

TRI-COUNTY CONNECTOR

The Montgomery Monitor | The Soperton News | The Wheeler County Eagle

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Vol. 138 No. 20

Vol. 112 No. 20

Vol. 103 No. 20

May 14, 2026

Amazon warehouse announced for Montgomery County

By **LOGAN REYNOLDS**
Staff Reporter

Montgomery County Development Authority Director Michael Stanley publicly announced the construction of an Amazon warehouse in Montgomery County during the Board of Commissioner's monthly work session on May 7.

Specifically, Amazon is constructing a 60,000 square foot last mile delivery center. "Last mile delivery" refers to the final part of the shipping process, where a package is stored and processed before being delivered to a specific address.

"In the chain that stuff goes through in order to get packages to consumers, the last mile distribution center is the last place, where the vans go out and deliver packages," said Stanley.

According to Stanley, this distribution center allows Amazon to avoid using third party distribution services and deliver packages directly to customers in Montgomery County and the surrounding areas.

"So, whereas you have facilities, such as the UPS center in Swainsboro, instead of packages



AMAZON WAREHOUSE
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Amazon has begun construction of a last mile delivery center on Carver Street in Montgomery County. It will also pave the street as part of their construction of the 60,000 square foot facility/**LOGAN REYNOLDS**



Montgomery County certified staff members were invited to attend a signing event on May 5 in the Montgomery County High School cafeteria. Staff signed their names on a large banner and were served ice cream to celebrate their inclusion in the 2026-2027 school year/**LOGAN REYNOLDS**

MoCo School System celebrates staff with special signing event

By **LOGAN REYNOLDS**
Staff Reporter

The Montgomery County School System celebrated its new and returning staff members by holding a signing event on May 5 in the Montgomery County High School's cafeteria.

"This is one of my most favorite events we do here in Montgomery County," said Montgomery County Superintendent Dr. Ronda Hightower.

The school system has held signing events for staff members four times, with

the May 5 event being the second consecutive event so far. The events were initially conceived by Assistant Superintendent Dr. Scott Barrow during his time as principal of Montgomery County High School.

"You know how athletes sign to go to college somewhere?" said Dr. Barrow. "That's what we're trying to do there, is to emulate that."

Since staff sign their contracts digitally, staff instead signed their names on a large banner instead. Staff were also treated to ice cream and drinks follow-

ing words from Montgomery County senior staff members.

In total, Montgomery County will see 80 certified staff members returning for the 2026-2027 school year, with six of them being new hires.

Among those new hires is Dr. David Stapleton, who will join the high school as a biology teacher.

"I just want to do a good job teaching some of these kids biology, make them enjoy it, at least," said Dr. Stapleton.

Dr. Stapleton had previously served as teacher and principal at Jeff Davis High School, where he taught many students who would go on to join Montgomery County's staff as fellow new hires. One former student, the current Montgomery County High School Principal Tracy McNeal, asked him to join the school as a teacher, ending his third retirement.

"Obviously, I don't have the knack for it," joked Dr. Staple-

ton, in reference to his multiple retirements.

The Montgomery County School System has seen budget cuts in recent years stemming from improperly appraised property values in the county, yet the schools have not had to lay off any employees. Instead, school administrators have opted to consolidate roles and responsibilities, while taking advantage of staff retiring or moving out of state to bring in new faces.

For example, a large number of staff were hired during the COVID-19 pandemic using emergency funds. Once those funds dried up in 2024, those positions were also able to be consolidated into other staff roles.

"We looked for those opportunities to see if we could shift people around or absorb those positions," said Dr. Hightower.

SIGNING DAY
Continued on page 8

Mother and daughter from Soperton killed in East Dublin wreck

By **LOGAN REYNOLDS**
Staff Reporter

Treutlen County schools made mental health counselors and school counselors available to students in the school's media room until noon on May 5, following a car accident in East Dublin which claimed the lives of two Soperton residents.

"We are deeply saddened to learn of the tragic accident that occurred Sunday evening in East Dublin, which claimed the lives of members of our community, including one of our students," wrote the Treutlen County School System in a post to FaceBook. "Our thoughts and heartfelt prayers are with the families, friends, and all those affected during this incredibly difficult time."

According to Laurens County Deputy Coroner Nathan Stanley, a vehicle driven by Damarcus Tyrell Wimbush, 29, from Millen, Georgia, was involved in a head-on collision with a vehicle driven by Chelsea Elizabeth Wilson, 35, of Soperton, around 11:51 p.m. Sunday, May 3, at the intersection of Ga. 29 South and J.W. Warren Road in East Dublin.

According to the Georgia State Patrol, Trooper First Class Andrew Thompson responded to the location around 11:54 p.m. The crash inves-

WRECK
Continued on page 8

Treutlen BOC selects Amwaste as new curbside trash pickup provider

Periodical — Mail Label



Treutlen Co. BOC reviews a map showcasing fire coverage in the county during their regular meeting. Fire Chief John Johnson (left) brought the map so the board could consider a partnership with the Tarrytown Fire Department to lower insurance premiums/**LOGAN REYNOLDS**

By **LOGAN REYNOLDS**
Staff Reporter

The Treutlen County Board of Commissioners selected waste management company Amwaste to provide curbside trash pickup services for residents during their monthly meeting on May 4, following a month of consideration.

The board began reviewing submitted bids for a new contract for trash pickup during their April 6 meeting. Two bids were submitted: one from Ryland Environmental, who previously serviced Treutlen County, and the other from Amwaste.

According to Amwaste's proposal, the company would charge \$16.25 per can per month with an extra \$8 per can for additional cans. These prices are based on billing through Treutlen County, as the bid advertisement did not specify a request for direct billing.

Amwaste's rolloff service would charge \$375 per haul and \$35 per ton. Amwaste would also not impose an extra fuel surcharge, as opposed to Ryland's 4% fuel surcharge.

Rather than make a decision during the April 6 meeting, the board elected to wait until their May

meeting to vote, so they would have enough time to review both proposals. They also invited representatives from Ryland and Amwaste to a work session on April 8 to further discuss the details.

"I think [it] would be wise to our constituents to do that," said Board Chairman Phil Jennings during the April 6 meeting.

During the work session, County Manager Joseph Glenn's biggest concern and inquiry for the Amwaste representatives was their

TREUTLEN BOC
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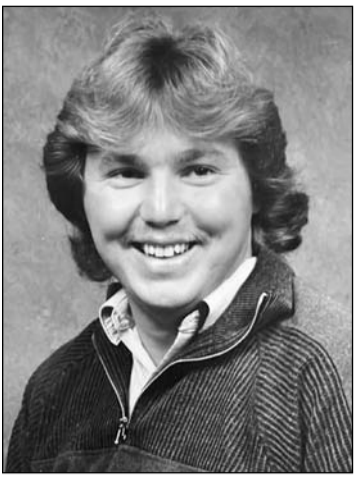


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OBITUARIES



Eugene Arnold Coleman

Funeral services for Mr. Eugene Arnold Coleman of Adrian, Ga. were held Friday, May 8, 2026 at 7 p.m. in the chapel of Higgs Funeral Home in Soperton. Rev. Jack Stafford officiated. Mr. Coleman died April 25, 2026 at his home.

Mr. Coleman, 60, was the son of the late Isaac McLendon and Marella White McLendon. He was born in Glenwood, Ga. on Aug. 29, 1965 and attended school in Emanuel County. He was a former resident of Summertown and Norristown and had lived in Adrian for the past six years. Mr. Coleman was a carpenter by trade and was a member of the Norristown Revival Center.

Survivors include his daughter, Brandi (Joel) McDaniel; sister, Pamela (Steve) Anderson; three brothers, James (Bette) Paul, Stacy McLendon and Thaxton McLendon, Sr.; She was preceded in death aunt, Sybil Amerson; wife, Angie Powell Coleman; step-daughters, Stephanie Robertson, Rachel Driggers and Jamie Wilkerson; nieces/nephews and great nieces/nephews, Sierra Anderson, Cameron Anderson, Hannah Paul, Jaycee Paul, Steven (Kayla) McLendon, Kevin (Jessi) McLendon, Caitlin (Dallas) Smith, Hayden McLendon, Thaxton

(Crystal) McLendon, Terry McLendon and Chad (Adrian) McLendon.

Higgs Funeral Home (higgsfuneralhomeandflorist.com and facebook) of Soperton had charge of arrangements.



Edith L. Gillis Carroll

Mrs. Edith L. Gillis Carroll, age 88, of Glenwood, Georgia, passed away on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at Oxley Park and Rehabilitation in Lyons, Georgia, following an extended illness. She was a native of Springfield, Massachusetts, and moved all over the country with her husband until settling in Glenwood in the late 1970s, where she later became the manager of the local Flash Foods. Edith enjoyed camping, arts and crafts, reading, being on her laptop, and feeding foxes and deer that regularly visited her yard. She was preceded in death by her former husband, James Gillis; one grandson, Steven M. Stanic; one brother, Billy Dean; father, Douglas Dean; and parents, Alice and William Sabato.

Mrs. Edith is survived by two sons, James Gillis, Jr. of Bellevue, Nebraska, and Michael Gillis of Glenwood; one daughter, Gayla Coleman and husband David of Glenwood; one brother, Edward

T. Sabato of Winzor, Connecticut; one sister, Kathleen Cronin and husband Stephen of Ware, Massachusetts; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren; and nine nieces and nephews.

There will be a private burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

The arrangements have been entrusted to Wilkes Funeral Home of Vidalia.



Laura Jean Nielsen Cummings

Mrs. Laura Jean Nielsen Cummings, 63, beloved wife of James Michael Cummings of Soperton passed away on Friday morning, May 1, 2026 at her home.

Funeral services were conducted at 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 9, 2026 in the Billy Williams Chapel of Sammons Funeral Home with Pastor Chad Cofield officiating.

Please share a memory, leave a condolence message and sign the online guest register at www.sammonsfuneralhome.com

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The Word of God

By ALBERT WHITE

And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves Thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord. - 1 Chronicles 15:15

I used this title because I couldn't think of a better one. I was at a loss for a title but not for a purpose. David wasn't looking for a title, he was looking for a process. However he was at a loss for instruction. At some point in our lives we will experience the emotions of anger and confusion, simply because we felt like doing a good thing and it caused someone else distress.

