

The Courier Herald

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COURIERHERALDTODAY.COM

Up the creek: Dudley seeks solution to sewage issues

By KYLE DOMINY
and RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Reporters

Two years ago, Jesse Everett and his brother, Jimmy, parked at a nearby bridge and slogged down Turkey Creek to where the city of Dudley's wastewater pond feeds into the stream.

"Everett had long suspected that following heavy rains, untreated runoff had been spilling over the pond's bank and into the creek. After noticing a septic tank truck pumping from the Dudley pond, the brothers decided to collect a water sample.

"I'd see his truck pumping it off. They would call him when they got in the 'red.' I figured that stuff is going in the creek," Everett said.

He was right. They took the two-gallon sample to the city of Dublin, which provides paid testing service to the public, and copies of the results show unacceptable levels of e-coli present.

"It was bad," Everett said.

During a 2021 expansion project at the Gilman plant, Dublin and Laurens County worked together to extend sewer service to the plant. Officials intentionally installed larger pipe so that the city of Dudley could connect to it later, but that has yet to happen.

"The school's dumping in it. What if they want to expand?" Everett asked. "They're building houses up there like crazy, but they have to have septic tanks. Why would they not want (sewer) at the interstate? It's Dudley. It would be a plus for them. I don't know if Dudley's broke or what."

Dudley's municipal sewer system is about 60 years old. A series of water mains and service lines move wastewater to the city's near 545,000-cubic-foot treatment pond on Ga. 338, just outside city limits. Water is treated by aeration and chlorination, before being dechlorinated and released back into the natural water system via Turkey Creek.

Area growth and aging infrastructure have strained



The city of Dudley has outgrown its wastewater treatment pond and is exploring options through the University of Georgia Archway Partnership/RODNEY MANLEY

the system. Old pipes allow stormwater to overfill the treatment pond, causing tainted water to spill into the creek. After heavy rainfall, some reports show upwards to 1 million gallons or more of wastewater breeching the pond.

The city has issued a moratorium on new sewer connections while seeking a solution to its sewage problems. Officials have appealed to the University of Georgia Archway Partnership for help planning repairs or improvements. In 2025, environmental and civil engineering students visited the treatment pond site.

"While Dudley has his-

DUDLEY POND
Continued on page 10



Dudley has a state permit to release treated wastewater into Turkey Creek, but spillovers after heavy rains have been an issue/SPECIAL PHOTO

Why Dublin, Laurens tax bills were really late this year

By RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Reports

Shaun Kahrman began his new job at the Laurens County Tax Commissioner's Office in mid-December, when property tax season typically is winding down. This year, however, it was just getting started.

Kahrman's first assignment: answering a "never-ending" flood of phone calls.

"Every phone call was, 'Where are the tax bills and when is the due date going to be?' All day long," he said.

Laurens County tax bills were mailed on Dec. 23. A few days later, people began showing up to pay.

"I've never seen anything like it," recalled Kahrman. "The first couple of days the line was out the door, all day long."

No one else has seen anything like it, either. That's because tax bills had never been that late before — and many wanted to pay before year's end for tax return purposes.

Georgia counties are required to submit a tax digest to the state Department of Revenue by Sept. 1 of each year, though it is not uncommon to ask for and receive extensions for various reasons. Laurens County requested and was granted four 30-day extensions this year. Without a digest filed and approved by the Department of Revenue, no governmental entity in Laurens County can bill taxes.

"That's never happened here

PAY ONLINE: Laurens County taxpayers can look up, print, and pay their property taxes online. For more information, visit tax.laurenscountygapay.com.

before, that fourth extension," said Laurens County Tax Commissioner Darla Brown, who is finishing up her first year in office.

"I filed my first extension on Aug. 22, the day that Tom Williamson, chief appraiser, walked in my office and reported to me that the Tax Assessors Office had realized it had sent out property assessment notices on real property, such as homes and land — but had failed to mail out notices on personal property."

Personal property includes things like cars, boats and mobile homes, but it also includes business machinery and furniture. In 2024, Laurens County's largest taxpayer, West Fraser, paid \$1 million in personal property taxes alone.

Records show a perfect storm of missteps and events leading to the delay in finalizing this year's tax digest, beginning with personal property assessment notices being mailed late on Aug. 22. The tax digest is a compilation of records and data that determine the total taxable value of property in the county, as well as official millage rate certifications by all districts — Laurens County, Laurens County Board of



A sign in the Laurens County Tax Commissioner's Office explains the department's role in the taxing process/RODNEY MANLEY

Education, Dexter, Cadwell, Dudley, Montrose, East Dublin, Rentz, Dublin and Dublin City Schools. All of these submissions must be approved by the state Department of Revenue as part of the completed digest.

After that initial delay, the tax commissioner was forced to file for three more extensions on behalf of the county.

• On Sept. 25, an extension request was made to finish out the 45-day appeals period, ending on Oct. 6, required by law, to allow for owners to appeal those late personal property notices to the county Board of Assessors.

• Another extension was requested Oct. 30 as the tax commissioner's office, which files the final-

ized tax digest with the state before taxes can be collected, was waiting on the school boards and municipalities to set their millage rates.

• A tax increase by Dublin City Board of Education contributed to the fourth extension request, filed Nov. 26. The city of Dublin had to wait until the morning after the school board set its millage rate, which could not be approved until three public tax increase hearings were held. Dublin City Council held a special called meeting on Nov. 25 to certify its PT38, which includes DCBOE's millage rate. All documentation was uploaded to Department of Revenue on Nov. 25 by the

LATE TAXES
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Fairview Park named a top medium-sized hospital by Georgia Trend

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

Fairview Park Hospital was recently named a top medium-sized hospital in Georgia by Georgia Trend magazine.

Each year, Georgia Trend evaluates Georgia hospitals that participate in the Centers for Medicare and Medical Services Hospital Value-Based Purchasing program. Hospitals are placed in different categories based on their size and mission and are ranked by performance in four areas based on data reported by the American Hospital Directory and CMS: clinical outcomes, person and community engagement, safety and efficiency, and cost reduction. Fairview is categorized as a Medium-Sized Hospital in the 100-249 patient bed range.

The Georgia Trend ranking release included a short list of 26 hospitals with

FAIRVIEW PARK
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Midstate keeping watch on another round of wintry weather

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Staff Reporter

The wintry weather forecasted for this weekend is predicted to stay north of Dublin and Laurens County.

Laurens County Emergency Management Agency Chief Bill Laird said the winter storm is expected to stay above this area, coming as far south as Milledgeville.

"The best thing for us to do is to keep our eyes on the weather predictions and keep watching the forecast," Laird said. "Right now we have a low risk of freezing

rain. They don't say no risk, just low risk, because there is always a chance. Folks just need to watch reputable new sources and forecast outlets. They need to be prepared just in case we do see something."

Laird has been on webinars with the National Weather Service in Peachtree City for the last couple of days. He did advise for people to rethink their plans if they call for traveling to the north part of the state.

"They will be hit the hardest and have the high-

est impact," Laird said. "If you have any travel plans for that area, you may want to postpone them."

When it comes to being prepared, Laird said people should always be ready for all weather events throughout the year.

"You need to be prepared just in case there are power outages," he said. "You need to have some can foods and things like that that are non-perishable, rather it is boxed foods and a couple of days supplies of water. We may be OK this time, but it could shift south and

we could experience some moderate impacts from it. This is weather. Mother Nature goes where she wants to and where she chooses."

"Folks just need to prepare and go ahead and get everything done that you need to have done," Laird added. "It'd be nice if we could sit home Saturday afternoon and Sunday afternoon and just watch it."

Laird admitted that weather forecast has improved during the years.

"The technology and the different models they use the last several years have gotten fairly accurate," he said. "The news media, national weather service and local newspaper are the ones to depend on."

Gov. Brian Kemp announced a state of emergency for all Georgia counties Thursday ahead of a winter storm expected to dump snow and sleet onto the northern third of the state starting Saturday. The governor said he had called up 500 National Guardsmen for deployment, if necessary. State agriculture and forestry crews are prepared with chainsaws to clear the way for power crews.

OBITUARIES



Keagon Seth Mullis

Graveside funeral services for Keagon Seth Mullis, 23 will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026, at Oakdale Baptist Church Cemetery. Rev. Scott Davidson will officiate.

Keagon was born Sept. 6, 2002, in Macon, Georgia. He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Olin Wallace "Buddy" Mullis and Susie Dixon Mullis (N.A. "Pa") Attaway, and maternal grandparents, Tommie Faye Kea Foskey and Larry Allen Foskey. He was self-employed as a handyman. He was a member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Mr. Mullis passed away Saturday, January 17, 2026.

