The Courier Herald

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Dublin board reopens search for new superintendent

By RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Writer

The Dublin City Board of Education is reopening its search for a new school superintendent.

Chairman David Westerfield announced Monday night that the board will again start looking for a superintendent, drawing from the field of two dozen candidates who applied earlier this year.

"It will not be a new search. We will reopen the search that was in progress before," Westerfield said. "The search is in progress. It is open."

Former curriculum director Marcee Pool has served as interim school chief since last September, after Superintendent Fred Williams stepped down to take an early retirement when the severity of the district's financial crisis was revealed.

The school system believed it had filled the position earlier this year following a nationwide superintendent search conducted by the Georgia School Boards Association. The school board picked a finalist but withdrew its offer over a contract dispute.

The board offered the job in July to Marietta City Schools human resources director DeMarcos Holland, naming him the sole finalist from 25 candidates. However, the board finally pulled the offer after several weeks, unwilling to accept Holland's increased salary demands.

The new superintendent faces some challenges in turning around the struggling school system, including working with a brand new school board. Members of the previous board were suspended and removed from office by Gov. Brian Kemp following a state hearing over the district's low accreditation rating. The governor then appointed the new members.

The district's long history of money troubles reached critical stage last fall. Georgia Department of Education officials contacted the Dublin district last August after learning the system owed $5.6 million to the state health plan after not paying in contributions for the entire fiscal year 2025.

The system had not completed an audit since 2021, and after a closer look at the finances, state School Superintendent Richard Woods declared the district on a "path to insolvency."

A subsequent special examination by the state Department of Audits and Accounts, requested by local lawmakers, confirmed the root causes – overhiring and overpaying employees, wasteful spending and lax oversight – but also identified specific concerns ranging from late tax payments to the IRS, "abnormally" high credit card spending and unwarranted travel and expenditures.

The audit also noted instances of family members traveling on out-of-town leadership retreats at the system's expense and undocumented payments to a local florist.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation is investigating at the request of Dublin Circuit District Attorney Harold McLendon. The FBI has been investigating, as well, according to testimony at the state Board of Education hearing in August.

Williams, who took office in 2015, was promoted from within after working in the Dublin system as teacher, coach and then administrator. At the time, the district was in similarly dire financial straits. He inherited a multi-million dollar deficit and, with the aid of COVID funds, managed to get the system out of the red for a couple of years.

However, despite warnings in 2022 from the state officials, the system continued to rely on pandemic money to fund positions and programs it could not afford.

ELHS CROWNS HOMECOMING QUEEN, KING

East Laurens High School recently celebrated with Kalise Williams being crowned as Homecoming Queen and Skyler Snead being named Homecoming King during the school's football game on Oct. 9/PHOTO FROM LAURENS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Landon Caraway stands next to his mother, Candi Powell, about a week after an accident during a Powder Puff game at West Laurens High School. Caraway was injured performing a cheerleading stunt and was eventually flown to a Macon hospital. Caraway and Powell appreciated the response from family and friends in the community / PAYTON TOWNS III

WLHS student, mother, praises community's help in time of unforeseen crisis

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Senior Reporter

Landon Caraway did not know it but he was minutes away from a helicopter ride to a Macon hospital.

The West Laurens High School junior was not thinking about any potential danger. And why would he? Caraway and the rest of those attending the Monday, Sept. 21 powder puff game at The Shu were having fun.

After all, it was homecoming week, and on that night, many had gathered at the high school's football stadium to watch the juniors and seniors reverse roles with the girls playing football while the guys cheered.

A ride in one of Air Evac's helicopters was nowhere close to being in Caraway's mind as he was tossed up into the air. It was not going up, that was necessarily bad. It was the way he came down and landed.

This incident was not even seen by his mother, Candi Powell. She was sitting in the stands across the field on the home side of the stadium. She was unaware that anything was wrong. She did not know that this joyful and fun homecoming festivity had taken a serious turn.

"We'll never forget that day," Powell said.

A stunt that did not go as planned

Besides knowing that her son was going to be cheering, Powell had no idea the guys were going to be doing that particular stunt. Caraway said they had practiced it before. Yes, there was one person who had replaced someone else, but there were really no big concerns. Hours before the incident, Powell recalls standing in the kitchen with her son. She hugged him before he left and told him to be careful with his back flips.

WLHS

Continued on page 3

Mayor holds proclamation for Red Ribbon Week

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

Mayor Joshua Kight and representatives of the Dublin Housing Authority gathered during a recent proclamation signing declaring October 23-31, 2026 as "Red Ribbon Week."

Substance abuse is particularly damaging to one of our most valuable resources, our children, and a contributing factor in the three leading causes of death for teenagers – accidents, homicides, and suicides it is the goal of Red Ribbon Week Committee and Kight to involve families, schools, businesses, churches, law enforcement agencies and service organizations in all aspects of this campaign and establish an atmosphere that supports awareness, education and on-going initiatives to prevent illegal drug use.

The Red Ribbon Week Campaign theme promotes family and individual responsibilities for living healthy, drug-free lifestyles, without illegal drugs or the illegal use of legal drugs. Kight would like to encourage citizens of the City of Dublin and Laurens County to recognize the Red Ribbon Week Campaign and its activities.

Mayor Joshua Kight and representatives of the Dublin Housing Authority gathered during a recent proclamation signing declaring October 23-31, 2026 as "Red Ribbon Week" / SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

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TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Explaining Autoimmune Hemolytic Anemia and its treatments

By DR. KEITH ROACH
King Features

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm about to turn 70. A month ago, I was diagnosed with autoimmune hemolytic anemia (AIHA) that's idiopathic. Two CT scans and many blood tests have cleared me of all tumors; however, my spleen's enlarged. My hematologist put me on prednisone, which is working very well. I don't know how long I'll have to take prednisone, but I'm tolerating it very well. I'd appreciate any information and advice that you have on AIHA. -- M.L.

ANSWER: As its name suggests ("hemo-" is blood, and "-lytic" is destruction), with this condition, the body's immune system destroys its own red blood cells, causing a low blood count. It's not a common disease, and most of the time, it occurs by itself (idiopathic, as you stated). But your doctors carefully looked for underlying conditions, especially leukemia, lymphoma and systemic lupus.

Prednisone is the usual first-line treatment, with many experts also starting people on rituximab (a powerful drug that reduces the body's ability to make antibodies) in the beginning. But some people do well with prednisone alone.

AIHA requires an expert -- a hematologist. They use their judgment, but a general rule of thumb is to taper the dose of prednisone once the anemia is under control. It takes several months (or longer) to bring down the dose.

We don't recommend the long-term use of prednisone because, even though you're tolerating it well, it can cause high blood sugar (even overt diabetes), high blood pressure, bone loss, cataracts, weight gain, infections, and many other problems. If prednisone can't be tapered off entirely, then it may be time to consider rituximab.

Because a person's red blood cells are constantly being destroyed and remade, they need higher doses of folic acid. Also, people should be warned that excess blood clotting can be a problem with AIHA, so symptoms like leg swelling and shortness of breath need to be taken seriously, as they could signify blood clots in the legs or lungs.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have an enlarged prostate. I take 0.5 mg of dutasteride (one per day) and 0.4 mg of tamsulosin HCL (one per day as well). Is there anything else I can take to reduce the size of my prostate? -- V.F.

ANSWER: Dutasteride does reduce the size of the prostate by blocking a hormone (dihydrotestosterone) that enlarges the prostate. Dutasteride works slowly over 6-12 months to shrink the prostate and improve urine flow.

Tamsulosin relaxes structures called smooth muscles, which are found in the prostate and in blood vessels. Tamsulosin doesn't reduce the size of the prostate, but it works quickly by allowing the urethra to open up more widely. (Most men get relief within the first three to seven days.)

Since these meds can also open up blood vessels, they can cause low blood pressure and lightheadedness upon standing, although newer agents like tamsulosin and silodosin are much less likely to do so than older drugs. Some experts use tamsulosin at 0.8 mg at night if the 0.4-mg dose isn't enough.

For men who have persistent symptoms despite treatment with both tamsulosin and dutasteride (or similar drugs), then another medication choice is tadalafil, which is particularly helpful if a man also experiences erectile dysfunction. My experience is that this is modestly beneficial. Otherwise, a referral to a urologist to talk about alternative options is appropriate.

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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OBITUARIES

Horace Jenkins Jr.

Mr. Horace Jenkins Jr. passed away peacefully on Oct. 16, 2026 at age 77. He was predeceased by his parents, Horace and Oleda Jenkins; daughter, Felicia Jenkins Tramule; brother, Leon Jenkins Sr; sisters, Barbara Coley and Glenda Faye Jenkins.

He is survived by his daughter, Bridgett (Angelo) Jenkins Hawes; son, Jermaine (Tasha) Barley; a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren; and sister, Annie Jenkins-Taylor of Dublin, Ga.

Courtesy of Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin

BIRTHDAYS

Oct. 27
Esther Garner

Oct. 28
Reginald Rozier
Emily Sleighmon

Kemp extends gas tax suspension through Thanksgiving

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — It has been nearly a month since Gov. Brian Kemp suspended Georgia's motor fuel tax to help drivers cope with soaring prices at the pump.

With prices down but still relatively high, Kemp announced that he is extending the tax break for another month.

The state excise tax of 33.3 cents a gallon for gasoline and 37.3 cents for diesel will remain suspended until 11:59 p.m. Nov. 30, according to the executive order signed by Kemp on Saturday.

The General Assembly must approve the suspension when it next convenes.

This is the fourth suspension of the tax this year. Kemp said he consulted with Lt. Gov. Burt Jones and House Speaker Jon Burns before extending the state of emergency.

In March, Kemp signed a 60-day gas tax suspension bill after it passed the state House 163-4 and the state Senate unanimously.

Then, in May, he declared a state of emergency and extended the suspension two weeks, into early June. The General Assembly retroactively approved the extension in a special session in June.

On Sept. 28, Kemp signed an executive order declaring another state of emergency and authorizing the current suspension, originally set to expire Oct. 29.

"With a major holiday coming up and fuel prices still at high levels, I am proud to take this step to keep more money in Georgians' pockets," Kemp said in a statement Saturday.

Prior motor fuel tax suspensions cost the state about $200 million a month.

Audi to build first U.S. plant in Georgia

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Georgia residents who are in the market for an Audi will eventually be able to buy one made locally.