David thought to do a simple process to move the ark of God. That seems simple enough. Honor the Lord and desire his presence in your house. The issue was that David didn't consult the word first to the manner of God to be moved. That failure caused someone else to make another mistake and it cost them their life. The thing was avoidable by resulting to the recorded words that God had already spoken to Moses concerning the carrying of the ark. In my opinion there are people today that are doing a mirrored process in the church today. No, we are not carrying the ark

anymore. We are not trying to get to the holy place anymore because the cross and the resurrection of Jesus changed all of that. However the Word of God tells us how to worship: heart, mind, and soul. I can't leave anything out to be effective. Mind you David did move the ark, he just didn't get it where he was trying to get it too. Until he went back to the handbook of faith, the scriptures. He found who and he found the how. Then he went back after preparing a place for it, then lining up the correct people. With the correct tools, even in the correct manner. Thank you Jesus for making the pursuit of the anointing so much simpler. We need the correct person, Jesus. We need the correct process, worship. Happens to be that he is the word of God. If I could encourage you in anything with my simple words it would be to desire the anointing of God in your house and pursue him. Do so in Jesus' mighty name and with adoration and praise. There is no reason to be dismayed or broken hearted by failed attempts of receiving the fullness of the spirit. Consult the Bible, learn of Jesus and become his disciple. Be blessed church.

Albert White is the pastor of Blocker's Chapel Church on Thompson Pond Rd. in Vidalia, Ga.

PASTOR'S VIEWPOINT

By CHARLES "BUDDY" WHATLEY

The great cathedrals in Europe, the towering skyscrapers in our American cities, all the houses, big and small, dotted across our nation, they all owe their survival to an invisible foundation buried deep in the ground beneath them. Likewise, every family worshipping in those cathedrals, working in those buildings and living in all those houses, owes their survival to a firm foundation of faith passed down through generations of ancestors. In fact, we sing a hymn titled "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent Word."

Now walk with me through a garden and admire the incredible colors of the flowers. Smell the fragrance that fills the air with beauty. Watch the bees and butterflies drawn to the flowers. But nobody ever stopped to praise the roots sunk deep in the soil soaking up nutrition from the soil and anchoring the plant against the wind.

Our nation was and is built on a foundation of all the families who live here, and the key to those families is the stability of a good father and the love of a good wife and mother.

Proverbs 31:10-12,28 GNT says: *"How hard it is to find a capable wife! She is worth far more than jewels! Her husband puts his confidence in her, and he will never be poor. As long as*

she lives, she does him good and never harm. Her children show their appreciation, and her husband praises her."

Every mother weaves a tapestry of life into her family; she sinks deep roots to nourish her children and anchor them against the winds of life. She weaves that tapestry with threads of patience when her toddler spills his juice for the umpteenth time. Threads of sacrifice when she gives up her sleep to comfort a crying child or gives up her time to run a shuttle service to dancing lessons and ball games. Threads of prayer when her children are sick or in trouble or away from home.

Lots of people believe "holy ground" is a church sanctuary with stained glass windows and red carpet, but the first holy ground most of us remember is sitting at the kitchen table with mom. Lots of people believe God is love; but the first love most of us remember is the love of a mother.

In the Book of Proverbs, we are told that a woman who fears the Lord "looks well to the ways of her household." This isn't just about chores; it's about "the stewardship of the soul." A mother isn't just raising a child; she's giving life to the future of a nation!

Charles "Buddy" Whatley is a retired Methodist pastor serving the Dawson Street Methodist in Thomasville, Ga.

RELIGION DIGEST

Spring Revival at Zaidee Advent Christian Church

Zaidee Advent Christian Church, located five miles east of Soperton at 5327 Old Louisville Road off HWY 46 will have a three night Spring Revival May 18, May 19 and May 20. Services will begin at 7:30. We will have a different speaker each night. Brother Morris Brantley, Pastor of Holton Chapel Advent Christian Church, will speak on Monday night. Brother M.L. Barber will speak on Tuesday night. Brother Clint Hutcheson, Pastor of Vidalia Advent Christian Church, will speak on Wednesday night. Church members invite everyone to come and worship with them.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Community Food Pantry at Mount Vernon United Methodist Church

Mount Vernon United Methodist Church, located at 120 McGregor St., Mt. Vernon, Ga. will host a community food pantry on Thursday, May 14 at 5 p.m. The event is rain or shine and will serve households with food insecurity* in Montgomery County and surrounding areas. A variety of frozen meats, fruits or vegetables and dry goods will be available free of charge. This food pantry is a partnership between Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia Community Food Bank, Mount Vernon United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church of Mount Vernon and Mount Vernon Church of God. *Eligibility based on Household Income.

Ohoopsee Soil and Water Conservation District Regular Meeting

Treutlen County Library, 585 Second St., Soperton, on Tuesday, May 26, at 10 a.m. The Ohoopsee Soil and Water Conservation District will hold its regular meeting on Tuesday, May 26, at 10 a.m. The meeting will be held at Treutlen County Library located at 585 Second Street, Soperton, GA 30457. Please RSVP by 05/20/2026 to NancyAnne Conner at (706) 612-4020, nancyanne.conner@gaswcc.ga.gov, or Christi Brantley at (912) 529-6728, christi.brantley@gaswcc.ga.gov.

Telfair's Got Talent II

Telfair Center for the Arts, 119 College St., McRae-Helena on June 20, at 6 p.m. Telfair's Got Talent II will be held at Telfair Center for the Arts, located at 119 College St., McRae-Helena, Georgia on Saturday, June 20, at 6 p.m. Come enjoy a free showcase of locals displaying their talents. Comedy and music will be featured throughout. The musicians will each perform two songs, one written by Thomas N. Monroe and a second song of their choice. Monroe's song Nui Ba Den, which appeared on the album The Newsman by John McEuen, co-founder of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band will be included. Donations to cover expenses will be accepted.

The Treutlen County Board of Commissioners do hereby announce that the proposed General Fund and Special Revenue budgets for Fiscal Year 2027 will be available for review on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at the office of the Commissioners located at 1830 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Soperton, GA 30457, as required by O.C.G.A. §36-81-5 (d). The Board will hold a Work Session on that day at 4:00 PM.

The Treutlen County Board of Commissioners will hold a Work Session on Monday, May 18, at 5:00 PM, to discuss the FY 2027 Operating Budget, and a Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving public comments concerning the FY 2027 budget on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 6:00 PM, as required by O.C.G.A. §36-81-5 (f).

The Treutlen County Board of Commissioners will adopt the FY 2027 General Fund Maintenance and Operations Budget and all Special Revenue Budgets as required on Monday, June 1, 2026, at 6:00 PM, at the June 2026 Regular Meeting.

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TREATLEN COUNTY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
DISASTER RECOVERY
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Treutlen County's Council is considering applying to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery. These funds must primarily benefit disaster recovery efforts within the County and low and moderate-income persons.

The activities for which these funds may be used are in the areas of housing, public facilities, and economic development. More specific details regarding eligible activities, plan to assist displaced persons (if any), the estimated amount of funds proposed to be used for activities to benefit low- and moderate-income persons, and the rating system will be provided at a public hearing which will be held at Treutlen County Board of Commissioners Office 1830 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Soperton, GA 30457 on May 15, 2026, at 5:30 PM.

The purpose of this hearing will be to obtain citizen input into the development of the application and to review progress on the previous CDBG-DR grant (if applicable). Treutlen County is committed to providing all persons with equal access to its services, programs, activities, education, and employment regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. Persons with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language shall contact the County Clerk, Angie Hooks, before May 15, 2026. She can be located at Treutlen County Board of Commissioners' Office 1830 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Soperton, GA 30457 8:30 - 5:00, Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons with hearing disabilities can contact Georgia Relay Service, at (TDD) 1-800-255-0056 or (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

ORLS Summer Reading Events and Community Dino Hunt

SPECIAL TO THE TRI-COUNTY CONNECTOR

We are super excited to share our events and programming for this year's Summer Reading theme, Unearth A Story! We have a packed calendar running from the beginning of June through the end of July with fun activities for all ages across our library system.

Several of our libraries will also serve as summer feeding sites this year. We are still waiting on final details and schedules. We will share more information on this as soon as it is finalized.

First up is our community-wide ORLS Dino Hunt to help build excitement for Summer Reading. This event is open to all ages, and participants have the chance to win family passes generously donated by Shamrock Bowling, Golden Ticket Cinemas, Houston Lakes Cinemas and Peachy Playtown.

Participants simply:

- Find a dinosaur at a participating location
- Snap a picture
- Upload it to Facebook using #orlsdinohunt

The more dinosaur photos participants post, the more chances they have to win! The ORLS Dino Hunt runs May 8 through June 26. Participating locations include:

Wheeler County

- Wheeler County Schools
- SunMark Bank

Telfair County

- Ryals Drugs
- Smith's Pharmacy
- Telfair County Elementary
- Joiner Creek Nursery

Wilcox County

- Wilcox County Schools
- Half Moon Brew

Bleckley County

- The Mule Barn

Pulaski County

- Pulaski County Elementary
- Little Children Growing
- Jo's Pizza
- Yummy Jo's

Dodge County

- Scoops and Brews
- Dodge County Elementary
- Dodge County Primary School
- Eastman Bake Shop

Next up is our Summer Reading Program calendar! We have a huge variety of fun and educational programs planned throughout the summer. Participants can sign up for Summer Reading and check in weekly to receive prizes. Top readers will also be recognized and entered to win exciting prizes including an e-reader and more.

Lastly, we would love to invite the community to our Summer Reading Kick-Off Parties. These events are a great opportunity for families to register for Summer Reading, receive a bag of goodies, and start their summer reading journey with us. We have tons of exciting activities planned for all ages.

Walker commends signing of legislation to lower taxes, expand educational access

SPECIAL TO THE TRI-COUNTY CONNECTOR

Senate President Pro Tempore Larry Walker III (R-Perry) today commended Governor Brian P. Kemp's signature of Senate Bill 33, the Homeownership Opportunity and Market Equalization (HOME) Act of 2026; House Bill 463, the Georgia Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act of 2026; and Senate Bill 556, which establishes the new DREAMS Scholarship Program and expands education savings opportunities for Georgia families.

"Throughout the 2026 legislative session, our primary focus in the Senate was to help make life more affordable for hardworking Georgians," shared Sen. Walker. "We took meaningful action to reduce income taxes, cap property tax increases, and create new opportunities for students to pursue higher education without taking on crushing student loan debt. These bills reflect our deep commitment to protecting families, strengthening our workforce and keeping the American Dream within reach here in Georgia. I want to thank Gov. Kemp for signing these measures into law and for his continued partnership in advancing policies that put Georgians first."

Senate Bill 33 builds upon property tax relief efforts approved overwhelmingly by Georgia voters in 2024 by capping annual increases in homestead property assessments at the rate of inflation for all counties, cities, consolidated governments and local school districts beginning in 2027. The legislation closes loopholes that previously allowed local governments to opt out of taxpayer protections and establishes a new Local Homestead Option Sales Tax (LHOST), giving communities another tool to reduce or eliminate property taxes for homeowners.

House Bill 463 lowers the state income tax rate from 5.19% to 4.99%, effective in 2026, and creates a path to bring personal income tax rates down to 3.99% over time. It also raises the standard deduction and increases the caregiver deduction per dependent from \$4,000 to \$5,000 in 2026, and up to \$6,000 over time. Additionally, this legislation and makes tips and overtime tax-free up to \$1,750 for hourly employees, and protects retirees by increasing tax-free retirement income from \$65,000 to \$70,000 for eligible

taxpayers.

