

DOTHAN EAGLE

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"For I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" — Genesis 37:17

75 cents

Today: High 56°
Low 33°



Chance of a.m. rain, then gradual clearing NNW wind 10-15 mph

SUPER STEPS DOWN

Daleville City Schools leader Andy Kelley calls it a day **Page 2A**



Wiregrass players sign on dotted line



IN TODAY'S PAPER

Landfill Expansion

Site spurs civil rights complaint

BY LANCE GRIFFIN
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A group of black residents who live near Dothan's proposed landfill expansion claim the authorization of the location is discriminatory and is asking the Environmental Protection Agency to investigate the Alabama

Department of Environmental Management, which approved the permit for the expansion.

The civil rights complaint was prepared Wednesday by Florida environmental attorney David Ludder on behalf of at least nine residents who claim the landfill expansion is discriminatory toward black residents because

African-Americans comprise 89 percent of the population within 1 mile of the proposed expansion and 79 percent of the population within 1.5 miles.

If the EPA decides to conduct an investigation and finds ADEM was discriminatory in permitting the landfill expansion, the complaint asks the EPA to halt

financial assistance to ADEM.

The complaint cites EPA regulations that prohibit any entities it financially assists from administering programs which "have the effect of subjecting individuals to discrimination ..."

The 29-page complaint further states that ADEM first needs to show a substantial, legitimate

interest that justifies its decision to permit the expansion. Second, even if that interest exists, it must show that an alternative would not have satisfied the interest without the alleged adverse impact on the minority population.

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MR. ENGINEER

'I love to go back and hear the success stories'



DANNY TINDELL/DOTHAN EAGLE

Jerome Tew looks to his father, Jerry Tew, as they discuss future plans for the Mr. Engineer software the elder Tew first created more than 30 years ago.

Local software developer's program being marketed globally to textile industry

BY EBONY DAVIS
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Jerry Tew said it wasn't a dream that prompted his development of Mr. Engineer, a two-generation software and hardware system designed to monitor textile industry operators' production while sewing.

Tew said it was simply his recognition that God had blessed him with an idea. That idea, which Tew pursued 30 years ago while studying computer science by day and working in the textile industry at night, recently led to his partnership with UK-based General Sewing Data of the Coats Group, which specializes in industrial thread and consumer textile crafts in more than 60 countries.

GSD has agreed to exclusively market Mr. Engineer's solutions to the international sewn-products industry.

Coats Group announced

Tew's partnership with GSD this month, marking a year since Tew's son Jerome visited Coats Group officials in England to demonstrate the Mr. Engineer software, while Jerry Tew recovered from a cancer-related surgery at UAB Hospital. Mr. Engineer's first order through Coats was made less than a week after the agreement to a company called Linea Aqua in Sri Lanka.

Before the GSD deal, Tew said his company had been dormant between the late 1990s and 2012 as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994 that presumably forced manufacturing — and, in particular, sewing facilities — overseas in search of cheaper labor.

The first company to receive Mr. Engineer's second generation technology was a company in Nicaragua in 2014.

Developing a plan

Jerry Tew was an industrial engineer at West Point Pepperell in Abbeville in the 1980s, where he said he spent time standing behind operators to monitor their performance. He said his boss then, Alex B. Clark, advised him that the only way to help an operator was to "walk in her shoes" by standing with her the entire shift to see where she was gaining or losing productivity.

"He said 'You gotta help the operator, Jerry,'" Jerry Tew said. "That stuck with me all these years."

Jerry Tew said a debate with an operator who insisted she was right when he sought to correct her had him hoping there was some way to visually show the operator her error.

In 1983, after enrolling in a computer science program at Troy State University and

working at Wex-Tex Industries in Ashford, Jerry Tew said he found a remedy to help the operator by watching a doctor on television explain an electrocardiogram to a man who had had a heart attack.

"I slid back and I thought 'Gosh, I'm an industrial engineer. I wish I could show an operator a picture in a picture and she would change her ways,'" Jerry Tew said. "... So when I got the idea that if I took a sensor and I sensed the needle of the machine sewing, and that I could take a picture of a good operator and of a bad operator, then the bad operator would say 'Jerry, you mean I need to change?' That's the concept of Mr. Engineer."

