The Courier Herald

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Dublin board scraps IGA for magnet school plan

Board member Peggy Johnson voices her objections to Tuesday night's proposals, saying board members were not provided enough advance information/**RODNEY MANLEY**

Moore Street alternative school, new school would switch buildings

By RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Reporter

The Dublin City Board of Education voted at a testy called meeting Tuesday to scrap the controversial and costly Irish Gifted Academy and replace it with a prep magnet school to feed the high school international baccalaureate program.

However, the magnet school will move into the Moore Street building, currently the district's alternative school. Those alternative students now will move into IGA classrooms, but the old high school gym will be closed for class activities to save money.

"We're following the state's recommendations," board Chairwoman Amanda Smith said Wednesday. "It's a financially responsible decision."

The magnet school would retain the approximately $1 million in state funding the IGA receives annually for students, and, as a school rather than program, it would also generate more state revenue to pay for positions, including a principal, which do not qualify for state money at IGA.

The board also voted to implement a blended learning model for alternative students that calls for more face-to-face teaching time and less virtual learning.

The plans were approved, both by 4-3 votes and along racial lines. The three dissenting board members, Peggy Johnson, JoAnna Glover and Kenny Walters said they were not informed about the plans prior to the meeting.

"As a board member, I know as much tonight as everybody else out there," Johnson said to the packed crowd attending the called board meeting.

Smith said the ideas were among several discussed among board members, district officials and state Department of Education representatives over the past month as they sought ways to climb out of a projected $13.4 million deficit.

The Irish Gifted Academy has been a lightning rod for criticism during the

DUBLIN SCHOOLS
Continued on page 8

PLAYIN' POSSUM: DEXTER HOSTS POPULAR POSSUM HOLLOW ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

The town of Dexter was anything but dead Saturday as it hosted the Possum Hollow Arts and Crafts Festival on Saturday. Crowds enjoyed a car show, live music and lots of vendors selling their handiwork and wares/**RODNEY MANLEY**

County OKs bid for $1M facility for fire training

By RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Reporter

The Laurens County Commission approved a $1 million bid Tuesday to construct a new burn building for firefighter training that's expected to rival any in the state.

"It would probably be second only to Forsyth and the Public Training Center," said Commissioner Gerad Mathis, a longtime volunteer fireman. "I don't think anybody in Middle Georgia is going to have anything comparable to it."

The new building will be at Station 10 on Valambrosia Road. It will replace an old training building on the county property near Laurens County 911 and the law enforcement center. Mathis said the current burn building was new when he started volunteering 23 years ago.

"It's pretty much on its last leg," said County Administrator Bryan Rogers.

Design and construction should be completed before year's end, Rogers said. WHP Training Towers was awarded the project after submitting the only bid that met the specifications outlined in the

COUNTY COMMISSION
Continued on page 8

The new facility will be built at the fire station on Valambrosia Road/**RODNEY MANLEY**

ELECTION 2026: LAURENS COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICT 1

Editor's note: *This is the first in a series of Q&A's spotlighting the candidates seeking local elected offices in upcoming general primary elections.*

Carolyn McCune

1. Why do you feel that you are the more qualified candidate for this position ?

As a first-time candidate, I bring a fresh perspective, a listening ear and a strong commitment to serve with integrity and accountability. I'm approachable, responsive and dedicated to making sure every resident feels heard.

If I am elected, I will stay connected by returning calls, addressing concerns and working collaboratively to improve our community. This role is about partnership and I will make sure your voice is heard.

2. What are the biggest challenges facing this area and how will you address them?

One of the biggest challenges impacting our community is the financial instability of Dublin City Schools. While the school system operates within the city and is governed separately from the county, its success affects all of us. As a County Commissioner, I will support collaboration with school leadership and community stakeholders to ensure we are aligned in strengthening educational outcomes for our children.

Economic development is also critical... We must recruit industries that provide livable wages so families can afford housing, food and healthcare.

McCUNE

If asked, I will work closely with the Dublin-Laurens Development Authority to support efforts that bring quality jobs to our area.

Transportation remains an urgent need. Our com-

McCUNE
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Brenda Chain

1. Why do you feel that you are the more qualified candidate for this position ?

I believe I am the better candidate because I bring proven experience, strong leadership, and a clear record of results for our community.

For the past seven and a half years serving as a commissioner, I have worked hard to be a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars. During that time, I've successfully rolled back the millage rate every year while still maintaining and even improving the quality of services our county provides. That takes not only discipline, but real-world business experience and careful decision-making.

As a businesswoman, I understand budgeting, efficiency and long-term planning—skills that are essential in managing county resources effectively. I also work well with all constitutional officers, because I believe collaboration is key to getting things done for the people we serve.

I pride myself on being visible, accessible and responsive. The citizens of this county know they can reach me, and that I will listen.

In addition, I have the knowledge and resources to pursue grants and funding opportunities that help Laurens County grow without placing additional burden on our taxpayers.

My record shows that I don't just make promises—I deliver results. I am committed to continuing that work and building an even stronger future for our community.

2. What are the biggest challenges facing this area and how will you address them?

One of the biggest challenges facing our area is job growth and economic opportunity. If we want Laurens County to continue to thrive, we must make it a

CHAIN

place where people can live, work and raise their families. I want the children who grew up here to have the opportunity to stay here and build their futures.

To address this, I will continue working to recruit strong, reliable industries to locate in our county. We are fortunate to already have a solid industrial sector, and we need to build on that success. I fully support our Development Authority and will continue fostering partnerships with the state to

CHAIN
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OBITUARIES

Teresa Lynn Roland

Teresa Lynn Roland, known to family and friends as Lynn, passed away on April 19, 2026, in Dublin, Georgia, at the age of 70.

Lynn was born on Jan. 6, 1956, in Dublin, Georgia, and spent her life loving her family and cherishing moments together. She was a woman of Christian faith. She devoted herself to raising her family in a warm and loving home. Family was the center of Lynn's life, and she loved her family dearly.

Lynn was preceded in death by her father, Lee Olis Foskey; her mother, Shirley Crabb Durden; her husband, Marvin Linder Roland; and her mother-in-law, Leola Roland. Their memories remained close to her heart throughout her life, and she carried their love with her always.

She is survived by her daughters, Kristal Porter and her husband Richie of East Dublin, and Mandi Hobbs and her husband Barron of Dublin. She also leaves behind her cherished grandchildren, Cole Porter and his wife Mackenzie of Dublin, Noah Porter (Shawna Wood) and Cali Porter of East Dublin, and Ava Hobbs and Drue Hobbs of Dublin, as well as her great-grandchild, Bishop Porter.

Lynn enjoyed the simple pleasures in life. She loved watching football and had a special fondness for the beach. Her greatest joys in life were her children and grandchildren.

The family received friends on Tuesday, April 21, from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. at Townsend Brothers Funeral Home.

A graveside service was held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at Minter Cemetery. Mr. Richie Porter will conduct the services.

Please visit www.townsendfuneralhome.com for service updates and to sign the online memorial register.

Richard Marion Epting

Christ will have to wait just a little longer before taking Colonel (Ret.) Richard Marion Epting into His arms. There is no doubt he needed one final look across the beaches of Chu Lai, and a stop in the halls of Valhalla to pay respect to the great warriors who went before him.

Richard Marion Epting was born on Aug. 6, 1941, in Hilliard, Florida, near the Okefenokee Swamp—a place that helped shape the toughness and character he would carry throughout his life. He answered the call to serve his country and was commissioned as an Infantry Officer upon graduation from Officer Candidate School, Class 20-69, on June 20, 1969. Over the course of a distinguished 26-year career in the United States Army, including 13 months in Vietnam as a LRRP in G Company Rangers 75th INF, he embodied the highest standards of leadership and sacrifice. In recognition of his impact and legacy, he was inducted into the Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame in 1993.

A soldier at his core—Ranger and Green Beret—he lived a life defined by service: soldier, husband and father ... in that order. He believed deeply in God, instilled a love of country and carried an unwavering pride in service. Above all, he upheld the honor of family and remained devoted to his beloved wife of 63 years, Jane Weatherly Epting, through the end of his days and into eternity.

Following his retirement from the Army, Colonel Epting made his home in Dublin, Georgia, where he continued to live with the same strength, conviction, and quiet professionalism that defined his military career.

Colonel Epting's legacy lives on through his wife, his children, and a proud line of grandchildren who will carry forward the values he lived by.

Rest easy, Colonel. Your patrol has brought you home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Wounded Warrior Project or Tunnel to Towers Foundation in his memory.

A private graveside service was held Sunday, April 19, 2026 on the family farm.

Please visit www.townsendfuneralhome.com to sign the online memorial register.

Townsend Brothers Funeral Home has charge of the arrangements.

Gloria Jean Axson

A celebration of life service was held for Mrs. Gloria Jean Axson on Sunday, April 19, 2026 at 1 p.m. in the First Seventh Day Adventist Church. The pastor Daryl Howard officiated and interment followed in the Dudley Memorial Cemetery.

Mrs. Gloria Jean Robinson Axson was born Tuesday, Sept. 4, 1945 in Dublin, Georgia to the union of Sammy Lee Sr. and Lillian Robinson.

She departed this life and entered into the arms of the Lord on Thursday, April 16, 2026.

Mrs. Gloria Axson attended Oconee High School. She had a wonderful career of being a wonderful and loving wife and mother to her husband and children.

Gloria was employed for over 20 years at the former May's Nursing Home, now referred to as Laurens Convalescent Rehabilitation Center. She worked also as a private aide for Jake and Merle Evans.

Although growing up in the Baptist faith, loving the Lord and singing psalms, after marrying the love of her life, she joined the First Seventh Day Adventist Church of Dublin, Georgia where she served in many positions. She was an excellent cook and enjoyed serving others.

Mrs. Axson was preceded in death by her parents, Sammy Lee Sr. and Lillian Robinson, sisters, Lillie Mae Taylor, and Velma Burch, brothers, Sammy Lee Robinson, Jr. and Charles Robinson, niece, Andrea Robinson and nephew, Rudolph Robinson.

Mrs. Axson leaves to cherish her memories and celebrate her home-going, and her life legacy, her loving husband of 58 years, Marshall Axson, her children, Beatrice (Wade) Jackson, Raddiff, Ky., Areta Knight, Dublin, Ga., Anthony (Roberta) Axson, Hampton, Ga., Joseph Axson (Katrina), Maggie Teresa (Albert Jr.), Wanza Axson and Livena Axson, Dublin, Ga. Mrs. Axson has 21, grandchildren a host of great-grandchildren and 13 great-great grandchildren.

Her devoted siblings, Francis (Joseph) Sneed, Jonas (Carolyn) Robinson, Dorothy (Arthur) Giles and Benjamin (Cynthia) Robinson, sister-in-law, Mellisa Robinson, brother-in-law, Albert Burch and Willie Ogburn, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, associates and many other family members who loved her greatly. The family received friend at her residence, 307 Duncan Street.

