

Daily Mountain Eagle

MARCH 22, 2016

JASPER, ALABAMA

— TUESDAY —

WWW.MOUNTAINEAGLE.COM

75 CENTS

BRIEFS



Spring carnival opens today at Jaycees Fairgrounds

The Walker County Annual Spring Carnival will begin today and run through Saturday at the Jasper Jaycee Fairgrounds.

Gates open today through Friday at 5 p.m. and Saturday at 3 p.m.

In addition to tjr rides, a petting zoo will be open at the carnival.

DEATHS

- Flavel Urwane Westbrook, 52, Nauvoo
- John William Sudduth, 72, Double Springs
- Patricia Ann Cunningham, 59, Sumiton
- Kenneth Hugh Key, 78, Houston
- Bobby James "Bob" Dunn, 53, Parrish
- John Allen Wilson, 50, Jasper
- Lola Cadwell Martin, 98, Oakman
- Chiquita K. Henderson, 54, Jasper
- Brenda D. Leavins, 59, Jasper
- Jacob Cody Sanders, 24, Florence
- Jeremiah Michael Sanders, 29, Killen
- Paul H. Birmingham Sr., 91, Sipsy

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High 72 Low 45

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One section, 14 pages



Check out our Facebook page at

Jasper Daily Mountain Eagle

OUR FACEBOOK QUESTION OF THE WEEK

An Alabama House committee approved a bill that would raise the gas tax by six cents in order to fund road construction. What are your feelings on the possibility of this happening?



ALABAMA LEGISLATURE

Governor says he will veto budget over Medicaid funding



Gov. Robert Bentley

Bentley highlights need for faster Internet in rural Alabama / A5

MONTGOMERY (AP) — Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley said Monday that he will veto a general fund budget lawmakers are expected to approve this week over what he called an "unacceptable" appropriation for Medicaid.

The Alabama Senate on Tuesday is expected to give final approval to a budget that is \$85 million short of the amount Bentley says is needed to adequately fund the state's Medicaid program.

"Legislators just don't understand it, and I don't think they want to," Bentley said during a press conference in Monroeville to highlight problems with rural broadband and health care access.

Bentley, a dermatologist who maintains his medical license, called the disconnect between medical providers and legislators "frustrating" and said lawmakers misunderstand the program.

"They (legislators) think there's a lot of fraud and abuse — I hear that all the

See LEGISLATURE, A5

INSIDE



Trump demands GOP embrace him as Democrats unleash new attacks

WASHINGTON (AP) — A front-runner under attack from all sides, Republican Donald Trump demanded that his party's skeptical establishment embrace the inevitability of his presidential nomination as he stormed into Washington on Monday. / A4

WALKER COUNTY COMMISSION

Commission hears new proposal for expansion of E-911 facility

By JENNIFER COHRON
Daily Mountain Eagle

Members of the Walker County Commission voted Monday to collaborate with the Walker County E-911 board on a project that has the potential to benefit the local emergency call center, as well as the county's Emergency Management Agency.

E-911 director Roger Wilson said the board wants to expand its facility, located at the old Walker County Airport, due to a lack of storage space and an anticipated increase in activity when Interstate 22 is completely open.

As the creating authority of E-911, the county commission is required to sign off on the construction.

Wilson said when he broached the subject with the current administration, he was asked if the project could also include additional space for Walker County EMA.

See COMMISSION, A5

HOLY WEEK SERVICES BEGIN IN JASPER



Daily Mountain Eagle - Jennifer Cochran

Bob Smith of Jasper First Baptist Church leads the hymn "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood" at the opening Holy Week service held at First United Methodist Church on Monday. Services will continue each day this week at 12:05 p.m., with a free lunch to follow. Music leaders and ministers from a variety of local denominations will be conducting the services, which are hosted each year by the Greater Jasper Ministerial Association.

A SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

The Secret Pantry

Newly formed initiative meeting needs of area students

By NICOLE SMITH
Daily Mountain Eagle

A newly formed initiative, The Secret Pantry, in ensuring students in county and city schools will have access to items that meet their basic needs.

Members of Leadership Walker County's 2016 red group are spearheading the effort to help poverty stricken youth in the county and city school districts. Members include Tina Aaron, a homeless education consultant for the Walker County Board of Education, T.R. Simmons Principal Jonathan Allen, Public Information Coordinator for the City of Jasper Tana Collins, Hayley Manasco of Ridgeview Health Services, Wendy Wood of Bevill State Community College, Robert Rigsby and David Mize.

"We've got all these different people that are networked out in Walker County, and we're just all bringing them together for one purpose," Allen said. "The beautiful thing is this is just one project. There's several other projects that will be going on through Leadership Walker County that will benefit our community."



Photo Special to the Eagle

Tina Aaron, far left, and Lupton Jr. High School students and faculty recently filled their school's Secret Pantry.

The Secret Pantry is being implemented in Walker County's 16 schools and all city of Jasper schools. Since Aaron presented the idea to her Leadership Walker County group in January, pantries have been stocked in five county schools — Curry High,

Lupton Jr. High, Cordova High, Oakman Elementary/Middle and Oakman High — and T.R. Simmons Elementary.

Each pantry is being stocked with basic personal hygiene items

See PANTRY, A5

Jury awards \$490K in wreck that injured 2

Supreme Court denies Alabama death penalty appeal / A5

Special to the Eagle

Last week, a Walker County jury awarded two Walker County residents \$490,000 in a lawsuit alleging negligence, wantonness and negligent and wanton entrustment of a motor vehicle.

The jury found that Thomas McDonald was entitled to \$250,000 and Karen Nicholson was awarded \$240,000. The jury verdict consisted of both compensatory and punitive damages for injuries sustained in a wreck that occurred when they were struck from behind at a high rate of speed while on Highway 69 South

See WRECK, A5



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TODAY'S WEATHER

Local 5-Day Forecast				
Tue 3/22	Wed 3/23	Thu 3/24	Fri 3/25	Sat 3/26
72/46	73/57	69/39	69/41	76/51
A mainly sunny sky. High 72F. Winds SSW at 10 to 15 mph.	More clouds than sun. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the upper 50s.	T-storms. Potential for severe t-storms. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the upper 30s.	Sunshine. Highs in the upper 60s and lows in the low 40s.	Afternoon showers. Highs in the mid 70s and lows in the low 50s.
Sunrise: 6:49 AM Sunset: 7:02 PM	Sunrise: 6:48 AM Sunset: 7:03 PM	Sunrise: 6:47 AM Sunset: 7:04 PM	Sunrise: 6:45 AM Sunset: 7:05 PM	Sunrise: 6:44 AM Sunset: 7:05 PM

Alabama at a Glance



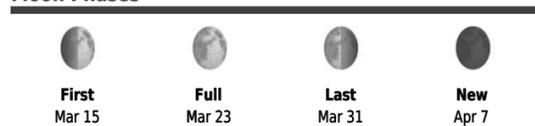
Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Alexander City	55	32	Sunny	Macon	60	37	Sunny
Andalusia	61	38	Sunny	Meridian	58	34	Sunny
Anniston	56	33	Sunny	Mobile	59	43	Sunny
Atlanta	56	35	Sunny	Montgomery	59	36	Sunny
Birmingham	57	36	Sunny	Nashville	54	37	Cloudy
Chattanooga	56	33	Cloudy	Opeika	57	38	Sunny
Columbus	60	38	Sunny	Ozark	59	35	Sunny
Cullman	54	35	Sunny	Panama City	62	42	Sunny
Decatur	52	35	Sunny	Pensacola	60	45	Sunny
Dothan	59	37	Sunny	Scottsboro	53	34	Sunny
Florence	55	35	Sunny	Selma	59	35	Sunny
Gadsden	56	31	Sunny	Thomasville	60	36	Sunny
Huntsville	54	36	Sunny	Troy	58	34	Sunny
Jackson	57	39	Sunny	Tupelo	57	36	Sunny
Jacksonville	64	47	Sunny	Tuscaloosa	57	34	Sunny

National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	56	35	Sunny	Miami	68	57	Cloudy
Boston	41	30	Cloudy	Minneapolis	48	34	Cloudy
Chicago	46	42	M Cloudy	New York	50	35	Sunny
Dallas	65	47	Sunny	Phoenix	92	62	Cloudy
Denver	72	42	P Cloudy	San Francisco	61	51	Few Showers
Houston	66	48	Sunny	Seattle	54	43	Few Showers
Los Angeles	67	52	Cloudy	Saint Louis	56	44	Sunny

Moon Phases



UV Index

Tue 3/22	Wed 3/23	Thu 3/24	Fri 3/25	Sat 3/26
7	7	3	7	8
High	High	Moderate	High	Very High

The UV Index is measured on a 0 - 11 number scale, with a higher UV Index showing the need for greater skin protection.

0 11

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DEATHS & FUNERALS

Flavel Urwane Westbrook

Flavel Urwane Westbrook, 52, of Nauvoo, passed away Friday, March 18, 2016, at Princeton Baptist Medical Center in Birmingham.

Visitation for family and friends will be held today, March 22, 2016, from 1 until 2 p.m. at Kilgore-Green Funeral Home in Jasper. A memorial service will be held today, March 22, 2016, at 2 p.m. in the Kilgore-Green Chapel. J.D. Dickerson will officiate.

Westbrook was preceded in death by his father, Urbane Westbrook; brother, Danny Westbrook; grandmothers, Mary Morrow and Orlena Westbrook; grandfathers, Flavel Westbrook and Bill Jean; and nephew, John Everette.

He is survived by his mother, Ann Westbrook; wife, Angela Westbrook; children, Autumn Westbrook, Alex Westbrook, Tristan Westbrook, Samantha Wilson and Richard Hudson; brother, Billy Westbrook (Melissa); sister, Elizabeth Everette; nieces, Madison Westbrook and Marianne Westbrook; and a host of aunts, uncles and cousins.

You may sign the online register at www.kilgoregreen-funeralhome.com.

Kilgore-Green Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-9503

John William Sudduth

John William Sudduth, 72, of Double Springs, entered into rest on Saturday, March 19, 2016, at his home surrounded by his loving family.

Sudduth was born on Oct. 30, 1943. John was a member of Double Springs First Baptist Church for 44 years, where he was a deacon and a Sunday School teacher. He was a 1961 graduate of Addison High School. He received his bachelor's degree from Auburn University and a master's degree from Alabama A&M in 1972. John was an Ag teacher for five years at Spring Garden High School and an Ag teacher for Winston County High School for 29 years. He was a member of the following organizations: Northwest Alabama Livestock Auction Board of Directors, Traders and Farmers Bank Advisory Board, Winston County Farmers Federation Board, Winston County Natural Resources Council, Winston County Republican Party Vice-Chairman, State Alabama Treasure Forest Committee, Grass Roots Advisory Council through the Winston County Cooperative Extension Office, Winston County Equalization Board, Winston County Soil and Water Conservation District Board and Winston County High School FFA Advisory Committee. During his lifetime, John received numerous honors and awards including WCHS Honorary Chapter FFA Degree, Alabama FFA Honorary State Farmer, Double Springs Panorama Study Club Outstanding Service Award, W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Award, Ronald Reagan Award from Winston County Republicans and Designated Treasure Forest Farm. He enjoyed raising cattle, timber and spending time with family and friends.

Visitation will be today, March 22, 2016, from 1 until 2 p.m. at Double Springs First Baptist Church in Double Springs. Funeral services will be today, March 22, 2016, at 2 p.m. at Double Springs First Baptist Church. Kenny Sudduth, Dr. Lance Hogan, James Hood, and Danny Page will officiate. Burial will follow in Double Springs Memorial Cemetery.

