

Dawkins 'did what was best for community'

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of goals set for the future – from offering a variety of programs and workshops for both adults and children, to establishing the first Friends of the Library in Lincoln County. Likewise, she requested the community at large give their input on services and materials they desired the library to offer.

Dawkins accomplished those things. And much, much more with the aid of other library employees and community members throughout the years.

Friends of the Library was first established in 1996 with the help of Elizabeth "Lib" Estes, Dawkins explained. At the time, the library was a part of the East Central Georgia Library System, which allotted only \$346 a year for books. When the Friends was formed, the group began fund raising.

"We did a lot of things and earned extra money for books," Dawkins said. "We probably earned – over the years – \$40-\$50,000, but it was a tremendous help when we didn't have money for books in the old system."

Later, Lincoln County became a part of the Greater Clarks Hill system, "which was the biggest plus for our library that's ever been done," Dawkins explained. "We took the money it offered and it wasn't used to be paid for administration, but for books and services."

Throughout the last quarter of a century, thousands of children have enjoyed programs at the library, as have adults.

"I always wanted to expose the children to different things, so having programs that would do that was important," Dawkins continued. "I geared a lot of our stuff toward them – like getting our summer reading program participation up, making sure that the children knew what the library had and what we offered, and parents too."

"Even today a lot of people don't realize we do faxes, we do copies, we are notaries, we have movies, and we can get other books from other libraries for them, no charge. There's still a lot of people that don't know these things," she said. "We have a genealogy room, and in my opinion, we have one of the best genealogy rooms, I'd say in Georgia, that's not an institution."

New additions such as the computer room and Dover Room were also added throughout the years as

LCES announces drop-off guidelines for Valentine's Day

Lincoln County Elementary School has announced the Valentine's Day drop-off guidelines that have been set for Thursday, February 11. Anyone involved is asked to follow the directions below to ensure a hassle-free day of deliveries.

Due to the rise in COVID-19 cases in Lincoln County, the school district has made the decision to allow only businesses to deliver Valentine items to the school.

Businesses must present a list that contains students names, grades, and teachers. Deliveries must be made by 1 p.m. on February 11, no exception.

Parents should remember that students will not be allowed to take glass, balloons, or any large item that can cause a distraction to the driver onto school buses.

LCES students bringing Valentine cards, etc. to hand out to each other will have an opportunity to do so at the discretion of teachers. Teachers will discuss with students the appropriate time for this type of exchange.



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a part of its various renovations, which were all paid for by gifted funds – and costing the county nothing.

As library director, one of the biggest tasks involved is ordering books, Dawkins further elaborated.

"We have to order books that are appropriate for Lincoln County, so it's about knowing our people and assessing what they need and would like to read, unlike other counties that might have a different make up," she said.

"That was one of the harder points I had to drive through to people. Back then we were still with the Augusta system and it was hard to get them to understand that what they were buying was not serving our people to the best of our abilities – I stepped on a good many toes that day," she chuckled. "I just thought the library should do what was best for our people."

Expressing, again, that service is the intent of the library, she likewise noted, "You know, if we ever don't know something, we try to find out. We look at it as a challenge that we try to meet. And, sometimes we can surprise ourselves."

It's clear that because of her heart, in not only extending library services to the community, but in her own personal efforts to help every soul that walked through its doors, Dawkins will truly be missed, according to many that know her.

She has received much support as director throughout her many years

at the library, from friends and family to patrons, children, and parents as she was heartily praised her last day of work. Cars full of supporters, firetrucks, law enforcement, and others celebrated a "drive-by" retirement party outside the library just last week to wish her well in retirement.

As the late Bruce Beggs, then chairman of the library's board of trustees, explained at Dawkins' hiring in 1995, "The board made a good choice, but it was a difficult one because we had a number of qualified applicants. I think Shirley has a lot of good ideas and will be an asset to our library program. We're all very excited about the future of the library."

So, in the eyes of the community, she proved them all right.

"Shirley's personality has been an excellent fit for the public of Lincoln County that use the library, she's been dedicated, she's served with dignity, and the people of Lincoln County are going to miss her," Commissioner Chairman Walker Norman said. "She married the library when she went there and she's loved it the entire time. We hate to see her leave, but the chapter in every book changes."

