

County Commission proposing \$70.3 million new budget

By **RODNEY MANLEY**
Staff Reporter

The Laurens County Commission has proposed a \$70.3 million budget for fiscal year 2027.

Although the total is about \$200,000 less than for FY26, spending from the general fund would increase by about \$3 million – to \$39.1 million.

Among the biggest increases are in fuel costs, inmate medical care at the county jail and opera-

tional expenses at the new 911 center.

Rising gas costs fueled a \$300,000 increase in fuel expenses. Laurens County covers 818 square miles and is Georgia's third-largest county by land area.

"We're a big county. We have a lot of area to cover," County Administrator Bryan Rogers said.

Health care at the county jail would increase to about \$450,000, much of it to provide mental health services for inmates, Rogers said.

Construction of the new 911 center was funded through a special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST), but operational costs associated with the Next Generation 911 system, which switches from outdated analog to a digital platform, are expected to increase significantly.

The commission held its first public hearing on the proposed budget on Tuesday. Rae Bloodworth attended to address the commission about a smaller-ticket

item in the budget.

Bloodworth, who recently retired as a county bailiff, asked that the commission consider a recommendation by a Laurens County grand jury last November to increase bailiff pay to \$100 per day. Bailiffs are paid \$50 per day, while surrounding counties pay \$75.

"While a deputy provides courtroom security, bailiffs handle essential court operations such as jury management. The current \$50 per day rate has made reten-

tion difficult," Bloodworth told the board.

"This recommendation is supported by court personnel, including the district attorney and law enforcement leadership. This is a small budget adjustment that directly affects court coverage and operations."

The commission is scheduled to vote when it meets again June 30. Copies of the budget are available at the commission office at the courthouse annex.

Dublin to buy drones for police, fire departments

By **PAYTON TOWNS III**
Senior Reporter

The city police officers and firefighters will soon be able to get a bird's eye view of Dublin.

The Dublin City Council approved the purchase of three drones and three docking stations from Paladin Drones. Dublin City Manager Josh Powell said they had budgeted to buy the equipment in their FY 27 budget.

"This will assist the police department in their duties," Powell said. "After the police chief and staff reviewed options from multiple vendors, they decided Paladin would provide us with the best bang for our buck."

They will be able to convert one of the city's assisting drones to tie in to the new system's software. They will also have an ongoing software contract with Paladin for the service related to the maintenance of the drones

as well as the video footage gained from the drones.

The funding will be split between the 2024 SPLOST and general funds, Powell said. Dublin Mayor Joshua Kight asked DPD Chief Keith Moon to inform the audience about the drones.

"Once we get the system set up, we can place them anywhere in town as long as we have power, internet and infrastructure," Moon said. "We can fly them for police department and fire calls also. We can use them for patrol and also use them to respond to calls."

Kight knew the drones were some of the technology Moon and Dublin Fire Chief Matthew Cutler had asked for to help in their job.

"This will be beneficial for public safety," the mayor said. "Thank you for continuing to look for ways to increase the safety in our city."



Dublin Police Chief Keith Moon shares information about the three drones the city council approved for the police and fire department/PAYTON TOWNS III

When asked, Moon confirmed that all three of the drones will have infrared sensors to detect heat energy.

Earlier in the meeting, the council held a second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to rezone 3.5 acres to allow MGVV to build multi-family housing. Blake McRae, who was at Thursday's meeting on

behalf of the owner, spoke during the hearing about building adjacent to existing multi-family housing on Woodlawn Drive.

"These will be very similar to the same multi-family development right next door," McRae informed the council. "The intent would be 59 units. We just want to duplicate what is going on right next door."

Kight asked a few questions, informing McRae that during the time the last apartments were built, the city had come up with additional conditions for builders.

"It is mainly for purposes of safety," Kight said.

The council wanted to know:

- Was there a plan to add a sidewalk to connect to the

crosswalk?

- Was there a plan for lighting in the parking lots?

That information was not immediately available, but McRae said he would discuss the requirements with the owner. He did say they plan to have a greenspace but said that type of amen-

CITY COUNCIL
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Residents escape fire through windows; authorities investigate cause of blaze

By **PAYTON TOWNS III**
Senior Reporter

Officials are working to determine the cause of a fire at a Dublin home without active electricity. Four people escaped the blaze despite the residence having no fire alarms and an obstructed doorway.

Dublin Fire Chief Matthew Cutler said they received a call around 1:19 a.m. Thursday, June 18, about a house fire at 719

Cardinal Circle.

"When we got the call they were trying to get everybody out," Cutler said. "There were four occupants in the home and they had no working smoke alarms so the fire was well developed before anybody realized there was a fire in the home."

The flames blocked the primary exits and the four people had to climb out of two different windows.

"Thankfully, they were

able to get out unharmed before we arrived," Cutler said. "I think they will be able to potentially redo this house."

It was a wood-framed house with four bedrooms. The cause remains under investigation. The state fire marshal's office was contacted. The chief said local investigators were also looking into the blaze.

HOUSE FIRE
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This photo of the home at 719 Cardinal Circle shows the blocked exit through the garage /SPECIAL PHOTO

Dublin police looking into car break-ins

By **PAYTON TOWNS III**
Senior Reporter

Two men dressed in dark clothing approached a vehicle parked in a driveway. Watching the video, it appeared that at least one tried to open the door, but it was locked. After peering through the window and apparently not seeing anything of value, both quickly walked away toward another house.

When Beatriz Lleras woke up the next morning, she was surprised to see that she had an alert from her camera.

"When I looked, that is

what I saw," she said. "They didn't take anything, but that's not really the point. Even though they didn't take anything, it felt like an invasion of privacy. It was a violation of personal space, my home and property."

She received the alert at 2:45 a.m. informing her that a person was detected in her driveway. Not the time of day for a visitor. Lleras posted the footage on social media.

"There is no reason why anybody should be going into other people's cars or property. I wanted to bring awareness to what was going on in the area, especial-

ly with other incidents that have been happening around town. Somebody has commented that you should not even walk across somebody else's yard and that most would go all the way around because they don't want others to think you are trying to walk on their property. They wouldn't want somebody to take their things from their property or car.

"Also, I wanted to send the message that that type of behavior was not going to be tolerated," Lleras added. "I want to nip this in the

BREAK-INS
Continued on page 7



A still shot of Beatriz Lleras' home surveillance camera captures two people looking into her vehicle recently /SPECIAL PHOTO

Dublin man sentenced to prison on federal weapons charge

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

SAVANNAH – A Dublin man was one of three people who received prison sentences in federal court for illegal possession of a firearm and one

for possessing a machine gun.

Sentences were handed down in U.S. District Court and were announced by Southern District of Georgia U.S. Attorney Margaret E.

"Meg" Heap. They include:

- Michael Rice, 37, of Dublin, who was sentenced to 84 months in prison and a \$1,500 fine followed by three years of supervised release after pleading guilty to

possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. In October 2024, Rice was found in possession of a .38-caliber pistol in Laurens County.

GUN CHARGES
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OBITUARIES



Mildred Rebecca Sanders Woodard

Mildred Rebecca Sanders Woodard passed away on June 17, 2026, in Dublin, Georgia, at the age of 98. Born on May 24, 1928, in Wilkinson County, Georgia, she lived a long and meaningful life marked by devotion to her family, steady faith and a gentle spirit that touched all who knew her.

Mildred was the daughter of the late Warren Sanders and Dora Collins Sanders. She was also preceded in death by her beloved husband of 67 years, Cecil C. Woodard, and by her grandsons, Luke Woodard and Caleb Woodard. Her life was deeply rooted in family, and she carried the love of those she held dear with her throughout her years. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother whose presence brought comfort and warmth to her home and to the lives of those around her.

Mildred worked faithfully throughout her life and was known for her strong work ethic and dependable nature. She was a former florist with Garden Gate Flower Shop and also served as a bus driver for the Laurens County Board of Education. In addition to her work outside the home, she was a devoted homemaker who took great pride in caring for her family and maintaining a welcoming home. She approached every responsibility with patience and care, and those who knew her admired the quiet strength with which she lived her life.

She was a member of Oconee Baptist Church and found strength and comfort in her faith. Her church family was important to her, and her life reflected the values she held dear. She enjoyed working, cooking, and gardening, and she especially loved being in her yard. She could often be found tending to her outdoor spaces and wearing out lawnmowers, a pastime that reflected both her energy and her enjoyment of simple, honest labor. These were among the many ways she expressed her love for home and for the life she built with her husband and family.

She is survived by her sons, Clinton Woodard and his wife Nancy of Metter, Larry Woodard and his wife Freda of Dublin, Jerry Woodard and his wife Dyonna of Dublin, and Danny Woodard and his wife Renea of Milledgeville. She also leaves behind her grandchildren, Angela Lewis and her husband Brian, Ryan Woodard and his wife Michelle, Julie Wade, Erica Bowles and her husband Brian, Josh Woodard and his wife Jenny, Nathan Woodard, and Brandon Woodard. Her legacy continues through her great-grandchildren, Walker Lewis, Taylor Lewis, Hayden Bowles, Addison Bowles, David Woodard, Katie Woodard, Faith Woodard, Brittany Persily, Caitlyn Persily, Ian Woodard, Caroline Woodard, Haley Woodard, Carley Wade and Abby Wade. Each of them was a source of joy to her, and she treasured the role she played in their lives.

