

>> BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Davis proposes change to how BOC chairman is chosen

Bailey McCully
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Discussion about the fairness of the appointment of the chairman was brought up during the Feb. 8 meeting. Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to look into amending the ordinance

regarding chairmanship to alternate chairman by district each January rather than be voted in by majority vote. "Attorney Brandon Palmer, a couple of weeks ago I asked you about a resolution and you told me that you had to get a consensus from all the commissioners to think about

this resolution," said Davis. "However, I have not seen it brought forth to us." Palmer replied that he only suggested that she confirm there was enough interest in the board for the amendment due to it changing an ordinance that has been in place for multiple years. The ordinance

explains the process to select chairman and to change it would require public hearings and further discussion. In reply, Davis informed the board of the proposed amendment during new business to open discussion. "Since seniority doesn't matter anymore to

chairmanship, which I don't have a problem with, I believe we need to be more fair. The leadership needs to be shared fair and equal," said Davis, as she introduced the amendment. "If we have a resolution to ensure that leadership is

MORE CHAIR >> A2

>> GEORGIA COLLEGE



COURTESY OF GCSU

Georgia College's Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy, in partnership with the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, celebrated former first lady Sandra Deal's 83rd birthday by reading to 12 classes at the Baldwin County Early Learning Center. Books were chosen based on themes of winter and snow.

GCSU's Deal Center delivers childhood literacy lessons

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Georgia College's Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy, in partnership with the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, celebrated former first lady Sandra Deal's 83rd birthday Feb. 1 by reading to 12 classes

at the Baldwin County Early Learning Center. Deal was an advocate for childhood literacy. Before becoming the first lady of Georgia, she taught language arts for more than 15 years until retiring as a sixth-grade, middle-school teacher in Hall County. In 2017, Georgia College & State University opened the Deal Center as a

state-funded educational institute to improve reading outcomes for the children of Georgia. "We offer a variety of programs that reach from Baldwin County to the entire state," said Executive Director Dr. Lindee Morgan. According to Morgan, the Deal Center has an extensive collection

MORE DEAL >> A5

Know your Neighbor



Bridgette Smith

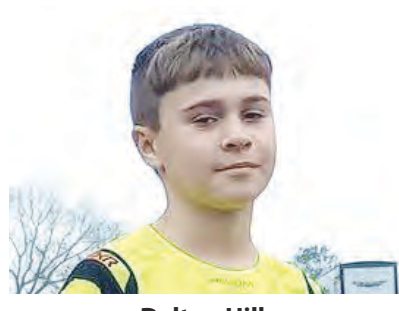
Ansley Kate Allen
The Baldwin Bulletin

Bridgette Smith has found a sense of community in Milledgeville with the help of coffee. Smith moved from McDonough in the fall of 2022 to open Morning Grind Coffee with her husband Jared Smith. "My husband and I never thought we would end up back in our college town, but the community we have found here is truly meant for us," said Smith. Smith is originally from Monticello and a graduate of Georgia Military College. She briefly lived in McDonough before settling back in her college town. "Living here full time has been a different experience rather than when I was here for college," Smith

MORE NEIGHBOR >> A7

>> REMEMBRANCE

Baldwin mourns loss of promising dirt bike racer



Dalton Hill

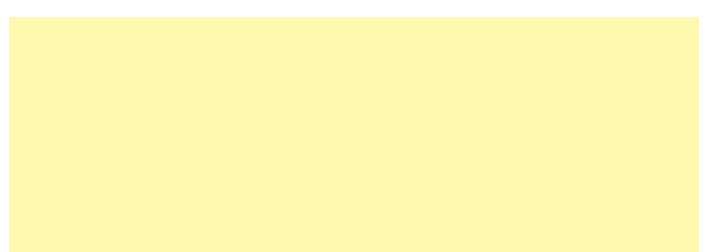
Bailey McCully
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The Baldwin community mourns the loss of 12-year-old Dalton Hill, who tragically passed last weekend during a racing accident at Echeconnee Motocross in Crawford County. Dalton is the son of Phillip and Emily Ethridge Hill. He was a seventh-grade student at Georgia Military College

Preparatory School and, according to his obituary, enjoyed wrestling, cross country and playing baseball. Above all else, however, he enjoyed riding his dirt bike. His family wrote in his obituary, "He loved competitive dirt bike racing. He was fondly known as Mac & Cheese from his dirt bike number. Everyone that raced with him always knew when he arrived and they saw No. 330, he was the one to beat."

