

SUPER SAVER
INSIDE



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Burger family opposes parole of convicted murderer

Karla Tipton
Herald Staff Writer

It has all the qualities of a TV crime drama: the brutal murder of a young mother who had just broken up with a man who threatened her life if she left him; and the traumatized family, persuaded to allow a plea bargain facilitated by a well-connected father to get a lesser sentence for his son.

The March 1982 murder of Sandra Burger in Barberton, however, was not fiction. It was real life. And every time convicted murderer Mark Headley goes before a parole board, as he will on March 11, the family of the young woman he killed must relive the pain of losing her again.

“Our wounds have never been able to heal because we have to keep reliving this, every five years, two years, 10 years,” said Teresa White, who was 19 years old at the time her 22-year-old sister Sandy was murdered on Harvard Avenue. “Every time he comes up on parole, we have to try to fight to put him back there in prison. My mother is 84 years old, and she had to go down there and deal with that again. It’s not right.”

Burger, who had moved out of the residence she had been sharing with Headley while he was at work, had been at her sister’s apartment when Headley arrived in his car.

White told her sister not to speak to him, but Burger insisted. “Then she reached down, kissed her little girl, and said, ‘I’m not going anywhere. I’ll be right back,’ and she walks out the door,” said White. “After a while, when she hasn’t come back, I look out the window, and she’s gone.”

Headley took Burger back to his Barberton residence and beat her to death. His young daughter was present in the house at the time.

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HERALD PHOTO/Karla Tipton
Sandy Burger’s sister Teresa White reads the letter that will be presented to the parole board on March 11, opposing the release of Mark Headley, who pleaded guilty to murdering Burger in 1982 in Barberton.

Together, the cast of ‘Annie Jr.’ finds their way to Easy Street

Karen Hornyak
Herald Staff Writer

It may be a hard-knock life, but the sun will come out tomorrow... or so claimed an orphan named Annie this weekend, coincidentally not far from Barberton’s Lake Anna. On March 1 and 2, the fourth- through eighth-grade students of St. Augustine’s drama club presented “Annie Jr.,” a condensed but equally charming version of the well-loved Broadway show. Cast members who lingered to chat after Friday’s show were justifiably proud of their performance. Kierstin Douglas (Annie and backstage crew) previously performed in the school’s production of “Oliver. She enjoyed singing “I Don’t Need Anything But You” with her friend Mara DeSantis (Daddy Warbucks and crew). With the energy the two expended, it’s little wonder her favorite part was falling back into the large easy chair used as



HERALD PHOTO/Karen Hornyak
St. Augustine students learn more than lines while rehearsing for “Annie Jr.”

a prop. Delaney Kolarik said playing Sandy, the dog, was “kind of weird” but a lot of fun despite her knees getting sore, as the role required her to be on all fours. Eleanor Talley (Pepper) dislocated her shoulder playing softball and was forced to play her part in a sling. “It was hard at first, but I worked around it,” she said. Talley credits her cast mates with helping her through some

painful practices. Although the performers’ headset microphones ensured their voices would carry, the equipment created its own set of problems. Jamie Husk (Duffy) said the tape on the mic didn’t adhere well to her stage makeup, causing the microphone to wiggle out of place. Breanna Stipe (Grace) said she always gets butterflies, even though she has been performing since

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Payless reaches the end of the road in North America



HERALD PHOTO/Karen Hornyak

Customers have the opportunity to pay even less until Payless closes its doors for good.

Karen Hornyak
Herald Staff Writer

Internet shopping is convenient, and the prices can be hard to beat. Unfortunately, increased online purchasing by consumers has hit traditional retailers hard. Low-price shoe outlet Payless now joins the growing list of businesses unable to make the cut. Cousins Louis and Shaol Lee Pozee of Topeka, Kansas founded Payless ShoeSource in 1956. At its peak of operations, the company had more than 4,000 stores in over 40 countries. Payless first filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in April 2017 and closed roughly 400 stores at that time. The company emerged from the reorganization with too much debt and too many stores, leading to another bankruptcy in February of this year. According to court records, Payless listed \$500 million to \$1 billion in debt. Having already ended online sales, the company is in the process of closing its remaining stores in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico.

