable Disease Control Branch. He has been credited as being one of the first physicians in the world to use penicillin as a treatment for Scarlet Fever. He died in 1984 at the age of 79.

Dr. John J. Robinson, a respected member of the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, was assigned to work hand in hand with Dr. Seal. Dr. Robinson had made great inroads in the research of the cause and treatment of the sometimes deadly fever. Robinson injected animals with the virus to study their reaction and experimented with many injections in hopes of finding a cure.

The Navy decided to close the Naval Hospital in the early summer of 1948. The Scarlet Fever Unit, the shining star of the hospital, was being closed as well. The members were sent to the Navy's Great Lakes Training Center on the north side of Chicago.

Congressman Vinson, highly enraged at the closing, stepped in and convinced Congress to open a Veterans Hospital in the installation, which is still operating today. Vinson made unsuccessful attempts to locate the United States Air Force Academy, a B-52 bomber base, and a naval fighter base in Laurens County in the decade that followed the closing of the Naval Hospital.

Today, modern medical research, led by Dr. Seal and hundreds of others, has greatly diminished the number of cases and their severity. However, no cure has ever been found.

## DID YOU KNOW ...?

### How many shows named 'College Bowl' have aired in the U.S.?

By JACK BAGLEY  
Georgia Trust for Local News

The New Year is more than a week old at this point, so the time has come to ask - how are your resolutions holding up?

Are you still keeping them? Or did you (as I do) just say "the heck with it" and give up on them?

Whichever you do, I am certain it's the right thing for you, and you're going to be fantastic at keeping them - or not keeping them, as the case may be.

I did keep one resolution - to bring you the finest in trivial stuff every week, and I'm going to keep doing it. So here's this week's selection of trivial stuff! Enjoy.

Did you know ...

... the nastiest place in your office may not be where you think it is? The average office keyboard harbors 3,295 germs per square inch. By comparison, the average office toilet seat has just 48 germs per square inch. (I have a line here, but it would close the show.)

... the Great Fire of 1666 in London began in a bakery? Thomas Farriner (1620-1670) was a baker to the household of King Charles II (1630-1685) and supplied the bread for the Royal Navy during the Anglo-Dutch War. The blaze, which ended up destroying most of London, started in Farriner's bakery on Pudding Lane on September 2, 1666, and was not extinguished until September

6. Almost 70,000 of the city's 80,000 homes were destroyed. Surprisingly, Farriner was not blamed for the fire, though it started in his bakery shop. A French watchman named Robert Hubert (1640-1666) gave a false confession to throwing a fire grenade into Farriner's bakery starting the blaze, which Farriner agreed to.

Hubert was executed in October of that year, almost certainly an innocent man, as he was not even in London when the fire broke out. Historians now believe that the Great Fire was started accidentally. (That's a pretty hot story there.)

... you may have heard a scroop? If you're wondering, a scroop is the sound that silk makes when it moves. Most likely, you've heard one if you were at a dance where formal ball gowns were being worn. That's the sound the ball gown makes. (Silky, isn't it?)

... a Major League pitcher had the same number of career wins as he had career hits? Warren Spahn (1921-2003) played 21 seasons in the Majors, for the Boston/Milwaukee Braves, New York Mets, and San Francisco Giants. During his career, Spahn chalked up 363 career wins - and 363 career hits. It gets even more precise: Spahn won 356 games for the Braves, four for the Mets, and three for the Giants. He had 356 hits for the Braves, four for the Mets, and three for the

Giants. (You have to admire the synchronicity of all that.)

... actor Michael J. Fox's middle name doesn't begin with a J? Fox (born 1981), who starred in the Back to the Future movies as well as some classic television, was born Michael Andrew Fox. He chose "J" as his professional middle initial as an homage to character actor Michael J. Pollard (1939-2019).

...

... more than one program called College Bowl existed on American television? Most readers would be somewhat familiar with the G.E. College Bowl, a weekly game show pitting teams of students from colleges and universities against each other in some rather difficult quizzes. The show ran intermittently from 1953 to 1970 on CBS and NBC, hosted by Allen Ludden (1917-1981) and later by Robert Earle (1926-2019). But before that, College Bowl was a one-season musical program from 1950 to 1951, starring Chico Marx (1887-1961), one of the Marx Brothers. This show was set in a soda fountain, supposedly owned by Marx, next to a college campus and featured singers who came in, sat around, told jokes, and belted out tunes. The breakout star from the show was Andy Williams (1927-2012). (I get the musical aspects and all, but ... Chico Marx? Sure, he was great at the piano, but I just don't see it.)

... the symbol for the planet Pluto has a double meaning? Made up of the interlocking letters "P" and "L," the symbol is not only the first two letters of the planet, but also the initials of astronomer Percival Lowell (1855-1916). Lowell initiated the search for a planet beyond the orbit of Neptune and created an observatory

in Arizona that is named for him. While working at the Lowell Observatory in 1930, Dr. Clyde Tombaugh (1906-1997) took the photographs that confirmed the existence

- and official discovery - of Pluto. (And I still think Pluto should be re-classified as a planet.)

... the first movie ever created solely with com-

puter-generated imagery (CGI) was released in 1995? Toy Story had more than 800,000 hours of mathematical equations used in the creation of the computer film. That equates to more than a week of computer time for every second of the film on screen. (And you thought it was easy.)

Now ... you know!

Middle Georgia's

# Southern Bride 2026

## Attention, newlyweds!

Submissions are open for our 2026 Southern Bride magazine cover contest!

The winner will be on the 2026 Southern Bride magazine's cover and be featured inside. The runner-up will also be featured.

Any bride who got married in 2025 and is a resident of either the Middle Georgia area or Georgia Trust associated counties\* is eligible to enter.

Submit a high-quality wedding photo, along with you and your partner's full names, address, wedding date, wedding location and venue, photographer's name, jeweler's name and contact information (phone number & email) to brieanna@hhjonline.com or by scanning the code below.

Voting will start January 19th on hhjonline.com and end at noon on January 30th. The winner will be announced January 30th.

Winners must be available for a phone interview between January 31st and February 5th.

Submission deadline: January 18th

Scan here to enter!



\*Eligible counties include Houston, Bibb, Baldwin, Bleckley, Crawford, Dodge, Dooly, Dougherty, Harris, Hancock, Johnson, Jones, Laurens, Macon, Meriwether, Monroe, Montgomery, Peach, Pulaski, Talbot, Taylor, Terrell, Treutlen, Twiggs, Wheeler, Washington, or Wilkeson.

