



Lady Bulldogs, 18-3,
Lead into Playoffs

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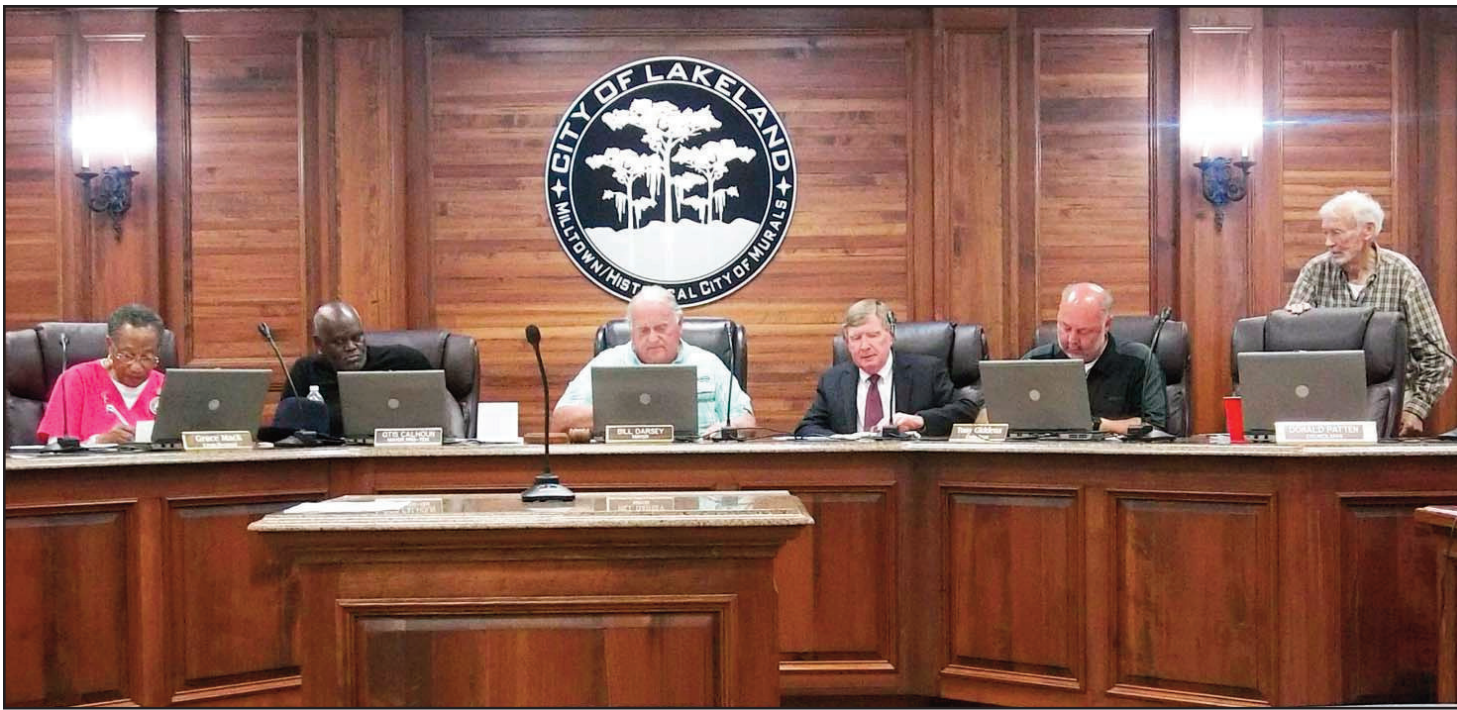


The Lanier County News

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Serving Our Community with Honesty and Integrity for 104 Years

Thursday, October 12, 2017 Lakeland, Ga.



L-R: Grace Mack, Otis Calhoun, Bill Darsey, Tommy Coleman, Donald Patten, and Tony Giddens.

City Council approves additional library funding

By Carol A. Moore

In a detour from past Lakeland City Council meetings and in a totally unprecedented move by Mayor Bill Darsey, the Lakeland City Council approved an additional \$2,000 to be contributed to our branch library's current operating budget. Miller Lakeland Library is a division of the South Georgia Regional Library services.

Darsey originally pushed to cut the City of Lakeland's revenue contribution to the Miller Lakeland Public Library from its annual contribution of \$7,000 a year to \$2,000 a year. The original cut caused our local library to close its doors on Mondays, a day it was normally open. The mayor reasoned that the city's contribution caused citizens double taxation, though

the standard term use has to do with personal income tax, according to dictionary references.

A couple of months ago, retired teacher JoNan Holbrook, who is now on the Advisory Board of the Miller Lakeland Library, made an emotional plea to the council to donate the cost of the library's monthly water and sewer services which totaled just above \$800 a year. Instead, Councilman Tim Harrison asked for the City Council to approve the amount of \$1,000 as an additional donation which was the cost of the water and sewer services that were roughly rounded to that number. The council approved Harrison's request.

At Tuesday's meeting as he cited improved library services, Mayor Bill Darsey

had placed the Lakeland/Lanier County Library Board on its regular session meeting's agenda set on Tuesday and invited Miller Lakeland Library Board members JoNan Holbrook and Allison Swann (Chairman) to the council meeting. At that time, Darsey asked the City Council to approve an additional \$2,000 funding for this year. The Lakeland City Council approved his request unanimously!

This brings the City of Lakeland's revenue contribution from its original \$2,000 to \$5,000 for the year. Darsey asked the council to work on the city's budget and think about approving additional funding for the library.