Arrangements entrusted to Wyche's Funeral Home.

Iona Virginia Jordan Butts

Iona Virginia Jordan Butts, 94, of Marlowe, W.V. went to be with the Lord on Sunday, April 19, 2026 at her daughter's home, in Williamsport, Md.

Born April 8, 1932 in Marlowe, W.V., she was the daughter of the late Clinton and Julia Bloom Jordan.

She had previously worked as a textile employee ending her career as a K-Mart clerk for over 25 years. She attended Little Falls Chapel and played piano there. She was a loving and caring soul, who always put others before herself.

Iona is survived by her daughters, Rebecca Frame (Charles) Cunningham, Beverly Riggs Estes, and Cathy (Tom) Palmer; daughter-in-law Joyce Butts; nine grandchildren, Christopher Frame, Lacey Nave, Tommy Palmer, Tyler Palmer, Paul Butts, Stephen Butts, Timothy Butts, Randy Riggs, and Jeffrey Riggs; numerous great and great-great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Paul S. Butts; son, Paul Butts; siblings, Alan Jordan, Frances Turner, Robert Jordan, Earl Jordan and Marion Cook; and grandchildren, Steven, Eric, Joey Riggs and Matthew Butts.

The family will receive friends from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday April 23, 2026 at the house of the Lord Church at 929 N. High St., Martinsburg, WV 25401.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, April 24, 2026 at 11 a.m. at the church with Pastor Robert Caplinger and Pastor Jack Payne officiating. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service.

Interment will be in Harmony Cemetery.

Anthony King

Funeral services for Rev. Anthony King of Dublin, Georgia, will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2026, at 1 p.m. at the Mount Calvary Baptist Church, 1601 South Poplar Springs Road in Dublin. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

Anthony King was born on Friday, Jan. 29, 1965, in Augusta, Georgia, to Hershel King and Christine Hudson King. His parents preceded him in death. He received his education in Dublin City Schools and graduated in the Dublin High School Class of 1983. While attending Dublin High School, he was a proud member of the Dublin Fighting Irish Junior Varsity and the Varsity Basketball Teams.

Upon graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army. He served for eight years on active duty and later enlisted in the Army National Guard. He retired after completing 21 years of military service. He also worked as a forklift driver in several businesses including YKK, AP of America, Best Buy and Perry Ellis.

After returning home from active duty, he met and fell in love with his "Queen" D'Andrea King.

They were married on July 2, 1994, and were blessed with 31 years and nine months of marriage. Together they raised a son and daughter who were the lights of his life. Family meant everything to him. He was also an avid fan of the Florida State Seminoles Football Team and enjoyed attending games with family and friends.

Rev. King started his Christian journey as a child at the Sandy Ford Baptist Church. He accepted the call to ministry in 1999. He was ordained at Second Baptist Church on April 2, 2000. He served as the pastor of the following churches: Zion Baptist Church, Hubbard Chapel Baptist Church, Chauncey Chapel Baptist Church, Francis Chapel Baptist Church and Holly Springs African Baptist Church. He was a son of the house at Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Willie L. Edmond. He was always a willing vessel, ready to do whatever his pastor needed him to do.

Rev. King departed this life on Sunday, April 19, 2026, at 3:15 a.m. He fought a good fight, but the Lord knew he needed rest, so he called him home. His loving heart, giving spirit and humble soul will truly be missed.

He leaves to cherish fond memories his loving and devoted wife, D'Andrea King; daughter, Loren Audria Rhyne of McDonough, Georgia; his son, Reverend Christian Anthony King of Dublin, Georgia; his princess granddaughter, Gwenaelle Marie Rhyne; siblings, Ronald (Bertha) Lindsey, Jeffrey Lindsey, Patricia Richardson, James (Joann) Lindsey and Timothy Lindsey, all of Dublin, Georgia, and Eddie (Deshawn) Lindsey of Warner Robins Georgia; a devoted niece and nephew who were raised as siblings, Nichole Richardson and Tvarski Richardson of Dublin, Georgia; mother and father-in-law, William and Gwendolyn Burwell; sister-in-law, D'Netra Bland of Upper Marlboro, Maryland; brothers-in-law, Roderick (Angel) Merday and Dru (Malva) Watson; aunts, Suzanne Smith, Patricia Ricks, Cantrell (Gerald) Harvey, Mary Ricks, Amy Ricks.; uncles, Ecleamus (Norma) Ricks and Danny (Betty) Scott; devoted friends, Ralph (Angela) Wright, Bruce (Belinda) Guyton and Tyrus (Tawanna) Jackson; godchildren, Deidra (Martavis) Isaac and Courtney Wright; his Mount Calvary Church family and several nieces, nephews, cousins and other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends on Thursday and Friday, April 23-24, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. each day at the home of Reverend Christian King, 100 West Street, Dublin.

Please post your condolences online at Servicebyby-Dudley.com.

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.

BIRTHDAYS

April 23
Michele Austin
Ron Williams

April 24
Jen Long

MOMENTS IN TIME

* On May 4, 1929, Edda van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston, the daughter of an English banker and a Dutch baroness who for decades has been better known to her many film fans as the actress Audrey Hepburn, was born near Brussels, Belgium.

* On May 5, 1809, Mary Kies became the first American woman to receive a patent, for her straw-and-silk weaving technique to create hats. The patent was signed by President James Madison.

* On May 6, 1994, former Arkansas state clerk Paula Jones filed suit against President Bill Clinton in the federal court in Little Rock, Arkansas, asking for $700,000 in damages. The case was just one of four major scandals that combined to threaten Clinton's second term.

* On May 7, 1984, seven chemical companies, including Dow and Monsanto, agreed to pay $180 million to thousands of Vietnam veterans who'd been exposed to the chemical herbicide Agent Orange during the war. Lawyers for both sides announced the surprise out-of-court settlement on the day jury selection was set to begin.

* On May 8, 2010, "Golden Girl" Betty White became the oldest host of TV's "Saturday Night Live." She landed the job in part due to the hundreds of thousands of her fans signing on to a Facebook campaign rallying for the honor.

* On May 9, 1970, President Richard Nixon made an impromptu visit to a group of anti-war protesters at the Lincoln Memorial -- an event that his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman, dubbed "the weirdest day so far" of Nixon's presidency, going on to record in a diary entry, "I am concerned about his condition. ... He has had very little sleep for a long time and his judgment, temper and mood suffer badly as a result."

* On May 10, 2002, former FBI agent Robert Hanssen, who intermittently sold state secrets to Russia over the course of two decades, received a sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole for espionage. Hanssen apologized for his acts, describing himself as "shamed" by them and saying that he had "opened the door for calumny" against his innocent family.

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Happy Birthday Mother
April 18, 1915 - May 16, 2009
Pauline S. Howard
Remember Me
Remember me when the flowers bloom in early spring; Remember me on the sunny days that summer fun brings; Remember me in the fall when leaves turn gold; In the wintertime, remember me in family stories that are told; But most of all remember each day; Right from the start I will be forever near for I live in your heart.
We will always Love You, The Family

Remembering Dewey Johnson

By SCOTT B. THOMPSON SR.

Forty-six years is a long time ago. Those who knew and loved Sgt. Dewey Johnson, USMC, they will never forget him. And today, nearly fifty years later, our country is still at war with the Infidels of Iran. Here is the story of a good ol' country boy from Laurens County, who gave his life to save the lives of many others.

The morning of April 25, 1980, was a typically beautiful Spring day in Laurens County. Ardelia Dixon decided to go fishing that morning. She had seen her brother briefly in the last few months and only knew that he was working on some secret military mission. Just a few hours later, she got the news - the news she had feared, but hoped would be true. That night the evening news carried the story of the ill-fated attempt to rescue fifty-two Americans being held hostage by the Iranian government. School children and thousands of others displayed American flags printed by the Courier Herald and tied yellow ribbons around their trees as symbols of hope for a quick and safe return of the hostages. As the story began to unfold and night began to fall, a pall was cast over the county. We began to realize just how close we were to the death and destruction that we were seeing on our television sets.

Staff Sergeant Dewey Johnson was born and raised in Laurens County. Dewey, the son of Elmer and Lucille Johnson, attended the East Laurens schools. He, like most boys of my generation, probably played army. " The most important thing I remember about Dewey was that he truly loved the military," his sister Ardelia remembered. At the age of 17, he entered the military service of his country. Dewey married Dianne Gaillard. They had two fine children, Lee Ann, 8, and Wesley, 2. Sgt. Johnson was stationed at the Marine Corps Air Station near New River, N.C., as a quality assurance specialist in the maintenance of helicopters. When the Pentagon began planning a super secret mission to rescue the hostages, Dewey Johnson was among the one hundred and eighty men who volunteered to serve in Operation Blue Light. Dewey didn't know any of the hostages. He knew that they were not his friends, but he knew that they were Americans. He knew that they must be brought home. After twenty practice missions, the men were ready to go. It would be a dangerous mission. The refueling stop had to be done at night. The commandos would have to transfer to helicopters, which would fly them to a secret mountain hideout. From the mountains, the assault on the compound two hundred miles away, where the hostages were being held, would have to be swift.

Six C-30 transport planes, half of them carrying men and equipment and the other half carrying fuel, rendezvoused with helicopters in an Iranian desert. The nearly moonless night sky hampered the refueling operation. The hydraulic systems of the Sikorsky RH53 helicopters began to fail. When the number of effective helicopters was down to four or five, and their ability to bring all of the hostages out safely was in serious jeopardy, the ground commander scrubbed the mission. As one of the helicopters began to lift off and move above one of the C-130s to top off its fuel tanks, one of the copter's rotors clipped the cargo plane. Both aircraft burst into flames. Ammunition inside the aircraft was ignited. Eight Americans were killed. One of them was Dewey Johnson. Another was Capt. Lyn McIntosh of Valdosta was piloting one of the two aircraft. McIntosh's father managed the Sears-Roebuck store here in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

As the news of the maelstrom came into the news office of the Courier Herald, so did Buddy Kight, father of Marine Corporal Kenneth Kight. The elder Kight had received a call from his son earlier in the week telling him of a secret mission. Kight was relieved to find that the name of his son, who had also volunteered for the mission, was not on the casualty list.

A special memorial service was held for the men in the Amphitheater of Arlington National Cemetery on May 9, 1980. President Jimmy Carter personally consoled the families of

Johnson, McIntosh, and the other fallen heroes. A granite monument was placed just west of the amphitheater in honor of the eight men. It lies in a section dedicated to heroes, just to the side of the monument honoring the astronauts of the space shuttle Challenger and within a few yards of the grave of another Laurens County hero, Congressional Medal of Honor winner Capt. Bobbie E. Brown. Another memorial service was held in North Carolina, where Johnson and two of the other men were stationed. All of the members of Johnson's squadron and Johnson's family came to the Johnson home to show their support and give comfort to Dianne.