Jerry Tew said he worked on the project for two years before seeking a patent on his idea, which was granted

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Ross Clark Circle

Official: Bridge fix 'went quite well'

Northbound phase yet to be scheduled

BY LANCE GRIFFIN
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Dothan's assistant public works director said this week that the recent detour around construction on Ross Clark Circle went "about as good as it could have gone."

Charles Metzger, who oversees the traffic division for the city of Dothan, said the flow of traffic off the circle and onto Main Street and Woodland Drive was aided with changes in signal timing and multiple electronic message signs placed on Highway 84 West and Highway 231 North warning motorists of the road closure between Bauman Drive and Fortner Street on the circle.

"We were highly pleased," Metzger said. "Based on what it could have been, it went quite well."

There were a few hiccups. Metzger said. Some 18-wheelers wound up traveling the circle all the way to the construction point and were detoured on Bauman Drive, a small neighborhood road not intended to accommodate large trucks.

Brantley Kirk, public information officer for the southeast region of the Alabama Department of Transportation, said opening the southbound lanes of traffic four days early helped mitigate the congestion caused by the detour.

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JAY HARE/DOTHAN EAGLE

Alabama Department of Transportation workers observe the process of the bridge slide on Ross Clark Circle.

Electronic Solicitation of a Child

Two victims in case involving Dale County teacher

BY MATT ELOFSON
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Dale County Sheriff's officials say there were two victims in the electronic solicitation of a child for unlawful sex act charges filed against a former Dale County Schools teacher.

Sheriff's Capt. Mason Bynum confirmed the charges filed against Scotty Snell, 42, of Dothan, a former middle school



Snell

two felony counts of electronic solicitation of a child for an un-

lawful sex act. Bail was set at a total of \$10,000 on each charge during Snell's first appearance in court Tuesday morning.

The charges stemmed from a complaint filed with the Dale County Sheriff's Office last Saturday alleging improper contact and communication had occurred between Snell and a student.

Bynum confirmed the charges filed were in connection with

improper communication Snell allegedly had with two girls, ages 14 and 15.

"One victim just didn't have a cellphone so she was communicating with an iPad, and the other victim was communicating via iPhone," Bynum said. "We don't know when it started but we know it's been active within the last several weeks."

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Troy Elementary gets realistic archery targets

BY JIM COOK
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TROY — Bambi beware. Troy Elementary School's young archers now have new tools to teach them exactly where to shoot when hunting with bow and arrow.

Troy Elementary School recently received a grant from the Troy City Schools Education Foundation to purchase Rinehart 3-D animal targets. The targets are mock-ups of animals commonly found in the forest, such as deer. The targets provide a realistic opportunity for students to learn to make a clean kill. Made of self-healing foam, the targets quickly seal back up after being shot.

Forrest Lee, Troy Elementary physical education coach, said the targets and archery instruction help him teach hunter ed-



JIM COOK/DOTHAN EAGLE

Kaley Lecroy and other Troy Elementary students shoot in archery class Wednesday.

ucation curriculum to students. Lee said the school offers hunter education to

help students prepare to get their hunter's license when they are 16. Under

that age, they may hunt with a licensed adult. Lee said teaching students

about responsible hunting at a young age is important.

"Students are taught the importance of protecting and managing our wildlife, hunting responsibly, ethics, survival skills, wildlife identification and other topics as it relates to hunter education," Lee said. "Archery was added to our program three years ago and the interest in archery has exploded. Our kids love it and the addition of 3-D targets will further the interests of students in the sport of archery and bow-hunting."

Lee said archery is offered to students in grades three to six at Troy Elementary. Local middle and high school students also can take courses at their schools. Troy Elementary, Charles Henderson Middle School and Charles Henderson High

School field archery teams in state competitions. Lee said having the 3-D targets gives his students an edge in competition, where a 3-D target shoot is an optional event.

"We may be the only school in the state that has these," he said.

Kaley Lecroy is a sixth-grader participating in the archery program.

"It helps me to focus, coming in after class every day," she said.

Lecroy said the course helped her prepare for her hunter education exam.

"I already knew most of the parts about the bow and arrow," she said.

