

Arson suspect sentenced to 15 months in county jail



Harris was arrested after reportedly ransacking a home on Beaver Dam Road while proceeding to set a camper and truck on fire last year/SPECIAL PHOTO

Judge to suspend remaining 3 months upon entry into substance abuse program

By CHRISTIAN MCKEARNEY
Staff Reporter

Exactly one year later, the man accused of starting the fire and ransacking a nearby home learned his punishment. Casey Harris, 39, was sentenced to 15 months in the county jail after pleading guilty to first degree arson, felony burglary, criminal damage to property, criminal trespass, improper burning, DUI and driving with a suspended license. Harris also was ordered to pay \$3,972 in restitution to the victim, as well as an

additional \$2,855 in court fees.

Harris had been in the county jail since the day of his arrest, which added up to 12 months of jail time. However, the judge suspended the remaining three months in jail "upon entry into a long term in-patient substance abuse program."

The incident occurred near the intersection of Beaver Dam Road and Club Road. The neighbor who placed the 911 call relayed to



Harris

ARSON TRIAL
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Wilkinson County BOE votes to set millage rate

By CHRISTIAN MCKEARNEY
Staff Reporter

The Wilkinson County Board of Education recently voted unanimously to set its next millage rate at 18.5, a decrease of .25 mills from the previous year.

This actually comes in .3 mills below the tax commissioner's office's "recommended roll-back rate," which means that the school board will not have to host a series of public meetings.

As part of the process, the school board was required to post its "property tax digest and 5 year levy," which showed that the school board's property tax digest increased 34 percent between 2020-2024, while actually being reduced by \$11 million in 2025.

MILLAGE RATE
Continued on page 2

Federal government will distribute \$500 million to farmers after Helene

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Farmers and other agricultural producers in Georgia will get federal financial aid to help with recovery from Hurricane Helene, the massive storm that wiped out crops and timberland more than a year ago.

Georgia and U.S. agriculture officials announced Tuesday that the state will receive \$531,236,000 from the U.S. government for a Hurricane Helene Block Grant Program.

It is "funding to provide much-needed relief to impacted farmers and producers," Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper said in a statement, adding that the money "is absolutely essential to help our farm families bounce back" from the devastation.

The Georgia Department of Agriculture spent hundreds of hours in negotiations to se-

HURRICANE HELENE
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Pictured, from left, are the members of the Wilkinson County Master Gardeners club: Sharon Carr, Suzi Troxell, Emily Youngblood, Jan Adair, Jean Adair and Jenn Morris /SPECIAL PHOTO

Master Gardeners help spruce up the Gordon Public Library

By CHRISTIAN MCKEARNEY
Staff Reporter

The Gordon Public Library sort of bottomed out in 2023, when it was forced to temporarily close due to mold issues.

The comeback has been mighty strong, however, complete with new carpeting, a new paint job and upgrades to the HVAC system.

The outside improvements have been equally noticeable, thanks to the Wilkinson County Master Gardeners and its volunteers. More recently, the Master Gardeners have installed a new shade garden and a day lily garden for children on the property, and earlier this week

the crew upgraded the garden in front of the building.

"We chose the library because it's a community building that all of the community can use," said Jenn Morris, one of the Master Gardeners.

The Master Gardeners club is a collaboration with the Georgia Cooperative Extension agency and Georgia 4-H. Members must complete a certain number of volunteer hours each year to maintain their certification.

The Friends of the Gordon Library previously presented the Master Gardeners with

GARDEN
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Farmers Home Furniture unveils home office renovations for trainees



Farmers Home Furniture Director of Employee Development Vance Laughlin; Executive Director of Human Resources Sarah Wardlaw; and company President Gabe Selman at the renovated Academy of Opportunity at the company's Dublin-based corporate office. The program trains managers to operate Farmers Home Furniture locations/KYLE DOMINY



By KYLE DOMINY
Managing Editor

Farmers Home Furniture has unveiled renovations at the company's Dublin-based home office housing an expanded training program for store managers and employees in leadership positions.

The Farmers Academy of Leadership was announced by the employee-owned home furnishing retailer in September. The program, a mix of in-person training and computer simulation, followed by shadowing and working with other managers, doubles Farmers' train-

ing capacity to about 60 employees at a time.

"We know that there are small towns all over the country that are perfect for Farmers Home Furniture and we want to have the right people in place," said company President Gabe Selman. "A lot of companies run from small-town America. We make ourselves at home, fire the people there and help them build that business."

The program helps teach business management skills, such as running each

FARMERS FURNITURE
Continued on page 2



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FARMERS FURNITURE

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store's in-house credit department and inventory control, and focuses heavily on providing high level customer service.

"Our plan is relational," Selman said. "We know our customers by name."

Selman said the new program currently had nearly 40 people, a mix of new hires and promotions, enrolled. Completion takes between seven and nine months, depending on the employees experience level.

Founded in Soperton in the 1949, Farmers Home Furniture now has more than 260 stores in seven states. The Treutlen County store, founded by Sherwin Glass, was de-

stroyed by Hurricane Helene last year. The company recently broke ground on the new building. Farmers Home Furniture now has about 2,300 employees, with about 300 of them housed in the company's Dublin corporate offices and distribution center.

The company, which has been employee owned since 2013, expects more growth on the horizon with hopes to open 10 to 15 new stores each year.

"We are looking for people that put in the hard work, prepare themselves, and are ready to get in the game," said Phillip Faircloth, Farmers' chairman and CEO in a statement announcing the new training program. "We're looking for people that say 'Put me in, Coach.'"