The body of Dewey Johnson was escorted home for his burial in the military section of Dublin Memorial Gardens. Lt. Col. Ed Seifert, Johnson's commanding officer, presented a Marine Defense Meritorious Service Medal and an American flag to Diane Johnson, along with six other flags to family members. Lt. Col. Seifort once flew missions in Vietnam with Lt. Tee Holmes of Laurens County. A Marine squad honored Johnson with a 21-gun salute. Almost immediately, members of the community began a fundraising drive to honor Dewey Johnson. Led by Bo Whaley and Doug Hall of the Courier Herald, Leon Green, Dahlia Wren, Cecil Passmore, and Wendell Zeigler, the generous and grateful citizens of Laurens County raised the funds and secured the presence of Veterans Administrator, Max Cleland, himself a victim of war, for the dedication of the monument on the courthouse square. Rev. James Frost recited a verse from John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." The Strickland family displayed a collection of Marine memorabilia, which included a model of Johnson's helicopter, in the window of their storefront across from the site of the monument.

Nine months after his death, Dianne Johnson traveled to Washington to meet the hostages following their release on Inauguration Day. She appeared on the Today Show and shared a special time with President and Mrs. Reagan along with the widows of the other men, which brought a sense of closure. The women talked with each other until the middle of the night, sharing their deep pains with each other.

Two years after his death, a second monument to Johnson and his fellow comrades was 1dedicated on the grounds of the Dublin-Laurens Museum. Ron and Vicki Miller of Florida decided to honor the eight men with a plaque to be placed in their hometowns. Doyle Dominy donated a flagpole. Charlie Garbutt put it up. Wilkinson & Son and Georgia Power Company lent a hand. Dublin Burial Vault donated a block of granite. State Representative and soon to be Congressman, J. Roy Rowland, dedicated the monument. Rowland, a decorated hero in World War II, dedicated the monument as a symbol of the men's courage and self-sacrifice. The monument now rests in the Traffic Circle in East Dublin, the hometown of a true American hero. So now, you know the story of Sgt. Dewey Johnson, may you never forget him.

DID YOU KNOW ...?

By JACK BAGLEY
GTLN

Trying to come up with an introduction to the column this week is akin to trying to pan for gold in that lake in Yellowstone Park that dissolves you ... I'm having no success at all.

So, for the rare moment, I'll just say the heck with it, wish you a wonderful week, and send you on to the trivia. Enjoy!

Did you know ...

... a composer once tried to create a mechanical ballet? George Anthiel (1900-1959) became well known for composing musical soundtracks to films such as The Pride and the Passion, Tokyo Joe, We Were Strangers, and many more. But in 1924 he tried his hand at avant-garde composing, creating the Ballet Mecanique. The work was written for a fire siren, automobile horns, and an airplane propeller to be used as musical instruments. The work was performed at Carnegie Hall, and according to reports, an elderly gentleman in the orchestra seats allegedly tied a handkerchief to his cane and waved it as a white flag of surrender. (The work did inspire one Spike Jones, I understand. Look it up.)

... carrots were not always orange in color? Back when they grew wild and uncultivated, carrots were actually purple. During the 17th Century, farmers began cultivating mutant strains into their carrots, resulting eventually in the current orange-ish color the vegetable has today. (Who wants a purple carrot?)

... an animal produces a scent that smells like buttered popcorn? The binturong, which is found in Southeast Asian rain forests, looks kind of like a cross between a bear and cat, and the scent produced is used to mark territory and attract mates. (To take to the movies for popcorn, I bet.)

... the set of a horror movie featured a poster for something that wouldn't happen for six more years? In the 1982 film Poltergeist, the characters of Robbie – portrayed by Oliver Robins (born 1971) – and Carol Anne, played by Heather O'Rourke (1975-1988), share a room. On Robbie's side of the room is a poster for Super Bowl XXII, which would not be played until 1988. The year 1988 even figures prominently on the poster. No one on the production team could ever explain why the poster was used in the movie, but if you think that's odd, hang on - it gets far stranger. On January 31, 1988 – the day that Super Bowl XXII was played – Heather O'Rourke began exhibiting flu-like symptoms, and the next day was rushed to the hospital after collapsing in her home. On the way to the hospital she suffered cardiac arrest, but was resuscitated. It was discovered that the young girl had a severe bowel blockage that required immediate surgery, but O'Rourke died on the operating table.

... the insignia of rank of a U.S. Army captain was once proposed to be three gold bars? Prior to World War I, officers in the Army wore their rank on cloth and bullion shoulder straps. A second lieutenant had a plain strap, a first lieutenant had one gold bar at each end, and a captain had two gold bars. During World War I, however, officers wore more basic field uniforms without the shoulder straps, and second lieutenants were being mistaken for regular privates due to a lack of specific insignia. The decision was made in 1917 to make a second lieutenant's insignia the gold bar, with two gold bars for first lieutenants, and three gold bars for captains. However, that change was going to cost a lot of money to implement in designing new production machinery for the metal bars, so they kept the gold bar for second lieutenants, and the first lieutenant's bar became silver. Captains then got two silver bars. (And the respect that those bars earn, I suppose.)

... you may suffer from gelotophobia? If you do, you have a fear of being laughed at. By the way, there's no name for the fear of being laughed with – probably because nobody is afraid of being laughed with. (If you've ever met me, you know I definitely don't suffer from it.)

... years before he became President, Lyndon Johnson had a business deal with another Chief Executive? While still a senator from Texas, Johnson (1908-1973) also owned a Muzak™ franchise in Austin. Johnson sold easy listening background music to President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) to be played in the White House. (That Lyndon, always lookin' for a buck.)

... cashews are not nuts? They are actually drupe seeds. What's the difference, you ask? Well, a nut is actually a dry fruit with a hard shell surrounding a single seed. But cashews are the seeds of cashew apples, fleshy fruits which are classified as drupes. (So don't be druped by the advertising.)

... a group of British women wanted to do away with coffee? In 1674, the Women's Petition Against Coffee claimed that the brew was turning British men into "useless corpses." Mental Floss tell us that the group proposed a ban on coffee for anyone under the age of 60. (Heck, ladies, we're all "useless corpses" on Monday mornings, at least until we have our coffee.)

Now ... you know!

Important Delivery Update

Dear Subscriber,

We want to inform you of an upcoming change to your newspaper delivery service. Beginning Tuesday, May 5th, your newspaper will be delivered through the mail rather than by home delivery.

This adjustment allows us to continue providing reliable service while adapting to changes in our delivery operations. You can expect your newspaper to arrive via the postal service on a consistent schedule.

We appreciate your understanding and continued support. Please call our office before May 5th to verify your correct mailing address. If you have any questions or concerns about this change, please do not hesitate to contact our customer service team at 478-272-5522.

Thank you for being a valued subscriber.

Sincerely,

The Courier Herald

OUR TAKE...

Melisha Johnson, right, is working to help those leaving the prison system become productive members of the community/PAYTON TOWNS III

Many Georgians in need of a 'Second Chance'

Georgia has one of the largest populations of inmates in the nation. In fact, only three states have more adults in the prison system than the Peach State. The Georgia Department of Corrections houses 47,000 felony offenders alone.

That means there are a lot of people, once they pay their debt to society, returning to communities all over the state. One out of 13 adults are under correctional control, that means parole or probation.

But re-entering civilian life is easier said than done. Support networks, job opportunities and housing can be scarce for former inmates. And about 30 percent of former inmates eventually return to cells.

Groups like The Compassionate Advocate are working to help those who are ready to be contributing members of society again. It's a struggle that Melisha Johnson knows well.

It all starts by giving someone a second chance, and Johnson is working to build a network of employers, churches and other organizations willing to help someone get back on the their feet.

We salute The Compassionate Advocate and its volunteers, and we encourage local businesses and groups to help lower Georgia's recidivism rate.

– Kyle Dominy

YOUR TURN:

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

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

"All that happens to us, including our humiliations, our misfortunes, our embarrassments, all is given to us as raw material, as clay, so that we may shape our art."

- Jorge Luis Borges

DAILY SCRIPTURE

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

- Matthew 5:23-24

EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY

April 23, 2026 is...
- Spanish Language Day
- Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
- World Laboratory Day
- Talk Like Shakespeare Day
- Take a Chance Day
- National Picnic Day

The Courier Herald

LOCAL MATTERS

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GEORGIA TRUST — 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.

Candidates missing opportunity to illustrate vision

GEORGIA POLITICS

By CHARLIE HARPER

Georgia will begin early voting for partisan primary races along with non-partisan judicial races on Monday, April 27th. The votes cast between then and Georgia's official primary date of May 19th will determine the judicial races, but most of the focus will be on the partisan contests.

Much of the early oxygen has been consumed by the Governor's race. With two of the Republican candidates each able to self-fund eight figures of ad buys and direct mail, they've likely gotten your attention. If you missed their commercials, don't worry. You've probably gotten a dozen or so unsolicited texts.

The Democratic primary for Governor has been a bit more low key, as the candidates in that race don't have the money or in many cases name ID that their Republican counterparts have. They're also having to define not only themselves, but as members of a minority party without a clear state or national leader to set the tone, what Democratic governance should and would look like if they are able to take the Governor's mansion after an almost quarter century's absence.

While there are additional contested primaries for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State School Superintendent, Secretary of State, Public Service Commission, not to mention Federal races for U.S. Senate and Congress, it will be the next Governor who sets the tone for Georgia. As the chief executive and spokesperson for the State, it is the Governor who decides more or less what changes we're going to make – and those that we will not – and who tells the rest of the country and world who we are.

That tone is important. It's not often set in the primaries.

Eight years ago the usual suspects in media decried Georgia's reign as a state to do business was over when then Governor-elect Kemp had just won a campaign largely due to his "Jake" ad, where he jokingly threatened a potential suitor of his daughters with a gun. He's not only presided over one of the most impressive economic development records for rural America, but is generally viewed as a pragmatic centrist for how he led the state through the Covid crisis.

Eight years before that, I, at the peak of my "hot-take" blogging role, referred to candidate Nathan Deal's campaign for Governor as "toast" after he had made a few missteps in trying to appeal to the right flank of the GOP base. He managed not only to get Georgia's economy out of the great recession with entire new industries located and thriving here, but managed to get bipartisan consensus on common-sense criminal justice reforms. He too can be labeled a successful pragmatic centrist for his tenure.

What is much more clear in retrospect about both of these Governors is that they had a clear vision for the path they believed the state needed, and were willing to make tough choices – sometimes against their own base – to ensure the state got there. That's what leaders do.

Modern campaigns don't allow for much of that anymore. Consultants are highly paid to instruct candidates for all levels to message in generalities, avoid specifics, and above all, make sure they voters hear what they want to hear – and only that.

As such, thus far we've heard a lot about tax cuts. We've heard very little about spending cuts.