Keagon is survived by his parents, Scottie and Denise Mullis of Dublin; a daughter, Stella Grace Mullis of Dublin; two brothers, Devin Tyler Mullis (Morgan) of Dublin and Sheldon Scott Mullis of Dublin; and two nieces, Ramsey Mullis and Albee Mullis.

Pallbearers will be Kelton Mullis, C.J. Mullis, Matt McDaniel, Josh Hutchinson, Quinton Tanner, Jeremy Fordham and Ethan Gibbs.

The family will receive friends from 12:30 until 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026 at Stanley Funeral Home and Crematory

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



Lawmakers wrestle with removing ballot QR codes as required by law

By MARK NIESSE
Capitol News Service

ATLANTA — Georgia legislators and the state's elections chief lacked a plan Wednesday to stop using computer QR codes for counting ballots before a July 1 deadline.

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger told a budget committee that the General Assembly hasn't provided any money to upgrade Georgia's voting system, which displays candidates on touchscreens and then prints paper ballots with QR codes containing voters' choices. But a state law passed two years ago mandates that QR codes can't be used to count ballots in elections after July 1, 2026. Critics of Georgia's election system say voters can't verify their votes from unreadable QR codes, which are used for the official vote count. Lawmakers haven't yet introduced a bill that would spend money or outline an alternative to the state's current election technology. Sen. Blake Tillery, R-Vidalia, suggested that every vote could be counted by hand this November — usually over 4 million ballots in midterm elections.

"If we were able to count

Everett Wallace
"Wally" Ellis Jr.

Everett Wallace "Wally" Ellis Jr., 68, of Lake City, passed away peacefully Tuesday morning, Jan. 20, 2026 at his residence with his family by his side after a brief illness. He was born in Dublin, Georgia, on Oct. 30, 1957, to the Late Everett Wallace Ellis Sr. and Evie Jean Rachels Ellis. He made Lake City his home for over the last 40 years and worked as a procurement forester and was a member of Christ Central in Lake City. God was first in Wally's life, and out of God's Love, he loved his family! He was an elder as well as a teacher at Christ Central and he was currently serving as the president of His Heart Worldwide Ministries. In his spare time, Wally enjoyed fishing, hunting, especially turkey hunting, working in the yard with his wife, spending time with his granddaughter and grilling and smoking meat.

He is survived by his loving wife of over 39 years, Sandra "Sandy" Ellis of Lake City; son, Joshua Ellis of Lake City; sister, Susan Ellis Lindsay (Steve) of St. Petersburg; and his granddaughter, Karaline Avri Ellis of Lake City.

A celebration of life service for Mr. Ellis will be conducted on Friday, Jan. 30, 2026, at 3 p.m. in Christ Central with Pastor Lonnie Johns officiating. Interment will follow at a later date in Dublin, Georgia. The family will receive friends for a time of visitation beginning at 2 p.m. at the church prior to the service. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations please be considered to the Renewed Outreach Center of Christ Central in Lake City or to the His Heart Worldwide Ministries in Lake City.

Governor declares state of emergency for Georgia, readying state crews, National Guard for snow and ice

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat Service

ATLANTA — Gov. Brian Kemp announced a state of emergency for all Georgia counties Thursday ahead of a winter storm expected to dump snow and sleet onto the northern third of the state starting Saturday, potentially encasing the land in a layer of ice.

In an online briefing from Belgium Thursday, where he was traveling to promote trade, Kemp outlined state preparations for a wintry mix that could slicken roads and pull down power lines, darkening homes for days if temperatures remain as cold as predicted.

The governor said he had called up 500 National Guardsmen for deployment, if necessary. State agriculture and forestry crews are prepared with chainsaws to clear the way for power crews.

His main message: hunker down for the weekend.

"If you can just stay off the roads, that would be a big favor to us," he said, noting that state police, utility crews and salt trucks need open roads to do their work.

The latter will begin bringing roadways late Friday night or early Saturday morning. The governor placed the danger zone north of Interstate 20.

The National Weather

Service has a winter storm watch in place in an east-west line just north of the Atlanta suburbs, dipping south as it moves to the east side of Georgia to take in Athens. The forecast calls for "heavy" mixed precipitation of up to two inches of snow and sleet, with ice accumulations of a quarter to three quarters of an inch.

Major potential impacts include travel disruptions and power outages as ice weighs down power lines and tree limbs that can break and fall on them.

Kemp said a drop in expected temperature of just a degree or two could push the danger line southward.

Josh Lamb, director of the state emergency man-

agement agency, advised filling cars with gas and emergency supplies, including snacks and blankets, and to drive cautiously on bridges and overpasses, which tend to ice up faster. But he also encouraged people to stay off the roads.

Lamb said Georgians should prepare their homes by covering pipes, cleaning gutters and stocking a three-day supply of food and water.

Prepare a way to keep cellphones charged while devising a communications backup plan for family members, he said. "Take precautions, don't panic, and please stay informed and stay off the roads."

Senators side with DOJ in fight for Georgia voter list with personal information

By MARK NIESSE
Capitol News Service

ATLANTA — A Georgia Senate panel approved a resolution Thursday calling on Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger to turn over the state's unredacted voter list to the U.S. Department of Justice — including voters' Social Security and driver's license numbers.

The Senate Ethics Committee voted along party lines, with Republicans in support and Democrats opposed, to advance the resolution to a vote by the full Senate.

The resolution doesn't carry the force of law, but it's a symbolic effort to support the Trump administration's nationwide effort to collect voters' data — and

to take aim at Raffensperger, a fellow Republican who is running for governor against Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and Attorney General Chris Carr. Democrats objected to Senate Resolution 563, saying it could result in identity theft if the federal government shares voters' private information with outside organizations in an effort to find noncitizens or double-voters.

"I'm deeply concerned that we are going to spend taxpayer dollars, a lot of them, millions of dollars, if we were to send this data information over and then also compromise the privacy data of our Georgia citizens," said state Sen. Kim Jackson, D-Stone Mountain.

Republicans on the

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.

BIRTHDAYS

Jan. 24

Anna J. Moore
Murray Edward Ward
Sr.
Angelise Wynn

Jan. 25

Jaliyah Kelina Evans
Tiffany Holmes

Jan. 26

Cynthia Jenkins
Matlene Pitts
David Stuckey

Moment of Inspiration

Which Path Am I Walking?

Everyday we make choices that reveal which path we are on. Proverbs reminds us, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12) What feels right to us is not always what is right in God's eyes.

Walking God's path requires trust and surrender. When we lean on our own understanding, we often wander. But when we acknowledge God in all our ways, He promises to direct our steps. His path may not always be easy, but it always leads to life.

Today, pause and ask: Am I following my own plans, or am I trusting God to lead me? When we choose His way, we walk in His peace and purpose.

Prayer: Lord, guide my steps today. Help me trust Your direction over my own and walk faithfully in Your path. Amen.

Dr. Curt Lysaker, Pastor Shady Grove Baptist Church, East Dublin, GA

Pastors if you would like to share a devotional please email to: advertisingtch@gmail.com



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Newspaper locates missing man

Dublin Courier-Herald,
Dispatch, And Press

Newspaper publicity met the test again.

This week a Laurens County selective service registrant whose whereabouts was sought by Draft Board No. 1 was located.

John Henry Robinson, colored, reported to the Board today after reading in the Courier-Herald that he had been sent a draft questionnaire and it had been returned because the postman could not locate him.

He explained that he had moved from the address on his registration card and had simply failed to notify his postman or the Board of the change.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COMMITTEES

Committees of the newly formed Dublin and Laurens County Chamber of Commerce for 1941 were announced today by W.W. Brinson, President, following a meeting of the Board of Directors.