Funeral services were held at 3 p.m., Saturday, June 20, 2026 at the Mary Whitaker Townsend Memorial Chapel with burial to

follow at Dublin Memorial Gardens. Rev. Rick Statham and Elder Garry Hall will officiate.

The family received friends from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. Saturday, June 20, 2026 at the funeral home.

Pallbearers were Ryan Woodard, Brandon Woodard, Nathan Woodard, Walker Lewis, Josh Woodard, David Woodard and Hayden Bowles.

Those wishing to make contributions may donate to Oconee Baptist Church, 2350 Oconee Church Road, Dublin, Georgia 31021.

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

Townsend Brothers Funeral Home has charge of the arrangements.



LaJean "Bootie" Kirby Hall

LaJean "Bootie" Kirby Hall, lovingly known as Bootie, passed away on June 17, 2026, in Dublin, Georgia, at the age of 70.

Born on Jan. 15, 1956, in Fort Payne, Alabama, she was the daughter of the late Clebron Theodore Kirby and Peggy June Kirby. Bootie made Dublin, Georgia, her home for most of her life, and it was there that she built the life she cherished. She met her husband in Dublin and together they raised their family in the community she loved.

She graduated from Dublin High School in 1974 and later attended Middle Georgia College. Bootie worked for many years as a radio DJ at WXLI in Dublin, where she shared her voice and personality with listeners until 2002.

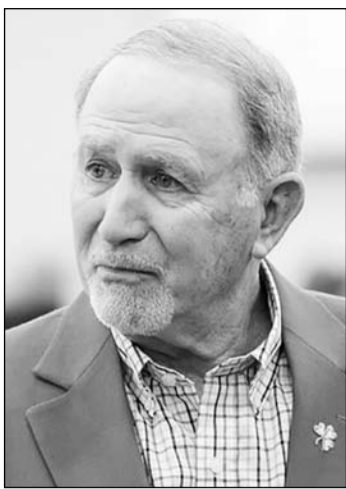
Outside of work, Bootie found joy in the simple and meaningful pleasures of life. She loved antiquing and had a special appreciation for the stories and character found in old treasures. Gardening brought her peace and satisfaction, and she also loved cooking meals for her family and friends. She was a devoted Alabama football fan and never missed a chance to cheer on her beloved Crimson Tide with a heartfelt "Roll Tide." Above all, she treasured time spent with her grandbabies, which brought her great happiness and filled her days with laughter and love.

Bootie is survived by her husband, John Hal Hall of Dublin; sons, Heath Hal Hall (Ben Ku) of Tucker, Ga. and Jesse Hale Hall (Alicia) of Dublin; grandson, John Parker Hall; granddaughter, Harper Jean Hall; brother, Mike Kirby (Phyllis) of Dublin; sister, Lojuanna O'Neal (Steve) of Fort Payne, Ala.; numerous nieces and nephews, and her beloved dog, Dixie "Peanut."

A graveside service was held at 2 p.m. on Friday, June 19, at Marie Baptist Church Cemetery. Rev. Bobby Hutto officiated. The family received friends on Friday from 1:30 p.m. until service hour at the cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Dublin-Laurens County Humane Society in honor of her love for animals.

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



Douglas Carl Metts

Funeral services for Douglas Carl Metts, 75 was held at 11 a.m. Saturday, June 20, 2026, at Marie Baptist Church, with interment to follow in the church cemetery. Rev. Bobby Hutto will officiate.

Mr. Metts was born Sept. 2, 1950, in Dublin, Georgia. He was the son of the late Urban Carl Metts and Jane Shearouse Metts. He was a member of Marie Baptist Church. He served in the United States Army Reserve and earned an outstanding trainee award during military training achieving a perfect score out of 10,000 reserves on a physical combat proficiency test.

Doug graduated high school from Dublin High School in 1968 and was named MVP of the basketball team that finished state runner-up that same year. He played college basketball at Middle Georgia College and then went on to earn an undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia where he was a member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity. He completed his master's from Georgia College and State University in administration. Doug devoted 40 years to education as a teacher, coach and administrator. He was the head football coach at East Laurens High School from 1988-1993 where he led his team to a Region AA Championship in 1991. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend. Mr. Metts passed away Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center.

Mr. Metts is survived by his wife, Wanda Hester Metts of Dublin; a son, Chan and Whitney Metts of Boone, N.C.; a daughter, Carla Metts of Charlotte, N.C.; three sisters, Sam Metts and Tom Harkleroad of Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.; Lynn Metts and Phil Cronin of Dublin, and Gena Metts of Dublin; and two grandchildren, Everly Gebhart and Jhett Gebhart.

Pallbearers will be Chad Wyatt, Rex Woody, Dennis Holley, Joel Watson, Paul Hodges and Daniel Hester.

Mr. Metts's former coaches and players will serve as honorary pallbearers.

The family received friends from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 20, 2026 at Marie Baptist Church.

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



Children who witness or experience domestic violence in their homes are more likely as adults to enter into abusive relationships as abusers or as victims of abuse.

272-8000 or 800-WINGS-03



Doris Padgett Dent

Doris Padgett Dent, 94, of Dublin, passed away on Saturday June 20, 2026 at her home surrounded by her family.

Doris was retired form mental health where she served as a house parent in a group home.

She was a dedicated, loving wife, mother and grandmother. She was a free hearted and forgiving person. She always thought of everyone first ahead of herself. She tried so hard to make peace and was a people pleaser. She was very interested in music and loved to read. Doris loved her family, she taught her nephew, the late Wayne Hammond his first chord on the guitar and he went on to play with Ernest Tub. She took care of all of her siblings, whom she out lived.

Doris Dent was preceded in death by her husband, William Dent, her parents, J.L. Padgett and Ola Howell Padgett two children; Karen Renae Dent and Kenneth William Dent, her siblings, Louise Hammond, Bill Padgett, Lester Padgett, Harvey Padgett, Nellie Schwalls, Mackie Byars and Marjorie Padgett and her son-in-law who she loved like a son, Earl Wilson.

Mrs. Dent is survived by her daughters; Vonnie Wilson and Sandra (Doug) Gay both of Dublin, her grandsons, Shon (Heather) Wiley, Travis Register, and Rodney Register, great grandchildren, Wesley McDermitt, Savannah Wiley, Creek Wiley, Coy Register, Chris Register, Blake Register and Gunner Register and several nieces and nephews, special niece, Brenda Hammond, caregivers, Faye Byars, Diane Moorman and Veronica Kyler.

A celebration of life service will be held 2 p.m. Tuesday, June 23 in the Mary Whitaker Townsend Chapel at Townsend Brothers Funeral Home. The family will receive friends at the funeral home from 1 p.m. until the funeral hour.

She will be buried beside her husband at Northview Cemetery following the service.

Wesley McDermitt, Jeffrey Tomberlin, Harvey Lee Padgett, Charles Allen Seymour, Doug Gay and J.W. Cooper will serve as pallbearers



Columbus C. Pullen Jr.

Mr. Columbus C. Pullen Jr., 85, beloved husband of Ann Foskey Pullen, of East Dublin, passed away peacefully on Thursday morning, June 18, 2026 at their home.

A native and lifelong resident of Laurens County, he was the youngest of two children and only son born to the late Columbus C. "Bay" Pullen Sr., and Louise Johnson Pullen. After graduating from East Laurens High School he began a long career working in the construction industry as an Electrician and Heating and Air Conditioning Mechanic. He worked with several companies before joining the Veteran's Administration. In 1959 he married his childhood sweetheart, Thelma Ann Foskey and they began a journey together that lasted 67 years. Upon joining the V.A. he worked in the maintenance department for 33 years, until retiring in 2006. While working his regular daily job, he continued farming; which was his true love and passion. Even after working all day and farming into the night, he oftentimes would leave his house and go to help someone needing heat or air conditioning for their family; many times providing needed parts and his labor at no cost.

Affectionately referred to by his grandkids as "PePa," "Grandpa" and "Paw Paw," they will each remember the life lessons and values that he instilled in each of them by the life he lived and examples that he set. Miss Ann recalls restaurant visits that after looking over the menu he would simply say, "I'll Have What She's Having." He was always thankful, even through his illness; he always thanked God, in prayer, for what he was doing and what he was going to do.

He enjoyed hunting, watching the wild birds in their yard and keeping their feeders full of seed, trips to the Smoky Mountains, train rides and visiting Dollywood in Pigeon Forge.

Mr. and Mrs. Pullen have been longtime members of Pleasant Springs Baptist Church in East Dublin where he taught Sunday School for over 50 years.

In addition to his par-

ents, he is preceded in death by two grandchildren, Jed and Gracie Pullen.

