

# DOWNTOWN DUBLIN

## 2018

# Magazine

ALSO INSIDE:

## CONSOLIDATED ASSETS

A brief history of the buildings that form the downtown headquarters of the

BANK OF DUDLEY

## SWEET SPOT

Downtown Dublin is falling for these unique treats at the new Sweet T's Bakery

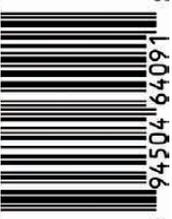
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# INSIDE

2018 EDITION

## Lofty Ideals

An arbor terrace that rims residential space newly built into the upper portion of their flagship property at Jackson and Roosevelt is the signature of Billy and Lee Ann Nash and their vision for transforming Downtown Dublin. This revival of a cornerstone building, and numerous restoration projects on tap for the near future, have the Dublin couple and their family on the leading edge of a commercial and residential boom in the downtown area.

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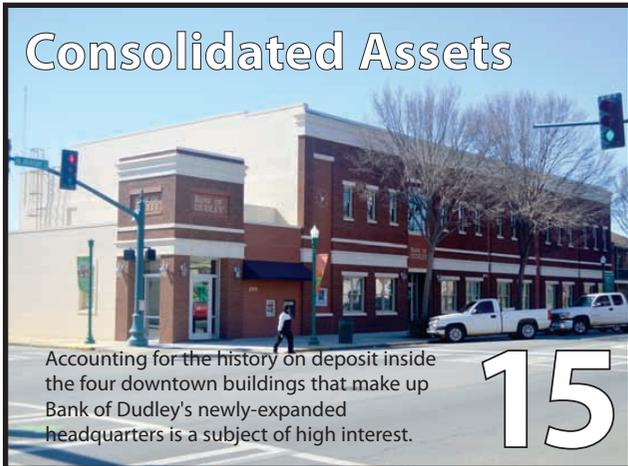
Billy and Lee Ann Nash (at front and center), alongside a group of guests they hosted during a rooftop reception, are seen on the garden terrace adjoining their new residential development from a vantage point atop the Lovett and Tharpe Building next door.



## Sweet Spot

Cakes, cookies and brownies aren't the only indulgences made fresh at Sweet T's Bakery, where its endless varieties of candied apples are stealing the show as Downtown Dublin's not-so-guilty pleasure.

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## Consolidated Assets

Accounting for the history on deposit inside the four downtown buildings that make up Bank of Dudley's newly-expanded headquarters is a subject of high interest.

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# DOWNTOWN DUBLIN Magazine

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## ON THE COVER

Billy and Lee Ann Nash stand on the rooftop terrace that adjoins their newly-completed development of condominiums on the upper story of the old Farmers & Merchants Bank building (also known as the Rhino Building). The project is the first of many similar residential- and commercial-use restoration projects downtown that the family has currently or soon-to-be under construction. (Photo by Clay Reynolds)

# Sweet spot

Toni Nixon put a fresh spin on the baking business when she moved to Dublin this fall and founded Sweet T's Bakery, and customers have come in droves. Turns out her colorful, candy-coated fruit creations, even more than cakes, cookies and traditional baked goods, are the items Dublin is falling for. How do you like them apples?

**By DAHLIA ALLEN**

with photos by Dahlia Allen and Clay Reynolds, and others courtesy Sweet T's Bakery





Candied apples, made in batches of 100 at least once a week, have been the signature item and best-seller for Nilxon (above) since she opened Sweet T's Bakery last year. Each Granny Smith is coated in caramel, peanut butter or white confection before being decorated in toppings that include nuts, M&Ms, Reese's Pieces, toffee and cereal, among other gourmet additions that vary in theme from week to week based on seasonal themes and customer requests.

**T**oni Nixon has a unique description of the signature item in her downtown bakery.

"I sell healthy snacks wrapped in tasty treats," she said.

The healthy snack is a huge, crunchy Granny Smith apple. The tasty treats are the caramel wrap and one of a dozen or more toppings.

Nixon makes the caramel apples at Sweet T's Bakery, which opened last fall.

"The apples are crisp, deliciously tart. The caramel provides a tart/sweet contrast, and there are only 300 calories in a caramel apple," Nixon said.

Tucked into a corner at 126 West Madison St. in downtown Dublin, Sweet T's Bakery is a dream come true for Nixon.

"I always knew I wanted to own a shop where I made sweet things for sweet people," she said.

Her specialty is making caramel apples. She and her business partner Mikael Newman produce the candied apples usually every other day. They order the apples from Washington state.

"An apple's shelf life is seven days," Nixon said. "We've never had any expire before we could sell them."

They produce the caramel-coated apples in batches of 100. Nixon makes her own caramel for the apples. Some she rolls in a topping.

Each apple has a stick stuck straight down through its middle. Some get an additional topping. Others have the caramel coat only.

When Nixon sells an apple, she slices it into half a dozen pieces. Eating the apples



Nixon and Newman (above) moved to Dublin and started Sweet T's Bakery after the two had worked together in a chocolate shop in Utah. The candied apples, among a number of their specialties, typically outnumber various cakes, cookies, brownies and other items that reside in the bakery's display case. Among the flavors in the weekly lineup is a featured apple – usually made from an idea dreamed up by a member of the staff or a customer. Features that end up as a hit, like the Granola Apple by Janice (opposite), are frequently selected to become a part of the regular menu.

involves pulling each slice away from the center stick.

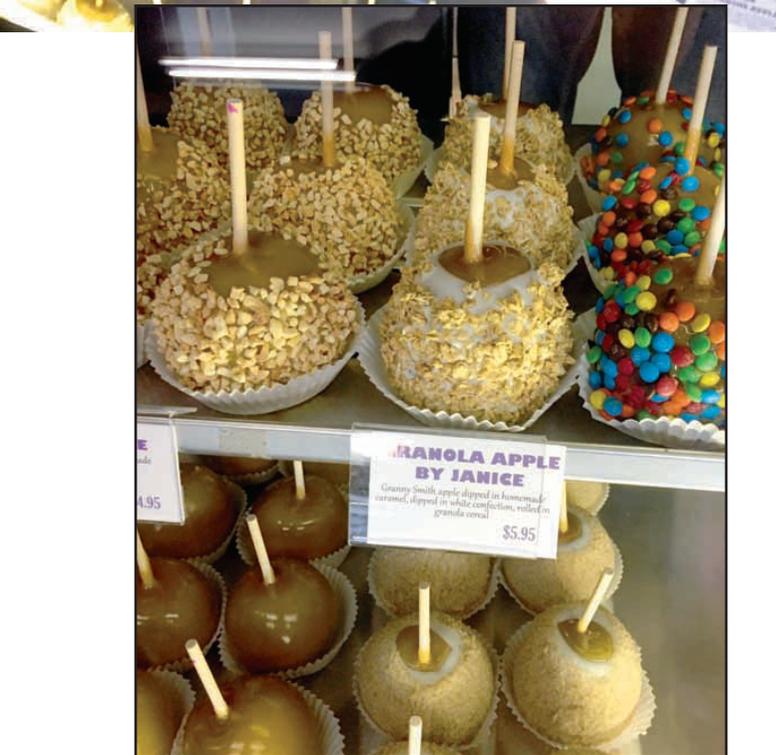
All sorts of toppings are ready for the sticky apples. Some apples get dark chocolate coatings, some peanut butter, others cream cheese, sprinkles, pecans, peanuts, M&Ms, almond paste, cookie crumbles, milk chocolate, espresso, coconut, Rice Krispy, double chocolate toffee and more.

