



Troy Brock to start today as Rome-Floyd fire chief

The City Commission also approves revisions to Rome's parks and recreation ordinance.

Page 2A

FMC plans \$2.7 million psych center upgrade

Hospital officials want to make Floyd Behavioral Health Center an emergency receiving facility.

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Eagles' state run ends

Coosa's girls tennis team falls in the second round to GAC.

SPORTS, page 1B

Hawks fall; series tied

The Atlanta NBA team will return home to host Game 5 Wednesday.

SPORTS, page 1B

Man to return \$30K in RICO case

● A hearing scheduled today for the former Floyd County Schools employee has been canceled.

By Alan Riquelmy
Staff Writer
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Derry Richardson, the former Floyd County schools employee facing RICO

accusations, will hand over \$30,000 he removed from the bank on the same day authorities seized his Summerville home, court records state.

The former maintenance director agreed Monday to hand over the lump sum in a "prompt manner." The agreement between Richardson and attorney Brian Bojo, the receiver or custodian of Richardson's assets, led to the cancellation of a hearing today about the money.

RN-T.com

Read this story online to see previous reports about the Floyd County Schools police investigation and staff resignations.

"That means we don't have a hearing, because we've worked it out," Bojo said. Bojo has said similar hearings often

are postponed or canceled during good-faith negotiations.

At issue was \$30,000 Richardson withdrew on April 14 — the day authorities descended on his home, seizing it and the assets inside under the Georgia Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act.

Richardson withdrew the money to hire an attorney.

Please see RICO 2A

Strawberry fields for Floyd County

Pick your own berries

By Alan Riquelmy
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The secret is to find the reddest strawberries.

You lift the leaves to find the best, grab one and put it in the bucket sitting next to you. Then you move down the row, searching for your next pick.

"We've been coming out here for years," said Judy Fox as she searched the leaves at LCCL Strawberry Farm for the best pick. "These are fresh."

Her daughter April Walraven crouched a few yards away filling her own bucket with strawberries. An overabundance of rain damages the fruit, she said, making them mushy and prone to rot.

Walraven had no problems Monday hunting for strawberries. The more vibrant, redder berries were sweeter, she said. She had a bucket next to her quickly filling with the fruit.

"They'll freeze them, put them on cereal or eat them with nothing else. Fox figures they'll be gone in a week.

"We'll come back and get some more," she added.

Several people wandered the rows of strawberries Monday afternoon at the 3743 Old Dal-



Alan Riquelmy / Rome News-Tribune

Kaitlyn Kirk (left) picks strawberries Monday with her 3-year-old daughter Raivyn at LCCL Strawberry Farm.

RN-T.com

Read this story online to see a Google map of LCCL Strawberry Farm and for a link to find more pick-your-own farms.



Alan Riquelmy / Rome News-Tribune

April Walraven (foreground) and her mother Judy Fox look for the reddest strawberries at LCCL Strawberry Farm.

ton Road business. Customers can opt for employees to pick the berries for them, but most filled their own buckets.

"It's what we used to do with our grandmother," said Kaitlyn Kirk, who traipsed through the fields with her 3-year-old daughter Raivyn in tow.

"Just get the biggest ones," said Dellynn Howe, Kirk's sister. "That's what our grandmother would always say, and they've got to be bright red."

It was the first time to

visit the farm for Kim Howe, mother of Kirk and Dellynn Howe. Kim Howe always had to work, and her own mother would take the girls strawberry-picking.

"We're doing it in her memory," Dellynn Howe said of her grandmother, Carol Touchstone.

Minutes later the buckets were filled, and families wandered over to the cashier to pay their tabs.

Pick your own, and it's \$2 a pound. Strawberry

ice cream and soft drinks also are available.

Moni Owen, who works at the farm, pointed to picnic tables near the two rear strawberry fields. Customers can bring their own food, pick some berries and enjoy a meal.