Mr. Pullen leaves to cherish his memory: His wife, Ann Foskey Pullen; their children, Janet Beacham (Kevin), Jeffery Pullen, Marsha Warnock (Ricky) and Chris Pullen (Mandy), all of East Dublin; his sister, Betty Carter, also of East Dublin; sister-in-law, Faye Ricks, Soperton, Ga.; five grandchildren: Casey Green (Timothy), Amy Kinchen (Chad), Josh Warnock (Ashley), Jacob Warnock and Gage Pullen; five great-grandchildren; Colby Kinchen, Holton Kinchen, Dylan Green, Hannah Green and Cullen Warnock; cousins, Jeanette Ban, McRae, Eudell Sanders, Dublin, Ruby Nell Black, Dublin, Elsie Black of Dublin; his constant pet companions and countless close friends and those that he has helped throughout his lifetime.

Funeral services were conducted at 2 p.m. on Monday, June 22, 2026 at the Pleasant Springs Baptist Church in East Dublin with Pastor Timothy (Cricket) Green and Pastor Al Soles officiating.

Mr. Pullen was laid to rest in the Pleasant Springs Baptist Church Cemetery.

Serving as pallbearers were: Dale Fulghum, Clint Thigpen, Gage Pullen, Colby Kinchen, Josh Warnock, Jacob Warnock, Dylan Green and Anthony Carter.

His family received friends on Sunday from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. at Sammons Funeral Home in Soperton.

The family wishes to extend a special thank you to the staff of Georgia Hospice of Dublin that provided compassion and care to Mr. Pullen during his illness.

Please share a memory, leave a condolence message and sign the online guest register at www.sammonsfuneralhome.com

Sammons Funeral Home - Since 1917

BIRTHDAYS

June 23
Keondre Powell



What makes us great.

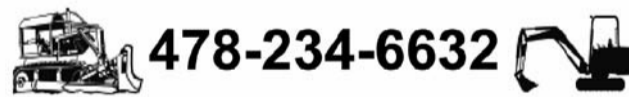


Pass It On.

PUBLIC NOTICE

There will be a Called Meeting of the East Dublin Mayor and Council Tuesday, June 23, 2026 at 5:00 pm to be held in the Terrie E. Drew Council Chambers in order to hold a work session with the Georgia Rural Water Association.

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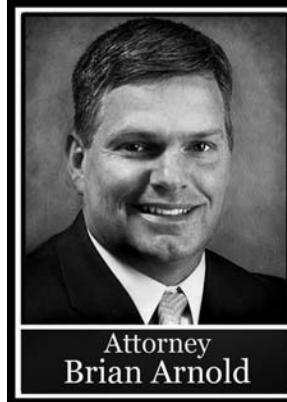
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OBITUARIES



Melanie Ann Garner McCullars

Melanie Ann Garner McCullars of Soperton died Thursday, June 18, 2026 at Twin City Trails Nursing Home in Twin City, Ga.

Mrs. McCullars, 54, was born on March 29, 1972 in Lakeland, Fla. to Charles Hubert and Margie Ann Hooks Garner. She grew up in Bartow, Fla. and attended Polk County High School. She and her family moved to Georgia over 35 years ago and she and her husband had been residents of Treutlen County in the Gillis Springs Community for the past 10 years. She worked as a cook at the Shamrock Bowl Center in Dublin and also cooked for several Huddle House Restaurants around the area. She was a Baptist by faith and Jeff stated she was a "loving wife." Her father, Charles Hubert Garner, preceded her in death.

Survivors include her husband of 20 years, Jeff McCullars of Soperton; her mother, Margie Ann Zipper of Soperton; two daughters, Crystal (Jammie) Livingston of Dublin and Ashley Shaw of Big Piney, W.V.; two grandchildren; aunt and uncle, Tommy and Debbie Brantley of Soperton; niece, Angel (Waylon) Toler; nephew, Chad (Megan) McCullars of Dublin; two great nieces, Jessica and Bethany; her brother-in-law, Mark (Sue) McCullars and her "Fur Baby Fluffy."

A memorial service will be held by the family at a later date.

Higgs Funeral Home of Soperton has charge of arrangements.

Democrats again block GOP plan to swap property tax cuts for sales tax increases

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — For a second time this year, Democrats in the Georgia House rejected a Republican plan to reduce homeowner property tax bills.

The Democrats' argument was unchanged from their refusal to support a similar GOP tax plan earlier this year: a sales tax to subsidize homeowner property tax bills would have raised prices on everyone for everyday necessities, from baby formula to school supplies.

"The no-vote today is a vote for no new taxes," said Rep. Tanya Miller, D-Atlanta, on Saturday, the third day of a special session. She called the Republican proposal, which would have let 67 communities put a 1% sales tax on the ballot, a "bait and switch."

Republicans contended that fast-rising property tax bills have become unaffordable and that their approach would have helped.

A penny-on-the-dollar sales tax would have saved homeowners in Gwinnett County \$250 million and homeowners in Forsyth County at least \$60 million, said Rep. Shaw Blackmon, R-Bonaire, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

It is "the kind of relief that could have helped some residents stay in the homes they own," he said.

Blackmon was in charge of crafting the

chamber's approach to affordability during an election year when the issue is a top concern.

During the regular session, he had proposed House Resolution 1114, which would have put a constitutional amendment on the ballot statewide asking voters if they wanted to pay more in sales tax so homeowners could pay less in property tax.

Republicans have a majority in the House and Senate, but constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority. Democrats rejected HR 1114.

Then, in the waning hours of that regular session, the Senate devised Senate Bill 33, which splintered the same idea into local votes by each community. The bill passed because it did not require a two-thirds majority, and Gov. Brian Kemp signed it into law in May.

Kemp then called lawmakers back to the Capitol to deal with lingering election issues and added the local sales tax question to their agenda.

The catch: although SB 33 did not require a two-thirds majority, each local bill it authorized did. Democrats remained opposed on Saturday when local legislative delegations brought their measures to a vote as a package in the House.

There were only three such measures in the Senate, and Democrats there denied each one a two-thirds majority, as well.

The sales taxes would have driven up costs

for shoppers, Senate Minority Whip Kim Jackson, D-Stone Mountain, said after the vote. "Whereas only those who are lucky enough to afford a house will see any relief," she said.

Republicans had pointed out that tourists pay sales taxes too. They did not point out, however, that the revenue would have subsidized only the local government portion of the tax bill and not the school portion, which is typically the largest share.

The disagreement promises to be a potent election year issue.

Democrats will argue that the scheme was illegal from the start.

Miller, one of the Democrats who spoke against the measure in the House, is her party's nominee for state attorney general. She argued after the vote that as a product of the Senate, SB 33 was unconstitutional because tax legislation must originate in the House.

But Republicans contended that Kemp signed it, so it's legal. And Rep. Scott Hilton, R-Peachtree Corners, said the Democratic Party "deep down knows" the sales taxes would have been popular among voters if the measures had appeared on their ballots.

"But voters are being denied that chance right now. Denied the chance to have a more affordable life, to be able to afford their home, to stay in their homes," he said. "Today, Democrats have denied that chance."

Dublin Police Department

- Cordarran Hickman, 22, was charged with driving under the influence, driving while license suspended or revoked, open container of alcohol in motor vehicle, possession of marijuana less than one ounce and possession of drug-related objects, at 3:53 a.m. on May 25 at Stubbs Park on Park Place.

An officer observed a vehicle parked by the skate ramp that appeared to be running and alerted dispatch. Approaching the vehicle, the officer noticed someone inside who appeared to be asleep and identified the individual as a man. There was multiple attempts to wake the man by knocking on the windows and a firm conversation was eventually successful.

The officer began talking while the man avoided eye contact and spoke in a very low tone until the officer asked him to speak up. The man then made eye contact and the officer saw red, glossy eyes and detected the smell of alcoholic beverages on the man's breath. The officer asked the man why he was in the park after hours. The man said he had been going through it with his baby mama and came to the park to chill.

The officer also smelled suspected marijuana. He could see what appeared to be a small black grinder inside the vehicle under the radio.

The officer asked the man to turn off the vehicle and got him to step out. The man was unsteady on his feet. At that time, the officer was able to identify the man as Hickman. After the man had stepped out of his vehicle, the officer saw an opened Four Loko alcoholic beverage in the driver's side floorboard where Hickman had been sitting.

The man admitted that he had been drink-



POLICE BEAT...

ing and possibly had too much to drink. At that time, the officer was able to run Hickman's license number through dispatch which came back with the man having a suspended license. Hickman was arrested and transported to Fairview Park Hospital to have his blood drawn. He was then transported to the Laurens County Detention Center.

- Around 9:50 p.m. on May 29, an officer responded to the area of South Washington Street and Hudson Street in reference to a car accident.

The officer met with both drivers involved in the wreck and was advised that Thomas Jones, 32, did not possess a valid driver's license. During the course of the investigation he became involved in a physical altercation with an unidentified man at the scene related to the incident. The officers immediately intervened and made contact with both people to de-escalate the situation and prevent any further disturbance.

Jones was arrested and transported to the police department for fingerprinting and processing.

Laurens County Sheriff's Office

- A deputy was dispatched to Snowhill Road in Cadwell around 9 p.m. on May 31 in reference to a woman trespassing.