Senate Bill 556 creates one of the largest expansions of need-based college aid in Georgia's history by establishing the Dedicating Resources to Educationally Advance More Students (DREAMS) Scholarship Program. The State of Georgia has appropriated \$325 million for the DREAMS Scholarship program that supports Georgia students with unmet financial needs at eligible public colleges and universities starting this Fall. Senate Bill 556 also allows advanced fine arts courses to be counted in the GPA calculation for HOPE Scholarship eligibility and increases Georgia's 529 savings plan limits.

All three measures are part of the Senate's broader effort to address rising costs and invest in long-term prosperity for communities across the state. You can read more about these measures here.

Sen. Larry Walker III serves as President Pro Tempore of the Georgia Senate. He represents the 20th Senate District, which includes Bleckley, Dodge, Dooly, Laurens, Pulaski, Treutlen and Wilcox counties, as well as a portion of Houston County. He may be reached by phone at (404) 656-0095 or by email at Larry.Walker@senate.ga.gov.

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FARMERS FOR BURT JONES

Fellow Farmers,

We write today as state legislators. More importantly, we write to you as Georgia farmers who have had the unique experience of witnessing the intersection of governmental policy and the effects those policies can have on our family farms.

We each fight in Atlanta every day during the legislative session on behalf of the Agriculture community. In the environment under the Gold Dome, we learn pretty quickly who has the backs of our state's farm families and rural Georgia. **We can tell you unequivocally that Lt. Governor Burt Jones has been a steadfast friend to agriculture and rural Georgia. Even during times when it would've been easier, and perhaps even more politically prudent to go in a different direction, he has stood by and fought for the interests of the agriculture industry and farming families in both his former role as a State Senator and now as Lt. Governor.**

Combined, those who signed this letter represent families who have farmed for generations. Burt and his family have farmed on the same land in Butts County for six generations. We may be Senators and Representatives while the legislature is in session, but we are always full-time farmers.

We each know, without a doubt in our hearts, that Burt Jones is the person we trust most to fight for our family farms and yours too. That is why we are supporting him in his campaign to be our next Governor and humbly ask you to join us in doing the same.

May God bless your families, your farms, and our shared future. Your friends,

Senator Russ Goodman

Chairman, Senate Agriculture Committee

Senator Lee Anderson

Chairman, Senate Natural Resources Committee

Representative Angie O'Steen

House Agriculture Committee

Representative Robert Dickey

Chairman, House Agriculture Committee

Senator Drew Echols

Chairman, Senate Economic Development Committee

Representative Jutt Howard

House Agriculture Committee

Senator Sam Watson

Senate Agriculture Committee

Representative John Corbett

House Agriculture Committee

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Bertsch Back Yard

Last weekend, there was an informal gathering of UGA aficionados, some retired from the oldest chartered state university and others who are friends of the group. It took place in the charming backyard of Joan and Gary Bertsch on Henderson Avenue. If there is a more becoming plot of ground in our town, I have not seen it.

Gary and Joan are a team, but the tender loving care and the trimmings of the signature complex belong to Joan, whose handwork elicits gushing kudos. There is greenery everywhere, and flowers, rocks, and pebbles are efficiently integrated into the landscape.

While it is not on a par with the Luxembourg Gar-

den in Paris or Monet's place at Giverny, with weeping willows and lily pads, Bertsch's place certainly is rare and becoming.

A fire pit with embers and wafting smoke added to the allure of the ambient setting, which is a reminder that when we commune with nature, we are royally blessed.

Then there is Gary's study, a free-standing building to which he can repair any time of the year. He can open his door in the spring and summer, letting the sunshine in. When fall and winter's chill come our way, he has a wood-burning fireplace for ambient warmth. A lot of intellectual thought has emanated from that cozy setting.

I have long been an admirer of Gary Bertsch, who

is an Idaho farm boy, one of the most well-rounded faculty members ever to share his wisdom, research, and connections with our community.

He taught at the University of Beijing and invited former Russian premier Mikhail Gorbachev to the UGA campus. His work with Senator Sam Nunn and others to reduce atomic weapons arsenals is remarkable.

While I am not scolding our local citizens and don't want to bite the hand that has fed me over the years, it is interesting that so many in this state know the shoe size of our third-string left tackle on the football team but don't make the effort to get to know professors like Gary Bertsch.

Everybody in our state is impressed by the brilliantly successful football program and its coaches, but we don't



LORAN SMITH

similarly lionize the exalted professors and researchers on our campus. How about singing the praises of both?

As an emeritus professor in the School of International Affairs, Gary is an avid Bulldog fan of all sports teams at UGA. He plays golf, and when he takes respite in the afternoon, his biggest challenge is determining where to en-

joy a glass of wine: his front porch, his den, his backyard, or his study.

His entire environment is an inspirational venue for reading and keeping up with what goes on in the world.

Recently, he and Joan hosted a fun group to interact with Greg Bluestein, political columnist for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. A Georgia alumnus, Bluestein is an indefatigable reporter-writer whose enthusiasm and commitment to his profession are extraordinary.

He analyzed the nasty gubernatorial campaign with insights on what all this means. He gave high marks to Athens native and governor, Brian Kemp, for his family bent.

Bluestein made no predictions but is curious about the governor's race where the two leading candidates seem likely to spend a hun-

dred million dollars collectively in the fight to win the right to move into the Governor's mansion at 391 West Paces Ferry Road.

While at Georgia, Bluestein was editor of the Red & Black, the campus newspaper, and took great delight in following the Bulldog football team—and he's still at it.

He has written an insightful book, "Flipped: How Georgia Turned Purple and Broke the Monopoly on Republican Power." Often referred to as the state's "chief political reporter," Bluestein is a very knowledgeable reporter and columnist. He also is a popular speaker.

The setting in the Bertsch's backyard garden was perfect for Bluestein's insightful remarks. Shall we say, "a good time was enjoyed by all."

Virginia Supreme Court redistricting a lesson in civics, federalism

Virginia's Supreme Court made some important national news last week. They did it by affirming a lower court's ruling on clearly written law. The process by which Virginia Democrats attempted to redraw their Congressional maps violated their state laws and Constitution.

The only real surprise here is that the Justices of Virginia's Supreme Court didn't bow to extreme political pressure and invent a loophole to reinterpret words. A lower court spelled it out clearly.

Circuit Court Judge Jack Hurley found numerous problems with the legality of the referendum itself. The authorization for the vote was illegal based on a late inclusion to a special session of the Virginia legislature, which is not allowed. The timing of the vote itself is against Virginia's Constitution because there hasn't been an ensuing general election of the House of Delegates, so that the earliest this vote could legally happen after a legal passage would be 2027.

The language of the question imposed to voters was ruled "flagrantly misleading". Legislators also violated the law by issuing the vote less than 90 days after passage. The legislature then again overstepped by mandating election procedures and locations that are beyond the powers given them under Virginia's constitution.

That's a lot of legalese. When dealing with the foundations of our Republic, legalese is important.

So why was the vote even allowed to happen? Because those pushing to ram the changes through cited law and precedent saying the court couldn't intervene until the election was over.

This, too, was a raw political calculation. It, too, failed.

The Supreme Court directly answered this criticism, knowing it would be a talking point to foment anger for the losing side. The opinion noted that they had already sided with those wanting the maps redrawn that they could not rule prior to the vote. With



CHARLIE HARPER
GEORGIA POLITICS

those same people now arguing that the court can't or shouldn't rule after a vote, they were effectively saying the Supreme Court can't rule on the legality of a constitutional amendment at all.

Lost to those claiming this ruling subverts the will of the majority and thus undermines democracy is that there was another vote for a constitutional amendment just six years ago regarding redistricting. That ballot question, posed through a legal process with a fair

ballot question, indicated that roughly two thirds of Virginians favored and enshrined into law an independent redistricting commission.

Now, the people who demand the will of the people be followed will only point to the razor thin margin of an illegally held snap vote. They want everyone to completely ignore an opposite opinion of voters who changed Virginia's constitution via an open and legal process.

It's getting harder and harder to take seriously the loyal opposition party who looks at a duly elected President who also won the popular vote and has a quarterly "No Kings" rally. The mantra is that they wish us to "return to norms" by ignoring both Constitution and law.

When Republicans object, they're told their words are violence. Meanwhile, Virginia's new Attorney General has a series of text messages saying he wanted to kill the children of his former Speaker of the opposing party because "only

when people feel pain personally do they move on policy."

Virginia's new Governor Spamberger stood by him despite his violent texts. She also told voters she didn't favor a mid-cycle redistricting. One that she ultimately flip flopped on as soon as she had power. Because of "fairness".

Georgia isn't Virginia. This piece, however, ties two of my last columns together.

Georgia is in the early voting period of an election that ends May 19th. This voting was already underway when a separate court ruling set off a wave of Southern states redrawing maps that will likely add more Republican seats.

Each state has their own Constitution and laws. Each has separate elections. It's not clear that Georgia has the legal standing or process, nor that voters have the political appetite, to force new maps for the 2026 election. Each state must stand on its own laws when deciphering guidance from the Supreme Court.

We are also electing Justices for our Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. There is significant overlap from national Democrats and their donors seeking to oust Justices and Judges who have bipartisan support and have pledged fair interpretations of Georgia's laws.

The challengers are walking the line of judicial code by promising predetermined outcomes. They are hiding behind ads paid for by third parties, but the clear intention is to politicize our courts.

Virginia's courts stuck by the law. The result is that no less than the New York Times is helping float the trial balloon that Virginians in a power grab may force every State Supreme Court Justice to retire and be replaced by political plants.

These are not the norms we're looking for. We have two political branches of government. It is imperative that Georgians re-elect our incumbent judges and reject attempts to have a third partisan branch of government.

Dick Yarbrough: We don't need a law to keep on talking southern, y'all

I'm a little late getting around to this but there is a survey out by a group called Writing Tips Institute, a website that teaches people how to write correctly. (An aside from the editors: Please consider joining, and if they will also teach you to put commas where they belong, we'll kick in with the tuition.)

According to the survey, 51% of Georgians would like our dialect protected by law. I would have thought the number would be higher, but then most everybody here is from someplace else and can't understand us anyway, let alone make the effort to protect the way we talk. Fuhgeddaboutit.

If we are going to talk about passing a law, we should pass legislation that says if anybody from north of the Mason-You-Know-Who line so much as snickers at the way we talk, we will put them into baggy white shorts and ship them off to Guatemala as illegal aliens. Let's see how they snicker then.

There's not much that will sully me up quicker than somebody telling me I talk funny. I will remind them that there is nothing wrong with the way I talk. They are the ones with the strange accents. And I would laugh at them, except that is impolite and in the South, it's all about good manners. That's the way our mommas raised us.

