

'He was important ...'

Laurens woman shares story of son's overdose death with U.S. Senate committee to support xylazine bill

By **RODNEY MANLEY**
Staff Reporter

A Laurens County woman urged the U.S. Senate on Thursday to pass a bill cracking down on the animal tranquilizer that contributed to her son's death from a drug overdose four years ago.

Kimberly Shiver attended the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee meeting in support of the Combating Illicit Xylazine Act, a bipartisan bill to address the dangers of the highly toxic sedative, known as "tranq," that is often mixed with fentanyl or

synthetic street drugs and has caused a nationwide increase in fatal overdoses.

Shiver said her son, Jason, a 32-year-old father of four, died from an accidental overdose in May 2022.

"We live in a town that has a population of less than 50,000. Fentanyl and xylazine wasn't discussed by anyone," she said in a statement to the committee. "There was no support from local and state officials in regard to drug education, good rehabilitation programs or community involvement. Our DA office wasn't on the same page as

our law enforcement.

"The system is broken, we need reform and oversight in the correctional, judicial and rehabilitation programs. We need extensive education and drug-off-the-street incentives. Law enforcement needs to work closely with the court system. Compassion needs to be taught to and demanded by law enforcement and prison workers."

The act, introduced by Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Sen. Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-Nevada), seeks to classifi-

fy xylazine as a Schedule III narcotic while also protecting access for veterinarians and farmers. Xylazine is not currently listed under the Controlled Substances Act and is accessible online for a relatively low price.

In 2024, 13 states reported 150 or more overdose deaths in which xylazine was detected, including almost 900 in Pennsylvania and more than 700 in New York.

"This drug is dangerous because it's a cheap way to cut other deadly drugs like fentanyl and heroin," Grassley told committee



Jordan Shiver (left) with his mother and sister. Shiver died in 2022 from an accidental overdose of drugs that included the animal tranquilizer xylazine/SPECIAL PHOTO

members. "Dealers use it to maximize drug profits at the expense of human lives. The data tells a harrowing story. .. It's why we're here today."

To combat opioid and fentanyl overdoses, authorities have sought to make the

drug Narcan, which reverses its effects, more readily available. However, Shiver said, it would not have saved her son.

DRUG BILL
Continued on page 3

City council plans to look into ordinances on nuisance issues

By **PAYTON TOWNS III**
Senior Reporter

Dublin's mayor and city council members promised last week to examine ordinances to tackle nuisance situations pestering residents.

The response came after citizen Jacqueline Denise Jaudon-Wright stood before them, and with obvious frustration in her voice, spoke about a situation where her husband's property was broken into recently.

"I'm crying because I am very angry," said Wright, who is usually upbeat and happy when she addresses the city council. "There is only so much that our city manager can do about the situation that is going on at the corner of South Church Street and Telfair Street."

Wright and her husband have lived in a house in that area for 10 months. She said they have invested more than \$4,000 worth of security equipment.

"My husband is very angry because someone went into his man cave and stole his lawnmower," Wright said. "Now we have to put private property and no trespassing signs out. It's ridiculous that people have worked hard to have something nice and we can't live in a city and respect other people's area or territories. Every day something is going on on that street."

She said the problems are coming from a homeless shelter started by a man in that area.

"I don't feel safe," Wright said. "It's a nuisance, a bad nuisance. I would like to see us come together as a city and have crime watch where people can call in to a number and report what they see where we can get these derelicts off of the (streets). Soon school is going to be out, and when that happens there is going to be a lot of gang activity on the Southside. I hope as a community, we can come together and get this mess cleaned up."

Dublin Mayor Joshua Kight did not hold back his frustration about Wright's situation. Kight walked to school when he was a child. In the evenings, he would walk to the library and back to home.

"Every child in our town deserves to have that opportunity to be able to walk down the street safely," the

CITY COUNCIL
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CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF: IRISH BALLOON FEST & GLOW

With winds calm and skies clear, conditions were ideal on Friday and Saturday for the St. Patrick's Festival Irish Balloon Fest & Glow at the Civitan Club Fairgrounds. Pilots and passengers took flight over Laurens County, while less adventurous patrons stuck to tethered rides – or stayed grounded altogether and enjoyed the balloon glow after dark/RODNEY MANLEY



FLEX winners: Local students rewarded for starting, running own companies

By **PAYTON TOWNS III**
Senior Reporter

A West Laurens High School student won a \$5,000 prize in the initial Laurens County FLEX program Friday afternoon.

Jazzel Diggs, owner of Sands of Time Jewelry and a senior at West Laurens High School, broke out into a big smile when she realized judges had awarded her with first place for her business, which is a company that designs and creates custom beach-themed jewelry products.

"This is crazy," Diggs said moments after accepting her check. "I can't even

think right now. I'm so happy and excited to be moving forward."

Paiden Rozier, a freshman at Trinity Christian School, took second place with his business called PlanPal, which sells customized student planners. He received a \$2,000 check.

Shane Stribling and Armani Williams, both seniors at Dublin High School, came in third with their company Drift Guard, which focuses on customization and repairs of video game controllers. They picked up a \$1,000 check.

Sara Kolbie, director of the Dublin-Laurens Coun-

ty Chamber of Community Foundation, believed the judges had three tough finalists to pick a first place business.

"They were all different businesses," Kolbie said. "I think they showcased the imagination of our community and also the hard work these students have put into it. They not only had to write their business plan, they actually had to start this business, get out there, start getting customers, making sales and make those financial pieces work out."

The FLEX (Foundation Leadership & Entrepreneur



Jazzel Diggs, owner of Sands of Time Jewelry and a senior at West Laurens High School, speaks during Friday's Rotary Club meeting. Diggs was judged as Laurens County's first FLEX winner/PAYTON TOWNS III

Xperience) program is a hands-on entrepreneurship initiative which gives high school students a chance to start and operate a real business while learning about leadership and business skills, Kolbie said.

During Friday's Dublin

Rotary Club meeting, the business owners had to give a presentation about their businesses in front of judges. All of the owners showed a short commercial explaining their product before they took the microphone and explained not only what

they were selling but also how much in profits they had made.

Diggs' idea for her business began with a beach trip with her family. She wanted

FLEX WINNERS
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OBITUARIES

Hazel Hamilton

Funeral services for Ms. Hazel Hamilton, 90, of Dublin, Georgia, will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, March 27, 2026, in the Dudley Memorial Chapel at the Dudley Funeral Home in Dublin. Dr. Willie L. Edmond will officiate. Interment will follow in the Dudley Memorial Cemetery. The family will receive friends at the Funeral Home from 10 a.m. until the funeral hour on Friday.

Ms. Hamilton was born on Thursday, May 23, 1935, in Dublin to the late Deacon Fred Hamilton Sr. and Rachel Coates Hamilton. Other deceased family members include her son, Ricky Hamilton, siblings, Rose Maude Baker (Isadore), Fred Hamilton Jr., James Hamilton (Catherine), Helen W. Colbert (Bennie), and Eugene Hamilton.

Early in life, Hazel joined the William Grove Baptist Church under the pastorate of the late Rev. D.D. Edmond. She was an active member of the church's Usher Ministry and remained active until her health no longer afforded her the opportunity.

There was nothing that Hazel enjoyed more than leaving a message for family members to stop by after work for a scrumptious, home-cooked meal.

After being confined to Dublinair Healthcare and Rehab Center for several years, she entered into eternal rest on March 20, 2026, at Fairview Park Hospital in her hometown of Dublin, Georgia.

She leaves to cherish her memories to her daughters, Barbara Knight Stanley (Shawn) and Linda Hamilton Wright (Lucian); two sisters, Dorothy Hamilton and Carolyn Hamilton; granddaughters, Luciana Wright, Lakeisha W. Fluker (Saul Jr.) and Dr. LaTrice Wright; great-grandson, Saul Aaron Fluker; two devoted nieces, Sharon Hamilton and June Greene Hamilton; a nephew, Chaun A. Hamilton; a devoted cousin, Juanita Farley Brown; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Please post your condolences online at ServicesByDudley.com.

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.

Jonathan Carr

Mr. Jonathan Carr, of Dublin Ga, passed away on Thursday, March 19, 2026. Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time but will be announced later.

Services by Dudley Funeral Home of Dublin. www.ServicesByDudley.com.

John Dixon

Mr. John Dixon, of Dublin, Georgia, passed away on Sunday, March 22, 2026. Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later time.

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.

Barbara Watkins

Mrs. Barbara Watkins, of McRae, Ga, passed away on Friday, March 20, 2026. Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time but will be announced later.

Services by Dudley Funeral Home of Dublin. www.ServicesByDudley.com.

BIRTHDAYS

Mar. 24

*Greg Hudgins
Shirley Jordan
Leroy Street*

Mar. 25

Elauni Carswell

Legislation takes aim at feral hogs in Georgia

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — After passing a budget that puts a bounty on wild pigs, Georgia lawmakers reiterated their lethal intent by enlisting cutting-edge technology to hunt them down.

Feral hogs have been ripping through farmers' fields, inflicting millions of dollars of damage a year. Lawmakers, it seems, would prefer them sitting on a plate as bacon.

So, last week, the state House passed a preliminary 2027 budget with \$400,000 toward a feral hog eradication incentive program and another \$500,000 for a state management program.

It didn't end there.