The committees, comprising nearly 60 members, are as follows:

Finance - L.D. Woods, Chairman; George Evans, Brigham White

Membership - Wilbur S. Jones, Chairman; Vincent Simmons, Stanley Reese

Budget - Earl Hilburn, Chairman; F.N. Watkins, Blakeley Parrott

Auditing - C.U. Smith, Chairman; H.C. Waldron, J.M. Couric

Legislative - W.S. Reese, Chairman; Judge R. Earl Camp, E.R. Orr

Publicity - E.W. Vaughn, Chairman; W.M. Harrison, Rev. R.W. Eubanks

Retail Trade - J.F. Pierce, Chairman; E.W. Oatts, E.W. Vaughn, B.H. Samples, D.W. Lovelace

Public Affairs - J.H. Mahoney, Chairman; A.T. Stevens, Jr., R.T. Peacock, George W. Evans, C.F. Ludwig

Civic - R.H. Hightower, Chairman; W.H. Proctor, M.H. Blackshear, Sr., Linton Malone

Agricultural - Cecil E. Carroll, Chairman; W.H. Holmes, Jr., J.B. Bedingfield, W.S. Reese, J.R. Broadhurst

Industrial - L.P. Keen, Chairman; Mayor Dee Sessions, W.H. Lovett, Milo Smith

Program of Work - M.A. Chapman, Chairman; M.W. Jordan, P.M. Watson, A.J. Hargrove

Projects - Dr. C.H. Kitterell, Chairman; Guy V. Cochran, Freeman O'Neal

Transportation - B.H. Lord, Chairman; George T. Morris, W.R. Werden, H.C. Tharpe, E.B. Mackey

Monday of next week will find the Secretary-Manager H.M. Simmons installed in offices in the Citizens and Southern Bank building, Suite 509.

3 VOLUNTEERS LEFT

Two days ago, three more volunteers went from Laurens County for army training.

From Board No.1, Frank Ladson and Leo Hue Hester were ordered to report, and from Board No.2, Henry Coley went.

They were sent to Fort Benning, Columbus.

McKinley Owens and Herschel Ellington were listed by Board No.1 for replacements, if found necessary.

COUNCIL ASKS TAX RAISE

An increase in the city tax limit from 15 to 17 mills will be asked when the legislature meets later this month, according to a resolution adopted by the Dublin City Council.

The need for additional revenue caused a drop in property valuations and homestead exemptions and a demand at the same time for continued public improvements and services are given as the reason for

asking the raise.

The resolutions request Laurens County's two representatives in the assembly, W.H. Lovett and Dawson Kea, to introduce the necessary legislation to provide for the increase.

Under Council's plan, revenue from the additional two-mill levy would be earmarked for the city's sinking fund, and net water department revenues, now set aside for that purpose, would be diverted into the treasury for general operating expenses. The higher rate would remain in effect for only six years.

The resolution was introduced by Alderman W.P. Tindol and was unanimously approved by other members of the Council.

In a discussion preceding its adoption, figures were introduced to show the comparative tax rates of Dublin and other cities of similar size in Georgia.

Without exception, the cities listed had a rate of 17 mills or more, the majority of them showing 20 mills and one as high as 22 mills. Cities listed included Carrollton, Cordele, Douglas, Quitman, Bainbridge, Griffin, LaGrange, Moultrie, Tifton, and others.

According to a report filed by council's finance committee, expenditures last year totaled \$8,746.62 more than receipts.

A total of \$115,960.32 was taken in and \$122,696.95 was paid out.

POST OFFICE RECEIPTS

Receipts for the last quarter of 1940, which included the largest volume of Christmas mailings ever handled here, were up ten per cent over the corresponding quarter of 1939. Totals were \$10,539.31 for the 1940 three-months period as compared with \$9,068.63 for the 1939 period.

The nearest approach to last year's high of total postal sales was the figure for 1929, which fell just short of \$34,000.00, Mr. Guyton added.

United States savings bond sales for 1940 totaled \$46,218.75 a slight decrease over 1939. This amount was net sales or purchase price totals, rather than maturity figures.

Postal receipts at the Dublin Post Office for 1940 were up five per cent over 1939 and set an all-time high here, Postmaster M.J. Guyton announced today.

Total for the year was \$34,152.14. For the year before it was \$32,450.24. This was a gain of \$1,701.90.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Laurens County Board of Education at its first meeting of the new year named Dr. C.J. Bedingfield of Cadwell as the Chairman to succeed W.D. Parkerson, whose term on the Board had expired.

W.M. Herndon continues as Vice Chairman.

Other members of the Board are F.A. Josey, J.M. Blankenship, and Dr. C.G. Moye.

PATROL STATION

Laurens County, City of Dublin, Georgia State Highway officials and members of the Dublin Exchange Club took part in officially turning over the new Highway Patrol Station here upon its completion.

The public is invited to visit the new building, located just off Bellevue Road, which is the new home of the Highway Patrol.

Among those present at the ceremony were Laurens County Commissioner J.F. Graham, State Patrol R.H. Mayo, Mayor Dee Sessions, Dublin City Alderman M.Z. Claxton, County Attorney Carl Nelson, Alderman W.P. Tindol, Stanley Reese, representing the Dublin Exchange Club which sponsored the erection of the building. Patrol Troop-

er Morris, County Commissioners Lamar Thigpen, J.L. Allen, L.O. Beacham, and Walter Daniell.

DISTRICT AAA COMMITTEEMEN

Z.E. Narville, Laurens AAA administrative assistant, today announced the names of the community AAA committemen and said that the attention of farmers is called to them so that farmers can contact them if they have any matter to take up with the committee.

The community committemen by districts are these:

S.J. Garnto - Bailey

Dennis Rawls - Buckeye

M.I. Amerson - Burgamy

H.C. Coleman - Cadwell

S.A. Lewis - Carter

C.G. Johnson - Dudley

W.J. McGowan - Dublin

H.D. Joiner - Harvard

Calhoun Hogan - Hampton Mills

R.E. Currie - Lowery

L.B. Blankenship - Jackson

L.Wynn - Oconee

J.L. Brown - Pinetucky

R.S. Collins - Reedy

Springs

J.B. Thigpen - Rockledge

H. Morris Hester - Smith

Commenting on the committee, Mr. Norville pointed out that Laurens producers elected the county committee on December 26. "These producers were selected because of their leadership in their respective communities."

"Laurens County is fortunate in having the largest business, farming, in the hands of these men.

"It is requested that each producer contact his or her community committeman regarding any matter that they wish to be helped on."

DUBLIN ROUTE 6

By Etta Mae Johnson
Friends regret that Mrs. J.E. Graham is ill and wish for her an early recovery.

Nelson Pullen and Felton Senn were recent visitors in Winsboro, South Carolina.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Chafin and daughters, Ras Chafin and Gailord Chafin, were recent visitors in this section.

Mr. and Mrs. Foster Clements, Misses Etta Mae, Roberta, and Opaline Johnson were recent visitors in this section.

Mr. and Mrs. Prentice Graham were visitors in Rockledge last Sunday.

Friends are glad that Mrs. C.S. Pope and Miss Louise Pullen are improving after a recent illness.

Mrs. C.B. Glenn visited Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Ely and children on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roger Brown and daughter were Sunday visitors with Mr. and Mrs. George Pullen.

Miss Elia Tolar spent last weekend with Misses Etta Maae, Roberta, and Opaline Johnson.

LIBRARY BOARD REPORT

At the regular meeting of

the Carnegie Library Board last night, officers for the year were named, as well as the librarian, assistant librarian, and substitutes.

Mrs. L.L. Porter was again elected President of the Board. Vice President is Mrs. H.R. Laney, and Mrs. H.C. Waldron is Secretary with Mrs. C.I. Hilburn as Treasurer.

The other Board members are Mrs. J.M. Peacock, Mrs. W.M. Harrison, and Mrs. M.A. Shewmake.

After this election, the Board named Miss Roberta Smith, Librarian; Mrs. E.R. Freeman, Assistant Librarian; and Mrs. J.F. Hart and Misses Virginia Graves and Elizabeth Lanier as substitutes.

Mrs. E.B. Freeman gave the last 1940 quarterly report, telling of her work while Miss Smith was taking a scholarship library course at Emory University.

She also told of the success of "book week" when the Lovett doll collection was used, carrying out the theme of "Children of Other Lands." She stated that this display was nationally recognized and was one of four in the nation to have such recognition.

During the quarter she had assisted in compiling early Laurens County records and family histories. These were placed in the history section.

Miss Smith made her annual report, stating that 1940 was a most successful year with a recorded circulation of 80,381 books read, not counting the books read in the 21 county schools and by rural readers through the country traveling library. This circulation figure was up 20,000 over 1939.

She mentioned that almost 200 books have been donated to the library during the past year with plates to mark some of them as memorials.

She described the highly successful vacation reading club and spoke of the splendid work done by assistants provided through WPA.

She also told of her work at Emory University where she was on a scholarship to study.

She had been awarded the Mary McCant Memorial Scholarship for her outstanding library work. She was grateful for the opportunity to have had this experience.

Her courses there included reference, bibliography, book selection, classification, and cataloging as well as library administration.