I'm really not sure why we talk like we do, but there is no question we are economical with the language. Unlike other parts of the



DICK YARBROUGH

country, we don't find it necessary to stick extraneous letters on our words. Like putting the "g" at the end of words. If you haven't figured out that we are saying "fussin'" or "fightin'" by the time we get to the end of the word, sticking a "g" on it ain't goin' make much

difference.

Same with the letter "r." We use them on the front end of important words like "Readin'" and "Ritin'" and "Rasslin'", but we don't feel compelled to put them on the end of words, like "over" or "under." We just say "ovuh" and "unduh." Even the Supreme Being doesn't rate an "r." We just call him "Lawd." He doesn't seem to mind.

We use the same words everybody else uses. We just assign them a different meaning. Bard, for example. According to my personal lexicographers, Barney Funk and Porter Wagnalls, bard is defined as a poet. Around here, bard means you took something that doesn't belong to you. ("Honey! That sorry brother of yours bard my riding

mower again without asking.")

In the West, a ranch is a lot of acreage with horse or cows on it. We have ranches in the South, too, only we have more of them. We have pipe ranches and box-end ranches and socket ranches. We use our ranches to fix things.

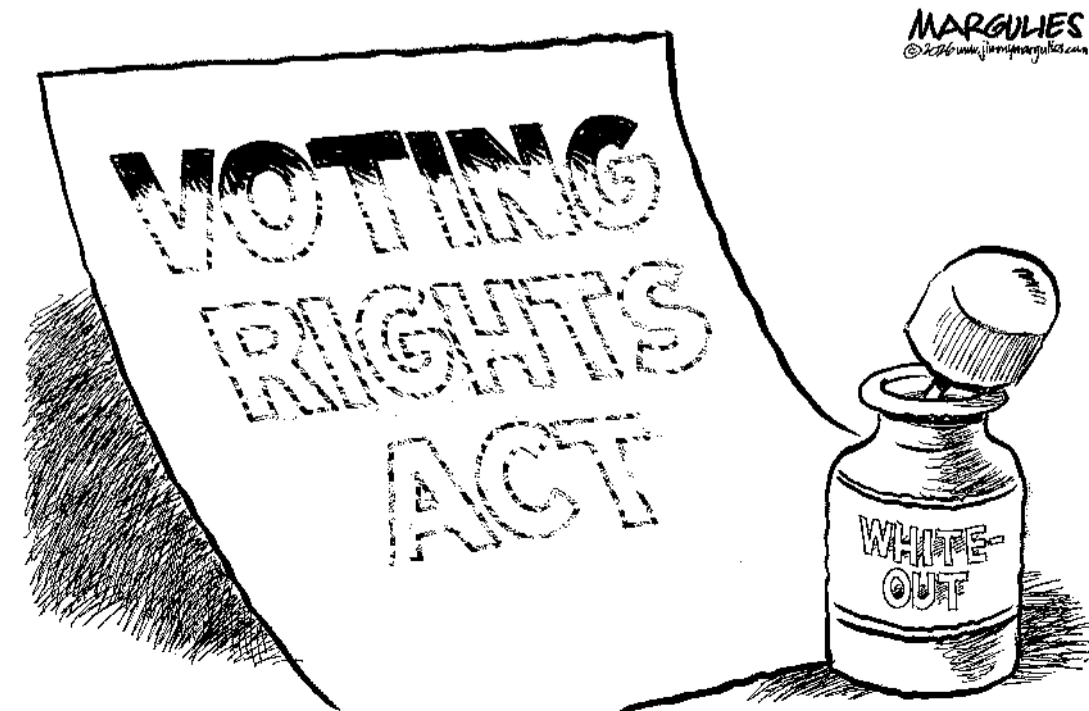
Speaking of "fixing," that is one of our favorite words in the South. We use it like everyone else when we are going to repair something, as in "Darlin', where's my ranch? I'm gonna fix the leak in the sink." However, we also use fix as a substitute for "preparation," which has too many "r's" and takes too long to say. We "fix" supper (In the South, supper is dinner and dinner is when we eat lunch) and then announce to the family to

wash up, that we're "fixin' to eat" or "I'm fixin' to sit down and watch me some Andy Griffith on TV."

When others talk about "war," they have visions of bombs bursting in air. When we say "war," we are describing what goes around fence posts to keep the cows from running loose. "Barbed war." In other parts of the country, "moan" means "to utter a low dull sound." Not here. When we say "moan," we mean to get the lead out and move it. ("Moan, Clar-

ence, we ain't got all danged day.") Same with "far." To a lot of folks, far is a long way off. Far keeps us warm.

Frankly, I don't think our dialect needs to be protected by law. It's fine like it is. Besides, I don't trust that the Legislature to get it right anyway. As my sweet momma, Southern to the core, used to say, "If brains were dynamite, they couldn't blow their nose. Bless their hearts." What's hard to understand about that, y'all?



Tri-County Connector

Published every Wednesday by the Georgia Trust for Local News

DuBose Porter, Publisher Emeritus
Pam Burney, General Manager
Kyle Dominy, Weekly Managing Editor
Logan Reynolds, Staff Reporter

The Official Legal Organ of
The Montgomery Monitor
Mt. Vernon, GA 60445 - (USPS 362-220)
tricoconnector@gmail.com
Periodicals postage paid at the Mt. Vernon, GA Post Office and at additional mailing offices.

The Soperton News
Soperton, GA 30457 - (USPS 501-500)
tricoconnector@gmail.com
Periodicals postage paid at the Soperton, GA Post Office and at additional mailing offices.

The Wheeler Co. Eagle
Alamo, GA 30457 - (361-220)
tricoconnector@gmail.com
Periodicals postage paid at the Alamo, GA Post Office and at additional mailing offices.

478-272-5522

Subscription Rates:
One Year in County \$31 - Senior in County \$29
Out of County \$37 - Out of State \$41

Legals

Treutlen Co. Legals

S26-029
NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCORPORATE
 Notice is given that Articles of Incorporation which will incorporate **South Star Corporation**, have been delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Business Corporation Code. The initial registered office of the corporation will be located **825 Huckleberry Lane, Tarrytown, GA 30470**, and its initial registered agent at such address will be **Steven Michael Page**.

May 7, 14, 2026

S26-030
DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAX SALE
 Under and by virtue of certain tax Fi. Fa.'s issued by the Tax Commissioner of Treutlen County, Georgia, in favor of the State of Georgia and County of Treutlen County, against the following named persons and the property as described next to their respective name(s). They will be sold for cash or certified funds at public outcry, before the Courthouse door in Soperton, Treutlen County, Georgia, between the legal hours of sale, on the first Tuesday in June 2026, the same being June 2nd, 2026, and continuing on June 3rd, 2026, if necessary, between the legal hours of sale, 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM. The below listed and described properties, or as much thereof as will satisfy the State and County tax execution on the respective individual and property. The property (ies) hereinafter described have been levied on as the property of the persons whose names immediately precede the property description. Each of the respective parcels of property are located in Treutlen County, State of Georgia. The years for which said Fi. Fa.'s are issued and levied are stated opposite the name of the owner in each case. Each defendant and tenant in possession, if applicable, has been notified of levy time and place of sale. Purchaser shall pay for title, all transfer costs, all taxes, advertising costs and recording fees.

Map & Parcel: 11326MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Braswell, Marnie
 Current Record Holder: Braswell, Marnie
 CRH Address: 4026 Lothair Church Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 777.29
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 2000, 16x80, Fleetwood, Weston, located at Tax Map & Parcel 017A004, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 11396MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Anderson, Deborah
 Current Record Holder: Heirs Known & Unknown of Anderson, Deborah, Deceased
 CRH Address: 6 Poplar Court Bluffton, SC 29910
 Amount Due: \$ 511.96
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1984, 14x70, Horton Homes, Inc., Horton, located at Tax Map & Parcel 006045, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 11487MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Johnson, Archie R.
 Current Record Holder: Johnson, Archie R.
 CRH Address: 1189 Troups Tomb Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 488.54
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 14x65, located at Tax Map & Parcel 009052, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 11558MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Lawson, James
 Current Record Holder: Lawson, James
 CRH Address: 1226 Outlaw Avenue Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 468.90
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 2004, 14x65, located at Tax Map & Parcel S011051, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1238MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Crockett, Roger Jr.
 Current Record Holder: Crockett, Roger Jr.
 CRH Address: 1143 Sumner Lane Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 755.40
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1986, 12x54, located at Tax Map & Parcel S016011, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1400MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Clark, Janilene
 Current Record Holder: Clark, Janilene
 CRH Address: 77 Cedar Lane Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 762.55
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1980, 14x60, Horton Homes, Inc., Summit, located at Tax Map & Parcel 017B036, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1563MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Coney, Shanita
 Current Record Holder: Coney, Shanita
 CRH Address: 1476 Mississippi Avenue Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 386.56
 Tax Years Due: 2024, 2023, 2022
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1980, 12x56, located at Tax Map & Parcel S010039, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1605MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Telfair, Kristal L.
 Current Record Holder: Telfair, Kristal L.
 CRH Address: 329 New Street Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 627.28
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1997, 16x76, Fleetwood, 6763L, Serial # GAFLV75A29654WL12, located at Tax Map & Parcel S003094, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1736MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Crockett, Robert
 Current Record Holder: Crockett, Robert
 CRH Address: 515 Sumner Lane Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 527.50
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1985, 12x60, Bonnell Enterprises, Dynasty, located at Tax Map & Parcel S016011, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1813MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Stevens, Maxine Marie

Current Record Holder: Stevens, Maxine Marie
 CRH Address: 2684 Old Louisville Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 548.95
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1990, 14x66, Horton Homes, Inc., Echo, located at Tax Map & Parcel S004039, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1819MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Harden, Larry
 Current Record Holder: Heirs Known & Unknown of Harden, Larry, Deceased
 CRH Address: 1733 Martin Luther King Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,472.84
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 2000, 16x76, Southern Energy Homes, Southern Homes, located at Tax Map & Parcel S011075, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1889MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Wise, Ron
 Current Record Holder: Wise, Ron
 CRH Address: 1076 Ennis Circle Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 700.62
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1998, 16x68, Horton Homes, Inc., Dynasty M Series, located at Tax Map & Parcel S013038, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1921MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Barwick, Danielle Mason
 Current Record Holder: Barwick, Danielle Mason
 CRH Address: 3376 GA Highway 199 Spur Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,311.23
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1996, 16x76, Horton Homes, Inc., Mirrage, located at Tax Map & Parcel 017B032, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1932MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: VanFleet, Geneva
 Current Record Holder: Heirs Known & Unknown of VanFleet, Geneva, Deceased
 CRH Address: 501 GA Highway 298 Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 758.17
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 2002, 28x76, located at Tax Map & Parcel 044021A, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1989MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Jones, Loretha
 Current Record Holder: Jones, Loretha
 CRH Address: 1464 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,412.12
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 28x66, Horton Homes, Inc., Summit, located at Tax Map & Parcel S011084, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 1992MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Williams, Amanda
 Current Record Holder: Williams, Amanda
 CRH Address: 145 Cascade Circle Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 853.40
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1990, 14x66, Horton Homes, Inc., Summit, located at Tax Map & Parcel 023058, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 287MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Blair, Anthony Chuck
 Current Record Holder: Blair, Anthony Chuck
 CRH Address: 2102 Alabama Avenue Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 625.59
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 14x70, General Manufacturing Homes, Inc., General Ltd., located at Tax Map & Parcel S010016, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 315MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Ferguson, Catherine
 Current Record Holder: Heirs Known & Unknown of Ferguson, Catherine, Deceased
 CRH Address: 5301 Louisiana Avenue West Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,199.90
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1984, 14x70, Fleetwood, Auburn, located at Tax Map & Parcel S008001, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 368MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Thomas, Diane
 Current Record Holder: Thomas, Diane
 CRH Address: 1455 Outlaw Avenue Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 468.74
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024

Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 14x56, Pioneer Housing Systems, Inc., Pioneer, Serial # PH305GA6878, located at Tax Map & Parcel S004031, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 370MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Watts, Charles
 Current Record Holder: Watts, Charles
 CRH Address: PO Box 103 Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 529.25
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 24x60, Horton, Serial # H68764GLR, located at Tax Map & Parcel 009A0033A, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 415MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: McDougle, Marchell
 Current Record Holder: McDougle, Marchell a/k/a Marchelle McDougle & McDougle, Stacy
 CRH Address: 1656 Ginger Springs Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 528.73
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1996, 16x76, Pioneer, Serial # PH1501GA9835, located at Tax Map & Parcel 016057, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 466MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Clayton, Carla
 Current Record Holder: Clayton, Carla
 CRH Address: 64 Bittersweet Trail Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 703.28
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1997, 26x48, Pioneer, GD, located at Tax Map & Parcel 014049, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 480MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Phillips, Sadie
 Current Record Holder: Phillips, Sadie
 CRH Address: 1721 Anderson Pond Road Adrian, GA 31002
 Amount Due: \$ 520.56
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 24x60, located at Tax Map & Parcel 006012, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 481MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Dunn, C.T.
 Current Record Holder: Heirs Known & Unknown of Dunn, C.T., Deceased
 CRH Address: 1020 Oak Hurst Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 528.45
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1970, 12x48, New River Homes, Shiloh, located at Tax Map & Parcel 006063, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 518MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Jackson, Robert Lee Jr.
 Current Record Holder: Jackson, Robert Lee Jr.
 CRH Address: 698 Oak Ridge Road Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 688.57
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1993, 28x66, located at Tax Map & Parcel 024004, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 596MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Miller, Lawanda
 Current Record Holder: Miller, Lawanda
 CRH Address: Route 2 Box 399-2AA Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,279.52
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1997, 14x66, Fleetwood, "C" Series, located at Tax Map & Parcel 024066, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 624MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Latimer, Zack
 Current Record Holder: Latimer, Zack
 CRH Address: 1176 MLK Jr. Drive Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 963.12
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1996, 24x64, Pioneer Housing Systems, Inc., Pioneer, located at Tax Map & Parcel S012020, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 641MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Phillips, Crystal
 Current Record Holder: Phillips, Crystal
 CRH Address: 571 Whipoorwill Way Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,272.94
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1982, 24x46, Fleetwood, Spring Hill, located at Tax Map & Parcel 037008, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 756MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Smith, Gloria
 Current Record Holder: Smith, Gloria
 CRH Address: 1089 Sumner Lane

Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 755.31
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1998, 28x56, Pioneer Housing Systems, Inc., Budget, located at Tax Map & Parcel S016011, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 758MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Lovett, Chiquita
 Current Record Holder: Lovett, Chiquita
 CRH Address: 1121 Canady Avenue Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 627.67
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 16x76, Fleetwood, Weston, located at Tax Map & Parcel S012043A, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 764MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Johnson, Charlie
 Current Record Holder: Johnson, Charlie
 CRH Address: PO Box 342 Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 578.37
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1998, 16x76, Clayton Homes, Inc., Explorer, located at Tax Map & Parcel S004035, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 871MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Barwick, Earl
 Current Record Holder: Barwick, Earl
 CRH Address: 3724 Highway 298 Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 626.64
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1997, 28x65, Peach State Homes, Signature Homes, located at Tax Map & Parcel 037042A, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 953MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Phillips, Terrell
 Current Record Holder: Phillips, Terrell
 CRH Address: 615 Horseshoe Bend Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 840.89
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1995, 28x56, located at Tax Map & Parcel 041025A, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 979MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Shaffer, Debra
 Current Record Holder: Shaffer, Debra
 CRH Address: 11813 GA Highway 46 Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 1,129.82
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1993, 24x48, Horton Homes, Inc., Summit Mod, located at Tax Map & Parcel 030023, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Map & Parcel: 995MH
 Defendant in Fi-Fa: Jones, Woodrow
 Current Record Holder: Jones, Woodrow
 CRH Address: 1732 MLK Jr. Drive Soperton, GA 30457
 Amount Due: \$ 421.84
 Tax Years Due: 2025, 2024, 2023
 Legal Description: MOBILE HOME: 1977, 12x76, Fleetwood, Broadmore, located at Tax Map & Parcel S011104, Treutlen County, Georgia.

Penny S. Wheeler
 Treutlen County Tax Commissioner
 * Deed Book: Refers to Deed Records located in the Treutlen County Courthouse, Clerk of Superior Court's Office where property is more fully described. 4C-2-26
 May 7, 14, 21, 28, 2026

S26-031
 STATE OF GEORGIA
 COUNTY OF TREUTLEN
 IN RE: ESTATE OF BEVERLY ZAN CAULEY, DECEASED.

All creditors of the estate of Beverly Zan Cauley, deceased, late of Treutlen County, are hereby notified to render their demands to Richard M. McNeely, attorney for William Carlton Cauley, Administrator of the Beverly Zan Cauley Estate, at P. O. Box 767, Swainsboro, Georgia 30401, according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment of any indebtedness due the estate. This 27th day of April, 2026.

RICHARD M. MCNEELY,
 Attorney for William Carlton Cauley,
 of the Beverly Zan Cauley Estate
 Richard M. McNeely, P.C.
 P. O. Box 767
 Swainsboro, Georgia 30401
 (478) 237-4225

May 14, 21, 28, June 4, 2026

S26-028
 NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER
 GEORGIA, TREUTLEN COUNTY

Under and by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by Kevin Manning to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as grantee, as nominee for AgGeorgia Farm Credit, ACA, its successors and assigns dated January 30, 2017, recorded in Deed Book 153, Page 468, Treutlen County, Georgia Records, as last transferred to AgFirst Farm Credit Bank by assignment recorded in Deed Book 25001, Page 1811, Treutlen County, Georgia Records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of SIXTY-EIGHT THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED NINETY-FIVE AND 0/100 DOLLARS (\$68,495.00), with interest thereon as set forth therein, there will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the courthouse door of Treutlen County, Georgia, or at such place as may be lawfully designated as an alternative, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in June, 2026, the following described property:
 SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF

The debt secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due and payable because of default having been made of the terms of the Note and Security Deed. The terms remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the total debt, including all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law which includes, but is not limited to, attorney's fees (notice pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 13-1-11 having been given). Said property will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), the right of redemption of any taxing authority, any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and any matters of record including, but not limited to, those superior to the Security Deed first set out above. Said property will be sold on an "as-is" basis without any representation, warranty or recourse against the above-named or the undersigned. Prospective bidders must perform their own due diligence. AgFirst Farm Credit Bank is the holder of the Security Deed to the property in accordance with OCGA § 44-14-162.2.

The entity that has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor is: LoanCare, LLC, 3637 Sentara Way, Suite 303, Virginia Beach, VA 23452, 800-909-9525.

Note, however, that such entity is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the loan.

Upon information and belief, said property is more commonly known as **2980 Ga Highway 46, Soperton, GA 30457**. Should a conflict arise between the property address and the legal description, the legal description shall control.

ATTENTION ALL PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS: On March 1, 2026, the data collection and reporting requirements under the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) new Anti-Money Laundering Rule (the "Rule"), found at 89 FR 70258, went into effect. The Rule applies to certain residential real estate sale transactions (including some that go beyond the typical one-to-four family residence) where the transfer is to a legal entity or trust, and which includes cash purchases, private financing or financing provided by an institution not subject to a federal Anti-Money Laundering or Suspicion Activity Report requirement. If applicable, as part of this Rule, buyers and sellers are required to provide additional information and documentation about themselves, their legal entities, and/or the source of funds used in the reportable transaction. The collection of this information and documentation is required to comply with the Rule's federal reporting requirements, if applicable.* This notice is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. You are encouraged to consult with your own independent legal counsel if you have questions about how the FinCEN Anti-Money Laundering Rule affects your transaction and whether your transaction is reportable.

*The Rule is the subject of ongoing litigation in several jurisdictions. We suggest that you seek your own legal counsel if you have questions about the status of the Rule and its applicability to your sale, if any.

The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed, and (3) to confirmation that the successful bidder has timely provided all information required for reporting under the Rule, 89 FR 70258, if applicable.