- A theft occurred on Eagle Creek Road around 9:58 p.m. on May 27.

- On May 30, around 8:08 a.m. a deputy went to West Kaitlyn Court in reference to damaged property.

- A deputy arrested Matthew Thomas Creamer, 50, of East Dublin in reference to warrants.

- On May 28, at 11:25 a.m., a deputy was dispatched to Roberson Church Road in reference to the caller wanting to make a report.

- A deputy was dispatched to Pinehill Road regarding a theft around 9:10 a.m. May 27.

- A Rentz man talked with a deputy about his company's insurance sending him a notice of cancellation on May 26.

- A theft occurred on Emily Drive around 3:51 p.m. on June 1.

- A deputy responded to the law enforcement center for a walk-in around 12:30 p.m. on May 30.

- A deputy responded to an accident with injuries at 7:52 p.m. on May 29.

- A woman talked with a deputy about her son being impersonated by an unknown person on Scotland Road in Rentz on May 27 at 8:08 a.m.

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.

MOMENTS IN TIME

* On July 6, 1900, Warren Earp, youngest of the famous gunfighting Earp brothers, was murdered at the Headquarters Saloon in Willcox, Arizona, by John Boyett. Reportedly, Warren had imbibed too much alcohol and begun abusing some of the customers. While Boyett was tried for murder, he was declared innocent on the grounds of acting in self-defense.

* On July 7, 1456, Joan of Arc's conviction for heresy was overturned at an appeal proceeding held at the archbishop's palace in Rouen, France. Sadly, she had been burned at the stake 25 years earlier.

* On July 8, 1853, Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry sailed into Japan's Tokyo Bay with a squadron of four American vessels. At first officials refused to speak with him, but under threat of attack they accepted letters from President Millard Fillmore, making the U.S. the first Western nation to establish relations with Japan since the country declared itself closed to foreigners two centuries previously.

* On July 9, 1948, baseball star Satchel Paige made his Major League debut with the Cleveland Indians, becoming, at age 42, the oldest rookie in the sport's history. As he notably remarked, "Age is a question of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it don't matter."

* On July 10, 1962, the United States Patent Office issued Swedish engineer Nils Bohlin a patent for his three-point automobile safety belt. Consisting of two straps joined at the hip level and fastened into a single anchor point, it reduced injuries by holding both the upper and lower body and decreasing the impact of the swift deceleration that occurred in a crash.

* On July 11, 1978, a truck carrying liquid gas crashed into a wall at a campsite of vacationers in San Carlos de la Rapita, Spain, resulting in an explosion that killed more than 200 people, with others suffering severe burns. The crash's cause was unknown, though some witnesses reported seeing a fire on the vehicle prior to the accident.

* On July 12, 1990, two days after Mikhail Gorbachev was re-elected head of the Soviet Communist Party, Boris Yeltsin, president of the Republic of Russia, announced his resignation from the party.

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TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

High cortisol causes patients to feel awful amid normal tests

By DR. KEITH ROACH
King Features

DEAR DR. ROACH: I've been feeling just awful. My doctor put me through the normal tests, and all were good. A neurologist recommended that I get a cortisol test. I did, and it showed a high cortisol level. I'd never heard of this. Would you explain what high cortisol is, how it's treated, and if there are any natural cures or therapies? -- S.K.

ANSWER: Cortisol is a critical hormone that is needed for the function of many body systems. Without cortisone, the body can't respond to stress, and a stressful event can literally kill a patient.

A medical condition called Addison's disease is when the body can't make cortisol (a type of steroid called a glucocorticoid). People with this condition need to take replacement cortisol or a synthetic form daily, and they need to take higher doses when under stress to prevent this. Addison's disease was most often caused by tuberculosis, but the leading cause of Addison's is an autoimmune disease of the adrenal cortex (where cortisone is made). People usually feel weak and tired with Addison's.

Cushing's syndrome is the opposite, where the body makes too much cortisone. The most common cause for this is a benign tumor. In Cushing's syndrome, the list of possible symptoms is seemingly endless, but fatigue and muscle weakness, weight gain in the abdomen but muscle loss in the limbs, and skin and hair changes are common. People can experience the same problem when taking high doses of cortisol or similar steroids such as prednisone, hydrocortisone or dexamethasone.

A cortisol level of 18 isn't diagnostic of Cushing's but almost certainly excludes Addison's disease. Depending on the time of day, cortisol levels can be between 5-25 mcg/dL, so a level of 18 mcg/dL in the morning may be normal. People with high levels of stress tend to have high to normal cortisol levels.

In contrast, a level of 18 mcg/dL at bedtime would be a very concerning sign for Cushing's. If your doctors were worried about Cushing's, additional testing could

be recommended such as a 24-hour urine cortisol test, a bedtime salivary cortisol test, or checking the blood cortisol after suppressing its release with medication.

An endocrinologist is the expert in making the diagnosis and treating diseases of the adrenal hormones, including Addison's and Cushing's.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm 77 years old and concerned about getting a prostate biopsy. My last PSA test jumped from 2.25 to 3.75 ng/mL, and an MRI came back healthy and normal with a PI-RADS code of 2. My urologist suggested a biopsy to be sure that everything is OK, but he also felt comfortable if I wanted to wait six months and get another PSA test done.

I am in good health, exercise regularly, and am not on any medications. Also, can strenuous bike riding affect my PSA score? -- W.B.

ANSWER: A PI-RADS score of 2 means that there's a small chance of clinically significant prostate cancer. The best estimate of your risk is between 4% and 6%. One question I'd ask is whether you'd undergo surgery if a biopsy showed cancer. Surgery is associated with a worsened quality of life; erectile dysfunction and incontinence are common shortly after surgery and persist in many men.

The evidence suggests that in men over 75, surgery doesn't improve their length of life. In a large study, the length of life was actually decreased in men over 75. Radiation treatment is a reasonable alternative for men with symptomatic prostate cancer, so in the unlikely event that you develop symptoms from prostate cancer, this would be a reasonable approach.

Also, bike riding (250 miles over four days) had an increase of less than 0.1 ng/mL for a PSA test.

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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TELL IT!



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

I'd be glad when we can get a sheriff to patrol these county roads. People are flying by all of the time. I live on Dewey Warnock Road and they act like this is a NASCAR drive out here. I guarantee you that just about everyone who comes by is speeding. Some of them I know are doing 60 to 70 mph. We have grandchildren out here who play. If they kick a ball, you know they don't realize what they are doing and they'll run out in front of a car. I know nine times out of 10 they are speeding. I and other people will be glad when sheriff deputies are on county roads. They can make more money right here on Dewey Warnock Road than they can out there on the interstate in a week.

So, you've been paying taxes 65 years and you don't have to pay now? Well, it's like this, there are people in the county who have been paying for 65 years too. The thing is, what they don't like, because they don't get no tax break, they can't stand somebody to rub it in.

The day a doctor issues a person a handicap tag is the same day the department of driver services should take that person's driving license. If you see a handicap tag avoid the area.

Editor's note: All Tell It! calls and emails are subject to editing before publication. Submission does not guarantee publication.

We need police ticketing people for parking in the red zone at Dublin Village (Kroger shopping center). I see three cars parked outside WingStop/Little Tokyo right now, blocking traffic. No regard others!

The city needs to spend \$2 million for manhole covers. They are tearing up trucks, tearing up cars and busting tires. Why can't they do something about them and fix them instead of leaving us to dodge them? Police then think you are drunk and you are trying to miss a manhole.

Whoever the Dublin City School board selects as superintendent, he or she better get their money up front. They don't have any money and they haven't paid all of their bills and I don't trust the first board member up there.

The FBI needs to look at who ate them dinners down there and put their names in the paper. You should pay for your dinners like everybody else. It is not right to take your family out to eat and charge it back to the school system. I think all of the board members, whoever did it, should resign.

My plan with snakes - leave them alone

The library is known as a quiet place. It is usually a spot where one can hear a pin drop.

That is never the case when Jason Clark, from Southeastern Reptile Rescue, brings his different types of snakes and other animals to the library.

The children, and adults, cannot help but squeal a little or jump back in surprise when Clark pulls out another Mr. No Legs.

While Clark provides humor with his snake stories, he also provides a truth about them that I have kept for as many years as I have watched his shows.

The most important one was the time he said when you see a snake, do not stay around long to try to determine what kind it is or if it is venomous or non-venomous. Just back up the way you came and keep going until you are out of sight.

Most people get in trouble and are bitten when they try to get too close to one to try to grab it, move it or take a picture of it.

One time my wife was cleaning out a pet cage on a Saturday morning that we had left outside on our back porch.

The door had not been shut long when she came back inside to inform me that a rattlesnake was stuck in the old cage. I asked if it was dead. She did not stay around long enough to find out.

While waiting for Milledgeville's Animal Control officer to remove the rattler, I talked with my mother. During our conversation, I

MAN ABOUT TOWN...



By PAYTON TOWNS III

informed her about the rattlesnake in our old pet cage. She told me to go out there, grab it by the tail and throw it over the fence in the backyard.

