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FORECAST

TODAY SUN MON
64°/42° 70°/43° 72°/43°
Complete forecast, A2

SPORTS



Playoffs at stake in Friday's games

Friday night's football games included critical contests between Austin and Florence, West Morgan at Hamilton, and Hartselle vs. Athens. Check out the scores and highlights of these and other games. C1

RIVERFRONT



Pryor expanding new maintenance division

Little more than a month after opening, Pryor Field Regional Airport's new aircraft maintenance division is preparing to expand, having serviced an estimated 25 to 30 aircraft and with plans to hire additional employees and build a new hangar. B1

NATION

Man who killed shooter had daughters at school

The man who stopped a deadly elementary school attack in Oregon by chasing down the teenage gunman and shooting him inside the building is the father of two girls who go to the school, his mother said Friday. A6

AREA DEATHS

Sonny Downs, Somerville
Brenda Montgomery, Moulton
Danny Rose, Hillsboro
Etna Sherrod, Athens
Travis Smith, Moulton
Frank Vincent, Decatur
Eva White, Decatur
Death notices, obits, A3

Abby E4
Books E5
Business D1
Dogs, Cats & MoreD3
Classified F1
Crossword E4
Editorials A4

Horoscopes E4
Inspirations D4
Living E1
Obituaries A3
Riverfront B1
Sports C1
Weather A2

Decatur, Alabama
115th year, No. 207
30 pages, 6 sections



DECATUR POLICE SHOOTING

Court returns case to county

By David Gambino
Special Projects Reporter

The Alabama Supreme Court on Friday issued an opinion that did not decide whether a former Decatur police officer should be immune from prosecution in the shooting death of Steve Perkins. Instead, the high court ordered Morgan County Circuit Judge Charles Elliott to decide immunity under a legal standard different from that used for police officers. Elliott relied on the latter in previously denying immunity, and a lower appellate court declined to overturn the ruling.

The opinion ordered the Circuit Court to reevaluate the actions of Mac Marquette — a former Decatur police officer charged with murder in the death of Perkins — as if he were a layperson.

The ruling, which came over

a year after Marquette asked the high court to intervene, likely means more lengthy delays before the case gets to trial or is dismissed outright.

“The trial judge will now have to enter another order applying the framework set out by the Supreme Court,” Matt Woodham, a law professor at Samford University’s Cumberland School of Law, told The Decatur Daily. “Then, assuming Mr. Marquette is again denied immunity by the trial court, he will file another pre-trial appeal.”

Leaked police body camera video and doorbell cameras captured the moment Marquette fired 18 rounds at Perkins in the early morning hours of Sept. 29, 2023.



Marquette

Marquette and three other Decatur officers responded to Perkins’ home on Ryan Drive Southwest after Caleb Combs, a repo agent, had tried hours earlier to repossess Perkins’ vehicle, which was parked in the driveway. Combs told police Perkins had pointed a gun at him and ordered him off the property.

Officers took up defensive positions around Perkins’ home as Combs returned to the property for a second attempt. Video showed Perkins again exited his home with a gun equipped with a flashlight.

Marquette then opened fire less than two seconds after yelling: “Police! Get on the ground!”

Several rounds struck Perkins, killing him. Several more went into a neighbor’s home.

The incident spawned months of community protests and

contributed to the ousting of former Decatur police Chief Todd Pinion. Three of the officers at the scene of the shooting were terminated.

The street where Perkins lived has since been renamed Steve Perkins Drive.

Immunity

At issue in the lower court was whether Marquette had acted as a reasonable officer or whether he had acted as an officer at all.

But the state’s highest court determined that was the wrong way to look at it. Rather than examining the question of pre-trial immunity through the peace officer immunity statute, the lower court should have viewed it through the defense-of-persons statue, Friday’s opinion said.

SEE COURT, A6

DECATUR PARKS AND RECREATION

Council to consider \$900K in upgrades to 4 city parks



Juan Miguel pushes the swing for his son, Juan Jr., at Rhodes Ferry Park on Tuesday. The City Council will vote Monday on whether to purchase new playground equipment for the park. [JERONIMO NISA/DECATUR DAILY]

By Bayne Hughes
Staff Writer

Three Decatur parks could receive new playground equipment, and a fourth could be developed near Austin Middle School through a combination of state and city funding.

Parks and Recreation Director Hunter Allen proposed purchasing new playground equipment for Flint City and Rhodes Ferry parks, adding a playground at Point Mallard and developing a new park near Austin Middle during Monday’s City Council work session.

Allen estimated the projects would cost \$900,000,



This is an artist's rendition of the proposed new playground equipment at Rhodes Ferry Park. [COURTESY/CITY OF DECATUR]

including \$50,000 for contingencies. The city would contribute \$650,000, with the remaining \$250,000 coming from state funding secured by state Sen.

SEE COUNCIL, A5

STATE SENATE 3

Orr and Dickey debate Flock, data centers

By GraciAnn Goodin
For The Decatur Daily

Data center and Flock camera regulations are among the issues that both Sen. Arthur Orr, R-Decatur, and Senate District 3 Democratic candidate John Dickey would like to pursue if elected, but other key focuses differ.

Voters will decide between Orr and Dickey in the Nov. 3, election. The last day to register to vote is Monday.

With a Bitcoin mining facility planning to locate outside Somerville, Morgan County has encountered the question of how to navigate a large load energy user, such as crypto mine or data center, moving to the area. While the County Commission passed a one-year moratorium on such operations, it is not legally enforceable.

Both candidates said they would like to grant local governments more powers in regulating data centers.

Orr has drafted a bill that would allow Morgan County to have a say in whether a crypto mining or data center facility could locate in the rural parts of the county. He also believes in a statewide bill that would apply to all county commissions.

“The presumption is leave the decision up to the locals, and the county commission is the best-suited entity at the local level



Dickey



Orr

SEE ORR, A5

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