On Friday, the state Senate sent House Bill

946 to Gov. Brian Kemp for his signature.

"All it simply does is make it where you can take a drone and locate feral hogs that destroys and damages your property," explained Sen. Lee Anderson, R-Grovetown.

Anderson had already left the well of the Senate when Sen. Carden Summers, R-Cordele, said he had a question.

Lt. Gov. Burt Jones did not make Anderson return, so Summers exploited the rules of the Senate and raised what's known as a "parliamentary inquiry," a technical question for the lieutenant governor.

"What's the difference between a hog and a hog," Summers asked, adding an extra vowel to his second expression of the word in an attempt to mimic Anderson.

Jones had a quick response.

"Depends on if you're below the Gnat Line or not," he said, with a flourish of his hand. It was a reference to the geological "fall" line that spans Middle Georgia and acts like a screen door to keep gnats down there.

Before he had left the well, Anderson had implored his fellow senators to vote for HB 946, which had been sponsored by Rep. Rob Clifton, R-Evans.

"I just ask each and every one of you vote green so we can go kill some hogs this afternoon," Anderson had said.

With those words, he had doomed the pigs. The vote was 46-0 for HB 946.

The legislation also allows people to catch hogs without a hunting or trapping license "provided that such hogs shall be killed upon capture."

Alamo Police Department struggles to maintain full staff

By LOGAN REYNOLDS
GTN

The Alamo Police Department is currently suffering from staffing issues, which Police Chief Karen Zanders says has been a longstanding issue for the department.

The chief said the Alamo Police Department requires four full-time officers on staff to maintain full coverage of the city of Alamo. However, the department is currently staffed by Zanders, one full-time night officer and a part-time day officer.

One issue contributing to the understaffed department is a high turnover rate. According to Zanders, several officers under her employ have accepted offers from other police departments, such as the Dublin Police Department, or even the Wheeler County Sheriff's Office.

She even recalled incidents where she had sent recruits to a police academy for training, only for the recruits to receive and accept offers from other police departments.

"If people come, and we send people to school, and they don't stay, we can't make anybody do

anything they don't want to do," said Zanders. "So, I try to create a work atmosphere where people will want to come and work here in Alamo."

In late 2025, the Alamo City Council considered closing the police department entirely to save on costs, turning the responsibility of law enforcement fully over to the Wheeler County Sheriff's Office. The push for closure was spearheaded by Councilmember Steve Jones during the council's November meeting.

"I disagree with it, because their reasoning behind that is because the Sheriff's Office covers so much for us, or [has] in the past, and they feel like we are taking advantage of the sheriff's department," said Zanders.

Jones argued the council should move forward with the merger in order to save approximately \$51,000 annually. While the council had delayed an official decision in favor of receiving input from residents, Jones cited recent voting numbers to argue residents were unengaged and uninterested with the council's actions.

"What I'm saying is they are not interested in what we're doing," said Jones during the November

meeting. "We need to do what we need to do for the city of Alamo, saving money if we can. We can use it somewhere else, and I just think we need to move on with it, start the process."

Jones offered a motion to begin the process of Council Member Dondrea Geter called Jones' proposal "tasteless" and "classless", but Jones' motion to begin the process passed in a majority vote.

In the following December meeting, the Wheeler County Sheriff's Office presented a proposal detailing how the office would take over the department should the process be completed.

The proposal estimated the current average annual cost for the department would total \$326,828, with a six year total cost of \$1,960,968. Under the sheriff's office, the cost to the city would fall to \$274,653 annually, resulting in annual savings of \$51,828 and \$310,968 over a six year period.

According to the proposal and the sheriff, while costs would be reduced, the sheriff's office would still have to staff four full-time officers to maintain full coverage.

Council Member Patricia Woodard argued against closing the department during the meeting, cit-

ing a \$246,000 grant the city had received to pay for officer training and equipment which will remain active until October 31, 2026. Closing the department would require the city to return the grant, which would provide logistical hurdles and damage the city's ability to receive future grants.

Woodard offered a motion to suspend any action regarding the department's closure until November 1, 2026. The vote was a tie ultimately broken by Mayor Pamela Lee in favor of the suspension.

"At this time, I don't feel like we've done our due diligence in what we need to do, so I vote with the yays," said Lee during the meeting.

To attempt to alleviate the staffing issues, Woodard offered a motion in the council's January meeting to raise the starting salary for Alamo Police Department officers from \$18 to \$20, which passed unanimously.

Zanders is hopeful the department can attract new hires prior to Nov. 1 to avoid a future closing of the department.

"I hope we can be fully staffed by then," said Zanders. "I expect us to be fully staffed by November."

TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Case of anaphylactic shock might be due to the methocarbamol

By KEITH ROACH
King Features

DEAR DR. ROACH: My question is about methocarbamol (Robaxin). My relative has been taking this for about two years for back pain. He then developed a sudden severe allergic reaction and went into anaphylaxis. He fought it all night, not knowing what was happening, and by morning, he had to go to the hospital. Could this be due to methocarbamol? If so, can this happen again?

He has no known allergies, and this had never happened before. The only other thing was maybe burning a lemon-scented candle in his bedroom, but he's burned candles before in his bedroom. He is 27 years old and in good health. -- B.G.

ANSWER: Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction to a foreign protein or carbohydrate (called an "allergen"). It is caused by a release of inflammatory chemicals from immune cells. It can be antibody-mediated (more common) or occur without antibodies (less common).

These chemicals can cause swelling of the airway and death through asphyxiation. They can also affect the heart and blood vessels, causing shock and circulatory collapse, which can also lead to death. The onset of symptoms is typically minutes to hours after exposure to the allergen.

In 95% of cases, the symptoms disappear, but there are cases of "biphasic anaphylaxis" where symptoms reappear usually within 12 hours. There are unusual cases of very delayed anaphylaxis, such

as with alpha-gal syndrome -- a meat allergy that is acquired after tick exposure.

Medications are one of the most common causes of anaphylaxis, and I did find case reports of anaphylaxis with methocarbamol in a person who had been taking it previously. I found another case report of a person with prolonged anaphylaxis after methocarbamol. It is uncommon but not impossible to develop anaphylaxis to a medicine that you have been taking for years.

If your relative isn't taking any other medications and had no unusual foods on that day, I strongly suspect that methocarbamol was the cause and recommend never taking it again as it can absolutely happen again.

A candle smoke allergy is documented, and a variety of symptoms can be caused by candle smoke in sensitive individuals. I found a source saying that anaphylaxis from inhaling candle smoke is "rare" but could not find a well-documented case.

Finally, methocarbamol is a muscle relaxant and isn't always a good choice for long-term treatment. My experience is that in many people, the beneficial effects wear off as the body gets used to the medicine, which can happen within a week.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Are there health benefits to taking fish-oil capsules? If so, what's the proper dosage? I'm a fit, healthy 70-year-old male. -- C.S.

ANSWER: The benefit of fish oil is one topic in medicine where we seem

to keep changing our mind due to studies that yielded some conflicting results.

What is clear is that fish oil reduces triglyceride levels. In people with high triglyceride levels, especially people who are at a relatively high risk due to other reasons (such as diabetes and low HDL cholesterol), then fish oil is a reasonable treatment. Most experts prefer the pharmaceutical-grade icosapent ethyl (Vascepa) or EPA/DHA (Lovaza), which are highly purified and aren't oxidized.

For people who are at a lower risk, the benefit is probably modest; however, fish oil is generally safe. There may be a small increase in the risk of atrial fibrillation with high doses.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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NOW HERE'S A TIP

* A good non-slip bathmat is essential in the tub to prevent accidents. Grab an extra to drape over the edge of the tub for help when entering and exiting.

* "To remove residue left over from price tags, you can use hairspray. Remove as much paper as possible, then give a good squirt. Use a plastic scraper to lightly scrape off the adhesive." -- L.P. in Ohio

* Got bread ends? Store in a bag in the freezer until you need breadcrumbs for a recipe. Pulse frozen chunks in a chopper or blender for instantly usable crumbs.

* "Guacamole is a precious commodity at my house, but sometimes I want a snack, not a whole bowl. I have struggled with how to save the leftovers, because once it browns, it's done. I learned a new trick, though. Simply put the leftovers in the smallest container possible and tamp down to press out all the air. Then carefully add a thin layer of water. Seal and refrigerate for up to three days. When you are ready to dip, pour off the water and stir!" -- C.D. in California

* "I have an old cedar chest from my grandmother. It had lost its smell, though. My husband removed all the contents and sanded it with superfine grit sandpaper. It is restored and smells wonderful now." -- J.K. in Iowa

Send your tips to *Now Here's a Tip*, 1800 Pembroke Dr., Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32810.
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Second place finisher Paiden Rozier, a freshman from Trinity Christian School and owner of Plan Pal, talks with Horace Austin during the FLEX program held Friday at the Dublin Rotary Club/PAYTON TOWNS III

FLEX WINNERS
Continued from page 1

to have a beach memory everywhere she went. Originally, Diggs was hesitant about doing the FLEX program. "My mom told me to continue doing this and to give it a try," Diggs said. "I'm really thankful that she told me to. I got to meet so many like-minded individuals, and I'm so happy to have been able to meet them and I want to continue to work with them in the future."

Diggs and her business will represent Laurens County in Tifton on April 15.