Sudduth is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Mary Lansford Sudduth; son, John (Amy) Sudduth Jr.; daughters, Sanda (Stan) Posey and Carla (Brett) McEwen; brothers-in-law, Ray Edwards and Tom Jenkins. He was "Granddaddy" to seven grandchildren, Matthew May, Will May, Anna Posey, Jonathan Sudduth, David Sudduth, Daniel Sudduth and Laurel McEwen.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Johnnie and Arie Walker Sudduth of Addison; and sisters, Pernie Jenkins, Fay Edwards, Willene Taylor and her husband, Kenneth, and Winell Cole and her husband, Bob.

The family would like to thank special friends Lenneth Hill, Danny King, Glenn Boone, Winston County Home Health - Kathy and Karen, Northwest Alabama Hospice - Jessica, Cassie, Jennifer, and Cheryl; and Dr. Stacy Horsley, Marcia, Luann and staff.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Gideon's International, Southern Baptist Convention - Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or the American Cancer Society.

Friends may sign guest book at www.nicholsfuneral-homes.com.

Nichols Funeral Home, Haleyville; 205-486-2204

Patricia Ann Cunningham

Patricia Ann Cunningham, 59, of Sumiton, passed away Sunday, March 20, 2016, at her daughter's residence. There are no services scheduled at this time.

Cunningham was preceded in death by her grandson, Jeremy Borden; and brothers, Jackie Mills, Danny Mills, and David Mills.

She is survived by her daughters, Patricia Michelle "Micki" Knight Bridges and her husband, Dayron, Shea Catherine Knight and Tina Lee Knight Cork and her husband, Leonard; grandchildren, Madison Bridges, Elyssa Cork, Ryan Williams, Leland Williams and Blake Williams; sister, Sara White; and a host of other relatives and friends.

You may sign an online register or express private condolences to the family at BellSumiton.com.

Bell Funeral Home, Sumiton; 205-648-6611

Lola Cadwell Martin

Lola Cadwell Martin, 98, of Oakman, passed away Monday, March 21, 2016, at her residence.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by Collins-Burke Funeral Home.

Collins-Burke Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-5571

Chiquita K. Henderson

Chiquita K. Henderson, 54, of Jasper, passed away Sunday, March 20, 2016, at Walker Baptist Medical Center.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by Collins-Burke Funeral Home.

Collins-Burke Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-5571

Kenneth Hugh Key

Kenneth Hugh Key, 78, of Houston, entered into rest on Saturday, March 19, 2016, at Princeton Baptist Medical Center.

Key was born on March 3, 1938, in Jasper. He was a member of Houston Congregational Church.

Visitation was held Monday, March 21, 2016, from 2 until 4 p.m. at Nichols Funeral Home in Double Springs, where services were held at 4 p.m. Homer Jones and Bobby Smith officiated. Burial was at Poplar Springs Cemetery.

Key is survived by his wife of 59 1/2 years, Vera Mae Key; son, Ralph Key; daughter, Lilly Key; brother, Rocky (Darlene) Key; sister, Glenda Morris; and special friend, Ricky Moody. He was "Poppa" to five grandchildren, Kenny Key (Kayla Grace), Shian Key, Ralph Woods, Chris Spain and Charity Watts; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Key was preceded in death by his parents, Charlie and Staller Key; sons, Kenneth Ray, Donnie Ray, Billy Joe and Charles Ray Key; daughter, Rebecca Key; and grandson, Terry Lynn Raliff.

Friends may sign guest book at www.nicholsfuneral-homes.com.

Nichols Funeral Home, Haleyville; 205-486-2204

Bobby James 'Bob' Dunn

Bobby James "Bob" Dunn, 53, of Parrish, passed away Sunday, March 20, 2016, at his residence.

Visitation for family and friends was held Monday, March 21, 2016, in the parlor at Collins-Burke Funeral Home in Jasper. Funeral services were held Monday, March 21, 2016, at noon in the Collins-Burke Chapel. Levi Sides officiated. Burial was at Odom Memorial Cemetery in Parrish.

Dunn was preceded in death by his brother, Billy A. Dunn; grandfather, Amon Dunn; grandmother, Emma Dunn; grandfather, Ocie Parker; and grandmother, Gene Parker.

He is survived by his wife, Rebamae Scott Dunn of Parrish; daughter, Seon Softley; son, Dakota James Dunn; mother, Nelline Parker Dunn; father, Billy J. Dunn; sisters, Wanda DeFoor and Teresa Dunn; two grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews and friends.

Pallbearers were Barry Pate, Kenny Standfield, Brent DeFoor, Corey DeFoor, Kevin Pringle, Jake Dunn, Dalton Pringle and Mark DeFoor.

Collins-Burke Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-5571

John Allen Wilson

John Allen Wilson, 50, of Jasper, passed away Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at his residence.

A private graveside service and burial was held Sunday, March 20, 2016, at Mt. Zion Cemetery on Fall City Road in Jasper.

Wilson was preceded in death by his father, Johnny Lee Wilson; and grandparents, Henry and Elma Wilson and James and Dorothy Burgett.

He is survived by his wife, Kimberly Wilson; children, Amber Potoka (Thomas), Jake Wilson (Ashley) and Caleb Wilson (Rena); grandchild, Ben Potoka; mother and step-father, Gloria Jean and Jerry Estes; siblings, Missy Valentine (Michael), Mandy Lynn (Scotty), and Linda Boots (Nick); nieces and nephews, Briana Lynn, Sara Beth Lynn, Gage Lynn, Jared Meherg, Jace Valentine, Kaylee Wakefield and Gunnar Wakefield; great-nephew, Barrett Smith; and a host of family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests any memories or condolences you would like to share be sent to Gloria Estes, 3801 N. Airport Road, Jasper, AL 35504.

You may sign the online register at www.kilgoregreen-funeralhome.com.

Kilgore-Green Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-9503

Brenda D. Leavins

Brenda D. Leavins, 59, of Jasper, passed away Saturday, March 19, 2016, at Walker Baptist Medical Center.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by Collins-Burke Funeral Home.

Collins-Burke Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-5571

Jacob Cody Sanders

Jacob Cody Sanders, 24, of Florence, formerly of Cordova.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by Collins-Burke Funeral Home.

Collins-Burke Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-5571

Jeremiah Michael Sanders

Jeremiah Michael Sanders, 29, of Killen, formerly of Cordova.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by Collins-Burke Funeral Home.

Collins-Burke Funeral Home, Jasper; 205-384-5571

Paul H. Birmingham Sr.

Paul H. Birmingham Sr., 91, of Sipsey, passed away Sunday, March 20, 2016, at his daughter's residence in Jasper.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by Bell Funeral Home in Sumiton.

Bell Funeral Home, Sumiton; 205-648-6611

Police: Mall Easter bunny, father scuffle after child slips

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (AP) — The Easter bunny has been involved in a mall brawl.

A mall Easter bunny and a father got into a scuffle Sunday after the man's child slipped from a chair while getting her photo taken, Jersey City police said Monday.

A video posted on Twitter on Sunday evening shows a chaotic scene at the Newport Centre in Jersey City, New Jersey, near an area set up to take photos with the Easter bunny.

City spokeswoman Jennifer Morrill says the father of the 1-year-old verbally and physically attacked the 22-year-old who was playing the role of Easter bunny after the girl slipped.

Morrill says both men were taken to a hospital with minor injuries.

No charges have been filed as police continue investigating.

The video shows a man wearing the body suit of the bunny costume fighting and then being separated by security. A few seconds later, the man in the bunny costume appeared again, throws off his white bunny gloves and exchanges more punches.

The mall's management said in an email to The Associated Press it would have a comment later Monday.

VOLUME 54 NUMBER 282

Daily Mountain Eagle

- Main Office -
1301 E. Viking Drive
Jasper, AL 35501
Phone (205) 221-2840



Business Hours: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday-Friday
Closed Saturday & Sunday

Daily Mountain Eagle ISSN 0893-0759 Copyright © 2015 by the Daily Mountain Eagle is published every morning Tuesday-Sunday by Jasper Daily Mountain Eagle, a division of Cleveland Newspapers, Inc., 1301 Viking Drive, Jasper, AL 35501, Tuesday-Sunday (Daily except Christmas). Business and Editorial Offices: 1301 Viking Drive, Jasper, AL 35501, Accounting and Circulation Offices: Daily Mountain Eagle, 1301 Viking Drive, Jasper, AL 35501. Call (205) 221-2884 to subscribe. Application to mail at Periodicals postage prices is pending at Jasper, AL, and additional mailing offices (if applicable).

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Daily Mountain Eagle, PO Box 1469, Jasper, AL 35502-1469 (USPS 144-040).

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Fire leads to Caesars Palace hotel evacuation on Vegas Strip

LAS VEGAS (AP) — An escalator fire sent smoke billowing into parts of Las Vegas' glitzy Caesars Palace, sending three hotel workers to the hospital with smoke inhalation and leading to an evacuation early Monday, officials said.

The blaze reported about 3:30 a.m. came from the top of the main escalators at the promenade level into the hotel's convention center and spread to curtains, Clark County Fire Department said. Smoke swept from a ballroom area into the casino,

forcing the evacuation of the convention center and nearby areas.

Caesars Entertainment Corp. spokeswoman Jennifer Forkish said 140 hotel rooms on three floors of the Palace Tower were evacuated for about two hours. Some shops nearby and a part of the casino floor also were briefly evacuated.

The three employees were treated and released from a Las Vegas hospital later in the morning, a University Medical Center spokeswoman said.

No patrons or hotel guests were injured.

Robert Merritt, 54, who was on vacation with his family from the Chicago area, said his wife and daughter were staying in a Palace Tower room that was not evacuated.

He said they were startled by the alarms, truck sirens and fire department response but were not given any directions or had any communication from the hotel. They decided to stay in the room to wait for instructions.

Freed after years in solitary, woman faces jailhouse charges

NEW YORK (AP) — Candie Hailey spent more than three years in a New York City jail, most of it in solitary confinement, before a jury decided she was innocent last year and set her free. Now, prosecutors say she still hasn't been punished enough.

The 32-year-old woman went on trial Monday on criminal charges stemming from a confrontation with guards at the city's Rikers Island jail in 2013. Hailey's chaotic Rikers stint and subsequent struggle to return to society was documented earlier this year by The Associated Press. She faces a felony charge of criminal mischief for breaking a chair used to scan inmates' body cavities for contraband.

Hailey, who was diagnosed with borderline character disorder, mood disorder and anti-social personality disorder, could face up to seven years in prison if convicted. She also faces misdemeanor counts of harassment, obstructing government administration and assault. "This all makes me feel like there is no such thing as criminal justice," Hailey said Monday during a break in court action.

The trial, which will be decided by a judge rather than a jury, opened with testimony from a jail captain who testified that she heard, but didn't see, Hailey break a piece off an apparatus called a "BOSS chair" while her cell was being searched. Hailey told the AP the



AP Photo

In this July 2015 file photo, Candie Hailey, center, speaks during a monthly rally calling for the end of solitary confinement in New York. Hailey, who spent more than three years on Rikers Island pre-trial and served much of it in solitary confinement before being acquitted, began standing trial Monday for criminal charges stemming from a jailhouse confrontation with guards.

chair was already broken when she got to the room.

"Who knows who really broke it," she said.

Her lawyer, Patrick Higgins, questioned how she could have damaged the device while her hands were covered with protective mitts designed to keep her from grasping anything.

