The Courier Herald

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Local churches preparing to give away 500 Thanksgiving boxes this Saturday

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Senior Reporter

A local church, along with other community volunteers, is looking to give away 500 Thanksgiving boxes this weekend.

The Greater New Friendship Baptist Church will be holding its fifth Thanksgiving Give-Away Boxes event beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 21 at Old West Laurens High School, 338 W. Laurens School Road.

Greater New Friendship Baptist Church Pastor Ernest Jones is expecting to see another long line for the event. After all, participants will be receiving a turkey and a lot of sides for a Thanksgiving feast.

"We thank God that this is our fifth annual event," Jones said. "We'll have multiple churches and other organizations who will come out to help pack the boxes and hand them out. It's a beautiful time where it will look like the body of Christ."

Jones said people do not have to register. All they need to do is drive up and receive a box.

"They just need to get in line and be patient," he said.

One of the things Jones likes to see is the number of youth from various organizations who come out to assist in this event.

"I pray that they will see that there is always something they can be committed to that is bigger than themselves," Jones said. "They will see families who are having a rough time. It is good for them to see this as a young person so that they will remember it and hopefully pass it down."

THANKSGIVING
Continued on page 9



The Greater New Friendship Baptist Church will be holding its fifth Thanksgiving Give-Away Boxes event beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 21 at Old West Laurens High School, 338 W. Laurens School Road/PAYTON TOWNS III

Local business set to start airport shuttle and transit service

By DONNELL SUGGS
Editor and Publisher

On a cool Monday morning, a Dublin native and proud Dublin City Schools graduate posed for a picture outside of the business that she owns in her hometown. The reason for the photo session and subsequent interview with a reporter was about the next step in her business journey.

Premier Talent & Logistics LLC, a local talent and recruitment agency, is opening a transportation division. Court Tours, named after the company's owner Courtney Coney, will begin to take Laurens County and Middle Georgia residents to Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport and beyond in mid-December.

Coney grew up in Dublin, and after leaving home to attend college in South Carolina, and hadn't lived in Laurens County for 18 years. She moved back to Dublin in May 2024, and decided to start a business that she felt was very much needed: reliable transit.

"There's nothing like that in Dublin. We're creating an opportunity to get people where they need to go," she said.

There are between 2,000 to 2,500 flights, departures and arrivals, per day out of Atlanta. The need for a shuttle service to the airport is something Coney decided her community needed. The idea of a shuttle service has always been on her mind thanks to a familial inspiration. Her uncle Johnny B. Denson started a transportation service, J and V Bus Line, in 1995.



Premier Talent & Logistics LLC, a local talent and recruitment agency, is opening a transportation division. Court Tours, named after the company's owner Courtney Coney (above)/DONNELL SUGGS

"I just always kind of expected to go into the transportation field," said Coney, who worked in the transportation industry in Columbia, South Carolina after graduating with a Bachelor's degree in social work from Benedict College before returning home to Dublin. "I always admired what he accomplished and the fact that he built something of his own in the transportation industry," she said.

Coney opened Premier Talent & Logistics LLC nearly six months ago, and though she wanted to provide background checks, safety compliance, training, and recruiting and talent placement, the transportation arm was always in the plans for her business.

"My family has always been all about entrepreneurship," she said. "Transit is such a unique industry because it is about so much more than moving vehicles. It is about moving people, connecting communities, and helping individuals get where they need to go."

Along with the trips to the airport, Court Tours will provide interstate trips in their two 15-seat passenger vans. All trips are by appointment only, says Coney.

Along with Dublin and greater Laurens County, Court Tours will service Macon, Statesboro, and Warner Robins.

"We'll also be able to help churches get to and from events or schools that may be looking for transportation, but don't want to use the school buses," Coney explained. "You can ride in comfort."

A trip on the agenda for Court Tours is the inauguration of incoming Georgia Governor-elect Keisha Lance Bottoms, who visited Dublin two days before Election Day on Sunday, November 1. That will take place at the State Capitol on January 11, 2027. Visitors can go to the Premier Talent & Logistics website (premiertl.com) to schedule a ride to downtown Atlanta for the historic moment.

Coney told The Courier Herald that there are also plans to service customers in Augusta, Columbus, and Hinesville in April 2027. Until then the transportation will have to be in Middle Georgia. She also hopes to partner with other transportation companies in the future.

"They can come to Dublin and catch a shuttle to the airport," Coney said of

BUSINESS
Continued on page 9

Board hires new Dublin High principal, steps up search for superintendent

By RODNEY MANLEY
Staff Writer

The Dublin City Board of Education hired a new high school principal Monday night while also diving back into its search for a new school superintendent.

The board voted to hire former Telfair County and Hancock Central principal Daymond Ray Jr. after closing its regular monthly meeting to discuss personnel. Ray replaces longtime principal Michael Overstreet, who retired this month after 35 years in education, including 17 with Dublin City Schools.

Ray has worked for more than 20 years as a teacher and then administrator, with 15 years experience as a school principal. He served as principal at Telfair County High. Oak Hill Middle and Hancock Central High before taking an assistant principal job at Griffin High in June.

"We are very excited to welcome Dr. Ray to the DCS family," interim Superintendent Marcee Pool said in a news release announcing the hiring. "He is bringing experience and a proven record of helping teachers meet the needs of students, and will be a difference-maker at Dublin High."

The Dublin board was swayed by Ray's experience at both the high school and middle school levels and with his track record of improving student outcomes.

While principal of Hancock Central High, one of Georgia's lowest performing schools, Ray helped lead significant improvements in school performance. The school's College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) score increased from 48.4 to 65.6, while its graduation rate improved from 85 percent to 93.3 percent.

Ray holds a Doctor of

PRINCIPAL
Continued on page 9



Daymond Ray Jr. brings 15 years of experience as principal to his new post at Dublin High School/SPECIAL PHOTO



City of Dublin officials and council members shovel the dirt toward the end of Monday's groundbreaking ceremony for Springdale Park/PAYTON TOWNS III

City celebrates groundbreaking for redevelopment of Springdale Park

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Senior Reporter

Dublin City Council members and officials tossed dirt to symbolize the beginning of a 10-month work that will improve Springdale Park.

The City of Dublin held a groundbreaking ceremony late Monday morning that began with Parks Superintendent Nikole Simmons welcoming everyone. She was glad a crowd was on hand to see what she called, "a tremendous occasion."

"I'm sure the public is excited about this," Simmons said. "We have been talking to many of the people that have come out here to walk their dogs and play a little basketball and utilize the park on a daily basis. I can tell you that they are just as excited as we are. That brings a smile to my face."

Dublin Mayor Joshua Kight said the city has been on a mission to renew, revive, restore, renovate and

PARK
Continued on page 9

INDEX

OBITUARIES 2
DAILY SCRIPTURE 4
EDITORIAL 4
TELL IT 4
SPORTS 5
NEWS DIGEST 7
COMICS 8
PHOTO PAGE 10

1 section, 10 pages • Vol. 113, No. 130, Pub. No. 161860

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OBITUARIES



Dorothy Williams Cross

Funeral services for Mrs. Dorothy Williams Cross will be held on Saturday, Nov. 21, 2026, at 1 p.m. at the Mount Calvary Baptist Church, 1601 South Poplar Springs Church Road, in Dublin. Interment will follow in the Church Cemetery.

On Nov. 12, 2026, the death angel sealed the lips of our beloved Dorothy W. Cross. Dorothy was born on Dec. 6, 1940 to Zelena O'Neal Williams and Cecil Williams. Dorothy was preceded in death by her loving husband, Allen T. Cross Sr.; two beloved sons, Tony and Timothy Cross; and loving daughter, Gwendolyn Peacock; and a host of other relatives.

Mrs. Cross leaves to cherish her memories her children, Satara, Deyana, Terry (Joyce), Allen (Phyllis), Ivory (Latricia), David (Raqual), Gary (Allegra). She also leaves to mourn a sister, Marilyn; and a host of grandkids; and great-grandkids, nieces, and nephews. She also leaves to mourn two loving nieces, Alice O'Neal and Aartha Mae O'Neal; three loving devoted close friends, Joyce Edwards, Helen Jones and Carmenletia Reid; and a devoted loving god-daughter, Debra Donner.

Please post your condolences online at ServicesbyDudley.com.

Services by Dudley Funeral Home and Cremations of Dublin.

Lawmakers call for forensic audit of Georgia child welfare agency's spending

By ROSS WILLIAMS
Georgia Recorder



Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick and Rep. Beth Camp listen to a foster parent talk about their experiences during a study committee meeting on Oct. 22, 2026/JILL NOLIN, GEORGIA RECORDER

A bipartisan group of Georgia lawmakers is calling for a new third-party audit of the Division of Family and Children Services, the state agency tasked with protecting vulnerable children.

"There is still so much that we don't know, and we don't know what we don't know, and the only way we can get that is a deep, forensic audit," said Rome Republican state Rep. Katie Dempsey.

Dempsey said lawmakers should look at starting the process "tomorrow."

Dempsey was speaking Tuesday at a hearing of a joint House and Senate committee tasked with evaluating rising costs in Georgia's foster care system. The committee was convened after the agency faced a shortfall of about $85 million, which led to service cuts and terminated contracts with nonprofits.

After the committee was formed, new reporting from the Center Square raised questions about the department's spending, including nearly $1 million on an SUV equipped with high-tech surveillance gear including a device that can tap into cellphones.

The committee approved 10 recommendations including proposals like making better use of federal funds, identifying resources for foster parent recruitment, reviewing insurance coverage for foster youth, and improving early diagnosis and treatment of autism for foster children.

The recommendations did not include the audit called for by Dempsey and other members of the committee. Whether agency spending contributed to the deficit was beyond the committee's purview.

An amendment to one of the recommendations from Sandy Springs Democratic state Rep. Esther Panitch states that a future legislative panel should examine agency spending.

"These were things that were actually coming up while we were meeting in committee but were not addressed, so this will allow us to move forward to deal with the elephant in the room, which is the DFCS scandal," Panitch said, referring to the agency's purchase of the SUV and other controversial spending.

Panitch added that she would support a forensic audit in addition to further legislative oversight.

"Obviously, DFCS had some significant major problems that the Legislature was not warned about, and we cannot allow that to happen again," she said. "The kids suffer when it happens, and those kids are our priority, not the administrators."

A September audit requested by the House Appropriations Committee and published by the state auditor's office found that spending on 20% of children in foster care, typically those with complex needs, accounted for 70% of the increase in spending.

The cost of providing out-of-home care for foster children in Georgia increased by $155 million, or around 42%, between 2022 and 2025 while the number of children has remained steady and inflation was only 18%.