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK SERVICES

The Laurens County Board of Commissioners (LCBC) is soliciting statements of qualifications from firms interested in providing Construction Management At-Risk (CMA) services for the Renovations and Additions to the Laurens County Senior Center in East Dublin, Georgia. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) seeks to identify potential providers of the above-mentioned services. Some firms that respond to this RFQ, who are determined by the Owner to be especially qualified, may be deemed eligible and may be invited to offer proposals for these services. LCBC reserves the right to reject any or all statements of qualifications or proposals, and to waive technicalities and informalities at their discretion.

The project involves all site work and building Renovations and Additions to the existing Laurens County Senior Center located at 112 Nathaniel Drive, East Dublin, Georgia.

The prospective CMA firms will provide preconstruction services which may include, without limitation, technical review, cost verification, cost evaluation, value engineering, schedule development, and schedule evaluation, in addition to management of the construction. In addition, CMA firms will be responsible for methods of construction, safety, and the scheduling and coordination of the work of all construction and miscellaneous contracts required for completion of the project within its predetermined budget and schedule. The successful CMA will be required to work collaboratively with the Architect and the Owner.

Interested parties should contact Bryan Rogers, County Administrator, to obtain a copy of the RFQ document. CMA firms wishing to submit their qualifications in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Request for Qualifications package must do so on or before Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Bryan Rogers  
County Administrator  
117 E Jackson Street Dublin, GA 31040  
e-mail: [rogersb@lclga.com](mailto:rogersb@lclga.com)  
phone: (478) 272-4755  
fax: (478) 272-3895

## OUR TAKE...

**Busy time ahead for lawmakers as Georgia Assembly reconvenes**

State lawmakers are getting ready for their return to the Capitol, with the next session of the Georgia General Assembly set to convene on Jan. 12. It looks like legislators already have a heavy docket ahead of them, and we can expect our representatives and senators to take up some familiar topics, as well as some new ones over the next couple of months.

The ever-popular topic of tax reform is among the most anticipated subjects with lawmakers set to debate further reductions in the state's income tax and relief for property owners. The latter subject will surely be applauded on the home front, with homeowners in Dublin-Laurens County being hit with a second consecutive year of property tax increases, courtesy of the local boards of education.

For schools, the Georgia Department of Education has a long list of priorities with some that hit very close to home. We hope our local delegation makes placing the tighter regulations on school financial reporting (particularly mandating transparency and the public posting of records) requested by the state school superintendent a primary objective. Also of vital importance, is establishing safeguards to prevent school systems from shirking their financial obligations to other state entities, most importantly the Teachers Retirement System and State Health Benefit Plan.

With more tax cuts up for debate, you can also rest assured that lawmakers will be discussing new forms of revenue, and don't be surprised if legalized gambling rears its head again. Georgia is on the shrinking list of states that have no regulated and taxed gambling ecosystem. While we tend to lean to the side that believes the bad that comes with gambling outweighs the good, the matter should be left up for the state's voters and should only be allowed if it benefits rural and other areas not reaping the reward of the state's industrial and tourism boom.

Forty days is a short amount of time, but we're expecting quite a lot from the Gold Dome this year.

— Kyle Dominy

## YOUR TURN:

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

## THOUGHT FOR TODAY

*"Of all the preposterous assumptions of humanity over humanity, nothing exceeds most of the criticisms made on the habits of the poor by the well-housed, well-warmed and well-fed."*

- Herman Melville

## DAILY SCRIPTURE

*"Wherefore, by beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."*

- Philippians 2:12

## EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY

January 8, 2026 is...

- Show and Tell At Work Day
- National Winter Skin Relief Day
- World Typing Day
- War on Poverty Day
- Earth's Rotation Day
- Bubble Bath Day

**The Courier Herald**

**LOCAL MATTERS**  Judged a newspaper of General Excellence 2024

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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.

**IN OUR OPINION****Yes, the state does need more auditors**

By **CHARLIE HARPER**

Career day in elementary school was a bit awkward. I was accustomed to blank stares from folks, kids and adults alike, when I responded to what my father did for a living. I could recite that he was "the Assistant Regional Audit Director for Health and Human Services." For much of my childhood I had no idea what that title meant either.

I can recall my Dad trying to explain it to my sixth grade class. "I'm an auditor." More blank stares.

Other parents had more relatable jobs. We of course, living in Fayette County, had a Delta pilot. I'm pretty sure we had a fireman. My Mom was a nurse. Dad did his best to explain his role.

Adults always had an easier time mis-understanding what Dad did. "An auditor? With the Federal Government? I always file my taxes on time!"

No, he wasn't "that" kind of auditor. He focused on government agencies, internally, for 22 years.

Dad switched his major to accounting when an injury cut his football career short. He went to work for the U.S. Government right out of college.

In those days, those younger and single got sent on longer travel assignments. Dad got to spend about six months each in Alaska, then Hawaii, then Puerto Rico, with a significant amount of time traveling within the Pacific Northwest, auditing local Authorities receiving money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Alaska was his favorite.

By the time I came along, he was doing much shorter trips and only when necessary. I can recall him spending quite a bit of time going back and forth to Columbia South Carolina. He was the government's expert witness in a prosecution of someone who had been misappropriating funds.

In later years, I recall a few stories about that trial and a couple of others. He was fully familiar with the role of someone who had to bring the receipts, literally, to show malfeasance.

understood that stealing from the government was stealing from taxpayers - Stealing from us.

Dad loved his job until he didn't. The last few years were challenging.

Expectations and workloads increased. The tools to do the job became more scarce. Competence in those newly hired was lacking, but those folks got promoted just the same. All those factors and more increased stress levels.

One of those in Dad's inner circle had a breakdown. Others had severe medical issues. Dad ultimately decided instead of trying to hang in eight more years to reach retirement that life was too short. He spent the next decade owning a hardware store.

When Dad left the government's employment in the early 1980's, the public was still capable of being outraged over spending scandals. Those my age or older can remember news stories about \$600 hammers and \$7,000 coffee pots. The backlash was real, even if the cost accounting was just sloppy.

