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Marion County High School Page

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JOURNAL RECORD

47TH YEAR, NO. 77 75¢

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Wednesday, September 28, 2016 www.myjrpaper.com

CITY OF WINFIELD LIST OF QUALIFIED VOTERS
- See page 1C.

Corporal punishment still allowed in local schools

State ranks 3rd in recent report for most paddlings

By TRACY ESTES
News Editor

A recent report by al.com revealed where Alabama has one of the highest corporal punishment rates in the nation with one Marion County town among the most consistent in the state when it comes to using a paddle for punishment.

According to the report, a paddling is administered in the state every four minutes--one of the highest frequency rates in the U.S. Only Mississippi and Arkansas paddle with more frequency.

While both school systems in Marion County allow corporal punishment under their current respective school board policies, there are some schools which appear to use the discipline method more than others.

Local schools are also now using more positive reinforcement



methods to encourage positive behavior.

While a school operating in Selma currently has the highest percentage rate of corporal punishment at more than 64 percent of the students receiving a paddling, the two schools in Brilliant each ranked among the Top 20 in the state.

According to the report, 41 percent of the students from Brilliant High School received a paddling during the 2013-14 academic year while 26 percent of the students at the elementary school could say

the same.

Brilliant High School ranked seventh in the state while the elementary school was ranked at No. 18.

The listing revealed where 62 students were paddled from a student body of 148 members at the high school for a 41.1 percent rate of students paddled with 41 students paddled at the elementary school from among 156 students for a rate of 26.3 percent.

See **CORPORAL** on page 11A.

Superintendents believe corporal punishment needed as disciplinary tool

Superintendents serving the Marion County and Winfield City school systems confirmed corporal punishment remains a disciplinary tool for educators.

"Having different forms of behavior modification allows the administrators greater opportunities to find the method that is most effective in changing negative behavior," said Winfield Superintendent of Education Dr. Keith Davis.

Asked if his faculty were in support of the policy, Davis said, "The feelings are varied, but I believe, overall, the pol-



Davis

See **NEEDED** on page 11A.

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Entering God's presence in a new way
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Legislators don't have right to grade schools
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Hackleburg woman dies in accident
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Hubbertville woman killed in Winfield
- See page 6C.

Pirate Classic set for Saturday
- See page 6C.

HAMILTON COUNCIL Colby plant sold to Rustic River for \$350,000

Modular home line will be added after major facility investment

By ED HOWELL
Assistant News Editor

HAMILTON - The Hamilton City Council voted 4-1 to sell the old Colby plant for \$350,000 to Rustic River Park Homes, which plans to add up to 20 jobs to add modular home production to the facility by next spring.

Councilman Tim Holcomb voted against the sale. Councilman Lynn Mitchell was absent. Mayor Wade Williams and council members Tami Lewis Williams, Frances Knight and Greg Ingram voted for it.

Wade Williams indicated after



ED HOWELL/STAFF

Rustic River Park Homes Chief Executive Officer Jason Cooke

the meeting that he would prefer to put the proceeds into the General Fund for the council that takes office on Nov. 7 to decide how to spend the funds. He suggested the funds might cover part of the city's

See **COLBY** on page 10A.



ED HOWELL/STAFF

Ridings talks about pilot program

Marion County Probate Judge Rocky Ridings asks the Marion County Commission at its Monday, Sept. 19, meeting to participate in a state pilot program to have electronic poll books at polling places for the Nov. 8 elections.

MARION COUNTY COMMISSION Commission OK's e-polling book pilot program Tablet version of polling books to be tried in Hamilton

By ED HOWELL
Assistant News Editor

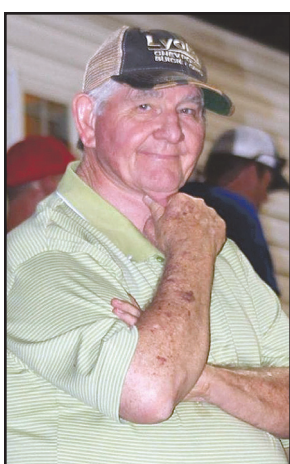
HAMILTON - The Marion County Commission has agreed to a recommendation from Judge Rocky Ridings to allow some poll workers, probably in Hamilton, to participate in the state's pilot program for electronic poll books during the Nov. 8 elections.