"Costs increased due to numerous related factors, including increased spending on children with complex needs, reduced foster home availability, limited psychiatric residential treatment facility capacity, greater reliance on higher-cost placements and contracted providers, and rate increases," the report found.

Concord Republican state Rep. Beth Camp, who co-chaired the study committee, said a forensic audit would provide more access into DFCS' spending than the state audit.

"The forensic audit is different because it basically goes from this date back, and it does a very deep dive into where the money went," she said.

"It doesn't add up, especially when we had the commissioner of DHS addressing us last year about this time and indicating to us that there was an $86 million shortfall," she added. "It's just not adding up for most of us. If we were running our household budget like this, we'd all be in trouble."

Camp said a forensic audit should be performed by a third-party agency not involved with the government and said it would need to be initiated by the executive branch, most likely Gov.-elect Keisha Lance Bottoms, who is set to take office in January.

"It's been communicated to her transition team," Camp said. "This is something that probably needs to take place sooner rather than later."

Speaking to reporters in the Capitol Tuesday morning, Bottoms said she was continuing to review budget and policy recommendations but indicated she was not opposed to a full forensic audit.

"What I would support is making sure that we can get to where we need to be on fully funding foster care, and if that means that an audit is in order and, and a top-to-bottom review, we're going to do whatever we need to do to make sure that our foster children are cared for and they have the resources that they need," she said.

In an emailed statement, spokesperson Kylie Winton indicated the state agency would not oppose the audit.

"DHS adheres to all applicable laws and policies, and we will gladly work with any person or firm auditing or investigating our agency's budgeted funding and expenses," Winton said.

Local election officials explain mishap that temporarily flipped southwest Georgia state House race

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

DONALSONVILLE — Election officials in Seminole County are attributing the changed outcome in the state House District 154 race to a mishap with their tabulation process, saying the memory card that recorded the votes never went missing even though state election officials initially said the card had been "overlooked."

In the days after Election Day, Nov. 3, incumbent Rep. Gerald Greene, R-Cuthbert, was trailing Democratic challenger Harry James by fewer than 100 votes, according to the unofficial tally.

But on Nov. 6, after additional votes were included in Seminole County's totals, Greene moved ahead of James.

That afternoon, the secretary of state's office issued a statement saying the correction of the tally had given Greene a 262-vote lead. (That night the unofficial tabulation on the secretary of state's elections website showed Greene with 10,193 votes to James' 9,932, a margin of 261).

After a hand count Monday, the state elections website on Tuesday showed Greene with 10,195 votes to James' 9,944, a margin of 251.

Seminole County has certified its results, but the outcome remains unofficial until Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger certifies it. His deadline is Friday.

The result will not affect control of the House. Democrats have taken control from Republicans, with 92 seats to Republicans' 87, according to the unofficial statewide count. One caveat: a three-way race on Election Day is headed to a runoff, and the outcome will give one of the parties another seat. But even if Republicans win, they will not have enough seats to regain control of the House.

The outcome in the Seminole County race flipped after election officials identified a discrepancy between the number of voters who checked in on Election Day and the number of ballots initially reported as cast.

In a statement on Nov. 6, the secretary of state's office said a routine check had found the discrepancy, and that the state then notified Seminole County.

Seminole County officials identified a discrepancy of nearly 400 votes.

In its Nov. 6 statement, the secretary of state's office attributed the unreported votes to an election machine memory card that "had not been uploaded into the county's election management system." The secretary of state's office also said it had launched an investigation that "will examine how the memory card was overlooked" and whether election procedures were followed.

Although initial reports described the issue as a missing memory card, Seminole County Elections Supervisor Ron Foskey said all memory cards had been accounted for on election night.

The problem, Foskey said, was that the county's election management system had not completed the final step necessary to validate and publish results from the last precinct's memory card. Once that step was completed, the updated totals matched the county's ballot scanner records.

The "Final and Complete" system report matched the ballot totals and scanner tape totals. The final report showed 388 more ballots than the report sent on election night.

The secretary of state's office confirmed that its investigation found that the memory card containing the additional votes was not missing.

Greene said in an interview Monday that he welcomed the hand count so the final result would be "above board" and "no one says something different about the election."

If the current result holds when Raffensperger certifies it, Greene will be sworn in in January to start his 45th year in office. He has been in the Georgia House since January 1983, making him one of its longest-serving members.

BIRTHDAYS

Nov. 19
YKeria Floyd
Noah Hester
Fredrick Jones

Nov. 20
Nikki Ball
Rosemary Kowtko

ANNIVERSARY

Nov. 19
Caleb & Meghan Wilson

The City of Dublin will be closed on Thursday, November 26th and Friday, November 27th, 2026 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Garbage schedule as follows:
Monday, November 23rd,
will be Monday and Tuesday route customers
Tuesday, November 24th,
will be Wednesday route customers
Wednesday, November 25th,
will be Thursday route customers
No recycling this week
Recycle will resume December 4,
for Wednesday and Thursday route customers







Sick days: Confessions of a recovering germaphobe

THE NEW SOUTHERN DAD



By KYLE DOMINY

Howard Hughes was an eccentric man to say the least.

One of the most famous wealthy figures in American history, Hughes was just as known for his odd behavior as he was his business dealings. He made movies and was a savvy investor on top of building and flying airplanes. Accidents and near death experiences while testing some of his flying machines are credited with worsening his obsessive compulsive behavior. Trauma does have a way of bringing out the worst in people.

But even before his life took its bizarre, tragic turn, Hughes was widely known as a germaphobe. He went through great lengths to avoid getting sick, going as far as burning his suits if he suspected he had encountered some sort of contaminate or, shudder at the thought, an ill person.

That proves the old adage, you can't hide money. With most suits being dry clean only, you can count on most people wearing dirty suits. I did, however, keep a suit tucked away in the corner of my closet for about a decade after a funeral turned into an illness spreading event. It was a miserable ride home from the cemetery, but I'll spare you the gross details.

I finally tossed the garment away with the trash recently. It's a shame, it was a nice suit. A black three piece with a faint blue pinstripe. Fit like a glove too.

But I digress.

As Hughes' mental state deteriorated over the years, so did his mysophobia. He became more and more irrational. He isolated himself for weeks on end, allegedly wearing tissue boxes on his feet to avoid contact with any surface. His hair and fingernails grew long. He avoided bathing and performing basic hygiene tasks. - a counter-intuitive measure that somehow played into his delusion.

When he died he was a mere shell of the former dapper business tycoon. His body was so unrecognizable that the FBI had to be called in to analyze his finger prints.

It is a good thing that he didn't have kids.

This is being written on a sick day, pulling double duty as many parents must during cold and flu season, squeezing in a little work as a sick child rests in the other room. This is after spending the morning in the urgent care waiting room with other people exhibiting symptoms that make you want to burn your clothes. I was recently in an elementary school, visiting to read a story to a class of second graders and the halls echoed with a seemingly non-stop chorus of coughs and sniffles.

My grandmother always said that you can't run from being sick. You don't catch it as much as it catches you.

Admittedly, I'm a recovering germaphobe. There was a time in my life when I would have avoided crowds during flu season. A time when my hands couldn't possibly be cleaner but I'd wash them again.

Having children changed that. Kids are natural dirty bombs, innocently spreading whatever contaminates picked up throughout the day. Besides, getting a little sick every now and then is good for you. It helps the immune system fight off worse conditions.

But if you see me wearing Kleenex boxes on my feet, just know I need a little help.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Does a baseball player, retired since 2001, still get a salary check for over $1 million each year from the New York Mets?

By JACK BAGLEY
GTLN

In this column's home newspapers, one week from today is Thanksgiving. I want to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very happy and safe holiday, and I hope you get to share the love and camaraderie of family as you enjoy your repast.

For dessert, I could suggest many things, but at the top of the list would be these little tidbits of trivia, designed to be served with or without whipped topping. Happy Thanksgiving, my friends. See you again next week - delivered after the holiday, I would imagine.

Did you know ...

... you may have seen a drey? In fact, there's a very strong chance you have. A drey is another name for the nest of a squirrel. *Additional trivia note:* Dray (note changed spelling) is also the word used for a group of squirrels; it's a nod to the name for their nests. (Sounds squirrelly, I know, but go with it.)

... the first modern skyscraper was constructed in 1885? The ten-story Home Insurance Building was located in Chicago. Designed by William LeBaron Jenney (1832-1907), the building was the first the use a structural steel frame to support its weight. (Chicago. Of course.)

... one of the most dangerous movies ever made was produced in 1981? That year, Roar hit theaters. Produced by Noel Marshall (1931-2010), the film featured more than 130 live, wild animals. Among the roster were lions, tigers, and an elephant. Many members of the cast and crew suffered injuries related to the animals on set. Star Tippi Hedren (born 1930) was bitten by a lion on her head. She also fractured her ankle, and after an elephant picked her up with its trunk developed gangrene. Hedren's daughter and co-star, Melanie Griffith (born 1957), was mauled by a lioness. (Roar, indeed.)

... onions are a remedy for a blocked nose? The sulfur content in the average onion is thought to be enough to draw mucus out of the body. (Try it and let me know if it works.)

... the bridal bouquet can trace its roots to early Rome? During the period of the Roman Republic, which existed from 510 BC to 27 BC, brides carried bundles of herbs such as garlic and rosemary under their veils. The herbs were used to symbolize fertility and to ward off evil. The herb bundles survive today in the form of the modern bridal bouquet of flowers. (Now the bouquet wards off other suitors.)

... a retired baseball player still makes over one million dollars a year in salary? When Bobby Bonilla (born 1963) left the New York Mets in 1999, the team decided to defer the remaining $5.9 million on his contract instead of paying him off all at once. The contract added 8% interest, with the payments scheduled to begin in 2011. Bonilla retired in 2001, and ten years later, the cash flow began. He will be getting checks for $1,193,248.20 every July 1 until 2035. *Additional trivia note:* The reason for the deferment was the investment plan that the Mets made with Bernie Madoff (1938-2021), which they didn't know was part of Madoff's Ponzi scheme that cost his investors an estimated $65 billion. Because of the money they lost to Madoff, the Mets simply could not afford to pay Bonilla off all at once. And Bonilla is a double-dipper – he also has a second deferred contract with the Mets and Baltimore Orioles, paying him $250,000 a year for 25 years. Those payments began in 2004. (Smart cookie, that Bobby Bonilla.)

... the first talking motion picture ever made in England was directed by Alfred Hitchcock? The famous director (1899-1980) made *Blackmail* in 1929 – the first sound-on-film motion picture made in the United Kingdom. Originally planned as a silent movie, the producers gave Hitchcock the green light to make some parts of it with the new novelty of sound – but Hitchcock thought that idea was absurd and made the entire picture with sound. (Hitchcock was something of a visionary, it seems.)