Caleb Watkins, also a sixth-grade student, said he enjoys the calm target shooting with a bow provides.

"You just hold steady, find your aiming point — stuff like that," he said.

Engineer

From Page 1A

in 1988. Mr. Engineer had its first customer installation in 1986, after the Tews showcased Mr. Engineer at a trade show in Atlanta and caught the attention of Oxford Industries in Luverne.

In 1995, Jerry Tew said IBM presented him a contract to market Mr. Engineer in the U.S.

"Technology has been good to us, and it's been fun to sell," he said.

Jerry Tew said he used the DOS operating system for Mr. Engineer's first-generation software and hardware, which consisted of a computer monitor, a cabinet and outsourced keypads to connect to companies' machines. Jerome Tew said the equipment was able to send a page to officials when a condition at a factory fell outside a certain parameter.

"When we're able to leave this all by itself and walk away, we're telling the operator 'this is your chance to tell us what's going on' because a lot of times it may have not been the operator's fault," Jerome Tew said. "It may have been management that set the bar too high. If you set the bar too high, the software is going to tell us what's going on during the day."

The Tews said they trav-

eled throughout the world promoting Mr. Engineer as "not just a product, but a strategy." They offered what may be considered traditional Southern hospitality by modifying the program as necessary on site for some companies, and they offered free upgrades. Jerry Tew said the brand expanded to 60 companies in 14 different countries, with 165 installations.

After years of success, Jerry Tew said Mr. Engineer fell dormant around 1996 and 1997 after NAFTA.

With Wex-Tex among industries shutting down in the U.S. as companies relocated to Asia, Jerry Tew said he went into consulting work. Jerome Tew found a job in computer science at a local law firm.

But the elder Tew said he never gave up on improving Mr. Engineer.

Continuing what they started

Jerry said a phone call a few years ago seeking Mr. Engineer in Nicaragua was the beginning of a new era for the company.

Nicaragua was the first to experience what the Tews call the "second generation" of Mr. Engineer, which consists of a Windows 8.1 platform tablet versus the multiple pieces of hardware the first generation required.

Jerry Tew said the call a

year ago from Coats Group solidified plans to no longer sell the product, but rather work with his son on making their product even better and providing day-to-day global support.

"From Day One, I did it for one reason: to help the operator change and correct a problem," he said. "It's a pleasure to walk in a plant and for ...an operator to hug me and tell me that she was about to lose her job, but someone brought in Mr. Engineer and it saved her job. I love to go back months later and hear the success stories."

Jerry Tew insists it was no dream that prompted Mr. Engineer. "I was just a guy in computer science and felt the computer was the future. I was a veteran industrial engineer trained by A.B. Clark, and I was blessed to put the two together. You've gotta recognize when you're blessed," he said.

Jerome Tew said to be able to travel the world with his father and to continually advance Mr. Engineer has also been a blessing.

"You travel the world and you see and do different things. The thing is being able to travel the world with your dad not only working but having fun," he said.

"We eat alike," Jerry Tew said. "We think alike."

Northview students tutor at Carver Magnet

BY JIM COOK
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Northview High School students got a chance to mentor younger students who will one day follow in their footsteps.

National Honor Society students from Northview traveled to Carver Magnet School on Tuesday to provide tutoring services to the younger students. About 25 Carver students received tutoring help from Northview High students.

Paula Whatley, a counselor at Carver, said younger students often respond well to mentoring from older students. Also, because Carver feeds to Northview, interacting with Northview

students can help Carver students prepare for high school.

"It gives them other kids to look up to who set high goals for themselves," she said.

Whatley said most of the students receiving tutoring assistance on Tuesday were there for a little extra help with algebra.

Ryan Richards, a Northview teacher, said that the older students all volunteered for the program. Richards said National Honor Society students are required to have at least 10 hours of volunteer service.

Richards said many of his students volunteered happily. "It's good to see them

jump on board like this," he said.

Brenly Mccullough, a Northview student, said he enjoyed the opportunity to help younger students master mathematics.

"I think the best thing is to be able to connect with other students and see them understand something they didn't understand before," he said.

Latasha Williams, a Carver student, said she enjoyed the opportunity to be tutored by older students.