AgFirst Farm Credit Bank
 as Attorney in Fact for
 Kevin Manning
 McCalla Rayment Leibert Pierce, LLP
 1544 Old Alabama Rd
 Roswell, GA 30076
 www.foreclosurehotline.net
 EXHIBIT "A"

All that tract or parcel of land, together with all improvements located thereon, situate, lying, and being in the 1221st G.M. District of Treutlen County, Georgia, containing one (1) acre, more or less, and being more particularly shown on that certain plat of survey prepared by Daniel R. Riggs, Registered Surveyor, dated January 12, 1978, and recorded in Plat Book 5, Page 90, in the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Treutlen County, Georgia. Said tract fronts on the southeast side of Georgia Highway No. 46 for a distance of 210 feet and extends back southeasterly of equal width for a distance of 210 feet. Said tract is the same as conveyed to Terry Duane Henry from Jack E. Josey, Jr., by warranty deed, recorded on October 4, 2016, in Deed Book 152, pages 287-289, Treutlen County Deed Records.
 MR / KR June 2, 2026
 Our file no. 25-18746GA-FT7
 25-18746GA

May 7, 14, 21, 28, 2026

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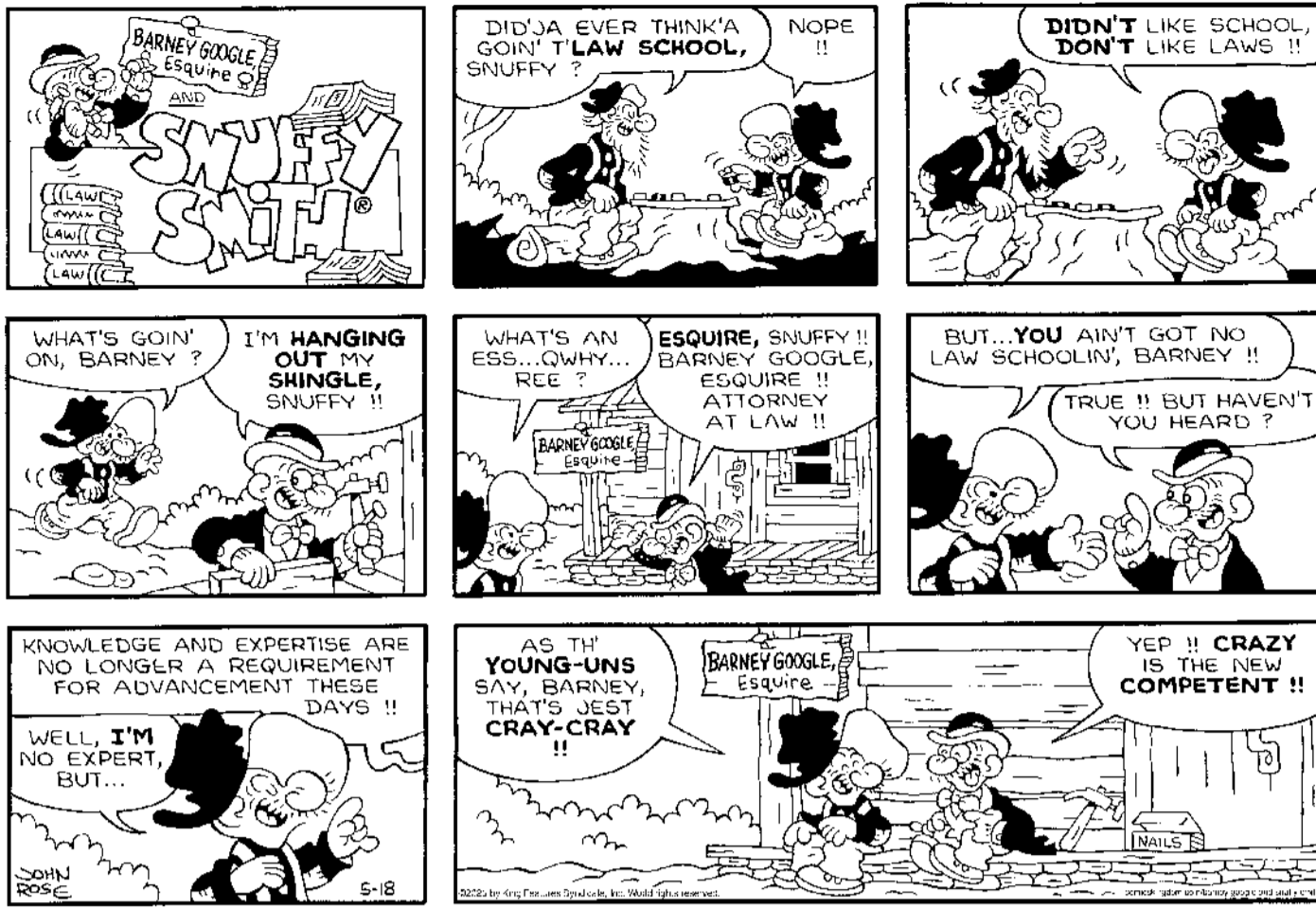
Property 1 - 105± Acres on Highway 80

- Located Adjacent to East Laurens High School with frontage on Highway 80.
- Laurens County Tax Parcel: 200B 007

Property 2 - 92.4± Acres on Jerry Hester Rd

- Frontage on Jerry Hester Road and McCord Road
- Laurens County Tax Parcel: 201B 012

Thursday, May 21st @



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

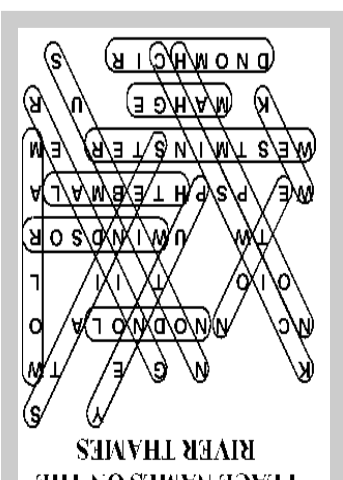


Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



CROSSWORD ANSWERS



MAGIC MAZE ANSWERS

King Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13					14		
15		16						17		
18						19	20			
		21				22		23	24	25
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37			38			39				
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45	46	47			48	49				
50					51				52	
53					54				55	

ACROSS

- 1 Cry
- 4 Vault
- 8 Daly and Allen
- 12 Common title start
- 13 Killer whale
- 14 Web addresses
- 15 Pithy joke
- 17 Legume
- 18 Suggests
- 19 TV guide abbr.
- 21 Wager
- 22 Expulsion
- 26 Errand runner
- 29 Whatever number
- 30 Hwy.
- 31 Caspian Sea feeder
- 32 Keats creation
- 33 Go caroling
- 34 Capitol VIP
- 35 Year in Madrid
- 36 Epic narratives
- 37 On/off switch
- 39 "You've got mail" co.
- 40 Documentarian Burns
- 41 Obligations
- 45 Beige
- 48 The whole crowd

DOWN

- 1 Halt
- 2 "It can't be!"
- 3 Hive population
- 4 Hang around
- 5 Painter Max
- 6 Expert
- 7 Series opener
- 8 Big brass
- 9 Rage
- 10 Org. with a style manual
- 11 Nine-digit ID
- 16 Slander in print
- 20 Purchase
- 23 Advanced math
- 24 Sicilian peak
- 25 Bylaws, briefly
- 26 Sudden wind
- 27 Disc-shaped cookie
- 28 Sharp tooth
- 29 Commotion
- 32 Penny
- 33 Like seawater
- 35 Boxing legend
- 36 Turned bad
- 38 Hog's "hello"
- 39 "Hello" singer
- 42 Illinois neighbor
- 43 Wife of Geraint
- 44 Fax
- 45 Clean air org.
- 46 Baseball fan's headwear
- 47 Tear
- 49 Compete

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PLACE NAMES ON THE RIVER THAMES

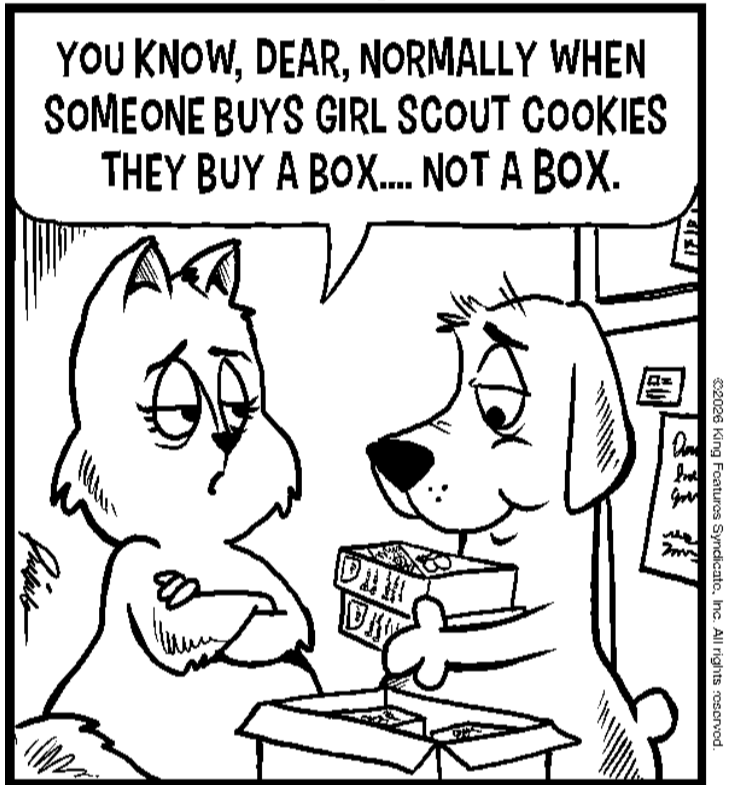
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 O W E S T M I N S T E R N E M
 L K I K H M A H G E F D U C R
 A Z X D N O M H C I R W V S U

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: Oldest University in England

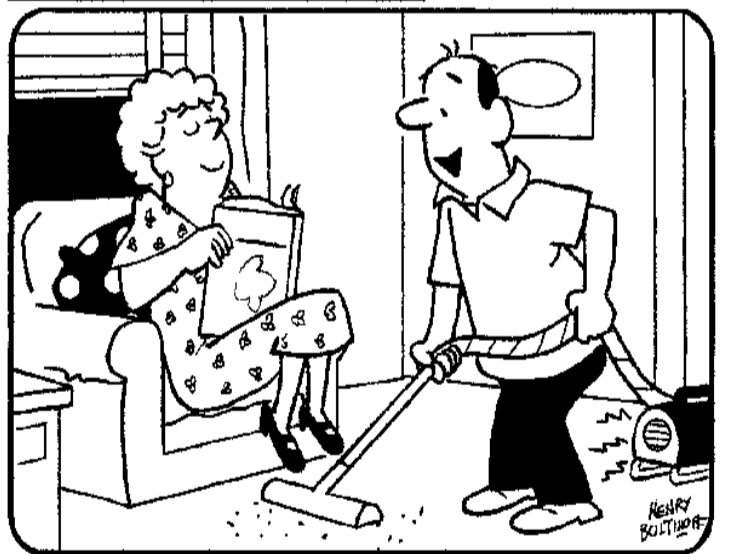
- Chiswick
- Egham
- Eton
- Hampton
- Kew
- Lambeth
- London
- Marlow
- Putney
- Reading
- Richmond
- Staines
- Surbiton
- Westminster
- Windsor

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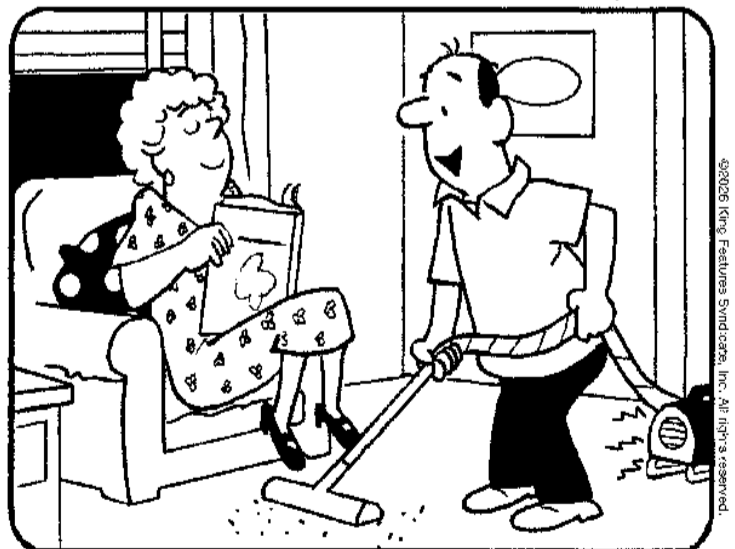
Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Leg of chair is different. 2. Vacuum is moved. 3. Blinds are higher. 4. Drawer is larger. 5. Back of chair is higher. 6. Bottom of chair is different.