See **PILOT** on page 10A.

FOND MEMORIES

Friends define Pollard's legacy

By TRACY ESTES
News Editor



Larry Pollard

BRILLIANT - One of the most recognizable names in Marion County has died. This person, Larry Pollard, lived his life in a most unassuming manner.

Pollard, 72, Brilliant, died on Saturday, Sept. 17, at Northwest Medical Center in Winfield.

Pollard was probably the most well-known for his auto business--one he began back in 1969 in Brilliant. He graduated from Brilliant High School in 1962 where he had been a member of the school's undefeated baseball team in 1961.

Beyond the car dealership, Pollard's name had become synonymous with checkers as the native son had won 15 state championships and a national checker

See **MEMORIES** on page 10A.



JR FILE PHOTO

He always accepted all challengers

Larry Pollard (standing left) takes on multiple players at a recent CoalFest in Brilliant. Shown attempting to play with the state champion are (from right) Marion County Commissioner Bob Bursleson, Marion County District Attorney Jack Bostick, state Rep. Mike Millican and Marion County Sheriff Kevin Williams.

Colby
continued from front page.

costs in securing a new hotel. The Colby plant, located off Highway 278, was originally built to manufacture furniture, but in recent years has been empty except for limited manufacturing. Colby Furniture was announced in 1992, costing \$1.6 million, with funding coming from the city and the company, according to press reports at the time. The Hamilton City Council approved a \$1.2 million industrial development bond issue which has since been paid off. By 2007, it was listed for sale by the city. Documents on file with economic development agencies showed that the facility has 106,000 square feet (including 2,000 square feet of office) and nearly 9.5 acres. Its last expansion was in 1999. In 2007, it had a listed sale price of \$1.3 million and a rental price of \$165,000, both of which were labeled as negotiable. The facility was used at one point as a home for the Jerry Brown Arts Festival as so much space was not being used, until Paradise Canyon Cabins moved into it in October 2014. It was renamed Rustic Park Homes within a few months. At the time, the business agreed to purchase the building for \$500,000. The first year lease is \$2,500 a month. At the end of the first year, they would buy the building for \$500,000. Wade Williams said at the time, "If they don't buy it at the end of the first year, they go into the second year and the lease goes from \$2,500 to \$4,000 a month. The \$4,000 a month at the end of the second year goes toward the purchase of the building, which would be \$500,000, less the lease purchase." The company was to start with

25 to 30 employees and possibly go to 100 to construct park model homes. Park model homes are recreational vehicles that, while transportable, can also be used for long-term or permanent placement where an RV or manufactured home is allowed, according to Wikipedia, as long as they remain under 400 square feet. Various sources say they can resemble cabins and are used at campgrounds throughout the United States. Jason Cooke, the chief executive officer at Rustic River Park Homes, told the council in July 2015 he hoped to double the plant's employment, noting it had about 30 people and had speeded up production to a cabin every nine days. At the Sept. 19 meeting, he indicated the plant employed 27. The mayor told the council on Sept. 19 that the plant wants to now add a production line of modular homes, hiring about two-dozen or more people in time. The business wants to purchase the building and make more investments in it, he said. Cooke said \$1.2 million has been invested in the company, while several hundreds of thousands of dollars has been spent on capital improvements in the building. He said the company now wants to start a new production line in the back of the building, and is planning on spending anywhere between \$300,000 to \$700,000 more above the purchase price to invest into the plant to get it ready. "We're researching right now with the five other manufacturing companies that are kind of in our region, going and seeing their tooling, learning how they do the process, learning what we're going to have to do as far as equipment to acquire, and obviously that skilled labor will have to be something that we train,"

Cooke said. Initially, the plant would like to have some employees float between the park model production line and the modular home production line. However, he said the plant was state licensed and other "third parties" have to come in and validate the process. "Currently, we're in the drafting stage to make sure the building can be laid out properly," he said. "We want to utilize every square inch of the building and not just throw it together."