The German company announced on Saturday that it plans to build its first U.S. manufacturing plant in Peach County.

"We have much greater ambitions for Audi in America, and Georgia will play a central role in making them a reality," Gernot Döllner, CEO and chairman of the Board of Management of Audi AG, said in a joint statement with Gov. Brian Kemp.

The company is expected to invest about $4 billion in a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility that will reach full production capacity in 2031 at 200,000 vehicles a year, creating 4,500 new jobs in the region, according to Kemp's office.

Audi, based in Ingolstadt, Germany, plans to build premium SUVs tailored to customers in North America.

The company said the Middle Georgia Megasite in Peach County is a good place to build the vehicles because of its proximity to an established automotive supply chain, a skilled workforce and access to consumers.

The site is near Class I rail and is within five hours by train to the ports in Brunswick and Savannah. It is also half an hour from two regional airports and 90 minutes from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

"We are proud that Audi has selected Georgia as the home of their first U.S. manufacturing facility," Kemp said.

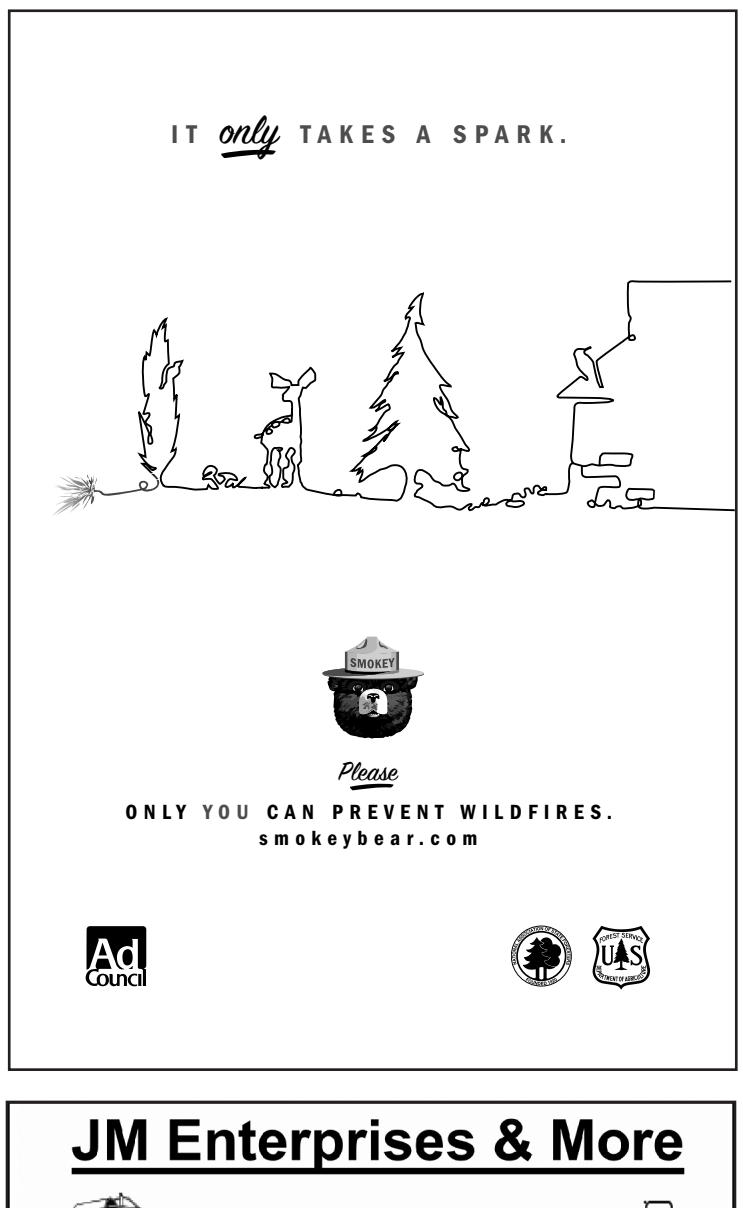
His office said the Technical College System of Georgia will create curriculum tailored to the new plant's needs.

Audi is expected to begin grading the site in 2027, with construction starting in 2028.

Do I Qualify to be a Foster Parent?

Do I have to be married, rich or have any particular religion to qualify as a foster parent? These are some of the common questions asked by those individuals interested in fostering. The answer is "No". You do not have to be married, you must be able to support your own family, but you certainly do not have to be rich, nor have a particular religious belief to foster. If you are one of the individuals wanting answers to your question, please call Anna Stone at 478-275-6747. Open your heart to a child in need of a home and a little happiness.

"Be A Foster Parent"



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WLHS

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"He had that down pat," she recalled. "On the way to the game, I never thought about the danger."

Nothing seemed out of the ordinary until Powell saw a golf cart with a siren dart across the field. She told her husband Joey that someone's child must have gotten hurt. She thought nothing of it until her daughter, Hadley, leaned over and said, "Momma, I think that's Landon."

This began Powell's journey from the stands to her son.

"I took off," Powell said. "I kept calling his phone hoping he would answer."

There was no answer. Halfway to her son she saw her daughter Marleigh crying.

"Then I took off running," Powell said.

Only moments before, Caraway had been tossed in the air.

"Instead of going straight up, I was tossed a little more back," he said when recalling the stunt. "I went back and landed on my head."

Powell later saw a video of the accident. Her son was thrown straight up in the air and his body started flipping backwards, landing on his head and neck.

"In the video, I can tell where I lost consciousness because I was laying on the ground and not moving for 15 to 30 seconds," Caraway said. "At first, I think some of them thought I was joking."

This was no joke though. Caraway was seriously injured..

"On my concussion protocol, it said I lost consciousness for an amount of time," he said. "Eventually, I was able to talk."

A friend helped Caraway get near a wall so that he was not straining to sit up. Every two minutes people kept asking Caraway his name and did he know where he was at.

"When I got over there, someone from the school was with him," Powell said. "EMS was there checking his eyes and responses. They were checking his vitals and told me that his blood pressure kept dropping."

Powell held a small box fan on her son to keep him cool and conscious. Medical workers started touching his spine and neck before walking away for a discussion. They returned to inform Powell an ambulance was on the way. They then checked a spot on Caraway and talked some more. They returned to tell Powell that it had been recommended for her son to be flown to a Macon hospital.

"There was a spot that they were concerned about on his neck as far as a spinal injury," she said.

Flying to Macon

Caraway had no idea he was about to fly anywhere. He had been in an ambulance for about 15 minutes when he heard the helicopter was on its way.

"I felt fine at that point and felt like nothing was wrong with me," Caraway said. "When I heard the helicopter was on its way, I began thinking it must be worse than I felt."

Powell was informed by emergency workers that they believe Caraway was in shock because he was only giving one word answers.

"I don't remember them asking me questions," he said.

His mother, though, was asking questions.

"They really could not give me an answer," Powell said. "They were not sure at that point what was wrong and if it was a spinal or neck injury. They would not know until they got him to the trauma unit."

Powell was hoping to be able to fly with her son to Macon.

"I started walking toward the helicopter with them and the pilot turned around and said, "Ma'am, you can't go with us." And that's when I lost it," Powell said.

There was not enough room for her to be in the helicopter. There was only space for the pilot, the Air Evac nurse and Caraway.

"It was very loud," he said. "They were carting me over on the backboard and they were putting me into the helicopter. The blades were so loud. It was the loudest thing I have ever heard. It felt like your ear drums were about to pop. There was not a lot of space in there. I had to stay stiff the whole time."

The next thing he knew, the helicopter was lifting off into the sky over his high school.

"I remember getting in the air and I could see out of the corner of my eye," Caraway said. "I remember seeing all of the bright lights when we were in the air. It was dark."

For Powell, it was hard watching the helicopter fly away with her injured son. Thankfully the nurse updated Powell on her son's vitals and how far out they were from the hospital.

"Every three minutes she was texting my phone," she said.

Medical workers were not sure at first which hospital they were taking Caraway. They just knew they were going to Macon.

"It took them a little bit to reply which hospital they were heading to," Powell said. "About 10 minutes after they were in the air, they notified me where they were going. They told me to take my time."

Take your time? Right. By then, Powell and her husband were heading to Macon. But they were not alone, and prayers were being lifted up for everyone involved.

Stepping up

While Caraway was flying to Macon, the community he left behind was looking after and helping his family. So many people stepped up to help Powell and her family without them asking.

"They jumped in with my other kids and looked after them," Powell said. "Many walked up to me and Joey and prayed with us."

When a loved-one is injured or hurt, time seems to slow down. And though the information was coming in, it always seems to take longer.

"That is how it felt," Powell said. "That night taught me that when you are in an emergency, you are not going to get answers right then, and rightly so. They didn't want to tell me he's fine because they didn't know. It was a slow waiting game."

Around 7:52 p.m. on Sept. 21, Powell had a chance to type out a quick Facebook post asking people to pray for her son. Powell did not have to worry about driving since they were being chauffeured up I-16 by Dudley Baptist Church Children's Minister Paul Leigh. By the time they arrived, Dudley Baptist's Pastor Matt Greene and Student Minister Clint Crozier were there along with Powell's friends Tara Bradshaw and Britt Evans.

"We showed up and they were there waiting on us," Powell said. "They wanted to be there and be present. Just them being there really said a lot."

About 10 minutes later, hospital workers reunited her with her son in the emergency room. Scans had been completed and pre-caution tests were being done. Thankfully, everything came back good.

Hours later, Caraway was discharged from the hospital. They were going home.

Around 12:53 a.m. on Sept. 22, Powell put out another post, informing family and friends they were on their way back to Laurens County and she had a long list of people to thank.

Something positive

Caraway returned to school on Sept. 23, but he would not be able to stay the whole day. The lights were too bright, so he was allowed to sit in a dark room. The principal could tell he was not feeling good, so Caraway was allowed to call his mother to pick him up. At least he got the chance to see the response from his classmates.

"Everybody was so loving," Caraway said. "Even though I came back (on Sept. 23), they let me know that they were still praying for me. Everyone around me made sure that I noticed that the community was there for me."

Looking back, both Caraway and Powell and their family were overwhelmed with how many reached out or stepped up to help with either prayers or other situations during the crisis.

"It really leaves you with a feeling of gratitude," he said. "The outcomes could have been far worse."

Caraway mentioned James 4:14, "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." (New International Version).

