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NFL rosters.

"But, per capita, we rank No. 1 in America in that category," Rogers said. "We've got a lot to be proud of in Georgia."

Rogers said Georgia isn't just a football state. Rather, the Peach State is a large producer of softball, basketball and baseball players on the national and collegiate stages.

"Last year in softball, the National Gatorade Player of the Year was from Georgia," he said. "We have a lot to be proud of in athletics."

"Our coaches association also ranks No. 1 in America in membership per capita," Rogers said. "Our athletes and coaches from the state of Georgia rank second to no one in America."

Rogers reminds us that one of the top players in the National Basketball Association came from a Class A

school.

"I think folks know who Dwight Howard is," he said. "He played in Class A at Southwest Atlanta Christian, and he went to the NBA straight out of high school."

"The best female basketball player in the WNBA is from Georgia, and is no stranger to America," Rogers said. "Maya Moore is one of the most recognized female athletes in the world and she played in our GACA North-South All-Star game."

"I don't have the statistics in front of me, but we've a huge number of basketball players, both male and female playing college ball across the nation. We have a lot to be proud of in Georgia."

The National League Most Valuable Player and World Series MVP, Buster Posey, is from Georgia," Rogers said.

"I could go on and on

about Georgia high school athletes succeeding at the professional and collegiate levels," Rogers said.

Rogers spent 36 years in public education in Union County, as an educator, coach and athletic director.

He also was a multi-sport star on the athletic field for the Panthers.

Rogers still holds the record for most consecutive 200-plus yard rushing games at five.

"All that has happened to me since I retired from public education, becoming executive director for the state coaching association, and being elected to the national board of directors, all that is definitely an honor," Rogers said. "All that is great, but the best part is that it all started right here in Union County."

"I'll never forget where I came from," Rogers said. "Home is home."

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20 students and five adults, before killing himself as first responders arrived. "You never know what's next in this world," Chief Carroll said. "All we can do is be prepared."

The shootings at Sandy Hook has sparked a national debate over gun laws and how to avert such a tragedy again.

From Capitol Hill to the grocery store to the water cooler, the debate is stirring emotions on both sides of the issue.

It's a debate that likely won't be settled anytime soon. It's a debate that will provoke many hard feelings nationwide.

Chief Carroll, Trooper White and Deputy Jones have the right attitude about the crisis, be prepared to avert another tragedy.



Union County School Resource Office Lt. Darren Jones and Trooper White at Union County Elementary School on Monday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Title Tax Law...continued from Page 1A

Under the new law, the fee for all vehicles titled between March 1 and the end of 2013 will be 6.5 percent of the worth of the vehicle. The figure will rise to 6.75 percent for 2014, and 7 percent in 2015. It eventually could climb as high as 9 percent of the vehicle's worth.

People who bought vehicles between Jan. 1, 2012, and Feb. 28, 2013, will have the option to pay the ad valorem tax for the life of their car, or to opt into the new title tax. The opt-in period lasts from March 1 until the end of 2013. Those who opt in will not get refunded for any ad valorem they already paid, but will get credit for paying sales tax if the car was not purchased in a private sale.

Knight said he's well versed in how the new law will work.

The old ad valorem tax system will continue to exist for vehicles titled in 2011 or earlier, Knight said.

People who lease cars will continue to pay sales tax and the dealership will pay the title ad valorem tax. Dealerships could include the cost of that tax in their fees, Knight said.

People who move into Georgia with a car after March 1 will have to pay the new tax on any vehicles entering into the state when they register their cars in Georgia.

New out-of-state residents will have to pay half the fee up front, and will have a year to pay the rest, Knight

said.

Vehicles passed between immediate family members — spouses, parents, children, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren — will pay a reduced fee of 0.5 percent of the car's worth to title the vehicle, provided the full one-time title ad valorem tax already has been paid.

Also, people who were exempt from paying the annual car tax, such as disabled veterans, are exempt from the new tax, Knight said.

"Vehicles that are older than 1985, and are not required to have titles, are only affected if the owner decides to get a title after March 1," Knight said. "Vehicles that aren't titled, such as boats and trailers, aren't affected by the new law."



RARE KIDS; WELL DONE By Don Jacobsen

Walking in a large shopping mall recently I noticed a man approaching, maybe in his early 30s. I don't remember seeing anyone quite as disheveled since I was visiting in a third world country. His hair appeared as though it had not been combed — or washed — in recent memory. His face and hands were dirty, the sole was coming loose on his right shoe. His pants were badly worn. I

mean badly. You've seen kids wear jeans with intentional holes in the legs, right? Well, I doubt that the holes in this man's jeans were intentional, but they were certainly not a fashion statement. I tend not to be judgmental of someone in dire financial straits or who is not well-coifed, but as I said, this one caught my attention.

As he approached I noticed something printed on

his shirt and although I didn't want to appear to be staring I was curious to read it. As we passed I read: "If you met my family you'd understand."

Now I grant that I don't know where he got the shirt. Maybe crumpled in the bottom of a bin at a thrift store. The fact is, he chose to wear it. (If he hadn't wanted to be a walking billboard, he could have at least turned it inside out; it wouldn't have compromised his wardrobe a bit.)

I thought, Here is a man making a non-subtle statement not too different from the one many others are making. It goes like this: "It's not my fault." I know I'm mean to my kids, but what do you expect, that's the way my dad treated me. I know I don't show respect to my wife, my mom didn't respect my dad, either. So I smoke — after all, I grew up in a family of smokers. I know I don't manage our family finances very well, but what do you expect, my family never had anything either. I know I should take my kids to church, but my family never took me to church. See, it's not my fault. I'm a victim and if you met my family you'd understand. But, we are not a product of our heritage, we are a product of our choices.

So, although we can't re-write the beginning of our story, we can write the next chapter. Then one day maybe our children — joyous, fulfilled, unselfish, caring — can wear a T-shirt that says, "If you met my family you'd understand."

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net. N[Jan9,A]ISH