I listen to my mom for advice, and I'm thankful to still have her to talk to, but this was one of those times I did not follow what she said.

I waited for the animal control officer to arrive. He took a look at the snake trapped in the cage and said out loud to himself, "How am I going to get that snake out of the cage so that I don't take your cage?"

From behind the door, my wife quickly cracked it open and said, "Take the cage!"

I looked at the man and told him, "You heard her, take the cage and the snake." We allowed the animal control officer to take Mr. No Leg out somewhere in the county.

When it comes to snake stories, I have them.

One day my wife and I were walking in the neighborhood trying to get a little exercise. When we returned to our house Jill wanted to

walk a few more laps around our yard while I stepped inside.

I had barely gotten inside when I heard the door open and Jill walk in. I asked her what was wrong, and she said she saw a snake crawling toward the bushes. I walked outside and told her to point where it went. About that time, we saw a snake make its way from the bushes to the woods near the top part of our yard.

Everybody has a snake story or two. I can think of many. One day in The Courier Herald office, a worker in the back of the building said they saw a snake near the pressroom.

Many of us went to look, but it took DuBose Porter to get it out from under a shelf. He held that harmless snake in the air for everyone to see.

After a few seconds of everyone gawking and making some noise about it, Porter asked if anyone would be willing to drive him to the river to let it go. When he looked around that crowd of people were gone.

No one wanted to volun-

teer for that trip.

One day when I returned home from work on a hot sunny summer afternoon, I pulled up to my house and could not help but notice a visitor on my front steps. I did not recall him having reservations.

I called Jill, who was inside the house, and told her there was a snake on the top step. She said, "How are you getting inside?" Thankfully, we have other doors, and the snake eventually made its way off our steps and back toward the woods.

The last take away from Clark's show, which usually happens after he asks the children if they want to touch a snake, is the importance of the snakes' venom. The research shows that the venom has helped cure diseases, including cancer.

So, if we wipe out all snakes, we are hurting ourselves in the long run.

I know people will choose to run over them, shoot them or maybe drop a boulder on them like they see in the Wile E. Coyote cartoons, but I plan to be observant and watch where I walk or stick my hands.

And yes, if I see one around my house, I plan to leave it alone. As Clark has said many times, there are snakes in the world and the odds of seeing them from time to time are pretty good.

When I do encounter one, I always recall what Clark has said many times in his shows at the library, "Leave it alone and it'll leave you alone. They are not the monsters people make them out to be."

Looking back at the primary results, ahead to the November elections

The primaries are over and it's time to analyze the results. Before I begin, it is important you know that Donald Trump has not commented on this column or its author. That is because he doesn't know either exists. For that, let us give thanks.

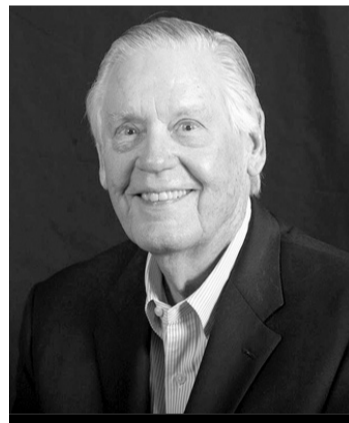
Billionaire healthcare executive Rick Jackson handily dispatched Lt. Gov. Burt Jones in a mud-slinging contest called the Republican primary runoff for governor. Jackson spent more than \$100 million of his own money in the campaign. That will buy you a lot of mud. Jones spent some \$30 million. All of this for a job that pays \$180,000.

Jones was endorsed early and often by Trump but lost anyway. In a pivot worthy of a flamenco dancer, the president now appears to be taking credit for Jackson's win against the guy he had endorsed. On Truth Social, Trump said, "Congratulations to Rick Jackson, who very successfully campaigned on being 'TRUMP,' and won. He will be your next Governor of Georgia." In a later post, he added: "Rick Jackson ran a great TRUMP Campaign. Very smart." One thing you can say about billionaires, they do stick together.

Usually after a hard-fought campaign, the loser will graciously accept defeat and pledge fealty to the winning opponent. I can't wait to see how this one turns out. Jackson and Jones were up-close-and-very-personal in their attacks on each other. Kissing and making up will require some major doing.

Republican Rick Jackson will now face Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms in November. I quit making political predictions after I publicly declared that an obscure Republican state senator from Bonaire would never beat an incumbent Democratic governor. And we all know how that turned out. But Keisha Lance Bottoms? That's the best the Democrats can offer?

It is certainly not because of her record as mayor of Atlanta, which was lousy. Her mishandling of the riots in the city in 2020 brought her scorn from both sides. So, after one term in office she bailed out and joined the Biden Administration as national director of nothing worth mentioning. And now she is back and wants us to believe she can govern



By DICK YARBROUGH

the Great State of Georgia. For most of the millions he spent on advertising, Jackson appeared like a glowering grump whose rare smiles came across as sneers. Not a guy you would want to hang out

with. Then somebody got the idea to humanize him with his grandkids telling Grandad to lighten up, shed the power suit and get a pickup truck and a dog. All of which he does and looks awkward doing it. But it works. Whoever thought of that idea deserves a raise.

In the race for lieutenant governor, state Sen. Greg Dolezal defeated state Sen. John Kennedy, who ran a lackluster campaign in the Republican primary runoff and will now face Democratic state Sen. Josh McLaurin in November. Dolezal's campaign produced the most bizarre ad of them all, depicting Muslims terrorizing Georgians and declaring he would "keep Georgia sharia free." What a crock. All a lieutenant governor in Georgia does is make com-

mittee assignments and preside over debates in the senate and be prepared to step in if the governor conks out. He has as much to do with sharia law as I do with Chinese aviation.

Brian Kemp found out being the state's most popular political figure goes only so far. The governor's support of his boyhood buddy, Derek Dooley, son of legendary UGA football coach Vince Dooley, instead of U.S. Rep. Mike Collins for the Republican nomination to oppose incumbent Democrat U. S. Sen. Jon Ossoff, as well as his last-minute endorsement of Jones made no difference. Republican voters rejected them both. It didn't help that Dooley admitted he didn't vote in 2016 or 2020.

I don't know Mike Collins, but I knew his dad, Mac, a member of Congress who I worked with in the runup to the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. He was a good man. I'm not so sure about Junior. He is currently under investigation by the House Ethics Committee and the Office of Congressional Conduct for misuse of taxpayer funds. He also had to fire a crude and arrogant staff aide that he should never have hired in the first place for some very inappropriate remarks.

Well, there you have it, boys and girls. The primaries are over and now it is on to November. Cue the mud machines, crank up the hyperbole and let the games begin.



THOUGHT FOR TODAY...

"Ah, summer, what power you have to make us suffer and like it."

- Russell Baker

DAILY SCRIPTURE...

"But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"

- Amos 5:24

EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY...

June 23, 2026 is...

- National Typewriting Day
- National Pecan Sandies Day
- National Porridge Day
- Pink Flamingo Day
- Let It Go Day
- National Hydration Day
- Public Service Day
- National Pink Day

The Courier Herald

LOCAL MATTERS



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

DUDLEY LL DISPATCH: 8-10/10-12 SOFTBALL, 8-10 BASEBALL ALL-STARS BEGIN DISTRICT

Dudley Little League's next phase of postseason play began this past weekend with district 5 tournaments for its 8-10 and 10-12 softball (both in Warner Robins) and 8-10 baseball all-stars (in Gray), which each advanced through Saturday's rounds of the action. The 8-10 baseballers collected early victories over Vine Ingle and Jones County to reach the semifinals of the winner's bracket, where they were scheduled to play the winner between Warner Robins American and Chatham County on Tuesday. Both softball squads were facing elimination on Monday night, the 8-10s against Vine Ingle (after an opening loss to WRALL) and 10-12s against Jones County (whom they defeated 15-0 before falling in a 4-0 heartbreaker to WRALL Saturday). Here are some highlights from Friday and Saturday's games...



The 10U boys' Griggs Bennett makes a sliding catch in left field on Friday/**JANICE BALLARD**



12U shortstop Kenzie Hogan stretches to nab a line drive and steal a hit Saturday afternoon/**JANICE BALLARD**



10U starting pitcher Skylar Mack deals during Saturday's game/**JANICE BALLARD**



Another great catch by 12U third baseman Aubrey Edmond/**JANICE BALLARD**



Kendall Hobbs pitches in relief for the 10U softball team/**JANICE BALLARD**



Troy Clanton got this bunt down, and beat it out to first for a single Friday night vs. Vine Ingle/**JANICE BALLARD**



10U girls relief pitcher Journei Butler delivers during Saturday's game/**JANICE BALLARD**



Starting pitcher Lyndey Southerland took the circle for the 12U girls to open Saturday's second-round game/**JANICE BALLARD**



Kanon Green with some relief work to help the 10U boys finish off a close win, 2-1, Friday night/**JANICE BALLARD**

Republican-led Senate backs delay of QR-code voting ban, adds hand-count requirement for top races each cycle

By **TY TAGAMI**
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — The Georgia Senate passed a measure Saturday that would delay a prohibition on the use of QR codes to tally votes until 2028 and also require hand-counting of the two top races on ballots.