In other business, the Lakeland City Council approved its Sept. 12 Council

Meeting Minutes. Reports were given by the City of Lakeland Police Department Chief Michael Slusher, City of Lakeland Fire Department's Chief Gary Yeomans, Councilman Tony Giddens gave the Fines and Forfeitures Report and Councilman Tim Harrison gave the Animal Control Report. The council also approved the City of Lakeland September 2017 Accounts Payable.

The City Council went into Executive Session for a personnel reason. When they returned, Mayor Bill Darsey announced that T.J. Brown, a former Navy military veteran, had requested to be considered for hiring by the City of Lakeland as a police officer. The council made the decision to hire Brown pending his ability to complete and meet all officer requirements.



Lakeland home to 2017 Ms. Veteran America winner

By Carol A. Moore

"I'm so proud to be representing the millions of women who have served and to carry on this legacy of phenomenal trailblazers," said Lindsay Gutierrez, the new 2017 Ms. Veteran America after traveling to Washington, D.C. for the final phase of Final Salute Inc.'s annual competition. Lindsay Gutierrez entered the competition at the first of the year. She then competed in the 2017 East Coast Regionals on June 10 in the DC Metro Area where she became the only woman veteran to represent the state of Georgia.

The Ms. Veteran America competition highlights more than the strength, courage, and sacrifice of our nation's military women, but also reminds us that these women are mothers, daughters, sisters and wives. Gutierrez as Ms. Veteran America 2017 has joined the ranks of winners who are role models, teachers and those who empower young women and girls to support, inspire and lift-up one another.

In order to compete, Lindsay had to be a woman who was either an honorably discharged veteran or was in good standing if she still served in the U.S. Military. Gutierrez was required to be of good health and moral character, and actively involved in her community (i.e., volunteering and/or charitable initiatives). Gutierrez had to agree, that if she selected she would participate in the competition, and would abide the code of conduct.

Lindsay Gutierrez is a proud Air Force veteran who is originally from Midwest City, Oklahoma. She enlisted in September 2010 as a Security Forces Journeyman and

was assigned to the 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath. During her military career, Lindsay deployed twice, earned major leadership awards and decorations, and mentored numerous junior airmen on professional education. Lindsay separated after fulfilling her 6 years of service honorably. She's now pursuing a Master's degree in Social Work, concentrating in forensics and mental health. Lindsay lives in Lakeland with her four tail-waggers and active duty husband, Anthony, an equipment maintenance professional at Moody AFB.

Ms. Gutierrez was judged on her interview, talent, military history and advocacy. The scoring criteria used included confidence, grace, personality, and poise. In addition to the judge's tally, Ms. Veteran America and Final Salute Inc. leadership also take into consideration contestant activity, interaction, and participation during the entire competition process to ensure the best Ambassador is selected.

Many people in our area have had the opportunity to hear Lindsay Gutierrez speak on the problems of homeless women veterans, particularly what she has learned about those in Georgia as she advocated for them.

Since the proceeds from this event provide housing for homeless women veterans and their children, Lindsay Gutierrez had to obtain sponsors as a part of the competition. She has raised over \$4,000 and has been active in letting citizens know that women veterans are currently the fastest growing homeless population in America. Over half of homeless women veterans are single mothers.

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Stockton man indicted for violent sexual offense

The Cook County Grand Jury indicted a Stockton man last week for aggravated sodomy, aggravated assault, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, and obstruction of an officer.

The Cook County Sheriff's Office brought the case against Michael Jason Lee, 34 at the time.

According to the indictment, on May 28, 2017, in Cook County, Lee pointed a gun in a woman's face, stuck the barrel of the gun in the victim's mouth, and then forced her to perform a sexual act. The indictment further states that Lee was in possession of a 20-gauge sawed-off shotgun after hav-

ing been convicted of felony possession of tools for the commission of a crime on Sept. 25, 2008, in Lowndes County Superior Court.

A "true bill" or indictment means that the Grand Jury decided the District Attorney's Office presented sufficient evidence for taking the case to trial.



Michael Jason Lee

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Mural by Ralph Waldrop

City elections early voting starts Oct. 16

By Carol A. Moore

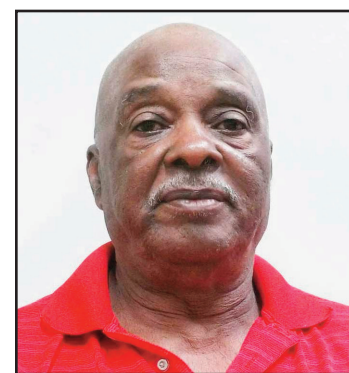
Monday, Oct. 16, marks the beginning date for early voting of candidates in the City of Lakeland Elections. Early voting on candidates in the city's election continues until Friday, Nov. 3. The mayor's post as well as that of all six city council seats will be included in this election.

Candidates for mayor include: William P. "Bill" Darsey (incumbent), Darren Henry, N.A. "Nate" Keith, and John H. "Sandy" Sanders. Post 1 City Council candidates consist of Tim Harrison (incumbent) and John W. Pruitt. Post 2 candidates include Grace Mack



Darren Henry

(incumbent) and Kellie McCrae. Post 3 City Council candidates are comprised of Tony Giddens (incumbent) and John "Jack" Paulson. Donald Patten is running unopposed for Post 4 City Councilman. Post 5 City Council candidates are Shirley Roberts (incumbent)



Nate Keith

and Greg "Dooner" Sealey. Otis Calhoun is running unopposed for Post 6.

In order to vote early, registered voters should go to the Board of Registrars office, Lanier County Courthouse at 56 W. Main St., during their regular business hours from

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