... during World War II, very few new automobiles were made? In 1941, before the United States joined the war, more than three million cars were manufactured in this country. During the following four years, only 139 more new cars for consumer use were manufactured, after the government practically froze the sale of new such vehicles. All of the major auto manufacturers turned their plants into war production. (Wonder who got to buy those 139 new cars?)

... a Japanese man holds the record for the number of patents held by one person? Shunpei Yamazaki (born 1942) holds more than 1800 patents in his name – about 1100 more than Thomas Edison (1847-1931). Yamazaki was president of the Semiconductor Energy Laboratory Co., Ltd. (Everybody has to be known for something, right?)

... the shopping cart was invented in 1937? Sylvan Goldman (1898-1984), the owner of the Humpty Dumpty Stores and Standard Food Markets in Oklahoma, designed the device so that customers would be able to easily move more groceries. The first cart was based on a wooden folding chair with a basket on the seat and wheels on the legs. Goldman then asked one of his employees, a mechanic, to create the cart out of metal. The first cart was a metal frame with two wire baskets, and he introduced them to his stores on June 4, 1937. (See, that's the kind of invention we all need.)

... a rodent's teeth never stop growing? The rodent wears them down by gnawing on bark, leaves, and other vegetable matter, and if they don't do that, their teeth became so long that they are unable to eat. (That explains it.)

Now ... you know!

You're invited to

Christy's Floral Christmas Open House

November 21st & 22nd

1–4 p.m.

Sales – Refreshments – Door Prizes

779 A Central Dr., East Dublin

478-272-2914



Thanksgiving Holiday Publishing Schedule for The Courier Herald

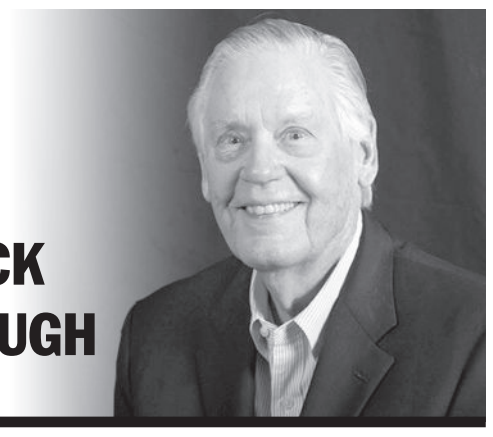
The Courier Herald will publish on Tuesday, Nov. 25, and a combined paper for Thursday, Nov 26, & Saturday, Nov 28.

Deadlines for the Thurs-Sat combo paper will be
Monday Nov. 23rd at noon

The Courier Herald office **WILL CLOSE AT NOON ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH** AND WILL BE CLOSED Thanksgiving Day and Friday Nov 27.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Some random thoughts on some random subjects



By DICK YARBROUGH

According to the television commercials, it's Christmastime. Not sure what happened to Thanksgiving, which, according to my calendar, has yet to arrive. I'll have more to say about Thanksgiving next week, but this week, I give thanks that all the political ads are history. . . .

I was surprised at the amount of mail I received last week agreeing that the recent Democratic blowout was not so much an endorsement of Democrats as it was a repudiation of Donald Trump. We are in a Forever War with Iran that was supposed to last four or five weeks, gas prices and diesel fuel prices have skyrocketed along with groceries, and he is worrying about his ballroom and his arch and getting his name added to the Kennedy Center. Methinks Trump is out of touch with mainstream America. Me also thinks the election results should have convinced him of that. But I doubt it. . . .

As for the Democrats, if they believe We the Unwashed are ready to go back to open borders, tearing down statues, pushing socialist policies and encouraging boys to become girls in order to gain an unfair advantage in athletic competition, we'll send them to the sidelines in 2028 just like we did the Republicans this year. Just saying. . . .

A nod to Colin Kapperdoodle or whatever his name is. You remember the multi-millionaire NFL football player who made a big show of sitting and kneeling during the national anthem, and wearing socks comparing police to pigs, all with the acquiescence of team owners? Well, you should see the NFL today. They are so wrapped up in patriotism and the flag and saluting members of the military that you have to wonder if there wasn't a public backlash from his antics. It seems the NFL got the message that more of us love our country than care about what this guy thinks of it. . . .

It took Gov. Brian Kemp's personal intervention to get the field at Sanford Stadium rightfully named for the late legendary Hall of Fame football coach Vince Dooley. Now it is time to put Dooley's name on the field itself, as is the case with many other football fields I see on television, including the Southeastern Conference. Time is of the essence. Somehow, I don't think this will be a priority with our incoming governor. . . .

Speaking of our new governor, it will be interesting to see where Keisha Lance Bottoms comes down on the issue of mining our Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge for titanium dioxide in order that the world never runs out of toothpaste whitener. Despite the Conservation Fund's acquisition of nearly 8,000 acres of land and the designation of the Okefenokee as a World Heritage Site, the threat of mining still looms. The local timber barons and the chemical companies are not about to give up their efforts to mine the area. It is going to take legislation and a permanent ban on mining. Will it happen? Stay tuned. . .

Congratulations to Wesley Christiansen, of Jefferson, Georgia, and Nayela Vilton, from Lithonia. Both are enrolled in the Wellstar School of Nursing at Kennesaw State University, and both are recipients of the Jane J. Yarbrough Endowed Nursing Scholarships awarded to second-career nursing students. My family and I established the scholarships in memory of The Beloved Woman Who Shared My Name and who was herself a second-career student at KSU, if you count raising two kids as a career while her husband focused all his time on scrambling up the corporate ladder. She became an RN at the age of 46 and enjoyed a satisfying career as an occupational nurse at Delta Air Lines before we lost her. I have no role in selecting the recipients, but I will remind them that they are representing a very special person. . . .

Finally, being a modest-yet-much-beloved columnist is not as easy as it looks, thanks to readers who don't cut me a lot of slack. I recently talked – actually whined a lot – about mangling my toe which required surgery and pins to put it back together and a longer than expected hospital stay. If I was expecting an outpouring of sympathy, I should have known better. Several wrote and asked me if I had called for a toe truck. A toe truck? Ouch.

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

Georgia Is In A Time Of Transition



GEORGIA POLITICS

By CHARLIE HARPER

The reality and totality of the election results are still sinking in for many. It is the most dramatic change in power during one election for the state in a quarter century. It's only the second time since Reconstruction that the moving trucks at the Governor's mansion will represent different parties.

Thus, there are few precedents for what our state is about to undertake. Those of us who were around the last time this happened can somewhat recall some of the personal and personnel reactions to the changing of the guard, but that merely serves as a framework. The times, the parties, and this state are much different now.

For Republicans, it's a descent from a peak of power a dozen years ago with a supermajority in both legislative chambers and all statewide offices to holding only the slimmest of majorities possible in the State Senate. One could say the party here is in Crisis.

The slimmest of comforts can be taken that a popular saying is that the Chinese write the word crisis by combining the symbols for danger and opportunity. The party is in danger of losing the Senate if current trends were to continue costing them two more seats. The opportunity is to rebound and in a couple of years retake a few of the House races lost by less than 1,000 votes, building towards rematches in statewide races four years from now.

The problem with this saying is that it isn't quite correct. The context for the "opportunity" symbol has a more literal interpretation of "crucial moment" or "turning Point".

Republicans are where Democrats were 24 years ago. They're at the end of a steady declining trend in power and are barely holding on to one chamber. The next two years will clearly represent a crucial moment. Will there also be a turning point? A turning point means there will be a conscious change in direction. For this to happen, there would have to be an honest discussion after thoughtful reflection on what went wrong.

There will be... let's be honest, there already are a lot of people pointing fingers. Those first out of the gate after political losses often do so to set a narrative in an effort to avoid blame. The blame game, however, isn't about what went wrong. It's about preserving the viability of an individual or organization and their proximity to power. This almost never leads to a turning point at a crucial moment.

Donald Trump wasn't on the ballot this year and won't be ever again, but he did tell voters to act like he was. A strong case can be made that they did.

Republicans' path back to majorities will begin with the Trump Administration having two years left on the meter. Candidates for office in 2028 will have to figure out how to rebuild a coalition of voters who previously supported the GOP without the President on the ballot but with him controlling partisan messages by action and by tweet.

Can or will the President discipline himself to act and message in such a way to demonstrate he and Republicans best understand the issues that matter most to voters and will act on them? Consider that his "closing argument" for this election was to muse that he might want to rename the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool after himself, and that his first remarks to reporters after the GOP drubbing was an unscheduled tour of the progress with the White House ballroom.

Meanwhile, the Democrats in Georgia's statewide offices will now begin to implement policies within the discretion given to the administrative branch and executive agencies. They will also have the Speaker's gavel in the House with which to pass legislation favoring changes they would like to make.

Both chambers have the opportunity to pass bills to appease their partisan bases. The slim majorities in each chamber will likely keep a bit of a check on some of the most extreme measures.

The partisan split between control of each chamber will likely limit many controversial bills from ever reaching Governor Bottoms' desk. It remains to be seen what topics will be chosen to find bipartisan consensus. The only actual requirement for this legislature is to pass a balanced budget. Anything else they choose to pass is up to the discretion of the majorities in both chambers.

Republicans will likely have a difficult time realizing how little power they maintain – and how to use that for their advantage. Democrats, meanwhile, will have two years to prove they can govern a state that has moved left, yet is still mostly centrist. They will have the same issues with the fringes of their base who won't understand why they can't get everything they want, immediately, now that their party won.

Both parties will have a couple of years to enjoy or "enjoy" the shoes they wore last year being on the other foot. They – and we – have yet to fully grasp what that ultimately is going to look like.

DAILY SCRIPTURE...

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, and coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

James 1:17 (New International Version)

THOUGHT FOR TODAY...

"Sometimes we spend so much time and energy thinking about where we want to go that we don't notice where we happen to be."

- Dan Gutman

EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY...

Nov. 19, 2026 is...

- Great American Smokeout
- National Camp Day
- World Toilet Day
- Have A Bad Day Day
- National Carbonated Beverage With Caffeine Day
- World Pancreatic Cancer Day
- Use Less Stuff Day
- Women Entrepreneurship Day
- Happy International Men's Day

TELL IT!

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

I keep reading in Tell It about people complaining about prisoners going to the hospital. They should think those prisoners are human beings like anybody else. I hope and pray that anyone who complains about those prisoners will never have anyone who is in prison and needs to go to the hospital. Then maybe they will think twice before running their mouths and not knowing what they are talking about.

So, Dublin City Schools is almost $3 million in the hole at the end of September and can't make payroll for the next three months. What exactly is the progress DCS is making?

Laurens County drug enforcement recently busted someone with 1 ounce of fentanyl ... according to the DEA that's enough to kill 14,000 people. A lethal dose is 2 mg. Let me guess, in the Dublin judicial system they'll get probation and credit for time served.