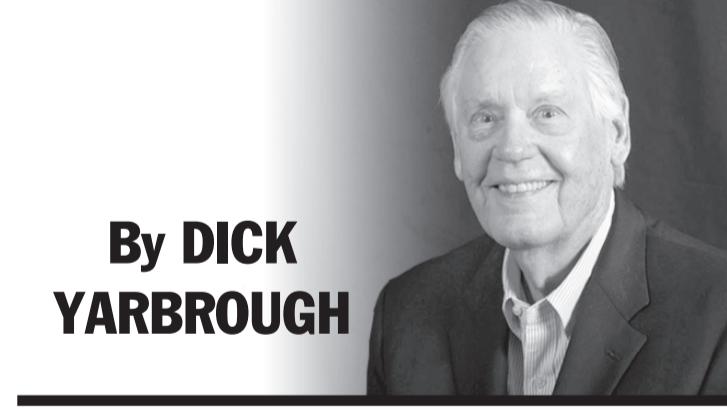
By the time I did a stint in a government contracting role about two decades ago, a procurement scandal involving tens of millions in documented fraud, waste, and abuse could barely get anyone's attention. I know this, because I spent almost two years trying to escalate

the problem within proper channels. It was viewed as just the cost of doing business.

A couple of budget cycles ago, one of the priorities was to give the IRS enough additional funds equivalent to the cost of hiring 87,000 additional auditors. The stated goal was to make sure the right amount of money was being taken from us to give to the government.

The American people are now coming to the realization that systematic fraud has been occurring throughout the federal government. Those who have spent careers believing the "Defense Industrial Complex" is the only place money can go to be misdirected into private profits are enduring a huge wakeup call as to the size and scope of where our tax money is actually spent. It appears states are not just complicit, but actively engaged in expanding the theft.

If we were to actually add 87,000 federal employees anywhere, I would agree that they should be auditors - just not those on the side of collecting the funds. The American people need to have assurance that when their hard earned tax dollars are paid, they go to where they were intended - and achieve promised results. We need more competent and honorable people on the inside, doing that job again.

**An invitation for Trump to address the Ryo Coffee Club**

By **DICK YARBROUGH**

and the boys got to talking a little politics this morning and that's the reason for my call. We all agree you know as little about politics as anybody we could think of."

You need a thick skin to deal with this man.

"Being as how we are all busy trying to make an honest living, we don't have a lot of time to watch the news and we don't do Facepaint or Twerp like a lot of folks," he said.

(I think he means Facebook and Twitter, but I have learned never to correct Skeeter Skates. As I have stated, he is a proud man.)

"I got to admit that while I don't have much use for folks that make their living writing words down on a typewriter (I didn't tell him I use a laptop), the boys and me know you are wired in at the highest levels of government," he said.

I don't know where he got that idea. I can't get anybody to return my calls about fixing the potholes in my neighbor-

hood.

"Anyhow," Skeeter continued, "we were wondering if the next time you were talking to that old boy who is running things up there in Washington (I think he means Donald Trump), you would invite him to come down to Ryo and address our Morning Coffee Club. We can't pay him, of course, but I am sure Booger could scare up some fresh vegetables for him and Walleye would be happy to give him a bucket of red wigglers and even take him fishing for spotted bass on the Oostanaula. I suspect that old boy don't get much chance to fish what with all the wars going on these days."

Skeeter added, "When you talk to him, tell him if he's got a snowplow that needs some work to bring it with him and I will be glad to fix it up for him. Given who he is, I'll just charge him for the parts only." I know the president would be pleased, assuming of course, he owns

a snowplow.

What about Uncle Coot, I asked? Skeeter said, "We'll scrub him down as best we can and be sure to sit him downwind. Unfortunately, we are still dealing with the remnants of a long career spent transporting porta potties."

I could tell Skeeter Skates was excited about the idea. "Hoss," he said, "where else is he going to have the opportunity to sit down and talk face-to-face with captains of industry like the Ryo Morning Coffee Club? Also, I hear he likes to name stuff after himself. We've got a right nice rock garden over in Calhoun. I can't make any promises, but I'll be happy to talk to the folks running it to see if they would be interested in naming it for him. I doubt he's got a rock garden in his name." I suspect he's right.

With that, Skeeter Skates hung up the phone and the clear expectations of my inviting Donald Trump to address the members of the Ryo Coffee Club. I promise it will be the next thing on my to-do list. Just as soon as I get someone to return my calls about fixing the potholes in my neighborhood.

You can reach Dick Yarbrough at [dick@dickyarbrough.com](mailto:dick@dickyarbrough.com) or at P.O. Box 725373, Atlanta, Georgia 31319.

**Dublin Police Department**

- Michael Jarrod Thomas, 34, was charged with obstruction of law enforcement officers, open container of alcohol in motor vehicle and distracted driving on Williams Street around 10:05 p.m. on Dec. 13.

Investigators were conducting criminal interdiction when one saw a gray Dodge Charger with its driver holding a cell phone while operating the vehicle. The officer pulled the vehicle over and the driver, later identified as Thomas, exited the vehicle rapidly and ran behind the residence.

Officers searched for the driver. An investigator heard the sound of metal striking metal and drew his service weapon to safely search for the suspect.

The investigator saw the driver walk from behind a metal storage shed in the backyard. The investigator pointed his service weapon and gave clear, loud verbal commands for the driver to get on the ground.

Thomas did not comply, leading to the investigator grabbing the right shoulder and assisting him to the ground with a push.

Once Thomas was on the ground, the officer immediately placed him in handcuffs. Thomas was searched

incident to arrest. A handgun holster was located on the right side of Thomas' waistline.

He denied ever possessing a firearm and said he ran because he had an outstanding warrant for a speeding ticket. A GCIC record check was later conducted and revealed that Thomas did not have an outstanding warrant. Thomas was transported to the sheriff's office where he was turned over to jail staff.

- On Dec. 20, around 3:20 a.m., an officer met with another officer who was out with a vehicle where the driver was passed out behind the wheel with an empty liquor bottles in plain view.

Officers tried waking the driver by shaking the car and knocking on the driver's side window, and it took several minutes to wake him up.

Once he was awake, officers were about to get him to place the vehicle in park and step out of the vehicle. Once out of the vehicle, he seemed to be uneasy on his feet and had to be told to pull his pants up.

The driver, identified as Nicolas Obryan Taylor, 38, was asked if he had anything to drink because of the empty liquor bottles and the strong odor of an alcoholic

**POLICE BEAT...**

beverage coming from him. He said he had and that is why he was asleep. When asked how long ago that was, Taylor said, "an hour ago."

Taylor was read implied consent for blood and agreed, but once they arrived at Fairview Park Hospital, became irate and uncooperative and refused his blood to be drawn. Taylor was taken to the sheriff's office for booking.

- Sierra Colleen Woodbeck, 28, was charged with theft by shoplifting at Walmart on Highway 80 West, around 2 p.m. on Dec. 21.

Officers met with an employee in loss prevention office. The suspect admitted to shoplift several items from the location. The total value of the items was \$42.90.

Woodbeck was transported to the police department where they were unable to fingerprint Woodbeck due to the machine not functioning. She was released with a citation and a trespass notice from

Walmart.