Williams said getting extra help from a fellow student was less intimidating than having to ask a teacher for help.

"It's a great thing," she said.

Tornado strikes women's prison

The Associated Press

ALICEVILLE — Federal authorities say a tornado damaged the administration building of a women's prison in Alabama, but caused no injuries to inmates or the staff.

The U.S. Department of Justice said in a statement to The Associated Press late Wednesday morning that the administration building is running on generator power at Federal Correctional Institution Aliceville.

Officials said the all of the inmate

housing units were running on their normal power source.

The Justice Department said the facility in Pickens County is a low-security female institution and houses about 1,850 inmates.

Officials said the tornado struck the facility around 5:25 p.m. Tuesday.

National Weather Service Meteorologist Jim Stefkovich says survey crews are canvassing other areas of west Alabama where suspected tornadoes struck and will give updates on damage assessments Wednesday afternoon.

Landfill

From Page 1A

The landfill and the proposed expansion are located in east Dothan, not far from the Burkett Subdivision, just off Ross Clark Circle.

The names of the complainants are redacted on the complaint obtained by the *Dothan Eagle*.

The complaint claims the landfill expansion will cause the following adverse effects on the nearby population:

- » Unpleasant odors
- » Increased population of flies that are bothersome and could carry infectious diseases
- » Increased population of buzzards that deposit droppings and may be carriers of infectious diseases
- » Increased population of rats, raccoons and opossums around the area that could be carriers of infectious diseases.
- » Increased noise
- » Decreased property values

A spokesperson for the Alabama Department of Environmental Management said the department has not officially received notice of the complaint and it would not be appropriate to comment at this time.

The city has hit several obstacles in the landfill expansion process that have delayed the matter.

» The city committed to purchase 182 acres adjacent to the current landfill in October 2012, but a discrepancy over closing details delayed the purchase until March 2014.

» A group of residents who live near the proposed expansion organized to fight the decision. Some in the group claimed former city officials had promised the next landfill would be built elsewhere.

» The city's board of zoning adjustment declined to approve a zoning exception for the city that was believed to be needed to move forward with construction. The city appealed the decision to circuit court, where a judge

ruled the city did not need zoning board approval to build the landfill.

» Also, ADEM took a rare but not unprecedented step of holding a public hearing in June of 2013 to gather comments on the renewal of the city's solid waste permit.

District 1 Commissioner Kevin Dorsey and District 2 Commissioner Amos Newsome have consistently voted against resolutions connected to landfill expansion at the current site. Other commissioners have voted in favor of expanding at the current site.

A City of Dothan Public Works report stated other alternatives were considered, but all were significantly more costly. Those alternatives included the incineration of garbage, turning waste into energy, using a private landfill or garbage collection company and/or building the landfill at another site.

The city is currently hauling garbage to a landfill in Campbellton, Florida, because the current landfill has reached capacity.

other and were not currently students of Snell's.

"Based on the evidence we have before us, there was not any sexual contact between them," Bynum said. "As of today, we don't expect any more charges, but it is still ongoing and there is the potential for people to come forward with evidence." If convicted, Snell faces

two to 20 years in prison for each of the Class B felony crimes of electronic solicitation of a child for an unlawful sex act.



Case

From Page 1A

The warrants filed in the criminal charges show deputies charged Snell with using an iPhone to send text messages to the victims.

Bynum said the two victims are not related to each

Circle

From Page 1A

"Bridge replacement on the southbound lanes of Ross Clark Circle had its expected and unexpected moments. This is a major artery through Dothan, so any time you disturb traffic flow, congestion is expected. This is compounded when you rec-

ognize it is heavily traveled by local commuters, school buses, commercial traffic and tourists. However, because of efficient construction practices and good weather, we were able to reopen both lanes four days ahead of schedule. That was an unexpected surprise," Kirk said.

Workers had seven days to perform a bridge slide technique to move a

bridge over a culvert near Eye Center South on the southbound lanes of the circle. The work was performed in less than half the time expected.

Workers must also perform the same technique over the culvert on the northbound lanes.

No announcement has been made concerning that detour, but it could be set as early as next weekend.

Annie Pearl's

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