



'THE PEOPLE'S POET'

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OPELIKA-AUBURN NEWS

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SEC MEETINGS

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SPORTS, 1B

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ELECTION 2014

Low voter turnout expected Tuesday

BY SARA FALLIGANT
 sfalligant@oanow.com

Lee County's primary elections are set for Tuesday, and while the Board of Registrars said 84,581 active voters have registered as of April 30, turnout is expected to be low.



Flynt

"We've been told by (Probate Judge Bill English) that it will be less than 20 percent," said Leigh Reed with the Board of Registrars.

Historically, Alabama primaries draw few voters, said Wayne Flynt, Ph.D., professor emeritus of Auburn University's History Department who studies Alabama voting.

"It's always very, very low," Flynt said. "You've got a combination of historically low turnout plus a Democratic ticket with no contest."

Flynt added the Republican ballot is "pretty hotly contested."

"I think there's strong interest, but that doesn't mean great turnout," he said.

Low voter turnout is not specific to Alabama. Steven Brown, Ph.D., chair of Auburn University's Political Science Department, said primary elections across the board receive far less turnout than general elections.

Although turnout is low, Brown said primaries are significant because they determine what candidates will run in the November general elections.

"Primaries are very important," he said. "It starts with the primary process."

This cycle, incumbents are running in all but one local race. Flynt said there is always a possibility incumbents might be in trouble.

"(People) don't think government

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AUBURN MAN CHARGED WITH FATAL SHOOTING, 3A

Circuit judge overturns Ala. Accountability Act

Some area educators pleased

BY SARA FALLIGANT
 sfalligant@oanow.com

A Montgomery circuit judge ruled the Alabama Accountability Act, which grants tax credits to parents who transfer their children from failing public schools to private schools, unconstitutional Wednesday.

Circuit Judge Gene Reese struck down the Act, saying it violates the Alabama Constitution's stipulation that the Legislature have only one subject in a bill, according to The Associated Press.

The law was challenged in court by the Alabama Education Association.

The ruling comes as a blow for Republican legislators, who helped pass the law in 2013. The Institute for Justice, a group defending the law, says it will appeal the ruling, the AP reports.

Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh (R-Calhoun, St. Clair) and Rep. Chad Fincher (R-Semmes) sponsored the bill.

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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh, R-Anniston (left), talks with Sen. Trip Pittman, R-Daphne, on the final day of the 2013 regular legislative session. Marsh said Circuit Judge Gene Reese's decision to strike down the Alabama Accountability Act is unfortunate, but adds he believes the law will stand on appeal.

Adrian Heard sits on the bank of the Lee County Public Fishing Lake while fishing on Wednesday. The lake is open Tuesday to Sunday from sunrise to sunset, and Wednesday to Sunday after July 1. Teresa Lake said she and her husband, Dwight, plan on retiring on June 30 after managing the lake for 16 years.

A Day on the Lake



ALBERT CESARE/OPELIKA-AUBURN NEWS

Auburn

City Council discusses 2015 budget

BY KRISTEN OLIVER
 koliver@oanow.com

Funding to build future city schools and other capital projects was a few of the many items discussed Wednesday during a work session held by the Auburn City Council.

During the meeting, the council discussed possible changes to the 2015 and 2016 fiscal years' budget to possibly allow for the construction of new schools, as well as other projects the city is planning to undertake. Auburn City Manag-

er Charlie Duggan walked through the proposed budget with the council using a slideshow presentation.

Duggan said the city's priority initiatives are school funding, transportation infrastructure, economic development, implementation of the Downtown Master Plan, the Renew Opelika Road Corridor Plan and maintaining high quality of citizen services.

The proposed budget showed an appropriation of approximately \$15.2

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