DEXTER OES NAMES OFFICERS

At the annual meeting for the election of officers held in Dexter by the Dexter Chapter 20, Order of the Eastern Star, Mrs. W.G. Smith was elected Worthy Matron.

The other officers elected were these:

Herbert Faircloth - Wor-

LOOKING BACK... 85 YEARS AGO JANUARY 24, 1941

By HARRIETT CLAXTON

thy Patron

Mrs. Candler Shepherd - Associate Matron

Mrs. H.W. Doster - Associate Matron

H.W. Dosier - Associate

Patron

Mrs. R.C. Hogan - Secretary

Mrs. D.W. Knight - Treasurer

Mrs. Herbert Faircloth - Conductress

Mrs. George Withington - Associate Conductress

The officers were installed on the evening of January 18.

LOWERY SCHOOL PROGRAM

A musical program, with various entertainment features, was held at the Lowery High School on January 10 and was well attended and enjoyed.

Cakes were "presented," and other interesting and entertaining features were enjoyed.

The public was invited to attend.

COLORED NEWS

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. E.J. Darden on their 20th wedding anniversary on January 2. Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Levine of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, were their guests on December 31. Other guests were Mr. and Mrs. George McCloud and Mrs. Annie L. Wright of Glenwood, Route 2, as well as Mrs. Fannie Lanier of Detroit, Michigan.

The Progressive Club of Jackson Chapel CME Church met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dixon on Jackson Street. The meeting began at 8:30, and all members are asked to be faithful.

RELIGION DIGEST

Pastors appreciation night will be held at Free Vision Deliverance Outreach Ministry, 540 Charles W. Manning Sr. Way at 7 p.m. on Jan. 30. The guest speaker will be Prophetess Robin Griffin of Greater Victory in Vidalia. The climax service will be held on Sunday, Feb. 1 at 11:30 a.m. Guest speaker will be Chief Apostle Shirley Parker. Everyone is invited to come out.

The First Rehoboth Baptist Association of Monroe, Ga. will be celebrating its Black History Program on the First Sunday, Feb. 1 at 3 p.m. Theme: Honoring Our Past, Empowering Our Future. This Youth-Led program featuring youth from our Association Churches will feature spoken word, music, and historical reflections celebrating African American Legacy, Faith, and progress. Julie Driger, interim mayor of Dublin, Ga., will be honored. Association churches having the largest in attendance will receive the attendance trophy for 2026. Everyone is invited.



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Can I get a hand, please? I've lost something important

I lost my wedding ring several years ago.

I blame the pandemic.

Back in the days of shutdowns and social distancing, I was sitting in the driver's seat of my beautiful car when, having just interacted with someone outside my family circle, I reached for the heavily recommended hand sanitizer. At the time a bottle of this clear, often scented goop was like money in the bank. Everyone desired it, but only a few could find it on store shelves.

To properly clean my hands, I removed my wedding band and set it aside. After rubbing alcohol into my skin, I reached for the symbol of wedding vows. My still damp fingers failed to grasp the tungsten carbide; thus it slipped and fell into the recesses between the seats.

And there it remains to this day.

I'm beginning to think there is a black hole to the darkest depths of the universe on my Honda's floorboards, because several things have been lost down there over the years, and no expedition or treasure hunt has ever been able to recover anything of value. I have found half-eaten crackers and broken crayons aplenty, but never my lost jewelry. A bounty still stands on the lost item. I told my children that whoever recovers and returns the ring will be entitled to a \$20 bill.

Still nothing.

DIVA ON A DIME: A SMARTER MUFFIN FOR JANUARY

By PATTI DIAMOND
King Features

By week three of the new year, my willpower has usually packed a bag and left a note on the counter. The holidays feel long over, my good intentions are still technically alive, and yet my afternoon coffee continues to demand a sweet treat.

At this point in life, I know that white-knuckling my way through cravings has never worked for long. If I don't plan a healthier treat I actually look forward to, I will default to whatever not-so-great option is closest. Judging by the chorus of agreement from friends and family lately, this isn't a personal flaw so much as a shared human experience.

So instead of giving up on goodies altogether, I decided to outsmart human nature and create something that feels indulgent, nourishes the body and keeps our best intentions from wandering off.

What makes these muffins work is the combination of sweet potato and applesauce, creating a muffin that's naturally sweet, deeply moist and satisfying. Instead of relying on flour, this recipe uses oats, which helps slow digestion and keeps blood sugar on an even keel. The result is a treat that feels steady and sustaining, not spiky.

There's flexibility built right into the recipe so you can use what you have handy. Any orange-fleshed cooked vegetable works here, including sweet potato, butternut squash or

pumpkin. I recommend roasting it to cook off excess moisture and concentrate the flavor.

There's just a half cup of sweetener in the entire batch. You can reduce it to 1/4 cup if you prefer a less-sweet muffin. It'll still be delicious.

The fat is modest, just 1/3 cup, since the batter already has plenty of moisture. A little flax meal adds fiber, omega-3s and antioxidants.

The add-ins are optional but encouraged. Pecans are lovely, but walnuts, almonds or pepitas bring texture. And the streusel topping? Optional, yes, but it's what gives these muffins that "fancy-pants bakery" feel. A small flourish that makes an everyday muffin feel special.

SNEAKY LITTLE SWEET POTATO MUFFINS

Yield: 12 muffins
Total Time: 35 minutes

1 1/2 cups quick oats
1/2 cup all-purpose or whole wheat flour

1/4 cup ground flaxseed
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice

1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup cooked, mashed sweet potato (pumpkin or butternut squash)

1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
2 eggs

1/3 cup coconut oil, or butter, melted, or neutral oil

1/2 cup brown sugar, maple syrup or honey
1 teaspoon vanilla

Optional add-ins: up to 1 cup of pecans, dried cranberries, raisins and/or finely chopped dates

CINNAMON PECAN STREUSEL

1/4 cup white or whole wheat flour

3 tablespoons brown sugar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons coconut oil or softened butter

3 tablespoons chopped pecans

Heat oven to 350 F. Line or grease a muffin tin.

In a mixing bowl stir together oats, flour, flax, baking soda, cinnamon and salt.

In another large bowl, whisk together the sweet potato, applesauce, eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla until smooth. Add the dry ingredients gradually until all are incorporated. Fold in add-ins if using. Divide batter evenly into muffin cups. They'll be pretty full, that's alright.

Make the Streusel: Combine flour, sugar, cinnamon, chopped pecans and coconut oil or butter in a medium-size bowl. Top each muffin with a big pinch of streusel.

Bake 18-22 minutes, until set and lightly golden. Cool completely.

Good treats should do more than satisfy cravings. They should nourish the body, comfort the spirit and fit into real life without negotiation or guilt. These muffins manage all three, and that's no small thing.

Lost in translation

THE NEW SOUTHERN DAD

By KYLE DOMINY

The problem is that there are so many dark crevices along the seats that no amount of light can shine in every corner, and even if it could, the human hand is not dexterous enough to reach in every hole. My ring, most likely, will

go to whomever I sell my car to whenever I decide to finally upgrade. We can just keep that between us. I have started wearing cheap rubber wedding bands, so it's no big deal if I make a habit of dropping things.

The solution to my problem, though, is currently being developed by a team of scientists in Sweden. Researchers are developing a robotic hand that will surpass the functionality of a biological one. What's the problem with hands? A real one can only pick up one or two things at a time. This machine one, however, can maneuver and grasp multiple items at one time, with each finger operating semi-independently of others and bending in all kinds of ways our meat-and-bone phalanges cannot.

Furthermore, the hand is detachable from the host and can crawl around, much like the Thing in the Addams Family franchise. The implications of such a device are phenomenal. Besides benefitting the injured or handicapped, the robot hand could be the perfect tool for working in tight and/or dangerous spaces. From retrieving a dropped screw in ductwork to repairing industrial machines, this thing could make life easier for a whole lot of people.

All I want to know is, can I borrow one for a little while? I want it to root around under the seats of my car and see if it can find my wedding ring.

There's \$20 in it if it can.

Edwin Wallin: A Christian brother



By JACK BROWN

served veterans there for 33 years. After returning from Vietnam, Wallin married Shirley Bienvenu, and they were together for those 33 years until she died of brain cancer in 2005.

In 2007, Wallin met and married Janice Vanderharr, who served with him in Christian service to others for the next 12 years. They were active together in the International Catholic Peace Movement, and Wallin was a lifetime member of the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Finally, in tribute to Wallin, he was vice-president of the West Tennessee Veterans' Home. Wallin is missed by his Baptist buddy, for we were friends and kept in touch for 52 years until God called him home.