The menu isn't static, though. Each week, Sweet T's features a

customer's suggestion.

"It's one of my favorite things," Nixon said. Customers have the chance to drop a suggestion into a basket for a drawing at the end of the week. Nixon and Newman create apples with the suggested topping and feature them for a week. If successful, the new topping is added to their menu.

"The name of the person who suggested the topping gets added to the Wall of Fame,"





In addition to candied apples, the bakery offers single-serve treats like coconut macaroons (below, top) and the favorite tres leches cake (bottom). Sweet T's also bakes and decorates special occasion cakes to order. Nixon (left) leads the bakery's current staff of four, which includes Newman (right) and others who greet customers with a smile and encouraging words whether in-store or speaking over the phone.



Nixon said, indicating a wall with a string of plaques bearing customers' names and apple topping flavors. "We've added eight new flavors from customers' suggestions."

The apples aren't everything in the display cases at Sweet T's, though. Other offerings are cookies such as coconut macaroons – traditional coconut balls sitting atop a base of chocolate – cheesecake, brownies and cupcakes. Another specialty of the house is tres leches, sponge cake squares with sweet milk and whipped cream and sprinkled with cinnamon.

Nixon also bakes special order cakes. The bakery is cozy and welcoming. It will seat about a dozen people. In addition, a children's table has games and a puppet show curtain. Nixon's mother makes the finger puppets, and Nixon has them for sale.

"They are all hand-cut and glued. There are 285 different characters," she said.

Nixon's plans include adding a line of aprons.

She got to Dublin almost by accident. She came to visit a friend in March 2017.

"Someone suggested that I come here and open a bakery, and here I am," she said.

She had relocated to Las Vegas from Salt Lake City, where she and Newman worked in a chocolate shop. From Las Vegas, she moved to Dublin.

"I realized that my children were grown, and the world was wide open to me," she said.

Nixon learned to bake as a child staying with her grand-



mother.

"Then I was a stay-at-home mom who baked theme cakes for my children's birthday parties," she said.

Moving to Dublin last July was an adventure.

"It was a little scary to pack everything into a truck, hitch my car behind it and drive 2,619 miles."

The shop has far exceeded her expectations, she said.

"We hope to build a community. We've had mah jong groups, birthday parties. Some people come in, bring their lunch and stay here for dessert."

Sweet T's is open seven days a week. The hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. The telephone number is (478) 205-5200.



Nixon markets a line of finger puppets (above) handmade by her mother, and has a special curtain designed for puppet shows included among a variety of activities in the bakery's children's area (right). She hopes the business, with its welcoming atmosphere, will catch on as a place for community and family fellowship as much as a go-to destination for sweet cravings and tasty desserts.



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# Consolidated assets

Accounting for the history of four buildings that make up the Bank of Dudley's newly-renovated Jackson Street headquarters – a deposit of more than a century in Downtown Dublin's past – is a subject of high interest

**By SCOTT THOMPSON SR.**

with historic images of the Laurens County Historical Society and present-day photos by Clay Reynolds and Griffin Lovett

**S**ir Winston Churchill once said, "We shape our buildings, and then our buildings shape us."

While most of Laurens County's bank buildings are built from the ground out, the Bank of Dudley's main office in Downtown Dublin is the main exception to that rule.

Located at the southwestern corner of West Jackson Street and South Lawrence Street, the bank's headquarters is composed of four separate buildings, each of which have their own history. From eateries, to grocery stores, to movie theaters, to banks, to appliance stores and clothing stores, the current group of the buildings incorporated into the bank over time have been a part of our community for more than 100 years.

On the corner, the shortest of the buildings was for many years the home of the Greenleaf Café, the forerunner to the legendary Ma Hawkins Restaurant, where Dublin's businessmen gathered for a new day's meal and to catch up on the business activities and local gossip.

In the late 1890's, W.P. Lassiter, one of Dublin's leading businessmen, built his store on the prized corner. That building was destroyed and later rebuilt as a part of the Citizens & Southern Bank in the early 1950s.

The C&S Bank came to town in 1930 following the collapse of the once powerful First National Bank in



Citizens & Southern Bank, a predecessor in the finance business, was the longest-running prior resident of the set of three buildings owned and occupied by Bank of Dudley since the 1990s. The C&S branch is seen (above) during construction of the corner building it annexed in the 1950s and (right) as it appeared from the time of the addition to the bank's departure in the 1970s. Bank of Dudley's newly-renovated headquarters (below) now covers the original C&S footprint, and has absorbed a fourth building (to the far right).



Dublin. It shall be noted that the Bank of Dudley and the Farmers and Merchants Bank, which was located on the opposite corner for decades, were the only two local banks to survive the crash of the stock market in 1929.

The C&S Bank also acquired the next building to the west. That building was originally part of a series of buildings

owned by Dublin's leading clothing merchant, R.L. Stephens. During the term of the C&S Bank, C.U. Smith and Winfield Scott Simmons guided the bank to the top of local financial institutions in assets and employees.

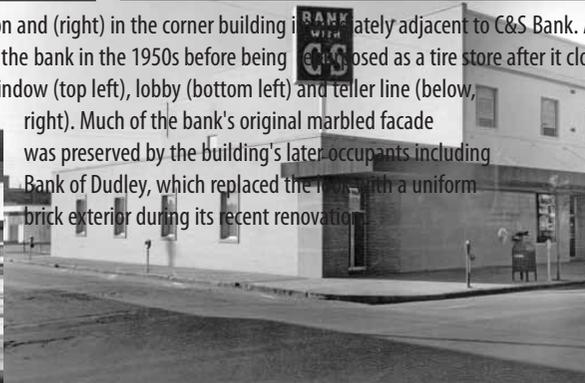
In the early 1970s, the Citizens & Southern Bank's board of directors embarked on a major expansion of its branch-

es, most of which took on the highly popular trend of the day with new offices designed in the style of Williamsburg, the colonial capital of Virginia. In fact, the bank's last location, now the home of Townsend's Funeral Home, was designed to resemble the exterior of Williamsburg's governor's mansion.

After the C&S Bank left, the



Above: The Greenleaf Café, (left) is seen at its original location and (right) in the corner building immediately adjacent to C&S Bank. Also a former retail establishment, the structure would be demolished and rebuilt as an addition to the bank in the 1950s before being repurposed as a tire store after it closed in the 1970s. Below: The bank is seen from the street (right and below, center), drive-thru teller window (top left), lobby (bottom left) and teller line (below, right). Much of the bank's original marbled facade was preserved by the building's later occupants including Bank of Dudley, which replaced the facade with a uniform brick exterior during its recent renovation.