"We want to encourage people to come and support Jazzel and see her compete for a \$10,000 cash prize at the state level," Kolbie said. "What is really cool about the State FLEX program is that it is sponsored by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and Georgia GROWN and they continue to mentor and support these businesses even after the FLEX program."

Rozier's business made student planners for those in school to keep up with all of their upcoming activities.

"This was something I had never experienced before," Rozier said. "I have grown since being in this FLEX program. At the beginning of it, I was more timid. I feel like I am more outgoing now and I can talk to people easier. I have grown together with the other business owners. We have become great friends."

He heard about the FLEX program and began brainstorming what he wanted to do.

"I plan to take the money and keep re-investing it into my own business," Rozier said. "I'll print more planners or I'll buy more merchandise for my company."

Stribling and Williams enjoyed doing something new.

"I'm pretty sure we are going to learn from this," Stribling said. "We are going to make sure we make more sales as we get into college and just let the business take off."

"It was good to see that something we could do would really work," Williams said.

Both like playing video games. They knew the issues with vid-

eo game controllers and they had knowledge on how to fix them.

"At first it was an idea, and we just kept working with it, found a solution and made it into a business," Stribling said. "From here we plan to grow by opening up a drop box so that customers can drop them off in a safer way."

When the program began last fall with 550 students attending a business plan workshop at all four local high schools.

Besides the businesses belonging to Diggs, Rozier, Stribling and Williams, the following finished in the top 10: Beaded For Christ, owned by TCS' Elise Jenkins, JJ's Landscaping, owned by East Laurens High Schools' Juan Lopez, Pistakahs by Aatmiya, owned by DHS' Aatmiya Shah, Crochetetiquette, owned by DHS' Ava Vickers, Berry Bun Haven, owned by ELHS' XioNaijia Devoe, Enchanted Entertainment, owned by TCS' London Dooley and RT's Black Hair Care Services, owned by ELHS' Rakiyah Turner.

Each of the 10 companies received a \$200 seed loan at the beginning. They had to pay that back in order to continue competing in the competition.

For the Laurens County FLEX program to work, Kolbie said the foundation had to raise about \$20,000 a year. They needed every school to take a part in it and have business mentors who taught the business workshops.

"Those business mentors met weekly or bi-weekly with the top 10 companies to help give them ideas, edit their presentations and help grow their businesses really sold and strong," Kolbie said. "We had to have business leaders and leaders across the community who were willing to do the workshops."

Businesses involved in FLEX programs go on to have more success.

"More than 50 percent of the businesses that were started with the Georgia FLEX program are still in operation today," Kolbie said. "It's a testament to say these businesses are not for just a short time or learning. They are for real employment and maybe possibly to employ others in the future."

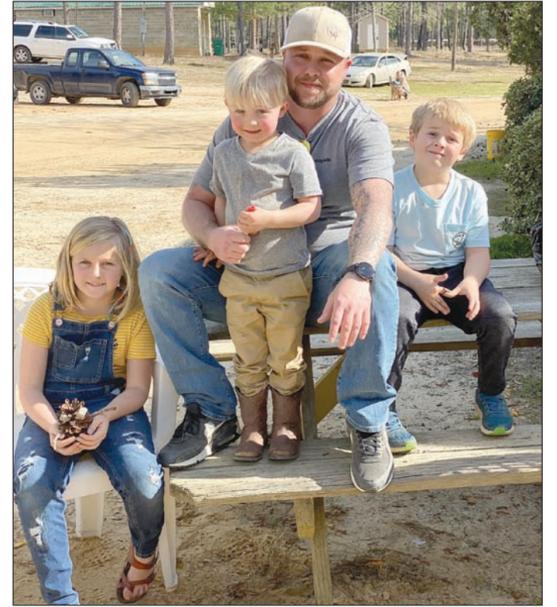
DRUG BILL
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"Had I been there and had Narcan, Narcan would only have reversed the respiratory depression caused by fentanyl. It would not have counteracted the xylazine," she said. "We need xylazine listed as a federally scheduled drug that is increasingly mixed with fentanyl, making it even more deadly."

Shiver and other bereaved family members of overdose victims traveled to Washington, D.C., to share their stories. Her son's death, she said, "affected so many people." At the time, Jordan's children were ages 14, 12, 10 and 6.

"He loved fishing and spending time with his children. He loved history and watched every documentary I believe that was available. He loved the Civil War, riding dirt bikes, loved to read and riding around in his truck. He was eager to travel and see the world. He had really big dreams. He was loved by many. He was important and had a loving heart. A mama's boy some may say.

"I am stronger than I think, and I know this isn't all of the story. Seconds, is all it took to change our lives forever, and seconds it will take to breathe again and move forward."



Jordan Shiver with three of his children. Shiver passed away in 2022 from a drug overdose. His mother traveled to a U.S. Senate committee meeting last week to support legislation to control the animal tranquilizer xylazine, which drug dealers are mixing with fentanyl to increase profits /SPECIAL PHOTO

CITY COUNCIL
Continued from page 1

mayor said. "Some of the things you are saying Mrs. Wright goes to how our social order has started fraying. People are not taking responsibility for their own homes, their own property and their own children. That is putting a bigger and bigger burden on the government to try to step in and do what people should be doing on their own. It is such a shame."

Kight said everyone has to take responsibility of their own lives and property. He then asked what could they do to help keep the streets safe and help people who want to invest in their property. The council has invested "a ton of money" in the Dublin Police Department with the FLOCK cameras, gunshot technology, body cameras, additional training and the gang task force that works with state and federal agencies.

"I think we've been successful at a big level," Kight said. "We've got one of the major gangs in town who have been broken up and when you look at some of the major areas of crime they are down 30 percent during the last few years. There has been some success but there is also a lot of problems that are still out there. We can't let up. This is not a problem that there is a solution to. We have to keep our foot on the gas, year after year, month after month."

Nuisance issues like trashy yards and people who should not be out on the streets also bothers Kight. People who have mental issues or drug addictions are creating many problems for the law abiding

citizens who are trying to live their life and enjoy the amenities and businesses in town, he said.

"Some of that is beyond our control," Kight admitted. "But to the extent that we can help, I think that our town needs to do everything possible. I know that we have our code enforcement department that is focusing on nuisance issues. As a city council, we need to give them every resource possible."

That means more than just funding them fully. It means the possibility of doing more than they have in the past, including the potential of adding new positions and tougher penalties.

"We need to do everything we can to empower staff to improve the quality of life and address these nuisance problems," Kight said.

During the next couple of months, Kight wants to find out from staff where they see roadblocks in the ordinances and let the council change them.

"We want to empower our city to be able to make a difference in the lives of the people and the families who are living in town," Kight said. "This is a work in progress and it's important to hear personal stories from people so that it keeps us motivated and inspired to keep trying to make this town better."

In other meeting news, council members:

- Approved a resolution to accept the terms and conditions with Thomas and Hutton to do construction supervision for the Claxton Dairy and Woodlawn Roundabout.

"We have awarded the con-

struction of this project to TES (Total Earth Services) and they are set and ready to begin," said City Manager Josh Powell. "They need to order some materials so that they can begin construction of the roundabout."

Once construction begins, it will take approximately 10 months to complete.

- Approved the purchase of four Hach TU5300 Laser Turbidimeters from DWL Instrument Service, LLC in Loganville for a total price of \$26,027.50. These laser will be used as a water treatment process at the surface water plant, Powell said.

"This is a device that tests the water and is required by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, which requires us to continually monitor the water at the plant for every filter that we go through at the plant," Powell said. "This device tests the cloudiness of the water. It is one of the required tests that goes out into our system."

- Heard from Beverly Brown, Laurens County Library director, gave a presentation regarding the budget request for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2027. Kight said the city provides funds each year to the Oconee Regional Library System and other organizations.

"We always ask those organizations to come in and tell us how they plan to use the money," Kight said. "We've been very supportive of the library."

- Approved the second reading of an ordinance to amend the FY'26 budget. The primary reason for the adjustment was because revenues were higher.

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OUR TAKE...



Students from the dressed up as super heroes while raising money to help the J.O.Y. Health Clinics /PAYTON TOWNS III

The young will lead

AJ Stuckey's family has not forgotten the young boy who would be eight now on his way to nine this September. And neither has the school and leaders he left a big impression on five years ago.

To remember young AJ, the school began holding a super hero day because he was a big fan of Spiderman. So, last Wednesday, students at Pine Forest Preschool gathered in the church's sanctuary to present a check to the J.O.Y. Health Clinics.

On the 100th day of school, the students were encouraged to bring in change or money and it was all put together to form a check that was given to Dr. Bob Shuman, who was representing the health clinic, that provides free medical, dental and eye care to uninsured adults in Laurens County.

The students brought in enough for J.O.Y. to receive \$500, showing us what our young people can do to help an organization provide more care for those in need of help. These children may not know it but their efforts to help J.O.Y. is a good example of how we all should come together to help others.

A legacy that AJ, and Spiderman, would be proud of.

— Payton Towns III

YOUR TURN:

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

THOUGHT FOR TODAY...

"Today's accomplishments were yesterday's impossibilities."

— Robert H. Schuller

DAILY SCRIPTURE...

"You thought you were so great, perched high among the rocks, king of the mountain, Thinking to yourself, 'Nobody can get to me! Nobody can touch me!' Think again. Even if, like an eagle, you hang out on a high cliff-face, Even if you build your nest in the stars, I'll bring you down to earth."