"When I look at that, I realize that God is not done with my life," Caraway said. "He is giving me a second chance."

On Friday, Oct. 2, 11 days after the stunt went wrong, Caraway and Powell stood outside Dublin City Hall to take some pictures. His follow up with doctors showed no side effects from his fall.

The night of Sept. 21 is now a reminder of how life can change in the blink of an eye. There was a scary and traumatic situation where no one had any answers. What stood out from all of this was the responses from everyone at the school, EMS workers, church family and friends who gave encouragement and prayers when things were spinning out of control.

"That showed us that it doesn't matter who you are, we were seen that night, loved on and cared about," Powell said. "People were there when we needed them. That was probably the most frightening night of my life because I did not know what was happening. We were shown how thankful we are to be a part of this community. I cannot stress how fast people were in response to the accident. It's like everybody knew their place and they knew what to do. It was amazing to see everyone jump in. Out of the bad, came something positive."

Commission OKs work for new firefighter training building

By RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Reporter

Laurens County's new $1 million burn building for firefighter training has been delivered. Now it just needs a foundation.

The County Commission voted Tuesday to award a separate contract to Dublin Construction Co. to build the foundation. Estimates for the work had come in at about $102,000. However, due to the detailed nature of the project, county officials approached Dublin Construction and gained an experienced company and saved money, with the cost at $83,450.

"It's a really intricate-type building pad for the project," County Administrator Bryan Rogers said. "It needed to be someone with experience in concrete work."

Commission Chairman Jimmy Rogers said he agreed after looking at the plans for the project.

"Not just anybody can go out there and do what the county needs done," he said.

The commission voted in April to approve a new burn building at Station 10 on Valambrosia Road, replacing the old training building on the county property near Laurens County 911 and the law enforcement center. The county plans to cover the costs with a $500,000 state grant and proceeds from the SPLOST, the local penny sales tax that can only be used for capital projects.

WHP Training Towers was awarded the project after submitting the only bid that met the specifications outlined in the county's request for proposals. The company delivered the new burn building last week, Bryan 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.

Also Tuesday, the commission:

• Voted to change its upcoming meeting schedule due to Election Day and the upcoming holiday season.

The board canceled its Nov. 3 meeting so as not to interfere on election night at the Board of Elections, which shares the courthouse annex building with the commissioners. The commission will meet on Nov. 17, as scheduled for its second meeting of the month, but at 5:30 p.m. instead of its regular time of noon.

In December, the commission also plans to hold just one monthly meeting, at 6 p.m. on Dec. 1.

• Voted to appoint Doug Ward to the Laurens County Board of Assessors. Ward will fill the unexpired term of Matt Lake, who resigned to move away. The commissioners had appointed Sam Beall to Lake's vacated seat, but Beall informed the board he would be unable to serve due to other commitments.

VA annual Trunk-or-Treat to be held Tuesday

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER HERALD

The Dublin VA Medical Center will host its annual Trunk-or-Treat Tuesday, Oct. 27 on the facility's front lawn from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. VA director Chandra Miller extends an invitation to anyone who would like to attend and anyone who would like to dispense pre-packaged candy to the children.

"This is a chance for us to interact with our Middle Georgia community and let folks get a look at our campus so they can see what we do for veterans. We always look forward to the chance to meet possible new community connections," Miller said.

Participants will be in the parking lot across from Building 8, Community Living Center, parallel to Veterans Blvd. (U.S. Highway 80), just across from the McDonald's.

Miller said that the event gives Middle Georgia children a safe place to enjoy Halloween.

"We want the little ones to be safe while having fun. Our VA Police will be on-hand as will other VA staff," Miller said.

The Dublin VA is located at 1826 Veterans Blvd, Dublin, Ga., 31021.

ßAnyone wishing to learn more about the event or how to participate can contact Michael.Catoe@va.gov The public is encouraged to follow the medical center's Facebook page at "Dublin VA Medical Center" to stay up to date on the latest events at the VA.

An upset is fun when it is your team pulling it off

MAN ABOUT TOWN...

By PAYTON TOWNS III

The clock ticked down to zero and almost no one could believe what the score board showed.

The visiting team was jumping up and down while the band played the fight song. No one had predicted this victory.

Now many of you may be thinking I am describing Auburn's 27-24 upset of the Georgia Bulldogs a few Saturdays ago. It may have been close to this, but I was not at the game so I do not know how Auburn's band was treated after the contest.

I was at home stunned at the upset. That was not how I figured the game would go. But it did remind me of the upset I watched my freshman year in high school when the Baldwin Braves upset the undefeated and highly touted Warner Robins Demons.

My Braves went in to that game with a 4-2 record. That year's season began with a 20-14 victory at home over Newton County before hosting and taking down Southwest-Macon 16-14. A trip to Macon saw Baldwin

beat Southeast 19-0 before returning home to beat Hephzibah 21-10. At that point, I thought we had a good team. A trip to Evans in Augusta saw the Braves lose 10-0 before returning home to fall to Central-Macon 28-6. We were 4-2 with an open date. And a trip to Warner Robins was next.

The Demons began the year at Lowndes with a 23-13 victory. They hosted Hephzibah, winning 49-6. They then took the trip to Evans where they won 33-14. Unlike Baldwin, Warner Robins destroyed Southwest-Macon 42-13. They then beat Central-Macon 28-12 and followed that by clobbering Butler 40-7.

Warner Robins was 6-0. I'm sure they were not overly concerned about Baldwin. As a freshman and member of the Baldwin Braves band, I had to travel to Warner Robins and cheer on the team on Oct. 21, 1988.

The game was close in the first half, but try as they might, the Demons could not pull away. What I remember is Baldwin scored late to take a 15-13 lead. The Braves were able to hang on. Like a crowd of people counting down to the new year each December, the band

counted down the seconds and cheered loudly when the horn went off to signal the end of the game.

We played the fight song and booked it to the buses and got out of dodge. A year later, Warner Robins came to Baldwin. It was a hot ticket, featuring the team that beat Warner Robins the year before.

The Demons got their revenge, beating the Braves 28-6.

In 1988, Warner Robins only had one defeat - the 15-13 loss to Baldwin. The Demons went on to a 14-1 record, taking the Class AAAA title. Baldwin loss to Butler the very next week 31-0 and the following week against Northside-Warner Robins 28-13 before edging Northeast-Macon 14-13 to finish with a 6-4 record.

I thought of this game from 1988 moments after Auburn beat Georgia.

I know how it felt to be celebrating a win of this magnitude. Auburn and its fans deserved to celebrate - does not mean I totally like it - but they won.

What happened to the top-ranked Bulldogs? I do not believe they overlooked Auburn. I can say they played their worst game of this year and one of their worse games since Kirby Smart took over in 2016.

And despite that, the Bulldogs were on their way to a potential game-winning drive when the last turnover happened.

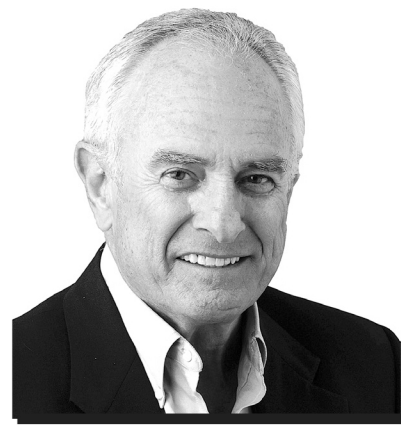
Every weekend in the fall across this country, high schools, colleges and NFL teams line up to play each other. There is always a favorite team picked to be victorious. There is also the other team that is the underdog. They did not show up with the idea of losing that game.

They put in the work, and yes, they have all intentions of winning. And if the top-ranked team has a bad day on the field, upsets will happen.

Warner Robins High School football fans know how that felt in 1988. Georgia Bulldogs fans know how that feels now.

The Demons responded by bringing home the top-prize. Only time will tell how the Georgia Bulldogs will respond.

Fall color



By LORAN SMITH

As one gets older, trips down memory lane become more treasured, and now that fall is upon is, those moments when I can sit by an indolent fire with a good book and a glass of wine are more appreciated than ever. October has been in a sprint since September ebbed away amid the most bothersome and prolonged heat that I can remember, and now I wish we could slow October down with little more than a week left in my favorite month.

I want to meet up with my friend Jimmy Harris, who has taken me fishing on the Chattahoochee for years. I could spend hours and days reminiscing about fishing this Georgia tributary. He taught himself to become a fly fisherman, and he is an expert who often takes off for flyfishing destinations such as the Rocky Mountain West and Argentina.

However, he can't get enough of fly-fishing opportunities in his own back yard—and the Chattahoochee which has its beginning at Jack's Knob in the Blue Ridge Mountains and flows past Columbus forming the boundary of Georgia and Alabama.

All along the Chattahoochee River, there are fishing and recreational opportunities. There are places in Atlanta where you can fish for trout with high-rise buildings in the background.

For years I frequently visited with Atlanta friends who lived near Lovett School and would walk the track around the football field and commune with nature. Listen to the Chattahoochee as it flowed by and spook the Canada geese, which congregated there in the early morning. Sometimes when I take a long flight, like to the West Coast, I find myself enraptured with the solitude and conjure up in my mind's eye the images of the Chattahoochee that I hold dear, which fortunately never fade away.

To accompany Jimmy Harris into the Chattahoochee and listen to the whisper of my favorite river is an experience that I will never tire of—which I am about to experience again.

I cannot imagine living in this bountiful state and not fishing the Chatthoochee and swooning to its effects. To wade out into this classic mountain stream and feel the cool waters slapping against your waders, seeing a whitetail deer monitoring all movements, and observing a flock of mallards settling softly on the river as you prepare to make a cast into the water—a tiny fly awkwardly meeting up with a ripple, taking your lure downstream.

Wham—bam! A rainbow trout parked stealthily in a shadow streaks toward the fly with the greatest of alacrity and heads downstream as you feel the line on your rod tighten, his actions signaling that he is full of fight and will not capitulate. The fly rod bends almost double, as "mister three pounder" slams about with unending commitment and resolve. Even though your concentration must be maintained as you tire him out and reel him to your net, you, nonetheless, are consciously aware of the setting in which you are blessed to be immersed—the refreshing North Georgia mountains, the still pristine Chattahoochee flowing freely, and nature's bounty reminding you that you are fortunate to be away from guns, violence, and greed. As you and your bounty both try to catch your respective breaths, you wish the outdoor experience for the world over. Instead of placing the United Nations Building in New York, why not set up shop on the banks of the Chattahoochee? After a good night's sleep for all delegates, let them fly fish in the mornings and then dine on silver queen corn for lunch. Lunch to be followed by a 30-minute nap. Negotiating would take place in the afternoon.

