

# The Herald-Leader

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## BOE handles budget, handbooks

BY TIM ANDERSON

In a called meeting last Tuesday night, the Ben Hill County Board of Education passed a spending resolution to allow for expenditures through the end of September or until the official budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 is passed.

"THIS WILL ENABLE the school system to continue to pay its bills without an authorized budget," noted Finance Director Thomas Rachels. The resolution, which the board passed, gives Rachels the authority

to spend one-twelfth of the budget proposed for next year each month until a budget is formally adopted.

"At our board retreat in the spring," noted Superintendent Dr. John Key, "we decided to wait as long as possible to pass a budget to get the clearest financial picture possible." Last year, after the budget was passed and the millage was set, the state cut \$400,000 in state funding.

"We expect to have the tax digest soon," Rachels continued. "We don't expect to be (Turn to BOE handles, 12-A)

## Fireworks, family fun planned for Fourth

BY SHERRI BUTLER

From fishing to fireworks — Fourth of July in Fitzgerald will offer something for everyone in the family. And each child who attends will receive a free patriotic fan to help him keep cool and serve as a reminder of why we celebrate Independence Day.

THE CITY of Fitzgerald, in conjunction with the Department of Leisure, has planned a full day of family fun at Paulk Park, beginning at 8 a.m. with a Kids' Fishing Rodeo and concluding with a 9:15

p.m. fireworks display. In-between will be food, friendly competitions and live entertainment.

The fishing rodeo, for all kids age 14 and under, will start at 8 a.m., with the final weigh-in at 11 a.m.

Kids will compete in two age divisions, 6 and under and 7-14, with first place prizes to be awarded in each division for the biggest fish and the most fish caught. The lucky winners will each receive a rod and reel.

FROM 4 P.M. on, the DLS will serve up free hot dogs, potato chips and drinks, as (Turn to Fireworks, 11-A)



RYAN SMITH



GAGE KICKLIGHTER



SAVANNA PUGHESLEY



JAYLA MCWELL

## Monday blood drive to honor 'little reasons' why donors needed

BY SHERRI BUTLER

There are a lot of reasons to give blood — for friends, loved ones and strangers whose lives may depend on the donation. Some of those "reasons" come in little packages as Fitzgerald residents have reason to know.

AT LEAST four Ben Hill county kids have needed blood transfusions during the past year. To honor those children and their families, and to allow the kids and families to express their thanks to the community, the American Red Cross is holding a special blood drive — "For all the Little Reasons" — on Monday, June 29.

The drive will be held from 1-7 p.m. at East Central Tech.

Heather Smith, mother of 4-year-old Ryan, knows better than most how important it is to have blood and blood products available — and how scary it is to have to worry about whether the blood will be there when it's needed.

RYAN IS being treated for acute lymphoblastic leukemia at Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah.

"A few weeks ago, Ryan was sick with a fever and had to have blood and platelet transfusions two weeks in a row," Heather says. "During the second week, the entire Savannah region was experiencing a platelet shortage. Ryan had to wait a day to get platelets that were rushed in from California."

Heather says there were a number of children at the clinic who needed platelets and had to wait until they became available.

"It is very dangerous for these children to have to wait and have low platelet counts. It could be extremely dangerous if they fell and started bleeding. It also causes nose bleeds and bleeding of the gums."

GETTING A needed transfusion makes all the difference in the world for the kids who need it.

"Blood is so important to these children for their survival," says Nicole Kicklighter, mother of Gage, who is also 4 and suffering from leukemia.

"In as little as 30 minutes after Gage has received blood or platelets, you can begin to see a difference in him. His color returns, he begins to perk up, and within a day he is pretty much back to his old self."

It is through her experience with her son that she has learned how important it is to give blood. "I could not imagine being told that my child needed blood, but that they could not locate a match and he would just have to be monitored to make sure he

did not hemorrhage or bleed out. Could you imagine that you are kicking the disease that has stricken your child, but they could still die if they do not receive the blood transfusion they so badly need?"

SAVANNA PUGHESLEY, who was diagnosed with medulloblastoma, a malignant brain tumor, in May of 2008, has had to have a blood or platelet transfusion — or both — with every cycle of chemo she has had, except one.

Her mother, Brittany, says, "One time she was in real bad shape from low platelets.

Most kids getting chemo can have a platelet count of 10,000 or more and be OK. Since Savanna has had a craniotomy, the docs don't like her platelets to be below 50,000. When she got to the emergency room, her platelets were 13,000. She was given platelets as soon as possible and hooked up to a heart and respiratory monitor because they feared she could have spontaneous bleeding where they removed the tumor. She also could have had a stroke. If the platelets had not been there — it could have been devastating."

Brittany says that the form given parents for every child who has to be transfused spells it all out loud and clear: the consequence of not getting needed blood or platelets is heart attack, stroke or death.

SAVANNA IS nearing the end of chemo treatments, but "nowhere near the end of the battle," her mom says. She will have regular checkups with her oncology team after the chemo ends, as well as MRI scans every three months and brain tumor clinic every two months.

"She will have to have surgery every 15-20 years to replace her VP shunt, as it has to be replaced due to wear and tear." Savanna will also have neurosurgery checkups every year, as well as seeing a hormone doctor to watch for possible late side effects, and an ear, nose and throat specialist to keep an eye on her hearing, which has been damaged by the chemo.

Savanna celebrated her fifth birthday last month, and her family is thankful that this year, she was able to celebrate at home.

RYAN IS "doing great" his mother says. "We are currently in the interim maintenance phase of treatment. We go every other week and stay in (Turn to Blood drive, 12-A)

## New arts council staffer has ties to city

BY SHERRI BUTLER

The Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Arts Council has a new assistant director, but she is by no means new to Fitzgerald.

AN ALBANY native, Jacquelyne Duwel, has lived in many parts of the U.S., but she often came to Fitzgerald as a child to visit her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. P.J. Nappi. "We came during the summer and on the weekends," Duwel says.

Her mother, Martine Young, was born and reared in Fitzgerald.

Duwel's work with the Job Corps took her to Maryland, Colorado, New York and Delaware, but recently she



JACQUELYNE DUWEL

and her husband, Robert G. Duwel, decided they were (Turn to Arts council, 11-A)



SCOTT SPIVEY IS SMILING ABOUT the recent acquisition of his company, Prospectus Central, LLC by Fortune 500 company, R.R. Donnelly and Sons of Chicago. Spivey's electronic document delivery and tracking company will continue to operate from its Fitzgerald offices.

## Local business bought by Fortune 500 corporation

BY TIM ANDERSON

Although not many Fitzgerald residents are familiar with R. R. Donnelly and Sons, the publishing giant, based in Chicago, has been in the printing business for over 140 years, once printing items like the Sears catalog. Donnelly recently expanded its scope of operations by acquiring a Fitzgerald business, Prospectus Central, LLC, founded by local businessman Scott Spivey.

every purchase of a product such as a mutual fund or annuity requires that customers receive literature called a prospectus, which explains how the investment works, any associated fees or expenses and other information. Spivey and Prospectus Central developed a proprietary system to electronically deliver a prospectus to customers, while tracking the e-mail, authenticating delivery and recording that the prospectus has been viewed.

"I've been working on this (Turn to Local business, 12-A)

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