



Photo by Payton Towns III

Sorrow smiles following his introduction.

Buddy's back...in Black and Gold

Twelve years after leaving, Sorrow returns to Falcons

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Football coach Buddy Sorrow is headed back to East Laurens High School. The Laurens County Board of Education approved Sorrow as the Falcons new football coach during its first meeting of the year Thursday night. His first official day will be Feb. 1. According to ghsfha.org website, Sorrow has an overall record of 101-62-2. He was 5-5 at Southeast Bulloch before going 56-39 at

East Laurens between 1994 and 2002. He then went 40-18-2 at Edmond Burke between 2008 and 2012. While at East Laurens, Sorrow never had a worse record than 5-5 and he led the Falcons to the playoffs four times. The board office was packed with many East Laurens supporters. After the board approved the personnel, ELHS Principal Eddie Morris introduced Sorrow. "In 1994 they hired a young guy to coach

at East Laurens High School," Morris said. "This may seem like 'Groundhog Day' because we choose to hire that same coach again this year. I'm excited about what he has planned for our school." After everyone clapped, Sorrow got a chance to address the audience. "I'm glad to be back," Sorrow said. "I see some familiar faces around. I'm hoping we're

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LCSO looks for info on man found froze to death

By PAYTON TOWNS III
The Laurens County Sheriff's Office is looking for information about an unknown Hispanic man who was found dead in a field Thursday morning. Laurens County Sheriff Bill Harrell said the man, who has black hair, is 5-foot-8 in height and weighs between 170 and

Description:
Five feet, eight inches tall
Weighed 170-200 pounds
Black hair and 30-35 years old
200 pounds, was found in a field near McDaniel Drive between Dexter and Rentz

around 8:30 a.m. Thursday. "We couldn't see any identifying marks on him," Harrell said. "If anybody has any information on him, please contact us. The man did not have any identification of any kind on him. He appears to be anywhere

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Photo by Payton Towns III

Christian shows her surprise following the announcement.

Christian named Teacher of Year for Dublin City

By PAYTON TOWNS III
Dublin High School teacher Kathy H. Christian was named the Dublin City School Systemwide Teacher of the Year during the Educator's Award Luncheon held at the Dublin Country Club Thursday afternoon. Christian, who is in the CTAE Department, was surprised at getting selected as the Systemwide winner. "I'm quite honored and surprised," she said. "I was honored to be mentioned with all of these other teachers. They are so deserving. It's not about me, because I feel like I'm the teacher I am today because of the other teachers I've worked with. I've gotten to work with a variety of people. You look at others and try to make yourself better. You mimic what they are doing and that makes you better." Dublin Principal Robert Hunter was excited about Christian being named as the Systemwide Teacher of the Year. "She is very deserving," Hunter said. "Mrs. Christian

has been doing this for a long time. She works as hard as the younger teachers there. I appreciate her so much. She is very deserving of this." Besides Christian, Christina Crawford, from Hillcrest, Christina Bazemore, from Saxon Heights, Leslie M. Holmes, from Susie Dasher, Shannon F. Spires, from Dublin Middle School, and Lynne Towson, from Moore Street, were also selected from their schools as Teachers of the Year. Pat Edwards, Director of Assessment, said each teacher's application was sent to someone outside of the system. "They pick the winner," Edwards said. "We have nothing to do with it. She will now compete at the state level." Which is something Christian knows about. She was the system's representative 12 years ago. "To make it there is quite a honor," Christian said. "You look at yourself and say 'I'm not good enough. There has to

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Photos by Mary Frances Flanders

(Above): Officials break ground on the new bridge. (Below): Grantham speaks on the GDOT project.

