



Camelot Theatre
to present "Godspell"
A5



It's all smiles as
Jags sweep Huskies
SPORTS, A8

The GRIFFIN DAILY NEWS

APRIL 5, 2019

PUBLISHED FOR VICKIE WILSON AND ALL OF OUR READERS SINCE 1872

VOL. 146, NO. 67 | \$2 DAILY / \$3 WEEKEND

Woman faces aggravated assault charges

Rakestraw allegedly hit victim with car

BY KAREN GUNNELS
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A Griffin woman is facing felony aggravated assault charges after she reportedly ran over a victim with her car following a physical altercation.

Tomaya Rakestraw, 27, is being held on the charges in the Spalding County Jail. No bond has been set.

According to the Griffin Police Department incident report, officers responded around 8:30 a.m. Wednesday to a Grady Street resi-

dence to a report of a pedestrian struck by a vehicle.

Rakestraw reportedly told officers she was at her Grady Street residence when two females "came in to her trying to argue and fight her in reference to a previous incident on Facebook," the report states. Rakestraw told officers she met the two females in the yard and a

physical altercation ensued, leaving Rakestraw with a minor injury to her finger. Rakestraw refused medical treatment, the report states.

After the physical altercation, the two females began walking north on Grady Street. Rakestraw reportedly said she got into her vehicle and

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'What have you done with the SPLOST money?'

BY RAY LIGHTNER
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As part of the SPLOST projects update this month, County Manager William P. Wilson Jr. gave a more detailed update and a report card.

Wilson said it was in response to the question "what have you done with the SPLOST money?"

Of the \$9,838,495 in budgeted bonded projects — those to be done up front with the county issuing bonds to be paid back with the SPLOST revenue — all but Heritage Park and Fairmont Park are completed. Most are under budget but there are two projects that are over budget. Those projects include 911 computer-aided dispatch and pickleball that

were approved by the commissioners to be covered utilizing excess bond proceeds.

The new computer-aided dispatch and telephone system for 911 cost \$1,238,955, which was \$89,417 over budget. The pickleball facility cost \$1,608,673, \$508,566 over budget.

The county also spent \$3,107,08 so far on a budgeted \$3,454,653 to retired outstanding indebtedness, saving \$347,635. There's been \$120,000 spent on equipment for the Senior Nutrition Program, saving \$17,945 on the budgeted cost.

Hardware and software upgrades for the judicial system cost \$603,189, saving \$172,749 on the projected

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

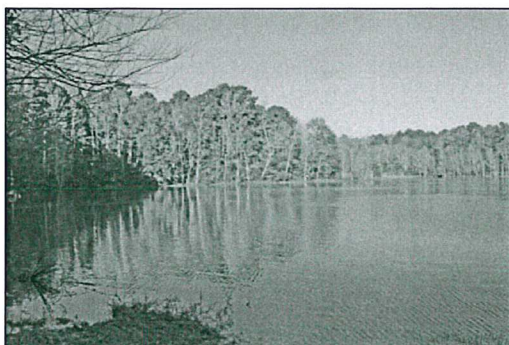
County Manager William P. Wilson Jr. is pictured trying out the spider web climbing apparatus at Fairmont Park. It is designed for teens.

Doss discusses Charity Tracker Program



JENNIFER REYNOLDS/GRIFFIN DAILY NEWS

Will Doss spoke before the Educational Prosperity Initiative on Thursday, where he discussed the local Charity Tracker Program. Charity Tracker is an online tool that local agencies can use to help track charitable giving. Agencies use the tool to coordinate giving in an effort to cut duplicate giving and help better spread resources throughout the local community.



JENNIFER REYNOLDS/DAILY NEWS

Heads Creek Reservoir is pictured.

Get outside in Spalding County

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(except holidays) from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (May through October).

Spring has arrived and with it comes warmer weather, more daylight hours and, for some, a desire to spend more time outside.

Here are some of the ways you can enjoy the outdoors in Spalding County:

UGA Research and Education Garden, at 129 Ellis Road in Griffin, is open for self-guided tours on weekdays

The 65-acre garden's main function is a research facility but it is also open for the public to enjoy. Themed gardens and open spaces make for a nice spot to enjoy a picnic or take a casual stroll.