LCCL Strawberry Field opens each year in April and closes around mid-June, giving pickers a six- to eight-week window to find the sweetest berries. The farm is open seven days a week, though inclement weather can change their schedule. The farm's Facebook page — LCCL Strawberry Farm — is regularly updated with any closures.

Owen's advice to find the best? Touchstone and others were right.

"Pick bright red strawberries," Owen said. "They're the sweetest."

Jamie Barton wins the 'Heisman Trophy' of music

● The opera star started out listening to bluegrass, the Grateful Dead and The Beatles in her family's Armuchee farmhouse.

By Verena Dobnik
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The prize dubbed the Heisman Trophy for singers is going to a Rome, Georgia, native with an earth-shattering voice — and an earthy style.

Announced Sunday, the winner of the 2015 Richard Tucker Award is mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton. The opera star recently appeared barefoot in jeans, giggling and cradling a glass of Oregon wine — offstage, chatting with a friend on YouTube.

Onstage in costume, she's being compared to the past century's finest vocalists.

The \$50,000 prize goes to a major young American singer. It's named after Tucker, the late tenor and Brooklyn native who started out as a cantor in synagogues.

Barton said she started out listening to bluegrass, the Grateful Dead and The Beatles "in the middle of nowhere" — a small farmhouse in the Armuchee community near Rome, at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. "My parents were hippies."

Her teenage rebellion was to dip into opera — and discover she had a voice. But she said half her iPod is still filled with bluegrass.

"There are many stigmas attached to opera: that it's only for people who have a lot of money, that it's more boring than church," she said with a laugh.

Not true, insisted Barton, speaking by phone from Houston, Texas, where she's singing in a production of Wagner's "Die Walkure." She said it's as exciting as "going to a Pink Floyd concert; it's an experience."

Of the people she's convinced to see their first opera, "I have a 90 percent survival rate; they return," she said. "But the hardest thing is to get their butt in the seats."



Jamie Barton

TODAY'S YOUNG ARTIST



Today's artwork is by Hannah Burkhalter, a Pepperell third-grader.

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Bomb brings together author, vets

● A Darlington student sets up a meeting between a school speaker and Romans who helped transport an A-bomb in 1953.

By Doug Walker
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A series of chance meetings brought together a Cedartown teen, an author of a book about the first nuclear bomb and a pair of Korean War veterans on the Darlington campus.

Longtime friends Frank Barron and Buddy Andrews were at the farmers market in Rome when the subject of the U.S. Navy and the Korean War came up. At some point, Andrews said that he had been on board a ship taking an atomic bomb to Japan in 1953 — and Barron real-



Doug Walker / Rome News-Tribune

Roman Buddy Andrews (left) points to the section of his ship, the USS Chara, that was carrying an atomic bomb to Japan for potential use in Korea in 1953. Andrews was showing the ship to Steve Sheinkin, author of "Bomb: The Race to Build — and Steal — the World's Most Dangerous Weapon." Roman Frank Barron (background) was aboard a destroyer, the USS Eversole, which was escorting the Chara.

ized he had been on a ship escorting Andrews' ship.

Some time later, Barron, a retired Coca-Cola Co. executive, was helping Darlington student Daniel

Morris do some research on the company. He mentioned he had just finished reading a book called "Bomb: The Race to Build — and Steal — the World's Most

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Read this story online for a link to the website for the book "Bomb: The Race to Build — and Steal — the World's Most Dangerous Weapon."

Dangerous Weapon" by Steven Sheinkin, and Morris said he had just started it.

When Sheinkin was scheduled to speak at Darlington, Morris helped put together a pre-speech breakfast on Monday to bring Barron, Andrews and Sheinkin together at the same table.

Barron related his story of the spring of 1953, when North Korea was refusing to negotiate a settlement to end the war. He said President Dwight D. Eisenhower decided to send a bomb to Japan as leverage against the North Koreans.

Please see BOMB 2A