SNAPSHOTS: COCHRAN CARES GICH ANNOUNCES THE SEPTEMBER YARD OF THE MONTH

The Cochran CARES GICH team congratulated Mr. John and Mrs. Nancy Ricks of 201 E Beech St. for the September 2025 Yard of the Month award. Cochran Hardware sponsored this month's award /SPECIAL PHOTO

ARSON TRIAL

Continued from page 1

deputies that "he heard lots of glass breaking and loud screams for help" and then saw a man on the porch take off on foot." Added the incident report: "There was extensive damage done to a residence located at 101 Beaver Dam Road. A vehicle was also located wrecked just down from the residence where there was a small fire next to the vehicle. The vehicle was registered to the suspect. There was also a small structure on fire."

MILLAGE RATE

Continued from page 1

Here are those numbers:
2020 – \$355.27 million
2021 – \$361.14 million
2022 – \$383.83 million
2023 – \$417.34 million
2024 – \$477.14 million
2025 – \$466.89 million

Property tax bills are expected to be mailed out this October, which has long been the traditional month. Last year, however, questions and concerns about a countywide revaluation performed by the Board of Assessors Office pushed the process way back, and property tax bills were not mailed out until April of this year.

HURRICANE HELENE

Continued from page 1

cure the money from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he said, praising Brooke Rollins, President Donald Trump's agriculture secretary, for the collaboration.

Harper said the grants will cover infrastructure and timber losses as well as future economic losses. Gov. Brian Kemp said in a post on X that the proceeds will cover as many farmers as possible, calling the outcome "great news."

Helene wreaked at least \$5.5 billion in damage to crops, ranches, poultry houses, orchards and timberland.

Congress passed a bipartisan relief package in December earmarking \$21 billion for affected farmers in Georgia and other states. The federal package also was in response to other natural disasters.

Kemp also redirected \$100 million from a state capital projects fund to help farmers and timberland owners. Then, in March, the General Assembly set aside \$867 million for disaster relief as part of the fiscal 2025 mid-year budget.

This article is available through a partnership with Capitol Beat News Service, a project of the Georgia Press Association's nonprofit, tax-exempt Educational Foundation.

GARDEN

Continued from page 1

a \$500 check for the front garden project. The Friends are now springing back into action and will host a Fall Slice Scramble on Nov. 1 at C&B Meats. Mix-and-match bakery boxes will be available for \$25 and \$40.

Oconee Fall line Technical College honors graduates with commencement ceremony

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES JOURNAL POST

OFTC – More than 50 Oconee Fall Line Technical College (OFTC) credit and High School Equivalency (HSE) graduates were honored during the College's 2025 Fall Commencement & HSE Ceremony held on the Sandersville Campus, Thursday, September 25. Graduates received degrees, diplomas and technical certificates of credit in a variety of high-demand fields like Automation, Machine Tool, Cybersecurity, Welding and Joining Technology, and more. Some graduates received high school equivalency diplomas.

"This evening, we are not just marking the end of a chapter; we are celebrating a new beginning," shared OFTC President, Erica Harden. "We are recognizing the culmination of countless hours of hard work, unwavering dedication, and immense perseverance. To each graduate, you have faced challenges head-on and have emerged stronger, more skilled, and more prepared for the future. You have earned your place on this stage, and you have made us all in-

credibly proud.

"As you leave OFTC and step into the next phase of your lives, remember the skills you've gained, the friendships you've forged, and the lessons you've learned," Harden continued. "Whether you are entering the workforce, continuing your education, or pursuing a new path, you are now equipped with the knowledge and confidence to make a meaningful impact on your communities and beyond."

Darrell Hill Jr., Director of the Adult Education program at a sister Technical College System of Georgia institution, served as keynote speaker and addressed the graduates, applauding them for their hard work and dedication in accomplishing their goals.

"Life is full of ups and downs," Hill shared. "There are good days and bad days; days we have it figured out and days we don't. But it's a beautiful thing when you see it through."

Hill honored the graduates and recognized their commitment and dedication to seeing their dreams through.

"You've demonstrated a commitment to ex-

cellence," he said. "Each of you have paid the price to be disciplined, and you've desired to dream."

"Graduates, I want to encourage you. As humans we tend to forget things over time. One thing I don't want you to ever forget – don't ever give up. If you need a sign to keep going, place your hand over year heart. If you hear the beat of your heart – that's your sign you can keep going one more day."

Following Hill's address, graduates walked across the stage to receive their credentials, officially marking the completion of their programs.

OFTC offers quality education that's affordable and close to home, making it a top choice for those considering higher education or career advancement. The college's 8-week Fall Minimester begins on October 15. To learn more about the 130+ programs of study or how to enroll, visit the College's website, OFTC.edu.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Sons of the American Revolution Chapter Organizing Meeting

There will be a meeting to discuss forming a SAR chapter in Dublin. It will be held Monday, Oct. 13 at 6 p.m. in the Carl Vinson Meeting Room at the Dublin Public Library, located at 801 Bellevue Ave, Dublin. Anyone interested in more information contact William Sanders at (912) 266-9691 or email wosanders52@gmail.com.



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Tap shoes and tattoos: When conventions collide

Tap dancing is as American as baseball and apple pie. The expressive dance form, named and set apart from other forms of expressive arts for the rhythmic sounds created by the performers specific to genre footwear, rose in popularity along with jazz music, another distinct American art.

The story of tap dancing ebbs and flows along with the history of entertainment, as well as the racial strife, of our country. But through the good, bad and ugly of it all we've seen the talents of such performers as Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers and, my personal favorite, Sammy Davis Jr. extenuated through tap dancing. The art form remains a standard practice for anyone pursuing a hobby in dance or a ca-

reer on stage, and there are few people in the world that don't recognize the sound of the metal toe tips and heels of tap shoes clicking against the floor.

It's a sound I didn't fully appreciate until my own daughter started dancing and the noise has been a near-constant soundtrack to my life for nearly eight years, and my only girl child has developed quite a knack for style.