Scheduled community events are held throughout the year.

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Deaths

Sherry Lynn (Head) White
Mr. James Perdue



Today's weather:
Mostly cloudy
74 58
°F

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Griffin, Georgia

OBITUARIES



Sherry Lynn (Head) White

Oct. 22, 1958 —
April 3, 2019

Griffin resident

Sherry Lynn White, 60, of Griffin, Georgia, went to be with her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on Wednesday, April 3, 2019.

Sherry was born and raised in Griffin, Georgia the daughter of David Pope Head and the late Kathleen Smith Head. She is preceded in death by her

Grandparents, Paul and Ruby Head, and John C. and Margaret Smith. Sherry retired in 2015 from Spalding County E-911 as a Dispatcher Supervisor after having served over 37 years with the Spalding County government. She began working for Spalding County just after High School at the Tax Assessors Office and then was among the first wave of dispatchers hired when she transferred in 1979 to the Spalding County Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services when the Spalding County Fire Department was first created. While at the Fire Department, she met and married her husband David, who was a Firefighter. Having served in the Tax Assessors Office, and having a grandfather who was a former "Revenue" for the U.S. Treasury Department, proved extremely helpful to the Fire Department because she had a very intricate knowledge of Streets and Roads in the City of Griffin and County. Along with dispatching Emergency Calls for the Fire and EMS, her duties included driving around the City and County to survey physical locations of structures and addresses. While at the Fire Department, she became a State Certified Firefighter through the Georgia Fire Academy and an Emergency Medical Technician through the Department of Human Resources. In the early to mid-1980's, she spent many hours working as an EMT on a Spalding County Ambulance and also often responded to fire scenes to help the duty firefighters out. In 1989, the City of Griffin and Spalding County started their 911 system and Sherry transferred to that Department. She

became a Supervisor there and through the decades, trained many people how to be E-911 Telecommunicators to dispatch for not only the Fire and EMS, but for the Law Enforcement agencies for the area. She was a generous and caring woman who spent most of her life in the service to others, one way or another.

Sherry had many hobbies, including crafts, painting, sewing, fishing and planting flowers. She loved children, her family, animals and people in general. But most of all she loved her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She worshiped and served at County Line United Methodist Church where she had served as a Sunday School Teacher and enjoyed helping with the meals they served at the church.

Sherry is survived by her husband of 38 years, David M. White, a brother, Walter S. Head and wife Pam, nephew, Bryan Head, many cousins and several other nieces and nephews.

Funeral Services for Sherry will be at 2:00 pm on Saturday, April 6, 2019 in the Chapel of Conner-Westbury Funeral Home.

Interment will follow at County Line United Methodist Church (416 County Line Church Road, Griffin, GA.) and a visitation and viewing will be at the Funeral Home from 6:00 pm until 9:00 pm on Friday, April 5, 2019. The Reverend Ed Swehla will officiate. For those who wish, in lieu of flowers, the family asks for contributions to be made to Mt. Zion United Methodist Campground or to County Line United Methodist Church in Memory of Sherry. Conner-Westbury Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. (770) 227-2300.

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

Please join the family and friends in honoring Sherry Lynn (Head) White by visiting www.conner-westburyfuneralhome.com and posting your tributes and memories.

DEATH NOTICE

Mr. James Perdue, 76, of Griffin, died on Monday, April 1, 2019, at Brightmoor Hospice. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 6, 2019, in the chapel of Davis Professional Funeral Services. Davis Professional Funeral Services, 426 Melrose Ave., Griffin, is in charge of arrangements.

WOMAN

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

followed after the subjects, according to the GPD.

"Rakestraw stated that as she followed the subjects, one of them jumped in front of her vehicle, so she ran her over with her car," the report states.

The victim was transported to Grady Memorial Hospital.

A witness and the victim's daughter told officers they went to "confront Rakestraw in reference to a family incident," according to the report.

The victim's daughter stated that when

Rakestraw approached them, Rakestraw reportedly drove through the yard of a Grady Street residence and proceeded to run over the victim. The witness told officers Rakestraw would have had to run over a chainlink fence in order to strike the victim with her car, the report states.

Officers observed tire tracks in the yard, which led over a chainlink fence and back onto the roadway.

"This evidence was consistent with the statements provided by (the victim's daughter)," the report states.