"You, Ed, were a great friend, and I am a better person for knowing and serving with you."

Peace!

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Harriett Claxton

**Thursday, January 29th
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
@ the Dublin Carnegie
311 Academy Ave.**

*Join us and celebrate her lifelong
contributions to the community and
the legacy of 50 Years Ago and
85 Years Ago.*

Dublin Police Department

- Markese Jaquan Walker, 33, was charged with driving while license suspended or revoked and giving false name, address or birthdate to law around 9:39 p.m. on Jan. 6.

An officer responded to the parking lot of Tidal Waves in reference to a wreck between two vehicles. The officer talked with the driver of a silver Toyota who saw that a man who was driving the blue Toyota, which was involved in the wreck, switch from the driver's seat to the passenger seat. He said a woman got into the driver's seat. The driver of the silver Toyota said he was traveling west on Veterans Boulevard near Mall Road when the car in front of him slammed on brakes, causing him to hit the back of that vehicle.

When the officer talked with the occupants of the blue Toyota, a woman said she was driving. The officer

told her that he was told the man was driving, but the man denied driving and then admitted that he was the driver. The man, later identified as Walker, said he did not have his license on him. He gave the officer a name of Tevin Lanier, with a birth date of Oct. 30, 1990. The officer ran the information, but the picture did not match Walker, who was then detained.

Walker told the officer his real name. Walker's license was suspended and he had a warrant out of Johnson County. Walker said he was stopped at the red light and was attempting to make a right turn onto Mall Road when the silver Toyota hit them. The driver of the silver vehicle was determined to be at fault.

Walker was transported to the sheriff's office and released to jail staff.

- On Jan. 5, around 10:16 p.m., an officer was stationary on Hillcrest Parkway

**POLICE BEAT...**

near Woodlawn Drive operating a Lidar device. He was able to clock a car traveling 55 mph in a 35 zone.

The officer made a traffic stop on the Jeep Cherokee, pulling it over in the parking lot of Circle K on North Jefferson Street. The officer met and identified the driver as Lamartiz Renard Dixon, 30, who stated that his license was suspended.

Dixon was arrested and transported to the police department where he was released on a citation for driving while license suspended or revoked and speeding in excess of maximum limits.

- Sandra Coney, 58, was charged with battery and cruelty to children in the

third degree at 9:33 a.m. on Jan. 5. Officers responded to a location on Fair Street in regard to a juvenile throwing things, arguing with a grandparent and needed to be removed.

The officers tried to de-escalate the arguing between family members. The investigation led to Coney's arrest.

Laurens County Sheriff's Office

- Terry Lynn Hatchett, 32, of Sandersville, was charged with obstruction of officers on Central Drive around 4:44 p.m. on Jan. 3. A deputy made a traffic stop on a 2010 Honda Accord in reference to several traffic violations including no seat

belt and improper right turn.

- A deputy talked with a man around 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 3 in reference to stolen firearms on Country Club Road.

- Austin Lee Trivett, 33, was charged with false imprisonment, on Walke Dairy Road around 2:34 a.m. on Jan. 6. A deputy responded to that location in reference to a domestic disturbance.

- Property was damaged on Old Savannah Road around 5 p.m. on Jan. 3.

- Delvecchio King, 20, was charged with driving under the influence of drugs at the intersection of Oakwood and Soperton Avenue. On Jan. 7, around 1:23 a.m., a deputy made a traffic stop on a gold Mercedes-Benz sedan due to the vehicle not having functioning tag lights.

- A theft occurred on Cadwell Lane on Jan. 6.

- On Jan. 1, around 5:22 p.m., a deputy conduct-

ed a traffic stop on I-16 around mile most 39 on a silver Chevrolet Impala for speeding. Graylyn Hysheen Simmons, 29, and Tilexia Jameeria Hooper, 23, were both charged with theft by receiving stolen property.

- A report was made by a deputy about an incident that happened on Highway 19 around 5:40 p.m. on Jan. 1.

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.

BUSINESS NEWS**Bowles named market president for SunMark Community Bank**

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

SunMark Community Bank is pleased to announce the appointment of Brian Bowles as Laurens County Market President, further strengthening the bank's leadership team during a period of strategic growth and regional expansion.

In his new role, Bowles will lead SunMark's Laurens County market with a focus on loan growth, customer relationships, and community engagement. He will oversee commercial and retail lending efforts, support customers' financial needs, and work closely with local teams to strengthen SunMark's presence and service throughout the community.

Bowles brings extensive experience in community banking and a strong connection to the Laurens County area. His deep understanding of the local market positions him as a key leader as SunMark moves forward with its merger with Atlantic South



BOWLES

Bank / Wheeler County State Bank.

In this role, Bowles will help ensure a smooth integration process while supporting customers, employees, and the long-term success of the combined organization.

"Brian is a proven community banking leader with a strong understanding of the Laurens County market and a deep commitment to relationship-based banking," said Zach Giddens, EVP/Senior Lender of SunMark Community Bank. "His leadership experience

and local insight will be invaluable as we continue our growth and work through the integration of our merger. We are excited to have Brian on board and confident he will make an immediate positive impact for our customers, employees, and communities."

"I am honored to join SunMark Community Bank and look forward to serving the Laurens County community," said Bowles. "SunMark's commitment to local leadership and relationship-driven banking aligns closely with my values, and I am excited to work with the team to support our customers and contribute to the bank's continued growth."

The addition of Bowles reinforces SunMark's commitment to strategic growth by enhancing local leadership as the bank continues to expand its footprint across the region while driving performance, scalability, and long-term value for members and communities.

Georgia First Bank named to 'best' list

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

Georgia First Bank has been named one of Newsweek's America's Best Regional Banks of 2026, an honor recognizing the bank's impact and commitment to financial strength, community investment, and reliable access to everyday banking services.

Georgia First Bank is a locally owned community bank serving Middle Georgia, committed to strong capital, responsible lending, and long-term relationships with the individuals, families, and businesses in the communities it has served for generations.

The recognition, presented by Newsweek in partnership with Plant-A Insights Group, highlights financial institutions that

are powering local economies by supporting small businesses, financing community projects, and providing dependable banking services.

"This recognition reflects the strength of our foundation and the consistency of our commitment to the communities we serve," said Maury Beasley, President and CEO of Georgia First Bank. "We believe responsible banking, healthy capital, and local decision-making are essential to long-term success for our customers and for the communities that depend on us."

"We hope this list helps people find the most trusted financial institutions in their area—whether they're planning their next business venture or taking the next step toward financial security," said Jennifer H. Cunningham, editor-in-chief of Newsweek.



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Congratulations, Visit Dublin, for acknowledging

Martin Luther King Jr. celebrations (parade and breakfast). If only all citizens inclusive of the council would participate in the unity.

The churches should

audit the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee's finances. They buy over 60 tables for their congregations who cannot see or hear the speaker and key participants. Furthermore, they are packed in the venue (free of charge) like sardines in a can. The MLK Birthday Celebration is a low-budget, once-a-year event that takes in a pretty penny.

Obviously, the Martin Luther King Jr.

Committee does not have the wherewithal to give this event the grandeur it is due.

Now that there is finally an investigation into

the mismanagement of the DCS monies, it will be interesting to see if any of the involved lawyer-up or just simply leave town and cannot be located. With all these board members and other people saying they didn't know and denying things, the old saying of "the guilty dog barks the loudest" just might apply here.

So are these Dublin

City school leaders going to abandon ship and try to jump on the Laurens County bandwagon? No thank

you! We are good.

Anybody know if Fred is still in town? Probably on a beach somewhere laughing about how he played us all!

The board should

have to give an explanation for Fred's salary. It doesn't line up no matter how you look at it.

It is quite interesting that the majority

of citizens writing about the Dublin City Schools never mention a concern for the students or education, only the money. It is my prayer that the students' education is not compromised.

With the current

board of education for the Dublin City Schools, the Dublin City taxpayers can never have confidence with them again.

How soon will it be

before the Dublin city taxpayers will hear from the GBI and their report on the Dublin City Schools? It might help people to pay their taxes earlier if we knew there was a legal investigation.

There could be a line

where you pay your city taxes on the due date. But I plan to stand in line to protest the way that the city taxes for the schools have been thrown away.

Can't believe Dr.

Williams has the nerve to show up at things like the

football banquet. You sir are who got us in this mess. Sit down and be little humble and sorry.

Verizon must have struck again, or I am going blind. No, Tell It! in the Saturday paper.

