

Marietta Daily Journal

COBB'S LOCAL NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1866

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COMING SUNDAY



Aisle Style

Cobb Life's 2011 *Brides* magazine offers tips from wedding planners on everything from how to wow 'em with a gown, making personalized invitations, top-tier cakemakers, choosing rings and gifts and how to stage parties. Gracing the cover is Kennesaw State University student and Kennesaw resident Melissa Martin. Get all you need to know about *Brides* in Sunday's Marietta Daily Journal.

INSIDE TODAY

SPORTS



Lassiter girls after state swim '4-peat'

The Lassiter High School girls swimming team will try to extend their dominance in the pool by going after their fourth straight state championship when the tournament begins at Georgia Tech.

— Page 1C

LIFESTYLE



Marjorie's cupcakes are made with love

Marjorie Gregory Clarke of Marietta believes her cupcakes are special because they come from a recipe her mom gave her.

— Page 1D

COBB & STATE



Galleria Centre set to host flower show

The 24th annual South-eastern Flower Show returns to the Cobb Galleria Centre Feb. 25-27.

— Page 1B

Another milestone for Giffords

Congresswoman shot in head starting to speak 'more and more'

By Amanda Lee Myers
Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX — Arizona Rep. Gabrielle Giffords spoke for the first time since she was shot in the forehead, her spokesman said Wednesday, yet another significant milestone in her recovery from a traumatic brain injury.

Giffords first spoke within the past few days and is speaking "more and more,"

spokesman C.J. Karamargin said Wednesday. He didn't know what her first words were, but said that at breakfast one morning she asked for toast.

"She's working very hard and it's paying off," he told The Associated Press. "We're elated at this. We always knew Gabby is a fighter and that she's not going to let this thing win. And you know, every day is proof of that."

Six people, including a 9-year-old girl

and a federal judge, were killed in the attack outside a grocery store where Giffords was meeting with constituents. Thirteen people, including Giffords, were injured.

Other news organizations, including Politico, earlier reported that Giffords had asked for toast and was able to speak.

In a Facebook post on Tuesday, Giffords' husband Mark Kelly said his wife



U.S. Rep. Gabrielle 'Gabby' Giffords

See Milestone, Page 5A

A ROCKIN' SUCCESS



Staff/Mike Jacoby

To Your Success Vice President Zach Childers, left, company President Jim Childers, seated, and Derek LoVerde, director of sales and marketing, pose at the Acworth company's operation on Acworth Due West Road in Kennesaw. The company provides customer 'thank you' gifts, surveys and other tools to gauge customer contentment with a business. It has grown rapidly in its 12 years, shipping more than 50,000 gifts last year to 47 states. And even with the economic downturn, it showed an 11 percent gain in 2010 over 2009. For a company profile, see Page 4B.

School board to vote anew on calendar

Online survey to be posted Friday for community members, teachers, parents to vote on three options

By Kathryn Malone
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MARIETTA — The Cobb School Board will reconsider the controversial, so-called "balanced calendar" and will decide next week on calendars for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years.

On Wednesday morning, vice chair Scott Sweeney asked that district staff present three calendar options at the board's next meeting, at 7 p.m. on Feb. 17, for a vote, and the board agreed, 5-2, with David Banks and Lynnda Eagle dissenting.

Sweeney and Kathleen Angelucci, who both presented information to the board on Wednesday about the calendar and are in favor of a more traditional calendar, will be working with Superintendent Fred Sanderson this week to create the calendar options. Board Chairwoman Alison Bartlett asked that at least one of the options be the current balanced calendar.

At the request of Eagle, the board will post a survey through Survey Monkey with the three calendar options on the district website, asking community members, teachers and parents to vote on their preference.

The survey will be available from 3 p.m. Friday

See Calendar, Page 5A



Scott Sweeney



Kathleen Angelucci

Early deadlines

Because of the threat of inclement weather moving into the metro Atlanta area on Wednesday night, the Marietta Daily Journal published today's edition on early deadlines. Some late news and regular features — such as lottery numbers and late-night sports events — may not be included today.

We regret any inconvenience this may cause our readers and we expect to resume regular deadlines tonight.

Strokes rising fast among America's young, middle-aged

■ Diet sodas linked to stroke risk / 4A

By Marilynn Marchione
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — Strokes are rising dramatically among young and middle-aged Americans while dropping in older people, a sign that the obesity epidemic may be starting to reshape the age burden of the disease.