On Feb. 1, Dalton had recently earned two first-place finishes and one third-place finish in a competition, according to his father's Facebook page. A week later, on Feb. 8, according to a 13WMAZ article, Hill experienced a fatal accident while riding in a qualifying race for the King's Cup. Hill sustained multiple injuries from the accident and was taken to Atrium

MORE HILL >> A3



WEATHER

62 HIGH
Partly Cloudy

Friday
Partly Cloudy

42 LOW

Detailed forecast / B8

INSIDE THIS WEEK

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>> COMMUNITY

Friends of the Mary Vinson Memorial book sale marked as success



Annual Used Book Sale 2025
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The Friends of the Mary Vinson Memorial Library 2025 Used Book Sale was a success. The organization thanked local and surrounding communities for coming out to the sale, its volunteers and business donors for making this "a phenomenal year." Book sales and donor contributions totaled over \$7,000 to far exceed last year's sale. All proceeds from the sale will go to city and county libraries.

DEAL

CONTINUED FROM >> A1

of children's books and chose a winter theme for the book reading at the Early Learning Center, due to the recent excitement of snow days and time of year.

"We held a similar celebration event last year, reading to kids as Mrs. Sandra Dunagan Deal did many times," said Morgan. "The School of Continuing and Professional Studies is a long-time partner of the center and worked with us to make a larger impact this year. The Early learning Center ranges from two- to five-year olds, but we read to the majority four-year olds."



Sandra Dunagan Deal

"Our vision is to have a Georgia where everyone has the tools to support children on the path to literacy, so across the board our programming is aimed at not just the children but the adults who support those children," said Morgan. "We are funded by the Georgia Legislature and our work is aimed to spread across every county, which includes funding through grant programs."

In Baldwin County, the Deal Center partners with Communities in Schools and Lakeview Primary School to offer a reading clinic, where a trained cohort of undergraduate Georgia College students offer support to struggling readers. The GCSU students are trained in an evidence-based phonics curriculum to work closely with students on phonological awareness.

"Phonological awareness is the ability to take in and process the sounds of the English language, break them into the smallest units of sounds, and be able to see letters on the page and map them

to sound. That is a major area of deficit, so we are working to help them decode what they are reading to become more fluent," said Morgan.

"The reading clinic works with kindergarten through third grade. And though we do not have the bandwidth to expand the program ourselves, we have developed this initial implementation to create a model others can emulate and offer in their communities."

Beyond its programs, the Deal Center hosts an annual Governor's Summit to bring together people from around the state that work "at leadership levels across the different entities in the language and literature ecosystem." This year's summit, titled "Brain Building Network: Bridging the Science of Learning with the Science of Reading," will take place July 8-9 at GCSU.

"The idea of the summit is to bring practitioners from across the state that serve children from birth through eighth grade. We are providing them with up-to-date content relevant to best practices in their field, strategy sessions, the latest research, and provide state and agency level updates," said Morgan. "The goal is thinking how a professional community can work together to influence early brain development across a variety of sectors."