- Jaheel Antonio Smith, 33, was charged with theft by shoplifting at Walmart around 12:14 p.m. on Dec. 21.

Upon arrival, an officer met with a loss prevention officer and he pointed to an individual walking through the parking lot. The officer made contact with the man identified later as Smith. He told the officer that he did not shoplift.

The officers looked at video footage and saw Smith pushing a shopping cart with multiple items inside. He left the shopping cart on an aisle and obtained the cart and pushed it to the customer service area. Smith then returned and obtained the cart from the customer service area and walked toward the exit.

Smith was confronted by an employee and began walking toward the self-checkout, and then suddenly left the cart and exited the building.

An officer saw Smith pass all the point of sale

areas and did not attempt to pay for the items inside the cart. An employee was able to provide a receipt for the merchandise Smith was attempting to shoplift, which came up to a total of \$998.64.

- Around 5:07 a.m. on Dec. 21, an officer was called for a driving under the influence investigation dealing with a wreck at the intersection of Country Club and North Franklin Street.

The officer was informed that driver Jeffcorrie Sheron Davis, 24, said an animal ran out and it caused him to crash. Davis informed the officer that he had two shots about three hours before the accident.

The investigation led to him being arrested and charged with DUI less safe, failure to maintain lane and seatbelt violation.

**Laurens County Sheriff's Office**

- On Dec. 17, around noon, a deputy was dispatched to Elm Street in Dexter in regard to an alleged theft.

- Kenneth Richmond Spires, 33, of Milan, was charged with possession of firearm or knife during commission of or attempt to commit certain crimes and possession of methamphetamine after a deputy

stopped a black Ford -F-150 for speeding on Highway 441 Bypass.

- A deputy responded to Churchwell Road in reference to shots fired around 2:58 p.m. on Dec. 13.

- Blake Lenton Roberts, 31, of Dublin, was charged with disorderly conduct around 4:50 p.m. on Dec. 11 when a deputy responded to McClelland Road in reference to an issue with a pine straw trailer.

- A deputy talked with a person about an incident that happened on Hillbridge Road between Dec. 9 and Dec. 10.

- Between Nov. 17 and Dec. 10, a deputy talked with a woman in reference to being scammed by another man.

*Editor's note: This information is public record and was taken from reports of local law enforcement agencies. These reports do not reflect guilt or innocence. An "arrest" does not always indicate incarceration. Readers are cautioned that people may have similar names. Police Beat does not identify minor children, victims of sexual assault, suicide attempts or medical conditions. Cases dismissed do not appear if the newspaper is notified before deadline.*

**TELL IT!**

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traffic during the driver's medical emergency.

Over there at the commissioners' office, people who work there park in front and they take up those parking spaces. I know there are parking spaces behind the commission offices but for some of us, we have a hard time walking. (The workers) need to park in where the old offices that they tore down was instead of park-

When that flower place in downtown got run over, if it did any damage to anybody's vehicle, Dublin City should be made to pay for that vehicle being fixed. Put your flower bed somewhere else, not in the center of town. That was crazy.

*Editor's note: City officials credited the flower bed from stopping the driver from stopping them from traveling into oncoming*

ing in front of the office. Somebody needs to come in and show Dublin how to fix things where it is more simple.

If Dublin's 'Upper Crust' want the privileges their children deserve, they should pay for them ... not the peasants struggling just to feed and clothe their own 'gifted' children and get them on a bus!

There is something so wrong when an elderly widow on a fixed income has to pay school tax three times the amount of city taxes! What's the saying, the rich

get richer ...and the poor?

Are the people of East Dublin gonna lose our grocery store? The shelves have been pretty slim. Seems they should say what's going on.

Inquiring minds would like to know: Are any of the tenants of the homeless encampment by Home Depot paying their fair share of school taxes?

Is the East Dublin Food World going to shut down or become a different grocery store?

I found one item miss-

ing from the laundry list of problems at our courthouse. The clock in the first floor courtroom hasn't worked in years. What will it take to get it back ticking?

Can we get a street sign for Blackshear Ferry Road at the intersection of Claxton Dairy Road? The sign bandit.

I noticed in Dublin the Popeye's building is up for sale. Maybe someone will buy it and reopen it as a Church's Fried Chicken. When we had it, it was good. I wish we had it back.

**Local 7-day Forecast:****The next 48 hours:**

**THURSDAY:** Warm with times of clouds and sun. **73°**  
Sunrise: 7:34 a.m.

**THURSDAY NIGHT:** Mainly clear. **55°**  
Sunset: 5:42 p.m.

**FRIDAY:** Very warm with times of clouds and sun. **77°**  
Sunrise: 7:34 a.m.

**FRIDAY NIGHT:** Partly cloudy. **50°**  
Sunset: 5:43 p.m.

**Saturday**  
**1/10**  
**HIGH/LOW**  
**79/50**  
Partly sunny and remaining warm.  
Sunrise: 7:33 a.m.  
Sunset: 5:45 p.m.

**Sunday**  
**1/11**  
**HIGH/LOW**  
**61/32**  
Partly sunny and cooler breezy in the morning, then becoming less humid.  
Sunrise: 7:33 a.m.  
Sunset: 5:46 p.m.

**Monday**  
**1/12**  
**HIGH/LOW**  
**59/39**  
Partial sunshine.  
Sunrise: 7:33 a.m.  
Sunset: 5:46 p.m.

**Tuesday**  
**1/13**  
**HIGH/LOW**  
**60/41**  
A couple of morning showers; otherwise, cloudy.  
Sunrise: 7:33 a.m.  
Sunset: 5:46 p.m.

**Wednesday**  
**1/14**  
**HIGH/LOW**  
**59/40**  
After a cloudy start, sunshine returns.  
Sunrise: 7:33 a.m.  
Sunset: 5:47 p.m.

**River levels...**  
Oconee (at Dublin) ..... 4.59'  
Ocmulgee (at Macon) ..... 7.9'

- Comments  
- Adjourn

The city of Dudley council will meet at the Dudley Fire Station at 6 p.m. on Jan. 13. The agenda follows:

- Call to order  
- Roll call  
- Approval of agenda  
- Approval of previous minutes - Dec. 9, 2025  
- Approval of bills  
- Old business  
- New business  
- Discussion and approval of 2026 budget

- Oath of office: mayor and city council members

- Adopting the 2026 budget

- Discussion of property contractors causing damage to city infrastructure (including water lines and pipes)

- Citizens comments  
- Council comments  
- Executive session (if needed)  
- Adjournment

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RIVER LEVELS

River levels...