Methinks that environment would take the hostility out of the give- and-take sessions to make the world more compatible and hospitable.

DAILY SCRIPTURE...

"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

- Philippians 3:6(KJV)

THOUGHT FOR TODAY...

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts."

- Winston Churchill

EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY...

Oct. 27, 2026 is...

- National Black Cat Day
- National Mentoring Day
- Navy Day
- Cranky Co-Workers Day
- National Pharmacy Technician Day
- World Occupational Therapy Day
- American Beer Day

TELL IT!

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

All prison vans should park at the very front door of the hospital. Line them up. This way we will know exactly what we are up against before we ever walk in the door.

One government could make it easier to compare spending, track projects and identify who is responsible for decisions. Transparency should be central to consolidation.

Imagine Dublin and Laurens County negotiating one contract for fuel, insurance, equipment and supplies. Consolidation could give taxpayers greater purchasing power.

Remember this old heathen, when you go around blasting your neighbor, you are breaking one of the commandments. You might want to get on your knees and pray for forgiveness. I don't push my religion on others and blast them. I'll sit there and pray for you because I'm that good of a person. Then again, I'm only human and I'm not in jail. I will tell you this, I don't pray for the devil!

Mr. preacher man, do you know why you have a small attendance in your church? It's because your small flock can't control their tongues, and can't control blaspheme.

For the person interested in the city-county merger, what is your grand plan for the other six municipalities in Laurens County? They probably don't want to be a part of anything like that.

The city wants to take over the county? Where have you been, under a rock? Haven't you seen how the city schools have damaged yourself for years? The county is going to get better. I don't want any part of the city.

Our downtown looks beautiful! The decorations that the business have put out and the Fall flags. All of it just gives you a good feeling that makes you want to smile! Happy Fall, y'all!

Why must there be a ladder laid down in the foyer of the county courthouse as if it's some mechanical room storage closet? Is this the best we can do? Perhaps there is a more appropriate home for it.

What if every Dublin–Laurens department had published performance goals? A new government could measure response times, spending efficiency and citizen satisfaction. Consolidation is a must!

Before raising taxes, taxpayers deserve to know how much debt each government carries. Consolidation planning could reveal opportunities for better debt management. Consolidation is a must!

Could one Dublin–Laurens government pursue larger regional grants and coordinate matching funds more effectively? That deserves examination before creating additional taxpayer obligations. It is a must!

I just want to tell everyone to have a happy and safe Halloween.

TELL IT! GUIDELINES

Have something to say about life in Dublin and Laurens County? We want to hear it. Tell It! is a space for community voices: praise, frustration, questions and everything in between.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Keep it local. Submissions should focus on issues, people and places in Dublin and Laurens County. We are not the right venue for commentary on national politics or public figures outside our community.

Be civil. Personal attacks, profanity and hate speech will not be published. Criticism is welcome; name-calling is not.

Stick to the facts. Submissions must not contain false statements of fact about identifiable individuals or organizations. We cannot publish content that is defamatory or exposes the Courier Herald to legal liability.

The Courier Herald reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity, and to decline any submission at its sole discretion. Submission does not guarantee publication.

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.

WEST LAURENS 28, LIBERTY COUNTY 6

Raiders pick off Panthers, preserve region title hopes

By CLAY REYNOLDS
Sports Editor

HINESVILLE – Post-touchdown tries have historically been an adventure in the West Laurens-Liberty County series, whose two other editions before Friday were both decided on go-ahead two-point tries that the Panthers held out of the end zone to win overtime games in 2008 and 09.

The teams were a combined 1-for-5 following the touchdowns scored Friday in their first meeting since, with an early PAT by Duggan Malone the only routine conversion of the night.

But the Raiders found some other ways of getting their point across in a statement victory to take their record above the .500 mark, and preserve a marginal shot at the region title with two weeks left in the regular season.

The 28-6 rout continued a season-long theme of strong defense, and the more recent trend of interceptions, which have come in bunches over three of West's last four games.

The Raiders (5-4, 4-1 region) picked off five passes, and blocked a punt, to headline the dominant night that wraps up a grueling stretch of eight games in a row, and five of them away from the SHU, where they'll return after Friday's open date to celebrate senior night against Windsor Forest Nov. 6

"I think we're 4-1 on the road this year," said West Laurens head coach Kip Burdette. "We've done well on the road, and I'm proud of that. It's hard to go places. Defense travels, and we played excellent on defense tonight."

It was an unusual game to say the least.

Special teams produced 10 points, defense six and offense the remaining 12 of the Raiders' total.

The D held Liberty County to under 100 total yards, and had its first five-turnover night since blowouts of Cross Creek in 2024 and 25.

"Without all those turnovers and interceptions, I don't think we'd be talking about the result that we had," Burdette said. "It was an excellent job defensively. We blocked a punt, which is mostly defensive guys. But the defensive unit is the one that's on the punt block."

Kingston O'Neal became a 17th defender in school history with two interceptions in a game.

His first was an easy pick-six to stretch the West lead to 13-0 early in quarter 2. The second, early in the third, compounded some growing offensive frustration for the Panthers, who would soon after make a change at quarterback.

A first in the career of sophomore safety Jamari Blash, early in the second quarter, was the pivot point on a potential Liberty County scoring drive that turned into an 81-yard West Laurens march in the other direction to go up by three scores on the way to halftime.

Stephen Odom and Tripp NeSmith followed with plays to nab passes of backup Jack Jacobson in the third and fourth.

A sixth big play that wasn't officially a takeaway, but had the same effect, opened the first-quarter scoring as J.D. Hogan blocked a Liberty County punt, and Kelsey Ashley carried it back about 25 yards to the end zone.

"These guys work their tails off every day," said West Laurens defensive coordinator Kenny Murphy. "We talk about turnovers. We want to create turnovers to get the ball back to our offense, and help this team win. We haven't been getting a lot of them, but tonight in a region championship-style game, they showed up for us."

The Panthers' quarterbacks, altogether, completed only two passes out of their 13 for a grand total of four yards. Their backfield accounted for the remainder of 97 total yards.

Maxx Chafin and NeSmith had two tackles each for loss. Hogan's dozen stops led the defense.

Special effects...

The kicking game was a double-edged sword.

The Raiders benefitted from more plays there than they didn't, but missed a point-after, had a few bad snaps, got a punt blocked and misfired on a two-point conversion attempt.

But Malone did connect on a 25-yard field goal for some second-half insurance, and was lined up for a 35-yarder in hopes of doing the same late in the fourth as Liberty County jumped offside to allow a continuance of a drive that would run the clock inside a minute, and ultimately end in a door-slamming touchdown.

The phase also yielded West's first non-offensive score of the night, with Hogan as the unblocked of two rushers off the left side who came in after the punt of Noel Best at the end of the Panthers' first possession.

"We spent all week looking on film, it took them 3.1 seconds for them to snap it to the punter and get it off," Hogan said. "We practiced all week, and we knew we were going to get one this game."

Ashley completed some unfinished business from the week before, on a fumble return at Long

RAIDERS
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Dublin's Domimarkeyo Walden (77), NaZyon Mitchell (6) and Jamarcus Knight (8) bounce off the Shamrock Bowl field after a final kneel-down exhausted the last remaining seconds of Friday's thrilling victory/HORACE AUSTIN

DUBLIN 53, DODGE COUNTY 47

Late INTs, Bostic's hat trick in 4th give Irish last word over Indians in 100-point thriller

By CLAY REYNOLDS and HORACE AUSTIN

Friday's 61st meeting between Dublin and Dodge County delivered another of the all-out barnburners that have become the norm in the last three editions of the long-time rivalry.

For a third-straight, the Indians gave the Irish every bit they could handle, and this time came as close as any to completing the upset with a fourth-quarter lead. But once again, Dublin emerged the winner to claim a piece of coveted ground in the region standings.

Of the teams' 100 combined points, the Irish scored the last 14 to prevail 53-47, picking up their 38th victory in the series and moving within a game of clinching the region 2-AA championship.

"I felt like our kids showed a ton of resiliency," said Dublin head coach Roger Holmes. "Neither team deserved to lose this game. When Dublin and Dodge get together, it's going to be a war. I think it was a huge win for our program, and all we've got to do now is go back next week and find a way to continue to get better."

Just one more win for the Irish in either of their final two will do it, though running the table would also likely assure them of top seed in the state playoffs as they prepare to visit Vidalia Friday, then host East Laurens the following week.

The teams' matchups since the arrival of Dodge head coach Phillip Brown in 2024 have trained fans to expect a thrill ride, whether that's the first year's rollercoaster – whose breathtaking heights and depths included a multi-score Irish comeback to win 50-33 in Eastman – or last year's more defense-dominated 22-16 Irish win in the Bowl – more resembling a drop tower on which the Indians' hopes were high after jumping out to an early two-touchdown lead, only to plummet on a few incremental dives in the latter part of the game.

This one, for its back-and-forth momentum changes, could be best compared to the swinging frisbee ride that spins its occupants around and around at the end of a giant oscillating pendulum that eventually flips upside down.

IRISH
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PIEDMONT 34, TRINITY 13

Crusaders come up short on road against Cougars

By JEREMY PAYNE
Correspondent

The Trinity Crusaders traveled to Monticello Friday night for their penultimate contest of the regular football season.

Much like last week's game with Flint River, the Crusaders got a late first-half touchdown to keep the game close, but Piedmont broke the game open with three second half scores to pull away for the 34-13 win.

Trinity took the opening kickoff and picked up one first down, but was then forced to punt. The home team would then go to work as the Cougars went 53 yards on 11 plays to get the game's first points.

Kooper Pounds found Corbett Cruise for a four-yard score to take a 6-0 lead late in the opening quarter.

Disaster struck on the Crusaders' next drive as they threw an interception that was returned for a touchdown. The score was negated by penalty, but Piedmont still retained possession deep in Trinity territory.

The Cougars did not waste much time extending their lead, as they needed just two plays to cover 29 yards.

Mason Carroll would run it in from three yards out and the extra point made it 13-0.

