

# Early County News



"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation *under God*, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

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"Pull for Blakely - or - Pull Out"

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12 Pages



Sept. 11, 2001, 19 Islamic extremist militants hijacked four airliners and carried out suicide attacks against America, flying two planes into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York, another hit the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. The 9/11 attacks resulted in extensive death and destruction, killing 3,000 people in New York City and Washington, D.C., including more than 400 police officers and firefighters.



## Join the Conversation

Everyone is urged to join the Early Cares conversation... Why health equity matters to all of us! Early Cares is a partnership for better living funded by Healthcare Georgia Foundation. The meeting will be Monday Sept. 17 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by Thursday Sept. 13 to Family Connection at 723-5122.

## "Old Fashioned" Hymn RE-Sing Sept. 30 at 6 p.m

The Bicentennial Hymn Sing is "back by popular demand!" The Early County Bicentennial Committee and the First Baptist Church of Blakely will host an "Old Fashioned" Hymn RE-Sing" Sunday, Sept. 30 at 6 P.M.

**OBITUARIES**  
See page 6  
Owen Lawrence Fussell

## Utility bill woes

Reports of problems with the city's utility bills began circulating last week... some had not received their bills, some bills were outrageously high, some were obviously undercharged and some received bills for services they did not have with the city. "Needless to say, my phone has been ringing off the hook over the past week," Mayor Anthony Howard stated when contacted by the News. "The City of Blakely transitioned to a new utility billing software this month and we have experienced several implementation challenges," he stated. "We are currently correcting these specific billing issues."

"Also, during this time period, we experienced storm related damages to the wireless meter reading equipment," he stated. "We have made the necessary repairs to this equipment." "Our City Hall staff is prepared to work with customers individually to address any billing issues." "We apologize for any inconvenience these issues may have caused and we appreciate your patience as we resolve these matters." For additional information regarding your utility bill, call 723-3677 or email Melinda.crook@cityofblakely.org.

## Commissioner training, Public Safety agreement Contentious issues

Commissioner training and Public Safety became contentious items of discussion at Monday's county commission meeting. County Administrator Spencer Mueller gave the commissioners updates on several projects, including the Fourth Street Design & Construction painting of the courthouse which began Aug. 27. The \$474,550 project is scheduled to be completed in approximately two months.

He noted the DOT had completed inspection of the crack seal and painting project at the airport. He also noted bids for the electrical revamp project at the airport were opened Sept. 5. The low bid was \$1.2 million. However the county has 120 days to accept the bid which they will not do until their application for \$1.3 million in FAA supplemental funds for

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## City Council meeting

The Blakely City Council adopted two ordinances at their September meeting and tabled another. Having determined that it is in the best interest of the City of Blakely to create the position of Municipal Court Clerk, the council held the second reading and adopted an ordinance creating Chapter 6 of the Official Code of Ordinances establishing the position, procedures and duties. City attorney Tommy Coleman noted the city at one time had a Municipal Court Clerk, but at some point it had been deleted from the ordinances. The council also held a second reading and adopted an ordinance providing for a Planning Commission. The ordinance was tabled at the August meeting to allow the council time to consider a request from the commission to increase members' compensation

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## SGA Homecoming Court



Standing from left, Faith Dowdy, Kamryn Carver, Kate McGill Hattway and Abbygail Brooks. Seated from left, Karlie Bridges, Laney Hall, Abbie Earnest and Ash Phillips.

The Southwest Georgia Academy student body has selected their representatives for the 2018 Homecoming Court. Homecoming activities will take place Oct. 5 prior to the Warriors' football game. The girls will be escorted by their fathers. The crowning of the homecoming queen will take place during halftime activities. The queen will be crowned and saluted by the senior members of the football team. See HOMECOMING on page 3

## Woman beat, then struck by vehicle

Sheriff's Deputies responded to a 911 call on E. South Blvd. Sept. 8 in reference to a female subject struck by a car. Upon arriving the deputies learned the victim had first been struck with a stick or tire tool.

The victim was struck by a vehicle as the suspect was fleeing the scene.

EMS treated the victim at the scene, then transferred her the Early County airport where she was flown by helicopter to a Tallahassee hospital.

An arrest warrant was obtained for Rodney Eaford, 47, of Blakely. The Sheriff's Investigative Division assisted in the investigation and the search for the suspect.

At approximately 9:30 Saturday night, one of the investigators located Eaford and arrested him without incident.

Eaford is being held in the Early County jail on charges of aggravated assault and violation of probation. Additional charges may be filed.

Anyone with information concerning this case is asked to contact the Sheriff's Office Investigative Division at 723-3158.

**ECHS school sweep**  
The Early County Sheriff's Office two K-9  
See CRIME on page 11



Eaford

## Distinguished Young Woman of Early County

Karlie Bridges, winner of the Distinguished Young Woman of Early County competition, participated in the Distinguished Young Women of Georgia competition July 21 in Marietta, Ga. Bridges was one of 15 high school seniors from across Georgia who participated seeking to represent the state as the Distinguished Young Woman of Georgia for 2019. As the local winner, Karlie was awarded \$800 in cash scholarships. The six local young women who participated in the inaugural Distinguished Young Women of Early County program included

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Distinguished Young Women of Early County chairperson Kimberly Storey, left, and Rotary president Lori Haddock are pictured with Karlie Bridges holding \$500 check from the Blakely Rotary Club.