Oconee (at Dublin) ..... 4.59'

Ocmulgee (at Macon) ..... 7.9'

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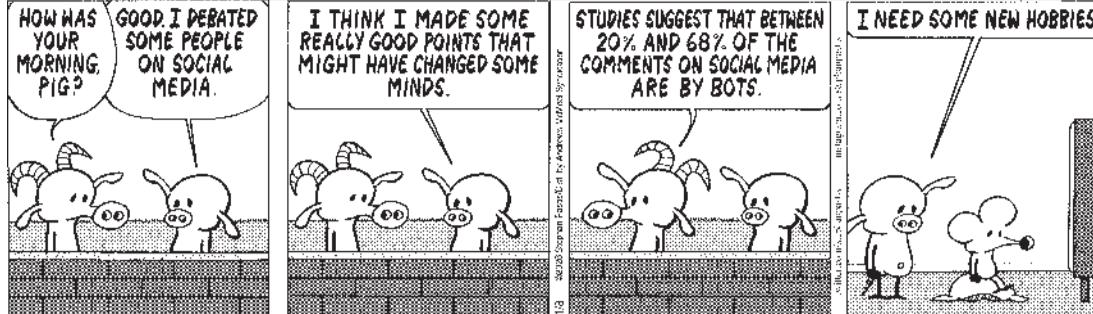
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Stroke and Cardiovascular dis-

## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



BY STEPHAN PASTIS

## GARFIELD



BY JIM DAVIS

## OVERBOARD



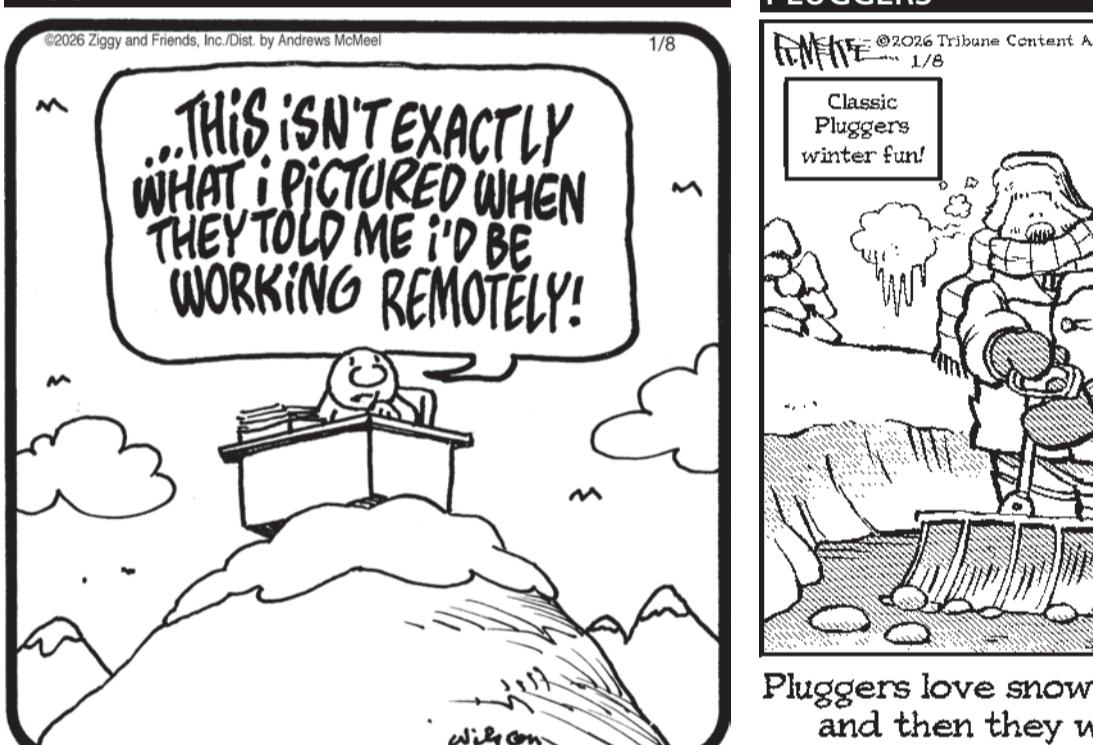
BY CHIP DUNHAM

## DEFLOCKED



BY JEFF CORRIVEAU

## ZIGGY



BY TOM WILSON

## PLUGGERS



BY JEFF MACNELLY

Pluggers love snow for about two weeks, and then they want it to be spring.

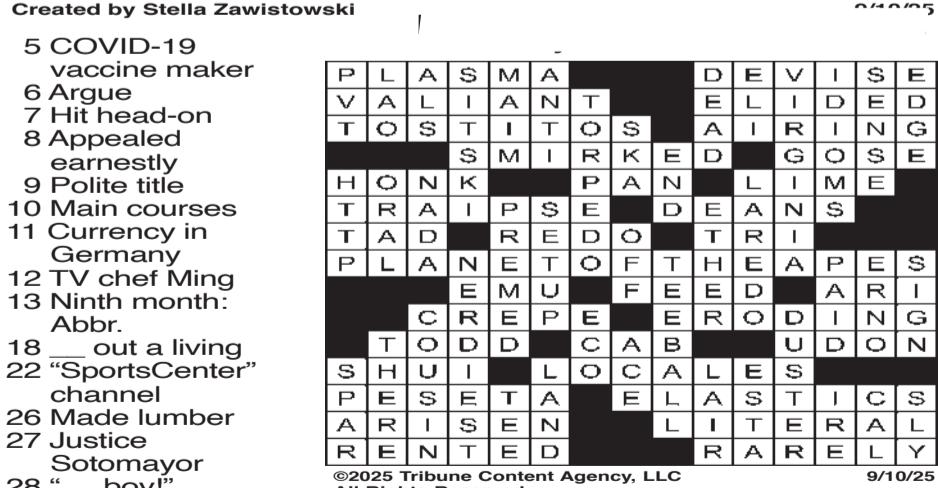
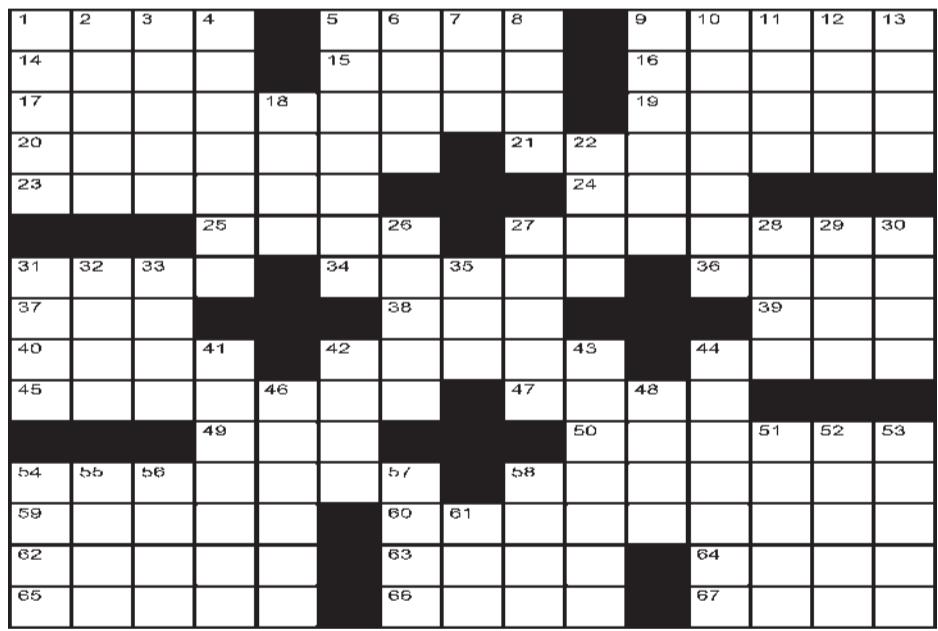
## THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Stella Zawistowski