Like tap dancing, tattoos have a rich history that spans different eras and cultures. From the identifying markings of ancient tribes to inked up characters in early 20th century side shows, tattoos have been a part of the human experience for as long as humans have formed societies. The



By KYLE DOMINY

permanent skin decorations have been embraced by some cultures, like the native Hawaiians, whose tattoos are a living record of an individual's life and lineage, while others stigmatized them. In ancient Rome only

prisoners and slaves had tattoos, and anyone with such a mark was ostracized from society.

Now, it's difficult to find someone without a little ink, visible or hidden away by a sleeve or trouser cuff.

Tattoos have become the ultimate form of self-expression and advancements in the tools of the trade have made it where the human body can be the canvas for anything from a cartoonish figure to a landscape that would make Monet shed a tear of joy.

The worlds of tap dancing and tattoos collided recently in dueling conventions at the Savannah Convention Center. The iconic facility, which seems to always be under construction, simultaneously hosted the Surge Tap Fest and the Villain Arts Tattoo Convention. The massive center, which overlooks River Street from its island in the Savannah River, not only decided the two were a good fit for a late summer weekend but also

provided space for the two events adjacent to each other.

To access the tattoo show, many folks had to go through the tap-dancing crowd. I, for one, thought it was a great juxtaposition and thoroughly enjoyed watching burly, bearded and heavily tattooed artists making their way to the show floor through a crowd of toddler tap dancers. It was a great reminder that we're all just trying to get by in this world and you must navigate with a little tolerance and understanding.

My daughter left with a new pair of tap shoes; I left with a new tattoo. It was a great weekend that I hope is already rescheduled for next year.

DID YOU KNOW...?

By JACK BAGLEY
Georgia Trust For Local News

Did you know ...
... the number 22,000 should be important to you? If you wonder why, read on. Assuming you're like the average human adult, that's the number of breaths you take in one 24-hour period. This "average person" takes between 12 and 16 breaths per minute when resting, but more when exercising. (The older I get, the more that number holds meaning for me.)

... ancient Greek and Roman statues were painted? Over the thousands of years since they were created, the paint – which made them very colorful – has worn away, leaving only the bare marble. But there are tiny flecks of original paint found on many of them, leading archaeologists to conclude that the artists didn't just sculpt a statue, they colorized it as well. (Which is a good thing, I would presume.)

... the most successful independent film of all time was one of the Star Wars films? In 1980, George Lucas (born 1944) released The Empire Strikes Back, now the fifth in the nine-film Star Wars series. Following the success of the first (fourth) film, A New Hope, Lucas bankrolled the entire cost of the production – some \$33 million – himself. The movie went on to gross more than half a billion dollars, making it the most successful independent movie. (The Force was with him.)

... childhood dreams are shorter than adult dreams? In addition, about 40 percent of children's dreams are actually nightmares. Doctors say this is probably a coping mechanism. (Considering what kids have to cope with, I tend to agree.)

... you should never eat a floating egg? If you put an egg into a bowl of water and it floats, that means the egg has gone bad. A fresh egg will sink, but a "ripe" one will float. This is because the egg contains an air cell, which expands as the egg ages. A floating egg may be safe to use, but I wouldn't. (Nor should you.)

... a popular board game was invented by an architect? Almost all of us, at one time or another, have played Scrabble, the word game where you use letter tiles drawn at random to spell out words for points. Scrabble was invented in 1933 by Alfred Mosher Butts (1899-1993), a professional architect.

Butts created the game during the Great Depression as a way to help uplift the spirits of people. He originally called the game "Lexiko," then "Criss Cross Words," before settling on the popular name we all know. (And love.)

... who holds the Major League Baseball record for most ejections from games? Normally, when an umpire

ejects a player or manager, it's because they either argued too energetically or said a "magic word" that gets them tossed. But throughout MLB's 150-plus-year history, one player and one manager found themselves getting the heave-ho more than any other. The player is Johnny Evers (1881-1947). Evers was an active player from 1902 to 1917, playing for the Chicago Cubs, Boston Braves and Philadelphia Phillies. A man who was known for his hair-trigger temper, Evers managed to rack up a total of 63 ejections from games during his career. As far as managers go, the ejection record is held by Bobby Cox (born 1941), who managed the Atlanta Braves and the Toronto Blue Jays. Cox was thumbed out of games 162 times during his managerial career. Additional trivia note: The active player with the most ejections is Bryce Harper (born 1992) of the Phillies, with 21 at the time of this writing. The active manager with the most ejections is Bruce Bochy (born 1955) of the Texas Rangers, who's been tossed 86 times

as of the day this is written. (Yer outta here!)

... the word "escalate" did not exist before 1922? As a verb, escalate - which means "to raise" or "to use an escalator" – came into existence with the invention of the escalator, or moving staircase, in the early 20th Century. The escalator itself was invented by the Otis Elevator Company in 1900,

but the first recorded uses of "escalate" as a verb are found no earlier than 1922. (Well, that escalated quickly.)

... camels do not store water in their humps? Rather, it's a special form of fat which holds nutrients that the camel lives on if there is a wide gap between meals or drinks of water. An additional value of the fat in the

hump (or humps) is keeping them cool, as the fat stored in one place helps keep the animal cooler that if the fat was distributed evenly

around the camel's body. (You know what you call a camel with no hump? Humphrey.)

Now ... you know!

CITY OF JEFFERSONVILLE
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §36-66-4(a), this Public Notice constitutes official notice that the City of Jeffersonville, Georgia will conduct a public hearing as to adopting a moratorium on manufactured and non-traditional development and building projects.

The Jeffersonville City Council will hold a public hearing regarding this moratorium proposal on October 14, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Jeffersonville City Hall at 18 North Church Street, Jeffersonville, Georgia 30144, and shall conduct the hearing pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-1. The public is invited to comment. The Jeffersonville City Council will vote on said moratorium on October 14, 2025, immediately after the conclusion of the public hearing, as described above, at the regularly scheduled council meeting, which will begin after the public hearing.

