



MARIETTA DUGOUT HAS A LITTLE FUN WITH OPPOSING PITCHER / 1C

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McCollum tower getting at least 2-month reprieve

Legal challenges to closures force federal regulators to delay shutdowns

From staff and wire reports

The air traffic control tower at McCollum Airport in Kennesaw will continue to operate for at least two months after federal regulators announced the closing of 149 small airport towers across the country is being delayed until June 15.

McCollum, along with six other Georgia airports and 142 others nationally, had expected either to be shut down, or to have to find alternative financing to stay open, after it was announced that federal budget cuts would be shutting them down Sunday.

The six other Georgia control

towers also getting a reprieve are: Fulton County-Brown Field, Gwinnett County-Briscoe Field in Lawrenceville, Athens-Ben Epps, Columbus Metropolitan, Southwest Georgia Regional in Albany and Middle Georgia Regional in Macon.

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Staff/Laura Moon

The McCollum Airport traffic control tower was scheduled to be shut down Sunday because of sweeping cutbacks by the federal government.

Teenager faces 26 years after conviction for fatal shooting in jealous rage

By Leo Hohmann
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MARIETTA — The sad story of a love triangle that came to a bloody end played out in Cobb County Superior Court this week, ending with the jury convicting 19-year-old Darius Dionne Oliver of voluntary manslaughter.

Oliver, then 18, kicked in the back door of his ex-girlfriend's home at Mableton Reserve Apartments in Austell on April 30, 2012, chasing her up a stairway in a violent rage. Three other people were in the apartment with the woman when Oliver burst through the door that day. One of them, 41-year-old Ricardo Reese, tried to help.



Darius Oliver

Reese came running up the stairs, unarmed, to try to stop the attack. Oliver turned and shot him twice in the chest.

"All three of those in the apartment testified and were very good witnesses," said Don Geary, the chief assistant district attorney who prosecuted the case.

Geary said Oliver did not know Reese, who was apparently his ex's new boyfriend.

"(Oliver) lived in Atlanta and came to visit his girlfriend, or ex-girlfriend depending on who you ask, and basically committed an armed home invasion and went after her," Geary said.

Reese tried to stop Oliver from attacking her, "and Oliver shot him twice right there on the steps, killed him in cold blood," Geary said.

The jury began its deliberations at 1 p.m. Thursday and didn't return with a verdict until shortly after 3 p.m. Friday. Jurors

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'AND ... WE DRINK THIS?'



Staff/Kelly J. Huff

Marietta home-schooled fifth-grader Eric Dean gets an up-close look under the microscope Friday of a water sample as part of the Cobb County Natural Resources Management. The science program includes a study of animals classes, symbiosis and the use of microscopes. More photos are on **Page 2B**.

Principal fighting claims in alleged rape case

By Lindsay Field
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MARIETTA — Awtrey Middle School principal Jeff Crawford is fighting Cobb Schools over an allegation that he failed to report an incident involving a student whom district investigators say was raped.

The incident involved two seventh-grade students, a boy and a girl, in which the girl allegedly was raped while she was at her home, according to public records obtained by the Marietta Daily Journal.

Crawford, a 21-year educator with 14 years of experience as an administrator, is accused of incompetency, insubordination and willful neglect of duties for failure to report a female student's allegation of rape.

The school district also faults Crawford for not



Jeff Crawford

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Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History archivist Sallie Loy helps researchers during the recent inaugural Museum Night.



Special to the MDJ

Kennesaw Civil War museum to build \$1M research center

By Bridgette Bonner
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KENNESAW — The Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History will be breaking ground on a \$1 million research center this year. The museum has more resources than it has room to store.

Executive Director Richard Banz said the research center will be the museum's first expansion

since 2003, when an educational center for children was built. The research center will be a place where history buffs can access records, documents, photographs, news articles and other artifacts with the help of museum staff.

The museum is the only history museum in the state affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution, Banz said.

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Cobb Life talks to local male leaders — and the ladies, too — and asks about their role models, inspiration and how they define **manhood**.

COMING SUNDAY

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OUTSIDE

Sunny

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HIGH

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Research

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Through donations — primarily from the Southern Railroad Historical Association, Norfolk Southern, the Kennesaw Museum Foundation, the city of Kennesaw, Georgia Power, the Vaughan Foundation and a few others — museum officials have collected \$1.1 million for the research center expansion project, Banz said.

One donor stood out, he said. Gary Eubanks, an attorney in Marietta, donated \$40,000 for the operations of the center. His contribution helps with utility costs, staff salaries and purchasing equipment for storing the artifacts.

“Most museums or research facilities like this are closing down,” Banz said. “We’re going in the other direction.”