For Dawkins, however, her heart has always simply been to help her hometown to the best of her abilities.

"I just think that being a good informed librarian and knowing who to go to and what to do means a lot for this community," she said.

House committee approves permanent switch to DST

By DAVE WILLIAMS
Capitol Beat News Service

Georgia will observe daylight saving time all year long subject to congressional approval under legislation that cleared a committee in the state House of Representatives on Thursday, January 28.

Switching every six months between daylight and standard time disrupts sleep patterns and has been shown to increase the number of heart attacks, car crashes, and workplace injuries, Rep. Wes Cantrell, R-Woodstock, the bill's sponsor told members of the State Planning and Community Affairs Committee.

"Our bodies are built to adjust slowly to the amount of daylight," he said. "The vast majority of people want time change to stop."

Cantrell introduced three bills on the topic last year. Two of the measures called for Georgia to observe daylight time all year or standard time all year.

The third called for a statewide non-binding referendum to gauge the sentiments of Georgians toward the issue.

None of the bills got far last year because the coronavirus pandemic intervened, forcing a three-month break in the 2020 General Assembly session.

Sen. Ben Watson, R-Savannah, pre-filed two bills before this year's session calling for either a non-binding referendum or putting Georgia on standard time permanently.

DPH reports fifteenth fatality as COVID-19 cases rise to 452

Lincoln County had its fifteenth reported COVID-19 fatality according to the Georgia Department of Public Health's (DPH) website as of Monday, February 2.

The report shows the individual was an 87-year-old male with pre-existing conditions.

The Lincoln County Health Department was unable to confirm the fatalities as of press time.

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lincoln County increased to 452 with fifteen reported fatalities as of the 3 p.m. posting by the Georgia Department of Public Health on Monday.

Neighboring Wilkes County lists 603 cases and fifteen deaths, McDuffie County reports 1452 cases and 31 deaths, Columbia lists 9726 cases and 118 deaths, and Richmond County reports 17,083 cases and 292 deaths.

Also reported as of 3 p.m. Monday, 872,448 Georgians had tested positive for COVID-19. Of those patients, 50,323 were hospitalized, and 12,613 deaths have been reported.

COVID-19 vaccinations are being administered locally by the

nently. A wrinkle in the possibility of switching to daylight time all year is that, unlike switching to standard time permanently, it would require congressional approval.

Cantrell said U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., is sponsoring legislation that would put the entire nation on daylight time permanently.

Florida, South Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana have passed bills calling for year-round daylight time, Cantrell said. If those became law, other states in the region would follow suit, he said.

"The entire Southeast would have it if Congress approves," he said.

Cantrell said he favors daylight time because it provides more daylight in the early evening hours for recreation and exercise, saves on energy, reduces traffic accidents, and leads to less crime.

But Rep. Derrick Jackson, D-Tyrone, wasn't convinced. He proposed that the committee delay acting on the bill until Cantrell returns with more definitive data on the potential effects of switching to daylight time.

"All I heard was anecdotal," Jackson said following Cantrell's presentation of his bill.

But the majority of the committee decided to move ahead and passed the bill on a voice vote. It heads next to the House Rules Committee to schedule it for a vote of the full House.



Naomi Cobb and Dr. Samuel Light display some of the items donated by Camp Lakeside which were bagged and distributed during the joint food drive on Thursday.



Lincoln County Food Pantry volunteers helping out with the joint drive through mobile food distribution were (l-r) Ella Norman, Alicia Beard, Ike Robinson, Gyp Hearst Jr., Henry Dent, Walter Keen, Travis Reid, Tim Easler, Wayne Searles, Mark Wallace, and Johnny Carr. Volunteers not pictured were Evelyn Norman, Jenny Carr, Lisa Willingham, Paula Drew, Tommy Drew, Maudene Walker, Frances Zellars, Jim Stopper, Robert Poss, and Naomi Cobb.