Of her first 29 months in jail, Hailey served about 27 of them in 23-hour isolation for breaking jailhouse rules and was frequently involved in confrontations and scuffles with guards. She regularly

hurt herself by banging her head against her cell wall or cutting at her wrists with broken light fixtures. And at least eight times during her time in solitary, she was hospitalized for suicide attempts that included swallowing a hair remover product.

Criminal justice experts have said Hailey's defiance was a common reaction to the continued use of solitary confinement for difficult inmates, especially those with mental health problems.

The newly elected Bronx district attorney, Darcel

Clark, has vowed to aggressively pursue charges against inmates who assault jail guards.

In a letter, Hailey's supporters have urged Clark to exercise restraint and dismiss the charges against Hailey in the interest of justice.

"Here is an opportunity to right a wrong," the letter states. "She should not be prosecuted for incidents that occurred during an ordeal that the city now agrees should not be practiced in our jails."

A spokeswoman for Clark declined to com-



AP Photo

This Jan. 28 file photo shows a solitary confinement cell at New York City's Riker's Island jail known all as "the bing."

ment. Hailey was initially jailed in 2012 after a group of women accused her of stabbing a baby during a fistfight. Hailey said she was the victim in the case. The three women robbed her, she said, and the child was injured when one of them knocked over a stroller during the melee. The infant suffered a hair-line skull fracture and needed three stitches. Since her release, Hailey has struggled to find stability, bouncing between shelters, friends' couches and sometimes the subway to sleep. She lost her public housing apartment and is trying to regain custody of her two children.

Hogan-Gawker jury awards \$25M in punitive damages

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — A Florida jury awarded a total of \$25 million in punitive damages Monday in the Hulk Hogan sex tape trial, hitting Gawker Media with a \$15 million judgment and its owner, Nick Denton, with \$10 million.

It also assessed \$100,000 against A.J. Daulerio, the Gawker editor who decided to post the edited sex video and wrote the post that accompanied it.

The punitive damages come on top of a \$115 million the jury imposed Friday after two weeks of trial.

Hogan sued Gawker after it posted a video of him having sex with his then-best friend's wife. Hogan said he didn't know he was being taped.

Hogan's lawyer had asked jurors Monday to add punitive damages to the \$115 million judgment. Gawker's lawyer pleaded that the existing verdict was already "debilitating" for the company. During brief closing arguments Monday, Hogan's lawyer Kenneth Turkel said Gawker Media's gross revenues in 2015 were \$48.7 million and that founder Nick Denton has a total of \$121 million, including a \$3.6 million Manhattan condo. Gawker Media is worth \$83 million, the lawyers said.

Daulerio, the editor, has no assets, the lawyers said. They said Daulerio has



Photo by Scott Keeler/The Tampa Bay Times via AP, Pool

Terry Bollea, known as professional wrestler Hulk Hogan, watches potential jurors at the Pinellas County Courthouse in St. Petersburg, Fla., as jury selection began in his case vs. Gawker Media.

\$27,000 in student loan debt.

Turkel asked the jury to decide on a punitive amount as both punishment to Gawker and a deterrent to other media companies.

Jurors have "an ability to send a message," Turkel said, adding that Gawker acted with reckless disregard when it posted an edited version of the sex video.

Michael Sullivan, representing Gawker, said the New York Media company has "heard your judgment

and we take it very seriously."

The \$115 million judgment "is punishment enough" and "is already far beyond their means."

"The amount of that verdict could already be debilitating for Gawker Media," Sullivan said.

"Your verdict will send a chill down the spine of writers, producers, and publishers," he added.

Despite the jury's decision on punitive damages, it's clear the case isn't over. Gawker has already said it would appeal.

Ex-State Dept. worker gets 5 years in sextortion case

ATLANTA (AP) — A former U.S. State Department employee was sentenced Monday to serve nearly five years in federal prison for accessing young women's online accounts from his computer at the American embassy in London and threatening to expose their sexually explicit photos.

Michael C. Ford, 36, sent "phishing" emails to women, specifically targeting members of sororities and aspiring models. He claimed to be a member of Google's account deletion team, which doesn't exist, to get them to hand over their passwords, prosecutors said.

U.S. District Judge Eleanor Ross sentenced him to four years and nine months in prison followed

by three years on supervised release. Ross granted a request to delay the start of his prison term until after Aug. 1 so that he can be present when his wife is due to give birth to their second child in late July.

Ford told the judge he was feeling small and looked down upon in his personal and professional lives and retreated into an online world where the people he was interacting with didn't seem real, he said. He's truly sorry to his victims, he said.

"What I did was a low and cowardly act by a person who was desperate," he said.

He wanted to get caught so he'd be fired and could leave an unbearable work situation without having to say he was a quitter, he said, adding that he suffered from severe depression and suicidal thoughts. He cried as he addressed the judge.

More than 30 of Ford's friends and family members, including some who'd traveled from England, packed the courtroom to show support. A dozen people, including his wife, addressed the court either in person or by video, describing Ford as a doting husband and loving father to his 2-year-old son.

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Trump demands GOP embrace him as Dems unleash new attacks

WASHINGTON (AP) — A front-runner under attack from all sides, Republican Donald Trump demanded that his party's skeptical establishment embrace the inevitability of his presidential nomination as he stormed into Washington on Monday. Democrats responded by debuting a multi-pronged assault, shifting their rhetoric and resources against the man they expect to face in a contentious and ugly general election campaign.

"If people want to be smart, they should embrace this movement," Trump declared at a news conference, shrugging off passionate resistance to his candidacy from both parties.

"I'm an outsider," Trump said. "They're not used to this."

As he often is, Trump was dogged by protests. A group of rabbis planned to boycott his evening speech to a pro-Israel lobbying group.

Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton touched off her party's fresh anti-Trump campaign during a morning foreign policy speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Conference, questioning the former reality television star's readiness to guide the nation through delicate international entanglements.

"We need steady hands," Clinton told thousands at the pro-Israel gathering. "Not a president who says he's neutral on Monday, pro-Israel on Tuesday and who-knows-what on Wednesday because everything's negotiable."



AP Photo

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign event in the atrium of the Old Post Office Pavilion, soon to be a Trump International Hotel, Monday in Washington.

Israel's security, she proclaimed, "is non-negotiable."

Trump kindled criticism from Republicans as well as Democrats earlier in the year when he pledged to be "sort of a neutral guy" on Israel. While the U.S. is officially neutral in the Middle East conflict, his statement marked a rhetorical departure for U.S. presidential candidates.

Clinton and her allies have readied a three-pronged effort against Trump that targets his character, credentials and controversial statements about women and minorities. That began in earnest on Monday, with labor unions, members of Congress and the presidential candidates all escalating their criticism.

"Let's be honest — @re-

alDonaldTrump is a loser," tweeted Sen. Elizabeth Warren, before launching into eight messages slamming Trump's "failed businesses," "petty bullying" and "flagrant narcissism."

The Massachusetts senator and liberal hero had largely stayed out of the presidential race, avoiding any endorsement of Clinton or her Democratic rival, Bernie Sanders.

The harsh words came the day before Clinton is likely to extend her overwhelming delegate lead over Sanders in primary contests in Arizona, Utah and Idaho. On the Republican side, Trump's remaining rivals — Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and Ohio Gov. John Kasich — are fighting in Arizona and Utah to stop him from building an insurmountable lead as well.

Cruz unveiled an endorsement from Utah Republican Gov. Gary Herbert, who declared in a state Capitol news conference that Cruz has the best chance to stop Trump. Kasich's campaign was promoting an endorsement from the GOP's 2012 nominee, Mitt Romney — although Romney only endorsed Kasich in Ohio. He's backing Cruz in Utah.

Shortly after Clinton's speech, Trump huddled in Washington for a closed-door meeting with about two dozen Republican officials, many of them supporters.

"It's obvious that Mr. Trump will be our nominee," said Rep. Chris Collins, one of two New York congressmen openly backing him. "We need to take the fight to Hillary Clinton."

Added Rep. Scott DesJarlais of Tennessee: "People up here need to take a look at what's happening and probably get used to the idea that it's very likely Donald Trump will be our nominee."

The New York real estate mogul was using a rare day in Washington to woo a Republican establishment that's been reluctant — and in some cases hell bent — on stopping his rise. Beyond mainstream Republicans, Trump also faces resistance from pro-Israel activists over what they consider a mixed record on the Middle East.

He has refused to make the perennial Republican campaign promise to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, drawing boos last year from the Republican Jewish Coalition.

On Monday, Trump also appeared to break with decades of U.S. precedent on aid to Israel.

When a reporter noted that Trump, in his rallies, frequently says that affluent countries that accept U.S. aid — like Germany and Japan — should return the funds. The Republican front-runner was then asked if that should apply to Israel.

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Health insurance gains due to Obama's law, not economy

WASHINGTON (AP) — There's growing evidence that most of the dramatic gain in the number of Americans with health care coverage is due to President Barack Obama's law, and not the gradual recovery of the nation's economy.

That could pose a political risk for Republicans running against "Obamacare" in the GOP primaries as they shift to the general election later this year. While the health care law remains highly unpopular in the party, the prospect of taking away health care coverage from millions of people could trigger a backlash if the eventual GOP nominee's plan to replace it is seen as coming up short.

"There are different phases of the campaign," said GOP pollster Bill McInturff. Playing to like-minded voters in the primaries, Republican front-runner Donald Trump doesn't have to spell how he'd replace Obama's law. "When you get to the general election, the demand for what you are going to do different starts to escalate."

Under "Obamacare," the share of Americans without health insurance has dropped to a historic low of about 9 percent, with room to go even lower. But even as the economy has expanded, major government surveys point to a lackluster rebound for employer-based coverage.

"It's very clear that the Affordable Care Act has done most of the work in decreasing the number of uninsured," said economist Robert Kaestner of the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The numbers vary across different government surveys, but the overall pattern is strikingly similar:

— The Census Bureau's American Community Survey found about 3 million more people gained employer coverage between 2010, when the health law passed, and 2014. But the number of uninsured people dropped by more than 10 million during that same period. The strongest gains appeared to come from Medicaid, which was expanded under Obama's law. The percentage of Americans covered by employers stayed about the same.

— The National Health Interview Survey from the



AP Photo

In this March 2010 file photo, President Obama signs the health care bill in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also found that employer coverage was essentially flat between 2010 and 2014. But the same survey found 12.6 million more people with health insurance during that period.

— The Census Bureau's Current Population Survey

found no statistically significant change in the number of people covered by employers from 2013 to 2014, while the number of uninsured people dropped by nearly 9 million as the law's main coverage expansion got under way during that time.

"This kind of shift in in-

surance I don't think can be explained by the economy," economist Christine Eibner of the RAND Corporation said.

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"It was really interesting. It was something about a local business... let's see... I'm trying to remember..."

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"Yea, he's been swerving around a lot."

"Probably trying to dial his cellphone."

"There you go, he's straightening up now. I bet his wife gave him an ear full!"

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"No, what was it?"

"I can't remember now. Maybe we'll come back this way next year."

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Bentley highlights need for faster Internet in rural Alabama

MONROEVILLE (AP) — Gov. Robert Bentley sat beside a young girl in a classroom at Monroeville Elementary School on Monday, looking at the girl's laptop computer, as the two considered a question about the way pulley systems work.

The girl's screen seemed to lag behind her classmates' for a few seconds, a wheel spinning on screen while the machine attempted to connect to the system. Monroe County Schools' director of technology DevLynne Barnes sighed in frustration.