— Obadiah 1:3-4

EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY...

March 24, 2026 is...

- American Diabetes Association Alert Day
- National Cheesesteak Day
- National Cocktail Day
- International Day for Achievers
- National Chocolate Covered Raisins Day
- World Tuberculosis Day

The Courier Herald

LOCAL MATTERS



Judged a newspaper of General Excellence 2024

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— for Local News —

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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.

Learning how to deal with tragic stories



By PAYTON TOWNS III

The May night was lit up with the emergency lights from law enforcement, firefighters and EMS vehicles flashing at the wreck scene. The normal noises of vehicles traveling down the road had been replaced with the sound of radio traffic coming from first responders equipment.

A young deputy directed traffic until the scene was cleaned up. He then returned to his patrol vehicle and turned his attention to his passenger. Not saying a word, he put his vehicle in drive and the two slowly made their way back into town.

After a few minutes, the passenger broke the silence with the question, "How do you do what you just did?"

The deputy, who was about the same age as his passenger, said it was all about doing the job. When he and other first responders arrive at a wreck scene, an accident or even a homicide, they are there to work whatever is in front of them. What has happened had already happened and they have to restore order in a moment of chaos.

They have a job to do for the victims and those affected by the reason they have been called to that particular scene.

It was an answer that helped me as a young journalist who had spent his first three years in the career covering sports.

The worst thing I ever faced was when my alma mater's girls basketball team, Baldwin, went undefeated during the 2000 season and lost in the state finals.

Later that year, our newsroom in Milledgeville had an opening for the crime and court beat. I took the position knowing that sooner or later I would have to go to an unpleasant scene. Luckily, it took a while. But on one spring Wednesday night, I received a call after I had left the office that there had been a fatal wreck near

Lake Sinclair.

I responded and did my job, interviewing the Georgia State Patrol trooper as our photographer took pictures. We returned to the paper and were able to write it up and get it in the next day's edition. For days though, that wreck bothered me because it occurred in a location near a restaurant my wife and I frequented. In fact, we had been the previous week.

About a week later, I asked and received permission to do a ride along with a Baldwin County Sheriff's deputy. I met the deputy at the sheriff's office around 6 p.m. that Friday with the idea of riding with him and seeing what he goes through until midnight. We responded to a couple arguing in the county. I found out later that this was not the first time this deputy had responded to this couple's house. They had never been violent toward each other, but the arguing usually gets out of hand.

When we got back on the road, a call for a 10-50 (code for wreck) came in for the Baldwin/Putnam County line.

The deputy activated his emergency lights and sirens and we quickly made our way across the county

to what is basically the last convenience store on the left heading out of Baldwin - which was also within eyesight of the fatal wreck I had been to a week or so before.

I watched as the deputies and other first responders worked the scene, directed traffic and communicated with each other. I was closer to the scene than I had ever been before. I observed the deputies and responders at work. It seemed as precise as clockwork as they moved from one car to the next.

Thankfully, this wreck was not fatal. But there were injuries that required the vehicle's occupants to go to the local hospital. I then got into the patrol vehicle and the deputy and I made our way back toward town.

That is when I, as the passenger, asked my question and received his advice, words that I have kept with me when I am informed about and respond to a tragic situation. As a reporter, I arrive to these tragic scenes, take pictures, interview the person in charge and write it up. That is all I can do.

We have a heart.

We grieve these situations too, while hoping that these sad stories will hopefully make our town safer for everyone.

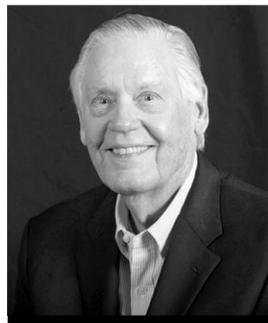
A eulogy to a friend and neighbor who made a difference

I received a note from a reader last week chiding me for writing about the Okefenokee so much and that he and others were tired of it. In fact, I have done only two columns on the Okefenokee this year, but I did allow mining proponents and opponents to express their positions on the subject. So that's four columns total. Is that overkill?

Ironically, as I was mulling his comments, the next eight consecutive responses I opened were urging me to keep the issue high-profile. Bottom line: I think most of you are not tired of my writing about the Okefenokee. You are tired of the stalling tactics under the Gold Dome as our intrepid public servants and assorted bureaucrats try figure out how to dig themselves out of the morass they have created for themselves and for me to keep the pressure on. But either way, please allow me to change subjects this week and for a very good reason.

It is not my normal practice to eulogize close friends who have passed away in this column. For one thing, I seem to be losing close friends at a rapid rate these days and that could mean a lot of eulogies. But today is an exception.

Eleanor Downs Callahan, better known to the world as Bootsie, passed away recently at the age of



By DICK YARBROUGH

91. She and her husband, Jim, had been our next-door neighbors for more than 40 years. When you move to a new location, you don't have much option in selecting your next-door neighbors. If we had been given that option, we would have chosen the Callahams.

I had known Jim Callahan's father at Southern Bell when I was a rookie manager. But not his family. Over the next four decades, we got to know each other very well and never a cross word was exchanged in all that time.

The Callahams had three children. We had two. All pretty much the same age. Collectively, we watched them all grow up, leave home, get married, birth a few babies and then watched the babies grow up, too. We

were also there in the tough times for each other. They lost their oldest son, Brian, and a few years later we lost our oldest grandson, Zack.

In short, they were ideal neighbors but that isn't what this eulogy is about. This is about how Bootsie Callahan changed the trajectory of my life. Bootsie was an outstanding artist. Portraits. Landscapes. Seascapes. Still life. She could do it all and do it well. Much of her work was by commission and I don't think she ever had a dissatisfied client.

I was pretty good at drawing. In high school, an aptitude test indicated I might become a cartoonist. That wasn't to be. I found myself in the business world and focused on climbing the corporate ladder as fast as I could. My right brain and sketchpad got shelved and the left brain and corporate-think took over. When I retired as vice president of BellSouth Corporation and then as a managing director of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, the left brain and I thought that was it.

Then one rainy Sunday evening in December, Bootsie Callahan knocked on the door and notified me I was going with her to an art class she had discovered. She knew I could draw and

was certain the instructor, a young man by the name of Kris Meadows, could teach me how to paint. Looking back on it, I still can't believe she talked me into taking up art, but she did. My right brain was delighted.

That was almost 20 years ago. Since then, and with a lot of encouragement from Bootsie and instruction from Kris Meadows, I have painted portraits of everyone in my family. Their dogs, too. The beaches at St. Simons. The mountains of North Georgia. Scottish landscapes. I have a painting hanging in the state capitol, the College of Coastal Georgia and at Kennesaw State University. I have given numerous paintings to my friends. I made it a point to never sell one. I was in business long enough. Painting for me is pure pleasure.

I was taught that we should all leave this a better world than we found it. There is no question that Bootsie Callahan did that. She made my world better and gave it new meaning by introducing me to art. In short, she changed my life. Now, you see why the eulogy.

You can reach Dick Yarbrough at dick@dickyarbrough.com or at P.O. Box 725373, Atlanta, Georgia 31139.

TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I am writing as a Dublin property owner, a child and adolescent legal advocate/activist, a former guest educator for DCS, and a relative to generations of DCS alum and current students. Like many in our community, I am appalled by the fiscal "darkness" that has led this district into a \$5.7 million hole.

For too long, a divide has existed where school system "insiders" treat parents, alumni, and business leaders as "outsiders" or meddlers. We are not outsiders; we are the owners of this system. When millions of dollars "disappear," it is our children's futures and our tax dollars at stake.

The evidence of systemic failure is not just community hearsay—it is documented by state experts:

- On lack of oversight: State Superintendent Richard Woods stated, "This is a situation where there was no one watching the store... there was a complete breakdown in the internal controls."

- On financial deception: The January 2026 Special Examination con-

firmed the district used pandemic funds to "mask" its true financial condition for years... leading to a 'culture of excess.'"

- On the severity: GaDOE Chief of Staff Matt Jones called this situation "unprecedented... We have never seen a school system in this state get into this much of a financial hole this quickly."

- On risk of insolvency: Reports from 13WMAZ highlighted that without emergency intervention, the district "would have likely ceased to exist or been unable to meet its next payroll."

- On violation of trust: The AJC reported that "\$6 million in health insurance premiums were withheld from employee checks but never reached the state," a "fundamental failure of fiduciary duty."

As this paper's own editorial noted in December, "Parents and taxpayers have a right to know exactly where their money went." We are offering to be the "eyes" that Superintendent Woods said were missing. Dublin is home to a wealth of human resourc-

es - CPAs, operations managers, legal experts, business leaders, nonprofit community servicepersons, concerned and knowledgeable parents, etc. - who are ready to serve as a Community Engagement Task Force. We are not the enemies of the school board nor its educators; we are allies with the professional smarts to help save this district.

Education "insiders" often complain about community apathy and disengagement, yet they push back when we want to be involved. It's kind of hard to help "watch the store" if we continue to be treated as an imposition. We are simply asking for a seat at the table to ensure that "false information" never again dictates the future of our schools.

We look forward to a prompt, public response from the board regarding the formalization of this task force.

Respectfully,

Carol L. Folsom-Scott
Dublin, Ga.