Both teams exchanged punts on their next possessions, but the Crusaders were finally able to put together a long drive to get on the board before the half.

Trinity put together one of its most impressive drives of the season, marching 68 yards on 16 plays.

Tayt Evans punched it in from a yard out to get the Crusaders on the board and make it 13-7 at the half.

Piedmont took the kickoff after intermission and went right back to work, going 89 yards in just six plays to extend the lead.

Carroll would punch it in again, this time from 13 yards out, to make the score 20-7.

Trinity picked up a couple of first downs on the ensuing possession, but the drive would eventually stall and they punted again.

Piedmont would capitalize again as Pounds found Bryson Dudley for

CRUSADERS
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JOHNSON COUNTY 55, HANCOCK CENTRAL 6

Trojans hammer Hancock Central to continue unbeaten run

By RALPH JACKSON
Correspondent

WRIGHTSVILLE – Fifty-five points. Just 17 offensive plays.

That was all Johnson County needed Friday night as the undefeated Trojans overwhelmed Hancock Central 55-6 at Herschel Lovett Stadium, improving to 8-0 on the season.

The Trojans averaged an astonishing 22.9 yards per offensive play, piling up 390 yards while scoring touchdowns on runs, passes, a punt return and a fumble recovery. Johnson County rushed for 306 yards on just 13 carries, an average of 23.5 yards per attempt.

And the game got out of hand almost immediately.

Jeremiah Scott took Johnson County's first offensive snap 65 yards for a touchdown. After the Trojan defense forced Hancock Central to punt, Scott returned the kick 32 yards for another score.

On Johnson County's next possession, quarterback Chance Wombles connected with Glen Harris for 34 yards before finding Daezon Devero for a 15-yard touchdown.

Just like that, the Trojans led 21-0, having run only three offensive plays.

Wombles later connected with Zacorian Graddy on a 35-yard touchdown pass, giving Johnson County a 28-0 lead before the first quarter ended.

Blocker Ayden Hall leads the way for Aiden Armstrong on a Johnson County run during Friday night's rout of Hancock Central/RALPH JACKSON

"We came out fast and furious," head coach Don Norton said. "I'm real excited how we played. We didn't get in very many plays tonight, but the ones we did were successful."

The Trojans' offensive efficiency was particularly remarkable considering that Hancock Central ran 45 offensive plays to Johnson County's 17. The Bulldogs held the ball for more than 32 minutes, compared with just under 16 minutes for the Trojans.

But possession time meant little against a Johnson County team capable of scoring from virtually anywhere on the field.

The Trojans' momentum was tempered by injuries to two important players during the second quarter.

Scott, the team's leading scorer, suffered an ankle injury with 6:15 remaining in the first half and did not return. He finished with 101 rushing yards on just four carries, including his 65-yard touchdown run, and the punt return touchdown.

A short time later, lineman Derek Dixon suffered a knee injury and was carted from the field. Dixon returned to the sideline during the second half, where he and Scott sat together on the Trojan bench, icing their injuries.

The long-term severity of both injuries remains uncertain, and both players could see their playing time affected over the coming weeks. However, the Trojans have demonstrated considerable offensive firepower and depth throughout the season, giving them reason for optimism as they approach the final two games of the regular season.

Jeremiah Taylor has been among the team's leading rushing contributors, entering Friday's contest with 435 yards and four touchdowns through seven games. He added 17 yards against Hancock Central, bringing his season

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RAIDERS

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County that was forced out of bounds at the 1, as he was tackled into the end zone on the end of the runback to get the Raiders on the board.

Hogan would make a huge diving catch near midfield to convert a third down and get the Raiders into Panther territory for a second time on the ensuing turn. But some costly presnap penalties had them kicking it back, just moments before O'Neal read and jumped in front of a looping bubble screen pass for an easy 20-yard runback.

A kick off the upright left the score at 13-0 Raiders.

Liberty County, despite some big kickoff returns for plus field position early in the game, mostly did itself in with mistakes in the same situations that had multiple key drives in the second half starting from inside its own 12.

Bad snaps were just as much a booger for the Panthers, who were playing a backup center.

Injuries hurt their cause as the game went on, with top safety and returner Nykiem Ezell and running back Best (who gave the Raider defense most of its trouble) spent a good portion of the game on the sideline after early nicks and bruises.

A long Ezell kickoff return had them in position to cut the Raiders' first-half lead to a score before Blash's interception created a two-touchdown swing to stretch it to 19.

Multiple Williams runs, leading to his extending catch to salvage a third-and-long, got West Laurens within range to score again on a rollout completion from Duggan Malone to Tripp Mascaro.

The Raiders couldn't sustain much in the second half, but turned the second O'Neal pick into points on Malone's field goal in the third quarter.

That 22-0 lead was cut to 16 by Liberty County's lone scoring drive, assisted by a long kickoff return and West Laurens unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Jacobson hit Aaron Brown on a key pass inside the 5, then snuck home on a third and goal.

But a wildcat run by Jahair Rodriguez would be stopped on the two-point try to leave a margin of 16 that, considering the rivalry's history of nailbiting finishes, would be too close for comfort with only 14 minutes left.

West Laurens punted a couple times more, and had the second of those blocked to put Liberty County in a great situation to start the fourth quarter. But the Raiders once again came up with an interception – this one by Odom – and converted it in a handful of plays on a five-yard run by Kaden Bloodsaw.

The score, coming with under a minute to go, was necessary to grab some key points that could help the Raiders in the event of a three-way tie for first in the region that would require a Harlem loss to either Liberty this coming Friday, or New Hampstead the next.

"The point differential is the region tiebreaker, and it just happens with the teams in the tie, so if we were to be in a tiebreaker, that's why we scored that last touchdown," Burdette said. "We could've ended the game. I was about to, and some of our assistants said, 'Coach, Coach! Tiebreaker, tiebreaker!' And I was like, 'Oh yeah, we've gotta punch it in.' I'm glad we were able to punch it in.

"It maxes out at 17, so we got all we could get. Maybe they'll go beat Harlem next week."

They'd go on and take a knee after Nesmith's pick on Liberty County's only remaining play.

West Laurens rushed for 131 of its 210 total yards, with Bloodsaw in the lead on 23 attempts for 89. Malone completed 3-of-4 for 79.

Williams' catch, for the same number as his rushing total on seven carries, finished with 76 all-purpose yards.

SCOREBOARD

FOOTBALL
Friday
Dublin 53, Dodge Co. 47
Piedmont 34, Trinity 13
West Laurens 28, Liberty Co. 6
Johnson Co. 55, Hancock Central 6
Burke Co. 34, Washington Co. 6
ECI 41, Montgomery Co. 13
GMC 13, Twiggs Co. 0
Jenkins Co. 30, Wilkinson Co. 14

PREP SCHEDULE

SOFTBALL
GHSA State Tournament (Columbus)
Wednesday
West Laurens vs. Ridgeland /**5:45 p.m.**

FLAG FOOTBALL
Monday
Swainsboro at East Laurens/**5:30 p.m.**

Thursday
EL at Portal/**5 p.m.**

FOOTBALL
Tuesday
Thomas Jefferson at Brentwood/**7 p.m.**

Friday
Dublin at Vidalia
Bleckley Co. at EL
Riverside Military at Trinity
GMC at Johnson Co.
Butler at Washington Co.
Dodge Co. at ACE Charter
Montgomery Co. at McIntosh Co. Academy
Telfair Co. at Wheeler Co.
Treutlen at Hawkinsville
Wilkinson Co. at Hancock Central/**7:30 p.m.**

CONTACT US:
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IRISH

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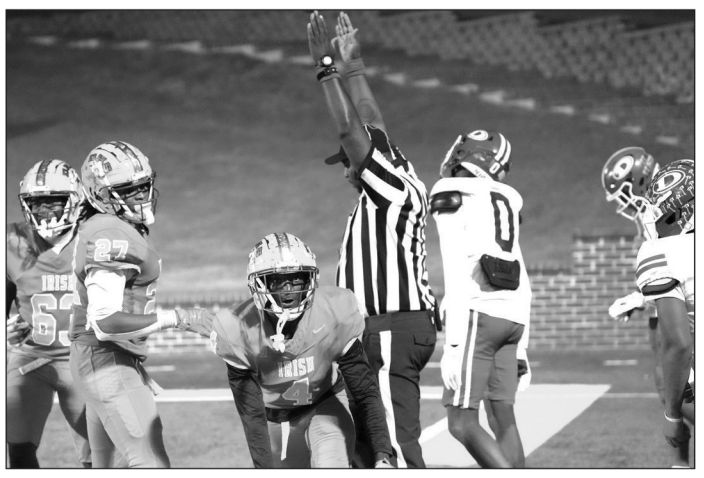
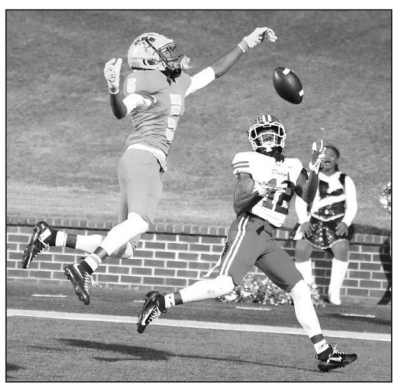


Dublin's Trav Bostic (4) and teammates celebrate after his touchdown run to give the Irish the late lead with just north of a minute to go/**HORACE AUSTIN**



JaKarian Jones gets a finger on a Kain Mincey pass toward Jerimiah Burns to deny the Dodge duo a potential third TD connection/**HORACE AUSTIN**

It was easily as high-scoring and unhinged a game as any the teams have ever played, and like the pair before, was marked by plenty of explosive plays from the Indians' passing attack, and just as unstoppable a Dublin run game going the other direction.

Dodge held the total offense advantage by a count of 487 yards to 411, a bulk of that number triggered by quarterback Kain Mincey, who with the help of two triple-digit receivers was 16-of-36 passing for 376 yards and five touchdowns.

"I was very very disappointed, obviously, in how we played defensively, but you know what, Dodge County had their thing going," Holmes said. "They mixed it up phenomenally well with the run, pass, short game, deep game. We never really got any pressure on their quarterback, and our secondary struggled tonight against a bunch of really good receivers. But at the end of the day, we found a way to win. Good football teams find a way to win."

The Irish ran for 406, and seven out of their eight scores.