We agree with stopping all sports in the Dublin City Schools and saving all that money they would otherwise spend. This includes things like maintaining the sports fields where they would spend a lot of money on keeping them up. All money needs to go towards salaries and other necessities. Sports and maintenance are not necessities. When the school is solvent again, they can resume them.

Maybe the anonymous person that gave the money for football could do the same for the band!

If the Dublin City Schools owes the state millions in back payment for health care for the employees, does that mean the employees have no health care? If DCS has not paid, how are their bills being covered?

Why don't the Dublin High School band director asks whoever is holding the money from the income of the football games for band instruments instead of asking the taxpayers?

Job Opening: Maintenance Supervisor

Housing Authority of the City of Wrightsville

The Housing Authority of the City of Wrightsville is seeking a **Maintenance Supervisor** to lead and manage our maintenance operations. This position reports directly to the Executive Director and plays a key role in ensuring the upkeep and modernization of our properties.

Key Responsibilities:

- Supervise and schedule maintenance staff for work orders, routine and preventive maintenance, and vacancy preparation.
- Completion of daily work orders and unit turnovers.
- Oversee modernization projects and ensure compliance with HUD standards.
- Conduct inspections of units, grounds, and facilities.
- Manage inventory, procurement, and vendor relations.
- Train staff in safety procedures and regulatory compliance.
- Respond to emergency maintenance issues promptly (Will be required to be on call every other weekend for emergencies only)

Qualifications:

- High School diploma or GED required; college education preferred.
- Minimum two years of maintenance-related experience with knowledge of carpentry, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and grounds maintenance.
- Valid Georgia driver's license and ability to pass background and drug screening.
- Certifications in HVAC, Plumbing, or Electrical are highly desirable.

Benefits:

- Competitive salary
- Paid leave
- Company-provided insurance
- Company-provided vehicle
- 4-day work week
- Retirement plan
- Opportunities for training and professional development
- Positive work environment serving the community

Resumes can be emailed to kevin@wrightsvillehousing.com or Mailed: Kevin Price C/O Wrightsville Housing Authority P.O. Box 190 Wrightsville, GA 31096.

Tuesday fast-break: WL sweeps Aquinas, EL gets back at Brentwood

From STAFF REPORTS

An up-tempo glance at Tuesday night's local basketball results...

West Laurens girls 43, Aquinas 25

Brooklyn Jackson came to the verge of a personal milestone with 16 points (to run her career total to 999), joining Maddie Ridgway (12) and Ja'Halee Snead (10) in double digits as the Lady Raiders (9-8, 7-5 region 4-AAA) brought their fourth-straight win home from Augusta.

West Laurens led by five at the half, then re-started on a 13-0 run while holding Aquinas to just a free throw as its lead exploded in the third quarter.

West Laurens boys 43, Aquinas 39

The Raiders held a steady lead from the second quarter on, but had to fight off a late surge by the Fightin' Irish, who crept within two with about three minutes left, then tied the game on the front end of an and-one opportunity by Aiden Newman with 1:29 to go.

But he missed the go-ahead free throw, and West Laurens answered immediately as Ezekiel Floyd hit a mid-range jumper, then a handful of stops and free throws in the final minute closed it out.

Dublin girls 66, Dodge Co. 52

Khalil Maddox led scorers with 21 points, and Keasia Jackson posted a 13-point, 15-rebound double-double to help the Lady Irish (8-8, 3-4 region 2-High A) make it back-to-back road wins, in the continuation of their strong play from Saturday's 59-28 win at Johnson County.

They impressively overpowered a strong Dodge County front court with four blocked shots and 34 rebounds, turning the tide of the game after a slow start to outscore the Squaws in every quarter.

Jordan Renfroe and Rainna Wyatt added 15 and 10 points respectively.

Dodge Co. 67, Dublin boys 52

The Irish (3-12, 0-7 region) overcame a tough first half to outscore Dodge 17-11 in the third quarter, making up a solid chunk of their 12-point halftime gap.

But the Indians, led by the 26-point effort of Kyler Johnson and three others (Ezekiel Hilburn, Jerimiah Burns and Jayden Stephens with between 10-11 each) who added double digits, outran them 25-16 in the fourth to put the game away.

East Laurens girls 46, Brentwood 45

The Lady Falcons (14-3, 6-1 region 2-High A) scored four points in the game's last 16 seconds to snatch their fifth-straight victory from the jaws of defeat.

Brentwood's Cadence English sunk a pair of free throws, then knocked down a contested bank shot to put the Lady Eagles up 45-42 early in the final minute. Zahmaria Robinson drew a foul on a made basket to cut the deficit to one, but missed her tying free throw, only for Deanna Lowther to swoop in down the left lane line for an offensive rebound and go-ahead putback.

Brentwood lost control of possession before a chance to get up a shot on its return possession as time expired.

East Laurens boys 85, Brentwood 59

The Falcons (14-3, 6-1 region) also returned the favor from December's loss to the Eagles, but this time to hand them their first loss in 17 games this season.

A series of massive runs in the second quarter to take a single-digit lead to 22 at the half, and more than double Brentwood's point total in a 43-21 count at the break, put gave East a commanding upper hand that it wouldn't yield at any point from there.

Next...

This weekend's action will feature two cross-county matchups, Dublin visits East Laurens in a region runback Friday, then East and West play their first Saturday. The Raiders will host Hephzibah Friday night. Dublin welcomes Toombs County on Saturday afternoon.



SEALING THEIR FATE: CFCA's Samiyah Woolfolk gets trapped by Trinity defenders Brinley Vinson, Addie Kendrick and Chloe Rozier, who combined to force a jump ball with a few minutes left in Tuesday's game. The Lady Crusaders' opposite-baseline pressure, which was as stifling here as it was at any point, held the visitors to just 13 points in the fourth quarter/CLAY REYNOLDS

Trinity girls get upper hand in first (of many) with CFCA

Crusader boys lanced in second-straight 6-AA loss after both teams run into Brentwood buzzsaw

By JEREMY PAYNE
Correspondent

The Trinity Crusaders continued region action over the past week with matchups Friday at Brentwood and then Central Fellowship Tuesday back at home.

The girls fell to the top-ranked Lady Eagles 65-43, but rebounded to defeat CFCA 64-56. The boys did not fare as well, as they fell 64-33 to the then-unbeaten Eagles (East Laurens would hand them their first loss the following Tuesday) and lost to the Lancers, 74-57.

The Lady Crusaders (13-7 overall) fell behind early Friday and could never make up the deficit as they dug a 17-6 hole after a quarter. The margin remained 11 at the half, 31-20.

Brentwood pulled away even further in the third by outscoring Trinity 20-13 for a 51-33 lead, and rolled to the win.

Bailey Barron led three Lady Eagles in double digits with 25. Cadence English had 15 and Callie Jones added 10. Brinley Vinson led Trinity with 22.

The Lady Crusaders made 18 field goals in the contest, while Brentwood made only 17. But the Lady Eagles made a living at the foul line, especially in the first half, going 16 of 24 in the contest while Trinity was just 4-for-4.

The game against Central Fellowship (likely the first of at least three and potentially four possible meetings this year) was a rematch of last season's state championship game, which the Lady Lancers won in a close battle. This one was much of the same.

CFCA broke a 12-12 tie to outscore Trinity 11-7 in the second, and take a slight halftime lead.

The offense for both teams improved after intermission as the Lady Crusaders scored 18 in the third to nearly match their first-half total. But CFCA had 20 in the quarter to extend its lead to 43-37 going to the fourth.



TALL ORDER: Alston Bryan leaps to contest the running shot of CFCA guard Deshonvaris Lundy, whose comparative size to multiple other 6-footers in a high-rise opposing lineup made him one of the least problematic defensive matchups for Trinity in Tuesday's game. The Crusaders' shorthanded front court couldn't do enough to keep the others – like Sirron Chambers, Shaheem Barbosa and Abram Austin – at bay around the basket/CLAY REYNOLDS

Trinity exploded for 27 in the final eight minutes, and tightened down their full-court pressure to hold the Lady Lancers to 13.

A Central Fellowship 3-pointer with about three minutes to go tied the score back at 53-53, after the Lady Crusaders had completed a run to pull in front by five.

But Trinity continued to cash in on the offensive end as Chloe Rozier, Addie Kendrick, Vinson and Maddie Grace Alligood combined for the baskets that put the game away.

Maddy George led Trinity with 22 points. Vinson added 14, and Rozier ended with 12.