The disruption was a small, barely noticeable blip in the classroom where about a dozen students engaged in a competitive quiz game. But Bentley visited the school to discuss high-speed Internet coverage in rural schools, and Barnes said

the brief computer delay was a small example of issues educators deal with daily.

Monroeville, in rural Monroe County about halfway between Montgomery and Mobile, doesn't have the fiber cables or towers for high-speed Internet. The spotty, expensive Internet service they do have has exasperated educators trying to ready students for a digitally focused workforce.

"That's where education is going, and we have to keep up with that," Bentley said Monday. "It's so important, not just for education. It's important for economic development that we have high speed Internet."

According to a 2015 Federal Communications Commission report, almost 35 percent of Alabamians don't have high-speed

service. Bentley established the Office of Broadband Development in 2015 to address service in rural areas, and this year he announced plans to use Education Trust Fund money to match a federal grant program called E-rate to expand rural connectivity.

Monroeville Elementary is technologically well-equipped in some areas. Every student in the class Bentley visited was using a Chromebook to answer a multiple-choice quiz, which automatically sent feedback and statistics to the teachers. But physical technology can be rendered useless by an unreliable Internet connection.

"It's like putting in brand new water faucets without a water line," Barnes said. "We've got our infrastructure ready, if we can

just get the network here."

Barnes said educators could easily revert to old school instruction sans technology, but the Internet is no longer just a helpful tool for instruction. Digital fluency is a vital skill children need to be successful in college or in the workforce.

"We wouldn't be preparing these children for their future," Barnes said.

On a day-to-day basis, a spotty connection can lead to frustrated students and a loss of instruction time. Superintendent Greg Shehan said he's watched children become disengaged from their lesson as they wait for webpages to load.

Testing presents more problems, as administrators can currently only test a few students at a time for fear the system will

become overwhelmed and crash.

And in rural, isolated areas like much of Alabama's Black Belt, school systems like Monroe County are often the most technologically advanced institutions for miles.

Many students don't have Internet access of any kind at home. Betty Madison, the principal of Monroe Intermediate, said she allows parents to file applications or apply for job recertification at the school.

Madison's school, even more isolated than Monroeville, barely has the Internet capacity to process student paperwork through a central system.

Madison said she asks teachers and staff to turn their personal devices off when she knows the system needs to be used.

STATE IN BRIEF

North Alabama teacher arrested on sex charges

DECATUR — A high school teacher from north Alabama is charged with having sexual relations with two students.

Decatur police say 42-year-old Carrie Cabri Witt faces two counts of being a school employee engaging in sex with a student less than 19. A school website says the woman teaches history and social studies at Decatur High.

Decatur police say they received information on Thursday that Witt had been involved with a student. Officers say they found a second victim during their investigation.

Police say Witt was arrested Monday at her home. Court records aren't available to show whether Witt has a lawyer who could speak on her behalf. Police say the school system's standard procedure is to place teachers on paid leave following an arrest.

Troopers: Missing Alabama man found dead, car wrecked

TUSCALOOSA — State troopers say a missing Tuscaloosa man has been found dead in a car accident.

Troopers say a wrecked Ford Mustang driven by 24-year-old Zach Koch was found about 9 miles south of Tuscaloosa on Monday. The vehicle ran off a road and down a hill, striking several trees.

Troopers say the single-vehicle wreck happened about 4 a.m. Sunday, and Koch hadn't been heard from since shortly before that time.

His sister, Charlee Koch, tells the *Tuscaloosa News* the University of Alabama graduate was last seen by a friend who gave him a ride home after a night out at a bar.

She says the man was going to meet his girlfriend but texted that he couldn't find her house. He never showed up.

— *The Associated Press*

Wreck — From A1

near Jasper.

The driver of the other vehicle, Thomas Santiago, pleaded guilty to being under the influence of drugs and alcohol at the time of the accident.

Two other defendants, Karolyn Painter and Courtney Painter, were charged with entrusting their truck to the driver who they knew, or reasonably should have known, was a risk to the driving public and that an accident was likely to occur.

"We are very grateful for and humbled by the jury's decision in this case. The jury sent a message that people should never entrust a vehicle to a person that they know is incapable of safely operating a vehicle," said Garve W. Ivey III, an attorney for McDonald and Nicholson. "The jury clearly agreed that a person who negligently entrusts a vehicle to an incompetent driver will be held responsible and will have to pay for injuries that result."

The punitive damages in this case were divided between the defendants, the owners of the vehicle and the defendant driver.

Strange: Court's denial in Alabama death penalty appeal demonstrates state law is constitutional

MONTGOMERY — On Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court denied a petition for certiorari in Clayton Shanklin v. Alabama, in which a convicted murderer argued that Alabama's capital sentencing scheme was unconstitutional under the Court's recent decision in Hurst v. Florida.

This was the first Alabama death penalty appeal to reach the Supreme Court on this issue since Hurst was decided on Jan. 12.

"The Supreme Court's decision to deny this petition establishes, yet again, that Alabama capital sentencing system is constitutional," Attorney General Luther Strange said. "As I have previously explained, the Court's decision about Florida law in Hurst has no bearing on the constitutionality of Alabama's materially different capital sentencing system. It is time for criminal defense lawyers to stop making specious arguments and for public officials to recognize that Alabama's capital sentencing is constitutional under current U.S. Supreme Court precedent."

In the Florida case, the holding is that a jury must find the aggravating factor in order to make someone eligible for the death penalty.

Alabama's system already requires the jury to do just that. The jury must unanimously find an aggravating factor at either the guilt or sentencing phase — such as when the murder was committed during a robbery, a rape or a kidnapping.

Shanklin was convicted of capital murder and attempted murder, which he committed during a home-invasion robbery in 2009 in Cordova. A jury in Walker County Circuit Court recommended Shanklin be sentenced to life without parole. But, under Alabama law, the judge sentenced Shanklin to death because of his long criminal history and the nature and circumstances of his crime.

There were no noted dissents to the Court's single sentence order denying the petition.

Legislature

From A1

time," Bentley said. "It's as bare bones as you can possibly get. It's children, the elderly, pregnant women and the disabled. Able-bodied people don't get it."

The budget poised for final passage would steer \$700 million to Medicaid.

The agency has said it needs \$785 million to maintain current services and continue the lawmaker-approved transition to regional managed care.

Sen. Trip Pittman, chairman of the Senate Finance and Taxation General Fund Committee, said Monday that he will seek Senate concurrence with House changes to the budget Tuesday.

If senators agree, that will send the spending plan on to Bentley.

Pittman said the additional money for Medicaid is just not there without slashing other agencies. The

Montrose Republican said lawmakers will continue the discussions after the budget passage.

"We'll continue the conversation and see who, if anybody, is willing to come to the table on solutions," Pittman said.

Although the governor has threatened a veto, lawmakers, if they choose to, could override his objections with relative ease. A majority vote of the elected members of both chambers could enact the spending plan over Bentley's objections.

Medicaid Commissioner Stephanie Azar has said the agency needs \$785 million to continue the transition to regional managed care, a shift that has been three years in the making. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid approved the state's waiver application last month.

Instead of the traditional fee-for-

service health care delivery model, Alabama plans to contract with 11 regional care organizations to provide care and case management services for patients. The state planned to debut the new system Oct. 1.

The organizations will assign a primary care doctor to each patient and might provide additional services such as transportation to assure that the low-income patients are able to get to appointments. Lawmakers approved the change two years ago in the hopes of tamping down future Medicaid costs.

Monroe County Hospital CEO Jeff Brannon urged doctors to personally contact legislators to express their concerns.

"If they (legislators) let it fall apart, it's going to be a crisis they don't want to take up, in my opinion," Brannon said.

Pantry

From A1

that students may not have access to, along with clothing and food in some pantries.

Aaron said the goal is to have enough products in each pantry to serve 50 students, and she says that while many students in need have been provided for in years past, The Secret Pantry allows a greater number to be served.

"It's not a new concept. Teachers have been doing it forever, bus drivers, lunchroom people. They've all been meeting needs. This is just another way to do it," she said.

Some pantries are being built from scratch, while others are being placed in existing areas within each school. Allen says students from all schools are getting involved in The Secret Pantry project, helping to stock, build and raise money to purchase items.

"Our passion has been that this is student led, not just adults going in and doing something, because we want it to be sustainable," he said.

Aaron says roughly \$10,000 has been raised in six weeks for the project, with area businesses and individuals contributing to the cause. Professional Pharmacy, West Alabama Bank, 69 Quik Stop, Rehab South and Home Depot have all made donations to The Secret Pantry, along with the Alabama Power Service Organization and Desperation Church. Wal-Mart in Sumiton donated



Daily Mountain Eagle - Nicole Smith

T.R. Simmons Elementary SGA students Alexis Guthrie, Allie Bull and Elizabeth Williams work to stock The Secret Pantry at their school.

\$1,500 to the project, and the Walker Area Community Foundation is accepting tax-deductible donations that can be allocated to The Secret Pantry.

A number of drop off locations have been established for the public to make donations. Those include The Secret Place, Curry Beauty Salon, Leaf and Petal, West Alabama Bank, All Four Realty, Boshell Chiropractic, Roberson Hardware (CH), The Hyche Center, Ladybug's Bakery, Ridgeview and Ridgewood locations and any Alabama Power location.

Secret Pantry contributions can also be made to area schools, and product bins can be adopted for \$50 by making a donation to the Walker Area Community Foundation for the pantry project.

"In the last six weeks, it

has just taken off. That's how I know it's divine, because it's been overwhelming. I am picking up loads every day at drop off places around the county," Aaron said.

She said the group will work on stocking pantries with food in the fall, and is currently focused on stocking clothing, including socks and underwear, and any personal hygiene items, including feminine care products.

Both Allen and Aaron said the goal of each pantry is to provide a discreet place for students in need to access items without their peers being aware they need assistance.

"Our poverty rate is 40 percent in the city. In some of our elementary schools it's even higher than that," Allen said. "Our free and reduced lunch [in the county] is 65 percent,"

Aaron added.

Allen said, "When you think about those numbers, it helps you understand what kind of homes many of our kids have to come from, and we simply want to meet a small need."

T.R. Simmons' SGA allocated \$150 to their school's pantry, and SGA students Elizabeth Williams, Allie Bull and Alexi Guthrie said they enjoy giving back to their peers in need.

"It makes me feel good, knowing we're helping others that might not be as fortunate and need the help," Elizabeth Williams said.

Any business that would like to start a collection bin may contact The Secret Pantry on Facebook for further information and to make requests for bins to be picked up once they are full.

Commission

From A1

"I said, 'The county will have to pay their share of that because the law for 911 is real clear on what you can spend the money on,'" Wilson said.

After researching grant opportunities, Wilson said he determined that funding is not currently available to cover the cost of providing space for EMA officials to use as an emergency operations center during a disaster.

The construction project that the E-911 board is considering would include a multi-purpose meeting room that could be used as an emergency operations center.

In return, the board would like the county to take over full responsibility for replacing street signs, a task that, by law, is shared between the two entities.

The board is currently paying someone to install the signs for eight hours each week.

Wilson stressed that the county would not be responsible for providing any finances for the project.

"This is going to be paid for totally through funds from 911," Wilson

said.

Commissioners voted to enter into negotiations with the E-911 board regarding the project.

In other action, the commission:

- approved a contract for legal services with Tina Burgett, who will represent Walker County Sheriff Jim Underwood when the county's attorneys at the firm Jackson, Fikes, Hood & Brakefield have conflicts.

District 1 Commissioner Keith Davis added that he would like Burgett to represent the commission when there are general conflicts regarding civil service matters.