Come Celebrate Ocmulgee EMC's 87th Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Members of Ocmulgee EMC is almost here! It will be the 87th consecutive time that the members and employees have gathered to do the official business meeting of the Ocmulgee Electric Membership Corporation.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, October, 8th, 2025 at the Eastman-Dodge County Recreation Department Complex, located at 1027 Dublin Hwy in Eastman, GA. **The doors open and registration begins at 12 noon with the business meeting beginning promptly at 2!**

This year's registration prizes will be a rechargeable flashlight and a ballcap. Come visit with old friends and meet new ones, while listening to great music presented again by The Chryslers Band.

For a faster registration process... if possible, please bring the perforated bottom tear-off from the front cover of your September issue of Georgia Magazine. PROPER ID IS REQUIRED TO REGISTER!



Ocmulgee Electric Membership Corporation

Ocmulgee EMC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

NOTICE								
The City of Gordon does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the								
(Gordon City Hall) on (10/20/25] at (5:30 PM) and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the								
following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.								
CURRENT 2025 PROPERTY TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY								
City of Gordon	COUNTY WIDE		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	VALUE	Real & Personal	58,000,581	62,723,200	65,268,730	65,349,192	80,429,428	80,217,227
		Motor Vehicles	1,841,250	1,429,490	1,390,810	853,600	1,128,330	848,820
		Mobile Homes	305,945	408,163	444,742	444,742	456,908	514,852
		Timber - 100%						
		Heavy Duty Equipment	484,485	62,360				131,469
		Gross Digest	60,632,261	64,623,213	67,104,282	66,647,534	82,398,614	81,712,368
		Less Exemptions	1,258,380	1,342,478	1,175,118	1,188,975	1,498,005	1,978,142
		NET DIGEST VALUE	59,373,881	63,280,735	65,929,164	65,458,559	80,900,609	79,734,226
	RATE	Gross Maintenance & Operation Millage	13.1210	12.2230	13.1710	12.9330	10.1990	11.5075
		Less Rollback (Local Option Sales Tax)	5.6210	4.1230	5.0710	5.0000	3.3340	3.5475
		TOTAL M&O MILLAGE RATE	7.5000	8.1000	7.9210	7.9330	7.9330	7.9600
	TAX	TOTAL M&O TAXES LEVIED	\$445,304	\$512,574	\$522,225	\$519,283	\$641,785	\$634,684
		Net Tax \$ Increase		\$67,270	\$9,651	(\$2,942)	\$122,502	(\$7,100)
		Net Tax % Increase		15.11%	1.88%	-0.56%	23.59%	-1.11%

NOTICE								
The City of McIntyre does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the McIntyre Resource Center on10/06/2025 at 5:00 pm and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.								
McIntyre Resource Center on 10/06/2025 at 5:00 pm and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.								
CURRENT 2025 PROPERTY TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY								
C I T Y O F M C I N T Y R E	McIntyre		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	V A L U E	Real & Personal	43,932,824	43,990,805	46,582,945	72,602,234	68,143,208	67,558,922
		Motor Vehicles	293,540	188,150	166,450	140,150	141,590	144,780
		Mobile Homes	273,959	281,241	309,723	309,723	301,966	488,170
		Timber - 100%						
		Heavy Duty Equipment						
		Gross Digest	44,500,323	44,460,196	47,059,118	73,052,107	68,586,764	68,191,872
		Less Exemptions	233,188	268,101	250,972	273,319	305,233	476,141
		NET DIGEST VALUE	44,267,135	44,192,095	46,808,146	72,778,788	68,281,531	67,715,731
	R A T E	Gross Maintenance & Operation Millage	6.4850	6.5110	6.6770	6.3380	6.6240	6.7056
		Less Rollback (Local Option Sales Tax)	0.7650	0.7910	0.9570	0.7050	1.2670	1.3406
		NET M&O MILLAGE RATE	5.7200	5.7200	5.7200	5.6330	5.3570	5.3650
	TAX	TOTAL M&O TAXES LEVIED	\$253,208	\$252,779	\$267,743	\$412,146	\$365,784	\$363,295
		Net Tax \$ Increase		(\$429)	\$14,964	\$144,403	(\$46,362)	(\$2,489)
		Net Tax % Increase		-0.17%	5.92%	53.93%	-11.25%	-0.68%

Jeff Foxworthy and Mark Richt

Jeff Foxworthy had a meeting with UGA librarian Toby Graham and his staff one recent morning and called to see if lunch with Mark Richt could be arranged following his session with the library folk. That was easy since there is the greatest mutual admiration society existing between these two men – both famous for different reasons. The former Bulldog coach arranged lunch at his home in the Five Points neighborhood in Athens. Much of what took place could have been expected if you knew anything about them.

“Do we go in the front door?” Jeff asked as we parked. I had been to the Richt spread a couple of times before but did not remember the protocol. About that time, the former coach was at the back door summoning his guests through the garage.

After a friendly embrace, Foxworthy was stopped in his tracks as he entered the kitchen area. There was a post the width of a 2 x 4 in the utility room, which segues into the kitchen, where growing grandchildren have their heights written with dates. Those kids will grow into their teenage years and beyond and can look back someday and remember how tall they were at certain ages. That it is adolescent graffiti does not bother Mark and Kathryn Richt. Grandchildren are allowed to live by their own rules.

Foxworthy was touched. Like everybody else, grandchildren melt the hardest of emotional facades.

You would expect that at Billy Graham’s house. Jimmy Carter’s house. George Bush’s place. Roger Staubach’s kitchen. But what was the kitchen like in Adolph Hitler’s home? Or Joseph Stalin’s?

I learned from a friend a long time ago that grandchildren are never overrated. I have also heard grandparents talk about how nice it would be to skip children and go straight to grandchildren.