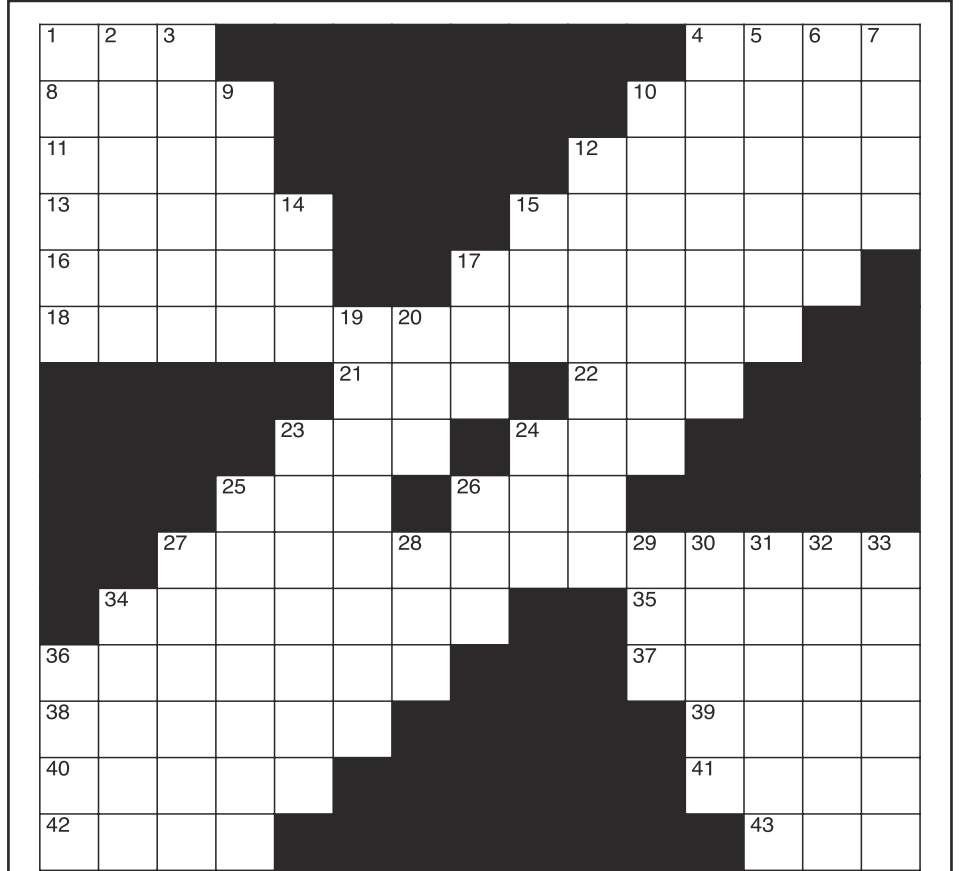
To learn more about the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy, visit galiteracycenter.org.

Children need formal reading instruction, which the center advocates for and helps to provide through evidence-based programs, training, and program models. According to Morgan, reading to a child as early as the second trimester offers several benefits.

"We used to think reading to children turned them into readers, and while that is partially true, reading to children creates the foundation for becoming a successful reader," said Morgan. "It gives them ample background knowledge on the world as they enter into formal schooling by enriching their vocabulary, enhancing their familiarity with print concepts, and differentiating the sounds of their native language."

"Within the second trimester of pregnancy, babies have ears and can hear the voice of their caregivers and be exposed to sound. Exposure to the sound of language primes children's brains to more quickly respond to and understand that language. The impact of reading to a child only grows as they age," added Morgan.

The Deal Center operates a grant mechanism to fund communities across the state and facilitate language and literature-oriented activities, as well as funds research within the University System of Georgia. It also actively teaches community members how to be volunteer readers, like the individuals who read at the Early Learning Center.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Racquet sport group (abbr.)
- 4. Norse god of thunder
- 8. Russian industrial city
- 10. What's good for the ___
- 11. Round-ish shape
- 12. Baltimore MLBer
- 13. French modernist painter
- 15. Burned with water
- 16. Intestinal issue
- 17. Take the lead
- 18. Prove oneself worthy
- 21. None
- 22. Tax collector
- 23. Swiss river
- 24. Gymnast Raisman
- 25. Baby's dining accessory
- 26. Canadian beer distributor
- 27. Iconic American tourist destination
- 34. More expansive

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Type of bomb
- 2. Polynesian island country
- 3. Heavenly body
- 4. Hard workers
- 5. Covered
- 6. Johns Hopkins Hospital founder
- 7. Plant of the grass family
- 9. Island person of the Bering Sea
- 10. Storehouse
- 35. Alert
- 36. Popular boots
- 37. Showings
- 38. Conclusion
- 39. Share a common boundary
- 40. Shooting sport
- 41. Popular side dish
- 42. Global energy firm
- 43. Chronicles (abbr.)

- 12. Scarlet-flowered desert shrub
- 14. A pituitary hormone
- 15. Female sibling
- 17. Monetary unit of Afghanistan
- 19. Empowering
- 20. Space station
- 23. Disorder
- 24. State of fuss
- 25. Footwear for babies
- 26. Nuclear reactor (abbr.)
- 27. Drove
- 28. Affirmative
- 29. Male parent
- 30. Utter obscenities
- 31. Type of verse
- 32. Unpleasant person
- 33. One who settles down
- 34. Founder of source-based history
- 36. A way to snarl

SEE PUZZLE ANSWERS >> PAGE B3

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SUDOKU PUZZLE

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6	4	9		7				3
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Level: Advanced

SEE PUZZLE ANSWERS >> PAGE B3

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