Commissioners also hired Joeletta Barrentine to represent the county when there is a conflict within the firm on educational issues.

• approved a resolution and ordinance on an existing school tax.

In February, a bond lawyer told commissioners that the Walker County Board of Education intends to pledge a portion of the county's sales tax that is earmarked for education to secure an \$8 million bond issue.

The request was tabled at that time to allow more time for commissioners to study the issue.

Davis noted that a new tax is not being levied and that the \$8 million will be used for "much-needed infrastructure projects."

"We're not telling them [the BOE] how to spend the money or authorizing them to borrow the money. We're just saying that the tax that is already in place will continue to be levied," Davis said.

• tabled a request from Cawaco RC&D for annual dues in the amount of \$3,000.

"The dues were not appropriated in 2014 and were not appropriated in 2015, but considering the amount of work and grants that have been invested in Walker County in the last two years, I thought it was appropriate to bring this to the commission's attention," Commission Chairman Billy Luster said.

Cawaco RC&D has approved grants totaling more than \$63,000 for the county in 2015 and to date in 2016, Luster said.

• held a brief executive session.

OPINION

Tuesday,
March 22, 2016

A6

EDITORIALS

'Conscience Protection' bill not only discriminatory, but anti-business

Eight of the top college basketball teams in America, along with thousands of their fans, are in St. Louis this weekend for first- and second-round games of the men's Final Four tournament. Local hoops fans, and the hospitality industry that's getting a big jolt of business, should drink deep of March Madness.

It could be your last chance.

The NCAA is studying Senate Joint Resolution 39, which would give individuals and businesses the right to opt out of providing services at same-sex wedding ceremonies if they claim religious objections.

SJR 39 has passed the Missouri Senate and is awaiting action in the House. If passed, it would go before voters this year.

Last year, when Indiana passed a similar measure, the Indianapolis-based NCAA took a strong stance against it and suggested it could move future games out of the state.

Faced with an economic backlash, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence "clarified" his state's measure, removing the discriminatory language just days before the Final Four was played in Indianapolis. In Indiana, you can mess with a lot of things, but not basketball.

Now comes Missouri with a similarly discriminatory proposal and a long list of amateur sports events scheduled or being courted for coming years. Kansas City wants to host the Big 12 basketball tournament in the next four years.

"It could be devastating from an economic impact standpoint," Kansas City's city manager Troy Schulte told a local radio station. He added, "If those events go away because there's a perception that Missouri and Kansas City are no longer welcoming for these types of events, it'll have a dramatic economic impact on the city as a whole."

The Missouri Chamber of Commerce declared its opposition to SJR 39 on Thursday, citing the measure's expected "detrimental impact" on the state's economy.

St. Louis already has scheduled Olympic gymnastics trials this year, the NCAA Division I men's wrestling and women's hockey and gymnastics finals next year and the SEC men's basketball tournament and the NCAA championships in women's bowling and women's gymnastics in 2018.

Do legislators really want to toy with turning our state into a national pariah? Sports would be just the beginning. A variety of tech companies being lobbied to open shop in St. Louis pride themselves on diverse workforces.

Why would they locate in a state where discrimination is enshrined into law?

Senate Majority Leader Mike Kehoe, R-Jefferson City, whose caucus pushed SJR 39 through the Senate and who later explained "Missouri is a very Christian state," said opponents "are trying to put as much fear into the economic Armageddon it might bring this state."

Other lawmakers should choose not to turn such a blind eye to the implications. This measure now threatens the reputations and profit margins of Missouri businesses.

As legislators have made abundantly clear, money talks in Jefferson City.

— The St. Louis Post Dispatch

State senator more powerful than congressman?

In the literary classic, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," the author draws parallels to a nation that was on top of the world and because of perverse, grandiose and pompous behavior that dynasty self-destructed and destroyed itself. It was from reading this documentary that the Russian premier Khrushchev believed that we, the United States, would destroy ourselves thus causing him to brashly declare, "We will bury you."

One of the travails of Rome, as illustrated in the book, was the power and arrogance of the Roman Senate. Roman Senators were given immense power and prestige and allowed to live lavishly at the public's expense. They, with the concurrence of Caesar, were allowed to control the Roman purse strings and thus dispensed the public funds generously among themselves. They lived a royal life with lavish luxuries and opulence generally reserved for royalty. It led to a life of comfort and debauchery that Solomon warned about in Proverbs, "pride goeth before a fall."

Many people believe that members of congress today are following this pattern. Maybe not to the same extreme as the Romans, but in some ways similar. U.S. Congressmen vote on their own annual salary increases, which are now up to \$175,000 annually with a health

plan that would be the envy of any corporate employee and could not be afforded by a corporation yet it cost the congressman nothing. Many congressmen will argue that \$175,000 per year is not exorbitant considering that they must maintain a residence in their home state and in Washington. This argument does not seem to hold water with the average American who earns less than 20 percent of that salary.

Congressmen do not have much of a challenge in getting re-elected. No matter how good a job they do for their constituents the advantage of incumbency gives 97 percent of all congressman another term if they choose. However, unlike Roman senators, their power has diminished significantly because of the partisan divide in Washington. Today, congressmen simply vote their party line, making them like members of British Parliament. They are no longer individuals but pawns of their party. They are members in the process and fall in line with party dogma and dictates, losing much of their individualism and, in the process, their power.

Even though one Alabama congressman or congresswoman represents approximately 635,000 Alabamians and an Alabama state senator represents around 130,000 Alabamians, I would argue that a least a dozen state senators have more impact over public policy than any of our seven congressmen. There are 435 members of Congress and 35 members of the Alabama Senate. If a state senator is well placed and in a position of power, they are unquestionably

more influential and powerful than a congressperson.

The only exception in our delegation would be Congressman Robert Aderholt. Of our seven members of the U.S. Congress, Aderholt is the only one with any seniority or clout. He is on track to be as powerful one day as his predecessor Democrat Tom Bevill. Aderholt got to Congress at a very young age and he is on the right committees and on the right track.

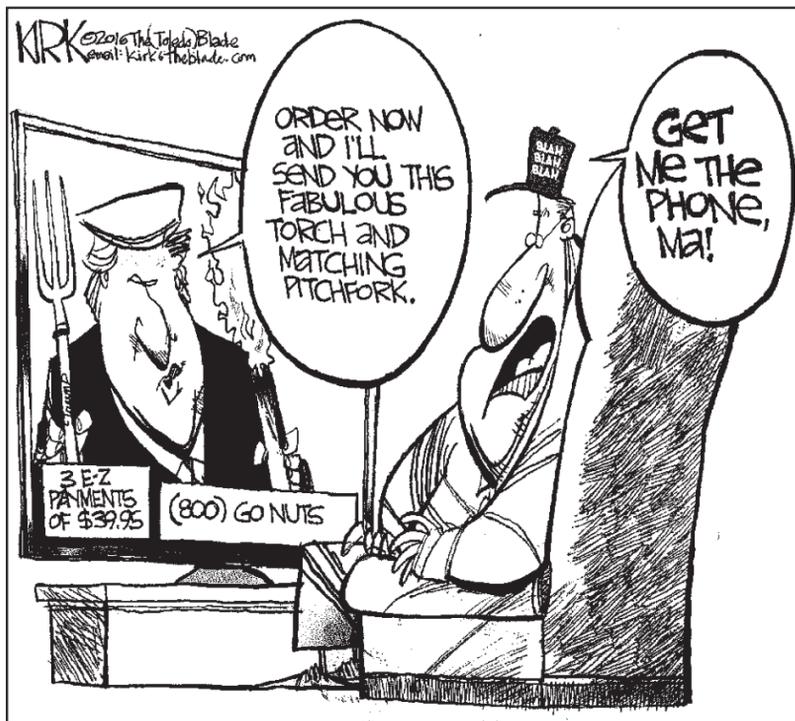
A couple of years ago, Congressman Jo Bonner left the Mobile/Baldwin first district of congress. A medley of candidates emerged. State Senator Trip Pittman of Baldwin County could have possibly won that seat. But guess what? Sen. Pittman chairs the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee. He would have become much less powerful as a freshman member of congress than controlling the state budget.

In 2010, State Senators Dick Brewbaker of Pike Road, Harri Ann Smith of Slocumb or Jimmy Holley of Elba could have captured the GOP nomination for congress in the 2nd District and ultimately gone to Congress. However, all three, especially Holley, have much more influence as one of 35 State Senators than as a back bench member of Congress.

In many cases, a state senator is more powerful than a congressman.

See you next week.

Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist. His weekly column appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers. He served 16 years in the state legislature. Steve may be reached at www.stevewflowers.us.



TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Tuesday, March 22, the 82nd day of 2016. There are 284 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 22, 1941, the Grand Coulee hydroelectric dam in Washington state officially went into operation.

On this date:

In 1894, hockey's first Stanley Cup championship game was played; home team Montreal defeated Ottawa, 3-1.

In 1933, during Prohibition, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a measure to make wine and beer containing up to 3.2 percent alcohol legal.

In 1958, movie producer Mike Todd, the husband of actress Elizabeth Taylor, and three other people were killed in the crash of Todd's private plane near Grants, New Mexico.

In 1963, The Beatles' debut album, "Please Please Me," was released in the United Kingdom by Parlophone.

In 1976, principal photography for the first "Star Wars" movie, directed by George Lucas, began in Tunisia.

In 1991, high school instructor Pamela Smart, accused of recruiting her teenage lover and his friends to kill her husband, Gregory, was convicted in Exeter, New Hampshire, of murder-conspiracy and being an accomplice to murder and was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Today's Birthdays:

Composer-lyricist Stephen Sondheim is 86. Evangelist broadcaster Pat Robertson is 86. Actor William Shatner is 85. Senate President Pro Tempore Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, is 82. Writer James Patterson is 69. CNN newscaster Wolf Blitzer is 68. Composer Andrew Lloyd Webber is 68. Sportscaster Bob Costas is 64. Actor Matthew Modine is 57. Actor-comedian Keegan-Michael Key is 45. Actress Reese Witherspoon is 40. Actor James Wolk is 31. Rock musician Lincoln Parish (Cage the Elephant) is 26.

Thought for Today: "Happiness does not lie in happiness, but in the achievement of it." — Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Russian author (1821-1881).

— The Associated Press

HOW TO REACH OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS



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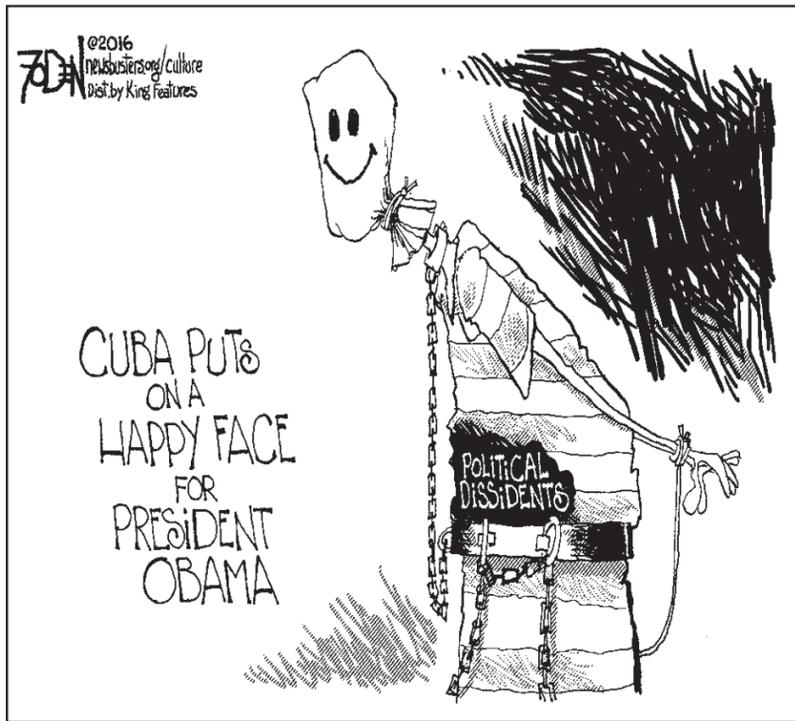
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Montgomery, AL 36130
(334) 242-7595

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Montgomery, AL 36130
(334) 242-7554

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Rep. Connie Cooner



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Daily Mountain Eagle* invites readers to write letters to the editor.

