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The scale house at the Garland County Landfill, 1040 Cedarglade Road, is shown. (The Sentinel-Record/File photo)

Garland County seeks bids for residential sanitation collection

DAVID SHOWERS
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

Garland County said five haulers have shown interest in bidding on weekly collection of more than 20,000 residential trash carts in the unincorporated area. The county's seven-year contract with Town and Country Sanitation Inc. expires next year. The Royal hauler's \$9.45 bid per can, subject to annual increases tied to the

Consumer Price Index, was the lowest received from the county's 2019 solicitation. The \$13.4 million the Garland County Quorum Court appropriated for the solid waste fund this year included \$3.4 million in hauler fees. According to a summary of treasury accounts presented to the quorum court, the fund had a \$16.6 million cash balance at the end of last month. The fund's share of the 0.50% county-

wide sales tax is projected to collect \$2.2 million this year, according to a correction in the revenue forecast the quorum court authorized earlier this month. Several revisions were made Monday to the request for proposals the county issued last month, including requiring contractors to maintain a local base of operation managed by a county resident.

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Children make Pokemon name tags at Garland County Library during its Pokemon Day event. (The Sentinel-Record/Thomas Buckman)

Library celebrates Pokemon Day

GABRIEL BASS
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

The Garland County Library hosted its annual Pokemon Day celebration on Thursday, which took on added significance in light of Pokemon's 30th anniversary this year. Jessamyn Carter, the public relations coordinator for the library, said the afternoon's festivities included a large number of activities for patrons in keeping with the library's status as a Pokemon gym. "We offer games. There are prizes just for showing up and taking part in the event. Those prizes can range from stuffed animals to Legos to room decorations," Carter said. Activities included craft stations where patrons could make their own Pokemon, choose Pokemon names for themselves, make bottlecap ornaments and play Pokemon bingo among other pursuits. The library hosts events like Pokemon Day "so that our patrons have something to do that's fun and free and kind of just out of this world during spring break," Carter said. "We think that that's really important that everybody



Miles Hudspeth, 4, holds up a Poke Ball he made during Garland County Library's Pokemon Day event. (The Sentinel-Record/Thomas Buckman)

has that opportunity, but with Pokemon celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, we also wanted to pay homage to that." She said most of the activities for Pokemon Day were repurposed from previous iterations of Pokemon Day "because they went really well last year, or it's things from other programs like the bottle caps."

The event was "really exciting for me because I grew up loving Pokemon," Carter said.

"I think it's really cool to see kids now that are getting into the trading card game and they understand how it works because when I was younger, I didn't. I just really enjoyed the

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FanDuel donates \$100K to Oaklawn Foundation to help support students

FROM STAFF REPORTS

FanDuel donated \$100,000 to the Oaklawn Foundation to help support scholarships for Garland County students and other programs, the foundation announced Wednesday. The donation was announced less than a week after FanDuel went live in the state through a partnership with Oaklawn, "which brings two iconic brands together to transform sports betting in the state," a news release said, calling FanDuel "North America's premier online gaming company." "FanDuel is proud to support the Oaklawn Foundation as part of our commitment to making a positive impact in the communities in which we operate," Keita Young, FanDuel's vice president of advocacy and public policy, said in the release. "Local community development is one of the key pillars of our community impact work, and we look forward to amplifying the great work the foundation does with both students and senior citizens," she said. Gabe Fisher, the chair of the Oaklawn Foundation Board, thanked FanDuel for the donation. "FanDuel's support marks an exciting moment for the Oaklawn Foundation, and we look forward to working together to make a meaningful and lasting impact," he said in the release. "This contribution will help us continue expanding opportunities for students and enhancing quality of life for senior citizens across Garland County." According to the release, residents and visitors can "place sports bets through the newly branded Oaklawn Sports powered by FanDuel, bringing together Oaklawn's trusted legacy and FanDuel's industry-leading sportsbook technology in one seamless platform." "As we considered the future evolution of our mobile offering, we were determined to deliver our customers with an exceptional, high-quality Oaklawn experience," Louis A. Cella, Oaklawn's president, said in the release. "This partnership with FanDuel enables us to provide our online patrons with a safe and secure platform powered by industry-leading technology." "The FanDuel Sportsbook app offers a simple, secure and best-in-class platform, featuring safe banking, lightning-fast payouts and 24/7 customer support," the release said. "The app provides innovative ways to place wagers on sports, including Same Game Parlays and Live Betting. Customers can access educational resources through Sports Betting 101, which includes betting guides and a comprehensive suite of responsible gaming tools, such as deposit and wager limits, as well as FanDuel's personalized My Spend dashboard to help track spending patterns and manage budgets," it said.

HS man charged with felony assault, allegedly chased a man with a knife

STEVEN MROSS
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

A local man was arrested Wednesday on a felony warrant stemming from allegations he chased another man with a knife while yelling racial slurs following a "road rage" incident last week. Tyler Neil Ratliff, 35, of Hot Springs, was taken into custody shortly before 2 p.m. during a traffic stop at Central Avenue and Franklin Street and served with the warrant for aggravated assault, punishable by up to six years in prison. Ratliff was booked into the Garland County Detention Center shortly before 4 p.m. and was released on a \$2,500 bond about two hours later with a Garland County District Court date to be set. According to court records, Ratliff was convicted in 2023 in Faulkner County of a felony count of first-degree criminal mischief and a misdemeanor count of third-degree battery and was sentenced to five years' probation. He also has prior convictions for unsafe driving and failure to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk, both traffic violations.



RATLIFF

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Iran and U.S. harden positions over talks to end war

JON GAMBRELL
AND DAVID RISING
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran and the United States appeared at an impasse Thursday, hardening their positions over ceasefire talks and setting the stage for more potential escalation in the Middle East war as thousands more U.S. troops neared the region. Meanwhile, President Donald Trump extended his deadline for Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz to April 6, and Tehran tightened its grip on the crucial strait while Israel poured more troops into southern Lebanon to fight the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah. Sirens over Israel warned of barrages of incoming Iranian missiles, and Gulf nations



Pro-government supporters chant slogans and wave Iranian flags during a rally in a square in western Tehran, Iran, on Wednesday. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)

worked to intercept fire. Heavy strikes were reported in Iran's capital and other cities.

In a war that appears defined by who can take the most pain, the U.S. has offered shifting

objectives, including ensuring Iran's missile and nuclear programs are no longer a threat and ending Tehran's support for armed groups in the region. Washington at one point also pushed for the overthrow of Iran's theocracy. While the U.S.-Israeli campaign has hit Iran's military and government hard, killing top leaders and striking scores of targets, Iran continues to fire missiles, and there is no sign of an uprising against the government.

**SURVIVING COULD
BE SEEN AS VICTORY
FOR IRAN**

For Iran's leadership, by contrast, merely outlasting the onslaught could be seen as victory.

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