Democrats opposed the measure, in part because they would not have an automatic seat at the table on the committee that will set the standards for new voting machines. The current machines, which rely on QR-code tallies, will become illegal July 1 under a law passed by the Legislature two years ago.

In the meantime, lawmakers failed to adopt or pay for an alternative system, creating an emergency that led Gov. Brian Kemp to call them back to the Capitol for a special session.

Senate Bill 3EX passed

the Senate 33-19, after Sen. Jason Anavartate, R-Dallas, the majority leader, said, "We're going to continue to stand with the citizens of Georgia, every citizen, no matter where they're from, no matter what their walk of life is, no matter their view of election integrity or otherwise."

Lawmakers had approved removing QR codes from Georgia's election procedures after backlash following President Donald Trump's loss in the 2020 election and mistrust among some in the way the state conducts elections.

"They're grappling with the reality that they are going to be forced to toe the MAGA line on elections for the rest of time," Sen. Josh McLaurin, D-Sandy Springs, the Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor, said of his GOP colleagues after the vote. "They're going to litigate this 2020 election over

and over again."

The bill would establish a nine-member legislative committee to set the specifications, standards and requirements for a new voting system. Members would be appointed by the governor and by legislative leaders, currently all Republicans. Democrats wanted their own appointments, though Republicans noted that GOP leadership has traditionally appointed Democrats to such study committees.

On the Senate floor Saturday, Republicans added an amendment that would require hand counts of votes in the two races atop a ballot before official certification of the results. That would require a hand count of presidential and gubernatorial elections, which do not occur in the same cycle, plus another race, usually for U.S. Senate.

Garland Favorito, a vocal critic of Georgia's digi-

tal voting process, said the hand-count mandate would be a first in the state's history of electronic voting.

"It's not a perfect solution," said the co-founder of VoterGA, "but it's a step in the right direction."

Classifieds

Yard/Estate Sales

Estate sale at the home of the late James S. and Undine Avery Fortner, 310 Old Kidbee Road, North, Vidalia, GA, Fri., June 26 9:00a-5p and Sat., June 27th from 9:00a-5pm. 4.7x10 greenhouse, books, vintage items, shop with misc. items & tools, lift chair, couch, split king adjustable bed, housewares, kitchenware, much more. Sue Jarriel Garcia.

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

Local 7-day Forecast:

The next 48 hours:

TUESDAY:
87° Periodically sunny and humid with thunderstorms on the prowl.
 Sunrise: 6:25 a.m.

TUESDAY NIGHT:
66° Partly cloudy and humid, after an early thunderstorm.
 Sunset: 8:43 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:
90° Intermittently sunny and humid.
 Sunrise: 6:25 a.m.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT:
66° Clear to partly cloudy.
 Sunset: 8:43 p.m.

 Thursday 6/25 HIGH/LOW 89/69 Humid and mostly overcast with afternoon storms likely. Sunrise: 6:26 a.m. Sunset: 8:43 p.m.	 Friday 6/26 HIGH/LOW 87/71 Variably sunny and humid with afternoon thunderstorm likely. Sunrise: 6:26 a.m. Sunset: 8:43 p.m.	 Saturday 6/27 HIGH/LOW 93/72 Mostly sunny and humid. Sunrise: 6:26 a.m. Sunset: 8:43 p.m.	 Sunday 6/28 HIGH/LOW 94/71 Mostly sunny and humid with a chance of spotty thunderstorms. Sunrise: 6:27 a.m. Sunset: 8:43 p.m.	 Monday 6/29 HIGH/LOW 95/72 Partly sunny with scattered thunderstorms possible. Sunrise: 6:27 a.m. Sunset: 8:43 p.m.
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River levels...
 Oconee (at Dublin) 6.4'
 Ocmulgee (at Macon) 9.9'

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS



GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



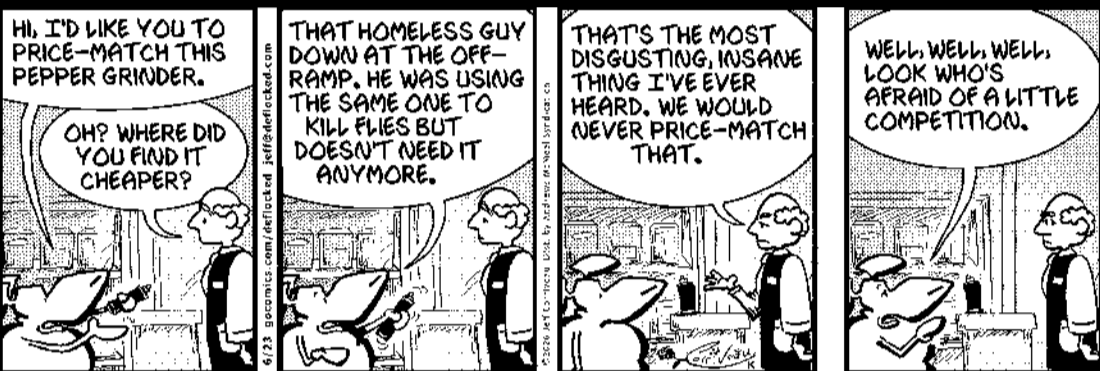
OVERBOARD

BY CHIP DUNHAM



DEFLOCKED

BY JEFF CORRIVEAU



ZIGGY

BY TOM WILSON



PLUGGERS

BY JEFF MACNELLY



A plugger knows his hair restoration shampoo only works on eyebrows and ears.

Worker feels targeted by colleague



DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I've been employed at the same company for 17 years. I'm the youngest person in the department, and I love my job and the people I work with. One co-worker I used to be close to has a son the same age as mine, and they did sports together and went to each other's birthday parties. I would invite her over to relax by the pool while our kids played.

In recent years, that has changed. Her attitude toward me is different, and I don't know why. Every chance she gets, she undermines me at work. She doesn't communicate but rather makes assumptions and rattles to our supervisor and boss. She has purposely left me out in emails when we would chip in for a card and money for our supervisor's gift for Christmas. Any mistake I make, she emails our boss and supervisor about it instead of coming to me.

I've had a meeting with her and my supervisor and boss, but she used it to undermine me on other job duties she had no experience in. She has also said nasty things about me to her son, who repeated them to my son at school. I'm at my wits' end here. Please tell me how to handle this. -- DEFEATED CO-WORKER

DEAR DEFEATED: It is one thing when a relation-

ship, but it's hard. I have spent more than \$1,000 on therapy, and I don't know what else to do. He says he needs time to heal, but it has been six months, and he no longer even calls me "Love." We have been going to church together, and he says he has hope for us.

I don't have any family where I live, and it's too expensive to move out on my own and start over. I'm finishing school here. My goal is to move to North Carolina, but I don't see that happening anytime soon, because he's committed to staying here for law school. I love him, but I feel so alone and don't know what to do. I want to get married and have kids soon, but I don't want to start over or cause more hurt. What would you do? -- CHEATER IN FLORIDA

DEAR CHEATER: It's time for you to move out so you can separate your feelings of dependence and affection. You wounded your boyfriend deeply, and that wound is not going to heal if you continue to pressure him. It's up to him now to decide whether to forgive you, but you need to give him the space to make that decision. Because you want to have children "soon," the reality is that you will have to "start over" either way, whether with him or someone else.

ship is based on having kids the same age with similar interests. As the children grow older, the ties that bind those friendships can loosen. But what you have written to me is different. Your former friend seems to have it in for you -- and appears determined to get you fired. This is why you should document every single dirty deed she has pulled, present it to your boss and tell him (or her) that this has been creating a hostile work environment, and you hope it can be stopped. (If it can't be stopped, talk about this to an attorney.)

DEAR ABBY: I'm 23 and have been with my boyfriend for six years. We currently live with his parents. A year ago, I cheated on him, but I told him about it a few months ago. We've been trying to rebuild our relation-

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

Q 1 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:
 ♠ K Q 8 6 ♣ K 4 ♠ A K J 7 ♣ K 9 7
 NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
 10 Pass 1♠ Pass
 20 Pass 4NT Pass
 30 Pass ?

Q 2 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:
 ♠ A 4 ♣ K J 10 9 8 6 4 ♠ J ♠ A Q 5
 SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
 10 Pass 1♠ Pass
 20 Pass 2♠ Pass
 30 Pass ?

Q 3 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:
 ♠ A 10 9 8 7 5 2 ♣ J ♠ 7 5 4 3 ♠ 7
 As dealer, what call would you make?
 A - The choice is between 3S and 4S. Hands with 7-4 shape are usually opened at the four-level, but this side suit is too weak. Bid 3S.

Q 4 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:
 ♠ A K 8 3 ♣ J 10 9 5 3 2 ♠ 8 ♠ 7 4
 EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH
 Pass ?
 What call would you make?
 A - We are proponents of aggressive weak two-bids, even with length in a side major, but this hand is too extreme -- poor hearts and excellent spades. Pass.

Q 5 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:
 ♠ Q J 8 7 ♣ A K J 9 6 4 2 ♠ A ♠ 2
 NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
 10 Pass 10 Pass
 20 Pass 2♠ Pass
 30 Pass ?