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



GARFIELD



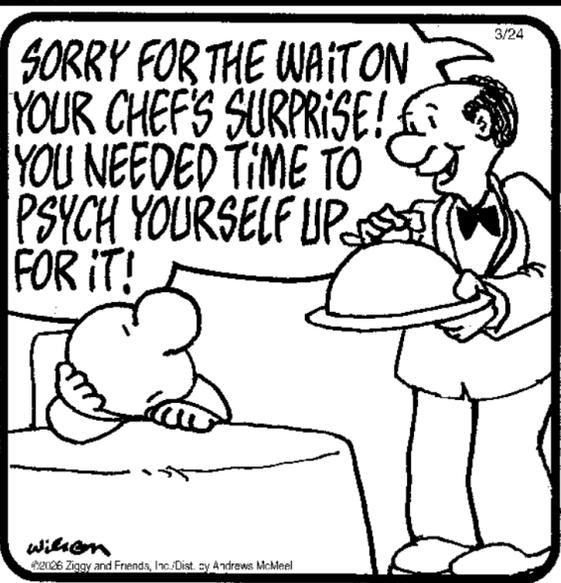
OVERBOARD



DEFLOCKED



ZIGGY



PLUGGERS



You're a plugger if it takes you three weeks to finally adjust the clock in your vehicle for daylight saving time.

Grandson restricts access to his righteous flock!

DEAR ABBY: I'm a Christian. I've raised my family to be Christians, and they have raised theirs to be Christians, even though we may not all be members of the same denomination.

One of my grandsons believes that his denomination is the only one and the rest of us are all sinners. He and his wife have decided that no one outside of his church can see his child. It's his decision, his choice, but I'm heartbroken and, of course, angry. I'm afraid my great-grandchild will grow up never knowing his great-grandparents or his grandparents. I believe that I will never know him.

I told my grandson I understand that this is his family and, therefore, his choice. He knows I'm heartbroken. Since they won't be coming to family gatherings, how should I handle gifts in the future? Should I acknowledge the baby and send a gift in the mail? I pray that someday soon my grandson realizes that we love him and his family. -- PRINCIPLED IN FLORIDA

DEAR PRINCIPLED: I always thought Christianity was a welcoming religion. This is the first time I have heard of a denomination that decides other Christians are not Christian enough. The church your grandson has joined sounds



DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

more like a cult than a religion. Before making any decisions about how, what or whether to gift anything to the new baby, ask your grandson whether accepting a gift from an "outsider" is even allowed.

DEAR ABBY: A dear friend of 40 years, "Dorothy," came to visit me for my birthday. She has visited numerous times over the years, and this was her third trip to my current home. As we were walking into the garage to take my car for a drive, she slipped off a small step and fell, injuring her shoulder and foot. Six months later, she still wasn't healing and said she would file a claim against my insurance to cover some of her expenses (her medical was covered, but she needed more in-home care and had to board her dog for many months).

My insurance company has been diligent about investigating the incident and decided I had no liability as a homeowner. They determined that Dorothy's physical condition (diabetes, neuropathy in her feet, obesity) was more likely the cause of her fall and slow recovery. They recommended I have no contact with Dorothy, so we haven't spoken in eight months. When she learns of the insurance company's decision, I suspect she may sue me next.

I truly don't feel I am at fault. The area was clearly lit, there was no clutter or other impediments, and she had been up and down that step many times. I'm sorry to lose a treasured, decades-long friendship, but here we are. Am I wrong? -- INNOCENT IN THE WEST

DEAR INNOCENT: You are wrong to end a 40-year friendship because some employee at an insurance company told you not to speak to Dorothy eight months ago. What you should have done then was tell your friend to contact her insurance company so the two companies can thresh out in court who is responsible for what and to what degree. It may not be too late to revive the friendship if you give her a call now.

GOREN BRIDGE

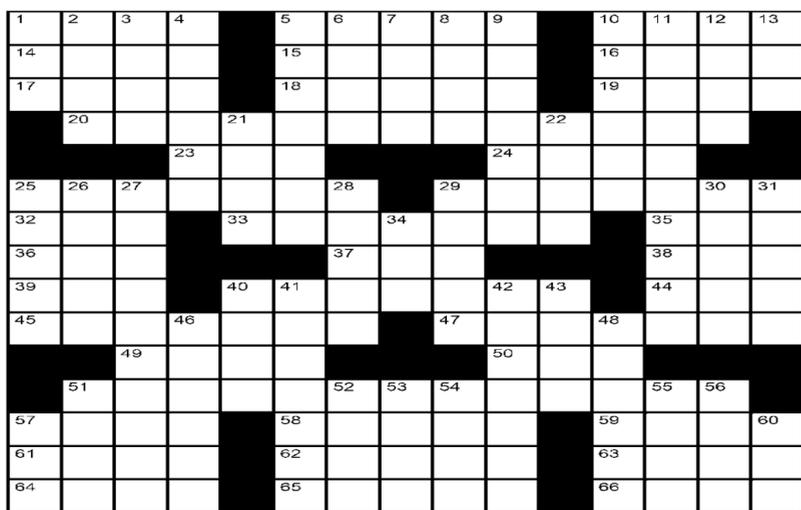
WITH BOB JONES
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

- Q 1 - Not vulnerable, as South, you hold:
♠ A K J 10 8 5 3 ♡ J 4 ♢ 7 ♣ A J 9
Right-hand opponent opens 3H. What action would you take?
A - We would open the bidding with 1S, if we could. As an overcaller, a jump to 4S has much to recommend it. This shuts the left-hand opponent out from cheaply showing a fit and the opponents may not be able to judge the right level at which to compete. Bid 4S.
- Q 2 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:
♠ J 9 8 6 4 ♡ 9 7 5 ♣ A ♢ Q 10 8 7
Partner opens 1NT and right-hand opponent passes. What is your plan?
A - With exciting distribution and a partner who is likely to have a decent fit for at least one of your suits, be aggressive with this hand and force to game. If transfers are played, bid 2H, forcing 2S from partner, and then introduce the club suit. Without transfers, make a forcing jump to 3S. After either sequence, pass 3NT by partner and hope the clubs will produce tricks for him.
- Q 3 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:
♠ K 10 ♡ 9 8 3 ♢ 10 9 8 7 5 ♣ A J 3
Partner opens 1S, you bid 1NT and partner jumps to 3S. Are you a man or a mouse?
A - Aces are always good and this king is precious. We would bid 4S even without the jack of clubs.
- Q 4 - Neither vulnerable, as North, you hold:
♠ A 9 5 4 ♡ A K 9 6 5 ♢ K ♣ 5 4 4
- The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ 2♣ 2♠ 2♣
? What action would you take?
A - You are certainly too good to pass. Your choices are a "need help" game try of 2S and a bold leap to 4H. All the values in this hand seem to be working. If partner has wasted cards in clubs, you might not do well, but your left hand opponent has advertised club strength so be aggressive. Bid 4H.
- Q 5 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:
♠ 9 6 4 ♡ A 18 2 ♢ Q 5 2 ♣ 5 3 2
With the opponents silent, partner opens 2NT. How do you proceed?
A - Experts are in two camps about this. One camp says that your hand will produce nothing in suit play, so just raise to 3NT. The other camp is worried that partner's hand might be better suited for suit play so they use Stayman to look for a 4-4 heart fit. This battle will not end soon. We like bidding three no trump.
- Q 6 - No one vulnerable, as South, you hold:
♠ A 7 6 5 2 ♢ K J 10 6 ♣ 10 ♠ K 7 3
The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
1♠ 2♣ 2♠ 2♣
2NT Pass ?
Pass or raise? What is your choice?
A - The ten of hearts is lovely and the 10 in partner's long suit is never bid. Bid 3NT.
- (Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16620 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001.)

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Stella Zawistowski

- ACROSS**
- European mountain range
 - Has to have
 - Travel the rapids
 - Winnie-the-___
 - House's storage area
 - Cafe de ___ (Mexican coffee drink)
 - Story
 - Trunk of the body
 - Designer Cassini
 - Dessert with a message inside: 2 wds.
 - Golf standard
 - Tiny branch
 - Orange liqueur
 - Under
 - Insurance option: Abbr.
 - "Classic" autos: 2 wds.
 - End of a sock
 - Ingest
 - Trash-talk
 - German grandmother
 - Old U.K. record label: Abbr.
 - Prince William's alma mater
 - To be: French
 - The "D" in CD
 - Vespa product
 - First-year pro
 - Florida reptiles
 - Make an escape
 - Kids' "it" game
 - Folded Mexican food
 - Possesses
 - Say "Go team!"
 - Flavor in mushrooms
 - Appliance with a spit
 - More weird
 - Low-voiced singer
 - Actress Marisa
 - "___ or tails?"
 - Not trans
 - Have a fancy meal