Tire King store moved into the corner location at 200 West Jackson Street in 1973. During the 1970s and 1980s, the original bank building was home to Easter Seals, Child Support Recovery, Laurens Community Service Center, Georgia Legal Services, the Laurens County Recreation Department and the Full Gospel Assembly of God Church. In 1995, the center sec-

tion was the temporary Laurens County Library while the present library was being remodeled. Rogers Grocery Store sold fine groceries in the building during World War II.

The Bank of Dudley opened its first Dublin branch on December 18, 1987 in the corner building. After the library moved out, the bank moved into the center section.

For nearly a quarter of a century from 1948 to the early 1970s, Garrett's Shoe Store, a premier privately owned shoe store occupied the building at 208 West Jackson Street. After Garrett's moved, Richard Baker, shoemaker, took over the building as one of the first African-Americans to own and operate and business on West Jackson Street. C&F Dollar Store occu-



The buildings to the west, which in their latter years have been incorporated one by one into both C&S Bank and Bank of Dudley, were mostly retail storefronts (above, left and below) that housed hardware, furniture and electronics dealers. The central structure is seen (above, right) before C&S bank remodeled it and moved in.



ped the site in 1972 and F.S. Sconyers sold premium tires from that building in 1931.

During the 1940s, the upper floor of 208 West Jackson Street was used as a USO building.

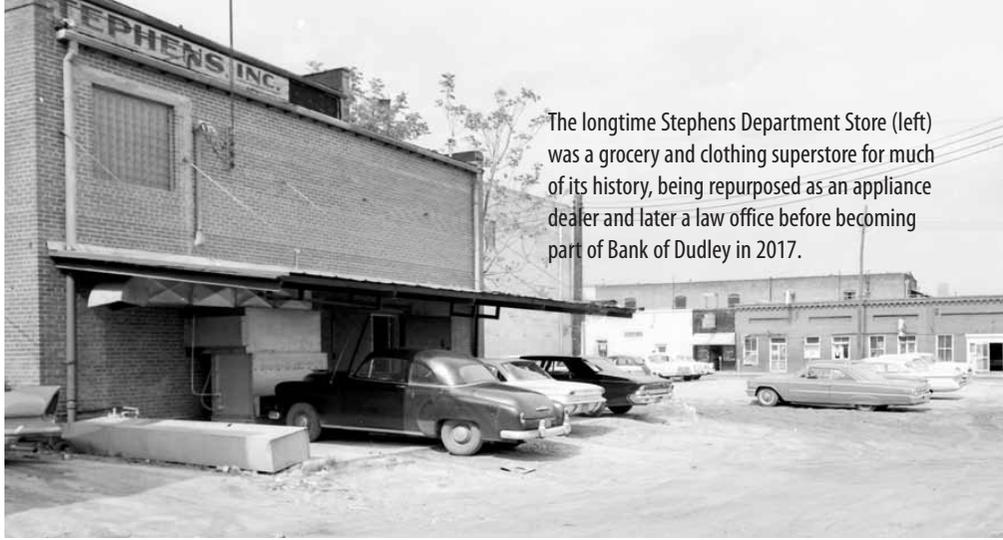
After the war, the teenagers of Dublin High School organized an after school and weekend group in a building which they named "The Shanty." The room was filled with teenagers for dances, parties and get togethers until the gatherings were relocated into a Quonset hut in the early 1950s.

The last of the buildings, known as the Stephens Building and now the Thompson building, was rebuilt in 1944 on the site of W.F. Schaufele's Men's Store, which was built in 1897 and rebuilt following a fire in 1913. In the early 1930s, the building was leased by the Rose Theater. In the mid 1930s, you could find the finest in meats at Shuman's Meat Market.

R.L. Stephens and his wife, Louanna Lovett Stephens, opened their dream store in 1944. Built in an art deco style, the building featured a spiral staircase, which was used for fashion shows and beauty contests.

When the Bank of Dudley acquired the building in 2016, the public clamored that the staircase and its imposing mirror be saved and incorporated into the building. Architect Bill McLees took many steps to retain as much of the Stephens building as could be saved.

From 1965 to 1984, the building was occupied by Laverne's Women's Department Store, Laurens Hardware Company, Quality Appliance Company and Deese



The longtime Stephens Department Store (left) was a grocery and clothing superstore for much of its history, being repurposed as an appliance dealer and later a law office before becoming part of Bank of Dudley in 2017.



The building, with its art deco style, featured large storefront windows often filled by sharply-dressed mannequins and a wide-open sales floor (both above). But its signature was the spiral staircase and mirror that were utilized for fashion shows (right, top) and beauty pageants (right, bottom). Both, seen (left) as they currently appear, have been preserved.



Appliance Company.

In 1984, the Stephens Building was purchased by H. Dale Thompson and Scott B. Thompson, Sr. for their new law offices. The Thompsons retained most of the original Stephens Building's unique interior designs. During their 31 years, the law office was also home to Judge Samuel A. Hilbun, C. Mitchell Warnock, Jr., Eric L. Jones, Lance Jones, District Attorney L. Craig Fraser and Margaret Greer.

Scott Thompson agreed to sell the building when the Bank of Dudley began looking into options for expanding its quickly-growing downtown presence. In the largest expansion and renovation project in its 113-year history, the bank conducted a full overhaul of the floor plan, interior and exterior of the now four-building complex. The completed work was unveiled in December of last year.

Today, the newly designed Bank of Dudley con-



Completed in December of 2017, Bank of Dudley's expansion and renovation reconfigured the floor plan of all four buildings, and unified them with a new lobby (above) more central and traditional in style. The bank's design, inside and out, includes touches of classic and modern that maximize its visibility and view (below) and acknowledge its place as a centerpiece of Downtown Dublin.

tinues the tradition of excellence to its customers, just as the scores of other businesses which occupied the site in the 200-year plus history of Dublin.



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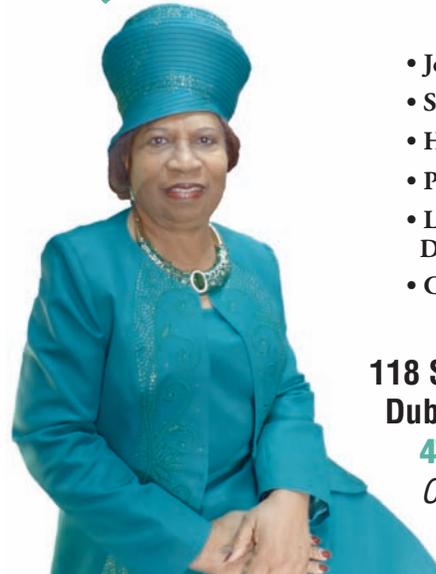
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Several of the six new condominiums nearing completion for developers Billy and Lee Ann Nash (inset, opposite) open onto this rooftop terrace. The elevated garden patio is seen from an elevated perch atop the Lovett and Tharpe Building across the street while hosting a lunchtime get-together.



**B**illy Nash sold his downtown Dublin business, Rhino USA Inc., in 2016 and retired.

“I found out I wasn’t good at retiring,” he said.