Can we get all the street lights at the interstate working before the big ball tournament comes to town? Most of them are no longer burning at night when they should be.

Citizens of Dublin, know this. All school systems have drugs, financial problems, and/or bomb threats here and throughout the country. It's what we choose to tolerate. Are we a problem or a solution?

As predicted, the DCS board raised taxes again, this time to offset the break they gave the "seniors." Next time it will be because they're still bankrupt and can't meet payroll for the foreseeable future. Then the next time it will be because they can't pay a superintendent. The paper made a point that there was no public opposition or public participation. That should worry instead of being a relief to the board.

The public is too disgusted and has no faith in DCS leadership and have given up that DCS is going to change or hold anyone accountable. Your quiet and absent public is just waiting for Middle Georgia Preparatory school to open. The DCS board exists to raise taxes. It's easier than budgeting or thinking.

A coach's child can make multiple errors in one game and still remain on the field. Yet other players are held to a different standard. Where is the accountability and fairness?

Dublin, Ga. needs to bring in more restaurants like Denny's and Church's Fried Chicken.

(To the restaurant) on Veterans Boulevard, please start cleaning the drink machine. It has been told to management but nothing has been done. Lots of mold and mildew.

Laurens County Sheriff officers please stop hiding on Highway 257 and sit by Love Quick Stop and watch those big trucks pull out in front of everyone. Someone's gonna get hurt badly!

Fairview Park Hospital please trim the limbs blocking the security light at the main entrance driveway.

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

Judged a newspaper of General Excellence 2024

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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.

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL OUTLOOK

Tougher tasks, taller odds for Heart of Georgia hopefuls as state playoffs progress to round 2

By CLAY REYNOLDS
Sports Editor

Survive and advance is the name of the game in the postseason.

Six Heart of Georgia programs did just that last weekend in the first round of the GHSA state playoffs. But their next steps become incrementally more difficult as the competition stiffens Friday night in games that will send a select few on to the quarterfinals, and for the rest, bring seasons to an end.

No. 3 (and fourth-seeded) Dublin (10-1, 7-0 region 2-AA) will have yet another region 2-AA rival revisiting the Shamrock Bowl, and one in No. 10 Swainsboro whose physical nature on both sides of the line of scrimmage has historically created challenges for even its best teams over the years, this one included.

"Swainsboro has played us as tough as anybody ever has for as long as anybody in Dublin can remember," head coach Roger Holmes said after last Friday's first-round win over Vidalia. "It should be a good atmosphere in the Bowl, and hopefully we'll be ready to go."

The Irish took a hard-earned upper hand 27-12 in their 77th all-time meeting Oct. 9, creating separation through the air on a couple of play-action passes for Ryland Yates touchdowns to Trav Bostic and Jamarcus Knight that caught the Tigers biting a little too hard on the run. Both sides came away with some regrets, mainly in the form of costly turnovers, but adequately held their own in a rushing dimension that will again define how the matchup unfolds.

Dublin can likely expect an opportunity to establish more if the Swainsboro defense implements some stronger safeguards against the same type of big play by sitting deeper, and offering the Irish more space to utilize near the line of scrimmage.

But the Tigers have every reason to feel good about their own chances of running the ball, and controlling a portion of the game's tempo with it in the hands of feature back Kyle Johnson. The sophomore carried it for just south of 200 (75 on a big-play touchdown late) in the earlier game, and only seems to have gotten better as his stats have climbed to an average 7.7 yards per carry, and over 165 per game, in the four consecutive wins for Swainsboro that followed.

A win would be Dublin's 48th over its oldest rival, and launch the Irish back to the state quarterfinals (to face the winner between Jeff Davis and Laney) for the second time in three seasons.

West Laurens, after a gritty first-round win over Westover, will have a tall task in its more unlikely goal of returning to the round of eight in back-to-back seasons as it heads to Fort Valley to challenge the top seed Peach County.

The unbeaten Trojans, whose sterling record (11-0, 7-0 region 2-AAAA) includes high-quality victories over Perry, Jones County, Jefferson, Baldwin, Mary Persons and Troup, are as talented and battle-tested as they come. Several opponents have made a good run, but their offense – a sixth-highest scoring in all GHSA classifications at just south of 50 points and more than 450 yards per game – has proven next to impossible to outscore, even for

FOOTBALL
Continued on page 6

MIDSTATE FOOTBALL ROUNDUP: HOW THE REST OF THE AREA FARED

Bleckley, Dodge, Treutlen win big to advance

Swainsboro, ECI, Westfield, Stratford, Northeast among other winners moving on from GHSA's first round, GIAA semifinals

By CLAY REYNOLDS
Sports Editor

Dodge Co. 41, Berrien 22

Dodge head coach Phillip Brown was adamant in the week leading up that his team would have to hold closely to the old adage that "you've gotta run the ball and stop the run to advance," if it hoped to keep its season going through the end of Friday's first-round road trip. The Indians accomplished both objectives by scoring four touchdowns on a strong 205 rushing yards, and holding Berrien to only two scores on 147 in the same dimension. They went further to gain just under 10 yards per attempt on half the number of rushing plays as the Rebels, whose average was only 3.5. Kain Mincey added 120 yards and two touchdowns passing on a 12-for-17 night in the pocket, finding Aamaury Fountain in the first half and Jauriel Bray in the second half for touchdowns. His touchdown scramble early in the third quarter gave Dodge the lead for good after Berrien took advantage of its two fumbles to climb back from an early two-score deficit and take a 15-14 lead into the half. Fountain also rushed for two touchdowns on 10 carries for 80 yards. Kawaski Robinson added six for 80, and Jordan Spady a 32-yarder for one of three add-on TDs in the fourth. Fountain and Burns combined for 81 yards on four catches each.

Bleckley Co. 59, Jefferson Co. 14

The Royals had some hiccups here and there, but overall played dominant football in a no-sweat playoff debut coming out of their open week. Brody Fleming completed seven passes for 163 yards and four touchdowns, one each to Gage Harris, Octavius Tate, Zyion Love, Jason McNulty, to assist in building a 52-7 lead by halftime. Sophomore Caleb Kilpatrick came on in the second half to find Brayden Hill for a fifth score through the air. Love rushed for one other while the special teams and defensive units took care of the remaining points. Kelvin Sneed had a pick-six and C.J. Taylor ran back a kick for a touchdown following a second of two Jefferson County safeties. A fumble following the first one opened the door to Jefferson County's only touchdown of the first half on a quick pass that made it 9-7. Ricky Jackson rushed for the Warriors' only other late in the fourth quarter.

Treutlen 35, Wheeler Co. 6

Peanut Tobler scored four touchdowns on 120 yards rushing to help prove the Vikings the better team – on this particular night – in a rematch of their loss to Wheeler County back in the regular season. But Treutlen's defense also forced six turnovers, a few of them involved in its multiple red zone stands, and two carrying lengthy returns: a fumble run back by Deverin Knowles to the Wheeler 5 to set up Tobler's second touchdown in the first half, and the 90-yard pick-six of Jalek Johnson (who forced that earlier fumble) early in the third quarter, just after



Wheeler County has the ball knocked loose on one of its six turnovers in Friday's first round playoff game against Treutlen/LOGAN REYNOLDS, GTLN

Wheeler County had pulled within 14 on Malik Madison's 15-yard run. Tobler broke loose from 53 yards out for one, and cashed in a Peyton Miller pick for the other of two remaining unanswered scores. This was the Vikings' first state playoff win in program history.

ECI 36, Montgomery Co. 0

The Eagles' only extensive drive into ECI territory came near the end of the first half, as they completed a deep shot, and got a pass interference flag on another to reach the red zone. But the opportunity ended with an interception in the end zone by the Bulldogs, who would resume expanding on their 21-0 lead on the other side of the break. Ste'kieven Sinkfield finished off ECI's opening drive with a touchdown run. Davis Johnson found him on a deep pattern for a second later in the period. The Bulldogs fumbled on a subsequent red zone trip, but got the football back and



Sammy McGehee (52) lifts quarterback Brock Johnson (11) up in celebration of his 70-yard touchdown run to put Athens Christian away in the fourth quarter of Westfield's 49-35 GIAA semifinal win Friday/CLAY BROWN, Houston Home Journal

finished the next one off with an A.B. Marsh carry for the halftime advantage. Patron Mack put the finishing touches on a 95-plus yard scoring drive on their first turn of the third, and Marsh broke a 35-yarder for the final set of points late. Kenya Tate (with a fumble recovery) and Kam Henderson (picking off

AREA
Continued on page 6

SCOREBOARD

GIRLS HOOPS
Thursday, Nov. 12
Fullington 37, Trinity 34

PREP SCHEDULE

FLAG FOOTBALL
GHSA Playoffs
Wednesday
(at Washington Co.)
Elbert Co. at East Laurens /7 p.m.
Round 2: Winner vs. Washington Co./Dougherty /8 p.m.

FOOTBALL
GHSA Playoffs, Round 2
Friday
Swainsboro at Dublin
West Laurens at Peach Co.
Clinch Co. at Johnson Co.
Pepperell at Bleckley Co.
Treutlen at Lincoln Co. /7:30 p.m.
Dodge Co. at Thomasville /8 p.m.

BASKETBALL
Thursday
Claxton at WL (scrimmage) /5 p.m.

Saturday
STC Tip-off Classic
(Vidalia)
WL (girls) vs. Bacon Co. /2 p.m.
Hugh McBride Tip-off
(at Jeff Davis HS)
WL (boys) vs. Coffee /5:30 p.m.

Monday
Hugh McBride Tip-off
(at Jeff Davis)
WL vs. Camden Co./4 p.m.

Tuesday
Dublin (girls) at Screven Co./4 p.m.
Trinity at Westfield/6 p.m.
EL (boys) vs. Portal (at SE Bulloch)/6 p.m.

STC Tip-off Classic
WL (girls) at Vidalia /7 p.m.