All letters must be signed and include a daytime phone number for verification.

Letters which do not include a name and phone number will not be published.

Letters should be typed and be limited to 300 words or less.

The *Eagle* reserves the

right to edit all letters but will make every effort to ensure such editing does not alter the content or meaning of the letter.

No letters containing profanity or accusations against an individual or business will be published.

When several letters about the same subject are received, the *Eagle* reserves the right to publish representative let-

ters but not necessarily all letters.

Letters which are obviously orchestrated by a group or individual will not be published.

Letters from individuals or organizations thanking businesses or other individuals for their support of projects or other activities must run as cards of thanks in the classified section or general pages of the newspaper.



Daily Mountain Eagle
ESTABLISHED 1872

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Executive Advertising Dir. - Jerry Geddings
Editor - Ron Harris
Sports Editor - Johnathan Bentley
Production Manager - Michael Keeton
Office Manager - Charlette Caterson
Circulation Manager - John Fortner

Last Week's Winning Combination

S	H	P
PALE	O	R
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S		I
E	FAN	S

There was no winner for last week's crossword. This week, the prize jackpot goes up to \$900. Remember that your CASHWORDS entry must arrive at the Daily Mountain Eagle office before 5:00 p.m. this Friday to be eligible to win.

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1. Select from the Cashwords, appearing in each ad, the words you think will fill in the Cashword puzzle spaces. Each word is used only once and all the words are not used.

2. After completing the puzzle, cut it out and drop it by the Daily Mountain Eagle by 5 PM Friday or mailed/postmarked by Friday:

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3. Limit 1 entry per address. No photocopies or other mechanically produced copies may be used. Only submissions from original contest form from a purchased newspaper will be accepted.

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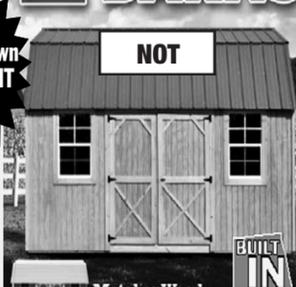
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4. All entries must be legible NO ERASURES ALLOWED.
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6. All prize money accumulates from a base of \$100.00 and increases by \$100.00 each week if no winner and returns to \$100.00 when there is a winner.
7. In case of a tie, 4 winners or less, prize money is divided equally. 5 winners or more, all names are put in a box and 1 winner is drawn.
8. The employees of the Daily Mountain Eagle and their immediate families (spouse, mother, father, sibling, children, spouses of children and anyone living in the home) are not eligible to participate.
9. The puzzle solution will appear each Tuesday with the new puzzle.

NOTE: Each puzzle has more than one solution. Your entry must match the one we have selected at the Daily Mountain Eagle.

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NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

New paths for Virginia, UNC

Early upsets alter road to Houston for No. 1 seeds

By AARON BEARD
AP Basketball Writer

RALEIGH, N.C. — Upsets and wild finishes have altered the NCAA Tournament landscape for No. 1 seeds Virginia and North Carolina in their bids for the Final Four.

Ten of the top 16 seeds have reached the Sweet 16, and seven of those are with fellow top seeds Oregon in the West Region or Kansas in the South.

But the Midwest and East have lost several expected roadblocks for the Cavaliers and Tar Heels, respectively.

Here's a look at those new tournament paths:

MIDWEST

No one talked much about Virginia thanks to the presence of second-seeded Michigan State, which had ousted the higher-seeded Cavaliers the past two years.

Now the Cavaliers (28-7) have a favorable draw after the Spartans lost to 15-seed Middle Tennessee in the tournament's biggest upset.

"It was something to take note of and to recognize," Virginia star Malcolm Brogdon said Saturday after a win against Butler in Raleigh, "but at the same time, we're not really a team that, you know, focuses on everything else."

That task-at-hand focus is one of the reasons the Cavaliers are here, along with an efficient offense and a defense that seems to tighten its grip as the games go on.

KenPom's top-ranked team meets No. 4 seed Iowa State (23-11) in Chicago on Friday. Win that, and the Cavaliers will face a double-digit seed — either 10-seed and ACC leaguemate Syracuse (21-13) or 11-seed Gonzaga (28-7) — for their first Final Four since 1984.

EAST

Preseason No. 1-ranked North Carolina (30-6) did the expected by reaching Friday's games in Philadelphia. The other top seeds — No. 2 Xavier, No. 3 West Virginia and No. 4 Kentucky — weren't so lucky.

UNC faces No. 5 seed and Big Ten regular-season champion Indiana (27-7) in the first tournament meeting between the two since 1984, when the Hoosiers upset the Tar Heels to end Michael Jordan's college career.

The bracket also features No. 6 Notre Dame (23-11) and No. 7 Wisconsin (22-12). And if the seeds hold, there would be an all-Atlantic Coast Conference final for a league with a tournament-record six Sweet 16 teams.

"I probably think we've played our best basket-

SEE NCAA, A11

LSU



LSU freshman Ben Simmons heading to NBA

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — LSU freshman forward Ben Simmons, who led the Tigers in scoring, rebounds and assists this season, has decided to turn pro and relinquish his final three seasons of college eligibility.

Simmons, who initially announced his decision in an interview with ESPN, said he will soon hire an agent and enter the NBA draft, for which Simmons has been widely projected as a top overall pick.

Simmons, who grew up in Australia before moving to Florida for three years of high school at Montverde Academy, averaged 19.2 points, 11.8 rebounds and 4.8 assists this season.

Basketball

AP source: Dixon leaving Pitt for TCU

A person familiar with the situation says that Jamie Dixon is leaving Pittsburgh to become head coach at TCU, where he played in the 1980s.

After leading Pittsburgh to 11 NCAA Tournament appearances the past 13 seasons, Dixon will take over a program that hasn't been to the tournament since 1998. He was a senior guard for the last TCU team to win an NCAA game in 1987.

Sports on TV

College Basketball NIT quarterfinals

St. Mary's at Valparaiso, 6 p.m., ESPN
Creighton at BYU, 8 p.m., ESPN

Spring Training

Tampa Bay at Cuban National team, 12:30 p.m., ESPN
Dodgers vs. Royals, 8 p.m., MLB

NBA

Rockets at Thunder, 7 p.m., TNT
Grizzlies at Lakers, 9:30 p.m., TNT

NHL

Kings at Wild, 7:30 p.m., NBCSN

College Baseball

Tennessee Tech at Tennessee, 6 p.m., SECN



AP Photo

North Carolina forward Brice Johnson (11) reacts after dunking the ball against Providence during their second-round tournament game on Saturday in Raleigh, N.C. North Carolina won 85-66. The Tar Heels face Indiana next.

PREP SOFTBALL

No. 1 Curry off to hot start in Gulf Shores

By JOHNATHAN BENTLEY
Eagle Sports Editor

Top-ranked Curry ran through its first two games in the 2016 Gulf Coast Classic on Monday.

The Yellow Jackets (14-0) opened with a 10-1 victory over Tipton Rosemark Academy (Tenn.) before beating West Morgan 8-0 in their second game.

Auburn signee Ashlee Swindle dominated both teams in the circle, allowing one run on three hits and two walks while striking out 12.

At the plate, Kaylee Horton and Justus Perry led the way. Horton was a perfect 6 for 6 on Monday with a stolen base, a double, four runs and three RBIs. Perry was 4 for 6 with two doubles, two runs and five RBIs.

In the win over Tipton Rosemark, Curry scored seven runs in the second inning to take control.

Swindle went four innings, allowing one hit and one run while striking out six. She was also 2 for 3 at the plate with a pair of doubles and a run. Horton was 3 for 3 with a stolen base, two runs and an RBI. Perry was 2 for 3 with a double, a run and two RBIs. Kyndra Richard was 1 for 2 with a home run, two runs and three RBIs and Taylor Rowe was 1 for 2 with a run.

Against West Morgan, Swindle allowed two hits and struck out six in five innings.

Horton was 3 for 3 with a double, two runs and two RBIs, Perry was 2 for 3 with a double, a run and three RBIs, Emily Aaron was 2 for 2 with a double and two RBIs, Madison Bentley was 2 for 3 with two runs and Katlyn Moore was 1 for 3 with an RBI.

Curry continues play in the four-day, 36-team tournament today.

ATLANTA BRAVES

Olivera extends hit streak; Braves take down Pirates



AP Photo

Atlanta Braves' Hector Olivera singled twice in Monday's win over Pittsburgh. Olivera has hit safely in 15 of his past 16 games. He is batting .419 this spring.

The Associated Press

BRADENTON, Fla. — Hector Olivera extended his hitting streak to seven games and drove in three runs as the Atlanta Braves roughed up opening day starter Francisco Liriano and the split-squad Pittsburgh Pirates 7-3 Monday.

Liriano hit a home run, but departed after 3 2/3 innings. He allowed seven hits and four earned runs, with one walk and five strikeouts.

"Didn't have any fastball command today," Liriano said. "It kept sailing all over the place, up and down."

"That's what we're here for, to get better at things we need to work on. Hopefully next time will be a lot better. . One more start to get myself ready for opening day," he said.

Olivera singled twice and has hit safely in 15 of his past 16 games.

Nick Swisher doubled twice and drove in two runs. The batters in the middle of the Atlanta lineup — Adonis Garcia, Swisher, Jeff Francoeur and Olivera — had two hits apiece.

"We swung the bats early, got some runs," manager Fredi Gonzalez said. "It was a good day for the Braves."

STARTING TIME

Braves: RHP Jhoulys Chacin, a front-runner for one of the available spots in the Braves' rotation, gave up four hits and a run in 3 1/3 innings. He walked two and struck out five.

SPORTS DIGEST

NASCAR

Jimmie Johnson gets past Harvick in OT to win at Fontana

FONTANA, Calif. (AP) — Jimmie Johnson pulled away in overtime to beat Kevin Harvick on Sunday for the Southern California native's record sixth NASCAR Sprint Cup Series victory at Fontana.

Johnson was third on the late restart, but surged past leader Denny Hamlin while giving a little bump to Harvick.

He side-drafted Harvick and easily got away for his 77th career victory.

Johnson clocked his fastest lap of the race to claim his second win of the young season, adding Fontana to Atlanta. The six-time series champion has won three of his last eight races after a 20-race winless skid.

Harvick was in position to win for the second consecutive week when second-place Kyle Busch blew a tire with two laps to go, forcing the race into overtime.

NBA

Injured Pelicans star Davis virtually rules out Olympics

METAIRIE, La. (AP) — Anthony Davis virtually ruled out playing for Team USA in this summer's Olympic Games on Monday as he prepared to begin treatment on knee and shoulder injuries that have ended his fourth NBA season early.

"I love USA Basketball. I loved when I was there in 2012. I loved when I played in the (FIBA) World Cup in 2014," Davis said. "But I think everyone understands where health is more important."