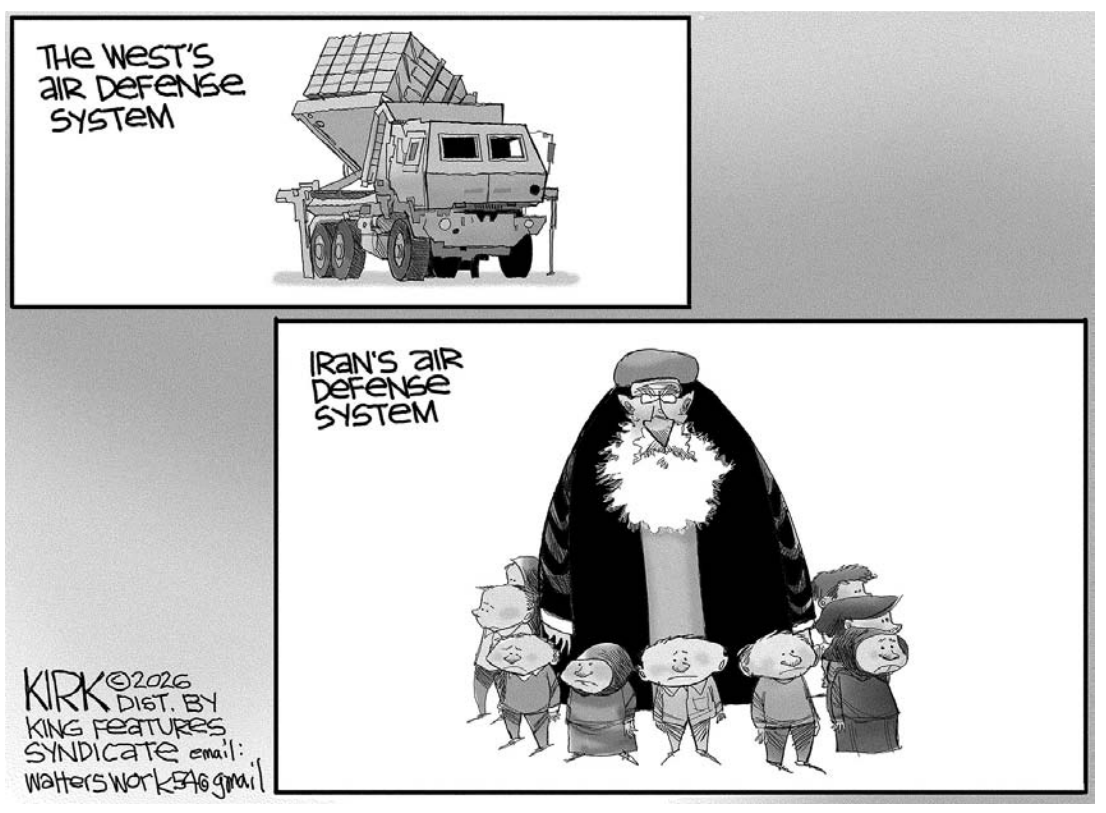
The state's budget must be balanced, every year. If you cut a dollar of incoming tax revenue, you have to cut a dollar of spending. Alternatively, you can cut a dollar of tax revenue by making it up with another tax or "fee" coming from someone else.

There are several proposals floating around dealing with property taxes. These are not state revenues, but local ones. Candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Representative and State Senate that are promising to cut property taxes are ultimately going to have to fight the bumper sticker of "local control" if they are truly trying to curtail spending by counties, cities, and school boards. That's a fight the locals usually win.

Voters care about a lot of other things than taxes, even if taxes are the one thing voters will generally agree are all too high. They want good roads and to spend less time in traffic. They want their schools to be safe, and their children to be highly educated and employable when they graduate from them. They want access to healthcare in their own communities, and they are increasingly aware this includes facilities for mental health.

And they want to know their homes, streets, and communities are safe. They want those who the police arrest to be prosecuted for the crimes alleged, and if convicted, to receive appropriate sentences. They're tired of stories of some District Attorneys refusing to bring appropriate charges and some local judges keeping revolving doors on county jails.

Cutting taxes are nice. A vision about how to fix the state's most pressing problems while effectively and efficiently using tax dollars is much harder. Too many candidates are avoiding the topics altogether.



Mules: An important animal in the history of the world

By LORAN SMITH

On a recent trip from Athens to Hartwell, I enjoyed driving the backroads and monitoring the fields which have or are being prepared for spring planting.

There were plenty of John Deere tractors about, which always makes my day. I remember what the old tricycle model MT meant to our family. It was the most versatile of machines. It could do things beyond its primary purpose—to use its two-row design to cultivate crops that were the staple of our survival.

We began the New Year by using a tiller to break our land, turn over the fallow fields for spring planting. We used a harrow to further bring about ideal conditions for putting seeds into the ground.

The John Deere MT could be outfitted to where it could be used to cultivate the row crops as they matured for growth and eventual harvest. We hooked up crop dusting equipment to attack the dastardly boll weevil which we vehemently despised.

That old MT could be outfitted with a pulley belt and a rear wheel to cut timber. It could haul heavy loads, and it could, in those unpaved road times, pull a car out of the ditch.

Today, machines for the most part have replaced manual labor down on the farm. You never see men and women stooped over in the cotton fields with long cotton sacks strapped to the backs.

Seeing those John Deere tractors on my drive brought about a flashback to farming with mules. I never had to plow a mule, but I have vivid memories of that era.

It made me consult Mr. Google which revealed that mules date back a thousand years BC or more. I learned that the Hittites, "a people of Asia Minor known for their horse-riding skills, held mules in higher esteem than their best horses."

Long ago, the price of a mule was three times that of a good horse. Mules were present in Israel and Judah in the time of King David. Further research disclosed that George Washington bred mules at his estate at Mr. Vernon. He was not only the father of our country, but he was also known as the "father of the American mule."

Among the reasons that mules were so highly regarded was that they worked harder and longer than horses, and they required less food and water.

You must be long in the tooth to remember the popular singer, Frankie Laine whose rendition of the song, "Mule Train," reached No. 1 on the charts in 1949.

"Mule train (hyah, hyah)
"Mule train,
"Seems as how they never stop, clippety, clop,
"Clippety, clippety, clippety, clippety, clippety clop-pin' along!

The success of that song led to the name "Frankie Liane and the Muleskinners." It turned out to be one of the great promotions by Mercury Records.

You likely know that the mascot of the Army football team is a mule. Interestingly, there are three—General Scott, Raider, and Ranger. This makes one wonder how the mule(s) became so important at West Point, given that calvary units had become so valuable to the Army.

Armies across Europe were dominated by calvary units before the coming of mechanized equipment such as tanks. Both America and England utilized calvary in the Revolutionary War.

However, the Army has continued using mules in training exercises and has explored options for using robotic mules to assist troops on the battlefield.

My question is, how do your train a robot to understand "gee" and "haw." "Gee" meant that you wanted the mule to go right and "haw" meant for it to go left. Hardheaded mules might be up for a hard nose confrontation, literally, if they didn't learn to gee and haw correctly.

Then there was the problem when the farmer absent mindedly used the wrong command saying haw when he meant gee. "Damnit, you scoundrel, I meant Gee. Gee, Gee, Gee you (unprintable)."

I remain thankful that a John Deere tractor enabled me to avoid having to become adept in "Gee and haw," language in the fields.

POLICE BEAT...

Dublin Police Department

- An officer responded to Fairview Park Hospital in reference to threats around 11:21 p.m. on April 12.

The officer met with the front desk receptionist who reported receiving a call from a man who was highly upset that his father had been taken to the hospital and then transferred to a Macon hospital.

The man cursed and screamed at her, demanding that the hospital provide him transportation to Macon, as they were the ones who initiated the transfer. He also said the Macon hospital does not like him. During the call, the man made a threat and then hung up only to call back multiple times while officers were on scene.

After an investigation, the officer requested deputies to respond to an address and make contact with Robert King, 49.

He was transported to the jail where he admitted to making threats. He was charged with terroristic threats and acts and harassing communications.

- Jordan Jewel O'Neal, 18, was charged with theft by shoplifting at Walmart on Highway 80 West around 3:54 p.m. on April 10.

An officer responded to a call regarding an individual shoplifting at the store. The officer arrived and met with an employee who said O'Neal used a bar code from a product of lesser value to purchase multiple items at the self checkout.

The officer observed video evidence of O'Neal scanning the same bar code for eight different items. The total of the items was $93.14. O'Neal was arrested and transported to the LEC where she was turned over to the jail staff to be booked.

O'Neal was issued a lifetime trespass from all properties owned by Walmart.

Laurens County Sheriff's Office

- A burglary occurred on Claxton Dairy Road between April 3 and 4.

- Vandalism happened on the corner of Walnut Street and Highway 126 around 12:53 p.m. on April 2.

- On April 2, a deputy met with a woman at the sheriff's office about a scam that happened on Rose Court.

- On Thursday, April 2, around 3:25 a.m., a deputy made a traffic stop at the intersection of 441 South and Highway 117. This led to the arrest of Michael Jason Cook, 31, of Vidalia. He was charged with fleeing/attempting to elude a police officer for felony offense.

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

Dr. Williams should be held accountable for what he has done to this system. He was the leader and it was his job to run the system. We are now finding out he did a horrible job.

Misusing COVID funds should be a federal crime and Dr. Williams should be held responsible.

No board members are apologizing for our outrageous taxes that came as a result of massive over spending. Remember when they tried to guilt us into believing they needed it all "for the kids?"

Laurens County tried to up their gifted programs to match IGA and now we see IGA was not all it was said to be and not affordable. Everybody is trying to be something they are not.

Whoever said ELHS has changed is so right! No respect for the head coach or the way administrators are running the school.

Did anybody believe the stuff that Mrs. Poole or board members say? She does the same ole cover up talk and says the same thing every time. When will someone apologize to Dublin citizens?

You ask who gets the jobs at Southern Pines.. kids on the West side like everything else.

When did it become OK for the LCBOE to give hundreds of thousands of taxpayers dollars to give bonuses to staff? If they have excess money it should go to the taxpayers, especially our senior citizens.

I would tell you to email the principal but you won't find it. Anyone know how hard it is to find an email for a county school principal or employee? Here's a hint, you can't. Plus they won't respond.

ESPLOST passed with promises of no school tax increase—yet taxes rose, then $2,000 bonuses were given. Don't let city issues distract from what's happening in county schools. You'd be surprised.

These middle school balls have gotten out of hand. Limos, prom dresses and flowers. Why can't we keep these things for high school prom? It looks ridiculous and not every family can do this.

Make these balls right after school in school clothes - make them just a fun dance. It has gotten out of control!

In 2023, the city taxpayers went to a meeting at the school board and talked with them about the comparison of their salaries compared to other schools the same size of Dublin's schools. We were told that it was under control and that they had it. They were very arrogant. The board members, superintendent and interim superintendent heard this. They cannot say that this is news. They need to either make a decision or shut up!

Why do some teachers at WLMS wear jeans everyday? That is so unprofessional!