Rakestraw was then transported to the Spalding County Jail.

Henry officers shot; teen held hostage

BY KAREN GUNNELS
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A gunman suspected of shooting two Henry County police officers remained barricaded Thursday afternoon in his Henry County home with a 16-year-old considered a hostage.

Thursday's incident began around 10:46 a.m. when a trouble unknown call made by a "distraught" female came into Henry County dispatch. Henry County Police Department Capt.

Joey Smith said it was possible the female, who did not live at the Eagle Ridge subdivision home, was reporting a possible domestic situation.

The two officers responding to the scene were fired upon by the unnamed gunman as they forced entry into the home, Smith said. Both officers received "non-life threatening" injuries. Both officers were transported to Grady Memorial Hospital, with one officer transported by air. Smith said it is not

believed that the two officers returned fire.

While Smith would not name the two officers Thursday afternoon, he described them as both males in their 30s, serving with the HCPD for about seven years.

The gunman is said to be a family member of the 16-year-old in the home, but the relationship has not been confirmed, Smith said.

Smith said authorities have been in communication with the gunman, who told police he would

release the juvenile, who was not injured Thursday afternoon.

"We were hoping he was going to release the 16-year-old. He said he would. We're just standing by waiting," Smith said late Thursday afternoon.

Since the preservation of life is the priority, Smith said authorities do not want to make a dynamic entry into the home.

"We will wait as long as we can. We want to end the situation safely," Smith said.

Local Briefs

From staff reports

UGA to host program for minority students

There will be an Advising and Mentoring Minority Students for Success Symposium on April 5 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at UGA-Griffin in the Stucky Auditorium.

Event to benefit Youth Camp

A Spring Craft Vendor Event will be held April 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 3990 Fayetteville Road, Griffin. The event is a fundraiser for the Central Georgia Youth Camp. There will be various vendors, food, kids' activities and free pictures with the Easter Bunny.

Gala to benefit CWC

On April 9, the Christian Women's Center (CWC) in Sunny Side, will host its 36th annual Gala to raise funds to support and grow this ministry. The theme of the event is "Your Grace Found Me." It will be held at Oak Hill Baptist Church in Williamson and will include a catered dinner, testimonies and live auction. If you would like to be a sponsor or would like to attend, call Becky Smith at 770-227-3700.

Egg candling class to be held

Georgia Department of Agriculture regulations require those selling eggs from backyard flocks to hold an Egg Candler's certificate, among other requirements. An egg candling class will be from 10 a.m. to noon April 18 at UGA Extension Spalding County, 835 Memorial Drive, Griffin. Attendees must bring an acceptable photo ID.

Register by 5 p.m. April 11.

Learn about Mediterranean cooking

Spalding County Family and Consumer Services Agent Cindee Sweda will explain the benefits of a Mediterranean lifestyle in a two-part class. Part 1 will be Thursday, April 11, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Part 2 will be Thursday, April 25, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Both sessions will be at the Griffin-Spalding County Library, 800 Memorial Drive, Griffin. The class is free to attend but reservations are strongly encouraged. Call 770-467-4225 to reserve a space.

'Holmes and Watson' continues through April 14

The Main Street Players' production of "Holmes and Watson" continues through Sunday, April 14. Wednesday through Saturday performances are at 7:30 p.m., while Sunday performances are at 3 p.m. For ticket information, call the box office at 770-229-9916. Remaining tickets will be available at the box office the evening of the performance.

Salvation Army to recognize volunteers

The Salvation Army of Griffin is holding its annual meeting and volunteer appreciation dinner Monday, April 15, at 6 p.m. at the Kiwanis of Griffin Center, 1025 S. Hill St., Griffin. The guest speaker is Lt. Col. William Mockabee, Georgia Divisional Commander. For more information, call Lt. Paula Blevins at 770-0412-6561 or 770-876-4752 or email Paula.blevins@uss.salvationarmy.org.

OUTSIDE

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

For upcoming events, visit <https://www.facebook.com/REGARDIAEVENTS/>.

Wyomia Tyus Olympic Park, at 1301 Cowan Road in Griffin, offers play areas, a baseball complex, walking trails, pavilions, a 3-acre lake and more.

