

INSIDE TODAY: The MDJ's Transit Voter Guide: A special edition with everything you need to know to make an informed decision on Cobb County's 30-year, 1% transit tax. See Page C1.



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Judge: Superior Court clerk still plagued by issues

By Hunter Riggall
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MARIETTA — On Sunday, the judicial emergency in Cobb County Superior Court expired.

Chief Judge Gregory Poole ordered a one-month emergency suspending legal deadlines in August, extended it for another month, but

elected not to extend it a third time. Now, he's taking a wait-and-see approach, hoping the office of Superior Court Clerk Connie Taylor can function properly.

"If things don't go the way they should, then, I don't know if I'd have to do it again or not," Poole said early this week. "I don't want to."

Taylor's office is responsible for receiving and maintaining criminal and civil filings for the Cobb Superior Court, which has broad jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases, and has exclusive jurisdiction over felony trials, divorces and title to land.



Greg Poole



Connie Taylor

The severe dysfunction in her office created an information breakdown and made conducting

business in Cobb Superior Court a nightmare, several attorneys previously told the MDJ.

Over the summer, Taylor switched the court's case management system from CRIS, which had been used for decades, to a new system called Icon, without giving proper notice to the Cobb County Bar Associ-

ation or PeachCourt, the e-filing system the court uses for all its documents.

That led to notices never being delivered, an unprecedented number of no-shows before the bench and several days where no court documents could be electronically filed.

SEE COURT, A9

Postal worker gets probation, \$100 fine for check theft

By Annie Mayne
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Reported problems out of the Marietta post office are staggering.

There's the thousands of dollars in stolen checks that readers have reported to the MDJ, widespread delivery delays and countless complaints about customer service.

Now, a former Marietta postal worker has pled guilty to mail theft.

'ATM DEPOSIT READY'

Antalisha Jackson was sentenced to pay a \$100 "special assessment" fee and three years of probation in federal court last month after pleading guilty to one count of mail theft.

SEE THEFT, A8

Former councilman loses pension for probation 'scheme'

By Annie Mayne
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Former Marietta City Councilman Anthony Coleman has lost his pension benefits for orchestrating a probation "scheme," according to a recent decision from a State Administrative Court judge.

Coleman was convicted of a felony in May 2016 for making false statements to help his girlfriend, Terry Jones Mays, avoid a probation violation.

SEE PENSION, A6



Jack Lindner

Jonathan Brown, a Dunleith Elementary School first grader, plays underneath a colorful parachute at the fourth annual Adapted Games on Friday.

'The happiest day of the year'

Marietta celebrates adapted games

By Jack Lindner
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MARIETTA — Students across Marietta City Schools found their inner Olympian Friday during the district's fourth annual Adapted Games.

The event provides students with disabilities opportunities to engage in non-competitive games and activities with their peers for a day of fun.

Marietta High School welcomed 90 students from across the district to participate in the games. Activities included a ring toss, throwing frisbees, cornhole, a 100-meter dash and playing with a large colorful parachute.

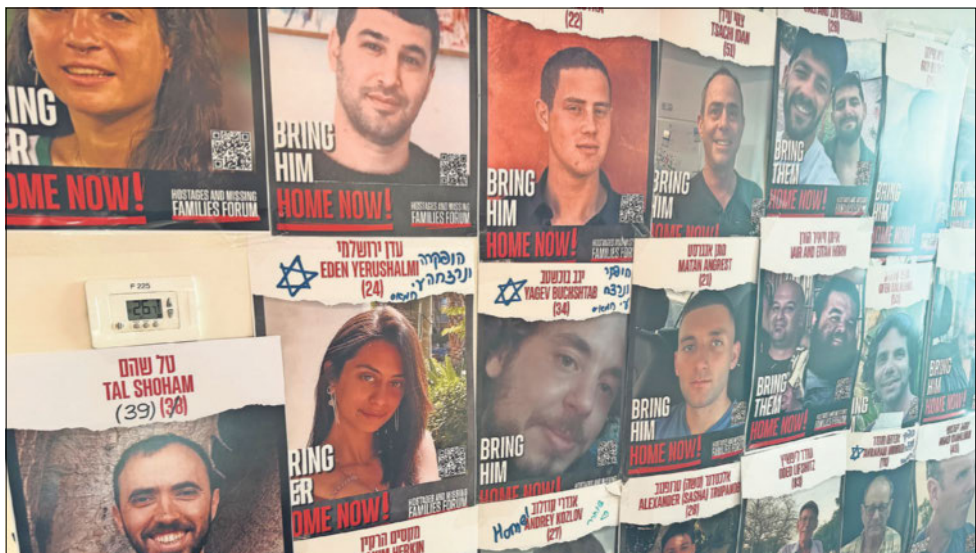
Michele Sayles Harris, the district's special services and educational support chief, said the purpose of the event is to foster inclusivity and celebrate student-athletes with exceptional needs.

"This is the happiest day of the year," Harris said. "When you see kids who ordinarily don't get to interact with their typical peers out here smiling, playing, having a good time ... just (puts) smiles on my face."

The Adapted Games are sponsored by the Marietta Rotary Club. Students were welcomed with cheers and bubbles from

SEE GAMES, A6

'Time is running out' to bring hostages home



Jon Gillooly

Photos of the hostages taken on Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas terrorists breached the Gaza-Israeli border, line the walls of the headquarters of the Forum of Families of Hostages in Tel Aviv.

By Jon Gillooly
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Editor's note: Last month, senior editor Jon Gillooly took part in a press tour of Israel sponsored by the American Middle East Press Association and Europe Israel Press Association. This is the fourth in a series of periodic reports.

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL — The 13-year-old girl beamed as she jumped from the Red Cross vehicle rescuing her after 54 days of darkness.

The girl, Gali, her older brother, and their father lived in kibbutz Be'eri, an Israeli community near the Gaza border where 130 people were massacred by Hamas terrorists



last October.

Gali's father tried to hide them in the house's safe room, but terrorists shot her brother through the door. When father and daughter tried to escape, Gali was kidnapped and taken to Gaza. Her father managed to hide and was rescued by the Israeli military.

Tamar (last name withheld for privacy) is connected to

SEE ISRAEL, A10

Dog park, bar combo to open in Marietta

By Jack Lindner
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MARIETTA — A combination dog park and bar business is coming to Marietta, offering residents a chance to bond with other pet-owners over drinks.

The Drafty Dane Park and Pint, an all-in-one, members-only dog park and family-friendly bar located at 942 Roswell Street, has a soft opening planned for later this month.

Co-owner Emily Matthews said the idea is to provide a space where both dogs and their owners can have fun.

"We've been going to dog parks ... and it was fun for the dogs but not really fun for the people," Matthews said. "And we would go to breweries all the time and the dogs are on leashes and kind of shoved under tables and they're not having a great time."

"This is just the best of both worlds. Dogs can have fun (and) people can have a good time."

Matthews runs the business with her husband Brennen Matthews and business partners Fitz Johnson and Suzann Wilcox.

The park's 19,000-square-foot, off-leash lot has artificial

SEE PARK, A7