Nash had heard talk of the need for more residential property downtown, so he decided to turn the property he already owned into second-story condominiums. The property in question is on the north side of West Jackson Street and stretches from Roosevelt Street east to what will be the new downtown plaza – about half of the city block.

Nash had operated Rhino, his telecommunications business, from space that included the corner building

that for decades had been the main branch of the Farmers and Merchants Bank. He had sold that much to Steve and Amanda Miller who opened Miller & Co., an interior design company, there in December 2017.

However, above Miller & Co. and clearly visible from the street in several directions, is an arbor terrace that pulls the eye upward to the condos. It covers the width of the building from front to back drawing attention to the living spaces.

Because the building is in Dublin’s historical district, Nash said he had to clear the arbor terrace with the historical review board. The downstairs façade already complied with historical district guidelines, he said.

Nash is remodeling the street level space. The sec-

# Lofty Ideals

Their new condominium project – and its revolutionary outdoor terrace – set to be unveiled this spring is the first of many restoration projects on the horizon for the Nash family, which is just getting started putting its stamp on business and residential life in Downtown Dublin.

By **DAHLIA ALLEN**

with photos by Dahlia Allen and Clay Reynolds

ond story is new construction. Six condos – four with one bedroom, two with two bedrooms – are finished and ready for tenants to lease, he said. His plans include building seven additional condos.

“Right now, we’re leasing, but they can be sold,” he said. “A one-bedroom leases for \$1,000 a month and a two-bedroom for \$1,200. That includes high-speed internet but not utilities and cable.”

Nash describes the living space as unfurnished, luxury condos with tile bathrooms, granite counter tops and crown molding. Because he had been in the technology business, he already had a fiber-optic cable



and the expertise for smart technology.

The downtown condos have different advantages for different people, he said. One is leased to a couple whose home is on a farm several miles away.

“They like the convenience of living in town during

the week and going home on the weekends," Nash said. "A young man who leases a one-bedroom likes the ambiance of living downtown. The condos are close to several good restaurants. They are safe, and there is no yard maintenance."

Below the condos will be offices and retail businesses.

"I've partnered with Louie Curry and Michael Maffett to move Curry-Maffett Insurance Company into two of the spaces," Nash said. "The projects will be ready in the fall, probably in conjunction with the

plaza being finished."

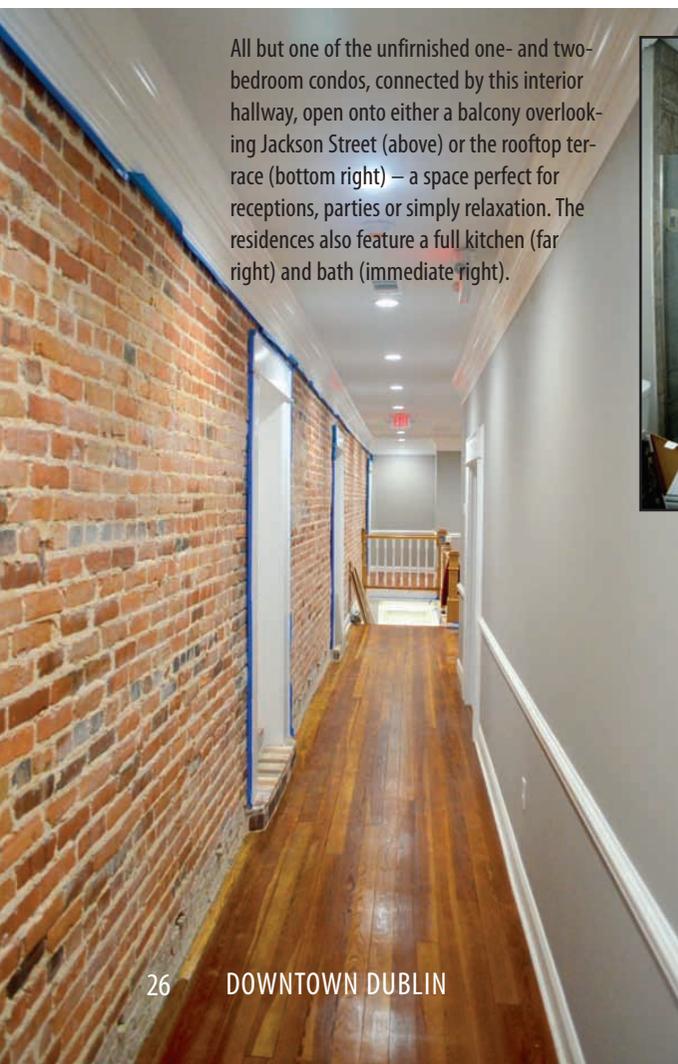
Nash is a native of Baxley. His wife Lee Ann Manning Nash grew up near Dudley. Although both attended the University of Georgia, they didn't meet there. Instead, they met on the beach at Tybee Island. After their marriage, they returned to Athens where he operated a business and she taught school until she retired.

"We won several preservation awards for work we did in Athens," Nash said.

Lee Ann always wanted to come back to Laurens County. When her father Troy Manning died, she inherited the family home. "We're living in the house where Lee Ann grew up," Nash said.

Nash also owns buildings on the west side of South Jefferson Street that once housed Dunn's Department Store and later the Blue Plate Restaurant. The adjoining space was home the Bozeman law practice. Once renovated, the buildings will be available for lease as offices, retail stores or restaurants.

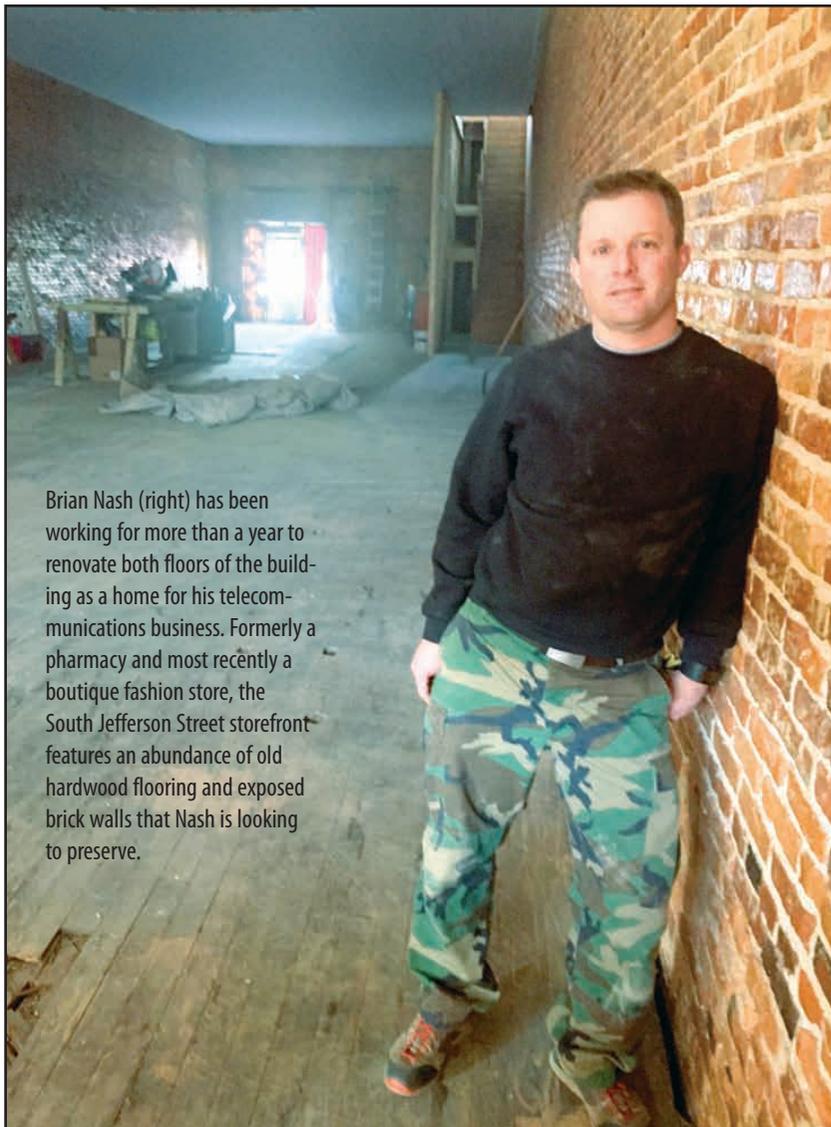
Renovation seems to be in the family genes. Their son Brian Nash is renovating right down the block on South Jefferson Street, where he will locate a telecommunications company.