Wade Williams said, "I'm very proud to have you in Hamilton. I know your plans for the future look good to us and the next administration can enjoy" a new production line that will create more jobs. The mayor said the owners of the business are committed to staying in Hamilton, noting he had talked to Dave Upton, 88. On Wednesday, Sept. 21, the mayor identified Upton as a Birmingham businessman who has essentially emerged as the controlling owner of Rustic River Park Homes, noting his sons own CraneWorks, a major heavy equipment rental business in Birmingham, and that he is known for doing charitable work. Cooke agreed at the Sept. 19 meeting that Upton is committed to Hamilton. Councilwoman Frances Knight said Upton has plans for homes designed for low-income families so that people paying up to \$600 in

rent can get low interest rates and pay less for housing. Cooke said, "Our key founder is in his late 80s. He has considered his legacy and he wants to do something that really blesses folks that are kind of in a situation where they are between a rock and a hard space. "I think this affordable housing addition does have teeth," he said, noting he has seen in Woodlawn in past years where people were paying exorbitant rent with no ability to buy a house. "So the Birmingham Land Bank Authority is now taking a lot of these vacant lots they've acquired and they are basically getting the title free and clear. They are going to help folks get land. Our goal is to hopefully be able to provide a product that can be placed on that land that they can live in." Knight said that when that is in place, the low-income families would then pay \$300 or \$400 a month to the land bank. Cooke said not all the details have been ironed out, but many of the details are coming together. The mayor said that the agreement with the city would allow that if the company left the plant within the first two years, the city would have first right to buy the facility back for another prospect or a spec building, perhaps. Cooke said that provision is in there so the city doesn't have to feel like the company is buying something at a discount when it could then turn around and sell it. "He (Upton) is making a long-term investment in the community with no real ulterior motives," he said. The mayor said he is comfortable with the proposal, while Knight noted all the money the company has invested and will invest, which she also compared to

the situation of "having something for sure" versus not having anything in the plant. After the meeting, Cooke said "conservatively" he hopes to add 15 to 20 jobs to the 27 jobs now at the plant within the next six to eight months. Holcomb, asked after the meeting why he voted against the sale, said, "I've talked to some people. That's way too low for that building at 100,000 square feet." The mayor said after the meeting that he anticipates the city being paid by Oct. 14. "We'll put it back in the General Fund and (the new administration) can decide what they want to do," Wade Williams said. "It actually might work out pretty good, because that will cover about what the incentive was that we paid Action Properties" for a proposed hotel to date. "And we realize the building is worth more than that, but it is not worth a lot more. But it is kind of an incentive to them to bring in new jobs, plus there is the huge investment they are making above the \$350,000 they are having to do just to get it going. I think it is a good deal." The mayor said on Sept. 21 that the company approached the city in August at a called executive session to ask for a smaller purchase price, noting the major investment that it was making in the company. He noted that prior lease payments, which did rise to \$4,000 a month, had brought down the purchase price to between \$400,000 to \$450,000, so that the price did not get reduced as much as some might think. City attorney Scott Hunt, who has helped with the contracts, did not attend the Sept. 19 council meeting as he was sick, the mayor said.

Pilot
continued from front page.

"For the pilot program, I think we can test it right here in Hamilton and see how well it goes," Ridings said at the commission's Sept. 19 meeting, just before the commission approved it. Ridings also discussed the idea, which Secretary of State John Merrill has pushed, with the commission at its Monday, Sept. 12, meeting. The pilot program was set up with a law passed by the Alabama Legislature in May, known as SB200. The commission had a Tuesday, Sept. 20, state deadline to respond with a resolution to the Secretary of State's Office. The commission also voted to approve a resolution to be drawn up later, as well as pay for any travel costs, such as meals and gasoline, involved in sending Ridings and his staff for free training by the state. Training will take place over two days with two half-day sessions. Ridings said he did not anticipate for now that an overnight stay would be needed. The program digitally records the thick book of poll lists that are used at polling places when a poll worker check for registered voters.