CONTACT US:
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	RODNEY MANLEY	PAYTON TOWNS III	KYLE DOMINY	JEREMY PAYNE	JANICE BALLARD	RALPH JACKSON	DON CARSWELL	FORREST KILGO
Last week/OVERALL	12-0/117-38	12-0/112-43	9-3/99-56	10-2/116-38	9-3/108-47	11-1/112-43	11-1/113-42	5-7/107-48
Swainsboro at Dublin	Dublin	Dublin	Dublin	Dublin	Dublin	Dublin	Dublin	Dublin
West Laurens at Peach Co.	Peach Co.	Peach Co.	West Laurens	Peach Co.	Peach Co.	West Laurens	Peach Co.	Peach Co.
Clinch Co. at Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.	Johnson Co.
Pepperell at Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.	Bleckley Co.
Treutlen at Lincoln Co.	Lincoln Co.	Treutlen	Lincoln Co.	Lincoln Co.	Lincoln Co.	Lincoln Co.	Lincoln Co.	Lincoln Co.
Dodge Co. at Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville	Thomasville
Douglass at Baldwin	Douglass	Douglass	Baldwin	Douglass	Baldwin	Douglass	Baldwin	Baldwin
Mary Persons at Monroe Area	Monroe Area	Monroe Area	Mary Persons	Mary Persons	Monroe Area	Monroe Area	Mary Persons	Monroe Area
Laney at Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis	Laney	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis
ECI at Washington-Wilkes	ECI	Washington-Wilkes	Washington-Wilkes	Washington-Wilkes	Washington-Wilkes	ECI	Washington-Wilkes	Washington-Wilkes
Stratford vs. Bulloch	Bulloch	Bulloch	Bulloch	Bulloch	Stratford	Stratford	Stratford	Bulloch
Windsor vs. Thomas Jefferson	Windsor	Windsor	Windsor	Windsor	Windsor	Windsor	Windsor	Thomas Jefferson

FOOTBALL

Continued from page 5

for then top-ranked Troup, which started them in a 26-0 hole only to give up 52 two weeks back.

"They're the No. 1 team in the bracket for a reason," Raiders' head coach Kip Burdette said Saturday.

For a chance, West Laurens (7-4, 5-1 region 3-AAAA) will need an outstanding (and also mistake-free) game from its defense in trying to slow down Peach County's trio of backfield monsters: West Georgia commit Ashton Barton, Zion Ellison and DeAndre Stinson, who are each gaining eight or more yards per carry, and have the Ty Cummings-esque ability to turn the tiniest of defensive miscues into big plays.

The comparable scrambling skills of quarterback Caiden Ivory will also complicate matters in creating pass pressure for Raider ends Maxx Chafin and Ayden Moore, for which some sacks and tackles for loss will be indispensable in getting the Trojans off the field.

West Laurens will try to keep them on the sideline as much as possible, and need some clearance up front blocking as sleek a defensive front as its O-line has seen all year, in order to do so.

Baldwin or Atlanta's Frederick Douglass is slated as a quarterfinal pairing for the winner.

Trips to battle top seeds are also in store for two of last week's underdog winners in Dodge County and Treutlen.

Off a fairly confident upset of one of its region counterparts, the Indians (6-5, 3-3 region 2-AA) now take the 1-AA champion in No. 2 Thomasville, and a team with whom they share some rich playoff history.

This will be the teams' fifth-straight meeting (out of nine all-time) to take place in the postseason, and in the four to date, they've battled to an even 2-2 record with each game except the last (a 44-7 Thomasville runaway in 2020) decided by 10 points or fewer.

Dodge's ability to score points (at a comparable average in the 30s per game) will give it every shot to hang in another close game. Whether it can get the best of the once-beaten Bulldogs will boil down to some defensive answers for playmaking quarterback Christian Hayes, whose talent is not only in his rushing and passing ability, but a knack for leading late-game drives to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

The Vikings (9-2, 6-1 region 4-A) proved in last Friday's road rout to gain redemption against Wheeler County that they're playing their best football when it matters. But will that be good enough to threaten No. 2 Lincoln County, which has the driver's seat in the bracket for the road to a potential repeat as state champion.

The Red Devils have alternated between low-scoring and high-scoring games with some fluctuating offensive and defensive success over the course of their 9-2 season (concluding with a 4-0 sweep of 8-A to claim their third-straight region title), but tend to get the job done with minimal style points by running the ball out of Lee Chomskis' Wing-T, and making it tough to finish drives.

Treutlen will be able to hang its hat on some steady rushing offense from Peanut Tobler and Co., but will need its defense to continue rising to the occasion in the red zone in order to beat them at their own game.

Two others among the area's established favorites to go deep are back at home, and hopeful for a business-like win to keep their recent streaks going.

But No. 1 Johnson County (11-0, 6-0 region 5-A) is taking zero for granted against a fifth-ranked Clinch County team that it's only beaten once in five meetings. Excepting the 36-21 win that advanced the Trojans to the state semifinals in 2022, the Panthers have had a firm upper hand in all four of the others, the last three of them in the state playoffs including a 28-6 loss for a mostly overmatched JoCo club at the new Falcon Field in 2024.

Clinch (8-3, 4-1 region 2-A) has cut its teeth this year against several of the best in Classes A and AA, and boasts the rare passing attack that out-produces its ground game (quarterback Traviian Miller has thrown for 1,573 yards and 16 touchdowns, with only two interceptions, through 11 games). The Trojans' ability to cover on the back end, and create blitz pressure (to the tune of two interceptions and multiple sacks that made the difference in 2022) will be put to the ultimate test in this clash of championship hopefuls.

Second-round games at home, for what few Bleckley County has hosted, have been stumbling blocks in its recent playoff history.

The No. 5 Royals, whose three quarterfinal-clinching wins in this round (in 2006, 2020 and 2022) have all come on the road, will need to win their first in three tries at Shelly Hayes Field in order to do so for a fourth time ever.

But BC has a matchup to like against 19th seeded Pepperell (6-5, 4-3 region 6-AA), which benefitted from a first-round stumble by Putnam County in the first round, but can't expect many of the same breaks to fall its way a second-straight week.

In Friday's other mid-state playoff matchups of note, Baldwin will host Atlanta's Frederick Douglass looking to advance to the quarters for the first time since 2018. Mary Persons has been back more recently, in 2022, but would need to be a first to knock off unbeaten Monroe Area.

Toombs County, off an 88-point shellacking of Temple, will try to keep rolling in the Pit against Carver of Columbus.

ACE Charter picked up a first win in seven games at Jasper County to unexpectedly keep its season alive, but will need a lot more of the same postseason magic to knock out once-beaten Bremen.

ECI will also look to pick off one of Class A's top contenders as it travels to face Washington-Wilkes.

Two defending state champions will try to complete back-to-back runs in the GIAA state championship games at Georgia Southern's Paulson Stadium, as AAA's John Milledge and AAAA's Stratford take on Westfield and Bulloch, respectively, in 8 p.m. games Friday and Saturday night.

New champions in Classes A and AA will be crowned early Saturday afternoon, when Windsor goes up against Thomas Jefferson, and Valwood battles two-time defending runner-up Southwest Georgia.



MOVE THEM CHAINS!: Fans in an Irish cheer section known for their first-down chants hail another one in Friday's second quarter that kept a Dublin scoring drive going. The home crowd will be hopeful to hear them early and often in a game likely to be defined by ball-control as Swainsboro revisits the Shamrock Bowl for the second round/**CLAY REYNOLDS**



West Laurens tackle Christian Rozier lifts up J.D. Hogan after leading the way on his third-quarter touchdown run to give the Raiders their first lead on Westover Saturday night. They'll need some similar push along the offensive line, and playmaking burst from Hogan and other top athletes in the backfield, to challenge an impressive Peach County defensive front Friday night in Ft. Valley/**DANNY SCARBORO**



Cory King picks off a Clinch County pass during the Panthers' visit to Herschel Walker Field in the 2022 state quarterfinals. The two postseason rivals meet again, with JoCo looking for to beat them for only the second time ever in Friday's second round, with the Trojans' pass rush and secondary a focal point of the matchup once again/**CLAY REYNOLDS, File**

AREA

Continued from page 5

a pass later on) forced turnovers for the MoCo defense. Hayden Hayes led Eagle tacklers with six solos and three stops for loss.

Rockmart 56, Washington Co. 14

The Golden Hawks trailed only 28-14 after Daveion Holmes exploded on a 70-plus yard run in the first quarter, then a considerably shorter one in the second, to keep them in it through a half. But Rockmart pulled away with 28 more unanswered points from there. Charlie Cannon was 10-of-18 passing for 204 yards and four touchdowns. Gavin Green had three of them on his six receptions for 154. J.T. Taylor scored twice on nine rushes for 146. The Yellowjackets intercepted three WACO passes.

Swainsboro 31, Screven Co. 6

The Tigers trailed early after a 75-yard Dallas Bryant pick-six to break the scoreless deadlock minutes into the second period, but responded with four unanswered touchdowns to win it going away. Kyle Johnson carried a hefty portion of the load on offense with his 31 carries for 185 yards, and two touchdowns. Joshua Gray threw for two more to Jayden Wilcher and Ja'Bios Smith, and finished 7-of-11 for 93 through the air. Angel Matias Castillo added a field goal to the tally. Derek Hughes had 10 total tackles, and joined Smith with a sack on the defensive stat sheet. D.J. Cuyler and Ajontae Floyd added fumble recoveries.



Northeast's defense, led by Idrissa Muhammad applies pressure to stop a Thomson drive/**MARK S. POWELL, for the Telegraph**



Stratford wideout Cale Smith leaves a Pacelli defender in the dust en route to a touchdown during the Eagles' GIAA playoff win/**DONN**

Northeast Macon 49, Thomson 28

Jordan Wiggins had a hand in six of the Raiders' seven touchdowns, rushing for two on 11 carries for 145 and airing the ball out for four and 286 yards on seven completions. Scottavian Thomas (three receptions for 116) was on the receiving end of two. Tavares Tinsley Jr. (two catches for 110) and Ryan Brinson (one for 53) had the others. Thomson, led by the two touchdown passes of Quaderrion Hunt, kept pace early but was denied on two key stops – on downs after a first-half interception, and near the goal line late in the fourth quarter as Emmanuel Thorpe returned a fumble 98 yards for the Raiders' next-to-last touchdown. Harold Simms, Idrissa Muhammad and Antoius Jackson recorded sacks.

Stratford 42, Pacelli 7

The Eagles cruised to their 10th win, and a second-straight berth in the GIAA finals (against Bulloch Saturday in Statesboro). Tucker Johnston was 18-of-25 passing for 226 yards and two touchdowns, to Morris Butler and Brady Fluornoy. Cale Smith led rushers with a hat trick on 12 carries for 53. Jett Johnston rushed for another touchdown. Pacelli was held to only 20 rushing yards by a Stratford defense that recorded 11 tackles for loss and two sacks. Pacelli's Matthew Alexich completed eight passes for 132, one to Jason Davis for the lone touchdown.

Westfield 59, Athens Christian 35

The second half got a little hectic for the Hornets as Athens Christian, down 35-7 after their four-touchdown burst going into intermission, picked up the pace of scoring and worked its way back within 14 by the last of the fourth quarter. But Westfield, whose Brock Johnson was 15-of-18 for 236 yards and three touchdowns and rushed for two more on 153, scored twice more to maintain no less than a two-score lead. Win Hoots had 11 catches for 227 yards and all three Johnson touchdowns, plus a fourth of 28 yards from Conner Sexton.