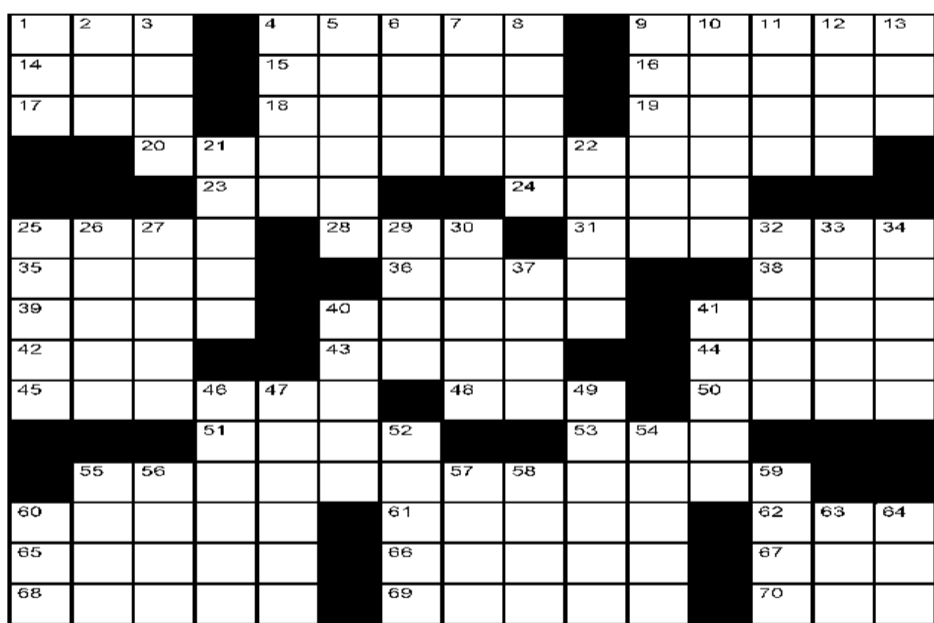
Q 6 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:
 ♠ K 9 7 ♣ K J 9 4 ♠ K J 10 8 ♠ K 7
 SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
 10 Pass 1♠ Pass
 20 Pass 2♠ Pass
 30 Pass ?

Q 7 - This re-bid shows a hand with great playing strength rather than massive high-card points, but too good to have started with a pre-empt. Perfect!

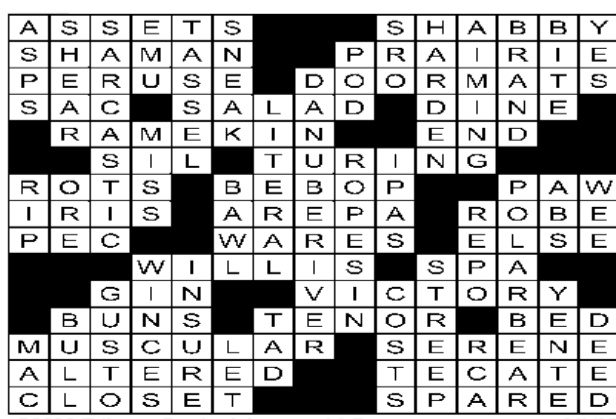
Q 8 - This hand re-evaluates to about 15 points. Despite holding no aces, we think the hand is worth an invitation. Bid 3S.

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Stella Zawistowski

- ACROSS**
- Calculate a sum
 - Great ape, for short
 - Chops with an axe
 - Mashed taro dish
 - Place to stay
 - Bowling location
 - Golf peg
 - Amazon assistant
 - one's trade
 - Place to take a dip: 2 wds.
 - Exist
 - Chicken cordon
 - Greenish-blue color
 - Sibling's nickname
 - Prompt: 2 wds.
 - Military position
 - Hounds and beagles
 - Eleventh month: Abbr.
 - Inquires
 - Wheels and
 - Story
 - Filmmaker Brooks
 - Leaf-clearing tool
 - Actor Wilson
 - Ready for bed
 - Huge amount
 - W on a map
 - Greek war god
 - Adam and
 - People who perform
 - Braid
 - Measuring tool
 - Core muscles
 - Biased viewpoint
 - Book of maps
 - Baseball hat
 - Pungently flavored
 - Sheriff's group
 - Zales competitor
- DOWN**
- Right for the occasion
 - Fawn's mother
 - Perishes
 - Place to sit
 - Fictional detective Sherlock
 - Article
 - ranch dip
 - Alternate strategy: 2 wds.
 - Occur
 - No-holds-barred: 2 wds.
 - Advertising award
 - Boat's backbone
 - Barrett of Pink Floyd
 - Travels on foot
 - Lip cosmetic
 - Mass-transit vehicles
 - Stand for a painting
 - Lower-leg joint
 - Notion
 - Immerses in water
 - Amazed: 2 wds.
 - Double agents
 - Olympic competition
 - Sheer delight
 - Laundry appliance
 - Part of a fortress
 - Having a meal
 - Nice to look at
 - Trojan War hero
 - Part of a handbag
 - Part of a poem
 - Singer Fitzgerald
 - Leavened flatbread
 - Motor vehicle
 - Ailments
 - Burlap bag
 - Oregon clock setting: Abbr.
 - Sheep's sound
 - Northern (apple variety)

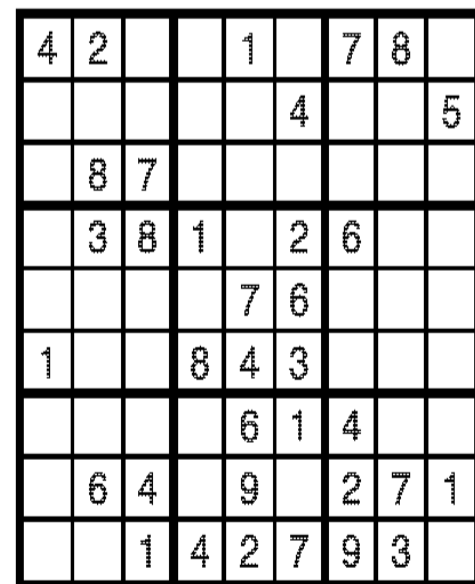


Created by Stella Zawistowski



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SUDOKU

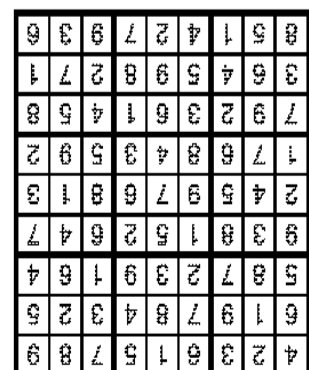


Fun By The Numbers

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:

CITY COUNCIL

Continued from page 1

nities had not been determined. When asked if a security system had been determined yet, McRae said no.

Councilman Bennie Jones asked if there would be a place with a cover for the children to be under to catch the bus. McRae was not sure but said "that is definitely a good idea."

Kight informed McRae that in the past, they had received agreements for these items before voting to approve the rezoning.

"In pre-council we discussed to table this in order to talk about this, and the bus stop as well, and make sure the owner is agreeable to do all of these things and bring it back before the next meeting," Kight said. "We want to be favorable toward the development,

but we also want to make sure the project has these things for safety."

McRae understood. "I think the challenge is getting the rezoning approved and then closing on the property," he said. "He can't close on the property until it is rezoned."

Kight wants to work with them, and said if need be, they can hold a called meeting about this before the next scheduled meeting on July 16.

In other meeting news, the council:

- Approved water and sewer easements at MGVG Living Apartments.

- Approved and accepted the renewal of supplemental insurance with the Georgia Interlocal Risk Management Agency for first responders. According to Powell, the Ashley Wilson Act mandated by the

Georgia Legislature, they are required to provide a PTSD program for first responders. The total cost will be \$15,540.

- Approved a contract with L&L Utilities for the Rice Avenue sewer replacement project.

- Approved a yearly contract with Brenntag for chlorine, Univar for hydrofluorosilicic acid and Riverland Trading for potassium permanganate.

- Approved local agreements with the Dublin Housing Authority, Southside Community Association, Inc., and Oconee High School National Alumni Association, Inc., for the use of the Oconee Gym, Oconee Cultural Center and associated parks.

"City staff met with representatives from all three of these entities about use of these facilities," Powell

said. "They wanted to have agreements in place because of the public benefit they provide."

- During citizens comments, Rae Bloodworth asked about an email she sent the mayor and council regarding city board appointments. Her concerns were how some people serve on the city boards for long periods of time. She requested information on how board vacancies are announced, when they are made available to the public and how city officials encourage broader community participation.

"I was asked this question, so I decided to bring it to you," Bloodworth said. "I believe it needs some answers. Please, somebody get back with me. How are we serving the whole city of Dublin if we have the same people continue to sit?"

HOUSE FIRE

Continued from page 1

"The house had no power at the time of the fire," Cutler said. "That rules out electrical right off the bat. We had fire where there shouldn't have been fire. We are trying to work through that and figure it out. It could have been a whole lot different. Thankfully, somebody woke up and realized there was a fire, because if they hadn't, things would have been bad."