## ACROSS

1 Mark from an old wound  
5 Car lot figure: Abbr.  
9 Encounters  
14 "Need anything?"  
15 Iridescent stone  
16 Not available: 2 wds.  
17 Fighting Irish school: 2 wds.  
19 Sandal part  
20 Nike product  
21 "Motor City"  
23 More creepy  
24 "— what I mean?"  
25 Phishing targets: Abbr.  
27 Mayo and margarine  
31 Finished  
34 Judge of baseball  
36 Put away  
37 Clumsy person  
38 Looking exhausted  
39 Earl Grey, e.g.  
40 "There's no I in —"  
42 Sprinter Carl  
44 Simple to accomplish  
45 Heartburn remedy  
47 Smartphone programs  
49 Light brown  
50 Jacuzzi: 2 wds.  
54 Charged with a crime  
58 "Decide now!": 3 wds.  
59 Medical record  
60 Cognizance  
62 Party hard  
63 Italy's capital  
64 Currier and —  
65 Clear of data  
66 Get rid of  
67 Well ventilated

## DOWN

1 Sight or touch  
2 Genetic copy  
3 Fall flower  
4 Poker ploy  
5 COVID-19 vaccine maker  
6 Argue  
7 Hit head-on  
8Appealed earnestly  
9 Polite title  
10 Main courses  
11 Currency in Germany  
12 TV chef Ming  
13 Ninth month: Abbr.  
18 — out a living  
22 "SportsCenter" channel  
26 Made lumber  
27 Justice Sotomayor  
28 "— boy!"  
29 Stags' mates  
30 Convince  
31 Facts and figures  
32 Candidly honest  
33 Shipshape  
35 Uncooked  
41 Becomes an adult  
42 In the — of fire  
43 Round, solid shapes



44 Latvia neighbor  
46 Special chess move  
48 Do some modeling  
51 Famed Roman fountain  
52 Racing family name  
53 Overly pushy  
54 Land area unit  
55 "Believe" singer  
56 Spanish sparkling wine  
57 Pointy projectile  
58 Thanksgiving tubers  
61 Wine and dine

## Man blames his Mother for robbing him of inheritance!



dren, and I know our constant fighting is bad for the kids.

Because I haven't worked in eight years, it has been extremely hard for me to find a job. I have applied for many. I want to leave this toxic marriage, but I'm scared. I don't know how. I have nowhere to go, no money, no car, no job. What can I do, Abby? I am so miserable that I can't stand it. -- BREAKING POINT IN THE WEST

## DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

own trust because of how he has behaved and his attempt at blackmail. Am I justified in excluding him? I want to forgive and forget, but I can't get past his actions. -- CONFLICTED IN IDAHO

DEAR CONFLICTED: Thanks to the generosity of our former daughter-in-law, we do have access to our grandsons. I have finally come to terms with my son's decision to remove himself from the family, which includes his brother and sister. He's an adult and can make that decision for himself.

It was always my intention to one day pass what I inherited on to my three children. What I am struggling with is that I'm feeling a considerable amount of guilt because my husband and I have excluded this son from any monetary distributions from our

.

DEAR ABBY: I am married to a verbally and economically abusive alcoholic. His drinking has grown much worse during this last year to the point that he can no longer hold a job longer than two months. We have three chil-

Thursday, January 8, 2026

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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NOT THIS TIME

Both vulnerable, East deals

NORTH  
♦ K Q J 5  
♥ K Q 5 2  
♦ A 7 2  
♦ 9 7

WEST  
♠ 9 8 7 2  
♥ J 10 9 7  
♦ Q 9 8 6 3  
♣ Void

EAST  
♦ Void  
♥ 8 4 3  
♦ J 10 5  
♣ K Q J 10 8 6 4

SOUTH

A

10

6 4 3

A

6

K

4

5 3 2

The bidding:  
EAST 3♦ SOUTH 3♦ WEST 6♦ NORTH 5♦

Pass 6♦ Pass 6♦

All pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

North's jump to five spades asked South to bid a slam if he held first or second round control in clubs, the opponents' suit. South bid six clubs to show first round club control in case North wanted to bid a grand slam. South won the opening heart

lead with his ace and he liked his chances. He had 11 top tricks. Should the trumps split no worse than 3-1, he could draw trumps, concede a club, and ruff a club in dummy for his twelfth trick. He started by cashing the ace of trumps and got the bad news.

South, a loyal reader of this column, was well aware that trump reversals are often overlooked. Not this time! He led a heart to dummy's king and ruffed the five of hearts with the three of spades. This would only lose if East started with an unlikely five-card heart suit on the side. South cashed the king of diamonds, led a diamond to the ace, and ruffed a diamond with the 10 of spades. He could then easily draw the outstanding trumps and claim his slam, conceding a club to East at the end. Well played! Careful play by declarer put him in position to go for the dummy reversal when the poor trump split made it necessary.

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001.)

SUDOKU

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

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:

# Lady Irish win second-straight, boys drop heartbreaker to JoCo in January openers

## EL begins new year on roll; WL off to tough start at Cross Creek

By CLAY REYNOLDS  
Sports Editor

Dublin's girls basketball team rang in the new year on a winning note, and its boys with a sour one, as the Irish re-took the court at home Saturday night in a non-region matchup with Johnson County.