The center will have search aids similar to a library card catalog for people to find what they’re looking for, he said. The artifacts are in a warehouse, but the goal with the center expansion is to make them

permanently accessible.

“There are papers from all the past presidents of the Southern Railroad, nearly a million photos of old railroads, blueprints of cars, information about the role railroads played in civil rights and news articles about Jim Crow laws,” he said.

To add a personal touch, museum staff has collected letters from soldiers and families during the Civil War, military diaries and photos, along with other family donations. Examples include family donations of medals of honor from those fighting for railroad policies.

Curious citizens, historians or Smithsonian staff have come to conduct research in the past, Banz said. There have also been people trying to make models of locomotives who have been able to do so with blueprints from the Kennesaw museum.

Artifacts date back as far as the 1830s, he said.

A groundbreaking will take place later this year, and construction will take nearly nine months, Banz said. The museum staff doesn’t have a date yet for the groundbreaking.

Reprieve

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The Federal Aviation Administration said Friday it needs more time to deal with legal challenges to the closures.

Also, about 50 airport authorities and other “stakeholders” have indicated they want to fund the operations of the towers themselves rather than see them shut down, and more time will be needed to work out those plans, the agency said in a statement.

The first 24 tower closures were scheduled to begin Sunday, with the rest coming over the next few weeks. Obama administration officials have said the closures are necessary to accomplish government-wide automatic spending cuts required by Congress.

Despite the delay, the FAA said all 149 of the airport towers, which are operated by private contractors for the agency, will be shut down or turned over to local authorities on June 15. The new schedule is to implement the shutdowns at once, rather than a gradual phase-in, as had been planned.

The U.S. Contract Tower Association, which represents the companies that operate contract towers, has challenged the closures in federal court. “The administration has decided to make tower closures the poster child of sequestration (automatic spending cuts),” said the

group’s director, J. Spencer Dickerson. “We believe there are other ways they could have skinned this cat.”

Federal officials have insisted that the closures wouldn’t affect safety. And there is evidence that with improving safety, some of the closures would make economic sense.

It turns out that the FAA has been using 30-year-old data on aircraft collisions to justify the cost of operating many of the control towers, even though accident rates have improved significantly over that time.

Had the FAA used more current data, it’s probable that some low-traffic airport towers operated by private contractors would no longer have met the agency’s criteria for funding, industry officials say. But the FAA has long been under pressure from members of Congress to open new towers at airports in their states, not to close them.

The FAA began paying contractors to staff and operate towers at a handful of small airports after President Ronald Reagan fired striking air traffic controllers in 1981. Today, there are 251 towers operated by private contractors at airports across the country at an average annual cost of more than \$500,000 each.

Principal

Continued from Page 1A

returning to school on Jan. 18 following a meeting regarding the accusations.

Awtrey counselor Cynthia Zell and Assistant Principal Anita Evans were initially investigated but district spokesman Jay Dillon said the resolution of Evans’ case depends on Crawford’s hearing in May and Zell has been cleared.

The district investigation was handled by Mary Finlayson and Jay Morrissey.

Dillon said the district does not comment on personnel matters.

Shortly after the mid-January meeting about the charges, Crawford contacted Marietta attorneys Justin O’Dell and Leslie O’Neal.

“Mr. Crawford’s involvement in this situation was virtually non-existent,” O’Dell said. “It is clear, based on the limited amount of information presented to him, that this was not a mandatory report situation.”

According to investigation notes acquired through the Journal’s Open Records Request, a female student at Awtrey was upset during a school dance. Two of her friends asked what was wrong, and the word “rape” came up.

The girls told Zell about the accusations, and then both Zell and Evans had a meeting with the student and learned that there was never a rape, but she was upset about a touching incident with another boy at her home.

The counselor and assistant principal spoke with the child’s mother, referred her to a therapist with Success for all Students, and the situation was thought to be resolved.

The therapist contacted the Department of Family and Children Services in December to file a report, and Kennesaw Police investigated but found no crime had been committed.

The incident was believed to be resolved.

For unknown reasons, Crawford was called into Area Assistant Superintendent Jim Carter’s office in early January and asked about the “rape,” told him he would receive a day of suspension without pay and was given 48 hours to request a hearing.

“CCSD brought charges based on facts that do not exist and are not supported by any of the witness interviews,” O’Dell said. “It is

disappointing that CCSD officials have continued to misrepresent this situation as an ‘alleged rape involving two students’ when all of the interviews confirm that this student never made any such allegation.”

O’Dell argues that the district’s entire investigation has been suspect.

“They have conducted interviews, which went unrecorded or in which the recorder mysteriously stopped,” he said. “They have knowingly withheld critical evidence from me on more than one occasion. They have made false statements about the evidence, the law and policies to witnesses in the course of interviews in order to get them to accept blame and punishment.”