Cutler stressed the importance of every house having working smoke detectors. The fire department offers battery operated smoke alarms to residents.

"Even if you don't have power to a house, these will work," he said. "The smoke alarm is your defense against fire or smoke at night. These alarms should be tested every six months."

This house only had two doors. One was through the garage, which was used as a storage area.

"That blocked off their secondary means of egress,"

Cutler said. "You always need to make sure you have two ways out of a house. While speaking to some of the occupants this morning, who were renting this house, I told them that wherever they go next or stay, make sure you have working smoke alarms. This fire could have been different and we could have had four fatalities. When they realized the house was on fire, it was bad. It was coming for them."

The American Red Cross supplies local fire departments with smoke detectors. They can take the alarms to those who need them at no charge.

Anyone with information about this fire, or would like to have a fire alarm installed, can call the Dublin Fire Department at (478) 277-5030. If people believe they have information about a suspicious fire, they can call the State Fire Marshal's Georgia Arson Control hotline at 1-800-282-5804. They can also text the information to the Dublin Police Department's Crime Text at (478) 595-7279.

BREAK-INS

Continued from page 1

bud. Whatever age you are, there is no reason for this to happen."

During the month of May, the police responded to seven entering auto calls. So far in June, three more have been reported. The Dublin Police Department is actively investigating these incidents.

The same officer responded to the three most recent calls. A woman reported that her vehicle was entered on West Drive. A pink wallet containing personal items was taken from the vehicle.

The second reported incident involved a car on Highland Avenue. A pair of rainbow-colored Kurt Geiger bedroom shoes was taken from the vehicle.

The third incident occurred on North Street when an SUV showed no signs of a forced entry. Approximately \$100 in change was stolen.

None of these vehicles were locked, but they all

had items in view of anybody walking by them.

"Don't leave valuables in your car," Dublin Police Chief Keith Moon said. "When you are shopping, put them in your trunk."

More importantly, do not leave weapons, especially firearms, in vehicles.

"That's the one that gets us," Moon said.

Lleras gave the police her video. Moon said it is important to call law enforcement and provide video of such encounters.

"If you have video of any suspicious person in your or your neighbor's yard, let us know. You never know when that video is going to lead to an arrest."

And if they see someone trying to break into their vehicle, or steal items from their yard, call 911. Lleras knows some homeowners might go outside and confront people if they see them trying to break into their vehicle.

"That is not a scenario that ends well," she said.

Lleras was thankful she not only had nothing of val-

ue in her vehicle but also in her yard. The lesson here is if more people would not leave items in their vehicle, others will more than likely leave their vehicle and yard alone.

"What stood out was they were covering their faces, which adds a sinister level to this," Lleras said. "It is not just little petty theft. They planned it and knew what they were doing was wrong and they don't want to get caught so they took as many steps as they can to make sure they don't get caught or identified. That's not OK. We're not going to tolerate this or allow it to go that way."

Lleras has only had a camera in operation for six months. She does not know how many times someone may have tried to break into her vehicle before the camera was installed. In 2019, she forgot to lock her car and someone entered and took a prescription bottle.

"If people don't give them a reason to get into their car, or see anything

of value, they will probably keep moving. Having cameras at your house is almost a necessity that us homeowners have to make. It's a shame that you have to take these measures to protect your property."

Lleras wants people to realize is that most homes and businesses have cameras filming their property.

"With people reporting these incidents (on videos), the police will be able to make connections and be able to address the situations," Lleras said.

She would rather have the criminals, who are more than likely young people, caught peacefully with a chance to turn their lives around before it is too late.

"I hope this is more like a warning. People will see you. They are surveilling their things and they will take the appropriate actions to protect their property, themselves and families. We are providing this information to law enforcement, and they will start connecting the dots."

GUN CHARGES

Continued from page 1

• Chauncey Lavon Feby, 20, of Augusta, was sentenced to 71 months in prison and a \$1,500 fine followed by three years of supervised release after pleading guilty to illegal possession of a machine gun. In November 2024 in Richmond County, Feby was found with a Glock model 45, 9 mm pistol which had been modified with an auto sear, converting the pistol into a fully automatic machine gun.

• Josue Gutierrez, 31, of Lawrenceville, was sentenced to 64 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release after pleading guilty to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. In September 2024, Gutierrez was found to be in possession of multiple firearms during a traffic stop in Atkinson County by Georgia State Patrol.

There is no parole in the federal system. Under federal law, it is prohibited for previously convicted felons to possess firearms or ammunition.

"We will continue to support our law enforcement partners in their efforts to remove these dangerous weapons from the streets and to keep our communities safe," Heap said. "The U.S. Attorney's Office remains committed to hold accountable those that unlawfully possess these lethal weapons."

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Dublin Police Department, Richmond County Sheriff's Office and the Georgia State Patrol assisted in the investigation of these cases, which were prosecuted for the United States by Southern District of Georgia Assistant U.S. Attorneys Joshua Kyle Davis, Jennifer Kirkland, L. Alexander Hamner and Kelsey Scanlon.



When banking starts feeling complicated...

CHOOSE SIMPLE.

GEORGIAFIRST.BANK/SWITCH





KIDS' CORNER

Vol. 016 | Join Herald the Hound every Tuesday on Kids' Corner from The Courier Herald

Brought to you by



SWIMMING SAFETY

Here are nine simple rules for a safe and fun summer:

- 1.) Swim with a Buddy!**
Swimming is more fun and safer when an adult is watching and a friend is nearby.
- 2.) Walk Around the Deck!**
Wet surfaces can be slippery. Walking helps prevent falls and injuries.
- 3.) Listen and Learn!**
Pay attention to your swim teacher, life-guard, or the adult in charge. They help keep everyone safe.
- 4.) Look Before You Leap!**
Before jumping in, check the water and make sure no one is below you. When in doubt, feet first! Never dive unless the water is at least 8 feet deep, and never dive into lakes, rivers, or the ocean.
- 5.) Keep Hands to Yourself!**
No pushing, dunking, or rough play. Good swimmers help keep their friends safe.
- 6.) Sip, Swim, Repeat!**
Swimming is exercise. Take breaks and drink water to stay hydrated.
- 7.) Life Jackets Save Lives!**
Wear a properly fitted life jacket when needed, especially around deep or open water.
- 8.) Speak Up for Safety!**
If you feel tired, scared, or need help, tell an adult and get out of the water.
- 9.) Only Dive in 8 ft or deeper**
You can see what is above the water, but you can't always see what is below it. Protect your head, neck, and back by entering unfamiliar water feet first.

Herald the Hound dives into swimming safety with instructor



There's no better way to cool off during the summer months than to go for a swim. Swimming is a fun activity and great exercise too, but there are a few things to know before jumping into the pool, lake, or, if you are at the beach, the ocean. This week Herald the Hound caught up with Ronda Walker, a local literacy coach and swim instructor (reading and swimming are two of Herald's favorite things to do) to learn a few tips to help keep you safe around the water.



Puzzles4Kids by Helene Hovanec

CRISSCROSS – "GO" WORDS

Each word will fit into one spot in the grid. Use the starting letters as a guide and fit each word into its spot. All words will be used, so cross off each one after you put it into the grid.

3 Letters
AGO
EGO
GOT

4 Letters
GOAT
GOES
GOOD
LEGO

5 Letters
BINGO
GOING
GOOSE
GOWNS
MANGO
TANGO

6 Letters
GOBBLE
GOBLET
GOSPEL
GOSSIP
GOVERN
OREGON

7 Letters
BEGONIA
GONDOLA
GORILLA

TRIVIA TIME!

Which answer lists the four basic swimming strokes?

- A.) Freestyle, Backstroke, Butterfly, Breaststroke
- B.) Freestyle, Dog Paddle, Backstroke, Side Stroke
- C.) Backstroke, Butterfly, Cannonball, Breaststroke
- D.) Freestyle, Underwater Swim, Butterfly, Dog Paddle

A.) Freestyle, Backstroke, Butterfly, Breaststroke

ANSWER KEY

Super Swimmer Word Search

Find these swimming and water safety words hidden in the puzzle. Words may go across, down, or diagonal.

F	R	E	E	S	T	Y	L	E	M	A	T
L	I	F	E	J	A	C	K	E	T	O	H
Y	P	T	H	R	O	W	Q	B	R	P	R
B	U	D	D	Y	S	A	F	E	T	Y	O
A	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	W
C	D	E	C	K	F	G	H	I	J	K	B
K	L	I	F	E	G	U	A	R	D	L	U
S	W	I	M	M	E	R	N	O	P	Q	T
T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	T
R	E	A	C	H	O	R	T	H	R	O	W
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	E
K	N	O	W	Y	O	U	R	Z	O	N	E
E	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	R

Find These Words

- | | | |
|------------|------------|--------|
| FREESTYLE | SWIMMER | REACH |
| BACKSTROKE | LIFEJACKET | SAFETY |
| BUTTERFLY | LIFEGUARD | DECK |
| BUDDY | THROW | ZONE |