On Sunday evening, Pelicans coach Alvin Gentry announced that the 6-foot-10 Davis, who has posted team-leading averages of 24.3 points, 10.3 rebounds and 2.1 blocks in 61 games, would sit out New Orleans' final 14 regular season games so he can focus on treating a torn labrum in his left shoulder — which will require surgery — and tendonitis in his left knee.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Football player mistaken for burglar, shot by ex-teammate

AKRON, Ohio (AP) — Police in Ohio say a University of Akron football player who entered a former teammate's apartment unannounced has been mistaken for a burglar and has been shot in the stomach.

Authorities say they won't file charges because both men agreed it was an accident.

The shooting happened Saturday at an off-campus house in Akron where the men have apartments. Police say Andrew Pratt entered Scott Boyett's apartment without knocking or announcing himself and Boyett shot him. Police say Boyett drove Pratt to a hospital.

Pratt remained hospitalized Sunday. He's expected to recover.

The university says Pratt was a senior wide receiver on last year's team. Boyett is from Dania, Florida, and was an offensive tackle who last played in 2014.

NFL

Patriots owner Kraft seeks 'Deflategate' draft picks back

BOCA RATON, Fla. (AP) — New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft has asked the NFL to reinstate the draft picks the team lost in the deflated footballs investigation stemming from the 2014 AFC title game.

Kraft said Monday at the owners' meetings that he sent a letter to Commissioner Roger Goodell more than a month ago seeking a return of the two picks — a first-rounder this year and a fourth-rounder in 2017. He did not say if Goodell responded.

But Kraft didn't sound optimistic that the picks would be returned, or that quarterback Tom Brady's four-game suspension would be rescinded should an appeals court rule in favor of the league in the saga dubbed "Deflategate." Brady had the suspension overturned in an earlier court case before the NFL appealed.

LOCAL DIGEST

Professional Wrestling

•All Star Christian Wrestling presents Championship Night on Saturday, March 26 beginning at 7:30 p.m. at Jasper's Swann Gym. The main event is a southern tag-team title match with Thunder and Lightning battling the Beautiful Bald Besties. In a southern heavyweight title match, Drew Adler takes on Beautiful Bobby Moore with manager Mr. Martin. In a junior title match, Action Mike Jackson takes on Shawn Nelson. In a No. 1 contenders match, Johnny Romano faces Logan Stevens. Tickets will be on sale from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday at the Jasper K-Mart. For ticket information, call 205-435-4275.

Jasper Park and Rec

•Jasper Parks and Recreation is registering for Men and Women Church and Independent softball until Mon. March 28. \$350 per team. If you have any questions call the office at 384-6014.

3 on 3 basketball Tournament

•Curry High School is holding a 3 on 3 basketball tournament on April 2 at the Curry High gym. Four players per team at \$10 per player. The deadline to enter is April 1. To register call or text Kevin Key at 205-385-3194 or Reid Hall at 205-522-6321.

POLICY

Event announcements and registrations for the Local Digest section can be sent to sports@mountaineagle.com or by fax at 221-6203. The deadline for next-day submission is 2 p.m. Submissions by phone are no longer accepted.

Atlanta sports events could be threatened by religious bill

By PAUL NEWBERRY
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA — Towering cranes dot the city's skyline, signaling the rise of a \$1.4 billion retractable-roof stadium that is supposed to keep major sporting events streaming to Atlanta.

Those plans may be threatened by a religious exemptions bill that opponents claim would lead to discrimination against gays, lesbians and transgender people.

Already, there are concerns about Atlanta's bid to host the Super Bowl at new Mercedes-Benz Stadium in either 2019 or 2020, prompting Falcons owner Arthur Blank to join a growing list of business leaders fighting the legislation.

The measure could also lead the NCAA to reconsider its decision to award the 2020 Final Four to Atlanta.

"We'll continue to monitor current events, which include issues surrounding diversity, in all cities bidding on NCAA championships and events, as well as cities that have already been named as future host sites," the NCAA said in a statement Monday.

The governing body for college athletics has shown a willingness to get involved in political issues. For instance, none of its championships could be held in South Carolina until the state removed the Confederate battle flag from its capitol grounds. Also, it led the effort to remove "hostile or abusive" nicknames from member schools, which largely centered on Native American mascots and imagery.

"Our commitment to the fair treatment of all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, has not changed and is at the core of our NCAA values," the organization said. "It is our expectation that all people will be welcomed



AP Photo

A \$1.4 billion retractable roof stadium under construction is a project that is supposed to keep big sports coming to Atlanta. Those plans could be threatened by a religious exemptions law that opponents say would clear the way for discrimination against gays, lesbians and transgender people.

and treated with respect in cities that host our NCAA championships and events."

There are also questions about the College Football Playoff's championship game, set to be held at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in 2018, as well as the Southeastern Conference's lucrative football title game, which begins a 10-season run in the new stadium after it opens next year.

The proposed Georgia law has been approved by both houses of the state Legislature, but still needs the signature of Gov. Nathan Deal. He hasn't indicated what he will do.

Blank is among the most prominent opponents, saying the bill "would have long-lasting negative impact on our state." His Falcons are picking up most of the tab on the new stadium, which will serve as home of both the NFL team and

the city's Major League Soccer expansion franchise, Atlanta United.

The new facility will be one of the world's most expensive stadiums and certainly one of the most distinctive, an origami-looking structure with a retractable roof that opens like a pinwheel. It will replace the 24-year-old Georgia Dome, which hosted the Super Bowl in 1994 and 2000 but was rejected in subsequent bids.

The NFL promised to change its stance if the city built a state-of-the-art facility.

Atlanta looked like a shoe-in to host the Super Bowl in 2019 or 2020 based on recent NFL precedent. This past season, the title game was held at the San Francisco 49ers' new stadium, while the 2018 contest has already been awarded to a new stadium under construction for the Minnesota Vikings.

WOMEN'S NCAA TOURNAMENT

Lady Volunteers back in Sweet 16

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer

Tennessee is back in the Sweet 16. Any other year that would be a foregone conclusion. This time it was definitely unexpected.

The Lady Vols entered the women's NCAA Tournament with the most losses in program history and its worst seed, and then barely survived the first round. Up next was host Arizona State. Playing on the Sun Devils' home floor Sunday posed no real problem for the seventh-seeded team, which won by 75-64.

"Getting this win is huge for us," Tennessee guard Diamond DeShields said. "It's just another chance for us to keep moving forward, another chance for us to prove people wrong, another chance to pursue our ultimate goal."

Now the Lady Vols will face Kelsey Mitchell and Ohio State. The Buckeyes sophomore guard put on a show Sunday, scoring 45 points in the 88-81 win over West Virginia. It was the fourth-highest individual effort in NCAA Tournament history.

"She's obviously very difficult to guard," Ohio State coach Kevin McGuff said. "She handles the ball and has got speed and quickness like nobody else in college basketball. West Virginia's a great team. They're a really good defensive team, but think we were able to play in transition and just play with enough spacing to give her opportunities to drive the ball."

As expected, top-seeds South Carolina and Baylor both easily advanced as well as Oregon State. Six of the eight host teams moved on, including Syracuse, which is playing in its first Sweet 16.

DePaul was the other visiting team to win Sunday, beating Louisville 73-72 on the Cardinals'



AP Photo

Arizona State's Elisha Davis (23) pressures Tennessee's Bashaara Graves (12) during their game on Sunday.

home court in a wildly entertaining game.

Here are some other tournament tidbits from Sunday.

NOT MUST-SEE TV

Baylor's next game will be in the Sweet 16 against Texas A&M or Florida State.

But when the Aggies and Seminoles play Monday, Baylor coach Kim Mulkey doesn't plan to be glued to a television set watching that game.

"I probably honestly will be out in my yard, and I'll check in and see who is leading," Mulkey said after the Lady Bears' 84-52 victory over Auburn on Sunday night to get to their eighth straight Sweet 16. "I've got enough time to spend in the film room. I'm not going to sit there and watch a basketball game. ... It's our

off day and I'm going outside."

As the No. 1 seed in the Dallas Region, the Lady Bears will have to go only about 100 miles from campus for the next round.

ATTENDANCE

Opening round attendance was down 300 fans per game from the previous year with the 16 sites averaging 4,413 people. Syracuse was below that average, but still drew very well. The announced attendance for Syracuse's opener was 2,445 — more than double the Orange's average.

BAYLOR REMATCHES

While settling an older score Sunday night, Baylor's potential NCAA Tournament rematches got altered with Louisville losing.

When the 64-team bracket came out, there was a potential path for Baylor to avenge its last five NCAA losses with a championship run.

The Lady Bears won their second-round game against Auburn, still the last unranked opponent to win in Waco — in the 2003 NIT final.

Louisville, which beat Baylor in the Sweet 16 of the 2013 NCAA Tournament, was the No. 3 seed this year in the Dallas Region, where Baylor is the top seed. The possibility of a regional final matchup ended with the Cardinals' 73-72 home loss to DePaul, a team Baylor beat in November.

A possible Sweet 16 opponent is Texas A&M, which was a Big 12 rival of Baylor when beating the Lady Bears in the NCAA Dallas Region final five years ago.

Baylor and three-time defending national champion Connecticut could play in a national semifinal — the game in which UConn beat the Lady Bears in 2010.

NCAA

From A10

ball the entire season in these last couple of weeks," UNC coach Roy Williams said after Saturday's home-state win against Providence in Raleigh. "Now is that going to transfer when we play (in Philadelphia)? I have no idea because (they're) 18-, 19-, 20- or 21-year-olds. But the appreciation I have for them is because they've earned it."

SOUTH

Kansas' bracket largely went according to plan entering Thursday's games in Louisville, Kentucky.

The Jayhawks (32-4) draw a dangerous team in No. 5 Maryland (27-8), a team ranked third in the preseason Top 25 and

peaked at second in February.

No. 2 seed Villanova (31-5), a contender for its own 1-seed entering Selection Sunday, lurks in the other end of the bracket. The Wildcats meet No. 3 seed Miami (27-7) to give this region three of the top 11 teams in KenPom's rankings, the toughest of the four fields.

So much for the Jayhawks getting a favorable draw as the tournament's top overall seed, even as they're savoring being back in the Sweet 16 after two opening-weekend exits.

"There was a lot of motivation from last year, that feeling that we had," Kansas senior Perry Ellis

said, "and we just want to continue to play the way we are and have fun and take it game by game."

WEST

This is the only bracket that went chalk with all four top seeds advancing, which has happened just 16 times since 1985, according to STATS.

Oregon (30-6) plays in Anaheim, California, on Thursday against 4-seed Duke (25-10), which is vulnerable to foul trouble or fatigue with largely a six-man rotation. But the Blue Devils can hit the 3, while high-scoring guard Grayson Allen (22.0 points) and likely one-and-done talent Brandon Ingram are scary

matchups in a win-or-go-home setting.

The bottom of the bracket features national player of the year candidate Buddy Hield and No. 2 seed Oklahoma (27-7), one of six teams to hold the No. 1 spot in the AP Top 25 this year.

The Sooners face 3-seed Texas A&M (28-8) fresh off the Aggies' miracle comeback to beat Northern Iowa in double overtime.

"We go to a new four-team tournament," Ducks coach Dana Altman said after Sunday's comeback win against St. Joseph's. "We know we're going to have to play better than we did tonight, but it's an opportunity."

NFL

Era ending: Rams closing up shop in St. Louis

By R.B. FALLSTROM
AP Sports Writer

ST. LOUIS — For weeks now, a steady succession of moving vans has been hauling away bits and pieces of the Los Angeles Rams franchise for the West Coast.