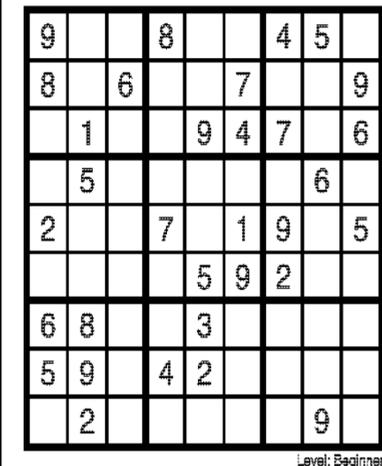


Created by Stella Zawistowski 10/16/25



- 3 Game played on horseback
4 Himalayas guide
5 Not artificial
6 Prince William's alma mater
7 To be: French
8 The "D" in CD
9 Vespa product
10 First-year pro
11 Florida reptiles
12 Make an escape
13 Kids' "it" game
21 Folded Mexican food
22 Possesses
25 Say "Go team!"
26 Flavor in mushrooms
27 Appliance with a spit
28 More weird
29 Low-voiced singer
30 Actress Marisa
31 "___ or tails?"
34 Not trans
40 Have a fancy meal
41 Repaired, as shoes
42 Sign, as a check
43 Was in a choir
46 "Gimme a break" candy: 2 wds.
48 Traveled by boat
51 ___ or less
52 Roam about
53 Where to bake a cake
54 Glasses part
55 "Paradise" performer
56 Small bed size
57 Awesome, for short
60 Pig's enclosure

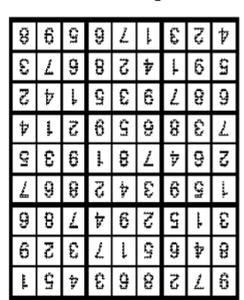
SUDOKU



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: 3MNSN

Falcons find Edge in rematch with ACE, get best of Gryphons to finish 2-2 week

By CLAY REYNOLDS
Sports Editor

East Laurens threw a big wrinkle into the continually unfolding region 2-High A title race Friday as it turned the tables on ACE Charter in the second game of the teams' two-part series.

After getting run-ruled 16-1 by the Gryphons earlier in the week, Grayson Edge and the Falcons handed them a 4-2 loss as the series concluded in Macon to initiate an earlier-than-expected shakeup at the top of the standings, where Dublin is now the only team that remains without a region loss.

Edge struck out four and held ACE to only five hits as he went the distance on the mound, contributing a key RBI single to his lineup's seven-hit effort at the plate. And for the first time since the Dodge series a week earlier, East (8-10, 5-6 region) was errorless in the field as it made the routine plays needed to secure its lead from early in the ballgame.

"Grayson pitched a great game," said East Laurens head coach Vic Thigpen. "He was able to spot his fastball and was able to keep them off balance with his curve ball and changeup. Grayson continues to get better on the mound. Our pitching staff is young and they are starting to show the growth and maturity that we need."

The big victory capped a 2-2 week for the Falcons, who rebounded from Tuesday's home loss to ACE with a 6-2 win over Tattnall County back in East Dublin on Wednesday, but dropped their rematch with the Battle Creek Warriors 10-2 the following afternoon in Reidsville.

East Laurens was set to open this week with a visit to Montgomery County, before two with Southwest Macon (Tuesday at home, Friday in Macon) and one to finish an incomplete series with Jefferson County

Wednesday in Louisville.

Against teams the caliber of ACE, the Falcons' early leads — when they've managed to get them — have rarely been safe this season. Despite a run of insurance it picked up in the seventh to offset one by the Gryphons in their half of the sixth, East Laurens wouldn't have ultimately needed more than the two it scored to break an early 1-1 tie and go ahead for good in the top of the second.

Edge, who walked only two in his seven innings of work, kept ACE hitters off balance the rest of the way.

The Falcons came up with seven hits in their second look at Gryphons' top hurler Will Makowski, who went back to the mound after Tuesday's light work — consisting of only 40 pitches and strikeouts of seven out of the 11 Eastside hitters he faced.

Though the 6-foot-3 junior's mid-80s heat was too much for them to catch up with on Tuesday, they squared him up with several good swings in Friday's first couple innings.

"The biggest difference was our patience at the plate," Thigpen said. "We didn't swing at bad pitches and we made him throw more pitches."

The Falcons followed up an error that helped Konner O'Neal become their first to reach base with back-to-back singles from Logan Gibson and Edge to score the afternoon's first run.

ACE answered in the bottom half with a run on hits by Chase Sasser and Camden Bailey, but Edge got Sebastian Falduti to fly out to end the inning, and East Laurens was able to take the lead coming back in the top of the second.

Sam Wynn led off with a base hit, Nollan Scott was hit by a pitch and Conner Lawrence singled to load the bases before O'Neal took a

3-1 pitch into the gap for a double to drive in two.

The score remained 3-1 until the sixth, when Makowski gave way to Will Mincey and ACE finally struck back to cut its deficit to one on hits by Aiden Sanderson and Huck Thompson.

But once again, Edge made some big pitches to get out of the inning, getting Bailey on a strikeout to end the inning and strand the tying run.

Then Mincey walked home a run — Wynn drawing his fourth in a row (out of five total, against no Falcon hits) to follow free passes for O'Neal, Gibson and Edge — to undo the progress just before the Gryphons' last chance at the plate.

Falduti doubled with one out to give the home team some life. But the final two outs followed quickly as Trey Barton and Mincey were retired to end the game.

On top of a field day for ACE offensively, Tuesday's series opener was a tragedy of errors for East Laurens, which had four that rendered 10 of the 12 runs allowed by its starting pitcher Lawrence unearned. The senior struck out two, and walked only three, in his three innings of action.

The Gryphons found a lot of holes — the gap at short for three singles in a row during a three-run third inning — for their 11 hits, of which only three went for an extra base.

Thompson (with the lead of three RBIs), Bailey, Sasser and Slade Hodge all had two of them apiece.

It was scoreless through one, but a nine-run second inning did about all the damage ACE would need to put the game on a fast-track to victory.

Makowski held the Falcons to only two hits — by O'Neal and Gibson — in his three innings of shutout work. East would get its only run

off his reliever Carter Lewis in the bottom of the fourth, at which point the Gryphons had scored seven unanswered to supplement the earlier advantage.

O'Neal was 2-for-2, and joined Edge with two RBIs, in Wednesday's rebound to out-hit Tattnall County 6-5.

The Falcons also stole nine bases to help maximize their offensive production behind Brody Kight, who struck out seven and walked only two in six innings of five-hit ball, with his only run unearned.

Wynn gave up the other, likewise unearned, as he faced six with a hit and a walk in the last of the seventh. But the Battle Creek Warriors could only cut East's five-run lead down to the final four.

The Falcons opened the game with three runs in a big first inning, as Myles Burke tripled and scored on the stolen base of O'Neal, who had gotten on via walk. Logan Gibson singled to left to move him along before Edge hammered both in on another base hit.

They padded the lead with one in the third and two in the fourth, on respective RBIs by Kight and O'Neal.

Another rough second inning — with Tattnall striking for seven in the home half — was East's undoing on Thursday.

The Warriors would score three additional runs, with East picking up one each in the third and fourth on the RBIs of Kight and Cade Oliver. But Wynn and Scott had their only two hits against a trio of opposing pitchers.

Tattnall's Brody Chambless, Connor Dutton and Aiden Brock combined to strike out five and walk six.

Chambless had three RBIs.

Oliver, Wynn and Gibson pitched for the Falcons, together walking eight and striking out one.

Irish get through tight one Friday to help sweep Northeast, secure control of first place in region

From STAFF REPORTS

Dublin, which continued to hum along with its third, fourth and fifth-straight wins last week, wasn't quite expecting to have the region 2-High A driver's seat to itself this soon.

But thanks to East Laurens, with its takedown of previously co-leading ACE Charter on Friday, the Irish are now alone at the top of the standings. And they'll get to spend at least a few more days there before having to elbow away the first of a few prospective backseat intent on taking the wheel back over later this week.

ACE (11-1) now joins Bleckley (9-1) in a once-beaten tie for second place in the region hierarchy, with Washington County (6-3) still in the hunt back at third, and rooting for some more chaos in the coming weeks.

Dublin (14-3, 10-0 region) steered clear of the week's only hazard Friday as it sidestepped a sneaky challenge from Northeast Macon in the first game of a home doubleheader.

The Irish needed eight innings, and a Bennett Lake walk-off double, to win the early matchup 5-4. But the Raiders, who had long since worn out their welcome, didn't stick around long after that as Dublin scored 19 in a four-inning shutout to roundly dismiss them in game 2.

Preceding the sweep was another huge victory on the road Wednesday night, when the Irish went to Milledgeville and whacked GMC 17-2.

The upcoming week once again leads off with a Wednesday-nighter, which will take them to Rochelle to battle Wilcox County. Then, it's the much-anticipated showdown with ACE,



BY ANY STRETCH: Tal Duke (left) dives home on a wild pitch and Will Wallace (right) steers the left foot over the plate after Bennett Lake ran out a ground ball for Dublin's go-ahead runs in the second and fourth innings of Friday's first game with Northeast. Despite 10 hits, scoring was difficult as the Irish were forced to use any means necessary to get on the board early, and then tie the game back up later after a three-run Raider outburst to take the lead in the sixth/CLAY REYNOLDS

as the Gryphons host Thursday and come to Dublin on Friday afternoon, to decide control of first, and which of the two teams will remain as the top challenger to defending 2-High A champion Bleckley County in April.

Xavier Reese was 4-for-4 with an RBI, and Ryland Yates 3-for-3 with two, in Wednesday's five-inning conquest of GMC. Lake, Bryceton Evans and Tal Duke also picked up three RBIs apiece, while C.J. Stubbs stole three of the team's 12 bases, to contribute to the big afternoon.