All but one of the unfurnished one- and two-bedroom condos, connected by this interior hallway, open onto either a balcony overlooking Jackson Street (above) or the rooftop terrace (bottom right) – a space perfect for receptions, parties or simply relaxation. The residences also feature a full kitchen (far right) and bath (immediate right).



The ground floor of the building, in addition to office space that will serve as a leasing and business headquarters for the residential development, is home to newly-minted interior retailer Miller & Company. Dublin native Amanda Miller (right, top) opened the store in December after she and her husband moved from Savannah back to her hometown and realized Middle Georgia's need for an all-inclusive interior design business while renovating their new home. The store, envisioned as a one-stop shop for home decorating – furnishings, upholstery, bedding, fabric and wallpaper – carries a number of custom furniture pieces, pillows, lamps and accessories in its extensive showroom (bottom, right), which is accented with pieces of art by Dublin native Trellis Payne. An even greater selection of products is available in its comprehensive resource center (bottom, left), complete with samples and catalogs as well as a staff of design specialists offering in-store and in-home consultation. While renovating the space, formerly Dublin's F&M Bank, the Millers preserved much of its native hardwood, marble and concrete flooring, in addition to its vault and teller line. Contact Miller & Co. by calling (478) 279-5432.



Brian Nash (right) has been working for more than a year to renovate both floors of the building as a home for his telecommunications business. Formerly a pharmacy and most recently a boutique fashion store, the South Jefferson Street storefront features an abundance of old hardwood flooring and exposed brick walls that Nash is looking to preserve.

When Brian Nash began tearing decades of wall and floor coverings out of his building on South Jefferson Street, he was amazed at what he

found. It had a boxing ring on the second floor.

However, the now defunct boxing ring was only part of its charm.

"I didn't realize the building had so much to offer," he said. "It's much more beautiful than I imagined."

Nash is remodeling to house his business, Vast Telecom. He is moving from a building on West Jackson Street, where his father Billy Nash operated a similar business.

The building that most recently housed Peachtree Fashions has some 5,000 square feet of hardwood flooring. The walls on both sides and the back are old brick. The inside left-hand wall was the exterior wall of the Four Seasons department store that once sat on the corner of South Jefferson and Madison streets.

The beauty of the building dates to its early days as a pharmacy – first Black's Drugs followed by Strange Drugs.

"When I bought the building, it still had

the raised level that would have been behind the drug store counter," Nash said.

To get to the brick walls, Nash had to strip away the layer of plaster that covered the bricks and the layer of sheet rock that covered the plaster. He found the pine floors when he ripped up the carpet that covered the linoleum that covered the wood. He has had the bricks cleaned and sealed, and is preparing to refinish the floors.

It took some doing, but Nash found a way to use the boxing ring, which was built in the 1920s.

"I tried to sell it or even give it away, but there was no way to get it down from the second floor," he said. So he cut it into pieces and made it into an upstairs conference table.

The 41-year-old grew up in Athens and majored in marketing at the University of Georgia.

"I was the mascot, Hairy Dawg, while I was there, too," he said.

He began working with his father in 2008 and moved here in 2015.

He started his career in retail sales but decided he would be more at home on the wholesale end. As a wholesaler of cellular airtime, Vast Telecom is a middleman between providers and retail, Nash said.

"We're a master distributor for Verizon, Rok Mobile, Eco Mobile and FirstNet – a division of AT&T," he said. "We provide a layer of protection between the provider and the retail store. Instead of having to deal with every retail outlet individually, they work with the distributor."

Each of the two floors in his building has about 2,500 square feet. Nash will use the second floor for his office. The business, currently with six employees, will be downstairs. Nash said he is adding a contract that will allow him to hire between three and five new employees.

Vast has three departments – sales, support and development, he said.

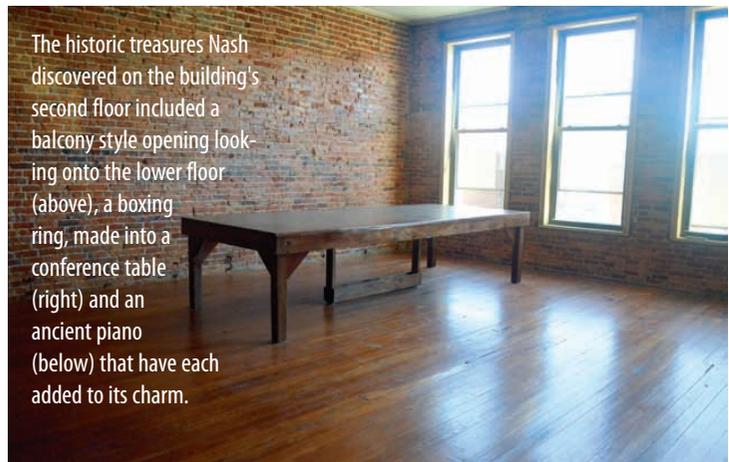
"The expansion will be in support. Two full-time developers write program codes for computers," he said.

Nash began the renovation Oct. 17 expecting to be able to move into it in December. The end finally is in sight, he said.

"I wanted to stay downtown. We're trying to do our part to make downtown beautiful again," he said. "This is one more building we can bring back."



Vast Telecom (logo above) will occupy the bottom floor of the building upon completion, with Nash's own office space set to go on the second story.



The historic treasures Nash discovered on the building's second floor included a balcony style opening looking onto the lower floor (above), a boxing ring, made into a conference table (right) and an ancient piano (below) that have each added to its charm.