More of last week's results...

Lee Co. 55, Northside 0
Cartersville 42, Perry 3
Toombs Co. 88, Temple 0
Thomas Co. Central 56, Veterans 6
Jefferson 28, Warner Robins 14
Lithonia 34, Jones Co. 24
Randolph-Clay 44, Telfair Co. 14
Schley Co. 56, Hawkinsville 14
ACE 14, Jasper Co. 10
Peach Co. 49, East Jackson 0
Douglass 60, Spalding 6
Baldwin 53, Harlem 21
Mary Persons 49, North Clayton 36
Calhoun 27, Howard 6
Taylor Co. 38, Seminole Co. 14
Warren Co. 37, Jenkins Co. 27
John Milledge 45, Tiftarea 8



HONORING KATHY SWEAT'S 42 YEARS OF SERVICE



A drop-in reception was held for former Laurens County Board of Education member Kathy Sweat from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 16 at the Old West Laurens School. In all, Sweat served the Laurens County School System for 42 years. Classmates, former students, school officials, family and friends attended the event to celebrate Sweat's accomplishments with the school system/**PAYTON TOWNS III**





NEWS DIGEST

Coca-Cola in Dublin

On Wednesday, November 18, Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Inc. hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for its new sales and distribution center at 128 Innovation Way in Dublin.

In a press release, Coca-Cola said the new facility "demonstrated a commitment to serving customers and communities throughout Georgia."

The groundbreaking took place at 10am and The Courier Herald was on hand for complete coverage that can be read online and in Saturday's print paper. Local and state officials were on hand, including Dublin Mayor Joshua Kight and State Representative Matt Hatchett.

Dublin joins Augusta, Brunswick, and Savannah as Georgia cities with Coca-Cola Bottling Company facilities.

The Dublin City Council will hold a pre-council in the International Room of City Hall at 11 a.m. **on Thursday, Nov.** 19 followed by its council meeting in the Henry "Bud" Hicks Jr. Memorial Chamber at noon. The agenda follows:

- Call to order
- Invocation and Pledge to Flag
- Approval of Nov. 5 city council meeting minutes
- Approval of bills over $15,000
- Approval of purchases over $15,000
- First reading on ordinance #26-17 to rezone parcel D10C 123 from R-1 to P
- First reading on ordinance #26-18 to annex .21 acres for parcel 100 080 A and 1 acre for parcel D05C 001
- First reading on ordinance #26-19 to rezone parcel D10E 155 from P to R-1
- First reading on ordinance #26-20 to amend article I and article II of chapter 7 of the code of ordinances to clarify and use regelation of city cemeteries and for other purposes
- Discussion and action on resolution #26-69 to authorize a contract amendment for Municipal Gas Authority for year 2030-2032
- Discussion and action on declaration of surplus
- Discussion and action on board appointments (if needed)
- Citizens comments
- Council comments
- Executive session if needed to discuss real estate, pending litigation or personnel
- Adjournment

Author to Author

Author, independent filmmaker, director, minister, and publishing consultant Ms. Johnnie M. Goolsby will host a book signing and educational seminar, "How to Become a Self-Published Author," on **Saturday, November 21,** 2026, at Barnes & Noble in Macon.

This event will bring an educational opportunity to the Middle Georgia community, encouraging aspiring writers to explore self-publishing while providing readers an opportunity to meet an author of 31 faith-based books.

The Barnes & Noble is located at 5080 Riverside Drive.

Shop Small

Small Business Saturday is November 28. The annual celebration of small businesses across the country takes place on the Saturday after Thanksgiving and the day after Black Friday.



POLICE BEAT...

Dublin Police Department

- Wilfred Manuel Caban Rodriguez, 31, was charged with shoplifting at Walmart on Highway 80 West at 8:49 p.m. on Oct. 19.

An officer was dispatch to the location in reference to a shoplifting call. Upon arriving, the officer talked with a woman who said Rodriguez did not pay for all of his items at the self-checkout station. He told the officer that he did not have a problem paying for items, but the woman said the store's policy was they had to prosecute.

The officer saw video footage that showed the man scan the merchandise while covering up the real barcode with his hand. He was arrested and transported to the police department where he was fingerprinted before being released on a citation.

- On Oct. 20, around 4:26 p.m., an officer was present at Walmart while handling a complaint regarding an incident that happened the previous weekend. While on the scene, the officer was alerted by the store's loss prevention officer that they were actively observing an employee in real time stealing from the cash register.

The officer saw the surveillance of the woman removing cash from the register and putting it in her pocket. Staff subsequently told the woman, who was later identified as Marie Jones, 44, to report to the back of the store where she was interviewed by store management. Jones confessed to the theft. The amount stolen was determined to be $100.

Jones was arrested and taken to the Laurens County Jail for processing. She was charged with theft by taking.

- William Thomas Brantley, 53, was charged with public drunkenness and public indecency - first or second conviction at Waffle House on Veterans Boulevard at 2:01 p.m. on Oct. 26.

An officer responded to a welfare check regarding a man wearing a blue shirt who was reportedly sleeping the grass next to the building. An officer saw the man with a blue shirt lying int he grass and leaning against the building while asleep. Next to the man was a can of Four Loko Jungle Juice, an alcoholic beverage. The officer approached the man, later identified as Brantley. The man woke up and the officer told him he was there to check on his welfare.

The officer detected the odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from Brantley and asked if he had consumed any alcohol. The man said, "Not for a while." The officer told Brantley that the Waffle House employees did not want him to remain on the property and that he needed to leave.

Brantley began to gathering his belongings. While doing so, he repeatedly pulled up his pants, exposing his buttocks several times. He attempted to walk away but his pants fell again showing everything below his waist. The officer determined that Brantley was too intoxicated to walk safely and asked where he lived. The man began cursing and talking in a manner that was difficult to understand. Brantley was arrested and transported to the hospital for medical clearance. After he was cleared, he was taken to the sheriff's office and released to the booking staff.

Laurens County Sheriff' s Office

- A deputy responded to the sheriff's office for someone needing to make a report about an incident that occurred on Oneal Drive around 5:45 p.m. on Oct. 16.

- A possible theft happened on Highway 441 South at 6:58 p.m. on Oct. 17.

- James Cody Keene, 33, of Dexter was charged with possession of methamphetamine on Antioch Church Road and Lowery Lane in Dexter at 7:12 p.m. on Oct. 17. While patrolling this area, a deputy saw a man who had an outstanding warrant on him.

- Amanda Kay Roszell, 53, of Crossville, Tenn., and Sara Brittany Thigpen, 37, of Dublin, were charged with possession of methamphetamine. Thigpen was also charged with going inside guard line with weapon, liquor or drugs. A deputy made a traffic stop at the intersection of Nathaniel Drive and Rex Miller at 9:44 p.m. on Oct. 15 on a vehicle due to a tag light.

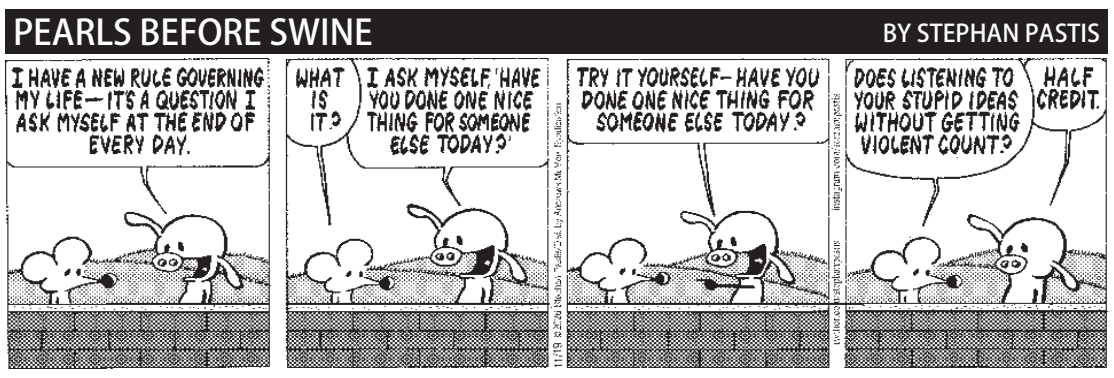
- A phone was stolen on Carolyne Currie Road on Oct. 15 around 5:53 p.m.

- Rasheed Lovett, 25, of Dublin, was charged with DUI drugs at the intersection of Highway 80 and Troup Lane at 8:06 a.m. on Oct. 15. A deputy initiated a traffic stop on a black Honda sedan in reference to a suspended license and the odor of marijuana.

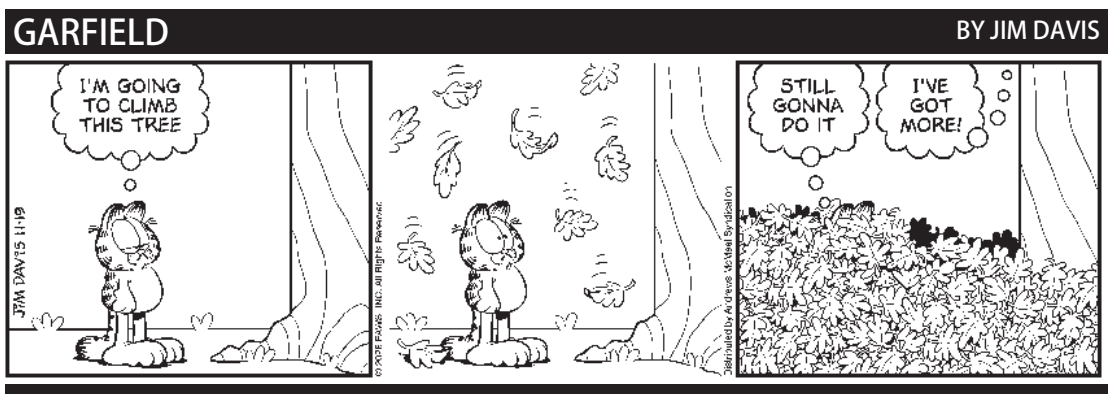
- On Oct. 18, around 5 p.m., a deputy was dispatched to Coleman Street in Cadwell in reference to an assault. Daniel Lane Murchinson, 19, of Cadwell, was charged with simple battery.

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 the deadline.