Georgia Retired Educators Association Unit 11 implements 2025-2026 theme

Georgia Retired Educators Association Unit 11 Director, Carol Roe, met with representatives of each Executive Board to implement the 2025-2026 State theme "Keeping the Vision." Unit Presidents & their representatives were: Annie Ingram, Hancock County; Atlean Wilcher, Johnson County; Dr. Elgin Dixon, Laurens Dublin, and Lillie Spikes, Washington County. We are having a GREA-t year in Fellowship, Service, and Support/SPECIAL PHOTO

Women's Study Club hear about painting outdoors

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

The Woman's Study Club met Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026 at the Moore Station Clubhouse for the annual open meeting.

As members and guests arrived, the Program Committee, Mrs. Jack Heidler, Chairman, Mrs. Donald L. Adams, Mrs. Robert Thigpen and Mrs. Thomas Lee Tiegs welcomed members and guests and invited them to enjoy lovely refreshments. President Mrs. Gregory S. Crabb called the meeting to order.

Mrs. Crabb thanked the Program Committee for arranging the meeting and the lovely refreshments. Mrs. Jack Heidler presented a synopsis of the programs for this year and the titles of the programs for the remainder of the year.

The programs will continue to be based on the theme "Paintings that Touch Our Lives." Mrs. Donald L. Adams introduced the speaker Mr. Kyle Key, who is an artist, storyteller and painter. To create his artwork Mr. Key told us landscapes, imagination and shared experiences inspire him.

He explained the term "en plein air" which is French for in open air. It is the practice of painting outdoors in direct contact with nature in the elements.

The practice inspired the impressionists' art movement.

Painting outdoors is different than painting in a studio.

Mr. Key created a painting for us. A tree was the focal point. He described how he approached the canvas, the use of light and shadows and how a painting comes together.

Mrs. Crabb thanked Mr. Key for a delightful program.

Local sorority makes donation to W.I.N.G.S.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is honored to support W.I.N.G.S in their mission to help others. Sisters coming together to make a tangible impact in our community is what philanthropy is all about/SPECIAL PHOTO

Local 7-day Forecast:

The next 48 hours:

THURSDAY: 87°
Mostly sunny and warm.
Sunrise: 6:53 a.m.

THURSDAY NIGHT: 54°
Clear.
Sunset: 8:07 p.m.

FRIDAY: 86°
Mostly sunny and warm.
Sunrise: 6:52 a.m.

FRIDAY NIGHT: 57°
Clear to partly cloudy.
Sunset: 8:08 p.m.

Saturday 4/25	Sunday 4/26	Monday 4/27	Tuesday 4/28	Wednesday 4/29
HIGH/LOW	HIGH/LOW	HIGH/LOW	HIGH/LOW	HIGH/LOW
83/61	83/63	83/64	82/61	81/57
Intervals of clouds and sunshine with a thunderstorm in part of the area.	Mostly cloudy.	A thunderstorm in spots in the morning; otherwise, cloudy.	A couple of thunderstorms in the morning; humid with times of clouds.	A thunderstorm in spots in the morning; otherwise, partly sunny.
Sunrise: 6:51 a.m. Sunset: 8:09 p.m.	Sunrise: 6:50 a.m. Sunset: 8:09 p.m.	Sunrise: 6:49 a.m. Sunset: 8:10 p.m.	Sunrise: 6:48 a.m. Sunset: 8:11 p.m.	Sunrise: 6:47 a.m. Sunset: 8:11 p.m.

River levels...
Oconee (at Dublin) ..... 1.70'
Ocmulgee (at Macon) ..... 6.0'

Classifieds

Employment

PUBLIC WORKS SERVICE TECHNICIAN I

The City of Dublin is currently accepting applications for team members with positive attitudes and initiative. A Service Technician I in the Public Works Street Department is needed. Work involves the performance of a variety of tasks in constructing, maintaining and repairing water and sewer lines, streets, sidewalks, storm drains and related facilities. Applicants must have a valid Georgia driver's license, high school diploma or GED, and pass a drug screen.

Starting salary is $15.98 an hour. An extensive fringe benefit package including health, dental and life insurance is also offered.

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

Director of Facility Maintenance

The Dublin Housing Authority is accepting resumes for the full-time position of Director of Facility Maintenance. The successful applicant must demonstrate key skills in the area of people management, budgeting, with a strong demonstration in communication and trouble shooting. The desired applicant must have experience in multi-family apartment management, property management or manufacturing/healthcare/education/real estate or educational facility management. An associate's degree in Facilities Management, Engineering, HVAC, electrical of related field or in these classes are a desired plus. Must possess a valid Georgia's driver's license; submit to pre-employment as well as random drug testing, and a criminal background check. The starting salary for this position is $30.00 per hour depending upon qualifications, Resumes may be addressed to Brenda B. Smith, Executive Director, Dublin Housing Authority, PO Box 36, Dublin, GA, 31040. They may also be received via email at dhousing@dublinhousingauthority.net. Deadline for submittal is May 15, 2026.

The Dublin Housing Authority is an equal opportunity employer.

Housing Administrative Assistant

The Dublin Housing Authority is accepting resumes for the full-time position of Housing Administrative Assistant. The successful applicant must possess superb communication and computer literacy skills. Must be able to multi-task with moderate supervision in all areas of the DHA departmental structure. The ability to prepare clear, concise reports is a plus in this position. The position also performs the centralized collection of all rental payments. Qualifications for the job include an associate's degree in a related work-related field or business training in secretarial sciences or three years' related experience in a money-handling environment is desirable. The starting salary for this position is $17.50 per hour depending on qualifications. Resumes may be addressed to Brenda B. Smith, Executive Director, Dublin Housing Authority, PO Box 36, Dublin, GA, 31040. They may also be received via email to dhousing@dublinhousingauthority.net. Deadline for submittal is May 15, 2026.

The Dublin Housing Authority is an equal opportunity employer. portunity employer.

ONLINE AUCTION

Settlement Of Land That Has Been In the Family for 50+ Years

290± Acres in Emanuel County

Offered In Four Tracts or Combined

- 9 Miles to I-16 (Exit 71)
- Convenient to Dublin and Swainsboro
- Recreational Getaway
- Timberland Investment Property
- Good Interior Road System
- Homesites on Hwy 80 and Paved Meeks Road
- Frontage on Meeks Rd, Hwy 80 and Barwick Kea Rd

ONLINE BIDDING

OPENS: Wed, April 29th @ 9:00 A.M.

BEGINS CLOSING: Thur, April 30th @ 1:00 P.M.

See Website for Complete Terms of the Auction

HUDSON & MARSHALL AUCTION MARKETING

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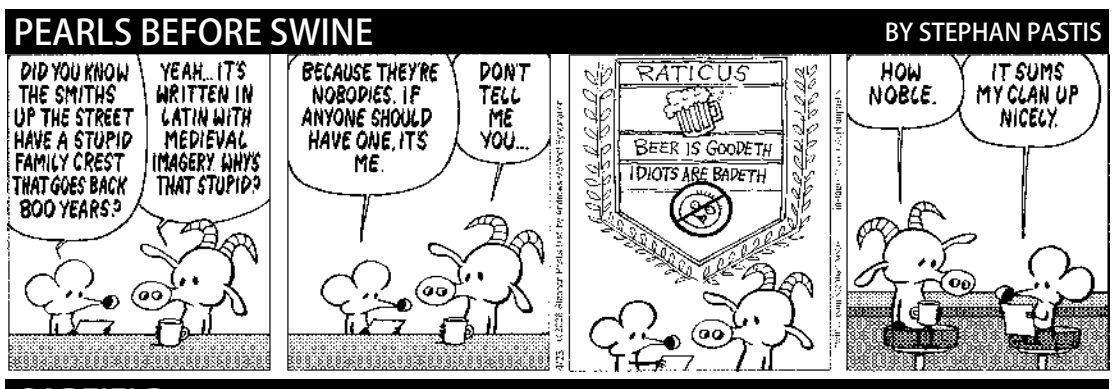
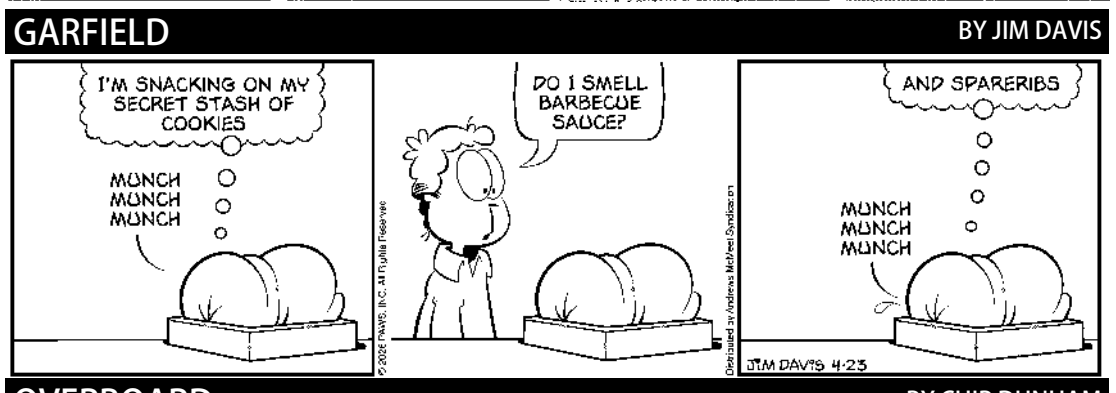
GAL 274

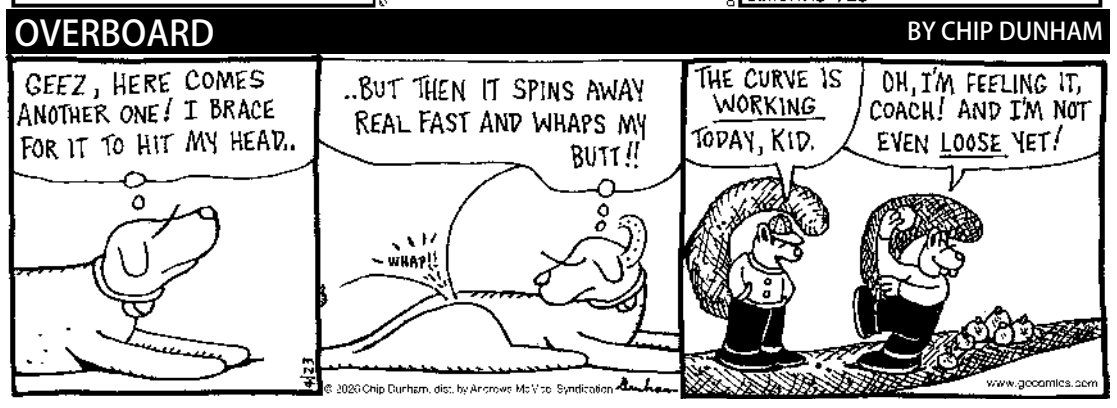
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE — BY STEPHAN PASTIS