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# The Courier Herald

Staff members at Dublin-Laurens County's No. 1 source for news share favorite recipes from our favorite mealtime.



Planned around special occasions, send-offs and holidays, the regular brunch get-togethers take place at the start of the business day and keep staff members returning for more the entire morning. A wide counter running the length of the newsroom turns from desk to buffet line as dishes prepared by employees in every department are brought in to spread out for all to enjoy.

## Hot off the presses...

By **CLAY REYNOLDS**

A local newspaper and the most important meal of the day are two essential components to the morning. And at The Courier Herald, where a hearty helping of each day's news is served up on Middle Georgia doorsteps simultaneous with the sunrise, community journalism and a good solid breakfast go hand-in-hand.

In fact, we put that quite literally.

Company wide get-togethers over a spread of potluck-style brunch are a regular tradition planned around holidays, send-offs and any other special occasions we can think up at our offices on South Jefferson Street downtown. Employees from each department whip up one of their favorite breakfast dishes, finger foods or desserts and bring them in to combine atop the counter running the length of the newsroom for an all-day smorgasbord.

We'll graze throughout the morning on the various items, all while sipping on more than one cup of our signature coffee punch – infused with sweetness and caffeine – that makes up the centerpiece.

This experience is one that, once a year, we share with others in the downtown community as host of the Downtown Development Authority's monthly Coffee Break in March.

While we invite you to come taste for yourself, this collection of recipes from Brunch at The Courier Herald offers a guide to making a few of our regular staples for your own get-togethers of friends and neighbors at home.

Whip up a few of these dishes yourself, while making sure to grab your morning paper, and then you'll have everything you need to "Wake Up with The Courier Herald."

# Coffee Punch

By **BRYLYN SUMNER**

**Ingredients**

1 quart hot water  
 8 Tbsp. instant coffee  
 1 cup sugar  
 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring  
 3 oz. Hershey's chocolate syrup (or more)  
 2 quarts milk (or more)  
 2 half-gallon containers of vanilla ice cream

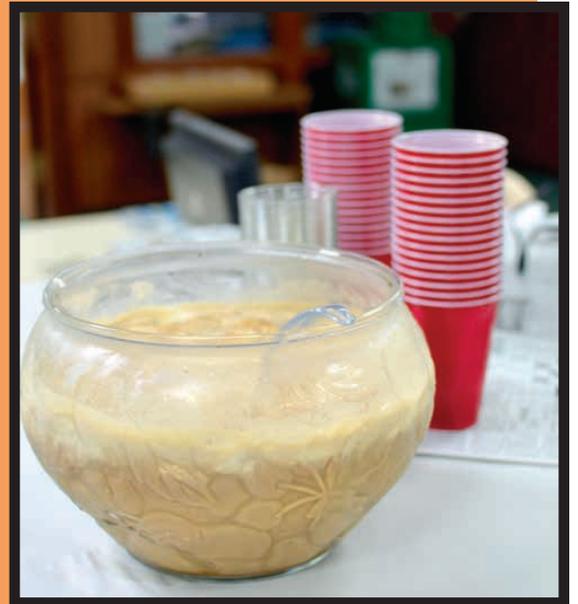
**Instructions**

Dissolve coffee in hot water inside a gallon-size or larger con-

tainer (a big pitcher or tupperware with a lid works well). Stir in the s u g a r , vanilla and syrup and mix thoroughly, then add milk (add more to taste). Refrigerate overnight.

To serve, cut ice cream into chunks in punch bowl, then pour mixture over the ice cream.

Stir and enjoy.



"A hit from the beginning," Brylyn's famous coffee punch has been a staff favorite since she introduced it to The Courier Herald family. The longtime bookkeeper, a Johnson County resident, has handed over the magic formula and responsibility for preparing it to a new generation upon recently entering semi-retirement. We thank her for bringing us this delicious beverage that no Courier Herald brunch is complete without.

**'If it feeds, it leads...'**



A Lothair native, Rhonda recently joined the company as an accountant, bringing along with her a ledger of great breakfast recipes. This casserole is one she enjoys making for family and friends.

# Breakfast Casserole

By **RHONDA STEPTOE**

**Ingredients**

1 lb. mild ground pork sausage  
 1 lb. hot ground pork sausage  
 1 (30 oz.) package of frozen hashbrowns  
 1 1/2 tsp. salt, divided  
 1/2 teaspoon pepper  
 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
 6 large eggs

**Instructions**

Cook sausage in a large skillet over medium-high heat, stirring until sausage crumbles and is no longer

pink. Drain well.

Prepare hash browns according to package directions, seasoning with 1/2 teaspoon of salt and pepper.

Stir together hash browns, sausage and cheese. Pour into a lightly-greased 13x9-inch baking dish.

Whisk together eggs, milk and remaining teaspoon of salt. Pour evenly over potato mixture.

Bake at 350° for 35 to 40 minutes.



# Sausage and cheese balls

By **PAYTON TOWNS III**

## Ingredients

1 lb. mild sausage  
1 lb. hot sausage  
2 cups medium or sharp cheddar cheese, grated  
1-2 cups all-purpose flour



## Instructions

Preheat oven to 400°. Mix sausages and cheese together. Sprinkle in flour until mixture will hold shape when rolled into balls the width of a half-dollar.

Bake for 10-12 minutes. Use mini-muffin tins to keep uniform shape and baking time.



Originally from Milledgeville, Payton joined the company as a sports reporter and editor in 2004 before transitioning to the newsroom as senior reporter in 2011. The Dublin Fire Department is part of his everyday beat. Hopefully you won't have to call them too after trying these sausage balls that pack some heat into the brunch menu.

# Blueberry Muffins with crumb topping

By **CLAY REYNOLDS**

## Ingredients

### Batter:

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/3 cup vegetable oil  
1 egg

1/3 cup milk  
1 cup fresh blueberries

### Crumb topping:

1/2 cup sugar  
1/3 cup all purpose flour  
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon  
1/4 cup butter, cut into cubes

## Instructions

Preheat oven to 400°. Grease muffin tins or line with muffin cups.

To make batter, combine flour, sugar and baking powder. Pour vegetable oil into a 1 cup measuring cup, then add the egg and enough milk to fill the cup. Combine with dry ingredients, then fold in blueberries. Fill muffin cups to the top.

To make crumb topping, mix sugar, flour, butter and cinnamon with a fork, breaking up large clumps until consistency is uniform. Sprinkle generously over muffins before baking.

Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until golden brown.

Makes 8 muffins.



Clay began working with the newspaper as a high school intern, and after leaving to attend college, never stopped coming back. He's now a full-time reporter whose duties include everything from producing magazines to bringing something new and different to contribute to the periodic brunch spread. He discovered the recipe for these sweet and crunchy blueberry muffins while baking them at the request of a co-worker offering fresh-picked blueberries. Ever since, they have become a standby and a crowdpleaser for just about any occasion.