Morgan Riley led all scorers with 25 for CFCA.

The Crusader boys were dealt a severe blow in the days leading up to the Brentwood game when they learned that second leading scorer Jamarion Ricks would no longer be with the team.

The shorthanded squad – with reserve guard Jude Evans also out indefinitely with an injury – was no match for the top-ranked and undefeated Eagles. Brentwood jumped out to a 23-11 first quarter lead and never looked back.

Trinity trailed 39-18 at the half and the deficit ballooned to 60-29 after three periods. The fourth quarter was just six minutes due to the mercy rule, and both teams scored four points each.

Jagger George led Trinity with 12.

The trio of Tristan Robinson, Zion Andrews and Baylor Cobb combined to score for 60 for Brentwood with 23, 20 and 17 respectively.

The Crusaders (8-11 overall) had a much better performance early on Friday, trailing only 15-11 after one quarter as their defense initially kept the Lancers' skyscraping front line from imposing its will inside.

SCOREBOARD

GIRLS HOOPS

Tuesday

Corrected: Dublin 66, Dodge Co. 52

PREP SCHEDULE

BASKETBALL

Friday

Hephzibah at West Laurens /5 p.m.

Dublin at East Laurens Gatewood at Trinity/6 p.m.

Saturday

Toombs Co. at Dublin /1 p.m.

EL at WL

Trinity at Robert Toombs /4 p.m.

Tuesday

Harlem at WL/5 p.m.

Dublin at Jefferson Co.

EL at Washington Co.

Windsor at Trinity/6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 30

Dublin at Wheeler Co.

Jefferson Co. at EL

Trinity at

Central Fellowship/6 p.m.

CONTACT US:

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



D.U.N.C. SHOTS: Tuesday night marked the first performance of the year for elementary school students involved in Trinity's D.U.N.C. (Developing Upcoming New Crusaders) program. The coach- and player-led initiative seeks to instill basics of ball handling, passing and dribbling to some of the school's aspiring hoopers, which get to show off their skills, with an upbeat basketball-themed soundtrack in the background, during these halftime showcases at multiple home games each season/CLAY REYNOLDS

Legals

January 6, 2026, you are hereby commanded and required to file with the clerk of said Court and serve upon Alexandria Capers, Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Lefkoff, Rubin, Gleason, Russo & Smith, P.C., 5555 Glenridge Connector, Suite 900, Atlanta, Georgia 30342, an answer within sixty (60) days of the date of the order for service by publication and shall bear teste in the name of the Judge and shall be signed by the Clerk of Court.

Witness the Honorable Jon F. Helton, Superior Court Judge.

This the 6th day of January, 2026.

Rhonda Spires
CLERK OF COURT
SUPERIOR COURT OF LAURENS COUNTY
Prepared and presented by:
The Law Office of
LEFKOFF, RUBIN, GLEASON, RUSSO & SMITH, P.C.
Attorney for Plaintiff
By: Alexandria Capers
Georgia State Bar No. 808823
5555 Glenridge Connector, Suite 900
Atlanta, Georgia 30342

January 17, 24, 31, 2026, February 7, 2026

Legals

OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.
AgGeorgia Farm Credit ACA, as Attorney-in-Fact for Kenneth Hunter Jonathan D. Moore, Esq.
Martin Snow, LLP
240 Third Street
P.O. Box 1606
Macon, Georgia 31202-1606
(478) 749-1700
File No: A0178.69486

Legals

January 10, 17, 24, 31, 2026

possession of the property is/are Iva Jean Lattimore and Marcia Lattimore. The property, being commonly known as 1045 Towson Dr, Montrose, GA, 31065 in Laurens County, will be sold as the property of Iva Jean Lattimore and Marcia Lattimore, subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien and not yet due and payable), any matters affecting title to the property which would be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection thereof, and all assessments, liens, encumbrances, restrictions, covenants, and matters of record to the Security Deed. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 44-14-162.2, the name, address and telephone number of the individual or entity who shall have the full authority to negotiate, amend or modify all terms of the above described mortgage is as follows: Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper, 8950 Cypress Waters Blvd, Coppell, TX 75019, 888-480-2432. The foregoing notwithstanding, nothing in O.C.G.A. § 44-14-162.2 shall require the secured creditor to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the mortgage instrument. The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under U.S. Bankruptcy code and (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed.

Albertelli Law
Attorney for Nationstar Mortgage LLC as Attorney in Fact for Iva Jean Lattimore and Marcia Lattimore
100 Galleria Parkway, Suite 1000 Atlanta, GA 30339
Phone: (770) 373-4242

THIS FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

-25-011799
December 27, 2025, January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 2026

Legals

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DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: A few years back, my brother gave me a substantial amount of cryptocurrency. A couple of years after that, he did something that hurt me and my husband deeply and destroyed any trust I had in him. As a result, I have greatly reduced contact with him as well as my entire family.

When I explained how what he did made me feel and how it affected my life, my brother "sort of" apologized, but it wasn't genuine -- and during this fake apology, he mentioned he wanted his crypto back.

Because I had had some financial difficulties, I couldn't give back the money. The cryptocurrency had been a GIFT. When he gave it to me, there was no agreement about paying him back or what to do with it. (He confessed that he had made a huge mistake by giving it to me.) When I told him I couldn't give it back, he sort of let it go. But now we are barely on speaking terms, and I feel awkward because I can feel his resentment.

I no longer trust him, and I'm not sure how to proceed. I'm not angry; I'm just cautious because of his previous careless actions and because he lacks a verbal filter, especially toward my husband, who is sensitive. How do I deal with the fallout? -- ONCE BITTEN, TWICE SHY

DEAR O.B.T.S.: I wish you had gone into more detail in the second sentence of your letter. If I have read it correctly, your problems with your brother have less to do with the cryptocurrency debacle and far more about how he treats your husband. As I see it, you have every right to proceed with caution where your brother is concerned. If he can't watch his mouth around your husband, some distance may be better for all of you.

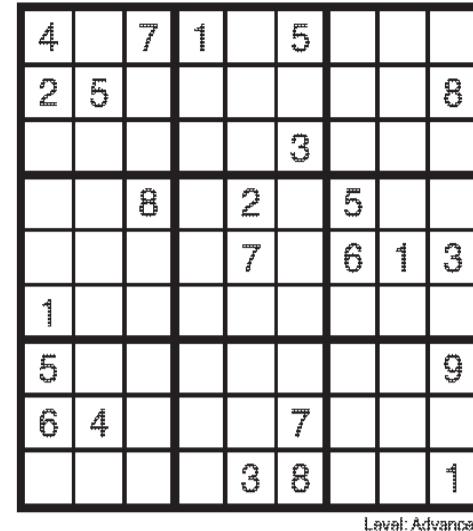
DEAR ABBY: I'm retired and have discovered a love for making bags, totes and purses with my sewing machine. A few years ago, I started doing local craft shows -- not because I've turned this into a business, but because it helps clear out the growing inventory. Financially, we're fine. I'm not risking money we don't have.

My husband, who still works, strongly disapproves of this. He says I've made a job out of a hobby, and he thinks it's silly since I don't really make money. He has even suggested I'd be better off throwing my creations away. In truth, after a lifetime of working and raising kids, I finally have time to do something that makes ME happy.

I feel torn. Must I stop doing something I love to keep peace at home, or continue and risk his ongoing resentment? It's heartbreaking to feel that every time I try something new, I'm met with resistance. -- STILL STITCHING IN THE SOUTH

DEAR STILL STITCHING: Your husband appears to be more than a little controlling by attempting to tell you how to spend your free time. Your hobby is what it is. It's a source of pleasure -- and it's not meant to be another income stream. Continue doing what you enjoy and please do not buckle under the pressure.

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!

Level: Advanced

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:

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



6. Armrest is different.
3. Necklace is missing.
4. Tie is different.
5. Nose is small.
6. Mouth is open.
Differences: 1. Man is looking the other way.
2. Mouth is open.

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle

ACROSS

1 Garden area

5 TV sports awards

10 Happy

14 ___ and learn

15 Very expensive

16 Pasta sauce

brand

17 Sign of the future

18 Rainforest

mammal

19 Individuals

20 "Be quiet!": 2 wds.

22 Least refined

24 Shoe bottom

25 Native people of

Arizona

26 Actress Green

29 Pelosi of Congress

31 Type in

35 Morsel

37 Insurance option:

Abbr.

39 River near

Phoenix

40 Alumni weekend

honoree: 2 wds.

43 Actress Shawkat

44 Operate

45 Making a fool of

46 "Yes, of course!"

