

Perry

Continued from 1a

Scott said that Bill Perry was introduced only as a board member and that he did not realize until after the meeting the relationship between the Perrys. However, Bill Perry said he introduced himself both as Nancy Perry's husband and a school board member. He declined to comment further.

Contacted at the Georgia School Board Association office, Sis Henry, the association's executive director, said that she could not comment on the specific incident but that, "In general, it would be very

unusual for a board member to attend a parent-teacher conference." In fact, in the vast majority of parent-teacher conferences the school principal is not even present, she said.

In addition to being an elected member of the Dublin City Board of Education, Bill Perry also serves on the board of directors of the state School Board Association.

Responding to questions about the meeting, Dublin School Board Chairman Richard Sheffield said that a school board member cannot "micro-manage." He referred to the chain of command for

parent grievances that begins with the teacher, then may be appealed to the principal, next to the superintendent of the school system and finally to the local board of education. He said that the matter has been discussed with Perry in an executive session.

Dublin schools are closed this week for spring holidays; therefore, neither Mallette nor City School Superintendent Dr. Chuck Ledbetter could be reached for comment. However, in a letter to Scott, Ledbetter said that "allowing the board member to attend the parent-teacher conference has been addressed with the prin-

icipal." The letter says that Mallette "has been instructed to call the superintendent should any board member wish to sit in on a parent-teacher conference and is not to allow it to happen."

Ledbetter said in the letter he and Sheffield have addressed with Perry the issue of his having attended the conference. "The board member was told that the board instructed us to reprimand him for his actions in this incident, and that by attending the meeting he gave the impression that the scales of justice were weighted against the parent," the letter says.

table," Wood said. "We are going to have a very dynamic speaker in Angela Williams this year."

Williams, who is from Atlanta, is the founder of The Voice movement to end child sexual abuse. The Voice tries to give children a voice.

"So many times they are scared to tell anybody when abuse is happening," Wood said. "(Williams') big deal is giving them a voice."

Canady said the event will also award those who participated in an essay contest the Exchange Club of Dublin sponsored along with the Accepting the Challenge of Excellence Award.

According to national statistics provided by Stepping Stone, a partnered agency with The Heart of Georgia United Way, child sexual abuse is an epidemic affecting one in four girls, one in six boys and only one in 10 will tell. Ninety-three percent of those children are abused by someone they know

anonymous. "They can call these groups or 1-800-Georgiachild," Wood said. "The best thing is to make the call. This is a small community and everybody knows everybody. That's sometimes a reason they are hesitant to make a report, because it could be against their friend or neighbor. But they have to remember that they are helping to protect that child."

And maybe next year, the number of pinwheels will be lower.

"I would love to see it lower and one day at zero," Wood said. "That's a pretty hefty task. We know this is something people don't like to talk about. But it's very important. A kid driving by who has been through something, can see those pinwheels and know what they represent. That could mean a lot to them just to know there is awareness out there and somebody is thinking about them and trying to help them."

Parents

Continued from 1a

wanting to confront the teacher immediately. However, DMS Principal Mike Mallette wanted to talk with Perry beforehand and give her a chance to prepare, so he scheduled the meeting for February 26, Scott said. Mallette and Bill Perry attended the meeting with Nancy Perry and Scott.

Scott said that they did not discuss what happened in the classroom during the meeting, focusing on Obama instead. Scott brought with him to the newspaper office interview a sheet of printout copies from the Internet website of the Christian Anti-Defamation League titled "7 Reasons Why Obama Is not a Christian" that the Perrys had with them at the conference. Nancy Perry said she brought the papers on-

ly to use as references if she needed them and that Scott obtained copies later from Mallette.

Dublin School Superintendent Dr. Chuck Ledbetter followed the conference with a letter to Scott in which he apologized and said that the matter of not taking political positions with students has been addressed with Perry, adding that she has filed for retirement.

Ledbetter said that he is acting on Scott's suggestion of the need for training for school personnel in "sensitivity and building relationships across economic, racial, and other divides."

The Dublin City school faculty members will participate in a regional training in July that will address "different students, student needs, and how to effectively teach and build

relationships with students." School leaders also will discuss relationship building issues and the problem of a school board members' wanting to attend meetings inappropriately in their leadership academy meetings, the letter said.

The Scotts are not satisfied with the response to their concerns, however. Jimmie Scott described his son as a student in the gifted program and said that he has many caucasian friends. The issue has not caused problems between the student and his friends, he said. He and his wife have not requested that their son be

transferred out of Perry's class. "This was a one-sided fight," Stephanie Scott said. "We've taught our son to respect his elders. What is a child going to say to a teacher (when he disagrees)?"

Jimmie Scott said that, despite Ledbetter's apology in the letter, the matter has not been resolved. "This is not over," he said, adding that they will present their demands at the April 13 school board meeting. That meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. at the Dublin Board of Education office.

FINANCING AVAILABLE
MID STATE POOLS & SPAS
2273 Wilshire Blvd. | (478) 275-0566 | 1-800-284-0566

caneega PHOTOGRAPHY
"on the square"
116 East Jackson Street, Dublin, Georgia 31021
478.204.4219 | caneegaphotography.com

"FROM MILD TO WILD"
WE GOTCHA COVERED!
DIRTY DIESEL

Hillcrest **URGENT CARE** is now
FastTrack IMMEDIATE CARE
& OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES
At FastTrack Immediate