The winning half of the split was all Lady Irish, as they dominated by double digits en route to their second-straight win, 59-27. The Dublin boys were on track to also complete their first back-to-back of the season, with a late lead reflective of their edge in most of the matchup's statistical categories.

But a handful of critical plays by the Trojans' J.T. Bivins in the final half-minute of the fourth quarter tipped the scales for the visitors, who jumped in front and hung on to win 49-48 for their first victory in four outings.

The pair of 2026 debuts were encouraging for Irish 3-point shooters, who were fairly locked-in across the double-dip.

Dublin's girls scattered several across the hot third quarter that was the separating point of their runaway. Jaydon McRae (4) and Glen Harris (3) combined for all seven by the Irish boys, who also dropped the bulk of theirs in a strong start to the second half that got a double-digit halftime deficit turned around.

Scoring close to the basket remained the challenge for both teams that it's been for much of the season to date. But rebounding, whose success rate for each has been uncoupled from an overall lack of points in the paint, was a different story.

That steady storyline floated a strong first half for the Dublin girls, who had already doubled up the Lady Trojans by a count of 32-16 through two quarters.

Obstructive defense going both directions took away most of either team's transition opportunities in a clunky start to the second half. But several long-range hits over a four-minute opening run – Keasia Jackson's made it a clean 20 points with 3:41 left – kept Dublin (4-5, 1-2 region 2-High A) comfortably in front from there all the way to the end.

The Irish boys (2-6, 0-3 region) didn't have nearly as smooth a ride to their late second-half lead, as JoCo set the pace leading up to and following a second 3 by McRae to give them a brief edge of 13-12 at the end of the first eight minutes.



DESPERATELY OUT OF TIME: The clock - down to just a few seconds - was a bigger issue than this loose ball for Dublin as it fought for a final answer, but committed a second-straight turnover it could ill afford as this Johnson County recovery, simultaneous with the expiration of time, brought an unfortunate end to Saturday's game/CLAY REYNOLDS

They fell on a severe drought late in the second, going the entire last four minutes leading into halftime without a point. The Trojans capitalized to run their lead up to a dozen.

But whatever adjustments were made by Coach Carlos Hope and the Irish during the halftime retreat had their intended impact as Dublin opened the second half on a 14-0 tear that finished up on another McRae triple to take back the lead.

The first four minutes of the third amounted to a 17-2 Irish run. And their momentum apexed later in the quarter with a Harris 3, followed by a separate field goal, to make it 41-33.

But JoCo would reverse and regain the momentum before the end of the period, cutting the margin back to a single possession by the third-quarter buzzer. And there it stayed for most of the fourth.

Dublin's Kam Stanley and Ar'Dreakius Taylor sunk key baskets to take a one-point lead to three at separate junctures in the final minutes, but a 7-for-19 final clip at the foul line kept it from pulling away.

The Trojans responded, and finally caught back up with a Bivins 3-pointer to tie at 26 seconds to go.

The Irish took a timeout and took the clock in anticipation of a move for the final shot, but wound up turning it over as he jumped their pass back toward the top of the key, and took it back the other way to draw a foul and get to the free throw line with 8.6 remaining.

The first try missed, but



CLUTCH 3: Johnson County's J.T. Bivins, who had scored just two up to this point in the night, came through when the Trojans needed him by knocking down this gotta-have-it triple to tie the game with less than 30 seconds to go in the fourth quarter/CLAY REYNOLDS

Bivins connected on the second to give JoCo the slight lead. And Dublin wouldn't get a shot up for a chance to respond on the other end as the ball got knocked away from Harris in a trap, and recovered by who else but Bivins as time expired.

The Trojans' last-minute hero had only six points, to trail the 16 of co-leaders Daezon Devero and Cory King, but got credit for two crucial steals. Devero also had six of the team's 21 boards.

Dublin out-rebounded

JoCo by just as many, with Jakarian Jones pulling in 12 for the lead. McRae and Harris had 13 each to lead the Irish. Chris Dixon assisted eight baskets.

East Laurens girls 77,  
Johnson Co. 25

The Lady Falcons won all but the first quarter, but absolutely dominated the third by a score of 39-2 to blow open an already-lopsided game as they opened the new year at home Friday night.

Dublin out-rebounded

Garyunna Mitchell had 19 to lead four East Laurens players in double digits scoring, with Zahmaria Robinson (17), Jameria Bing (14) and Deanna Lowther (10, plus 10 assists in a nontraditional double-double, along with nine boards, nine steals and three blocked shots) not far behind.

East defenders deflected 28 passes, and recorded 37 steals.

East Laurens boys 71,  
Johnson Co. 37

Many of their layups were open, and others not-so-open, but it didn't much matter for the Falcon boys, who got the ball in the basket one way or another to jump-start their offense after a somewhat languid start.

It was a low-scoring first quarter, but East Laurens finished it on a 6-2 run for a lead of four, then started the second on a 14-2 to go up by double figures.

Nearly identical overall scoring spreads in the second, 21-7, and third, 22-7, put the Falcons in firm control from that point on.

East Laurens girls 60,  
Tattnall County 43

Mitchell had another 17, and 10 rebounds for a double-double, to lead the Lady Falcons (8-2, 3-0 region 2-High A) for a second-straight night.

Bing (14) and Robinson (10) also remained hot, with Lowther scoring in single-digits but pulling in a team-high 13 boards to lead a strong rebounding effort.

Miyah Smith added eight and Robinson seven to run their total on the glass to 48.

Unanswered runs for East Laurens numbering eight points to start the game and nine early in the second contributed to a 31-17 lead at the half. A run of 13 within five minutes, as it handled some Tattnall County pressure midway through the second half, put it away.

East Laurens boys 60,  
Tattnall Co. 53

The Falcons' strong play around the rim continued Saturday night, when several long wingspans were valuable in converting shot chances from close range.

Jeremiah Rozier's 3-pointer highlighted a 13-2 first-quarter run that built an early cushion, and spilled over into the second with three more consecutive

## SCOREBOARD

### GIRLS HOOPS

Saturday

Dublin 59, Johnson Co. 27

Tuesday

East Laurens 53, Dublin 25

West Laurens 46,

Richmond Academy 37

### BOYS HOOPS

Tuesday

EL 55, Dublin 53

ARC 44, West Laurens 42

## PREP SCHEDULE

### BASKETBALL

Friday

Jefferson Co. at Dublin

West Laurens at Baldwin

/6 p.m.

Washington Co. at

East Laurens/7 p.m.