By Thursday, the job should be finished and the team plans to close for good in St. Louis after 21 seasons.



Relocating offices, weights, and equipment and personnel has been a monumental task that has kept the Rams hopping since owners approved the move in mid-January.

Bruce Warwick, the team's director of operations, said about 30 semi-truck loads carrying 20,000 to 22,000 pounds each will make the journey to temporary headquarters in California.

Those in charge of the nuts and bolts were instructed not to jump the gun, to comply with league guidelines. Still, during last season inventory was assessed in anticipation of a move.

"Once the vote went down, then it was on," Warwick said. This week, he said, will be a "constant of semis coming and going."

Business and scouting operations were shut down in St. Louis last Friday.

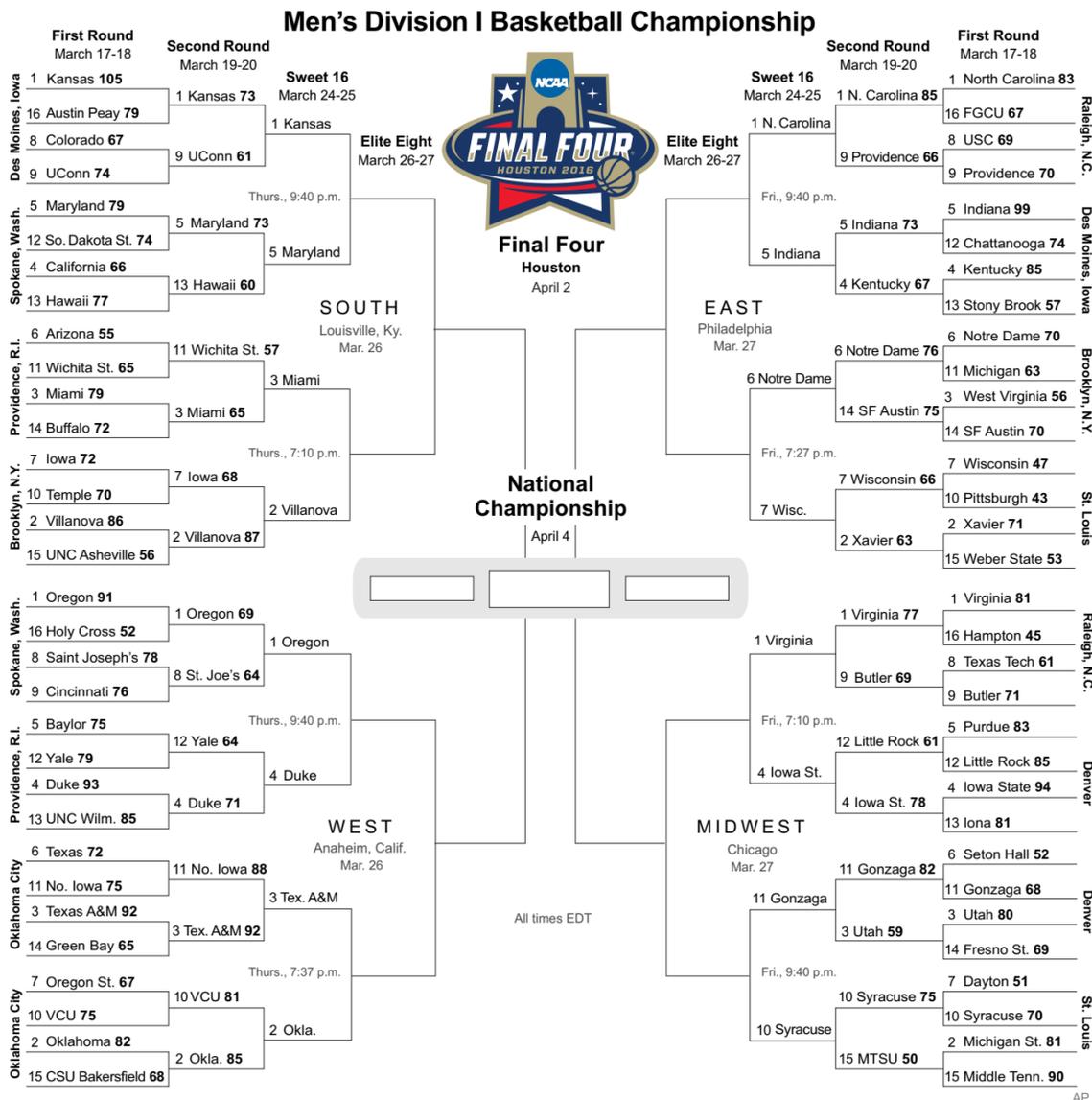
The Rams Park parking lot is nearly empty now with just finishing touches remaining before the \$15 million complex reverts to St. Louis and St. Louis County ownership, its future use unclear. Inside, the walls are bare.

Back in 1995, most of the team made the move to the Midwest here remain raw for a deserted fan base feeling jilted by a franchise that produced a Super Bowl championship but just four winning seasons overall. A proposal for a new stadium was described by owner Stan Kroenke as a sure path to "financial ruin."

Within the team, the focus has been on the many preparations for next season in a new home.

"We tried to figure out what was best for the business side, the operation side. What's realistic?" Warwick said. "All those things had to factor in around draft meetings, free agency. We had to take all those things into consideration."

11 Vanderbilt 50	16 FGCU 96	First Four March 15-16 Dayton, Ohio	11 Michigan 67	16 Holy Cross 59
S 11 Wichita St. 70	E 16 FDU 65		11 Tulsa 62	E 16 Southern U. 55



NBA

LeBron's triple-double leads Cavs to division title

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — LeBron James scored 33 points and recorded his 41st career triple-double as the Cleveland Cavaliers clinched their second straight Central Division title with a 124-91 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Monday night. James added 11 rebounds

and 11 assists before checking out with 6:02 left to a thunderous ovation. He scored 17 in the first quarter, helping the Cavs build a 19-point lead and erase the memory of an embarrassing loss on Saturday in Miami.

The Nuggets fought back and briefly led before the Cavs regrouped, scored 68 after halftime and easily

notched their 50th win.

J.R. Smith added 15 points and Channing Frye 14 for Cleveland, which played without starter Kevin Love (illness).

Will Barton scored 27 for the Nuggets, who concluded a 1-4 road trip. Denver's Kenneth Faried missed his third straight game with a sore lower back.

The Cavs were playing for the first time since being battered by the Heat, who led by 33 in the fourth and won by 21. It was a humiliating night for James, who sat out the final 12 minutes against his former team, and the loss raised more questions about Cleveland's chemistry and chances of returning to the NBA Finals.



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Will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash at Wise Towing, 1397 Sellers Road, Dora, AL 35062, on the 5th day of April, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.

The seller shall have the right to reject any and all bids.
 *March 15, 22, 2016

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Will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash at Hearn Salvage Co., & Wrecker Service, 665 Arley Bypass Road, Arley, AL 35541, on the 14th day of April, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.

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Obama, Castro lay bare tensions on embargo, human rights

HAVANA (AP) — Laying bare a half-century of tensions, President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro prodded each other Monday over human rights and the long-standing U.S. economic embargo during an unprecedented joint news conference that stunned Cubans unaccustomed to their leaders being aggressively questioned.

The exchanges underscored deep divisions that still exist between two countries despite rapidly improved relations in the 15 months since Obama and Castro surprised the world with an announcement to end their Cold War-era diplomatic freeze.

Obama, standing in Havana's Palace of the Revolution on the second day of his historic visit to Cuba, repeatedly pushed Castro to take steps to address his country's human rights record.

"We continue, as President Castro indicated, to have some very serious differences, including on democracy and human rights," said Obama, who planned to meet with Cuban dissidents Tuesday. Still, Obama heralded a "new day" in the U.S.-Cuba relationship and said "part of normalizing relations means we discuss these differences directly."

Castro was blistering in his criticism of the American embargo, which he called "the most important obstacle" to his country's economic development. He also pressed Obama to return the Guantanamo detention center, which is on the island of Cuba, to his government.

"There are profound differences between our countries that will not go away," Castro said plainly.

White House officials spent weeks pushing their Cuban counterparts to agree for the leaders to take questions from reporters after their private meeting, reaching agreement just hours before Obama and Castro appeared before cameras. It's extremely rare for Castro to give a press conference, though he has sometimes taken questions from reporters spontaneously when the mood strikes.

While the issue of political prisoners is hugely important to Cuban-Americans and the international community, most people on the island are more concerned about the shortage of goods and their struggles with local bureaucracy.

Castro appeared agitated at times during the questioning, professing to not understand whether inquiries were directed to him.

But when an American reporter asked about political prisoners in Cuba, he pushed back aggressively, saying if the journalist could offer up names of anyone improperly imprisoned, "they will be released before tonight ends."

"What political prisoners? Give me a name or



AP Photo/Ramon Espinosa

Cuban President Raul Castro, right, lifts up the arm of President Barack Obama at the conclusion of their joint news conference at the Palace of the Revolution Monday in Havana, Cuba.

names," Castro said.

Cuba has been criticized for briefly detaining demonstrators thousands of times a year but has drastically reduced its practice of handing down long prison sentences for crimes human rights groups consider to be political. Cuba released dozens of political prisoners as part of its deal to normalize relations with the U.S., and Amnesty International said in a recent report that it knew of no prisoners of conscience in Cuba.

Obama's and Castro's comments were broadcast live on state television, which like nearly all media in Cuba, is tightly controlled by the government and the Communist Party.

At an outdoor cafe in Havana, about a dozen Cubans and tourists watched in awed silence. One woman held her hand to her mouth in shock.

"It's very significant to hear this from our president, for him to recognize that not all human rights are respected in Cuba," said Raul Rios, a 47-year-old driver.

Ricardo Herrera, a 45-year-old street food vendor said, "It's like a movie but based on real life."

After responding to a handful of questions, Castro ended the news conference abruptly, declaring, "I think this is enough."

Obama then appeared to lean in to pat Castro on the back. In an awkward moment, the Cuban leader instead grabbed Obama's arm and lifted it up as the U.S. president's wrist dangled, an image that immediately grabbed attention on social media.

Obama's visit to Cuba is a crowning moment in his and Castro's bid to normalize ties between two countries that sit just 90 miles apart. The U.S. leader traveled with his family and was taking in the sights in Old Havana and attending a baseball game between the beloved Cuban national team and the Tampa Bay Rays of America's American League.

Several American business leaders joined Obama

on the trip, many eager to gain a foothold on the island nation. Technology giant Google announced

plans to open a cutting-edge online technology center offering free Internet at speeds nearly 70 times faster than those now available to the Cuban public. Obama said Google's efforts in Cuba are part of a wider plan to improve access to the Internet across the island.

While Castro has welcomed increased economic ties, he insisted his country would still suffer as long as the American eco-

nomical embargo was in place. Obama has called on Congress to lift the blockade, but lawmakers have not held a vote on the repeal.

"The embargo is going to end," Obama said. "When I can't be entirely sure, but I believe it will end."

Obama's visit is being closely watched in the United States, where public opinion has shifted in support of normalized relations with Cuba.

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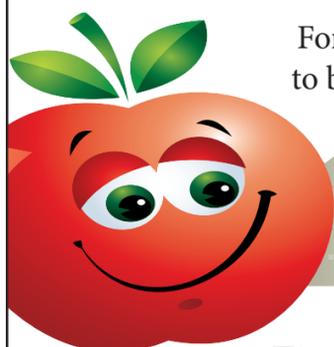
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