

Local Bandag plant celebrates 40th anniversary

BY THOMAS HOEFER
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The Bridgestone Bandag Griffin Plant, located in the industrial park on Greenbelt Parkway, celebrated its 40th anniversary Tuesday.

With numerous local and state representatives in the audience, much of the celebration was about the many current and retired employees — commonly referred to as teammates — that made it all happen.

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THOMAS HOEFER/DAILY NEWS

Plant Manager Christy Brasher, right, addresses the audience during the 40th anniversary celebration of the Bridgestone Bandag Griffin Plant on Tuesday. The celebration also featured, from left, Griffin-Spalding Development Authority Executive Director David Luckie, Griffin Mayor Dick Morrow and State Sen. Marty Harbin (R-District 16) as speakers.

According to Griffin-Spalding Development Authority Executive Director David Luckie, who spoke at the celebration along with Griffin Mayor Dick Morrow and State Senator Marty Harbin, Bandag was the first company to settle into the Griffin-Spalding Industrial Park when it opened its plant here in November 1976.

Since then, he added, the

company that specializes on producing and manufacturing rubber tread has assisted the Development Authority by communicating with prospective businesses and putting into the community jobs and capital investments.

“You are truly one of the great companies in Griffin,” Luckie said.

At some point during the cel-

ebration, guests were shown a brief video on the history of Bandag and its Griffin plant. The video included the rather unpleasant memory of Dec. 26, 1983 — the day when the local plant caught fire and burned to the ground.

However, not only did Bandag build a new plant and reopened it just nine months after the fire, the company also

helped find its employees jobs in the community, paid them the difference in earnings and continued to pay for their benefits.

“We have so much to be proud of,” said Plant Manager Christy Brasher, who also pointed out the many connections Bridgestone Bandag has

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Mary Frances Goddard, 95, of Griffin, passed away on Sunday, November 13, 2016.

Frances was born in Carroll County, Georgia on July 10, 1921. She is preceded in death by her parents, William Henry Kierbow and Sallie Bell Johnson Kierbow; sisters, Essie Kierbow, Evelyn Kierbow, Doris Morris and Geneva Fain; brother, Oman Kierbow. Frances was a long time member of Cathedral of Praise Church.

Survivors include children, Sarah Duke (Leon) of Brooks, Melba Waddell of Griffin, Bobby Goddard (Connie) of Griffin; grandchildren, Kelley Coe of California, Amy Duke of Brooks, Julie Helgeson of Griffin, Jennifer Morris (Brian) of Athens, Elizabeth Goddard of Griffin; great grandchildren, Sydney Nelms of (UGA) Athens, Kylie & Amelia Helgeson of Griffin, Harrison Morris of Athens; sisters, Lessie Kierbow of Griffin, Willa Tanksley of Brooks; and daughter-in-law, Beverly Evans of Griffin.

Visitation for Frances Goddard will be on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at Conner-Westbury Funeral Home. A graveside funeral service will be conducted on Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 11 a.m. at Oak Hill Cemetery.

The Rev. Roger Robinson will officiate. Family and friends are asked to meet at the cemetery at 10:50 a.m. on Wednesday morning.

Please join her family and friends in honoring the life of Frances Goddard by visiting www.conner-westbury-funeralhome.com and posting your tributes and memories.

Conner-Westbury Funeral Home, 1891 W. McIntosh Road, Griffin, is in charge of the arrangements.

DEATH NOTICES

Mrs. Shirley Adams Pusinelli, 70, of Griffin, died on Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2016, at her residence. A memorial service will be conducted in the chapel of Conner-Westbury Funeral Home at 11

and Vendor Application and return it to the Kiwanis Club of Griffin at 1025 S. Hill St. For more information, contact Wade Hutcherson at hutch@uga.edu or 770-467-4225 or call the Kiwanis office at 770-227-9187.

Westmoreland staff will be in LaGrange, Griffin

U.S. Representative Lynn Westmoreland's staff will be holding mobile office hours on Tuesday, Nov. 15, in Griffin and LaGrange. The Griffin mobile office hours will be held by Field Representative James Ruvalcaba, and the LaGrange office hours will be held by Field Representative Colin Martin.

Ruvalcaba will be in Griffin, from 10 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, Nov. 15, at the Griffin Regional Welcome Center, 143 North Hill St., Griffin.

Martin will be in LaGrange, from 10 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, Nov. 15, at the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce, Diverse Power Room, 111 Bull St., LaGrange.

If you are unable to attend these office

The Georgia Nature Photographers Association will host nature photographer, John Quinn on Tuesday, Nov. 15 at 6:30 p.m. in the 1st floor conference room of the Women's Center of Spalding Regional Hospital. Members and potential members are invited to attend.

Quinn's topic will be "Ends of the Earth: Antarctica and Iceland." For more information about Georgia Nature Photographers Association, check out their web site, www.gnpa.com and click on the "central chapter."

Library to host Ask-A-Lawyer

The Griffin-Spalding County Library is hosting an Ask-A-Lawyer program Friday, Nov. 18 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you are unable to meet with an attorney, you can meet with Georgia Legal Services Program attorney Jana Edmonson-Cooper. To make an appointment, call 770-412-4770 or ask at the front desk at the library. To contact the GLSP, call 404-894-7707. The GLSP does not handle criminal cases or immigration matters.

MOTION

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"It is wrong to attempt to execute people who were broken by the government. If anyone deserves protection of the courts, it is veterans with PTSD," Pittman said in court Nov. 1.