Saturday

WL at Dublin/4:30 p.m.

EL at Bleckley Co./5 p.m.

## CONTACT US:

Email sports information to tchsports77@gmail.com, or call (478) 272-5522, ext. 403

tive field goals, two by Zion Dixon.

But the last of dueling runs in the half had the Battle Creek Warriors back within eight on the way to the break. And they never went away as the Eastside lead fluctuated down the stretch.

B.J. Sanders hit two 3-pointers in the last two minutes – a last with 34 seconds to go to trim it to only five. But Rozier made both of two subsequent free throws, and the Falcons (7-3, 2-1 region) iced their second-straight win with another stop.

Mary Persons 53,  
West Laurens girls 34

The Lady Raiders were outscored 34-12 in the first half, and couldn't climb back as they traveled to Forsyth for their last game of the year Dec. 22.

Demmie Moss had eight points to lead all scorers, and seven boards to finish near the top of the rebound column along with Brooklyn Jackson (who chalked up eight along with seven points, three assists and four steals) and Leah Brown (with seven points and five re's).

Cross Creek 45,  
West Laurens girls 18

Jackson's 14 points and eight boards, and a six-rebound effort by freshman London Williams, were bright spots in the Lady Raiders' overall bumpy start to the new year.

West Laurens (4-7, 3-4 region 4-AAA) committed 38 turnovers, and shot only 26 percent from the floor.

Cross Creek 100,  
West Laurens boys 50

The Raiders (3-10, 1-6 region 4-AAA) were doubled up in a discouraging re-start to region play on Saturday, though their 2026 ended on a positive note with their lone win out of three at a tournament on Hilton Head Island Dec. 22.

After losing its first two at the event soundly, 86-54 to Jordan Christian Prep and 69-40 to host Hilton Head Island, West Laurens closed out with a 61-40 victory over Denmark-Olar to finish the weekend.

Next...

Dublin, East Laurens and West Laurens resumed region action Tuesday night, with the Falcons and Irish meeting for the first time this season on the Jarry Stuckey Court, and the Raiders across town hosting Richmond Academy.



3s COMPANY: Kaleigh Rozier (3) joined multiple Lady Irish teammates with 3-pointers on a successful Saturday night shooting the ball from deep/CLAY REYNOLDS



BOOGIE DOWN: Jaydon McRae sinks a go-ahead 3-pointer to round out a sizzling Irish start to Saturday's third quarter. The junior, who hit four shots from deep in the game, connected on a pair to bookend the 17-2 run out of halftime that erased a 12-point JoCo advantage/CLAY REYNOLDS



Brandon Chain speaks at the end of last Friday's meeting/PAYTON TOWNS III

#### CITY COUNCIL

Continued from page 1

"I was once a young man in your seat," Smith said. "Some words of advice I have to you is to listen thoroughly, learn all you can and keep answering for the people."

Earlier in the meeting, the council approved Duke Groover to serve as the city's attorney in 2026. He then took his oath of office.

"We turn on the TV and see the news and how dysfunctional things are," Groover said. "It is such an honor and pleasure to represent a group of individuals who are willing to give up their time and their efforts to make the lives of the citizens in Dublin better."

Councilman Bennie Jones was selected to serve as the mayor pro tempore, who will serve in the absence of the mayor.

"It's an important role

whenever I'm not available to serve in the meetings or to do public events," Kight said. "The mayor pro tem has to step in and represent the city of Dublin."

Councilman Paul Griggs was named the chairman of council, who serves when both the mayor and mayor pro tem are not available.

"It is an important role, because any time you have an officer of the city council, they sort of represent the council and the city of Dublin," Kight said.

The council then appointed The Courier Herald as the official gazette, the legal organ for publishing required notices.

Kight then made the following board appointments for the new year:

- Finance committee: Chain, Smith and Bill Brown
- Facilities committee: Chain, Godfrey and Jones
- Personnel committee: Brown, Griggs and Smith

#### UNITY

On Jan. 18, at 6 p.m., the coalition will present "The Dream Lives on Revival" that will celebrate the life, legacy and birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. at Greater Victory Temple Church,

511 N. Franklin St.

The Evangelist Melisha Johnson and Prophetess Patricia Stephens will be the guest speakers. Roundtree said people can look forward to more of these revival-type services once a month.

"This year is going to be an awesome year in our Lord," Roundtree said. "It is a year of new beginnings where God is going to do a multitude of new things. We look forward in uniting and fellowshipping with God's people in 2026."

Kight also appointed the following council members as liaisons to the various authorities in the city:

- Housing: Godfrey
- Economic development authority: Jones
- Downtown development authority: Kolbie
- Recreation authority: Brown and Smith
- Land Bank: Kolbie

In other meeting news:

- The council approved a resolution for an easement to Morris Bank to locate a natural gas generator. City Manager Josh Powell said the bank wanted to install a natural gas generator that will be placed adjacent to their annex building in Bicentennial Plaza.

- At the end of the meeting, Kight thanked Blake Daniels for serving as inter-



Brandon Chain signs his oath during the Jan. 2 Dublin City Council meeting/PAYTON TOWNS III

im city clerk for the last couple of months of 2025. The mayor said the search committee made a recommendation for the appointment of Dorothy Rozier for that position.

"We reached an agree-

ment about this (on Jan. 2)," Kight said.

Rozier will be sworn in during the next city council meeting at noon on Jan. 15.

"We look forward to working with you as city clerk," Kight said.



The raised crosswalk will go from the sidewalk in front of the newly constructed MGVG Living Dublin apartments off of Woodlawn Drive, not too far from the Hillcrest Parkway intersection/PAYTON TOWNS III

#### CROSSWALK

and stripe it," Ivey said.

A spokesperson for the developer said the crosswalk construction, and closing of this part of Woodlawn Drive, was scheduled to begin on Jan. 21.

"There is a lot of traffic on that road," Bradshaw said. "We want people

to know that this type of work is getting close to starting and we'll keep them updated on the city's social media."

The main focus of this particular crosswalk is pedestrian safety. Because it will be raised, like the one at the back part of Moore Street School further up on Woodlawn Drive, the crosswalk will also help slow traffic down.

"We know the pedestrian traffic is going to increase with the new apartments and this is how the city is working to make it safer," Bradshaw said. "This will help people get over to the sidewalks and then they can walk on a sidewalk for a long time because there are a lot of sidewalks in that area."

# FEBRUARY 7, 2026

## 10AM-4PM



MIDDLEGALITFEST.COM

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900 NORTH HOUSTON ROAD  
WARNER ROBINS, GA 31088