The idea is to use tablets (to be reloaded with each election) to look up the information, making it quicker and more accurate, with names searchable in different ways, such as by similar names or by addresses. Ridings said on Sept. 12 eventually it is likely that all polling books will be converted to electronic polling books by as soon as 2018, as that would cut down the number of tables and poll workers at each election in larger precincts. He estimated Hamilton would take about four electronic books and about two will be needed in Winfield to handle the number of voters there. Several counties are already involved with trying to mount the pilot program in time for the Nov. 8 general election which will include the presidential race. Among those are Barber, Baldwin, Bullock, Hale, Houston, Jackson, Jefferson, Madison, Mobile, Morgan and Shelby counties. "Three of the counties I called off are smaller than us," Ridings noted. Each electronic polling book costs \$340, but the pilot program in the Secretary of State's Office will pay for up to six of them, he said. The electronic book itself is \$300,

while the software is \$40. The county will not have to pay for training, but will have to pay for travel expenses to training, Ridings said. He suggested training two people for each electronic book, leaving at least 12 to train. He said more e-polling books could be purchased at this time using Help America Vote Act (HAVA) money, referring to the 2002 act that provided funds and mandates for election technology upgrades after the 2000 presidential election controversies. Officials said that the county has \$43,000 in HAVA funds, which are rarely used. However, at the Sept. 19 meeting, commissioners seemed content to try the process using the free materials provided. Ridings said at that meeting he had learned since the last meeting that the poll workers would not be sent out for training. Instead, the probate judge and some on his staff would be trained somewhere in the state, and they would come back and train the poll workers locally. He said, "Right now, I would say we will wind up using all six in Hamilton, to tell you the truth. If we cut it too short, we won't get the

job done right. But I really would have liked to have done it in Hamilton and Winfield. It's a pilot program, but we don't have enough to do it." He said three or four books would be needed in Winfield, with probably two each in Guin, Hackleburg and Bear Creek "and one in the others." "We can see the benefit they are going to have after we do the pilot program," he said. "If we don't see a benefit from it, we don't have to do it any further, because the state, like I said, doesn't mandate this—yet. I figure one day we will be mandated with this." Poll lists will still be made for pre-election use by election officials. During the pilot program, the state still recommends using a printed polling book "in case something goes wrong. They will have that to fall back on," he said. However, in the future those would be eliminated for Election Day. An electronic poll book can list up to 1,500 voter names, he said. During the Sept. 12 meeting, Ridings said, "We're on the forefront of something that is coming. This is not going to be something that is coming that we can dodge anyway, so we might as well

be in the forefront and be progressive with it and start trying to get this done. "The good news for this commission would be that some day—it won't be this election, and it might not be the next one—but some day, this will reduce (the number of) election poll workers. These things are much easier to use." The pilot program, with its limited effect, will not save money, he said. Even fully installed, it would not save money at smaller precincts, as state law requires at least four poll workers to a precinct. The winning bidder to handle the project in the state was not ES&S of Omaha, Neb., which handles many other election materials in the state, Ridings said, noting ES&S had a much higher price for a book and elected not to bid. "They had some limitations they didn't want to try to meet on it, so they didn't bid on it," he said. He did not know the winning bidder. The county will still have to put out a voter list, although Ridings talked about "working with our legislators, because something probably ought to be done" about that. The same electronic books would be used with

each election, with the company providing the electronic books being able to download new lists with each election. "We won't have to do that," he said, although he said the county would likely be charged for that service. "But probably I would guess by the 2018 elections, I'm pretty positive this will be fully implemented," Ridings said. In another election matter on Sept. 19, the commission approved a \$6,749 maintenance contract for the current vote tabulation machines with ES&S, which provides the machines. The contract was passed pending research and approval from county attorney Scott Hunt. Officials said the state used to pay for the maintenance but no longer provides that, passing along the cost to the counties. Payment will be made out of local HAVA funds. Also, the commission approved a low bid of 1.86 percent from First State Bank of the South, which has offices in Hamilton and Winfield, for an unsecured four-year loan of \$110,000 for an asphalt distributor that has already been purchased. Revenue outside the General Fund income will be used to pay for the loan.