## Fresh fruit dip

By **DIANE LOVETT**

### Ingredients

10 ounces Vanilla Yogurt  
1 cup Cool Whip  
2 tablespoons Instant Vanilla Pudding Mix

### Instructions

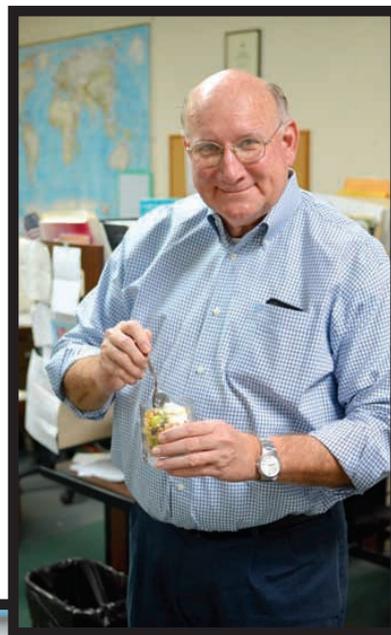
Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Mix with spoon until completely combined. Cover and chill for about 1 hour.

Serve with fresh fruit and granola of choice. Dip may be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to five days.

Makes two cups.

Diane, wife of publisher Griffin Lovett, helps out in the company's accounting department when not whipping up food for a crowd at special events through her local catering business. This sweet, creamy fruit dip, which she first tried out at our DDA Coffee Break during 2016, will keep you heaping spoonful after spoonful on top of generous helpings of fresh fruit.

## Fresh scoop



## Honey-drizzled pecan crescents

By **DuBOSE PORTER**

### Ingredients

2 canisters of Pillsbury Original Crescent Rolls  
2 cups of chopped pecans

Jar of honey

### Instructions

When you roll out the crescent rolls on the baking pan, sprinkle the chopped pecans onto the crescent wedges and then roll the chopped pecans into the crescent rolls for baking.

Bake the crescent rolls containing the chopped pecans until golden brown, around 12 to 14 minutes.

When the rolls come out of the oven, place on a large platter.

Liberally pour the honey over the warm crescent rolls, and then sprinkle remaining chopped pecans on top.

The first time I tried this was at the recommendation of Wendy Buffington of

Jefferson, Georgia. She recommended this with the gift of some Georgia mountain honey. Wendy is the wife of Scott Buffington who is currently President of the Georgia Press Association. I tried this on my boys at Christmas and it was an instant success. I got the same response here upon serving them during a Courier Herald brunch.



A longtime state representative, DuBose has been a co-owner of The Courier Herald since 1987, and to this day brings as well-seasoned a culinary palate to the paper as his array of experience in news and politics. This recipe, which he created secondhand, puts a southern twist on the traditional taste of crescent rolls, adding some sweetness and crunch to their buttery, flaky perfection that's hard to top.

# The perfect pot of coffee

By **RODNEY MANLEY**

No get-together at The Courier Herald, much less a workday, is complete without a fresh pot of coffee. The start of each morning and afternoon in the newsroom is usually signaled by the hum of beans in a grinder, followed by the thick aroma of the freshly-made joe.

The key to good cup of coffee is, well, the coffee. The better the bean, the better the brew. And grinding those beans just before brewing is the best way to enjoy coffee at its freshest.

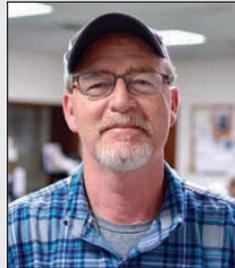
Investing in a small electric grinder (most run between \$10-20) is a great idea, but if you don't have one at home, most grocery stores and coffee houses will gladly grind your package of whole bean coffee on request.

Coffees come in numerous varieties, and each have their own distinct flavor, based largely on where beans are grown and how they are roasted. Coffees are typically sold either as single-origin (named for the country in which they are grown and harvested, such as Guatemala or Ethiopia) or as a specialty blend (given a generic title like House Blend or another name based on culture or location of its roaster).

Roast profiles, whether blonde, light, medium or dark, are usually noted on the packaging with a description of the coffee's flavor. A few of our favorites include Jittery Joe's Guatemala, Starbucks Veranda Blend, Starbucks Yukon Blend, Starbucks Anniversary Blend, Starbucks Sumatra, Peet's Coffee Major Dickason's Blend, Larry's Coffee Cowboy Blend and Starbucks Komodo Dragon Blend.

Here a few additional tips to brewing your own freshly ground pot:

First, make sure to use cold water — and quality coffee beans. The common recommendation is at



The most experienced reporter in our newsroom, Rodney began his first stint with The Courier Herald in 1986, serving as a staff writer and managing editor for many years before joining The Telegraph. He returned in 2016 to become sports editor, as well as staff barista. In that role, the lifelong coffee connoisseur has re-heated the company's love for a freshly-made cup of joe, personally grinding fresh batches of beans before brewing new pots of coffee each morning and afternoon. He makes sure to write out the fresh roast that serves as "The Daily Grind" on a custom coffee chalkboard.

least 1-2 tablespoons of beans per 6 ounces of water.

Then grind the beans. Make sure the beans are ground thoroughly, but don't overdo it. Grind them too long and the beans get "burned" by the blades.

About 10 seconds should be sufficient for enough beans to

make a full pot. It never hurts to carefully give the grinder a shake or two in mid-grind to ensure all the beans get ground.

Coffee brews best in faster-brewing coffeemakers, but soon enough you'll be enjoying a fresh-ground, fresh-brewed cup of joe.

## Breaking news. Breaking bread.



# Sausage Roll-ups

By **AMY HAISTEN**

**Ingredients**

- 1 lb. of hot sausage
- 1 8 oz. package of cream cheese
- 1 lb. of bacon
- 12-16 slices of bread
- Franks Original Red Hot Sauce to taste



**Instructions**

Brown the hot sausage and drain it. Melt the cream cheese into the sausage. Cut the crust off the bread. Cut the bread in half and the bacon in half. Place one slice of bread on one slice of bacon. Spread 1 tbsp. of sausage mixture onto the bread. Roll up the bacon and bread around the sausage mixture and place rollup on a cookie sheet face down. Cook at 400 degrees at 15-20 minutes until the bread begins to brown. Serve immediately.



A longtime member of our graphic design staff, Amy showcases her flair for the artistic in the advertisements she composes as much as the food she enjoys preparing. These sausage bites, an unconventional and delicious combination of three different breakfast foods, are one of her most imaginative creations.



Mary Beth, one of our hardworking ad sales consultants, enjoys cooking and entertaining in her spare time. This sausage and cream cheese log brings together the sweet and savory in a dish that is a much anticipated addition to the newsroom spread.

# Sausage and cream cheese log

By **MARY BETH PORT**

**Ingredients**

- 2 lbs of pork sausage (mild, medium or hot)
- 1 and 1/2 packages of cream cheese (8 oz packages)
- 2 packages of crescent roll sheets

**Instructions**

Preheat oven according to crescent roll instructions. Brown sausage and drain, then stir in cream cheese. Unroll crescent roll sheet and

spread half the mixture on each, roll up and bake according to crescent roll package.

Slice and serve. This recipe is excellent for breakfast, brunch or parties.