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE — BY STEPHAN PASTIS



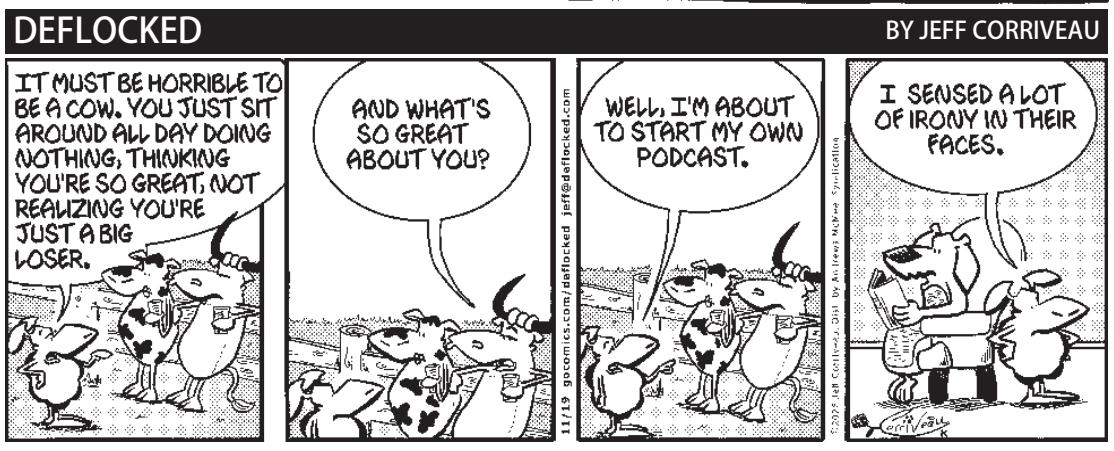
GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS



OVERBOARD — BY CHIP DUNHAM



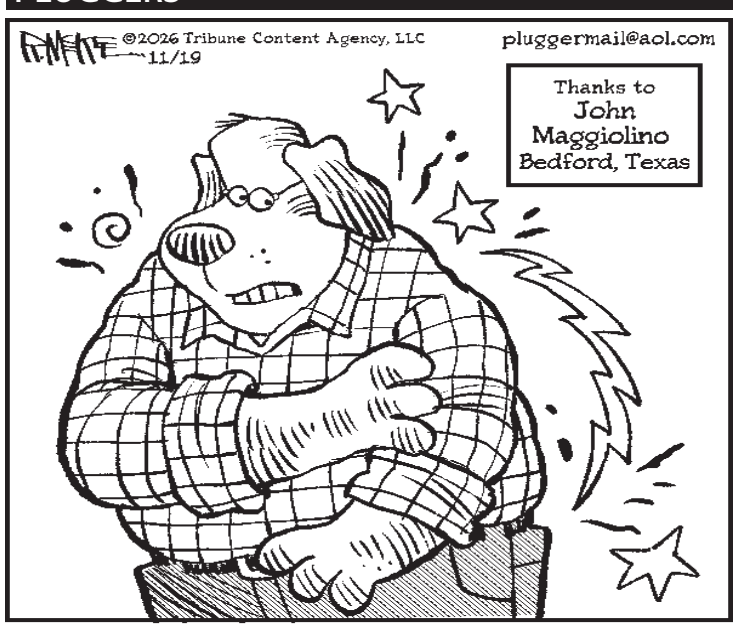
DEFLOCKED — BY JEFF CORRIVEAU



ZIGGY — BY TOM WILSON



PLUGGERS — BY JEFF MACNELLY



A plugger experiences frequent travel pain: Pain traveling from one part of the body to another.

Concerns grow over aging hoarder sister



DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My immediate family consists only of my brother (75, same age as me) and a sister who's four years older than us. My sister, "Marilyn," is divorced with no children. She has a long-term diagnosis of depression and remains under the care of a psychiatrist, who has her on several medications.

Marilyn has a shopping addiction and an issue with money. She purchased a condominium for some $20,000 in the 1970s. Now she owes about $80,000 on it. Whenever she needed money for a large purchase, such as a car, she took out another mortgage, dipping into its equity. She loves jewelry and has piles of it all over her home. Her income is $80,000 per year, but she's been through bankruptcy for debts and a foreclosure for failure to pay condo fees. We've tried for years to get her rein in her spending.

Marilyn is in failing health, and her home is a hoarder nightmare, requiring one to climb over items just to get to the bathroom. Should she need assisted living or a nursing home, she has no ability to pay for it. My brother and I are adamant that we won't assist her financially, but we worry. Marilyn won't help us by signing a financial power of attorney, a will or a transfer-on-death deed for her condo. She has managed to maintain herself, albeit chaotically and on the edge, so guardianship would not be appropriate. I have no wish to be her guardian anyway. What advice do you have about this situation? -- BELEAGUERED BROTHER

DEAR BROTHER: You can't force Marylin to stop shopping or spending money she doesn't have, but you can help ensure that she's not a physical danger to herself. Because she is already under the care of a psychiatrist, it's time to inform that caregiver about Marilyn's hoarding and her shopping addiction. You can bet Marilyn hasn't brought them up! Be aware that the doctor's office won't inform you of her progress and may not even confirm that she is a patient, but they should at least listen to your concerns.

The state of her condo sounds like it poses a health risk, so a call to Adult Protective Services is in order. They can come to her home, assess the risk and put her in contact with someone who can help her get it under control.

****

DEAR ABBY: We gave our good friends a gift and a card for their special anniversary. When our anniversary arrived a few months later, all they gave us was a card. I know they can afford a gift, so why didn't they reciprocate? I thought we were good friends. We are feeling hurt, though we know we should get over it. Can you offer some advice? -- GOLDEN COUPLE IN MAINE

DEAR GOLDEN COUPLE: Your friends appear to be less invested (literally and figuratively) in anniversaries than you are. Friendships should not be measured by whether gifts are exchanged. Perhaps your friends were trying to tell you it's time to cut back on the gift-giving at this point in your lives. Whatever the reason, don't let this spoil a meaningful friendship.

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. COPYRIGHT 2026 ANDREWS MCMEEL SYNDICATION, 1130 Walnut, Kansas City, MO 64106; 816-581-7500.

Thursday, November 19, 2026

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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SURE THING

Neither vulnerable, North deals

NORTH
♠ Q J 9 7
♡ A 8 5
◇ K J 5 2
♣ K Q

WEST
♠ 10 6 5
♡ 2
◇ 8 6
♣ J 9 8 6 5 4 2

EAST
♠ 8
♡ K J 10 9 7 6 4
◇ Q 10 7 4
♣ 7

SOUTH
♠ A K 4 3 2
♡ Q 3
◇ A 9 3
♣ A 10 3

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	3♡	3♠	Pass
4♡	Pass	4NT	Pass
5◇*	Pass	5♡*	Pass
6♣	Pass	6♠	All pass

***1 key card**
****Asking for the queen of S**

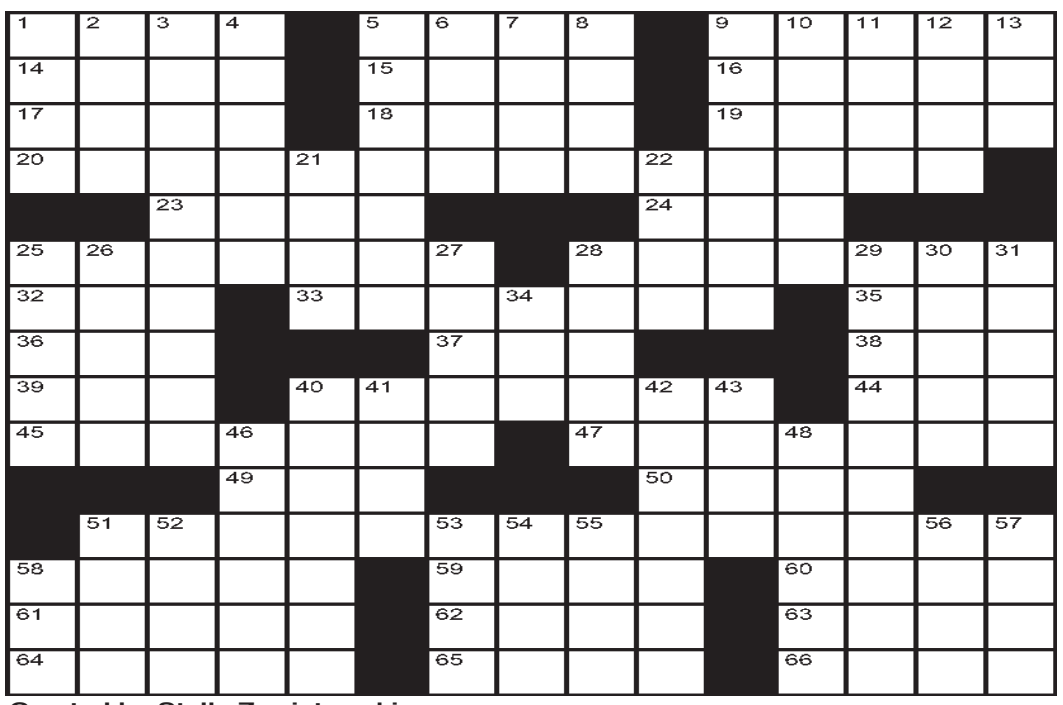
Opening lead: Two of ♡

North had such a good hand for spades that he cue bid his ace of hearts on the way to four spades. South launched into Key Card Blackwood and then asked for the queen of spades when North showed the missing ace. North's six-club bid promised the queen of spades as well as the king of clubs, and South settled for a small slam in spades. No trump might have been easier. South could have played low from dummy on the opening heart lead and the queen of hearts would have become his 12th trick. The lead was an obvious singleton, however, so South won with dummy's ace to prevent a ruff. It might look like the contract depends on a successful diamond finesse, but South came across a sure-trick line of play as he was playing the hand.

He led a spade to his ace, a spade to dummy's queen. East showed out so it was safe to cash the king and queen of clubs. South crossed to his hand with the king of spades, drawing the last trump, and cashed the ace of clubs, discarding a heart from dummy. He now led the queen of hearts to East's king. East had to lead a diamond into dummy or give up a ruff-sluff. 12 tricks either way. Nice play!