One of the park's trails, Ernie's Trail, offers visitors a chance to observe wetlands, native plants and even wildlife from a marked trail and boardwalk.

For those who enjoy walking for exercise, the park offers rubberized trails and lighted paths for evening walks.

For more information about

Tyus Park and other parks operated by Spalding County Parks, Public Grounds and Leisure Services, visit <https://spaldingparksandrec.com>.

Heads Creek Reservoir, just off New Salem Road and West McIntosh Road, is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week. There is a boat ramp located on New Salem Road.

Wading and swimming is prohibited, but boats powered by electric motors or paddles and fishing are allowed within certain guidelines.

A list of the guidelines can be found at http://www.cityofgriffin.com/Portals/1/Documents/Public%20Works/Heads_Creek_Regulations.pdf.

The secluded reservoir offers sweeping scenes of native

flora that make it ideal for photography or bird watching.

Camp Stephens boasts two locations.

Camp Stephens West Tract, at 330 E. McIntosh Road, Griffin, and Camp Stephens East Tract at Stephens St. and Jackson St. in Griffin.

History buffs can view trenches and breastworks that were created by Confederate troops who trained at the site during the Civil War. The site served as both an encampment for troops and as a training ground.

Prior to the founding of Spalding County, the location was part of a Native American trade route. The site was once owned by Doc Holliday's father, Henry who bought it in 1855.

SPLOST

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

costs. Relocation of the 800MHz equipment from a privately-owned tower to a newly-constructed county tower cost \$380,102, down \$110,061 from the budgeted cost, plus saving the county on rental fees.

The other completed bonded project was soccer field lights at Wyomia Tyus Park, at a cost of \$445,619, which was \$83,168 less than budgeted.

At Fairmont Park, the county has spent \$916,917 (as of last week) on renovations and new equipment — including expanding a pavilion and adding another, new heating and air system for the community center, and a new wood floor in the gym, and renovated restrooms. The project was budgeted at \$953,137, with \$36,220 remaining, plus the commissioners authorizing any overages to be covered from excess bond proceeds.

At Heritage Park, so far, \$252,226 has been spent on playground equipment and a new pavilion, of the budgeted \$1,248,227.

The Heritage Park project was to include a

pavilion and restroom, remodel of the gym at the former Fairmont High School, rehabilitation of the historic Griffin Vocational School (a Rosenwald school), removal of the middle building asbestos abatement on all three buildings, rehabilitation for the community garden, a playground, pavilion, and new air conditioning for the buildings.

Of the pay-as-you-go SPLOST projects, Wilson said, the county has already completed the Hill Street roundabout culvert at a cost of \$2,595,870. Also completed was the local match funding for the 2016 and 2017 Local Maintenance & Improvement Grants from the Georgia Department of Transportation for resurfacing projects at \$1,512,695 for 2016 and \$1,083,175 for 2017.

The county has spent \$5,591,909 of the budgeted \$9,115,923 in transportation projects in the SPLOST. Other transportation expenditures so far include \$198,521 in engineering for the Jordan Hill Road bridge replacement project, \$6,302 in design costs for the North Hill Street/McIntosh Road intersection improvements,

and \$195,346 in other design and engineering costs.

The other pay-as-you-go projects include:

- \$13,687 of the \$250,000 budgeted for materials for the Flint River Regional Library.
- \$243,935 of the \$250,000 budgeted for CAGE vehicles and equipment for the Sheriff's Office.
- \$21,740 of the \$1,185,000 budgeted for renovation of the Animal Control Shelter. Demolition started on the Regional Youth Detention Center this week and plans have changed to build new as renovation and expansion would cost more than budgeted.

- \$400,537 of \$831,000 budgeted for fire apparatus and for the Fire Department.

So far, no SPLOST funds have been spent on the aquatics center, budgeted at \$4,690,000 and the \$1,031,700 budgeted for improvements to the other county parks included AMBUCS Park, City Park, Dundee Lake Park and Tyus Park.

To answer the question of "what have you done with the SPLOST money?" the county has spent \$8,672,699 of the budgeted \$9,838,495 for bonded projects, with \$1,165,796 remaining. And for the pay-as-you-go projects, the county has spent \$6,271,808 of the \$17,373,623 budgeted, with \$11,101,815 remaining.

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