Ground broken on new bridge

By MARY FRANCES FLANDERS
Freezing temperatures didn't stop cars from lining the Blackshear Ferry boat landing to witness the groundbreaking for the Oconee River Bridge Project, which is expected to be completed September 2016. Willie Paulk welcomed all and thanked everyone for coming despite the weather. Rev. Thad Haygood opened the ceremony with a prayer, thankful for the advancement in the community, the opportunity to build bridges with one another and the privilege of building a new bridge that will enhance our community. Don Grantham, chairman of the State Board of Transportation and governing official for the Georgia Department of Transportation, recognized his wife, Carol, for being with him, as she is a Dublin native. As well, he recognized DOT mem-



bers for all of their dedication and hard work. "I'm extremely proud to be here with you on this groundbreaking," smiled Grantham. State Representative Matt Hatchett was all smiles speaking of this project

that has been 24 years in the making. "I want to take a minute to thank four individuals that gave their property for this project to happen: Roger Hatcher, Jerry Gay, Glen Shiver and last but not least, Claude Graham who donated over 38 acres for this to happen," said Hatchett. State Representative Bubba Epps was thankful to all involved in making this project a reality, not only the governor and the Department of Transportation for all they have done but also the citizens of Dublin. "Those of you assembled here are, in large part, responsible for this being able to take place, because you had the courage and dedication to vote for an issue that wasn't necessarily popular statewide," stated Epps.

See BRIDGE page 3a

Dublin Council appoints officials at first meeting

By JAMIE MORTON
At the Thursday, Jan. 9, 2015 Dublin City Council meeting, city council members honored the employee of the quarter and the employee of the year. Charlie Evans was named the City of Dublin employee of the year. Evans works as a water treatment operator. "I feel great. It's a wonderful feeling. I enjoy my coworkers. I've been employed with the city for 26 years and I've enjoyed every one of them. And I love what I'm doing," Evans said. Jimmy Thomas, a City of Dublin sanitation employee was honored with the employee of the quarter. "I feel good about it," Thomas said. "I enjoy working for the city. I get along good with everybody. I've been with the city for 17 years." Both men were honored with a plaque and a check from the city. Also at the meeting, motions were made to re-appoint municipal court judge Harold D. McLendon and City Attorney Lance Jones. Both motions passed unanimously and both McLendon and Jones were sworn in by Superior Court Judge H. Gibbs Flanders, Jr. Council also re-elected Bill Brown as Mayor Pro Tem; Gerald Smith as Chairman of the Council; and The Courier Herald as the official gazette of city council. Council also approved a grant of \$80,694.00 from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. The grant will

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Police concerned with realistic BB guns

By PAYTON TOWNS III
All across the country, it seems law enforcement officers are coming across young people pulling out realistic toy guns or BB guns. The results have been deadly. Last November in Cleveland, Tamir Rice was carrying an airsoft gun that shot plastic pellets. Surveillance video released by the police showed Rice being shot after officers told him to put his hands up. He pulled the pellet gun and was shot. "People need to talk with their kids about the dangers of having a realistic air pistol that looks like a firearm," said Dublin Police Department Investigator Stacey Sapp. "I hope they never pull them on someone. It could be a very sad day if they do." In a recent arrest a few weeks ago, officers recovered two BB guns that looked like hand guns. DPD Major Tim Chatman has seen the air pistol guns, and agrees that they look too much like real hand-



Photo by Payton Towns III

These BB guns were recently recovered by officers in the city.

guns. "We have had some situations where people are arrested with a BB gun that looks exactly like a real 0.45 or 9 mm hand gun," Chatman said. "That's a dangerous recipe when you have someone who is actively breaking the law and carrying a BB gun or a replica at the same time." Law enforcement officers who approach a person with a BB gun have to make a quick decision. "If that person, God forbid, decides to pull (their BB gun), it puts that officer in a bad situation to protect their life or someone else's life," Chatman said. "One of the last things we want is a mother or father to grieve the loss of an officer or the other person. My heart

goes out to everybody involved because nobody wants to see or hear about somebody losing their life, especially the police and also those on the other side who choose to break the law." Toy guns have something orange on the muzzle. The thing is, more and more of today's real guns come in all sorts of colors. "You can buy a full operating hand gun that is pink," Chatman said. "They have multi color now and it's hard to distinguish the difference between the two. The officer has to use professionalism decision making in the process. It's just a recipe for disaster when you bring a replica, BB gun or anything to a situation like that." In the end, education is an important key to everyone being safe. "There has to be a check and balance. There's nothing against the law to have a BB gun," Chatman said. "When I was young I had a BB gun but

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Sorrow

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going to change things around and get things going in the right direction."

Athletic Director Joel Watson was glad to have Sorrow back.