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DID YOU KNOW...?

Did a billionaire's stinginess lead to his grandson being injured in a 1973 ransom?

By JACK BAGLEY
Georgia Trust For Local News

Did you know...

... the original vampire novel has never been out of print? Dracula, written in 1897 by Irish author Bram Stoker (1847-1912), ties together the vampire bats of the New World with the actual story of Transylvanian prince Vlad III Tepes (1431-1476), known as Vlad the Impaler. Scholars are divided on the true meaning of the work – some say it is a clear allegory of Christianity, while others say it is a lampooning of Victorian-era mores in the United Kingdom. Whichever (or both), the book has never been out of print since it was first released. (I wish I could say that about my books.)

... a common condiment was once thought of as a medicine? Ketchup, the humble condiment that makes hamburgers and other dishes taste better, was at one time prescribed as a medicine for rheumatism, jaundice and other ailments. In the 1830s it was sold in a pill form by Dr. John Cook Bennett (1804-1867). Competitors soon followed, but some were not quite honest – they used laxatives instead of tomatoes in their “medicine.” (Well, they also used to think tomatoes were poisonous, so ...)

... one of the most famous pieces of Star Trek lore came from a Jewish ritual? The Vulcan salute, made by holding up the hand with the middle and ring fingers split in a “V” shape, was created by actor Leonard Nimoy (1931-2015). Nimoy, who played Mr. Spock on the classic series, had observed his rabbi using the hand symbol in a benediction while a boy and never forgot it. The hand symbol is made to represent the Hebrew letter shin, the first letter of the Hebrew word “shalom,” which means peace. (Nimoy wasn't supposed to look, but he peeked.)

... a dentist was forced to legally change his name because of his advertising? Dr. Edgar R.R. Parker (1872-1952) was a rather flamboyant dentist in his home town of Philadelphia, but following his graduation from Philadelphia Dental College he went six weeks without seeing a patient. So, he decided to advertise. Parker billed his dentistry as “painless,” but his patients said he was lying. To avoid charges of false advertising which could have put him out of business, Parker legally changed his first name to Painless. (Clever, very clever!)

... the first embroidery pattern book was published in the 16th Century? The Modelbuch, published in Germany in 1524, contained 29 pages of designs for embroidery and lace. As far as knitting patterns, the earliest pattern books combining knitting and embroidery came out in the 17th Century, with the first devoted exclusively to knitting printed in 1761. (They just made up their own patterns prior to that.)

... a billionaire's alleged stinginess caused his grandson to suffer? On July 10, 1973, John Paul Getty III (1956-2011), 16-year-old grandson of the then-richest man in the world, was kidnapped from the Piazza Farnese in Rome. The kidnapers demanded \$17 million in ransom, but the young man's grandfather – billionaire J. Paul Getty (1892-1976) – refused. The elder Getty's reasoning, apparently, was that if he paid, his other grandchildren could become kidnapping victims as well. The younger Getty was held by the kidnapers for five months, and the only movement in the case came in November of 1973, when a package containing a lock of Getty's hair and his severed ear arrived at a newspaper. The note threatened to mutilate the young man even further if a ransom of \$3.2 million was not paid. Even in the face of the injury done to his grandson, J. Paul maintained his parsimonious ways – he only agreed to provide \$2.2 million, because that was the most that was tax deductible, and loaned another \$800,000 to his son, John Paul Getty, Jr. (1932-2006), the victim's father, on condition that it be paid back at four percent interest. Nine of the kidnapers were apprehended, but only two received prison terms. Additional trivia note: When the younger Getty was finally released in December, he telephoned his grandfather to thank him for paying the ransom. The elder Getty refused to come to the phone.

... you probably can't afford the world's most expensive tea? I certainly can't. Called Da-Hong Pao Tea and only available in China, the most expensive tea in the world will run you \$1.2 million for one kilogram. This rare form of tea is grown only in the Wuyi mountain region of China's Fujian province, from a kind of tree of which only six exist. (One cup, please.)

... only one pitcher has ever appeared in all seven games of the same World Series? In 1973, Darold Knowles (born 1941) was pitching for the Oakland A's in the World Series against the New York Mets. Knowles appeared in all seven games of the Series as a relief pitcher, and in his 6 1/3 innings of work through the games he did not give up a run. He was credited with the save in games one and seven of the Series, which went to the A's.

Now... you know!

Bad moms give us something to be thankful for on Mothers Day

There is not much to not like about George Washington.

The accomplished general and first president, though flawed as all humans are, is regarded the world over for his feats on the battlefield and his actions as a statesman. Historians continue to study the writings and actions of this celebrated figure in American history to learn just what made him think and act the way that he did.

But there is one notable person who did not think George was all that great – his mama.

Yes, Mary Ball Washington is well documented as an overbearing, ever-complaining and non-approving parent. George could never do anything right in her eyes, and she would openly deride and vilify her son to anyone who would listen.

It's generally bad practice to disrespect someone in command of an army, but George must have had thick skin or really loved his dear old mother. I feel sorry for his dad, because if winning a war and helping found a nation couldn't impress the woman, I don't know what would.

Coincidentally, there's another famous American, one that perhaps shouldn't be remembered as fondly, who made his mother extremely proud.

Zerelda Elizabeth Cole James Simms Samuel (say that three times fast) was the doting mother of famous outlaws Frank and Jesse James. Zerelda was not a shining member of society herself and fully condoned her sons' lawless ways. She would provide haven for the fugitives in between their es-



By KYLE DOMINY

capades, and that would later cost her a limb.

During a raid on the family homestead by the Pinkerton Detective Agency, an explosive device claimed her right arm and, more tragically, the life of the James' baby stepbrother.

After Jesse was dead and Frank was on trail, Zerelda decided to capitalize on the craze created by her offspring – as any grieving mother would. She gave tours of the family home, for a nominal fee of course, and provided sordid details of the raid that damaged her body and killed her child and gave details about the James boys that the newspapers and dime novels couldn't provide.

It is stories like these that make you appreciate mothers that try to do right by their offspring.

I certainly don't have anything

to complain about in the parent department. In fact, I've been surrounded by good mothers my whole life, from my own mother and grandmothers to the moms of friends who treat me like their own. While I don't, or will ever, have accomplishments that compare to George Washington's, but I've also avoided the ire of the law. That should make any mother proud.

This Mother's Day it's expected that folks in the United States will spend more than \$40 billion trying to show their mothers how much they appreciate them, or at least going through the motions. Surely there are more Mary Ball Washingtons and Zerelda Samuels around.

If you're fortunate enough to still have a mom around, pay her a visit or give her a call.

Happy Mother's Day.

COUCH THEATER



Lewis Pullman, left, and Sally Field star in "Remarkably Bright Creatures"/Photo courtesy of Netflix

By DEMI TAVERAS
King Features

Ready or Not 2 (R)

The sequel to "Ready or Not" (2019), a comedy-horror film that catapulted Samara Weaving ("Borderline") into "scream queen" territory, is out now to rent after pulling in three times its budget in theaters. (Not bad!) Weaving reprises her role as Grace MacCaullay, and the sequel picks up moments after the events of the last film. Grace has just survived the ritual where she was supposed to meet her end and reunites with her younger sister, Faith (Kathryn Newton), while she recovers in the hospital. However, a council including six elite families hears wind of Grace's successful escape and manages to kidnap both Grace and her sister for another round of games. Sarah Michelle Gellar ("I Know What You Did Last Summer") and Elijah Wood ("Yellowjackets") joined the cast this time around. (Apple TV+)

Remarkably Bright Creatures (PG-13)

This film, led by Sally Field ("80 for Brady") and Lewis Pullman ("Wishful Thinking"), is based on the novel of the same name by Shelby Van Pelt. Although it's dubbed a "mystery drama," there's a heartwarming human element to the film due to Field's and Pullman's endearing performances, as well as the subject matter at hand. Field plays Tova, an elderly widow who works the night shift at her local aquarium. When a young man named Cameron (Pullman) begins working alongside her, they form an unlikely bond as she helps him to find his father. Colm Meaney ("The Panic") and Alfred Molina ("Harold and the Purple Crayon") co-star in the film, which is out now. (Netflix)

Lurker (R)

We have a bit of horror this week, we have a tearjerker, and now we have this arthouse film starring Theodore Pellerin ("Beau Is Afraid") and Archie Madkwe ("Saltburn"). "Lurker" follows retail worker Matthew (Pellerin), who's working at a clothing store in Los Angeles when a popular musician named Oliver (Madkwe) wanders in. The two hit it off and become fast friends (not unlike the beginning of "A Star Is Born"), to the point that Oliver offers a spot to Matthew in his entourage as a documentarian. Infatuated with the idea of being adjacent to a celebrity, Matthew accepts, only to begin spiraling as Oliver's infatuation with him loses steam just as quickly as it started. Premieres May 15. (HBO Max)

Tucci in Italy: Season 2 (PG)

Back for another season is this National Geographic series hosted by Stanley Tucci, which is perfect timing considering that Tucci is currently on a roll with a bunch of press for "The Devil Wears Prada 2." In this season, the 65-year-old actor explores five new regions in the country that his family has descended from, including Naples and Campania, Sicily, Le Marche, Sardinia, and Veneto. Tucci also visits the world's smallest kingdom on Tavolara Island, whose king owns a seafood restaurant called Da Tonino. Tucci told People magazine, "In Italy, food is never just food. It's memory, identity and, sometimes, a full-blown argument." All episodes are available to stream on May 12. (Disney+)

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Local governments continue to remain firm on burn bans



The Georgia Forestry Commission announced a reduced outdoor burn ban area, now affecting only 17 counties in south Georgia. However, many local governments have opted to keep local bans in place as drought conditions continue/SPECIAL PHOTO

By **LOGAN REYNOLDS**
Staff Reporter

Several local governments will maintain pre-established emergency burn bans despite the Georgia Forestry Commission's (GFC) announcement of a reduction of the state-mandated burn ban area on May 5.

"It's still mighty dry," said Alamo City Manager Jeffery Floyd.

The GFC announced on May 5 a reduction on the number of counties under the mandatory ban on outdoor burning from 91 counties to 17 counties. The affected counties now only include Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Berrien, Brantley, Camden, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Echols, Glynn, Jeff Davis, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Ware and Wayne.

The GFC issued the first iteration of the ban on April 22, which was the first ban of its kind issued by the department. The order prohibits prescribed burns and agricultural burns, the burning of leaf piles or yard debris and applies "regardless of whether such activities require a permit from the State Forestry Commission."

