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The Clinch County News

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HOMERVILLE, GEORGIA

10 PAGES, ONE SECTION

NEWS BRIEFS

What's going on in your community

Sports Hall of Fame ceremony on Jan. 31

The fifth class for the Clinch County Sports Hall of Fame will be inducted Saturday, January 31, prior to that night's Clinch County/Turner County basketball game. The class includes Jamie Bass, Sheena Hill, Antonio Jefferson, Octavis Johnson, Trezmen Marshall, Lamar McKnight, Rachel Morgan, Alan Pope, Jerry Rice, and Hosie Williams. The reception is scheduled to start at 4 p.m. in the CCHS cafeteria. Inductees and one guest will be admitted free. Adult admission is \$10. Children 12 and under will be admitted at no cost.

Property tax bills will be delayed for 2025

Property tax bills for 2025 are delayed this year due to the property reevaluation process. They will possibly be sent out toward the end of January. Once they are sent, the due date will be no less than 60 days later, according to the tax commission office.

FMB sponsoring trips to NY, Amish Country

Farmers and Merchants Bank is sponsoring trips to Niagara Falls USA & Buffalo, June 6-14, 2026 and to Shipshewana, Indiana, Amish Country, October 11-16, 2026. Come join the fun and travel with the Farmers and Merchants Bank group to Niagara Falls USA & Buffalo for 9 days and 8 nights, 14 meals and tours of Niagara Falls, USA (No Passport), Cruise on the "Maid of the Mist" and Erie Canal, drive through wine country & tour Buffalo. Amish Country trip is for 6 days and 5 nights, 8 meals and tour Amish Homestead, see the show "Love Comes Softly", visit MENNO-HOF, the Amish & Mennonite Story, a wagon tour and visit DAS Dutchman & Downtown Shipshewana. If you are interested, contact Jo Ann Tomlinson at tomlinson.joann@gmail.com or 912-487-8664.

Narcotics Anonymous meetings beind held

Clinch Memorial Hospital is hosting Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings every Thursday at 7 p.m. These meetings offer a supportive environment for individuals seeking recovery and community connection. Any interested is encouraged to attend.

Tuesday Night Talks at Clinch Memorial

Join Clinch Memorial Hospital on the first Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. for our Tuesday Night Talks series. Each session features a guest speaker with professional experience on a prevalent health topic relevant to our community. A light supper is provided, and all are welcome to attend.

Great need for foster homes here

There is a great need for foster homes in the area. In Clinch County, there are two approved foster homes and 21 children in foster care. Anyone who wishes to foster should call 877-210-KIDS or visit fostergeorgia.com.

Follow us on:



Construction has started on 441 four-laning

Construction has started on the four-laning of Highway 441 from Homerville to State Route 122, according to the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Contractors for the Georgia DOT started removing vegetation near State Route 122 along US Highway 441 this week, as part of the project to widen the highway in Clinch County.

This work is part of the \$52

million US 441 widening project, which includes widening from two to four travel lanes in Clinch County, totaling 8.44 miles. The roadway project is located just south of the Clinch County High School at Orange Street in Homerville and extends to just north of SR 122. The section within the City of Homerville consists of four lanes with a two-way center turn lane, curb and gutter, and sidewalks. The

remainder of the project includes widening to four lanes with a 32-foot grass median.

Georgia DOT awarded the project contract to The Scruggs Company, with completion scheduled for the third quarter of 2028. Scruggs will maintain two lanes of traffic during construction. Motorists should be aware of and take heed of large equipment entering and exiting the construction work zones.

BOE approves student runner, chairs for year

By Ben Murray
Staff Writer

The Clinch County Board of Education approved Malorie Delk as a student runner for the school system at their regular monthly meeting, held on Thursday, January 22.

A student runner's responsibilities will involve traveling from the school to the school board office to pick up the mail, and then deliver it back to the schools.

The position will pay \$8 an hour plus pre-approved travel.

In other action from the meeting, the board:

- Made their annual appointments, with Stanley Thrift being reappointed as board chair and Charlie Mae Cross as vice chair. Gayle Infinger was appointed as GSBA delegate, and Eric Harris as GSBA alternate. Chad Corlee was reappointed as board attorney.

- Approved the resignations of Paula Pittman, Donna Jones, Jim Dickerson, and Maria Palmer.

- Approved financial reports for December 2025.

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Above, spectators brawl on the court at Atkinson County High's gymnasium Friday during halftime of the boys' basketball game.

Gym cleared of fans after brawl at Clinch/Atco basketball game in Pearson

By Len Robbins
Publisher

Fans engaged in a brawl in Pearson Friday at the Clinch County/Atkinson County basketball game, prompting Atkinson County High School officials to clear the stands for the second half of the boys basketball game.

During halftime of the boys basketball game, an altercation occurred in the concession area, and then spilled out onto the court right before the second half was set to

commence. Footage shows several fans throwing punches before order was restored.

Atkinson County High School officials then asked all spectators to leave the gymnasium, with the second half being played without fans.

Atkinson County and Clinch County school officials are reviewing video footage of the incident and both say they will take action if warranted.

Atkinson County High School issued a statement on the matter, saying:

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Let's Talk Local

Burkhalter Cleaners: A Downtown Legacy Built on Hard Work and Heart

(Editor's Note: This feature is the first in a series by Homerville Main Street about Downtown Homerville's small businesses.)

For more than five decades, Burkhalter Cleaners has been a trusted name in Downtown Homerville, providing quality service and dependable care to generations of local families. Located at 281 South Church Street, the business has been a cornerstone of the downtown district since it was established in 1970.

Owned by W.C. Burkhalter, Burkhalter Cleaners was inspired by a passion that began early in life. At just 15 years old, Burkhalter worked at White's Cleaners in Lakeland, Georgia, where he learned the ins and outs of the cleaning business. That early experience sparked a lifelong dedication to the trade and laid the foundation for a business that has stood the test of time.

Today, Burkhalter Cleaners offers a wide range of services including dry cleaning, laundry, repairs, carpet and rug cleaning, and even auto detailing. While dry cleaning remains the most popular service, customers value the business for its versatility and commitment to quality.

Burkhalter chose to locate his business in Downtown Homerville because of his deep love for the town and its people. That connection extends beyond the front counter, as Burkhalter Cleaners is known for stepping up to help during times of need and supporting the community whenever possible.

When asked what he loves most



Above at their South Church Street location, Joseph, Lorraine, Mary Ann, and W.C. Burkhalter.

about being part of downtown, Burkhalter's answer is simple: everything. He describes downtown Homerville as a great place to do business, built on strong relationships and loyal customers.

Like many small business owners, Burkhalter believes challenges are met through hard work and genuine passion. His advice to anyone considering opening a business downtown reflects that philosophy: choose something you truly enjoy, work hard, and success will follow. "Downtown is a great place to be in business," he says, adding that he hopes to continue working and enjoying the cleaning business for many years to come.

As for the future, Burkhalter jokes that if he decides to retire

sometime in the next 50 years, Joseph and Lorraine will keep the doors open — a testament to the strong foundation and continuity of the business.

Perhaps what customers may not realize is just how grateful Burkhalter is for their loyalty. "Our customers have kept us in business for 55 years, and we want to always do the best cleaning for them," he shared.

When asked to complete the sentence, "Downtown Homerville is special because..." Burkhalter's answer speaks volumes: "It's a good place to be in business, and I have the best customers."

For more information, Burkhalter Cleaners can be reached at 912-487-5389.