"He's a proven leader," Watson said. "His experience coaching football players and teaching kids in the classroom will help mold the students at East Laurens High School."

Morris said they wanted to hire the best football coach available after Gary Morton resigned from that position in November.

"I think we've done that," Morris said. "(Sorrow) knows our students and our community. You can see by the turnout tonight that he is well respected and we are excited about that. He's ready and we are ready to get started."

Sorrow said coming back to East Laurens is like getting back on a bicycle.

"I just got to get on and start peddling again," he said. "There are familiar people around here and there are still good people here. I'm ready to get back to work."

Sorrow, who said he likes to run an offense that is based out of the wishbone, had retired in 2012 and is living in Perry. He plans to rent a house in East Dublin. He knows how things have been at East Laurens, with only two winning records and three trips to the playoffs. Each one of those ended in the first round.

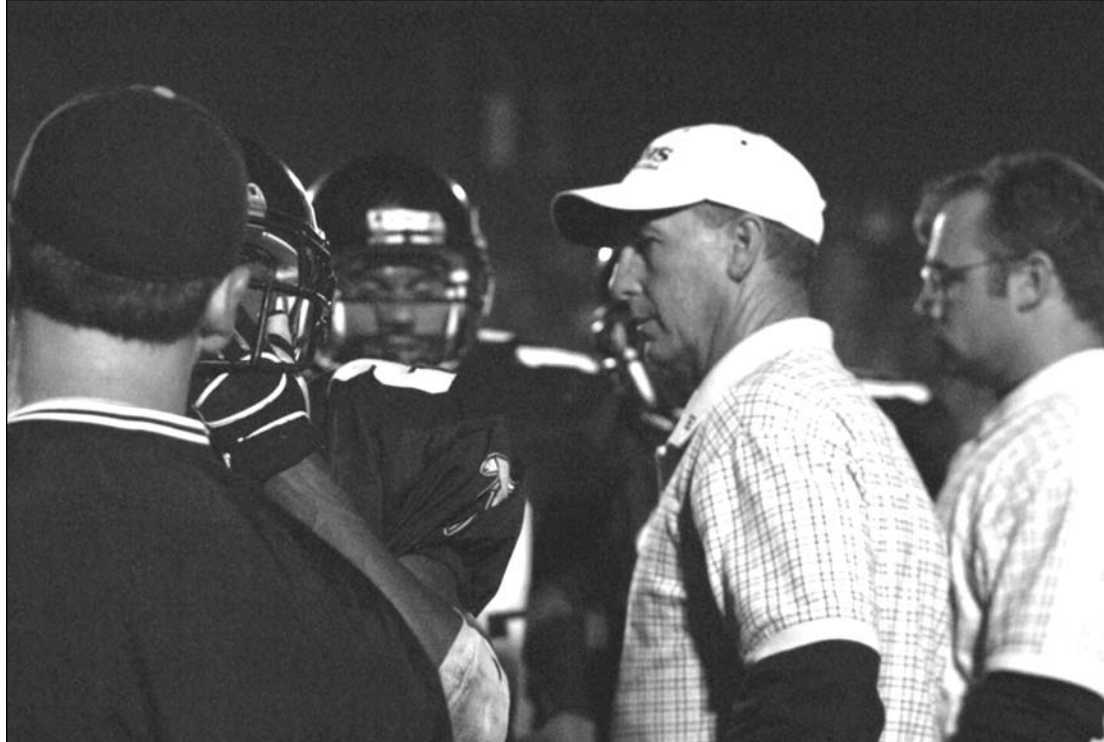
"It's going to be a challenge," Sorrow said. "We are going to have to get competitive in practice first of all. Then we are going to try to be competitive in our non-region games and then try to be competitive in our region games. You've got to take it step by step. Hopefully it won't take long and we'll get it going again. I'm just going to be here to drive the train. The football players are going to be the engine that moves it. We're going to get them on the page and get them committed."

The Falcons haven't been to the second round of the state playoffs since they went 9-3 in 2000. A team that was led by Sorrow.

Sorrow looked at the schedule and said he wants to get teams like Johnson County back on the schedule.

"That's a good rivalry game and it's a good gate for the school to make some money," he said. "We can play some schools that are near here."