The numbers, reported Wednesday at an American Stroke Association conference, come from the first large nationwide study of stroke hospitalizations by age. Government researchers compared hospitalizations in 1994 and 1995 with ones in 2006 and 2007.

The sharpest increase — 51 percent — was among men 15 through 34. Strokes rose among women in this age group, too, but not as fast — 17 percent.

"It's definitely alarming," said Dr. Ralph Sacco, American Heart Association president and

See Stroke, Page 5A

Former Cartersville legislator gets 11th District GDOT post

By Jon Gillooly
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ATLANTA — Former state Rep. Jeff Lewis of Cartersville was elected Wednesday to represent the 11th Congressional District seat on the 13-member Georgia Department of Transportation board.

"You had four great candidates. You really did, and it was a tough choice," State Sen. Doug Stoner (D-Smyrna) said.

Lewis, who served in the state House as a Republican from 1993 to 2008, ousted incumbent David Doss of Rome, first elected in 2002, and beat out two other challengers, commercial real estate agent Paul Chastain of Kennesaw and former state



Skip Butler/The Daily Tribune News
Former state Rep. Jeff Lewis of Cartersville.

Sen. John Wiles, a Republican also from Kennesaw.

Stoner said it took four ballots to determine the winner. The first ballot eliminated Chastain, the second eliminated Wiles and the third was a tie between Lewis and Doss.

State Rep. Judy Manning

(R-Marietta) said "I would love to have had somebody who outright represents Cobb, but if that wasn't going to happen, I guess he's the best one. I guess I'm as happy as I can be."

GDOT board members, who serve five-year terms, are elected by a majority of a General Assembly caucus from each of Georgia's 13 congressional districts. There are 11 state senators and 21 state representatives who vote by secret ballot for the position. Of the 32 lawmakers who vote in the 11th Congressional District, 15 represent Cobb.

Some have questioned whether it's proper for Lewis to sit on GDOT's board given

See GDOT, Page 5A

INSIDE

ADVICE	2D	COMICS	7D	MOVIES	3D
BUSINESS	4B	CROSSWORD	5C	OPINIONS	3B
CLASSIFIEDS	5C	LIFESTYLE	1D	OBITUARIES	6A
COBB/STATE	1B	LOTTERY	2A	SPORTS	1C

◆ 145th year, edition 41

OUTSIDE

Partly cloudy
44 HIGH
25 LOW
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Bieber fever
'Beliebers' pack singer's documentary premiere
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Vinings resident helps form new Atlanta law firm

From staff reports

Atlanta trial attorneys **Andrew M. Beal**, a Vinings resident, and **James D. Blitch IV** have formed **Beal & Blitch LLP** law firm. The firm, located in Midtown Atlanta, represents a broad range of businesses and clients in litigation in federal and state courts, as well as other alternative dispute resolution matters.



Andrew M. Beal

Beal graduated from Duke University and earned his law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law, where he was active in the Moot Court Society and taught in the School of Business. He began his legal career in 1986 with Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi, a national firm specializing in products liability and property subrogation claims.

Marietta firm gets GDOT contract

C.W. Matthews Contracting Company, Inc., of Marietta, was awarded a Georgia Department of Transportation contract for \$30.9 million. The 4.7-mile CD lane project will begin this spring and is scheduled to be completed by August 2013. The firm will construct two eastbound CD lanes parallel to and on the south side of Interstate 20. The lanes are designed to improve mobility and safety in this corridor, essentially by moving the heavy local traffic between Interstate 285 and Wesley Chapel Road off of I-20 east and onto the CD lanes. ... Atlanta-based accounting firm Moore Colson has announced it has hired a business assurance professional and three business assurance interns. **Kelly Bird** has been hired as a business assurance senior associate, and **Bevan Hopper**, **Meg King** and **Jenna Kelley** have been hired as business assurance interns. ... Skyline Pest Solutions & Home Inspections of Marietta has acquired CRC Services Termite & Pest Control,

which had been serving metro Atlanta and north Georgia for more than 30 years. CRC Services was a privately held family business founded by **Connie R. Couch**. ... From today through April 14, Austell taxpayers can get free help filing their personal income tax returns from AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers. **Richard Cramer**, Tax-Aide state coordinator for Georgia, said help is available at 125 sites throughout Georgia. For more information about locations or volunteering for the program, go to www.aarp.org/taxaide or call (888)-227-7669.