48 San ___ California

50 No vote

51 Embraces

53 Aardvark's food

55 Nimble and supple

58 Painting, music, etc.: 2 wds.

62 Most populous

continent

63 Sports venue

65 Horn sound

66 Exchange for cash

67 Many rescue dogs

68 Notion

69 "Go ___ It on the Mountain"

70 Big hit

71 Container for eggs

72 Actress Davis

28 Confess to

30 Beijing's country

32 Promotional

gimmick: 2 wds.

33 Kagan of SCOTUS

34 Tall and skinny

36 Inflatable toy: 2 wds.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

14 15 16

17 18 19

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35 36 37 38 39

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43 44 45

46 47 48 49

50 51 52 53 54

55 56 57 58 59 60 61

62 63 64 65

66 67 68 69 70 71

Created by Stella Zawistowski

1 Prom vehicle rental

3 Kitchen appliance

4 Camping shelters

5 Moving staircase

6 Taken illegally

7 Mountainstop

8 To date

9 Former VP Agnew

10 Becoming an adult: 2 wds.

11 Country road

12 Becomes mature

13 Clean with a rag

21 Gin and ___

23 Imitate

25 Church song

26 Actor Hawke

28 Confess to

30 Beijing's country

32 Promotional

gimmick: 2 wds.

33 Kagan of SCOTUS

34 Tall and skinny

36 Inflatable toy: 2 wds.

Created by Stella Zawistowski

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9/18/25

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DUDLEY POND

Continued from page 1

torically managed to support its population and modest growth, the aging infrastructure is now at a critical point," noted their report, released in December. "The strain on the system has raised concerns not only for existing residents but also for future growth tied to subdivision and potential commercial or industrial development. The background of Dudley's sewer challenges lies at the intersection of its history, geography and recent growth. The community's location, institutions and steady rise in population have contributed to its vitality, but the aging infrastructure has not kept pace with these changes."

In the report the stu-

dents, identified as Rylee Bender, Joshua Hamilton and William Hawthorne, drafted three possible solutions for the city, none of which included tying in to the lines installed along U.S. 80 by the City of Dublin and Laurens County.

The three options, presented to the Dudley City Council last month, were to construct a secondary storage pond to catch the overflow caused by stormwater; for the city to build a new wastewater treatment plant; or repair the existing treatment pond.

The cheapest option, costing an estimated \$115,200, is optimizing the existing pond. The existing pond can be repaired in stages, the report concludes, giving the city flexibility in planning repairs and the

least chance of environmental impact during construction. However, simply fixing the problem does not account for future growth.

"While upgrades can significantly improve treatment performance, the existing pond has limited capacity ..." the report lays out. "Without further future expansion, it may not be sufficient to accommodate long-term population growth."

The plan that would best prepare city infrastructure for growth, but with the heftiest price tag, is the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant, which comes with an estimated cost of over \$3 million.

This plan includes a new, larger wastewater pond and enhanced treatment capabilities. The new pond could

be built on the city's existing 9.2-acre property. New, higher-capacity equipment could treat a higher volume of water and prevent overflow caused by storms.

"This design offers a sustainable long-term solution by directly addressing the community's two most pressing issues: the sewer ban and the lack of infrastructure needed for future growth," the report concludes.

The cost, however, is a major setback. Dudley, a town of less 600 residents according to 2020 Census data, has a limited tax base.

The city was also presented with a plan to construct a second storage pond, a 2.28-acre reservoir downhill from the current pond to act as "a temporary storage area from excess

wastewater that exceeds the current pond's capacity."

This plan would not increase the treatment capacity for the city, but would effectively prevent more waste spills into Turkey Creek. It comes with a feasible projected \$765,500 price tag.

"We're meeting again with [the students] to finalize the proposals," said Dudley Mayor Jason Locke. "But we're leaning toward that option."

The report notes that the City of Dudley has been awarded a loan-grant package from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority totaling more than \$796,000 to offset the cost of their infrastructure upgrades.

Locke said the city has asked the students to com-

bine two of the proposals, construction of the second pond and optimization of the existing pond, and present a plan to the city council. Once a proposal is accepted by the city, student will have until May to present a finished plan.

Tying into the sewer lines installed by Laurens County and the City of Dublin remains an option for Dudley.

"It's not out of the question," Locke said. "It's still being explored and could be a great solution."

However, he said the city's priority was stopping the storm water from infiltrating the sewer system.

"That's a big animal to tackle," he said. "We have to deal with the ground water coming into the system through the aging pipes."

LATE TAXES

Continued from page 1

tax commissioner's office, but the extension was to allow vendors for the board of assessors and tax commissioner to generate finalized reports and consolidation sheets, which included the new millage rates, for review.

Once all the millage rates were approved and all tax digest information reviewed, the board of assessors and tax commissioner's vendor was able to upload the final files to the Department of Revenue on Dec. 10. The very next day the tax commissioner's office received the collection order from the state revenue commissioner that finally allowed everyone to send out their bills.

The end result: Rather than due dates in mid-December, the deadlines were pushed back to Feb. 20 for county taxpayers and Feb. 23 for Dublin.

Impacted most by the delay has been the school boards, particularly the cash-strapped Dublin dis-

trict. School systems basically get revenue from three sources — property taxes, state funding and grants.

Just to make payroll, the Dublin district has borrowed advances on its state funding allotments for the past four months. The district usually collects substantial property tax revenue each December, but instead had to rely on another advance to make ends meet, essentially exhausting its entire \$16 million state QBE allotment for the school year.

The somewhat complicated property tax process starts with the County Board of Assessors, which through the Tax Assessors Office identifies, lists and appraises all taxable real and personal property in the county.

The assessor's office also maintains ownership records, manages homestead and other exemptions and compiles all data for the annual tax digest.

Once the property values are assigned, assessment notices are mailed to taxpayers. Residents have

45 days to appeal their new property values, either formally or informally, to the tax assessor's office. If unhappy with that result, they can appeal to the county Board of Equalization, a neutral board appointed by the grand jury, and then to Superior Court.

Before a proposed tax digest can be finalized for the county commission or school board to set its millage rate, the amount of properties still under appeal must be less than 3 percent of the digest's value. Millage rates are set by a mathematical equation: The governing body's budget, divided by net assessed value equals the upcoming year's millage rate.

The five-member Board of Assessors in charge of overseeing the tax assessor's office is appointed by the County Commissioners to serve as an independent body. Its current members include Matt Lake, Hilton Culpepper, Terry Autry, David Turner and Jerry Hatchett.

The board is currently

without a chief appraiser after Williamson left for health concerns.

Once the digest is done, a governing body or school board must roll back its millage rate enough to offset growth in the digest — which in Laurens County last year topped \$2 billion for the first time ever — or it is considered a tax increase. State law requires that any county, city or school raising property taxes must advertise the tax increase and hold three public hearings before voting to approve.

School boards can set their own millage rates, but do not levy taxes, so school millage rates and taxes are rolled into the final rates approved, or certified — in this case, by the County Commissioners and Dublin City Council. State law allows for a 2.5 percent fee to be assessed to the school boards by the county or city collecting taxes on the schools behalf.

Beginning last July, school boards cannot lower their millage rates below

10 mills and still qualify for state equalization funding. That threshold had been 14 mills until the law was changed.

Once the county and each municipality compile all their taxing information, that info is gathered by the tax commissioner and electronically uploaded to the state Department of Revenue. Once the state revenue commissioner signs off, the tax commissioner receives the collection order, a sort of green light for the cities and counties to begin collections.

This year collection order was received back from the state on Dec. 11, the day after the state started its review..

"That's the fastest we've ever got a collection," said Michelle Wood, who's worked at tax commissioner's office for more than 17 years.

Once bills got out, county property owners showed up, even in those first days after Christmas, paying in more than \$2 million in just the first two days of collections.

FAIRVIEW PARK

Continued from page 1

Fairview ranking in the top two hospitals in the state. To earn this badge of excellence, Fairview Park Hospital earned high marks across several metrics measuring quality of care received at the facility, which elevates the dedication and persistence of the staff and medical staff serving the Dublin-Laurens County community and surrounding counties.

"We are honored to receive this recognition from Georgia Trend Magazine", commented Fairview Park Hospital President and CEO Brad Griffin.

"It truly reflects the hard work our clinical teams, medical providers, and ancillary staff put into the care received at Fairview each day. We are extremely proud to serve Dublin-Laurens County and the surrounding communities."

Fairview was one of two HCA hospitals in Georgia to be recognized.

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