Sorrow was excited about the crowd who packed the



File photo

Sorrow is the winningest coach in East Laurens history.

board office. "I was glad to see them here for me," he said. "I've got some friends that I've known since I left here. I was really happy when I found out how supportive they were about bringing me back. It makes me feel good that they have enough confidence in me to let me take this route again."

New board member Kathy Sweat was glad to have Sorrow back on the sidelines for the Falcons.

"I'm very excited about Buddy coming back," Sweat said. "He's an extremely hard worker and he's very, very knowledgeable about football. I think he'll have good discipline. We had winning seasons when he was here. We'd love to see him bring that back. Our children and coaches deserve it."

Superintendent Rob Johnson got to meet Sorrow for the first time Thursday night.

"He has a tremendous amount of support in this community as evidence tonight by the board but a standing room only board room," Johnson said. "I look forward to working with him for many years."

In other meeting news: - Kenny Payne was elected as the new chairman for the board. Britt Parker was voted in as the vice-chair.

"I appreciate that the board members have given me the opportunity to lead the board right now," Payne said.

- The board scheduled a called meeting to talk about two facility plans at 6 p.m. on Jan. 22.

"We are down to two plans," Payne said. "We want to be able to vote on one in the first meeting in February. Then it will be presented to the state for them to make recommendations."

Parker and new board member Brenda Hilton have both come up with plans for the board to look at.

"I just want to make sure that everyone realizes that we are doing this because the state requires it and we are not planning to start building any time soon," Hilton said. "A SPLOST has to be passed to be financially stable and we have to get the capital overlay money built up so that we don't have to borrow money."

- The board voted to do away with the usual work sessions that used to be held the Monday before the meeting on Thursday.

"The board approached me about this," Johnson said. "We can call a work session when we need them. This will help us save money."

According to Dr. Bill Rowe, this will help the board save \$6,000. The meetings will be held at 6 p.m. on Feb. 12, March 12, April 16, May 14, June 9, July 16, Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12 and Dec. 10.

- WLMS won the Clean School of the Month Award.

- Associate Superintendent Dr. Jameson Travick announced the Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH) Program scholarship nominees. Michaela Blackshear and Khalil Davis were named from East Laurens

Middle School and Trent Carr and Alexandria Stephens was named from West Laurens Middle School.

"These students will have, when they finish, a scholarship that will help them to attend universities in Georgia," Johnson said. "This is one of the most exciting things that has come around. In the long run, as this program expands, we're going to need public support to help pay for this. At this time we are getting some assistance from the Governor's Office and the State. These were amazing students who were nominated tonight. We hope to expand the program at a later time."

Travick also presented a commendation from Georgia Governor Nathan Deal for joining and promoting the REACH program.

- The board approved the following resignations: Makeisha Melton (Para Pro at East Laurens Primary School), Vincent Jones (custodian and bus driver at East Laurens Elementary School) and Melinda Downard (LR worker at West Laurens Middle School).

- The board approved Wanda Leroy, ESOL teacher at Southwest Laurens Elementary School, retirement on May 27.

- The board approved Kelli McCary as a Pre-K Para Pro at ELP and Kenneth Griffin as a custodian at WLMS.

- The board approved the transfer of Sonya Ward from Northwest Laurens Elementary School to SWL as a Special Education Para Pro.

Teacher



Photo by Payton Towns III

From left: Lynne Towson, Christina Bazemore, Christina Crawford, Leslie M. Holmes, Shannon F. Spires and Kathy H. Christian.

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be a lot better than me out there.' It'll be interesting. I was Teacher of the Year for the system 12 years ago and had an opportunity to go to the banquet at the time. The top 10 or 12 teachers of the state were there. It was interesting."

Christian has 34 years of teaching experience, in six different school systems with the last 18 coming at Dublin City Schools. She has taught in every grade from kindergarten through high school.

Before the announcement was made, a video was shown which showed all of the teachers in their classrooms, along with comments from their students and principals.

Christian said it was good to see what they had to say.

"I have great kids," she said. "I have really good students. And Mr. Hunter's words were so kind. Mr. Hunter is awesome. If you need anything, he's supportive and it's good to have principals like that."

Dr. Fred Williams, associate superintendent, welcomed everyone to the event.