Turnovers struck both ways, but in a familiar theme, Dublin took advantage of a couple key ones late that made the final difference.

The most pivotal was an interception that occurred moments after Irish wingback Trav Bostic tied the game with his second touchdown run of the night, followed by a two-point conversion on the exact same power play to even the score at 47 with a little under five minutes to go.

Dodge County started from its own 26, and picked up a first down on the bold decision to go for a fourth and inches that Aamaury Fountain narrowly converted. But the ensuing series wound up in a third and medium, and for the first time in what seemed like all night, the Irish dialed up a blitz that got home to force a mistake.

Mincey, with an unblocked Jaden McRae bearing down, turned loose a throw over the middle that looked to find Jauriel Bray up the seam.

But he didn't see Dublin's Kye Young, who picked the pass off and ran it back to the 30-yard line to set the Irish up for a go-ahead chance with less than two minutes to play.

They needed only two plays to cash it in.

Bostic gained 25 on an opening run, then took a carry right on a perimeter sweep, and survived a tackle to spin back in over the pylon for the touchdown with 1:08 to go. The extra point was no good, but Dublin was back on top for the first time since way back in the opening quarter.

And the Irish defense, which all night had been hard-pressed to get the Indians off the field without giving up points, would have to do it one more time.

Fountain's return to the 18 had Dodge starting in what seemed like its worst field position of the night.

But another in the game's trend of clutch completions between Mincey and members of his elite receiving corps got things moving toward midfield for the Indians, as Bray secured a diving catch for a first down, and Jakavion Harris picked up another on the run after to lift them out of the deep hole following an intentional grounding penalty that was forced by the rush of V.J. Bond.

With time winding short after a Mincey scramble to his own 48, it was time for the inevitable deep shot.

The senior slung it as hard as he could to an area with multiple receivers down the right numbers near the Irish 10. But a slight underthrow wound up in the hands of Dublin's JaKarian Jones, and his interception and return – plus 15 additional yards on an unsporting foul for some jawing in the aftermath – put the Irish 12 yards from the end zone for their final kneel-down.

Fasten your seat belts...

Dublin's only other lead followed its first touchdown of the night, which also resulted from a key defensive play as Zion Porter – who had his name called several other times later in the night – scooped and scored after Bostic's blocked punt back in the first quarter.

For a game that turned out to be so high-scoring, both defenses were strangely dominant in the early going.

Neither offense went much of anywhere on the game's first three possessions that were limited to a series and a punt.

But a short kick started Dodge's third in plus field position, and the Indians went to their staple trick play on an end-around to Burns that got about 18 and finally got the chains moving.

Mincey threw a back-shoulder strike to Bray from 26 yards on the very next play to tie the score. And it remained six apiece after the Dodge PAT spun off to the left.

Dublin punted again, and Dodge drove from inside its 5 to go on top, taking advantage of a freebie on an Irish pass interference foul to score on Robinson's 25-yard run over the right side.

A failed conversion left the Indians with a 12-6 lead at the end of one.

They got it back on a Dublin fumble, but wound up punting. And the Irish – in the nick of time – hit one of their patented big plays on the first snap of the next drive as Knight, recently their most prolific highlight back, took off after turning the corner on the left side for a 61-yard touchdown run.

Once again, the point-after missed, and the count was level at a dozen points.

Jerimiah Burns returned the next kickoff 75 yards for another go-ahead Dodge TD, and once again, the Indians followed it up with a huge stop on downs.

Dublin's defense gave up a first down on pass interference, but then forced a punt that Bond got to and blocked. Bostic made the recovery, and the Irish drove the remaining 45 yards on runs by Knight and Ryland Yates, who had the nine-yard touchdown carry. Na-Zyon Mitchell's first successful point-after tied it up at 19.

Dublin held to force an incompletion on a fourth and long in its red zone, and ran out the clock to send things to halftime.

All heck began to break loose after that.

Dodge County's Jordan Spady tipped a pass for an interception by Fountain on Dublin's opening series.

Burns made another highlight just a few plays later, spinning away from one tackler and juking out another on a 31-yard catch and run for a touchdown as the Indians turned an Irish blitz into another big play, and a 26-19 lead.

Dontavious Cannon ground his way downhill on carries, the last for a 21-yard score, that made up most a Dublin drive of 52 to respond, and tie at 26 with another good PAT.

Mincey and Dodge carved a 70-yard path back to the other end zone to lead again, after double-digit completions over the shoulder to Burns and Fountain, and a 19-yard floater to Bray for the TD.

Dublin used the last two minutes of the third to equalize again, on a 55-yard march keyed by Yates' 31-yard keeper, and sneak touchdown.

The Indians held serve. Fountain returned the kickoff close to midfield, then caught a long touchdown pass to put the Indians up 40-33.

The Irish almost matched it, but lost another fumble as the ball was stripped away from Cannon on the end of a solid run up the middle.

A Domimarkeyo Walden pressure and Matthew Batts break-up forced Dodge to punt, and Dublin drove back to score on a four-yard Bostic run. The point failed, and the Indians led 40-39, then 47-39 after Mincey's 69-yard touchdown pass to Burns – just as untouched off a catch right down the middle of the field – for an eight-point lead.

Knight's 20-yard run was the opening spark of a second-straight scoring drive as Bostic broke two big runs in three plays for his third score in a row.

Yates had just one completion on three passes for five yards, but rushed for 72 and a touchdown and did some adjusting at the line of scrimmage that Holmes pointed out was a key part of getting into the right run on several key downs.

Knight led rushers with 11 carries for 148, with Cannon right behind at 20 attempts for 141. Bostic added 10 for 51, and the late hat trick.

Burns, with 136 yards and over 200 in the all-purpose category, and Fountain, who caught an identical four passes for 125, led Dodge receivers.

CRUSADERS

Continued from page 5

a 56-yard catch and run to cap a 66-yard drive and make the score 27-7.

The Cougars would add one final touchdown in the fourth quarter following a Crusader turnover on downs. Cam Moss would score on a 12-yard run to make the score 34-7.

The Crusaders finally got back on the board late in the fourth on an 11-yard touchdown run from Griffin Lane to close the scoring.

Jude Evans finished the night 9-of-18 passing for 60 yards, and led the way rushing with 54 yards on 14 carries. Tayt Evans had 46 yards on 17 attempts.

Pounds finished the night 5-of-9 for 145 yards and two scores. Carroll had 125 yards on 17 carries.

Trinity falls to 2-7 overall, and will finish up the regular season next Friday as it hosts Riverside Military for senior night.

JOCO

Continued from page 5

total to 452 yards.

Jacaden Webb, Kelsey Waters and Amari Murray have also demonstrated their ability to produce big plays, giving Johnson County multiple offensive weapons even with Scott sidelined.

That depth was evident Friday night.

Waters recovered a Hancock Central fumble in the end zone for a touchdown, then later scored on a 25-yard run following an interception by Kris Siren. The two scores pushed Johnson County's halftime advantage to 42-0.

Norton acknowledged that his team briefly lost some of its focus during the second quarter.

"We kind of got out of doing what we do in the second quarter for a little bit. We took our foot off the gas, but we learned from that," Norton said. "We'll continue to get better and won't make that mistake again."

Senior center Matthew McCoy offered a similar assessment, acknowledging that the Trojans allowed Hancock Central's physical play and verbal exchanges to affect their discipline.

"They tried to play dirty and trash talk," McCoy said. "We lowered our standards a little bit, which we shouldn't have, and we have to get better about doing that."

McCoy said officials had spoken to the coaching staff about the verbal exchanges between players on the field, something he acknowledged was not consistent with the standards expected of the Trojans.

"That's not what we do," he said.

Still, McCoy was pleased with the team's overall performance.

"Our run game was great. Pass game was pretty good," he said, adding that the defense was "on point."

The Trojans wasted little time adding to their lead in the second half.

After Jalen Daniels recovered a Hancock Central fumble, Webb broke loose for a 43-yard touchdown run on Johnson County's first offensive play of the half.

Later in the third quarter, Murray raced 64 yards for another touchdown, pushing the score to 55-0.

Hancock Central finally got on the scoreboard in the fourth quarter with a 30-yard touchdown pass, preventing the Trojans from recording another shutout.

The Johnson County defense limited the Bulldogs to just 83 yards of total offense, including 38 yards rushing on 33 attempts. Hancock Central completed only three of 12 passes for 45 yards.

Siren intercepted two passes, while Daniels and Waters recovered fumbles. The Trojans finished with a plus-three turnover margin.

Offensively, Scott led the rushing attack with 101 yards, followed by Webb with 72 yards on two carries and Murray with 64 yards on his only attempt. Waters added 38 yards on two carries, while Taylor gained 17 yards on two attempts and Morgan Prosser contributed 17 yards on one carry.

Wombles completed three of four passes for 84 yards and two touchdowns. Harris had a 34-yard reception, Graddy caught a 35-yard touchdown pass, and Devero added a 15-yard scoring reception.

Now 8-0, Johnson County will turn its attention to Georgia Military College Prep School (GMC) this Friday as the Trojans look to keep their unbeaten season intact.

Classifieds

Miscellaneous For Sale

U Pick Sweet Potatoes, $10 per 5 gal. bucket, bring containers. Randy Deloach: 912-282-4300 day, 912-739-4124 night. 1026 Herman Lynn Rd, Claxton, GA.

Real Estate

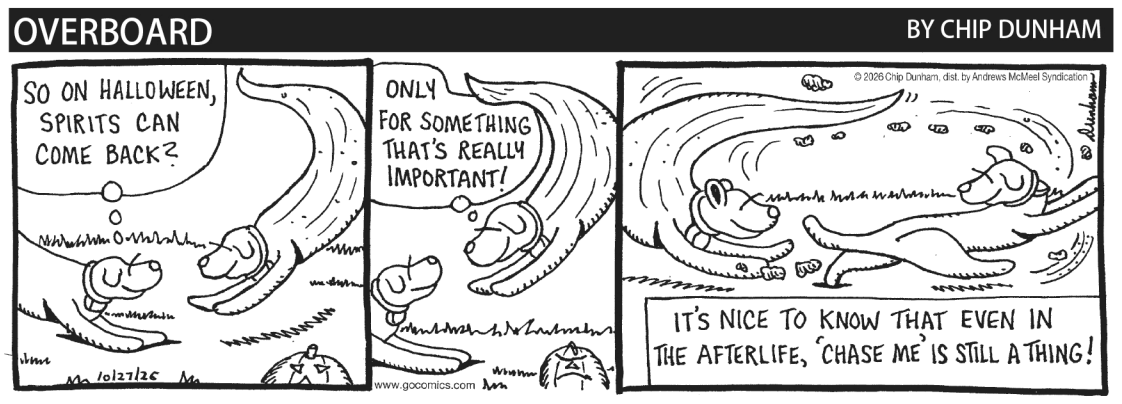
For Rent/Lease

Efficiency-House for rent at 714 Blaine St, Dublin, GA. One bed/full bath, combined kitchen & dining room, with large yard. Rent $500, Deposit $500. Stove/Refrigerator included. Contact Jerry Davis 478-697-6817.