Lake's two-RBI double was the key swing in a five-run first to get the afternoon started on a big note, and Dublin bats would add three more runs to the tally in the second, six in the fourth and three in the fifth, in the process of outhitting the Bulldogs 14-3.

Jeff Davis pitched five innings of three-hit ball, allowing only one earned run while striking out six and walking only three.

Neither of Friday's starting pitchers lit up the gun. But both — Dublin's Reese and the Raiders' Bryce Tal-



BARE-KNUCKLE BRAWL: Dublin's Xavier Reese threw in a knuckleball along with his usual mix of fastball, changeup and breaking ball to hold his own with five strikeouts in the fistfight that was Friday's pitchers duel/CLAY REYNOLDS

ley — are known for being difficult to hit hard on a consistent basis.

Dublin couldn't capitalize on enough of its 10 hits to more than break even against the latter through seven innings of regulation, and mostly had to use a combination of patience at the plate and A-B-C baseball to scratch across its single runs in the second and fourth of an early stalemate.

The former, known for his location and variations of speed, didn't let the Raid-

ers get much going either, though several — Talley, Jordan Wiggins, Kournei Williams and Xay Hutchings for hits — made some solid contact. Wiggins drove in two runs out of three in the sixth that gave Northeast a brief lead before Dublin re-tied with two in the bottom half.

But it was over fairly quickly after Talley retired following the completion of seven innings, with two strikeouts, three walks and eight opposing hits.

Will Wallace singled to

lead off the eighth against Jaiden Center. Davis bunted him to third, and Lake doubled to left to drive in the winning run.

A bases-loaded walk by Talley gave Dublin its initial run in the bottom of the second inning.

Williams doubled and Hutchings singled to set up a tying run via error in the top of the third.

Lake, who joined Jeff and Morgan Davis with two hits each, had the RBI single to make it 2-1 in the Irish fourth. Two innings later, Northeast responded with three to go ahead 4-2, as Talley went to left with a single, two Raiders drew a walk and Wiggins doubled to bring in two for a 3-2 lead. C.J. Jackson's sac fly made it 4-2.

But Dublin came up with a speedy answer in the bottom of the sixth, as Morgan Davis singled and Lake and Evans both drew walks to ultimately score on the same wild pitch.

Reese went six innings, allowing four hits and three earned runs, walking four and striking out five before handing the baton to Will

SCOREBOARD

BASEBALL
Friday
East Laurens 4, ACE 2
Dublin 5,
Northeast Macon 4 (8 inn.)
Dublin 19, Northeast 0
Trinity 2, Windsor 1

GIRLS SOCCER
Friday
EL 1, Dodge Co. 0
West Laurens 2, Trinity 1

BOYS SOCCER
Friday
Dodge Co. 4, EL 1
WL 6, Trinity 0

PREP SCHEDULE

BASEBALL
Monday
East Laurens at
Montgomery Co./5:30 p.m.
Stratford at Trinity
West Laurens at GMC
/6 p.m.

Tuesday
Trinity at
Central Fellowship
WL at Howard/4 p.m.
Southwest Macon at EL
/6 p.m.

Wednesday
EL at Jefferson Co./5 p.m.
Dublin at Wilcox Co.
WL at Bleckley Co./6 p.m.

Thursday
Howard at WL/5:30 p.m.
Dublin at ACE Charter
CFCA at Trinity/6 p.m.

Friday
ACE Charter at Dublin
/4 p.m.
EL at Southwest Macon
/4:30 p.m.

SOCCER
Tuesday
Trinity at Vidalia Heritage
WL at Harlem/5 p.m.
Washington Co. at
Dublin (boys)/7:30 p.m.

Thursday
Baldwin at WL/5 p.m.
EL at Bleckley Co.
Jefferson Co. at
Dublin (girls)/5:30 p.m.

TENNIS
Monday
Trinity at Windsor
/3:30 p.m.
Tift Co. at WL/4 p.m.

Tuesday
Trinity at Brentwood
/3:30 p.m.

Thursday
WL at Baldwin and Howard
/4 p.m.

GOLF
Monday
Vidalia at Trinity/3 p.m.

Tuesday
Southeast Bulloch at WL
(Dublin CC)/3:30 p.m.

Thursday
WL at FPD/3:30 p.m.

CONTACT US:
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Wallace for the final two. He'd get the win with a walk and a strikeout.

Friday's nightcap was comparatively straightforward, as Jeff and Morgan Davis, Stubbs and Duke all recorded multiple hits (among the team's 14) and Lake continued his big day with four runs driven in. Jeff also had four and Morgan three in support of Yates, who pitched all three innings, allowing one hit, walking two and striking out six.

Dublin's biggest inning — a 14-run third — included two-RBI hits by both Davis and Lake, a bases-clearing single by John Oliver and an RBI by Curt Norris, along with bases-loaded free passes drawn by both Wallace and Stubbs.

Dublin Police Department

- On March 11, around 8:15 p.m., an officer responded to Akerman Street in reference to an assault. The officer met with a man who said he was assaulted by his ex-girlfriend, Monae May, when he was attempting to keep her away from the other woman he brought to the residence.

The man said the conflict led inside the house where May hit him with a fan. He provided security footage of him holding May back from entering his car, and she struck him in the face with a closed fist. An officer went to find May for an interview, and saw that she was being escorted by another officer out of the home.

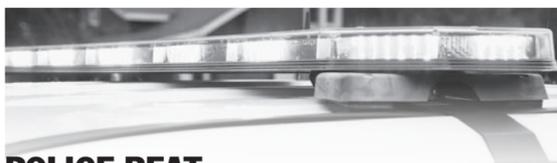
May admitted to hitting the man with the fan. The

officer advised that the fan was broken. The man had minor scratches on his upper back but did not request EMS. The officer told the man of the resources available to him.

May was transported to the Laurens County Jail and charged with simple battery family violence.

- Jeff Herndon, 55, was charged with possession of methamphetamine on South Decatur Street around 4:14 p.m. on March 11.

An officer assigned to the Crime Suppression Unit stopped a black Chevrolet for failing to use a turn signal. The driver, identified as Herndon, told the officer that his license was revoked. The officer asked the driver to step back to his patrol vehicle to get his information. At this time,



POLICE BEAT...

the officer smelled an odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle.

The officer asked the passenger if anything illegal inside the vehicle, and he said he had a very small bag of marijuana. The officer conducted a search of the vehicle and located in the middle area of the front in a black box, methamphetamine.

Herndon told the officer that the meth was his and the passenger had nothing to do with it. He was arrested and transported to the county jail.

Laurens County Sheriff's Office

- A deputy talked with a person about a possible trespass that happened on Pine Hill Road around 1:47 p.m. on March 9.

- Around 1:30 p.m. on March 9, a man talked with a deputy about his son stealing his money.

- A theft occurred on Kenneth Hilburn Circle around 8 a.m. on March 9.

- A deputy responded to a location on Old Hawkinsville Road in reference to an altered mental status around 9:38 a.m. on March

6. - A theft occurred on Achord Road around 6:48 p.m. on March 10.

- On March 9, around 3:17 p.m., a deputy arrived at Bradley Court for training purposes.

- Shalon Makia Johnson, 21, of Forest Park, was charged with driving under the influence of drugs on I-16 West around 8:51 p.m. March 7.

- A deputy responded to property damage on Marley Cannon Road around 10:08 p.m. on March 5.

- A deputy came into contact with and arrested Robert Ogletree, 53, of Rentz for possession of methamphetamine at Taylor Grocery Road in Cadwell around 8:14 p.m. on March 5.

- On March 7, around 9 a.m., a deputy met with

a person at the Laurens County Sheriff's Office in reference to a violation of a court order on Payne Rentz between Dec. 27, 2025 and March 7, 2026.

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!

CALL 272-0375, EMAIL CHTELLIT@GMAIL.COM, OR TELL IT! AT COURIERHERALDTODAY.COM

Dublin City is still delusional. Keeping IGA while cutting other places. I guess the special people need their "private public" school. I wish the state would make

them cut it.

Too bad Dublin didn't fight for all the other positions as much as they are fighting to keep IGA. Cut

those expenses.

If only 14 percent of those at IGA are really gifted, why can't they be gifted in their regular school? DCS does not need a separate school when taxes are so high and you are in debt.

Someone please justify the staffing and building expenses of IGA if only 14 percent are really gifted? Is that why my taxes are high?

Dublin - look around you. Counties in good standing don't have an IGA like program. So what makes you think you should keep it when you are broke and we are all paying ridiculous taxes.

I would be securing a job somewhere else if I worked in Dublin. They still haven't sent out contracts.

I encourage everyone to connect with a committee member on this. We need a pipe band of bagpipes for the 2027 St. Patrick's Parade. Who's with me? Pipes are a staple of St. Patrick's parades.