We went from the children’s height stud to the kitchen—den where sandwiches were laid out (the coach had pre-ordered), as the conversation ramped up right away with Foxworthy becoming the “grand inquisitor.”

If you know anything about the second best coach in UGA history, you surely expect him to return thanks before the meal. Foxworthy complemented the humility of the blessing with a robust, “Amen.”

He asked the coach about his network television gig with ESPN. He asked about favorite players, his biggest games and most thrilling moments. The comedian was having the time of his



LORAN SMITH

life doing the asking and cheerleading at the same time.

I chose not to ask the comedian if in informal gatherings do people by their disposition and body language say, “Make me laugh!” I can tell you that all you have to do with this great Georgian is steer the conversation to grandchildren, Georgia football, and family and the laughs will erupt like a South Georgia thunderstorm in late July.

That is the beauty of this great talent, he makes you laugh without trying to. He

is just naturally a very funny man. He watches people constantly – the man in the street – and collects material that brings houses down all over the country.

Foxworthy confided that a grandson was at the pool one day and announced that he was getting nature’s call. Jeff told the kid it would be okay for him to, this one time, do what comes naturally. The grandkid then jumped out of the water, took off his swim shorts, and sent a stream into the pool.

Coach Richt wanted us to try his favorite brand of chips, “Ruffles Baked Cheddar & Sour Cream.” All three of us kept reaching for this tasty delight until there was nothing left but crumbs.

When Jeff caught the coach pouring the residue from the chip bag into his mouth, he out a big “whoop,” whipped out his iPhone, and punched out a few notes in his grab-bag—another “You may be a Redneck” joke for a future performance. The man is always thinking, which means

he is always working.

What I appreciate about Jeff is his genuineness. He is about children, grandchildren, the simple things in life. He swooned to the great moments of the coach’s Bulldog career. Most importantly, he appreciates Richt’s underscoring of the values of faith. They are on the same page when it comes to identifying with faith-based principles.

As we drove away, my thoughts suddenly turned to a couple 481 miles away. I feel for what Archie and Olivia Manning are going through.

They must be agonizing with the pressure and criticism of their grandson, Arch.

Life has been good, generally speaking, for America’s first football family except for the controversy surrounding their famous grandson. They hurt for him just like any of us hurt for our own grandchildren. Life can be unfair and when it is, we suffer deeply when grandchildren are affected.

With the 2026 campaigns underway, we must pace ourselves

We’re still early in Georgia’s 2026 campaign cycle, though most viable candidates have been running for months – some longer. Or maybe we’re still late in the last cycle. We still have people demanding we debate the 2020 election results after all.

It all seems to blur together. Mostly, it has. Even many of the official campaigns are really about the next one. It too often seems candidates aren’t running for an office so much as they are placing themselves on a trajectory. Voters ultimately decide if they get chutes or ladders.

The problem with these campaigns is maintaining the voters’ interest over a two or four year span. Campaigns live on engagement. They need constant stimulus to develop voter lists, drive earned media, show changes in internal and external polling, and of course, to fundraise.

Much of this is done well outside the work of any specific campaign. Blurred lines between media, activists, technology platforms, and institutions – government and private – have created an ecosystem whose main output is red meat stimuli for our consumption.

We all tell ourselves we need to change our diet and exercise more. Yet as soon as the kitchen in the outrage cafeteria produces a fresh dish, we return to the buffet line for another heaping serving.

This overindulgence is neither good for us nor for our republic.

We know this, when we stop to think about it. But how do we ween ourselves off of what has essentially become a societal addiction?

First, we must individually accept that we have a problem. We can’t fix the rest of the world if we can’t first fix ourselves.

It’s amazingly easy to see the speck in someone else’s eye while ignoring the plank in our own. Too much of our politics is asserting a problem, then declaring the solution is for the people we don’t like to change while we do nothing.

That’s not an excuse to “both sides” any issue. Ultimately elections are about choosing consequences. While there are still people out there mumbling about “the uniparty” – usually as an excuse to complain about everything while offering no concrete path to solutions – we are at a time when what our major parties represent, and the actions they propose to take, are diverging at a rapid pace.

We’re just over a year from yet another “most important election in our lifetime,” and about eight months from when primary elections will decide our nominees. The outcomes will change the future of



CHARLIE HARPER
GEORGIA POLITICS

our state and our nation. We need to be of clear mind when making the choices of who best will lead us.

Most of the noise produced by the political ecosystem during the next few months will be just that – noise. That’s not to say that the underlying events happening and that will happen are not consequential.

We have people being shot for their political beliefs. We have churches and

synagogues being targeted because of religious beliefs. We have district attorneys who refuse to bring criminal charges and judges who put people charged with violent crimes right back on the street.

Meanwhile, you have “experts” chosen for their political ideology instead of their factual findings being replaced by other “experts” with opposite ideology and findings. We also have those who led political based prosecutions of their political opponents finding themselves prosecuted for more or less the same charges.

Elections are always an exercise where voters try to undo the wrongs of the past while projecting themselves into a better future. Campaigns are now, more or less, about manipulating voters’ views of history while promising the deliverable.

If voters are going to make the best choices in

May and then again in November, they’re going to need to be clear headed, focused, and discerning not only of the problems they want handled on “the other side”, but who is best to make decisions when future events put us in situations we haven’t yet contemplated.

We’ll need to pace ourselves. We must remain engaged so as we’re aware of what’s going on. We also need to shut down our screens and turn off our TV’s when we realize our bellies are getting full of whatever the outrage du jour has been served in plentiful proportions.

These are in fact serious times. We are called upon to make serious choices. They must be made not out of an induced anger, but of clear and sober calculations of what we believe is best to move us forward.