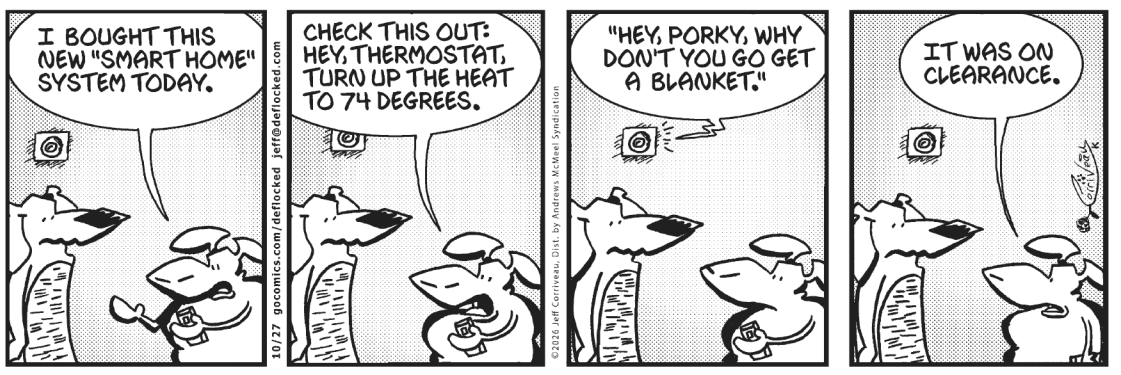
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE — BY STEPHAN PASTIS

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

OVERBOARD — BY CHIP DUNHAM

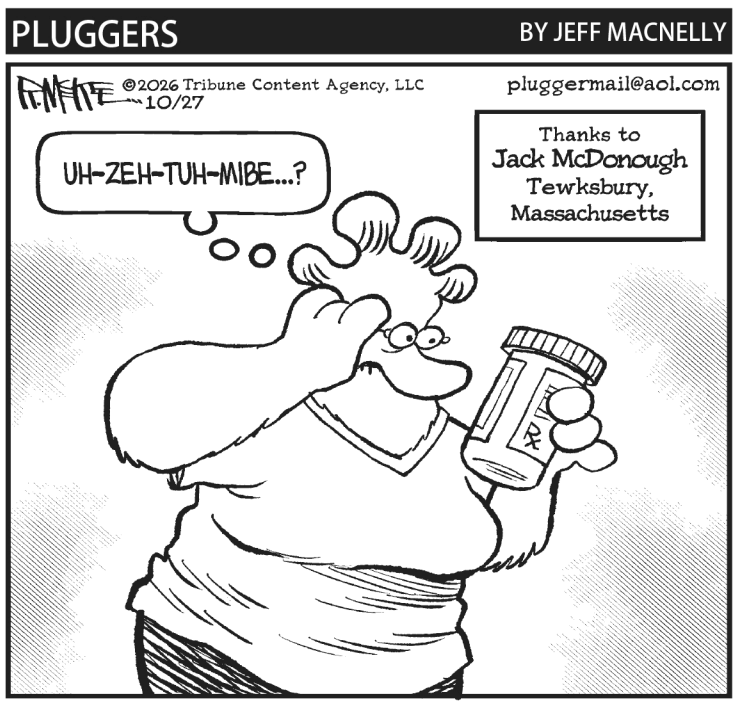


DEFLOCKED — BY JEFF CORRIVEAU



ZIGGY — BY TOM WILSON

PLUGGERS — BY JEFF MACNELLY



Pluggers eventually get really good at pronouncing words like atorvastatin and metoprolol.

Friend's gift-reselling habit grows irksome

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are friendly with another couple, "Matt" and "Mara." They have two young children, one of whom is autistic. We have five children, so we understand the daily challenges of parenting.

My husband and Matt have been friends since preschool. I met Mara soon after she and Matt started dating. We weren't that close until after we both had children. When it comes time for birthday and Christmas gifts, Mara and I always ask each other what our kids would like for a gift. Besides the usual toys, books, etc., Mara always asks for expensive sensory items for her autistic son.

I adore her son, but I roll my eyes every time she sends me a link for a $90 memory foam chair. My husband doesn't see a problem. We just buy more things for their other child so they are treated equally.

My problem is that within a few months, I see Mara has listed my gift for sale online. It hasn't happened just once, but multiple times -- pajamas with the tags still on, a $50 plastic climbing dome and an expensive race car track that Mara specifically asked me for.

When I brought it up to my husband, he was a little peeved at first. After it happened again, he brushed it off, saying that maybe Mara had asked multiple people for the same gift and ended up with two of the same thing.

I could understand if she had used the gifts for a while and then her kids weren't interested anymore, but the fact that her ad says these items were brand-new and never used seems like a slap in the face. Do I have a right to be upset? Should I just stick to gift cards from now on? -- GENEROUS FRIEND IN THE EAST

DEAR FRIEND: Could Mara be doing this because she needs the money? Of course you have a right to be upset about the wasted effort that went into purchasing these gifts. You might feel less peeved if you were to give her gift cards to spend on her children, but there's no guarantee that's how they'd be used.

****

DEAR ABBY: At a recent wake service, I hugged the wife of the deceased and told her how sorry I was for her loss. She thanked me for coming, and I responded, "I wouldn't have missed this." Later, I wondered if that sounded flip, like putting my attendance on the same plane as not missing a concert or sports event. What might have been a better response to her thanking me? Or was that acceptable? -- WANTING TO BE RESPECTFUL

DEAR RESPECTFUL: Wakes, visitations and funerals are emotional events. We're all prone to minor gaffes and other social awkwardness under such circumstances. I'm sure the widow understands you meant no disrespect. In the future, you might phrase that sentiment more like this: "It was important to me to be here for you." You can also never go wrong by paying a simple, heartfelt compliment to the deceased.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren. For nearly four decades, Jeanne Phillips penned this column, which was founded in 1956 by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 270135, Kansas City, MO 64127.

Monday, October 26, 2026

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ ANSWERS

Q 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ 10 4 ♡ 10 6 ◇ A K 4 3 2 ♣ Q J 10 2

Right-hand opponent opens three spades. What call would you make?

A - Many red-blooded men and women will feel the urge to bid with this hand, but it is not good enough to act at this level. Pass.

Q 2 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ J 8 6 ♡ Q 3 ◇ A 9 7 6 5 3 2 ♣ 3

You are the dealer. What call would you make?

A - We know, we know. This is a poor suit and a poor hand, but we cannot give away the one- and two-levels to the opponents at this vulnerability. Open 3D.

Q 3 - Both vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K 4 3 ♡ A 4 ◇ J 10 4 3 ♣ A Q 10 6

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1◇	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

A - Partner has made a sign-off bid and we should usually respect that and pass. This hand, however, has reevaluated to 15-plus in support of spades. Bid 3S.

Q 4 - North-South vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A 7 5 ♡ A Q 10 8 2 ◇ 7 6 5 ♣ J 4

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	?		

What call would you make?

A - Do not even think about jumping to 2H to show a near opener. That is an old-fashioned concept that time has proven to be a poor idea. Bid 1H.

Q 5 - East-West vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ A K 5 ♡ A Q 8 7 4 ◇ 10 8 7 ♣ J 3

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1♡	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♡	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

A - Partner has shown an invitational hand with three hearts and only four spades. He would have bid 3S with five of them. You have enough to accept. Bid 4H.

Q 6 - Neither vulnerable, as South, you hold:

♠ K 8 7 ♡ 9 8 7 5 ◇ K 10 9 4 ♣ K J

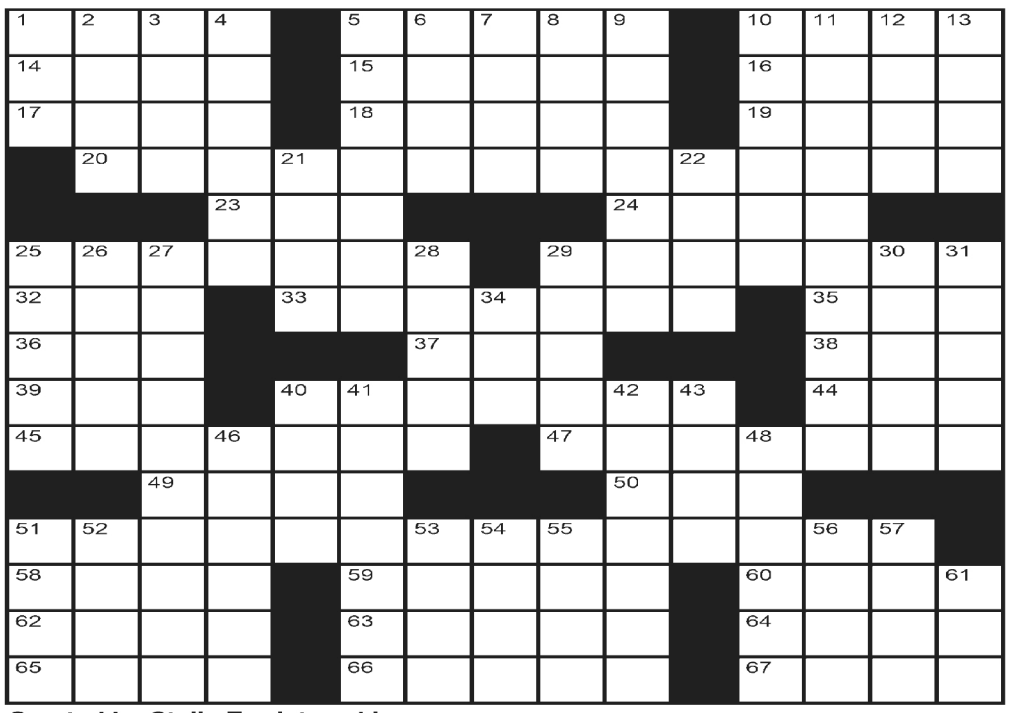
SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Pass	Pass	1♠	Pass
?			