NEWS DIGEST

The regular meeting of the board of commissioners of the Dublin Housing Authority will be held on Thursday, March 26 at 5 p.m. at the administrative building in the James W. Strickland boardroom located at 500 W. Mary St. The agenda follows:

- Call to order
- Roll call of members
- Invocation
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Recognition of guests/presentations
- Approval of regular

minutes of Feb. 26 and called meeting March 12

- Financial reports, Check history reports, TAR reports, 90 day forecast

- Old business: Update on RAD development/ NSPIRE/2026 annual plan and 5 year plan update

- New business: HVAC-Bell Homes Project

- Executive director's report

- Executive session

- Commissioner's comments

Local 7-day Forecast:

The next 48 hours:

	TUESDAY: 69° Cooler with sun followed by clouds. Sunrise: 7:31 a.m.
	TUESDAY NIGHT: 48° Mainly cloudy. Sunset: 7:46 p.m.
	WEDNESDAY: 70° Rather cloudy with a couple of showers and a thunderstorm. Sunrise: 7:29 a.m.
	WEDNESDAY NIGHT: 53° Partly cloudy. Sunset: 7:47 p.m.
	Thursday 3/26 HIGH/LOW 79/56 Mostly sunny and pleasant. Sunrise: 7:28 a.m. Sunset: 7:47 p.m.
	Friday 3/27 HIGH/LOW 85/50 Very warm with plenty of sunshine. Sunrise: 7:27 a.m. Sunset: 7:48 p.m.
	Saturday 3/28 HIGH/LOW 66/43 Mostly cloudy and cooler. Sunrise: 7:25 a.m. Sunset: 7:49 p.m.
	Sunday 3/29 HIGH/LOW 70/49 Plenty of sunshine. Sunrise: 7:24 a.m. Sunset: 7:50 p.m.
	Monday 3/30 HIGH/LOW 79/55 Mostly cloudy, a morning shower in spots. Sunrise: 7:23 a.m. Sunset: 7:50 p.m.

River levels...
Oconee (at Dublin) 8.39'
Ocmulgee (at Macon) 8.79'

HOMER 2

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Classifieds

Employment

Greensman Part Time

The City of Dublin is accepting applications for a Part Time Greensman. Must be available to work on Saturday and Sunday. Provides labor and support for a variety of entry level golf course conditioning functions to include but not limited to hand raking, push rotary and fly mowing, laying sod, topdressing, shoveling, range care, greens check, and debris care. All duties must be performed in a safe and efficient manner, and in a manner that does not disrupt golfers. This position's primarily responsible for operating equipment and providing knowledge, labor and support for the daily conditioning of the golf course. Work is performed under the direction of the Golf Course Superintendent. Starting salary is \$13.52 per hour. Successful applicant must pass a drug screen and have a valid Georgia Driver's license. Applicants may apply online through our www.cityofdublin.org website until position is filled. The City of Dublin is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Real Estate

For Rent/Lease

Houses for Rent: 2 bedroom \$1,050/month and 2 bedroom \$725/month. No Animals; References required. 478-278-9012

Jefferson Street Baptist Church Holy Week Services

Monday-Friday @12:10pm

Monday, March 30 - Matt Haywood
Pastor, Bethlehem Baptist Church

Tuesday, March 31- Max Rodgers
Pastor, Olivet Baptist Church

Wednesday, April 1- Matt Greene
Pastor, Dudley Baptist Church

Thursday, April 2- Keith Collins
Pastor, New Bethel Baptist Church

Friday, April 3- Bryce Robinson
Pastor, Jefferson Street Baptist Church



Box lunch for all in attendance!



jsbcdublin.com

209 N Jefferson Street Dublin, GA (478)272-7750





KIDS' CORNER

Vol. 004 | A fun page for kids from *The Courier Herald*

Brought to you by Dublin-Laurens County
Dublin-Laurens County
**CHAMBER
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**

Class of the week: Mrs. NeSmith's 2nd graders at Hillcrest Elementary

Students in Mrs. Krystal NeSmith's second grade class at Hillcrest Elementary were joined by Herald the Hound last week to hear a story and learn about the importance of reading. The students proved their sharp reading skills by playing a letter scavenger hunt, quickly finding letters and words in the newspaper. They also showed that they have been paying attention in class, knowing how to identify and write an opinion piece /PAYTON TOWNS III



HERALD'S ART GALLERY



"Every child is an artist," said famed painter Pablo Picasso, and these art submissions from East Laurens Primary prove just that. At left, Kalani sent in a stunning portrait of Herald. Below, Ella Grace drew a colorful scene with a person who looks suspiciously like Courier Herald advertising director Connie Adams

Puzzles4Kids by Helene Hovanec

RIDDLE SEARCH – EXPRESS YOURSELF

Look up, down, and diagonally, both forward and backward to find every word on the list. Circle each one as you find it. When all the words are circled, take the UNUSED letters and write them on the blanks below. Go from left to right and top to bottom to find the answer to this riddle: **How should you speak to a giant?**

ANNOUNCE	A	N	S	W	E	R	L	L	E	Y
ANSWER	N	R	U	L	L	E	T	S	S	A
ARGUE	N	E	G	D	I	S	C	U	S	S
ASK	O	M	T	U	E	P	H	G	P	B
CHAT	U	A	N	I	E	O	A	G	E	E
DISCUSS	N	R	A	V	E	N	T	E	A	L
EXPLAIN	C	K	R	G	T	D	W	S	K	B
GAB	E	X	P	L	A	I	N	T	S	M
GOSSIP	O	N	O	I	T	N	E	M	A	U
MENTION	R	G	O	S	S	I	P	D	S	M
MUMBLE										
RANT										
RAVE										
REMARK										
RESPOND										
SAY										
SPEAK										
STATE										
SUGGEST										
TELL										
YELL										

Riddle answer: _____

Fun Fact

Some jellyfish create their own light. This light is a result of energy released by certain chemical reactions that occur within the tissues of the jellyfish. It is called "bioluminescence." It enables them to camouflage themselves from predators, lure their prey and even "communicate" with other jellyfish.

Source: www.originaldiving.com



MINI SUDOKU

	6	2	1		
3					
		5	3	4	1
4				6	2
		6			3
3				2	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 6-box square contains all of the numbers from one to six.

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ANSWER KEYS

MINI SUDOKU ANSWERS	3	4	1	2	5	6
	1	3	4	1	3	5
	2	1	2	5	6	2
	5	6	2	5	3	4
	3	4	1	2	5	6
	4	1	3	5	6	2
	5	6	2	5	3	4
	3	4	1	2	5	6
	4	1	3	5	6	2
	5	6	2	5	3	4

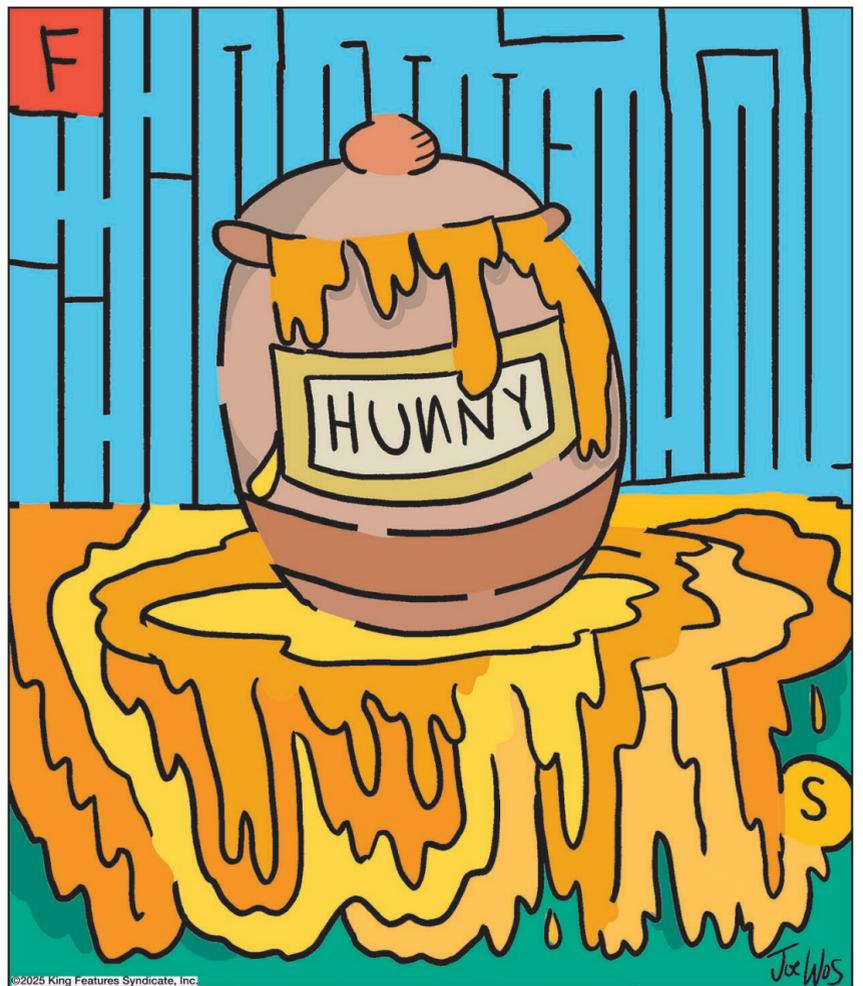
Puzzles4Kids ANSWER

A	N	S	W	E	R	L	L	E	Y	
U	L	L	E	T	S	S	A			
C	E	M	A	N	I	E	O	A	G	E
Z	Z	O	N	O	I	T	N	E	M	A
O	R	G	O	S	S	I	P	D	S	M

Riddle Answer:
Use big words.

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Teachers, do you want us to visit your classroom next? Students, do you have artwork, poems or stories you want to submit for possible publication? Email us at read@courierheraldtoday.com.



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Joe Wlos