"We are celebrating the wonderful teachers and staff at Dublin City Schools," Williams said.

Demarcus Stuckey, student at Saxon Elementary, said the Pledge of Allegiance, Jakerah Stephens, student at Dublin Middle School, sang the National Anthem, Amaya Rozier, student at Hillcrest Elementary School, read a poem, Lizzianna Sinkfield, student at Susie Dasher, sang "I Believe I Can Fly" and Jaswain Bell, student at Moore Street, said the prayer

before lunch.

After lunch, Edwards got the program going.

"Dublin City Schools has a rich heritage," she said. "We are very fortunate to have good teachers and support staff to make Dublin City Schools what they are. Today we are fortunate to have teachers who make it good for students. ... You join the ranks of numerous professionals who have had this honor put on them."

Each teacher recognized was given a plaque and a check, which they were able to g thanks from businesses through donations.

DCS chairman Rev. Richard Sheffield thanked the teachers for their accomplishments.

"We need teachers," Sheffield said. "... We gather to celebrate Dublin's finest. You see them here. You are the greatest of them all. Teaching is a calling. You've been prompted by God to do what you do."

DCS Superintendent Dr. Chuck Ledbetter told the teachers he was proud of the work they've done for the school system.

"The teachers here are doing great," Ledbetter said. "In the last year, we've had 11 school systems come in to see what we are doing. We just had a guy from Boise, Idaho, come in to write about this school system to show others how it can be done in other small towns."

"You are the best of the best," he added. "You are the Teachers of the Year in one of the best school systems around."

Bridge

Continued from 1a

County Commissioners Buddy Adams and Tommy Daniel were also part of the guest speakers at this event, decades in the making.

Adams thanked everyone for coming on the cold day, thanked the four who donated

land personally, as well as a thanks from the commissioners for helping to make the project come alive.

"This project is going to make Laurens County a lot better place to live, work and to bring industry in," Adams said.

The bridge will open up

Death

Continued from 1a

between 30 and 35."

Laurens County Deputy Coroner Nathan Stanley said the body will be sent to the Georgia State Crime Lab for identification purposes and

cause of death. Stanley pronounced the man dead at 9:05 a.m. Thursday.

Harrell said they want to identify the man so that the family can have some closure.

"At this time, we're not looking into if there is (foul play),"

Guns

Continued from 1a

my mother wouldn't let me use it until she was present or an adult taught me how to use it. In fact, I had to keep it in her room so that it would be under lock and key and monitored. There was some responsibility that came with it. We have to have that.

We don't want anyone to be injured. That goes for police officers and the public."

There have been a lot of

tragic incidents between law enforcement officers and people. Chatman knows that.

"Our aim is to really expand and make it safer for the citizens of Dublin, Ga.," Chatman said. "We want to educate and do some type of awareness of all things to make it safe. Certainly we want to protect our officers and citizens in the City of Dublin. We don't want to harm anyone. Sometimes you have those incidents where the officers have to use some type

parts of Laurens, Johnson and Washington counties and it will make travel for EMS easier. In addition, there is a plan in place to level and resurface Claxton Dairy Road to help with the project as well.

"This is a great day for Laurens County," smiled Daniel.

Harrell said. "They'll go to the crime lab to have an autopsy done. That way it will be determined."

If anyone has information, they can call (478) 272-1522 and ask for someone in the Investigation Division.

of force to complete an arrest.

"Police officers have families," he added. "If people had a son or daughter wearing a badge, they would want them to be safe and come home safely. When the shoe is on the other foot, it's totally different. I can't speak for any other agency, but from what I know from this agency, our goal is to treat everybody fair. We want to be that community police department that the citizens want to see. That is our desire."

Council

Continued from 1a

completely fund the 2015 Teen Court Program. The Dublin Teen Court Program was the first in the State of Georgia and helps reshape the lives of teens that have offended. The grant will allow for the program to become reactive without a cost to the City of Dublin.

This was the first meeting of 2015 for the Dublin City Council, and keeping with a tradition that has been active for several years, Mayor Phil Best and Chairman Gerald Smith's Minister Thad Haygood gave a dedication from Luke chapter 10. Haygood spoke on these points: remember who you serve, remember to have fun and to remember to stay open to the Spirit of the Lord.

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