Survey confirms why the great state of Georgia is just so great

It is my obligation as your modest-yet-much-beloved scribe to remind you of important stuff others tend to overlook. Only here will you read that broccoli can be detrimental to your well-being unless you consume large amounts of banana pudding as a cure. Or, that You-Know-Where-Institute of Technology is facing an educational crisis. They are graduating more engineers than there are locomotives available to accommodate them.

I have also been known to extol the virtues of the Great State of Georgia and the unique privilege we have of living here. We not only have the greatest state song in the history of the world, “Georgia on my Mind,” as sung by Ray Charles Robinson, of Albany, Georgia, we also have the oldest state-chartered university in the nation with almost as many first round NFL draft picks (20) as Rhodes Scholars (28.)

Now I share a study from MarketBeat.com, a financial media company in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, that surveyed 3,015 respondents, asking them to name the American-made products in their state that make them beam with state pride.

MarketBeat.com says they provide their clients “financial data, market analysis and news, including information on analyst ratings, dividends and insider trades.” How that fits with asking people what makes



DICK YARBROUGH

them beam with pride about their state isn’t clear.

I assume there is only so much financial data one can analyze in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and someone at MarketBeat.com said, “Hey! I’m getting eye-glaze talking about IPOs and stock splits. Why don’t we find out what makes people beam with pride about their state and publish the results? Maybe we can sucker some modest-yet-much-beloved columnist into writing about it. Then we can all go play in the snow even though it’s July!”

It makes sense if we are going to look at what puffs us up with pride, we should start with South Dakota. After all, that’s where the survey originated and it is in that state where one of the most significant monuments in all the land, maybe in all the world is located. Mt. Rushmore, of course. Over two million visitors a year. American-made. The obvious choice. Right?

Wrong.

It seems South Dakotans prefer Wall Drug Store in Wall, South Dakota, (Pop. 800), a collection of cowboy-themed stores, including a drug store, several restaurants, a gift shop and an 80-foot sculpture of a brontosaurus. How can 60-foot-high granite faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln compete with that?

It is interesting what floats the boat of other states. According to the survey, some choices are obvious. Idaho is proud of its potatoes. Hawaii is proud of its coffee and Florida its orange juice. Maine is proud to be the home of L.L. Bean and Minnesota of General Mills. Michigan says it is the Ford Motor Company about which they beam, which must have General Motors scratching their heads as to

why not them?

Some choices are surprising. Indiana lists as its top choice, Orville Redenbacher’s Popcorn and I say good for them. The day you don’t find a box of Orville Redenbacher’s popcorn in my pantry, report me as seriously missing. A few are a bit uninspiring. Illinois is most proud of chewing gum. New Jersey? A can of Campbell’s soup (tomato, I assume.) Ohio, rubber tires. Chewing gum, soup and rubber tires? All three states are losing population, by the way. If this is what they are most proud of, that may be a big reason why.

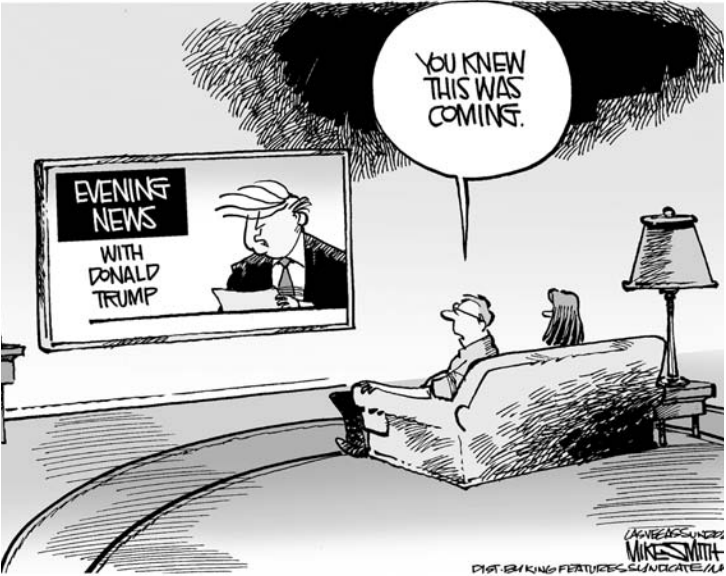
Compare all of the above with our Great State of Georgia. Not surprisingly, the survey shows we are most proud of Coca-Cola. And we should be. It was invented right here in our state in 1886. And it has done pretty well since. More

than 2.2 billion Coca-Colas are served in more than 200 countries and territories each day. That’s a lot to be proud of.

Ranking No. 2 is the sweet Vidalia Onion, which is grown in only 13 counties in Georgia and a portion of seven more. There is nothing like the Vidalia Onion. The Vidalia name is even protected federally, as well as by state law. It is illegal to

call a sweet onion a "Vidalia" if it’s grown outside this area. As if we wouldn’t notice the difference.

Coca-Cola, Vidalia Onions, the greatest state song in the history of the world and the oldest state-chartered university in the nation? Beam with pride, my fellow Georgians. Our cup runneth over. Can I get an amen?



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SWCD announces hydroponics raft system planned

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES JOURNAL POST

SANDERSVILLE – The Central Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), in collaboration with T.J. Elder Middle School, proudly announces the installation of a new Hydroponics Raft System on campus. The project was made possible through grant support and partnerships with the USDA–Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission (GSWCC).

A ribbon-cutting ceremony, held on Aug. 21, marked the official launch of the system, which will give students hands-on experience with innovative agricultural practices.

During the ceremony, T.J. Elder Middle School FFA students, with the guidance of their FFA Advisor, Matthew Shelton, showcased the hydroponics project. Students demonstrated the complete process – from seed to harvest, including sanitizing, drying, weighing, and packaging produce for sale – highlighting both the educational and entrepreneurial benefits of the system.