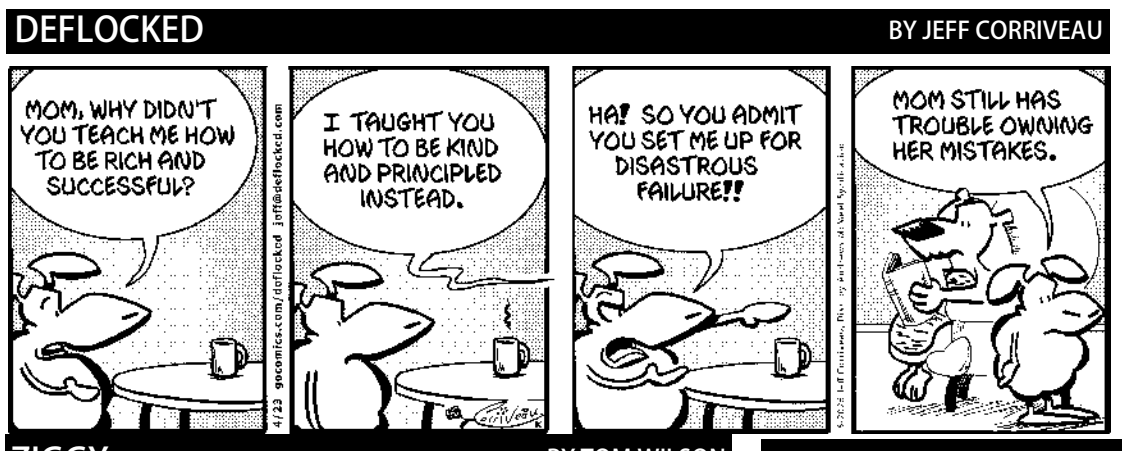
GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS



OVERBOARD — BY CHIP DUNHAM



DEFLOCKED — BY JEFF CORRIVEAU



ZIGGY — BY TOM WILSON

PLUGGERS — BY JEFF MACNELLY

Pluggers wonder why even though cookies have obviously gotten smaller, their calorie count hasn't changed.

Sexual abuse victim isn't interested in forgiveness!

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My earliest memories are of my father molesting me when I was 4, 5 and 6. My mother knew. I had appendicitis when I was 4, and she ignored my symptoms for days. My appendix burst when they tried to remove it. My father took me for "drives" during which he molested me. He would threaten me with death, so the abuse continued.

I am the youngest daughter. My wonderful brother understands and has always been my witness and protector, but since Mother died, my older sisters are rewriting history. They endlessly eulogize this malevolent, narcissistic woman. What can I do? People say I should forgive my parents, but my parents were evil! They say it will give me peace. How? -- SURVIVED IN UTAH

DEAR SURVIVED: The first step toward forgiving people who have hurt us is wanting to. Some folks manage to forgive when the burden of hatred becomes so painful they must act. Your father may have thought what he was doing was allowable because he was abused as a child. (A significant number of molesters were.) This, however, does not absolve him; what he did was evil. That your mother turned a blind eye (for financial or whatever reason) is beyond the pale.

Because you would like to take a step toward achieving peace, the surest way would be to contact a support resource like RAINN (rainn.org) or consult a licensed psychotherapist. I hope you may have already received some counseling to help you cope with what happened to you, but it's never too late. It may take time, but it would be worthwhile.

DEAR ABBY: Was there ever a time in history when people honored committed plans with others? It seems like in today's world, many people say yes to a date for a meeting, a family event or even just to hang out, but at the last minute, something else comes up. It happens in corporate and family life.

Am I a sap for being committed to my word? I understand if a family illness or historic family event comes along unexpectedly, but I'm talking about small things -- like picking up someone at the airport at the last minute when other means of transportation are available.

I'm trying hard to build a team, and there is always someone who throws a wrench into the plans. This last time, it cost the company money. I will not confront anyone and ruin what strides I have already made. However, I'm wondering if this is a new trend I need to adjust to or just certain people. Did my mom teach me manners that no longer exist? -- COMMITTED IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR COMMITTED: Socially, manners have become less rigid since you and I learned the rules of etiquette. However, there is a difference between social and business manners. If I were trying to build a team and someone flaked out on me twice without a good excuse, I'd look further afield and find someone else to be on my team. Please consider it.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Thursday, April 23, 2026

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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THE CLOSED HAND

Neither vulnerable, South deals

	NORTH ♠ Q 2 ♡ K 10 6 ◇ 10 6 3 ♣ K 10 9 5 4	
WEST ♠ 10 9 8 7 6 3 ♡ 8 7 ◇ K 8 2 ♣ J 8		EAST ♠ 5 4 ♡ 5 4 2 ◇ A J 9 5 ♣ A 7 6 3
	SOUTH ♠ A K J ♡ A Q J 9 3 ◇ Q 7 4 ♣ Q 2	

The bidding:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
2NT	Pass	3NT	All pass

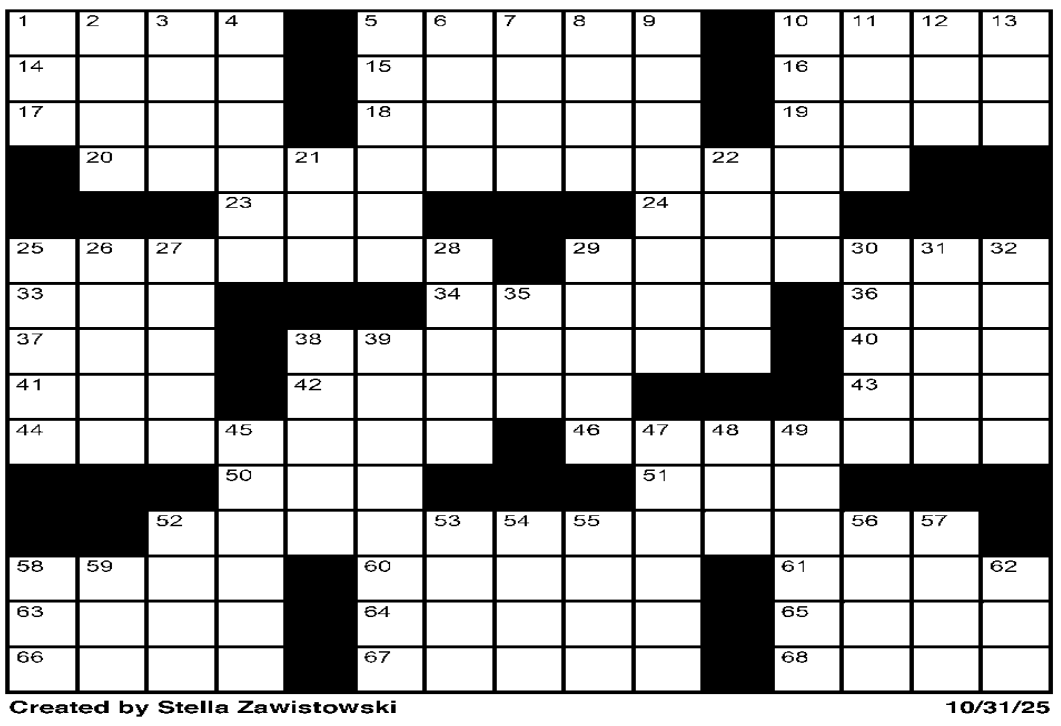
Opening lead: 10 of ♠

There is power in leading toward the closed hand. It puts more pressure on the first defender to play. The first defender usually plays low, and that is often the right play, but not always. Today's deal is from a recent tournament in Hungary. East was Hungarian Geza Homonnay.

South promoted his hand to 20 points due to the nice five-card suit and opened two no trump. North had a routine raise. Declarer won the opening spade lead in his hand with the king and led the queen of clubs. Homonnay realized that there was nothing to be gained from holding up his ace. The king of hearts was a sure entry to dummy. Homonnay took his ace and shifted brilliantly to the jack of diamonds, "surrounding" dummy's 10. South covered with the queen, West won and continued the suit, and the defense took three more diamond tricks to defeat the contract. Nice defense by Homonnay, but it would have been much better for South if he had won the opening spade lead with dummy's queen and led a low club toward the closed hand. Would East have risen with his ace or played low. We'll never know, but South would have romped home with nine tricks had East played low!

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

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Stella Zawistowski



Created by Stella Zawistowski — 10/31/25

ACROSS

1 De-clump, as flour
5 Celebrities
10 Starter courses, for short
14 Opera solo
15 Flower part
16 Maple or magnolia
17 Singer Braxton
18 "Spider-Man" director Sam
19 Color variation
20 Stories in the paper: 2 wds.
23 QB's try: Abbr.
24 Barbie's beau
25 Equipment for a draft horse
29 Equipment for a podcaster
33 Wonderment
34 Old Russian rulers
36 ___ Jersey
37 Male sheep
38 Piglike
40 Singer Lennox
41 Enjoy Aspen
42 High male voice
43 ___ Newtons (cookie brand)
44 Six-sided fastener: 2 wds.
46 Pieces of sculpture
50 ___ and vinegar
51 Frozen water
52 Carved Halloween pumpkin
58 Therefore
60 Build
61 Pork or lamb
63 Remove from office
64 ___ alla vodka
65 Just barely defeat
66 Moistened
67 Carried around
68 Amount of medicine

DOWN

1 Took a chair
2 Pressing appliance
3 Of high quality
4 Taipei's country
5 Small herrings
6 Rip
7 "Guess who's ___ again?": 2 wds.
8 Oscar winner Malek
9 Raincoats
10 Go to
11 ___ and cons
12 Writing instrument
13 Take a look at
21 Sault ___ Marie
22 Dog's restraint
25 Cruelly severe
26 Not asleep
27 Dance version of a song
28 Period of work
29 Eyebrow parts
30 Major fiasco
31 Strange and frightening
32 Bits of kindling
35 ___-cone
38 Unemotional
39 Nicely taken care of
45 Brags
47 Lightly colored
48 ___ of Congress
49 Abounded
52 Fair and impartial
53 Sandwich cookie
54 Pre-Easter season
55 Cystic skin condition
56 Make over
57 Constantly pesters
58 Drag behind
59 Part of a rainbow
62 Golf-ball support

P	E	D	I	■	S	L	A	B	■	S	C	A	L	P
C	R	I	B	■	L	I	F	E	■	T	A	P	E	R
B	A	R	E	■	A	C	R	E	■	A	M	I	N	O
■	■	T	R	I	C	K	O	R	T	R	E	A	T	■
■	■	■	I	N	K	■	■	■	O	R	R	■	■	■
U	R	B	A	N	■	A	W	E	S	■	A	P	P	S
P	H	I	■	E	T	C	H	E	S	■	S	A	L	T
P	I	N	■	R	E	T	I	R	E	S	■	S	E	E
E	N	D	S	■	D	E	R	I	D	E	■	T	A	P
R	O	S	E	■	I	D	L	E	■	G	O	A	D	S
■	■	■	A	B	U	■	■	■	F	U	N	■	■	■
■	S	E	S	A	M	E	S	T	R	E	E	T	■	■
A	U	D	I	T	■	A	H	O	Y	■	O	O	P	S
C	I	N	C	H	■	C	O	N	E	■	F	L	E	E
S	T	A	K	E	■	H	E	I	R	■	F	L	A	T