According to the Wall Street Journal, it is one of the largest retailer liquidations to date, with over 16,000 jobs lost. International franchisees and stores throughout Latin America will continue business as usual, as operations there are expected to remain profitable. At the North American stores still open, liquidation sales will go on until at least the end of March, with most continuing through the end of May. However, there have already been major changes in policy. The rewards program has been discontinued; coupons are no longer being accepted; checks are no longer a valid method of payment; and all sales are final. Also, stores will not accept returns of in-store or previous online purchases or issue merchandise credits. Active gift cards and merchandise credit can be redeemed only through Monday, March 11. An employee at the Magic City Plaza Payless, who declined to be named, said employees know no more than the public. When

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Board welcomes donations

Cierra Thompson
Herald Staff Writer

The Barberton Board of Education recognized the high school band students who participated in the OMEA Solo and Ensemble Festival and received superior, excellent and good ratings.

“It’s important to have balanced extracurriculars, including the arts and the music programs,” said Megann Eberhart, board member.

The board agreed that these ratings are a reflection of both the students and the staff.

Superintendent Jeffrey Ramnytz recommended

that the board approve the submission of a Breathe, Think, Respond grant to the GAR Foundation in the amount of \$9,980. He also asked for the approval of submissions for grants to the GAR Foundation, entitled Barberton A-Live for \$15,000 and Educator Initiative for \$7,000.

“These grants open opportunities for our students. Thank you to everyone who takes the time to write these and hopefully we do get them,” said Dave Polacek, Board of Education Chairman.

A motion was made to approve an overnight trip for the high school Business Management team to attend

the Business Professional of America competition in Columbus March 14. Another motion was made to approve an overnight trip for DECA students to attend the state competition in Columbus March 15.

The board approved adding Shawna Angeloff, board member, Don Wood, community member, Amhee Heim, school counselor, Henry Muren, high school principal and Leslie Soltis, teacher, to the Academic Hall of Fame Selection Committee for this school year.

The board accepted donations from the Barberton All Sports Boosters for swim, tennis, baseball, basketball, football and track teams.

A donation of more than 50 packages of mechanical pencils, correction fluid and crayons was given by a Coventry Township resident. The board recognized the generosity of the community and Polacek said they are very thankful.

Following the Feb. 27 meeting, the board entered into an executive session to discuss employment and the compensation of a public employee.

\$4 million deficit reduced to \$2.4 million

Cierra Thompson
Herald Staff Writer

At the safety committee meeting, Councilman Shorter Griffin called for a draft ordinance for a grant request for adequate staffing of fire and emergency response.

Union President Rick Schwenning addressed concerns about the lack of minorities and women at fire department at the March 4 meeting. He said the fire department has no say on who gets hired because the hiring is done through the city.

“We are not actively trying to keep women or minorities out of the department. It’s not our decision to make,” said Schwenning.

“I wouldn’t say it’s a cushy job, there are days that we run more and less. We are supposed to be there 24 hours a day,” said Schwenning.

Director of Human Resource Elizabeth Daugherty said they’ve had several female candidates apply to the fire-fighter positions and haven’t passed either the written or

physical portions of the test which could speak to the testing. She said there was an African American who worked there briefly. She said it is important for the safety forces to reflect the population.

“The applicants are usually aligned with the percentage of the minority population within the city of Barberton,” Daugherty explained.

At the finance committee meeting, Councilwoman Carla Debevec explained a draft ordinance for the appropriation of \$135,000 to the permissive license tax fund capital budget for the upcoming Interstate 76 Interchange project, which includes significant resurfacing of state Route 619.

This project includes the reconstruction of a waterline along 619.

Debevec called for another draft ordinance to enter into contract with the state attorney general’s office for the collection of EMS transport collection fees and delinquent income tax money owed to the city.

In other business, they initially projected a \$4

FROM THE FRONT

Payless

(Continued from Front Page)

Ryan Shoe Fund will need to find another partner. Payless customer service operators were unable to comment, and a follow-up call to the number provided was not returned. An open letter on the company’s website states, “We would like to extend our appreciation to our hard-working, dedicated Associates who have worked tirelessly to deliver an exceptional service to our customers. Our sincere gratitude goes out to our customers for their loyalty and support over the years.”