"The introduction of the hydroponics system will significantly advance our agriculture program by providing our students with real-world experience in soilless growing methods which are becoming more popular in modern agriculture," said Matthew Shelton, Connections Teacher at T.J. Elder Middle School. "Students will also be able to use the system to build on their knowledge of plant science as well as things such as food safety, processing, and business skills."

Eddy Turner, Supervisor of the Central Georgia SWCD, who identified the opportunity to partner with T.J. Elder Middle School on this great project added:

"Our local FFA program, the students and leaders, are outstanding and we are proud to assist in this important project. The greatest benefit of this project is the development of skills and teamwork of the students. This is a project that enables all students to participate, discover their unique skills and apply them in a team environment complementing those of each other to achieve great results. They are learning about planning, planting, growing, harvesting, packaging, marketing and sales. These are business skills that will follow them throughout life."

The Central Georgia SWCD works closely with partners across the state to deliver education and resources that promote sustainable agriculture and natural resource conserva-

tion. With youth education as one of its top priorities, the District sees the hydroponics system as an important step toward preparing future leaders in conservation and agriculture.

The Central Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District is a unit of state government that guides natural resource programs in Bleckley, Dodge, Johnson, Laurens, Twiggs, Washington, and Wilkinson counties utilizing partnerships with local, state, and federal organizations to promote conservation of soil, water, and other natural resources. Through education, outreach, resource and grant opportunities, the District supports farmers, schools, and communities in creating sustainable solutions that benefit both agriculture and the environment.



T.J. Elder Middle School FFA students pictured with Connections Teacher and FFA Advisor, Michael Shelton (left) and SWCD supervisor, Eddy Turner (right)/SPECIAL PHOTO



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Wednesday, October 15th - Saturday, October 18th

For Booth Spaces call 478-595-6821 and leave message.

Qualifying Results for November 4th General Election

Qualifying for the municipal general election was held August 18, 2025 – August 21, 2025 with the following qualifying for the City of Cochran:

- Mayor:** Carla Coley
- City Council District 1, Post 1:** Trecia P. Gardner (Incumbent)
- City Council District 2:** Rufus Veal
- City Council District 3, Post 1:** Dianne Lawson Lester (Incumbent) & Cassandra Stanley

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 21-2-132 and O.C.G.A. § 21-2-9(c), a municipal general election will be held for the City of Cochran on **Tuesday, November 4, 2025**, at the **Jaycee Barn, located 290 Ash Street, Cochran, Georgia**, from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Early Voting
Early voting will begin on **Monday, October 13, 2025** and will end on **Friday, October 31, 2025**. Office hours for early voting are Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

In addition, early voting will be held on **Saturday, October 18, 2025**, and **Saturday, October 25, 2025**, from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

All early voting will take place at **Cochran City Hall**, located at 112 W. Dykes St., Cochran, Georgia (behind the Post Office).

Absentee Voting
To request an absentee ballot by mail, contact the **City Hall Administration Staff**. The last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is **Friday, October 25, 2025**.

Voter Registration
The last day to register to vote in this municipal election is **Monday, October 6, 2025**. Registration is available at the Bleckley County Board of Elections Office, City Hall, or other locations as required by Georgia law.

Submitted by:
Candace Summerall
City Clerk, City of Cochran
Municipal Elections Superintendent

Do I Qualify to be a Foster Parent?

Do I have to be married, rich or have any particular religion to qualify as a foster parent? These are some of the common questions asked by those individuals interested in fostering. The answer is “No”. You do not have to be married, you must be able to support your own family, but you certainly do not have to be rich, nor have a particular religious belief to foster. If you are one of the individuals wanting answers to your question, please call Anna Stone at 478-275-6747. Open your heart to a child in need of a home and a little happiness.

Be A Foster Parent

NOTICE								
The City of Irwinton does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the Irwinton City Hall on October 14th at 6:00pm and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.								
CURRENT 2024 PROPERTY TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY								
C i t y o f I r w i n t o n	COUNTY WIDE		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	V A L U E	Real & Personal	7,463,939	7,449,398	8,221,984	8,230,751	11,879,447	11,934,869
		Motor Vehicles	271,670	248,390	187,070	183,280	179,110	173,700
		Mobile Homes	272,852	294,399	309,789	309,789	297,950	409,181
		Timber - 100%						
		Heavy Duty Equipment						
		Gross Digest	8,008,461	7,992,187	8,718,843	8,723,820	12,356,507	12,517,750
		Less Exemptions	389,220	380,266	368,082	356,674	541,302	755,224
		NET DIGEST VALUE	7,619,241	7,611,921	8,350,761	8,367,146	11,815,205	11,762,526
	R A T E	Gross Maintenance & Operation Millage	9.5150	9.6370	10.7150	11.0680	11.0690	11.4414
		Less Rollback (Local Option Sales Tax)	3.7050	3.8270	4.9050	5.2560	6.7450	7.1204
		NET M&O MILLAGERATE	5.8100	5.8100	5.8100	5.8120	4.3240	4.3210
	TAX	TOTAL M&O TAXES LEVIED	\$44,268	\$44,225	\$48,518	\$48,630	\$51,089	\$50,826
		Net Tax \$ Increase		(\$43)	\$4,293	\$112	\$4	\$4
		Net Tax % Increase		-0.10%	9.71%	0.23%	0.01%	0.01%