Memories
continued from front page.

every year. "He and I grew very close over the years and I considered him a personal friend. I shared a few of my memories with his kids at the funeral so they will know how much I considered him my friend." Hayes noted the fact each of Pollard's four children had come through the hallways of Brilliant High School while adding how Larry's face could always be seen in the crowd supporting his son and daughters. "His family grew up here. We grew up together, in a way," Hayes said with a chuckle. "He was part of our family. Larry touched the lives of so many in this community and even the communities around us. "Few people in life can

say they have lived life and leave behind no one who can say a bad word about them. Larry was one of those few." Hayes also recalled how his friend would share his talents in the game of checkers at the town's annual festival-CoalFest. Pollard would carry on five or six games of checkers at the same time, accepting challenges from politicians ranging from the mayor to state senators and representatives. Never did the champion fail the challenge, despite facing multiple opponents simultaneously. "He was something else. He truly was something else," Hayes concluded. Brilliant Mayor Perry Franks called Pollard a man others should want to emu-

late. "He was the kind of fella who could walk into a room and just light it up with a smile and his personality," Franks said. "He was a good man. He was a very spiritual man. His faith was important to him. He was a good example to others around him. And he was really bigger than life. He was a local legend. Losing a man like him will be tough on our town. He will truly be missed." Heath Sanderson has worked closely with Pollard in recent years. His memories of his colleague will also be fond. "He was a father to me," Sanderson said. "This has been a tough few days. I spent six days a week with

him on the job and Sundays at church. I spent more time with him than my wife. "He was my best friend. We would talk several times a day. He was one I could speak with in confidence and never worry about his telling what I shared with him. I trusted him and that is a rare thing today. "He was a fine Christian man. He would pray anywhere or anytime. He was consistent in his faith—the way he talked and lived. His faith was strong. Nothing shook him. Everyone talks about his car business, but it was second to him when compared to his faith and his walk with Jesus. "He would drop anything to pray with somebody or talk church with them. I can-

not tell you the times I have seen him rush to the store to buy a Bible for someone who had shown an interest in salvation or the church. He was a wonderful man who will be missed." Pollard was the son of David Aaron and Vera Lee Flippo Pollard. He is survived by his wife, Tena, along with three daughters and a son. Pollard was the proud grandfather of four and great-grandfather of two. Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Sept. 20, directed by Bowen Funeral Home in Winfield. He was buried not far from his home at Brilliant Memorial Gardens.

Sept. 26 - Oct. 1 has been designated as National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week. I want to take this opportunity to shine the spotlight on the fantastic work of the outstanding teachers of our program at Beville State Community College. I encourage you to contribute to the socioeconomic health of our state by sharing information about our program with those you know that would benefit of the services that we provide. For more information, contact Nancy McDonald, director of adult education, Beville State Community College, at (205) 932-3221, ext. 5677.

Thornell
continued from page 3A.

In response to questions from commissioner Bob Bursleson, Thornell said the Sitel operation in Winfield, whose building the commission helped fund, could not get enough contracts to stay in business. The building is now empty and had graffiti on it. Thornell said local officials asked if Sitel would turn over the building so that it could be used locally, but it declined—although it did clean up graffiti on the building.

Illiteracy
continued from page 9A.

gender, race, and ethnic origin. **FACT: Nearly 30 percent of adults with household income at or below poverty level do not have high school credentials.** **FACT: Individuals with high school diplomas earn about \$10,000 more annually than those without.** **FACT: By 2018, 63 percent of all jobs in the United States will require education beyond high school. Yet, nearly half of the workforce has only a high school education or less and/or low English proficiency.**

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housing authorities, etc. in order to provide convenient locations. We offer on-line instruction as well. Our instructors are some of the most qualified, dedicated and caring teachers in the state! They have consistently met the state's goals for program performance for the 27 years I have been associated with the Adult Education program. Our classrooms are adequately equipped with computers for students to use while attending classes and offer an extensive variety of instructional materials designed for adults to help them meet their personal and professional academic goals.

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