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10/31/25

SUDOKU

	1	5						6
						2		
		2			5	3		9
	5							
		9		2			7	
		4		1		8		
8			3		4	6		
	4				9	1		
	6			5				

Level: Intermediate

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:

7	4	6	1	5	8	3	9	2
8	3	1	9	6	2	7	4	5
5	4	7	2	6	9	1	3	8
6	9	1	3	7	4	8	2	5
3	6	8	6	1	5	9	8	3
7	2	4	5	3	6	8	9	1
9	3	5	4	2	8	5	7	4
1	5	8	7	9	3	4	6	2
4	7	2	6	8	5	3	1	9
9	8	6	1	3	7	2	5	4
3	1	5	9	4	2	7	8	6

EL, WL slowpitch bound for state

East and West Laurens both advanced from last Wednesday's GHSA sectional tournament at Southern Pines as one of eight teams who will battle it out for a state slowpitch softball crown later this week. The crosstown rivals (shown exchanging postgame handshakes at right) met in their second games of the day after first-round byes, with the Raiders winning 18-0 to officially lock up a spot in the final group, though they'd go on to defeat Richmond Hill (the day began with a 21-0 victory over Savannah) in one more game. The Falcons chalked up an early win, 20-0 over Groves, then bounced back from the loss with an 18-4 defeat of New Hampstead to claim their berth from the loser's bracket. West Laurens, which is back with designs on going all the way after a runner-up finish in 2025, will face Jefferson in its opening game Wednesday at Woodstock's Twin Creeks Park. East, also hoping to make it further after moving on to last year's second day of competition, is set to battle Cherokee at the same time/**SPECIAL PHOTO, courtesy Jami Thompson**

Golf: Trinity's teams finish runner-up at region; WL, EL match up as regular season winds down

From STAFF REPORTS

All-region selections Eden Rowe and John Brantley led the way for Trinity's golf teams, which secured second place on both leaderboards as they hosted the region 6-AA championship tournament last Thursday at Dublin Country Club.

Rowe shot a 106 to take girls' low-medalist honors.

Brantley's 75 was top score for the Crusader boys, whose total of 325 placed second behind the 295 of region champion David Emanuel. Covenant (371), Robert Toombs (402) and Windsor (409) rounded out the five-team field.

Jagger George (80), Hayden Bowles (83), Kason Slater (86), Charlie Maffett (87), Cole Johnson (94), Jonathan Rozier (94) and Acie Carter (133) also had quality rounds.

DEA, whose Ethan Fields had an eye-popping round of 69 to take the boys' low medal, had three other scorers in the 70s.

The Crusaders will take on Eatonton's Harbor Club next week for the GIAA AA state tournament.

Meanwhile, last week was a busy one for West Laurens golfers who returned from spring break to start out their next-to-last week of regular season play in Douglas with 18 holes at Coffee High School's Neil Graham Invitational Monday, April 13.

The Raider boys, with a team score of 296, took second place overall out of the 19 teams, the hosts scoring 290 for first overall.

Braceton Beasley shot a 72 to capture fifth overall in the individual standings. Keith Howell's 74 placed him 10th. Brody Graham and Wade Martin tied for 11th with 75s, and Jake Harden put up a 78 for 23rd.

West's boys and girls collected victories over East Laurens in a home match the following afternoon.

TOP FLIGHT: Eden Rowe (left, hitting an approach to the green on No. 3) and John Brantley (right, putting on No. 7) had the leading rounds for Trinity at the 6-AA tournament last Thursday/**CLAY REYNOLDS**

The Lady Raiders won 97-107, with Valley Stewart and Bailey Jean Logan posting nine-hole rounds of 45 and 52 for the top scores. East Laurens' Madison Necce shot 52, and Abigail Contreras 55.

The West Laurens boys played a younger flight of golfers, but still prevailed 181-196, with Lane Neal, Lane Fountain and Brody Graham tying for the best nine with rounds of 45.

Jonathan Aldridge (41) and Brody Owens (49) led the Falcons.

The Raiders hosted Veterans and Vidalia for a tri-match at Green Acres on Thursday.

The West Laurens boys defeated both, with a team total of 145 against the Indians' 163 and the Warhawks' 172.

Beasley led all scorers with a 34, Harden carded a 35, Howell shot a 37 and Martin added a 39. Graham and Will Tribble both had 41s.

The Lady Raiders, with a 95, scored in between Veterans' 87 and Vidalia's 98 for a split, with Logan's 46 and Stewart's 49 out front on the scoreboard.

NOW DRIVING: Charlie Maffett tees off on the par five seventh /**CLAY REYNOLDS**

West opened its final week in preparation for the area tournament with a sweep of Dodge County, the boys 167-193 and the girls 97-102, this past Monday.

Neal and Dayten Yarbrough had 38s to lead the boys. Logan's 46 and Stewart's 51 were the girls' top numbers.

The Raiders rounded out their regular season Tuesday against both Southeast Bulloch and Savannah Christian on the front nine of the Georgia Southern University golf course that will host next Tuesday's area tournament.

The boys defeated both with a score of 153 (Savannah Christian had 166 and SEB 184) and the girls fell a bit short of both the Jackets (88) and Red Raiders (107).

Beasley (35), Graham (38) and Harden (39), each clearing 40 strokes for the boys, along with Stewart (53), Leigh and Aubrie Paul (59 each) had the Raiders' best performances in some windy conditions.

SOCCER ROUNDUP...

Raiders edged in OT, but still clinch 4-AAA title

Irish boys give ACE all it can handle in regular season finale

From STAFF REPORTS

A 3-2 overtime loss at Aquinas last Thursday night spoiled the West Laurens boys' perfect finish, as well as their shot at the top overall seed in the playoffs. But the Raiders (18-1, 13-1 region) still secured the 4-AAA title, and fell only two spots to No. 3 in the draw, where their road to at least the state semifinals will still run through The SHU.

Despite the unfortunate ending to the regular season, which also included a 2-0 loss for the West Laurens girls, both teams' focus quickly shifted the postseason, which began in winning fashion for the Lady Raiders in a 1-0 victory at Bainbridge Tuesday night.

The boys were hopeful to make it a second first-round win in region rematch with Howard (which they defeated by scores of 2-1 and 3-1 in the regular season) Tuesday night.

Aquinas scored both the first two goals in Thursday's match, one midway through the opening half and a second just out of halftime, to give itself a strong chance at the win.

But the Fightin' Irish needed more than a simple victory, rather one by a specific margin, in order to take the region title from the hands of the Raiders, who had won their first meeting of the season by two.

A trip-up foul called on Aquinas at the top of the box set up a PK for Jack Yearwood, who went left to make it a 2-1 game, and threw some complications into that arrangement with just under 30 minutes left in the match.

Unable to score for a third time in regulation, Aquinas resorted to conceding an own goal – its goalkeeper turning to hit the ball in with the back of his heel as he set up for a goal kick – with 90 seconds to play, forcing overtime and buying 20 minutes of extra time.

The ploy neither benefitted the Irish, nor backfired, as they simply recouped the goal they gave up with roughly two and a half minutes left to play as a simple cross was inadvertently bumped into the net.

But it was Aquinas' last shot.

Dublin and East Laurens also concluded their regular seasons Thursday night on the wrong side of sweeps by ACE Charter and Vidalia.

The Lady Irish (3-12, 4-6 region 2-High A) were shut out 10-0, though the Dublin boys (3-10, 1-6 region) put up a frisky fight before falling 2-1 as senior night brought an end to both teams' seasons in the Shamrock Bowl.

The ACE girls scored eight times in the first half, and coasted through the second with just one additional goal before the match came to an end with their 10th around seven minutes to go.

A goal went each way in the first five minutes of the hard-fought boys match, with the Irish striking first only 80 seconds in as Urick Andrews navigated a minefield of defenders and – refusing to be denied – dodged one last guy before punching in a shot to stake them to a 1-0 lead.

But the edge was brief, as ACE tied it back moments later when a corner set piece produced a foul in the box, and an equalizing PK.

The match was a dead heat from there, through halftime. But the Gryphons got back on top about 10 minutes post-halftime. A man was lightly tripped up from behind to set up a long free kick. Sohan Patel played his initial hit off the rebound from a defender, but immediately busted a low line drive that got inside the left post to give ACE its final 2-1 lead.

The East Laurens girls (8-10, 5-3 region 2-High A) kept Thursday's match at Vidalia scoreless through a half, but gave up two goals after the break that amounted to the 2-0 final.

The Indians, led by hat tricks from Dakota Brannon and Lake Wright, won the boys' match 8-0.

Both sets of Falcons went on the road for first-round playoff action, the girls with the bracket's No. 26 seed. They were shut out 10-0 by Bremen on Tuesday night.

The Eastside boys (9-8, 4-3 region 2-High A) will have a comparatively shorter ride on their hands as they make a short hop over to Eastman for a rematch with region rival Dodge County on Wednesday.

Trinity's soccer teams ran into some buzzsaws as they closed out the week at Central Fellowship last Friday.

The Lady Crusaders (11-2, 9-1 region) surrendered the match's only two goals (by the Lancers' Layla Wagner and Lois Tanner) in the second half, and suffered their first GIAA loss of the year.

Jagger George (who led the front line with six of 11 shots) had a goal in each half, but CFCA, via Jake Stanage and Ivan Sears, scored twice in the second to end regulation with a 2-2 draw. And the Trinity boys (9-3-1, 8-1 region) were ultimately blanked 2-0 in the penalty kick shootout.

Trinity swept Vidalia Heritage as it returned home Tuesday night. The Crusaders will host FPD on Thursday.

SCOREBOARD

BASEBALL
Tuesday
Trinity 12, Covenant 5

GIRLS SOCCER
Tuesday
Trinity 8, Vidalia Heritage 1
West Laurens 1, Bainbridge 0
Bremen 10, East Laurens 0

BOYS SOCCER
Tuesday
Trinity 9, Vidalia Heritage 1

GIRLS TENNIS
Tuesday
EL (girls) at Armuchee (no score reported)

PREP SCHEDULE

SOCCER
Wednesday
GHSA Playoffs, Round 1
East Laurens at Dodge Co.
Howard at West Laurens (boys)/**7 p.m.**

Thursday
FPD at Trinity/**5 p.m.**

BASEBALL
Friday
Tallulah Falls at Trinity **/6 p.m.**

GHSA Playoffs, Round 1
(doubleheaders)
Gilmer at WL/**4 p.m.**
EL at Fitzgerald
Jasper Co. at Dublin/**5 p.m.**

Saturday
(Game 3s, if necessary)
Gilmer at WL/**11 a.m.**
Jasper Co. at Dublin **/12 p.m.**
EL at Fitzgerald/**TBD**

SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL
GHSA State Championship (Woodstock)
Wednesday
Cherokee vs. EL
WL vs. Jefferson/**9 a.m.**
Losers' games/**11 a.m.**
Winners' games/**1 p.m.**

TENNIS
GHSA Playoffs, Round 1
Wednesday
East Hall at WL (girls) **/3:30 p.m.**
EL (boys) at Swainsboro **/4 p.m.**
Dougherty at WL (boys) **/5 p.m.**

Thursday
Dublin (boys) at Fannin Co. **/2 p.m.**

GOLF
Monday, April 27
Trinity at GIAA State Tournament (Harbor Club, Eatonton)

Tuesday, April 28
WL at GHSA Area Tournament (Georgia Southern GC Statesboro)

CONTACT US:
Email sports information to tchsports77@gmail.com, or call (478) 272-5522, ext. 110

BULLETIN BOARD...