Annie

(Continued from Front Page)

The actors agreed that it helped to get out among the audience during intermission, during which time refreshments were served and everyone could relax. “I felt a lot more confident after intermission,” said DeSantis. Derrick Chapman (Rooster) was thankful for the encouragement from the rest of the cast. Olivia Belmont (New Yorker), making her stage debut, said the experience has made her more confident. Luke Gresser (Drake) was proud of how well the show turned out, adding that the best part was how everyone supported each other. Ariana Woodruff (Molly), Isabella Matusicky (Kate), crew member Robyn Ryan and everyone else present echoed that sentiment, which Jossilyn Blake (sound effects and “woman”), further demonstrated by saying her favorite part of the play was one in which she was not even involved. Elijah Jones played a dual onstage role, as did Adrianna and Alana Petro (not present for interviews). The cast, who rehearsed for four months prior to Friday’s performance, also included Ella Beke, Savannah Drake, Kayla Jones, Amya Lily, Cheyenne Logston, Regan Molder, Chenoa Moss, Jaden Rendino, Peyton Stump, Olivia Talley, MaQhia and MaQarii Thomas, Zoey Turner, and Alexis Woodruff (also on crew). Additional crew members were Avery Drouhard, LaBella Edwards, Bobby Fisher, Kaeden Kolarik, Mylee Mosh, Ben Miller, Lisa Ortscheid and Ethan Wright. Drama coaches Kim Krajcovic and Jenna Schweitzer, both teachers at St. Augustine, were well pleased with the way their charges came together to deliver a masterful performance. Togetherness, it seems, paves the way to Easy Street.

million shortfall. With the actual numbers entered into the general fund, the deficit is \$2.4 million. The city had a larger income tax collection than expected which aided in the reduced deficit.

The fire department had a forensic accountant examine the city’s financial records. Debevec said the city has several reserve funds; income tax, general liability

loss, emergency reserve and infrastructure reserve fund. She explained what each fund is specifically used for.

At the committee of the whole meeting, Schwenning addressed council and said he wants them to make an informed decision. He said if the layoffs do take place, it will not help the budget or save the city money.

Burger

(Continued from Front Page)

he?” said White, who had been told by a family member that Headley had threatened to kill Burger if she broke up with him.

Headley, a body builder, and the son of Barberton attorney and former state legislator David L. Headley, was originally charged with aggravated murder. He pleaded guilty to the murder, blaming his use of steroids for causing him to lose his temper and kill Burger. He was allowed to plea bargain and was sentenced to 15-years-to-life in prison.

“I think my mother was directed to just cooperate,” said White, suggesting he could have been charged with “premeditated murder, abuse of a corpse and kidnapping and gotten a longer sentence. But we were all distraught and my mom was trying to protect her family from the details.”

To the family’s dismay and despite their opposition, Headley got paroled in 2007 after serving 25 years in prison, despite dozens of letters sent to the parole board arguing against his release. According to Akron Beacon Journal reporting, his father had argued on his behalf. Headley was placed on parole for five years, and ordered to undergo drug screens and obey all laws.

When Headley was released, he moved to Florida where his daughter lived with her husband. Three months before the end of his five-year parole, he was arrested on charges of drunk driving and crashing into a sheriff deputy’s car in Manatee County, Florida. The deputy and a man he was transporting suffered injuries. Headley spent five years in prison in Florida for that charge, and was then was returned to Ohio to serve more time.

For the upcoming hearing, White and several friends and family members have written letters to the board opposing Headley’s release. She went before a board member in Canton and read her letter. She hopes it makes a difference. “I want the community to know that this monster is going to live on these same streets that your family lives.”

Barberton Police Chief Vince Morber is also writing a letter to the board, as will retired officers of the Barberton Fraternal Order of Police who worked on the case at the time.

“We have a sacred duty to speak for victims, it’s our job,” said Morber. “She was viciously beaten to death by his hands. We’ve always opposed Mark Headley being released because he took an innocent life.”

Headley will appear before the board next week in a closed session. If he is granted parole, the Burger family plans to appeal the decision.

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