

Weather

Mostly sunny. Tonight, mostly clear.

High: 60 Low: 31

Page 2A

Obituaries

- James H. "Jimmie" Baker
- Robert O. Baxter
- Evelyn K. Hobbs
- Frankie L. Knight
- Betty Jean Cannon Simmons
- Fred Douglas Wynn

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Local



■ The Lee County Humane Society has seen a 74 percent increase in new puppies. And due to the influx of new dogs, the LCHS is slashing adoption fees. **Page 3A**

■ The Opelika Fire Department is staying busy in the New Year. The OFD responded to its fourth fire of 2010. **Page 3A**

State



■ Gov. Bob Riley is relying on \$1 billion in federal stimulus money that he doesn't support for fiscal 2011 budgets. **Page 5A**

■ The state Legislature moved one step closer to outlawing texting while driving. **Page 5A**

Opinion



Columnist Thomas Sowell says that the Obama administration pays lip service to matters of national security. **Page 4A**

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OPELIKA-AUBURN NEWS

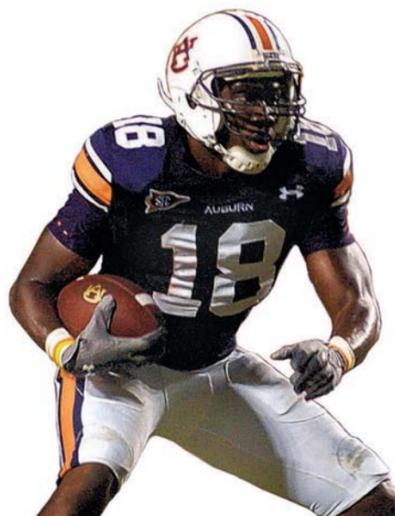
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AU FOOTBALL:
Could Kodi Burns emerge as the Tigers' No. 3 wide receiver?

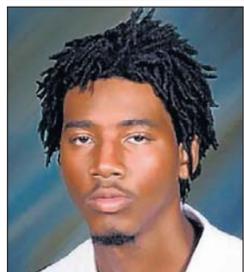
PAGE 1B

'HE'LL BE SORELY MISSED'



VASHA HUNT | OPELIKA-AUBURN NEWS

Terry Thomas, a football and basketball player for Lanett High School, was accidentally killed by his friend LeMarcus Wright, a former Lanett football player, at the Sunlit gas station in West Point, Ga.



Terry Thomas

'I hate for anything to happen to a young man with his whole life ahead of him.'

Ronnie Sikes
Former Lanett football coach



LeMarcus Wright

School grieves loss of athlete

DAVID MORRISON AND ED ENOCH
STAFF WRITERS

Lanett's boys basketball team will have Terry Thomas' number embroidered on the back of their jerseys for the rest of the season.

And then, coach Steven Davis said, none of his players will ever wear No. 1 again.

"I'm going to take No. 1 out of my numbering system," Davis said. "As long as I coach, I'm not going to use that number again."

"That's just my way of

honoring him."

Thomas, an 18-year-old Lanett student-athlete, was accidentally shot and killed Monday night in West Point, Ga., according to West Point Police Department Capt. Robert Fawley.

"It's an unfortunate accident and someone who had a gun that shouldn't have," Fawley said.

Now, Thomas' childhood friend and a former Panther's football star LeMarcus Wright sits in a Georgia jail, charged with his friend's accidental death.

Thomas, who played

football and basketball for the Panthers, was sitting in a car at the Sunlit convenience store in the 100 block of 8th Street in West Point when he was shot, Fawley said. Wright, 20, was attempting to unload a handgun when it accidentally fired and hit Thomas.

"He was shot in the back," Troup County Coroner Jeff Cook said. "The bullet damaged his heart and left lung."

Thomas entered the store and collapsed, according to

SEE DEATH, PAGE 8A

Police investigate BankTrust robbery

BRITTANY WHITLEY
STAFF WRITER

Auburn police are searching for a suspect in a bank robbery after a man took an undisclosed amount of money from the BankTrust located in the 400 block of North Dean Road Wednesday at around 3:39 p.m.

No one was hurt during the incident, said Auburn Police Division assistant chief Tommy Dawson.

"Basically we had a male subject go into the bank, produce a weapon ... and take an undisclosed amount of cash from the bank," he said.

According to a release from APD, the suspect is described as a black male, approximately 6-foot-tall, 180 pounds, in his early 30s, wearing a blue or purple baseball cap, blue jeans, white tennis shoes and a shirt with wide red and blue horizontal stripes, and armed with a black semi-automatic handgun.

Police say he may have left the scene in a white service-type truck with a toolbox bed.

"Really, we would like the public's help on this," Dawson said.

Anyone with information can call the Auburn Police Division at 334-501-3140 or call the APD's anonymous tip line at 334-501-7337.



COURTESY AUBURN POLICE DIVISION

Auburn police are looking for this man, who is suspected of robbing BankTrust on North Dean Road in Auburn.

Effects of Haitian tragedy extend past Caribbean

AU professor in Haiti OK, family concerned

DONATHAN PRATER
STAFF WRITER

When Lovina Shannon first heard that an earthquake had struck Haiti Tuesday evening, it was news that hit close to home for her.

Shannon's husband, Dr. Dennis Shannon, a professor with Auburn University's department of agronomy, was in Haiti at the time of Tuesday's 7.0 magnitude earthquake that has reportedly left thousands dead or injured. Dr. Shannon was visiting the Caribbean island as part of a trip sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development.

About an hour after Lovina learned about the earthquake through a television news broadcast, she received a phone call from her husband at their Auburn home.

"I spoke with him briefly last night and he told me that he was all right," she said. "As I listened to his voice, I could tell he was very nervous."

Their conversation was cut short due to the fact that her husband's cell phone was "going



SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

The Shannon family was in "disbelief" when they learned about the quake that struck Haiti, where Auburn University professor Dennis Shannon was staying. From left are Whitney, Nicole, Lovina, Melisa, Jeremiah and Dennis.

dead," Lovina said. Officials from Auburn University have also been in close contact with her on any news she has received from her husband.

"It felt good to know that he was OK, but I was in disbelief when I heard that an earthquake had struck Haiti," she said. "I've lived there before and know that it's a small island so

Humanitarian efforts underway

DONATHAN PRATER
STAFF WRITER

With a death toll estimated to be in the thousands and climbing after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti Tuesday, efforts to assist the Caribbean nation with relief support are pouring in from a number of international and local agencies, including the Lee County Red Cross.

The local Red Cross chapter has been in close contact with the American Red Cross since news of the earthquake broke Tuesday.

"We don't have any local responders in Haiti at this time, but we already have people on the ground there," said Jennifer Ryan, executive director of the Lee County Red Cross.

A Red Cross International Response

INSIDE For more on Haiti, go to **PAGE 6A.**

anything that happened there would shake up the whole place."

Dr. Shannon was staying at Villa Creole, a hotel located in Pétion-Ville, a short distance

SEE SHANNON, PAGE 8A

SEE RELIEF, PAGE 8A



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