However, even though the Geor-

gia state government is no longer requiring them to maintain a burn ban, the county governments in Wheeler, Montgomery and Treutlen, as well as city governments such as Alamo and Soperton, have opted to keep their burn bans in place. Many of these bans were put into place days before the GFC's mandate.

Many of these bans carry penalties for violators, including \$1,000 in fines and jail time. The Treutlen County Board of Commissioners also adopted a new ordinance on April 27 allowing county law enforcement to levy these punishments for future burn bans as well.

The primary reason cited by officials as to why the bans are kept in place is the ongoing drought conditions in Georgia. Over 50 counties in Georgia have been reported as experiencing exceptional drought conditions by the United States Drought Monitor, with many more experiencing extreme drought conditions.

According to Treutlen County and Soperton Fire Chief John Johnson, the area would require a five day storm depositing one inch of rain per

day to properly alleviate the drought conditions.

Some areas did see rainfall on April 28, such as Treutlen County, but only two-tenths of an inch of rain fell. Chief Johnson said that amount would be nowhere near enough rain to alleviate the current drought.

"Not even a drop in the bucket," said Chief Johnson.

There was more rainfall over the following weekend, but in a report to the Treutlen County Board of Commissioners on May 4, EMA Director Justin McNure said the area only received a "hair over two inches."

"I think we got out of all the rain last week, I think it was just a hair over two inches," said McNure. "Which is, I'm definitely glad we had, but it wasn't enough to saturate us at all."

As of May 6, the GFC has responded to a total of 143 wildfires which have burned a collective 541.57 acres statewide. In addition, firefighters have contended with two large wildfires in Clinch County and Brantley County, which have burned 32,575 acres and 22,471 acres respectively as of May 6.

AMAZON WAREHOUSE

Continued from page 1

that are [sent] through there, now packages in our area will be able to come through [the distribution center], and we'll directly service us, as well as the surrounding communities," said Stanley.

Stanley estimated the center will bring between 50 to 100 jobs to the county, including roles such as delivery drivers and floor workers.

The center will be built on Carver Street, just down the road from J & S Produce. According to Stanley, there were some issues concerning the railroad during discussions, which runs alongside Carver Street, but those issues have since been rectified.

"There was an issue towards the end that we were dealing with the past few months where, because the railroad runs right there. We just had to ensure that right of ways and everything, that we weren't going to mess anything up there," said Stanley.

Amazon will also perform landscaping work on the property with what Stanley describes as "a landscaping package... that would make you blush."

"Overall, I think it's going to be a great opportunity," said Stanley.

As part of the construction process, Amazon will also pave Carver Street to "assist in getting Carver Street up to par," as the section of the street in front of the construction site is a dirt road.

Stanley estimates construction to be completed by the fall of 2026, which he attributes to the company's quick construc-

tion pace.

"They said that whenever they get to the point where they're actually getting ready to stand up the building, that you'll go by there one day, and it'll just be open," said Stanley. "And then you'll go by a day or two later, and there's a building there, because the progress that they're able to make is pretty great."

He also confirmed Amazon did not receive any kind of tax abatement, which will result in more tax revenue for Montgomery County.

While contracts were signed in March, discussions on the project stretch back much further into the tenure of Stanley's predecessor, Joe Filipponi. During this time, the deal with Amazon consumed much of Stanley's time, with specifics kept under wraps to maintain the security of the deal.

Now that the deal has been finalized, Stanley said he is working with county officials to make development authority meetings more standardized and more transparent to the public. These measures will include an altered meeting schedule and the posting of meeting minutes to the Montgomery County official website.

"I think it's important that we be transparent to the citizens while still protecting the confidential information," said Montgomery County Commissioner Amie Vassey. "So, I was just hoping that the development authority can establish a regular cadence for meetings, post their schedule on their website, post their meetings on their website at a bare minimum."

CAR WRECK

Continued from page 1

tigation determined that a Chrysler 300 was traveling north on Ga. 29 and failed to maintain its lane. The vehicle entered the southbound lane and hit a Kia Sorento head-on.

This crash led to the deaths of the driver of the Chrysler, Wimbush. Wilson, the driver of the Kia, and her daughter, Aliah Michelle Smith, 16, of Soperton, who was a passenger, were transported to Fairview Park Hospital.

Wimbush was pronounced dead by Stanley on the scene around 1 a.m. on Monday, May 4. Wilson and her daughter,

Smith, were transported to Fairview Park Hospital. A doctor pronounced Wilson dead at 1:12 a.m. A doctor also pronounced Smith dead around 2:37 a.m.

"The loss of a young life is something that touches our entire school community, and we grieve alongside you," wrote the school on Facebook.

Stanley said two other children were also in the Kia. The GSP said they were transported with non-life threatening injuries.

The cause of death for all three deaths was multiple blunt trauma due to a motor vehicle crash.

"It's sad," Stanley said. "A lot of lives changed in the split of a second."

TREUTLEN BOC

Continued from page 1

level of communication should residents or the county run into any issues with Amwaste's service.

"That's my biggest concern, really, is making sure if we bring you guys on, you're going to answer the phone," said Glenn.

According to the Amwaste representatives, Treutlen County would have a dedicated operations manager to maintain communication and address any concerns which may arise.

The representatives also said certain options not present in their proposal, such as direct billing and commercial dumpsters, could be made available should the county officials desire them.

Finally, during the May 4 meeting, Board Member Rodney Meeks offered a motion to accept Amwaste's bid for the curbside trash pickup service, which passed unanimously.

"I think it's a positive win for Treutlen County," said Amwaste Operations Manager Buddy Baldwin. "I think Treutlen County is going to see positive effects from it. I think being the local partnership next door is a great thing."

Trash services under Amwaste will be billed through Treutlen County, rather than direct billing through Amwaste. According to District Manager Josh Raugh, the board will receive an official contract to sign the week after the meeting.

In other action items, Board Member Joey Powell offered motions to renew a contract with the Community Service Board of Middle Georgia and to reinstate Wayne Coates onto the Region 5 EMS Council. Both motions passed unanimously.

Board Member Thallia Gillis offered a motion to approve a new grant fund policy drafted by County Manager Glenn, which passed unanimously.

In public comments, Alfred Harden requested the board begin an audit of the Treutlen County Tax Commissioner's Office. Harden alleged the office had charged him and other residents for the same bills twice despite paying the first time.

"I'm here because I'm mad as hell about my taxes," said Harden.

He also alleged the double billings were racially motivated against Black residents of Treutlen County.

"They need to be looked into, and I'll say it like this, and I feel like it's just in the Black community," said Harden. "Negros that own property [are] being attacked with this situation."

While both County Manager Glenn and County Attorney James Garner said Harden's concerns were valid and that other residents had come forward with similar complaints, both claimed the Board of Commissioners had no legal authority to begin an audit of the tax commissioner's office. Instead, Harden would have to contact the Governor Brian Kemp's office to notify the Georgia Department of Revenue, which does have the authority to audit.

"It makes no sense," said Garner. "It really doesn't."

The Board also promised to provide Harden with the necessary information to move forward with his complaint.

In department reports, Fire Chief John Johnson presented the board with three proposals to consider. His forest proposal was a potential solution to alleviate certain residents' insurance premiums.

A portion of Treutlen County bordering Montgomery County is outside of any five mile radius of any Treutlen County fire station, officially designating this area

as a class 10 ISO area. Subsequently, residents living in those areas pay insurance premiums which Johnson described as "astronomical."

Johnson proposed incorporating the property and road base within five miles of the nearest Tarrytown fire station, as well as renewing the automatic aid protocols with the Tarrytown Fire Department. Under automatic aid, Tarrytown fire fighters can respond immediately to fires in Treutlen County in the area in question.

Both Johnson and Tarrytown Fire Chief Don Snively cited a good working relationship between the two fire departments under the current mutual aid practices, as well as Tarrytown firefighters' willingness to cover the area.

"That partnership is already there," said Johnson. "Don's had a very good relationship with the former fire chiefs, both Sid and Lee, and we both agree that we can continue that very, very well, and we've already demonstrated that in the past."

The plan would also cost the county nothing monetarily.

According to Chief Johnson, the partnership with Tarrytown would also bring Treutlen County's firefighting coverage area up from 95 percent to 100 percent, which he said was "virtually unheard of."

Second, Chief Johnson asked the board to consider allocating funds from the SPLOST account to cover the purchase of new equipment for the fire department, including hoses and firefighting foam.

Third, Chief Johnson asked the board to consider pursuing a 50/50 match grant offered by the Georgia Forestry Commission. According to Johnson, the grant matches 50 percent of the cost to purchase new firefighting equipment, with a cap of \$5,000.

"So, it's basically half price," said Johnson.

One example Chief Johnson gave for a use for the grant was the purchase of wildfire gear for local firefighters. Treutlen County and Soperton firefighters are equipped with gear designed to fight structural fires, which is too heavy to combat wildfires without risk of stress-related injuries.

"It's heavy, it's cumbersome and there's case after case [after] case, nationally documented, where structural gear being worn into wildland environment has led to heart attack and death, because of the extreme stress it puts on individuals wearing it," said Johnson.

Snively backed up Johnson's request, saying his department regularly applied for the grant. Chief Johnson also noted he was not asking for any of his requests to be voted on during the meeting, but rather that he was "planting seeds."

Treutlen County EMA Director Justin McNure reported the county had received \$4,954,060.50 in category A funds. According to McNure, the funds are intended to help the county pay off bills incurred by the aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

"The way this works, basically, through a lot of talking and bringing our points across to some of the state and even federal level commissioners, representatives and things like that, they have basically got it to where they will release that money to us so we can pay our bills," said McNure. "So, this is not money... where we can put it in there and live off of it."

The board also announced its meeting dates for its 2027 budget, including a work session on May 14 at 4 p.m. and a work session on May 18 at 5 p.m., followed by a public hearing the same day at 6 p.m. The final vote on the budget will be held on June 1.

SIGNING DAY

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However, according to Dr. Hightower, the Montgomery County School System has reached the limit as to how many roles can be consolidated.

"We're at the floor," said Dr. Hightower. "We can't absorb anymore now."

Yet, the superintendent is not concerned with potential future layoffs. She instead sees the ongoing county-wide property reappraisal performed by the local tax assessor as an avenue to take measures to stabilize the schools' budget issues.

"I am expecting in our future, as properties are reassessed in Montgomery, to be able to roll the millage rate back," said Dr. Hightower. "We're also still looking at offering a local homestead exemption as well. Those are things that are in our view, not laying off anymore staff."



Montgomery County certified staff members were invited to attend a signing event on May 5 in the Montgomery County High School cafeteria. Staff signed their names on a banner and were served ice cream to celebrate their inclusion in the 2026-2027 school year/LOGAN REYNOLDS