# Strawberry Trifle

By **CHERYL GAY**

**Ingredients**

- 1 5 oz instant vanilla pudding mix
- 3 cups milk
- 1 angel food cake (cut into cubes)
- 4 sliced bananas
- 1 16 oz package frozen strawberries
- 1 (12 oz) container of whipped topping



**Instructions**

Prepare pudding with milk. In a glass trifle bowl, layer half the cake pieces, half the pudding, half the bananas, half the strawberries and half the whipped topping. Repeat the layers. You can use fresh strawberries to decorate the top. Cover and chill in refrigerator for four hours.



Cheryl, who has served as The Courier Herald's Circulation Director for more than 20 years, is always the life of the party. This layered dessert, a reflection of her personality, is just as much a metaphor for the work she and her dedicated team of carriers do each day assembling the many sections of the newspapers they deliver across the county.

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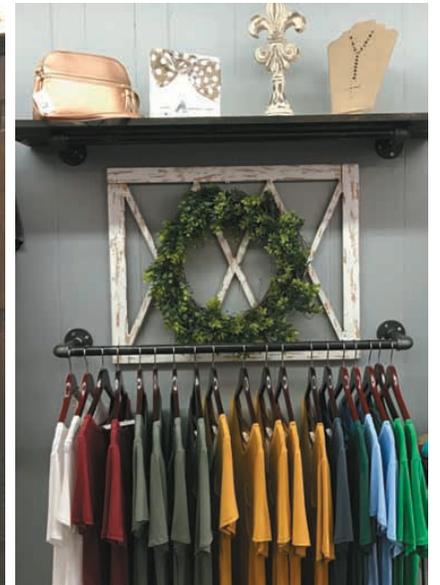
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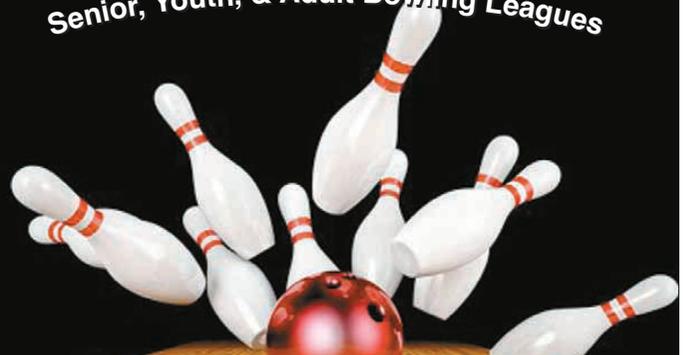
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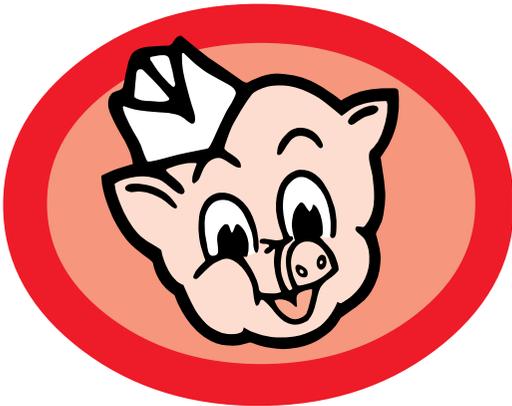
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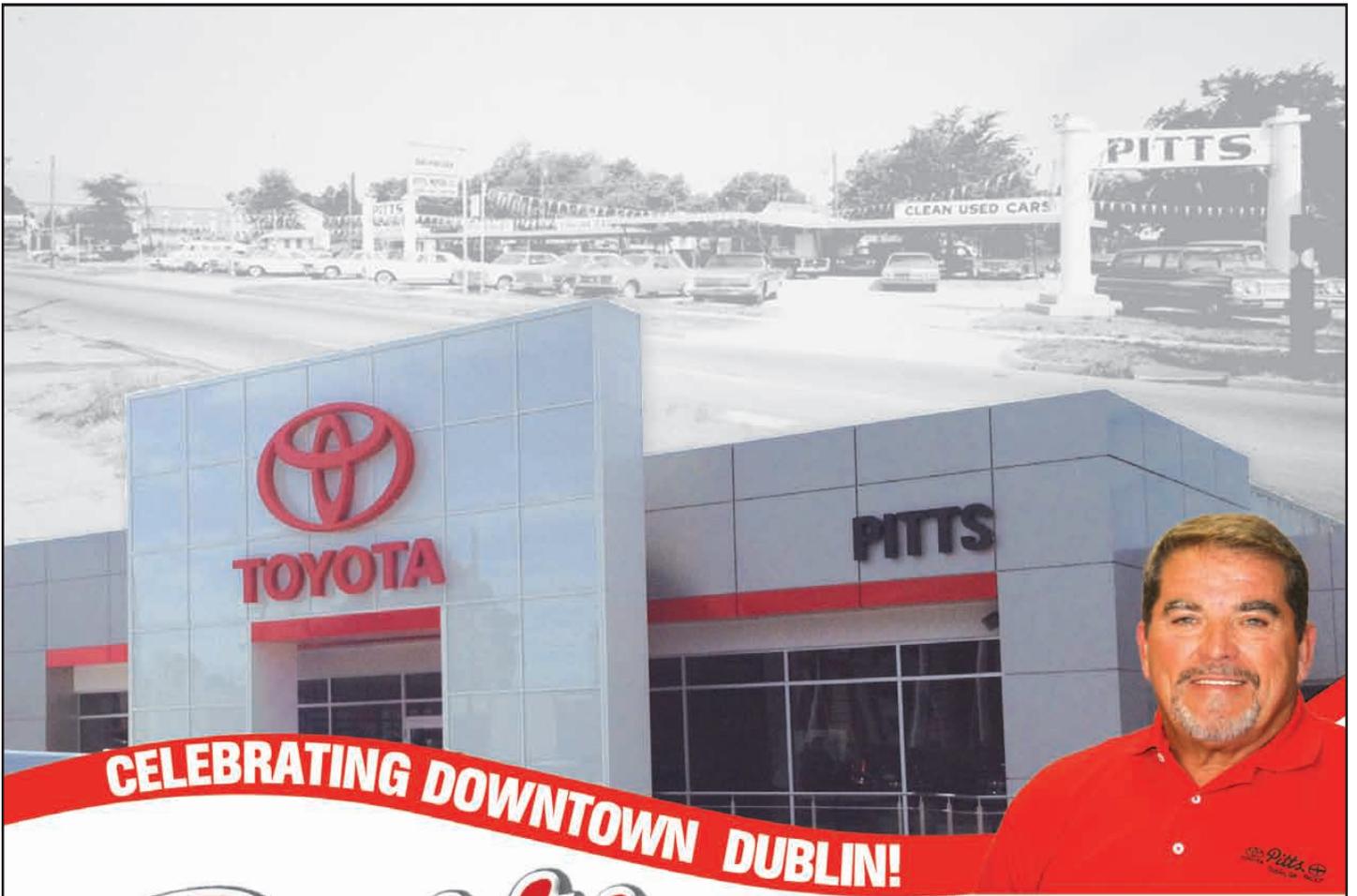
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