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

THE Daily Commuter Puzzle by Stella Zawistowski



Created by Stella Zawistowski

ACROSS
1 Prices for services
5 Starter courses, for short
9 __-Royce (car brand)
14 Shoestring
15 Glance
16 Kindle download
17 Author Leon
18 Place to buy a Reuben
19 Preferred strategy: 2 wds.
20 Jewelry with a proposal: 2 wds.
23 "So be it"
24 Unfairly fix
25 Intimidating statements
28 Small bouquet
32 __ v. Wade
33 Overhauled, as an essay
35 "The Gilded Age" sister
36 Red or black insect
37 Not at home
38 Texter's "not cool": Abbr.
39 Foldable bed
40 Town roads
44 Spanish uncle
45 Picked up the check
47 City near Naples
49 By way of
50 Farm storage structure
51 Bedrock TV family: 2 wds.
58 June birthstone
59 Apple's center
60 Casual collared shirt
61 A la __ menu
62 Wicked
63 1815 Austen novel
64 Use an iron
65 Tree fluids
66 Writing table

DOWN
1 Furnace duct
2 Work for pay
3 Vaping device
4 __-seed bun
5 Way to make pasta: 2 wds.
6 Work in verse
7 Gondola tool
8 By the __ of your teeth
9 Repeated bit of music
10 Do a favor for
11 Lending transaction
12 Foot-__ sub
13 Reggae precursor
21 Equipment
22 Horse's gait
25 Parcel of land
26 Integrity
27 Rapier or cutlass
28 Makes mention of
29 Foodie
30 Office worker, for short
31 MSN competitor
34 "You'll __ the day!"
40 Discourages
41 Blue-green color
42 Drape attachments
43 Narrow opening
46 Wards off
48 Got married in private
51 Rip
52 Rabbit relative
53 Cool summer treats
54 Smoked salmon variety
55 Journey
56 Stately trees
57 Immerse in water
58 Main doctor: Abbr.

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

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SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

ANSWER:

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

BUSINESS
Continued from page 1

her future customers. “Our scheduled airport shuttle service is just the beginning of what we envision for Court Tours. We are preparing to provide transportation seven days a week.”

There is also a mission to provide jobs within her community, says Coney, who added that Dublin is “home” for her and “helped shape who I am today.”

“One of the greatest goals with this expansion is to create economic opportunities for local residents, including professional drivers, dispatchers, administrative personnel, and transportation operations professionals,” she said.



Coney (above) grew up in Dublin, and after leaving home to attend college in South Carolina, hadn't lived in Laurens County for 18 years. She moved back to Dublin in May 2024, and decided to start a business, Premier Talent & Logistics, LLC (above, in the lobby area)/**DONNELL SUGGS**

PRINCIPAL
Continued from page 1

Education in curriculum and instruction from Georgia College & State University, where he also serves as an adjunct professor. He additionally earned an Education Specialist degree in educational leadership from GCSU, a Master of Education from Troy University and a Bachelor of Science from Georgia Southern University.

Also during the executive session, the board met with representatives from the Georgia School Board Association to discuss the search for a new superintendent of schools.

Earlier this year, the GSBA conducted a nationwide search for candidates, free of charge to the cash-strapped school system. That search yielded a finalist for the position, but the hiring fell through when the school board and finalist DeMarcos Holland were unable to agree on salary.

More than two dozen candidates applied for the superintendent's job. Rather than start from scratch, the board plans to reconsider the field of candidates chosen by the GSBA as the most qualified for the position.

Before moving into executive session, school board chairman David Westerfield said the board is moving with "a great sense of urgency" on hiring a new superintendent.

"We have some people here to discuss that in executive session," Westfield said.

Pool, the district's curriculum director, 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.

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.

The new superintendent will be working with essentially a 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 Dublin school officials last August after finding the system owed $5.6 million to the state health plan after not paying in contributions for the entire fiscal year 2025.

The district, which at the time had not completed an audit since 2021, was declared by state officials to be 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 GBI and FBI both are conducted into the school system's finances.



Officials battle an early morning blaze at a house on Sawyer Street on Tuesday, November 17, 2026/**KYLE DOMINY**

DFD puts out flames on Sawyer Street

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Senior Reporter



The Dublin Fire Department continues to investigate the cause of a fire at a vacant house on the morning of Tuesday, November 17, after they kept it from spreading to nearby structures.

DFD Lt. Adam Hobbs said no one was injured and no one was at the house at 213 Sawyer St., when they arrived at a fully-involved fire at 7:14 a.m.

“We arrived and found heavy smoke and fire throughout the house,” Hobbs said. “Firefighters used handlines to extinguish the fire and bring it under control. The tower truck was used to drop water from an elevated platform to put the fire out.”

Hobbs said it took between 30 and 40 minutes to get the fire under control.

“The faster we can get water on the fire, the faster we can put the fire out but also protect the houses and businesses around it,” he said. “Our goal was to keep it from spreading.”

PARK
Continued from page 1

rejuvenate their community spaces. They have held many groundbreakings during the past five years.

“This process has been driven by the parks masterplan that we started about five years ago,” Kight said. “The goal was to create beautiful community spaces for our citizens and we’re here today to celebrate another new beginning and another restoration here at Springdale Park.”

Dublin Construction Company will soon begin work on phase 1 for the park, located off of Claxton Dairy road. This work will include moving dirt, road work and trail building. They will also work on the parking areas, roads and all of the underground infrastructure and the electricity.

Thomas and Hutton Engineering Company will work on the amenities during phase 2. This will include the dog park, playground, the natural playground, the ninja course, pickleball courts, the dock and renovation of the baseball, softball and football fields.

“Thank you for the people who will work on this project and let us work in unity and in peace,” Dublin Councilwoman Tess Godfrey said in a prayer. “Let this be a blessing for the kids and generations to come.”

Kight reminded the crowd that Springdale Park was built in the mid 1980s, starting with four softball fields with a two-story concession stand in the middle.

“Over the years, additional fields were added and it became the primary place for organized sports for Dublin and Laurens County,” Kight said. “Then, about 25 years ago, the city of Dublin joined with Laurens County to build the Southern Pines Recreational Center. That has been a tremendous blessing to our community.”

Springdale Park became what Kight called a “leftover” space. People used it for walking and walking their dogs. It was used for unorganized playing on the fields.

“Today, we are embracing and enhancing Springdale’s new role as a place for people in Dublin to gather, not just through organized sports teams, but as friends and families,” the mayor said. “It’s a place where our community will be able to get away from their busy lives and just be outside to enjoy the outdoors.”

The Springdale Park project will provide amenities that are not possible at the other parks. There will be a mile-long walking trail that will wrap around the park, including around a new pond and fishing dock at the back of Springdale.

“That was part of the park that was not previously used,” said Kight, who added that Laurens County assisted with building the pond and providing the funding for the dock.

There will be new playgrounds for different ages. Kight added there will be courts for pickleball, tennis and basketball along with renovated playing fields and renovated dog parks.

“Importantly, with the help of our staff, design team and engineers, we are creating a foundation on this 40 acres that can accommodate new uses as time goes on and money allows,” Kight said.

The mayor thanked the citizens for their feedback during the city’s masterplanning process when they informed the officials what they wanted in the parks.

“This park is by you and for you,” Kight said.

He also thanked the city council for prioritizing funding for the park’s projects. The mayor pointed out council members Chris Smith, Bennie Jones, Brandon Chain, Bill Brown, Sara Kolbie, Paul Griggs and Godfrey.

“Thank you to all of these council members who have worked so hard and dedicated their time to make this a possibility and a priority for our community,” Kight said. “I want to thank our city of Dublin team. It takes a lot of us to get this stuff done. We are lucky to have such a dedicated staff and great employees. To pull off a project like this, it takes a lot of people working together in order to pull off a vision. We do this work at Springdale Park, and all of the other community spaces in Dublin, to make this a fantastic small town.”

Kight told the audience to take a look at Springdale Park. It will soon look different.

“We’ll be closing the park for about 10 months and I hope you will come back next year for the ribbing cutting,” the mayor said. “And when you do, we can think back on this moment and we’ll be amazed at the beautiful new park we have created together.”



Dublin Mayor Joshua Kight gave remarks about Springdale Park during Monday's celebration/**PAYTON TOWNS III**

THANKSGIVING
Continued from page 1

He knows these youth will soon be adults and future leaders.

“I want them to be able to see that they can do stuff with the older folks,” Jones said.

And it is also a blessing to see the response from those who really need a Thanksgiving box at this time of year.

“There is a need in the Laurens County, Dublin area,” Jones said. “This year, probably more than ever, there are some people who have needs that need to be met. I have been praying already that everybody who actually needs it will receive a box, if not from us, from someone else.”

Jones wishes he can give a box to everybody who pulls up.

“It hurts to tell someone we are out,” he said. “If we are aware of another location, we’ll send them to that location. Each year somebody has shown up after we have given out supplies. It hurts to turn them away, but we have 500. If there is a need, God is going to find a way to meet it. We want people to know that Greater New Friendship Baptist Church is going to be doing something around Thanksgiving each year.”

Classifieds

Miscellaneous For Sale

Shelled Pecans: $10/Quart $40/Gallon. 478-875-3309

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.

ABSOLUTE AUCTION

145.16 ACRES - JAMES CURRIE ROAD
LAURENS COUNTY

- Offered in 6 Tracts, Combinations Or As A Whole
- Merchantable & Pre-Merchantable Timber
- October 2026 Timber Cruise Available on Website
- 28± Acres of Straw Quality Longleaf w/ Excellent Production
- Hunting/Recreational Land
- All Tracts Front Turkey Creek and Have Paved Road Frontage
- Over 6,900 Feet of Frontage on Turkey Creek
- 2 Miles to I-16 Exit 54 (Hwy 19) & 6 Miles to Dublin

Thursday, December 10th @ 7:00 PM
Sale Site: Oconee Fall Line Tech. College
560 Pinehill Road, Dublin, GA 31021
Visit our Website For Additional Information

HUDSON & MARSHALL AUCTION MARKETING
478-743-1511
HudsonMarshall.com
LIC # 3512

HISTORIC GEORGE T. MORRIS HOUSE GETS MAJOR RENOVATIONS



A look at the exterior renovations/**RODNEY MANLEY**



The front balcony had to be rebuilt, reusing as much of the classical balustrade railing as possible/**RODNEY MANLEY**



Development Authority President Mitch Griggs describes how workers covered and converted a second-floor metal bathtub to shelving space/**RODNEY MANLEY**



A look from the inside/**RODNEY MANLEY**



A classic scalloped shell wall niche is an example of the architectural detail of the former home of Mr. and Mrs. George T. Morris. The house was designed by Ellamae Ellis League, one of Georgia's first and foremost female architects. The Morris family heirs deeded the home to the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority in 1987/ **RODNEY MANLEY**



The Courier Herald senior editor Kyle Dominy (left) and Laurens County Development Authority President Mitch Griggs engage in a discussion outside of the building/ **RODNEY MANLEY**



The entryway shows off the oak floors and stairs that been hidden for years under carpet/**RODNEY MANLEY**



Interior decorations reflect the coming Christmas season/ **RODNEY MANLEY**



LEFT: Workers saved as much of this handpainted and highly valuable Japanese wallpaper as possible/**RODNEY MANLEY**



Another look at the vintage Japanese wallpaper/ **RODNEY MANLEY**



Kids Send Your Letter to Santa!

Email your Christmas list to us, so Santa can see it in the newspaper!

Email tchsanta@gmail.com
All letters must be received by December 8th.
for inclusion in our Letters to Santa special section.

LETTERS TO Santa

Special Section Prints Thursday, December 24th!

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