10th Raider Rumble set for May 9 at Green Acres

The West Laurens golf team is hosting its 10th annual Raider Rumble tournament Saturday, May 9 at Green Acres Golf Club. The four-man scramble is $100 per player, and $400 per team. There are no extra fees and lunch is included. Cash prizes will be awarded to winners in two flights. There will also be a longest drive and closest-to-the-pin contests and raffle drawing. Registration at 8 a.m. Shotgun start at 9. For more information, contact Green Acres at (478) 875-3110 or greenacresgolf1@gmail.com.

DUBLIN SCHOOLS

Continued from page 1

district's financial crisis, especially among parents and others who believe the academy gets special treatment and takes away resources from other schools. Some of those concerns were somewhat confirmed in a report from Ben Lanier, who took on the role of district director of accountability in January.

"It's very confusing to try to sort through and figure out what's what with IGA," Lanier said.

Test scores from IGA students are reported as from their assigned "base school," which has "muddied the water" on gauging the actual performance at those schools.

We don't have the luxury of not being transparent with student outcomes," he said.

The IGA has 251 students, but only 49 of them have beed identified as gifted.

"The gifted academy label does not fit the student population it serves," Lanier said. "That's not to say that those students are not talented or high-achieving, but if a building is named a gifted academy, you would expect that the majority of the student population be gifted, and it takes away our legitimacy to defend an institution. This is not a branding problem. This is a core structural misalignment, and it's Ben Lanier's opinion is that it was not set up to succeed."

The IB magnet school would spell out clear criteria for admissions to avoid any appearances of favoritism. It would immediately qualify for $180,000 in state funding. Part of it would pay for a principal and literacy coach, while $40,000 would be earmarked for security and $20,000 for mental health services.

La'Ronda Fleming, the district's federal programs director, pitched the plan for Moore Street to switch to a blended learning instructional model that called for more face-to-face teaching time despite the staff being hit hard by job cuts last fall.

In the first semester, enrollment was 74 students, with seven teachers and two administrators. This semester, enrollment is at 67 students, but with just three teachers and one administrator.

The move to the former IGA classrooms would put the students on the same campus as the high school, but in a different building, while allowing for support and newer facilities.

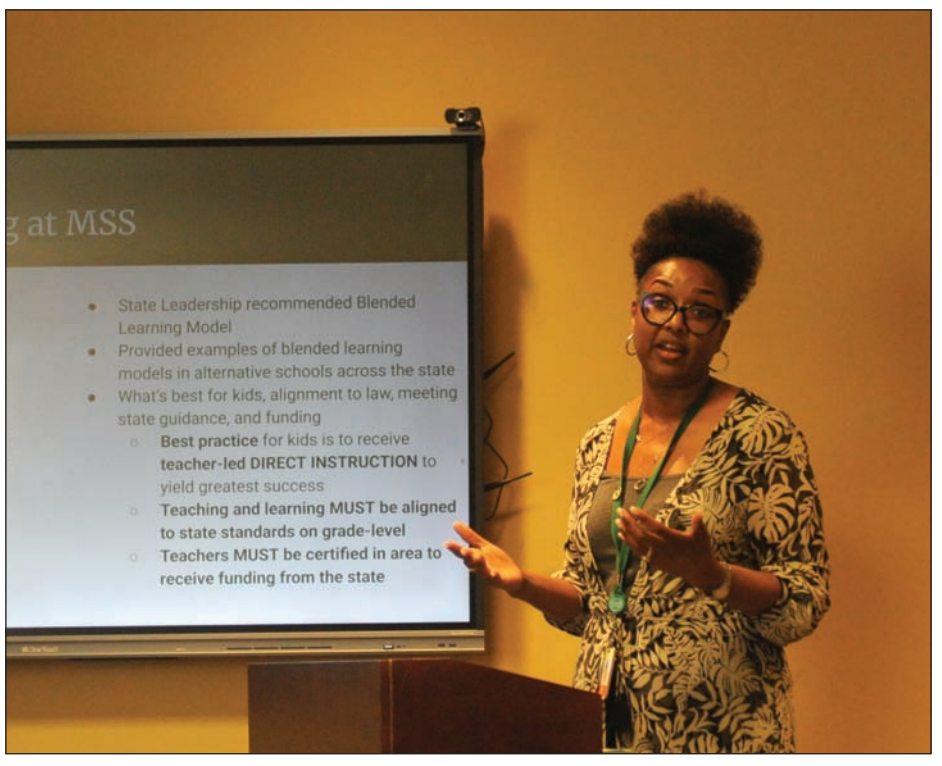
"They would be in a more secure building," said board member John Bell, drawing groans some in the crowd.

Interim Superintendent Marcee Pool said the plans were among many recommendations made by the state, some of which would not work for Dublin. "We had to wrap our heads around it and determine if it's feasible for our system," she said, explaining the delay in presenting the plans to board members, Both Lanier and Fleming said their presentations were not finished until shortly before the board meeting.

Walters, a longtime board member, objected to the board "getting these things at the last minute.

"This board is getting back into some of its old habits. Don't worry about the minority as long as the majority is going," Walters said.

Board member James Lanier responded in his comments, saying, "Whether it's 4-3 or 7-0, as long as we have the best interest of the kids at heart, it doesn't matter. And I don't care if you're black or white."



Federal programs director La'Ronda Fleming outlines the plan for a new learning model for alternative school students/**RODNEY MANLEY**

Regina McRae was one of several residents who spoke in support of Moore Street School and called for equity in the distribution of school resources/**RODNEY MANLEY**

MCCUNE

Continued from page 1

munity deserves a reliable and structured transportation system. I will advocate for partnerships between city and county leadership to secure grants and funding to move us toward a real solution.

We also need to improve access to essential resources, including bringing a supermarket to the Highway 441 South area. I will support ongoing efforts with the Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce to make that a reality.

CHAIN

Continued from page 1

attract new businesses and expand existing ones. By doing this, we create jobs, strengthen our economy and improve quality of life for everyone.

Another major challenge is providing timely and effective emergency services. Laurens County has a growing and aging population, and the demand for ambulance, fire and emergency medical services has increased significantly. Our county's size, along with the river that runs through it and the limited crossings, can make response times more difficult—yet in emergencies, every second matters.

I am committed to continuing investments in our emergency services to ensure that all citizens—whether they live in the city or in our rural areas—receive prompt, high-quality care. Public safety is not optional; it is essential, and I will work to make sure our county is prepared to meet these needs now and in the future.

Governor announces national recognition for Georgia's Pre-K program

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

ATLANTA — Governor Brian P. Kemp announced that Georgia's Pre-K Program has met all 10 of 10 quality benchmarks established by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), positioning the state as a national leader in early childhood education. Georgia Pre-K is the largest program in the nation to meet all 10 benchmarks, and the first universal program to do so.

This remarkable achievement is a direct result of the unwavering dedication and strategic investment of Governor Kemp and Georgia's visionary policymakers who have made early childhood education a top priority. Thanks to their leadership, Georgia continues to set the bar for excellence in Pre-K education and inspire states nationwide.

The announcement was made during a press conference at the Georgia State Capitol, where Governor Kemp joined NIEER officials to release NIEER's national 2025 State of Preschool Report. The yearbook provides an annual snapshot of state-funded preschool across the country. At the event, leaders highlighted Georgia's progress as a direct result of strategic investments and program improvements.

"Georgia is proud to be a leader in quality early childhood education as we work to ensure all Georgians have the opportunity to succeed, including our youngest learners," said Georgia Governor Brian P. Kemp. "Having strategically invested in our Pre-K classrooms, we are both meeting all 10 NIEER benchmarks of excellence and giving Georgia students a strong start on the path of lifelong learning."

This achievement follows significant state investment in the program, including a $97.6 million funding increase in 2024 and an additional $46 million investment in 2025. These resources funded enhancements that contributed to meeting NIEER standards.

Among the most impactful improvements:

- Reduced maximum class size from 22 to 20 students
- Lowered teacher-to-student ratios from 1:11 to 1:10 to increase individualized instruction
- Strengthened overall classroom quality and learning environments
- Increased lead and assistant teacher salary

As a result, Georgia's Pre-K Program is now ranked among the top 10 in the nation for quality, and Georgia joins a select group of states that have achieved all 10 benchmarks.

"Other states should take note: Georgia proves that state-funded preschool with well-qualified teachers, pay parity with K-12, small classes, and strong continuous improvement systems can be scaled as a universal program," said Steve Barnett, Founder and Director of NIEER.

Georgia's Pre-K Program is administered by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) led by Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs and Deputy Commissioner of Pre-K Instruction and Support, Susan Adams.

"Achieving all of NIEER's benchmarks reflects years of enhancing quality in every Pre-K classroom," said Commissioner Jacobs. "We appreciate the support of Governor Kemp and key state lawmakers that has enabled us to invest in our teachers, reduce class sizes, and prioritize student outcomes. Working together, Georgia is delivering the high-quality early education that its children deserve."

The NIEER benchmarks are widely recognized as the gold standard for measuring state-funded preschool program quality, evaluating factors such as teacher qualifications, class size, curriculum standards, and program oversight.

COUNTY COMMISSION

Continued from page 1

county's request for proposals.

Rogers said the burn building is used by both county and city of Dublin firefighters for live training in suppressing real fire. In addition to the benefit of better trained firefighters, the burn building helps save property owners money. The training center helps fire departments earn better ratings from the Insurance Services Office, and better scores help lower insurance rates for homeowners and businesses.

WHP Training's bid, unlike the others, was for a multi-floored facility, similar to the current building, which contributes to the better insurance scores.

Mathis and several other commissioners thanked state Rep. Matt Hatchett for securing more than $500,000 for the project. Rogers said revenue from the special purpose local option sales tax would be used to pay for the work.

"Without Matt Hatchett this project does not happen," Mathis said.

Some construction has already begun at the Valambrosia Road. Mathis said a slab prepared there was one of the last projects completed by county employee Randall Warnock before he passed away almost four months ago.

Welcome to the Sales Team

Justin Adkins
Finance Manager

Brett invites all of his family and friends to stop by and he'll be glad to help you with all of their automotive needs.

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Welcome to the Sales Team

Brett Poulton
Sales Manager

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