Because of the district’s failure to hand over specific investigation materials, the mid-March tribunal has been rescheduled for May 14.

O’Dell said they are appealing the facts the district based its charges on because they don’t believe they are accurate and don’t follow state law or system policies.

“Mr. Crawford is overwhelmingly concerned about the manner in which the investigation was conducted and the amount of evidence that was misrepresented and withheld,” O’Dell said.

Crawford said he believes it’s important that the issues are brought to light because other educators are facing similar situations within the school district.

“If something is not done to change the process, educators will continue to be falsely accused and improperly punished,” he said.

John Adams with Educators First, an organization that represents district employees, agrees.

“Teachers and administrators continue to be very much on edge because of the ever-changing policies and procedures on manda-

Timeline of events that led to charges by Cobb Schools, based on Crawford investigation file

- Oct. 30, 2012:** Two Awtrey students are told by a student that she was raped.
- Oct. 31, 2012:** Zell is told by two students that a student was raped.
- Zell tells Evans, who tells Crawford.
 - Evans and Zell meet with the student and learn that the alleged rape related to an incident from 2008, but that she was upset Oct. 30 because she was uncomfortable with a boy at school who touched her inappropriately at her home.
 - The student’s mother is told of the incident involving the touching by a boy and is informed of options regarding contacting police, but she said she would go home and talk to her husband about incident.
- Nov. 1, 2012:** Evans and Zell contact Success For All Students therapist Megan Allen about the incident.
- Evans lets Crawford know about the outcome regarding the mother’s visit and referral to therapist.
- Dec. 7, 2012:** Allen meets with the student’s mother and learns about the alleged incident.
- Dec. 11, 2012:** Allen calls DFCS to see if a referral had been made. She was told no and to contact Crimes Against Children to learn that a referral had not been made.
- Evans calls Allen to ask about referral to CAC.
 - Evans calls DFCS to make a referral but was told that a report was not necessary since the alleged sexual abuse did not involve a family member.
 - Evans calls student’s mother angry because the mother had not called police.
- Dec. 14, 2012:** Evans called Allen and told her that she called DFCS and was told that a report wasn’t necessary.
- Jan. 11:** Cobb Schools Investigator Jay Morrissey and Cobb Schools Public Safety Officer Randy Rogers interview Allen.
- Jan. 17:** Morrissey and Rogers interview the student and her mother.
- Morrissey interviews Zell and Evans.
- Jan. 18:** Morrissey, Cobb Schools Professional Standards and Ethics Director Mary Finlayson and Area Assistant Superintendent James Carter interview Crawford.
- Morrissey interviews Zell and Evans again.
- Jan. 22:** Morrissey and Finlayson interview the student’s mother.
- Finlayson interviews student.
- Jan. 28:** Morrissey confirms with a detective from Kennesaw Police that she had interviewed the student.
- Rogers tells Finlayson and Morrissey that the Cobb Solicitor General’s Office confirmed that Crawford, Zell and Evans all violated the mandatory reporting law.
- March 1:** Crawford receives a letter from Hinojosa advising him of a one-day suspension and charges.

tory reporting,” Adams said. “They continue to be concerned that they could be thrown under the bus.”

Last school year Kell High School Principal Trudie Donovan resigned after the district brought forth accusations that she failed to file a mandatory report within 24 hours, and a few months before that, the board approved the firing of both Tapp Middle School Principal Dr. Jerry Dority and counselor Yatta Collins for similar allegations.

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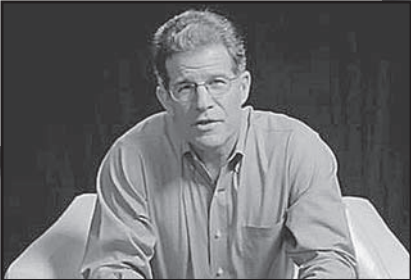
2013 Keynote Speaker Chuck Bengochea

President and CEO
The Original HoneyBaked Ham Company of Georgia, Inc.

Chuck Bengochea was born in Cuba and raised in South Florida. His family emigrated from Cuba for political reasons in 1959. He attended Cornell University. Chuck has worked for General Electric and The Coca Cola Company. In 1995 he joined The Original HoneyBaked Ham company of Georgia and in 2003, he was named President and Chief Operating Officer. In 2006 he was appointed CEO.

His passion is to take the church outside the walls—to the workplace and to our cities. He is Chairman of the Guiding Elders at Fellowship Bible Church and has been involved with The 3:15 Project which provides Christians an opportunity to take the next step in their faith walk and share their testimony with others. (www.the315project.com)

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