Sams also granted the state its motion for a psychological evaluation of Bowman, and Spalding County Assistant District Attorney Marie Broder said the evaluation "will be scheduled very soon."

Pittman said Monday the defense may raise a "guilty but mentally ill" defense, but no

new psychological evaluation by defense experts is planned at this time.

In what he deemed a close decision, Sams granted the defense's motion to suppress objects found in the hotel room that Bowman and Mixon were staying in at the time of the incident as well as items from the house where Bowman was living.

While the state has the right to appeal this ruling, the state will not appeal at this time, Broder said.

Upcoming court activity dates were also discussed at Monday's hearing. While some testing such as ballistics testing and chemical analysis are still

outstanding, both the prosecution and the defense team said they should be ready for trial as scheduled.

A change of venue to Troup County was granted in July. It has been Sams' plan to begin jury selection in Troup County Jan. 9 with the trial tentatively set to begin Feb. 6. Sams said Monday that jury summons will go out this week or next.

More motions in the case are expected to be heard Dec. 5 in Spalding County. Both the state and the defense will travel with Judge Sams Dec. 6 to inspect the Troup County court facilities and then hear potential jurors' requests for excuses or deferrals Dec. 7 in Troup County.

AIRPORT

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The Airport Authority voted to give this potential buyer and anyone else who wants to bid two options to ease the potential buyer's concerns about his money sitting in escrow and the new airport falling through, explained Airport Authority Bill Johnston, citing the sales process of land at Fort McPherson as part of those concerns.

Box A, Johnston said, "the amount goes into an escrow account, there's one closing and he's entitled to the land at the end, when the airport closes. During that time we can use the money to buy out the existing leases and to move current tenants over."

The difference in A and B, Airport Authority Chairman Dick Morrow explained, is when the owner wants to take control of the property,

the FAA for release of the vacant unused property as soon as possible.

Johnston said, "the money is held in escrow, we have the opportunity to use a portion of the money, with the final closing contingent on a second appraisal," as is required by the FAA. Johnston noted, "the board is willing to absorb that cost if there is a difference."

Morrow said, this offer, and any other bids, would be for all airport land, the business park, terminal and T-hangar owned by the Airport Authority, excluding Airport Road Park, which the county is buying on a lease purchase; the Sheriff's Office hangar, which the county will buy on lease purchase, but it cannot be released until after the airport is closed; and a portion of the golf course which was on airport property that the city has purchased.

The offer include the Kiwanis fairgrounds

would change from the Airport Authority to the potential new land owner. The Kiwanis would be in the same position as they are now."

Airport Authority member David Brock, who is also a Griffin city commissioner representing District 4, which includes the Hillandale area across the street from the airport, was concerned about what would go in there. "He might put in an amusement park," Brock said, citing comments made during prior confidential negotiations.

Morrow, also a city commissioner said, "we have final say what goes in, it will be in the contract," and he told Brock that Brock "totally misconstrued" what will go in there.

Airport Authority member Carl Pruett, critical of Brock discussing the confidential negotiations said, "he's putting something in there that will attract people to the area."

erty as a movie studio. I believe this is probably the highest and best use and would have the exciting possibility for significant economic potential in our community."

Morrow said, "the jobs, capital investment, and revenue generation would offer workforce opportunities for our citizens that are currently unavailable. This ties directly into the film academy development at Southern Crescent Technical College to meet the demand for a trained movie and film workforce."

Brock asked Monday night that it be clarified as to what's going in there. He also questioned the \$15 million price, as "outrageous amount for that property," saying "it's worth about \$6 million, and for that much (\$15 million) he's going to put in whatever he wants."

Morrow said "it is put out for bid, and it's all subject to our approval what goes in there," with Airport Authority member

RIGHT: TRUCKS AS MILEAGE TRACK, THE Tough Turkey 5K and Half Marathon. Both races start at Journey Church, 315 West Solomon St., and end at the Park at Sixth, at the corner of East Solomon and 6th streets.

Race day registration and packet pickup will start at 6:30 a.m. and end at 7:15 a.m. The half marathon start time will be at 7:30 a.m. and the 5K will start at 7:45 a.m. Register for the races at www.active.com.

All race proceeds go to support the continued efforts of Impact Racing Ministries.

For more information, see Impact Racing Ministries on Facebook.

BANDAG

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in the community, as it supports numerous local groups and organizations.

Aside from its heavy involvement with Griffin-Spalding United Way — for which Brasher presented a check over \$17,000 to Executive Director Denise Quick during the ceremony — Bandag also collaborates each year with Chick-fil-A and the Southside Riders to bring a Christmas celebration to foster children in Spalding County and surrounding counties.

"You been a partner for the last 40 years," said Luckie, as he emphasized the importance of having a company like Bridgestone Bandag in town. "We would like to assure you that we are going to be your partner for the next 40 years."

right, it's not going to happen."

Morrow said "it's not \$6 million, it's \$15 million and that covers our expense to move out the tenants."

The \$15 million includes the land and the buildings in the business park, Morrow said, and explained "we have to buy out the aviation business buildings and facilitate moving those businesses onto the new airport."

Brock, a Hillandale resident, said he was concerned about "the property values if he puts an amusement park in there."

The board voted unanimously, including Brock, to put it out for bid, with a \$15 million minimum. Sealed bids will be opened by the Airport Authority legal committee, which will sift through them and make a recommendation to the full board.

The Airport Authority also awarded the appraisal contract for the sale of the airport to RE Appraisal