What call would you make?

A - Should you be using the Drury convention, where a 2C response by a passed hand shows 10 points and a fit for opener's major, this is the perfect time for it. Otherwise, don't punish partner, who may have opened a bit light. Bid 2S.

(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



ACROSS

1 Use a sponge
5 Entertain
10 Carpet style
14 Adam and Eve's garden
15 Out of bed
16 No place like ___
17 Red root veggie
18 Pitcher Rodriguez
19 Often: 2 wds.
20 Creature-shaped treats: 2 wds.
23 Singer McGraw
24 Departs
25 Wearable video device: 2 wds.
29 "The more the ___"
32 Filmmaker Aster
33 TV show unit
35 SSW opposite: Abbr.
36 "___ Misérables"
37 "___ if I can help it"
38 Praiseful poem
39 Toastmasters: Abbr.
40 Curriculum parts
44 Silently assent
45 Winter face covering: 2 wds.
47 Hair curlers
49 Dessert wine
50 Cow's sound
51 Impossible Burger, e.g.: 2 wds.
58 Old, in German
59 Bee-related
60 Tidy
62 Cain's brother
63 Nissan SUV
64 Fence opening
65 Catholic service
66 Busybody
67 If not

DOWN

1 Spider's creation
2 "I have no ___!"
3 Hammer part
4 Any thing
5 Tourist's reference: 2 wds.
6 Flour factory
7 "Semper Fi" group: Abbr.
8 Fortuneteller
9 Very angry
10 Salt holder
11 Golf achievements: 3 wds.
12 Love, in Spanish
13 Obtains
21 Computer accessories
22 Apple's center
25 Lip treatments
26 Vacuum brand
27 Vanishes away
28 Belarus city
29 Car's engine
30 "Star Wars" moon
31 Marsh plants
34 "Help!"
40 Rocker Ulrich
41 Where river meets sea
42 Oscar hopeful
43 Opening for coins
46 Roadside lodging
48 Loaf about
51 Polite title
52 Actor Idris
53 Fraternal group: Abbr.
54 Endorse
55 Tightly stretched
56 Blue-green color
57 Consumes
61 Golf-ball prop

Created by Stella Zawistowski

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

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SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

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:

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

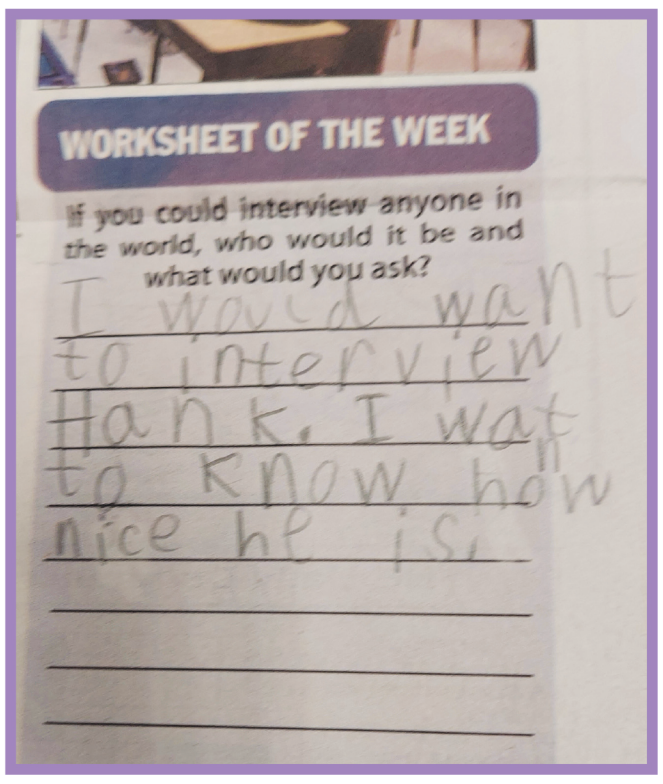
KIDS' CORNER

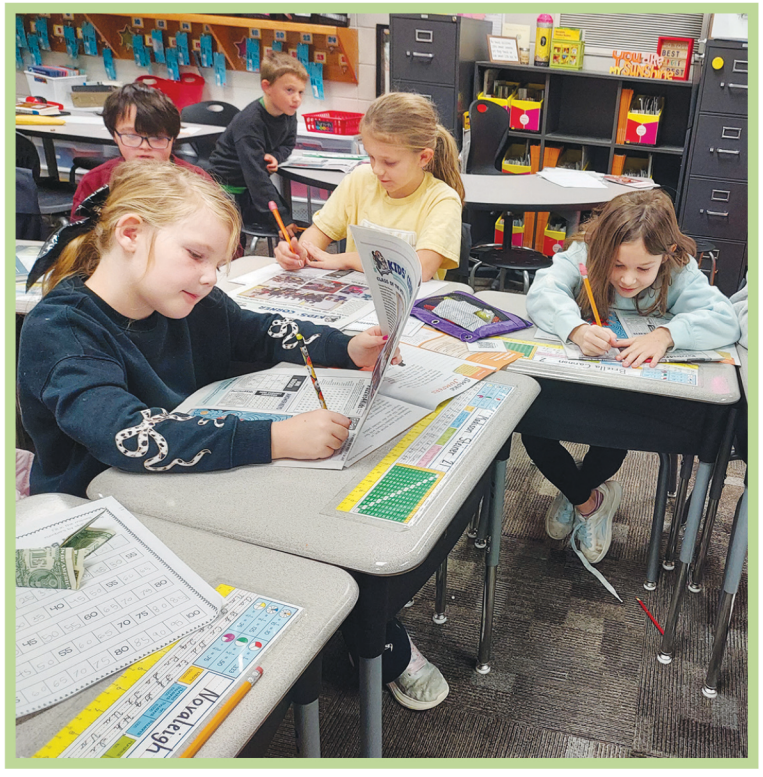
Brought to you by Dublin-Laurens County CHAMBER COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Vol. 034 | Follow Herald the Hound every Tuesday on Kids' Corner from The Courier Herald

CLASS OF THE WEEK: Mrs. Kristin Watkins' class at ELP

The students in Mrs. Kristin Watkins class are great at asking questions! During a recent visit by Herald the Hound, the kids discussed conducting interviews and learning by asking questions. Then they had a chance to write a few of their own and who they would ask them to. See below for an example.





WORKSHEET OF THE WEEK

Spooky opinion poll: What is your favorite Halloween monster? Explain why.

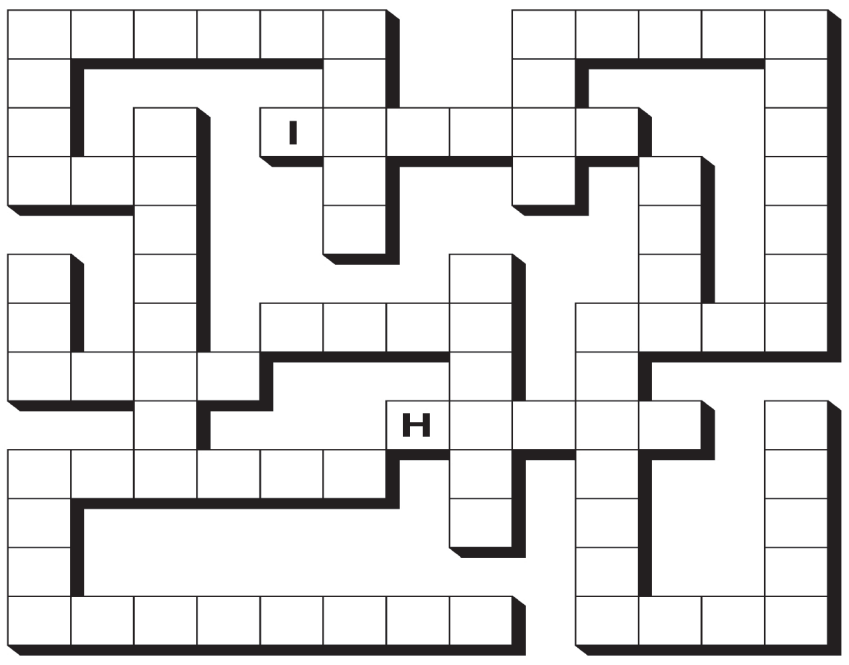
Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

CRISSCROSS – THE PEOPLE IN OUR LIVES – PART 2

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
MAN
MOM
4 Letters
ALLY
AUNT
CHAP
CHUM
GENT
MATE
PEER
TYKE
5 Letters
ADULT
BUDDY
HUMAN
NANNY
6 Letters
COUSIN
INFANT
PARENT
SPOUSE
7 Letters
GRANDMA
TRIPLET
8 Letters
ANCESTOR
RELATIVE



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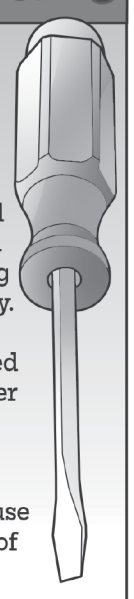
Fun Fact

Archeological evidence shows us that tools resembling **screwdrivers** were being used in Germany and in France during the 15th century. The Industrial Revolution paved the way for faster and simpler production of screws, thus increasing the use and popularity of screwdrivers.

Source: monroeengineering.com



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MINI SUDOKU

	4				
6			1		
		1		6	3
	3			1	
	6				
			4	5	

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

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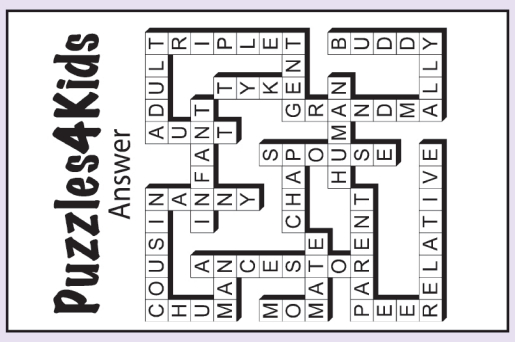
ANSWER KEYS

MINI SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

Puzzles4Kids Answer



TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

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