

TRUMP DEFENDS VA PICK, 7B

President also acknowledges Jackson's lack of experience

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Art farm permit application withdrawn

BY LARRY STANFORD
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CONYERS — Plans for a proposed art farm in south Rockdale County have been shelved as the property owner has withdrawn his application for a special use permit.

The proposed camp, which is being called the Rockdale Art Farm, would have been located

on 25 acres at 4120 Flat Bridge Road in south Rockdale County, near the intersection with Union Church Road. Joe Eifrid, the founder and CEO, had said the camp would be a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) community creative arts center, with recreational and educational programs offered to the public.

The area is zoned Agricultural-Residential, and Eifrid had

asked for a special use permit in that zoning. Planning and Zoning Director Kc Krzic said the planning staff recommended approval of the application, but that the Planning Commission recommended denial over concerns about the hours the facility would be open and the types of events that could take place there.

The proposal also drew

heated opposition from property owners in the area concerned about traffic, noise and possible other uses for the property that fall under the special use permit.

At the Board of Commissioners work session on April 21, Covington attorney David Ozburn wrote in a letter presented to the BOC that, in his legal opinion, the art camp did not fit in the special use permit.

Ozburn went on to state in the letter that if the county approved the permit, opponents would be taking the county to court.

The Citizen received an email Sunday from Eifrid in which he wrote, "I withdrew my application for a special use permit Friday."

Krzic confirmed Monday

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Above left, attendees check out information at the Right At Home booth. Above right, the health fair and senior expo was held in conjunction with Springfield's annual Woods Stroke Awareness 5K Walk/Run. A runner, with his race number still attached, has his blood glucose checked at the Diabetes Association of Atlanta booth. (Staff Photos: Larry Stanford)

City planners encourage development of Olde Town

BY AIMEE JONES
Staff Correspondent

CONYERS — The city of Conyers is encouraged to continue to focus on developing Olde Town, highlighting community assets like the Georgia International Horse Park and the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, and to simplify some of its zoning and development standards.

These were the recommendations presented at the April 18 City Council meeting by Allison Duncan of the Atlanta Regional Commission regarding the city's Comprehensive Land Use Plan update.

"You already have a solid strategic plan in place, and we adopted heavily from that for our vision," Duncan told council members.

Duncan first laid out some basic demographic information about the city, pointing out that the city's population has been steadily growing since 2000, although it has slowed in recent years. As of 2015, a little more than 15,500 people were residents in the city limits of Conyers. The percentage of African-American residents has more than doubled between 2000 and 2015, while the population of whites has remained relatively unchanged. The percentage of people of Hispanic origin increased about 3 percent in that timeframe, whereas the percentage of Asians has decreased.

The city also has a relatively equal distribution across all age groups with

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Healthy turnout

Annual Generations senior event draws hundreds

BY LARRY STANFORD
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CONYERS — Hundreds of people of all ages turned out for the third annual Rockdale/Newton Citizen Generations Health Fair & Senior Expo at Springfield Baptist Church

Saturday.

The event, held in conjunction with Springfield's annual Woods Stroke Awareness 5K Walk/Run, promotes healthy living and better quality of life for residents in the east metro area.

Attendees were able to take advantage of more than 40

health and wellness vendors providing free health screenings, healthy living tips, healthy cooking demonstrations and more. Expo attendees also received a free gift bag containing health and wellness resources.

In addition to health screenings, the Expo offered

informative speaking sessions on topics such as: Discovering Your Ancestry, How to Live To Your Best Health Potential, Understanding Your Skin: Benign to Cancerous, Preventing Identity Theft, Why Are My Hands Hurting? and more.

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Neighbors appeal to city for help in Hunting Creek cleanup

BY AIMEE JONES
Staff Correspondent

CONYERS — Sometimes good old-fashioned diplomacy is worth a try.

For months, a small group of residents from the Hunting Creek subdivision located on Flat Shoals Road has addressed the Conyers City Council, seeking help in their efforts to clean up the neighborhood — not just

of litter but of loitering and suspected criminal activities.

Angela Venable and Renee Turner began bringing their concerns to the council several months ago, pleading for help with persistent code violations. After a few meetings, Lorraine Jubrey, a property manager in the Hunting Creek community, joined their forces, explaining that they have continuously contacted code

enforcement and the Conyers Police Department, and despite their best efforts and responsiveness, the problems persist.

"The police have been wonderful and have done a good job, but it's not enough," Turner says nearly every week when addressing the council. When police arrive, the groups of ne'er-do-wells simply flee into other houses, including one

next to Turner that she says is rife with criminal activity, and she believes may be the central cause of most of the issues.

Venable said she works diligently to pick up trash that is strewn around her yard or discarded behind her house — everything from personal care products to food items to suspected drug paraphernalia. She and a few of the other women from the

subdivision have confronted their neighbors to no avail. Tensions are rising and nothing is happening, which is why they decided to appeal to the City Council.

During last Wednesday's City Council meeting, Venable said she realized that some of the trash that she was picking up behind her house was actually in the back of an adjoining neighbor's property. Venable said

when she confronted this neighbor about picking up the trash, the conversation turned to the point where Venable is now concerned this neighbor will try to get her cited for trespassing.

Last week, another resident, Gloria Grant-Pitts, told council members her yard and the road in front of her residence are also plagued

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