SNAPSHOT



Staff/Anthony Stalcup

CHAMBER AWARD: Allan Bishop, with WellStar, right, was recently honored with a Cobb Chamber of Commerce Campaign Lifetime Achievement Award at the Chamber's annual awards dinner. Chamber Chairman Rob Garcia hands him the award.

We welcome your business news

The Marietta Daily Journal wants your business news for our expanded two pages of coverage on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, with an emphasis on Cobb news.

We ask that you send us your business news — new business, promotions, new hires, expansion, and so on. Is your company or organization planning an important meeting? Send us the news and we'll publish it in our business calendar of events.

Send all news to Business Editor Donna Espy at despy@mdjonline.com.

We also ask that you include photos with your news and send them in jpeg form, please.

COBB BUSINESS

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COBB/SMALL BUSINESS

To their success



Staff/Mike Jacoby

To Your Success part-time worker Rebekah Childers, left, and Vice President Zach Childers pack up the company's customer appreciation gifts at its operation on Acworth Due West Road in Kennesaw.

Cobb company's key: Customer satisfaction

By Donna Espy
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"There is only one boss — the customer. And he can fire everybody in the company, simply by spending his money somewhere else." — **Sam Walton**, Wal-Mart founder

Businessman Jim Childers has created a business that combines an all-important customer satisfaction aspect with a cookie.

Childers is president of To Your Success, a family owned and operated business providing customer thank-you gifts, customer satisfaction surveys and other tools to gauge customer satisfaction with a business. The cookies are a way of saying 'thank you' from a firm to a new customer, often adding a 'wow' factor to the process.

The delightful smell of cookies baking is one perk of working at the Acworth Due West Road business, which is housed in a 1909 home on three acres. Products are shipped via the U.S. Postal Service and range from \$25 tins and soft-sided coolers to \$80 Waterford Crystal bowls filled with cookies, candy, coffee and nuts.

"I felt like, if we help others succeed, then we'll have success ourselves," said Childers, 59, explaining how he came up with the company name. A man of strong faith, Childers said he believes God gave him the business idea and the name. "We want to give God all the credit."

The 12-year-old firm has seen much success. It shipped more than 50,000 gifts last year to 47 states. Even with the economic downturn, the company saw an 11 percent increase in sales in 2010 compared with 2009, Childers said.

"And in January we've already seen a 25 percent increase over last January, ship-



To Your Success co-owner Olive Childers arranges cookies on a cart at To Your Success.

ping 5,000 gifts." Childers attends trade shows around the country with cookies in hand. The three industries that make up the majority of his customers are heating and air-conditioning, recreational vehicle and mobility businesses.

E. Smith Heating and Air Conditioning in Marietta uses the company to ship out cookies to their new equipment customers. They come in recycled grocery bags with the company logo on it and have proven to be a big hit.

cookies with their thank you note," Abernathy said. "That really sets us apart."

Abernathy said Childers and his employees will probably help E. Smith celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. "It would be nice to send something special to our customers for our 50th," Abernathy said. "We'll turn to Jim to help with that — I can't imagine anyone else but him filling that niche for us."

Jim's family helps fill that niche as well. His son, Zach, 28, is vice president, and his son-in-law, Derek LoVerde, 31, is director of sales and marketing. Family friend Caron Startt is operations manager and, when needed, Jim's wife and co-owner Olive, their daughter, Rebekah, 20, and younger son, John, jump in to help get shipments out every Tuesday and Thursday — a must to make sure the fresh-baked cookies arrive on time.

"Having good people is the hardest part of having a business," Childers said. "God has put the right people here at the right time." He added they average around 12 employees but have had as many as 15 during Christmas and summer months. And many of those are college students or others who need a job in today's tough economy, Childers said. "We see this as a ministry to offer work to people going through tough times in their lives."

Their family business is grounded in the Christian faith, said Childers, who attends Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta. "Our goal in this business is to win more people to Christ and let people see that a business can be run by Biblical principles and can work," Childers said. "And to honor God in everything we do."

For more information, visit www.ToYourSuccess.com.

Advertise Your Business on the

Local Business News Wednesday through Friday and Sunday!



COBB BUSINESS PAGE

We welcome your business news!

Send all news to Business Editor Donna Espy at despy@mdjonline.com

Contact Wade Stephens at 770-795-4001 for Rate Information