Joint distribution serves 212 families; next scheduled drive-through is Feb. 11

Lincoln County Food Pantry volunteers braved cold and windy conditions to deliver meals to 212 families during the joint drive-through food distribution held by the Lincoln County Food Pantry and Lincoln County School Superintendent Dr. Samuel Light.

"Camp Lakeside contacted me requesting a way they could help the many families who have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 virus," Dr. Light said. "We appreciated their contribution which provided additional meals to students and their families. Lincoln County does an exceptional job of taking care of their own. I want to thank all of the volunteers that participated

today, [Lincoln County Food Pantry President] Naomi Cobb and her crew do an amazing job of feeding our families."

Food pantry volunteers distributed bags of canned goods, 150 loaves of whole wheat, 50 loaves of white bread donated by Golden Harvest, and bags of assorted frozen meats and fish.

Families with children at home were also given "Blessing Bags," which included a mixture of treats including Pop Tarts, honey buns, peanut butter crackers, chip, fruit cups, milk, juice, and other items geared toward children.

"I am grateful to Dr. Light and our new partnership," Cobb said. "We can't forget the children of Lincoln County and I look for-

ward to future joint events. As always, we couldn't do anything without the pantry volunteers, Chairman Walker Norman, Director LeTrellis Glaze, Lisa Willingham, and Sheriff Paul Reviere. Their continued support makes these events possible.

The next drive-through distribution will be held February 11, at the Firetower Road location from 10 a.m.-noon.

Anyone interested in volunteering or if you are aware of a family in need, call Cobb at 706-990-0472.

Those who would like to make a monetary contribution to the Lincoln County Food Pantry can mail a check to P.O. Box 473, Lincolnton, GA 30817.

Starbuck releases new book on overcoming marriage fears

Raised in Lincoln County, non-fiction author Megan Starbuck recently publish her new book Surprised by Marriage: A Cynic's Guide to Believing in Love, a work she is eager to share with her hometown community.

Married at Faith Community Church in 2017, Starbuck – who publishes under the name M.C. Starbuck – shares practical ways to overcome negativity surrounding marriage in her latest work.

"Marriage isn't constantly difficult. It can be difficult. But there are also plenty of times when it's easy, fun, and beautiful," Starbuck remarked.

The book was primarily written during her first year of marriage, which included a move to the other side of the world. In this book, Starbuck shares how she overcame 12 fears, from the fear of cheating to the fear of falling out of love or experiencing a loss of freedom. She spent decades being afraid of the very thing that now brings her great joy – her marriage.

Her hope is that this book prevents others from wasting so much time on such fears.

Furthermore, Starbuck wrote Surprised by Marriage because, before she tied the knot, she wanted to read a book on marriage written by a newlywed, but was unable to find one. She read plenty of books by authors who

had been married for decades, but she also wanted to learn from someone who was just a few steps ahead of her.

The author explained that throughout the book there are quotes from happy couples at all stages of marriage – from newlywed to child-rearing to widowed – showing that these fears are common but don't have to keep you from enjoying marriage.

As a child, Starbuck knew she wanted to write, "I told my fifth-grade English teacher, Mrs. Julia Leverett, that I wanted to write a book one day," she said.

"I still remember her reply, 'You should get them to make it into a movie.' It was so nice that she didn't tell me my dream was too big, but rather encouraged me to dream even bigger," Starbuck explained. "Seventeen years later I published my first book, Pack-rat to Clutter-Free. While neither of my books is being made into a movie, they have connected me with a lot of wonderful people I would never have met otherwise."

Starbuck is the daughter of Brenda Haislip, pianist at Morning-side Baptist Church, and the late John Starbuck. She and her husband also recently celebrated three wonderful years of marriage and look forward to many more.

She is a 2006 graduate of Faith



MEGAN STARBUCK

Christian Academy in Lincolnton, but attended Lincoln County public schools through the sixth grade.

Those interested can pick up a copy of Starbuck's latest book at The Milky Way, however all of her works are available on Amazon.

Furthermore, Starbuck enjoys writing about "making big goals easy and fun" on her website LivingTinyDreamingBig.com.

She also leads an online book club that discusses the topics of dating, marriage, and singleness. Those interested can sign up for it at MCStarbuck.com/marriage-book-club.