NOTICE								
The City of Ivey does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the								
Ivey City Hall on October 13th at 5:30pm and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the								
following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.								
CURRENT 2025 PROPERTY TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY								
City of Ivey	COUNTY WIDE		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	VALUE	Real & Personal	10,935,161	11,246,667	11,836,355	11,673,830	15,003,107	14,403,369
		Motor Vehicles	398,260	328,450	334,920	318,360	279,190	282,620
		Mobile Homes	203,123	240,894	262,336	262,336	398,738	422,895
		Timber - 100%						
		Heavy Duty Equipment						
		Gross Digest	11,536,544	11,816,011	12,433,611	12,254,526	15,681,035	15,108,884
		Less Exemptions	568,404	601,297	474,453	549,947	647,678	706,884
	NET DIGEST VALUE	10,968,140	11,214,714	11,959,158	11,704,579	15,033,357	14,402,000	
	RATE	Gross Maintenance & Operation Millage	11.4780	11.5350	12.6960	13.7230	14.7930	15.8164
		Less Rollback (Local Option Sales Tax)	6.0900	6.1470	7.3860	5.2550	10.3520	11.3664
		NET M&O MILLAGE RATE	5.3880	5.3880	5.3100	5.2550	4.4410	4.4500
	TAX	TOTAL M&O TAXES LEVIED	\$59,096	\$60,425	\$63,503	\$61,508	\$66,763	\$64,089
		Net Tax \$ Increase		\$1,329	\$3,078	(\$1,996)	\$5,256	(\$2,674)
		Net Tax % Increase		2.25%	5.09%	-3.14%	8.54%	-4.01%

Bleckley Co. Legals

October 2,9,16, 23. 2025

TRUC

October 2, 2025

TZS-054
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF TWIGGS
IN RE: ELEVERNE HASTY, DECEASED

All debtors/creditors of the Estate of Elverne Hasty, deceased, of Twiggs County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned

This 12th day of September, 2025
Jason Samuel Moore
1876 Georgia Highway 18 E
Macon, Georgia 31021
September 18, 25, October 2, 9th, 2025

TO: Toi Scott
and to whom it may concern:

Toi Scott has petitioned for **Toi Scott** to be appointed administrator(s) of the estate of **Roy Scott**, deceased, of said county. (The petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond, waiver of reports, waiver of statements, and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. section 53-12-261.)

All interested persons are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be granted. All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and must be filed with the Court on or before **October 13, 2025**.

By virtue of Power of Sale contained in the Deed to Secure Debt from Tommy Lee Smith, Jr., dated March 24, 2020, recorded March 25, 2020, in Deed Book 390, Pages 943-946; as amended in Deed Book 390, Pages 838-843; as further amended in Deed Book 403, Pages 520-525; as further amended in Deed Book 409, Pages 655-662; as further amended in Deed Book 416, Pages 477-481; as may be amended of record, Wilkinson County, Georgia Land Records. Said Deed to Secure Debt being given to secure a Note dated March 25, 2020, totaling the original principal amount of Five Thousand Nine Hundred fifteen and 00/100 (\$5,915.00) Dollars, with interest from date as stated therein, there will be sold by the undersigned at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door at Wilkinson County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in January, being January 7, 2025, the following described property: **All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in the Town of Toombsboro, Wilkinson County, Georgia, containing 0.375 acres, more or less, and more**

TO: Larry L. Hines III
and to whom it may concern:

Larry L. Hines III has petitioned for **Larry L. Hines III** to be appointed administrator(s) of the estate of **Larry L. Hines Jr.** deceased, of said county. (The petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond, waiver of reports, waiver of statements, and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. section 53-12-261.) All interested persons are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be granted. All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and must be filed with the Court on or before **September 29, 2025**.

GAL #274

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FOR THE WEEK 9/28/25**

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BE NOTIFIED FURTHER: All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections. All objections should be sworn to before a notary public or before a probate court clerk, and filing fees must be tendered with your objections, unless you qualify to file as an indigent party. Contact probate court personnel for the required amount of filing fees. If any objections are filed, a hearing will be scheduled at a later date. If no objections are filed, the petition may be granted without a hearing.

Sarah A. Holder
Judge of the Probate Court
By: Bradasia A Mims
Clerk of the Probate Court
Wilkinson County Probate Court 100 Bacon St
Irwinton, GA 31042
478-946-2222

September 11, 18, 25, & October 2, 2025

W25-072
TS # 2024-10926-GA
Notice Of Sale Under Power
Georgia, Wilkinson County Under and by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in that certain Security Deed given by Larry S Bennett, a married person to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Grantor, as nominee for Freedom Mortgage Corporation, its successors and assigns, dated 6/12/2014, and recorded on 6/13/2014, in Instrument No.: --, Deed Book 357, Page 849, Wilkinson County, Georgia records, along with Scrivener's Affidavit recorded 12/16/2024 in Deed Book 00420 and Page 00521, as last assigned to Freedom Mortgage Corporation by assignment recorded on 8/15/2024 in Instrument No.: -- Deed Book 00418, Page 00105, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of \$88,369.00, with interest thereon as provided for therein, there will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door of Wilkinson County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale on 10/7/2025, the following described property: All Those Tracts Or Parcels Of Land Situate Lying And Being In The 331st (RAMAH) G.M. District And In The 5th Land District Of Wilkinson County, Georgia, Being Shown As Lot Number WF-29 And Lot Number WF-30, Section Twenty-Five, Tract "C", In The Subdivision In And At Ivey, Georgia, Known As Holiday Hills Lake Tchukolako Development, According To A Plat Of Survey Recorded In Plat Book 7, Page 106 In The Office Of The Clerk Of Superior Court Of Wilkinson County, Georgia, Said Lots Have Such Size, Shape And Dimensions As Shown On Said Plat, Which By Reference Thereto Is Made A Part Hereof. Less And Except All That Tract Or Parcel Of Land Lying And Being In Land Lot 46 Of The 27th Land District And/Or 331 Georgia Militia District Of Wilkinson County, Georgia, Being More Particularly Described As Follows: Beginning At A Point 39.53 Feet Right Of And Opposite Station 12+00.777 On The Construction Centerline Of Fall Line Freeway On Georgia Highway Project No. FLF-540 (19); Running Thence Northeasterly 154.174 Feet Along The Arc Of A Curve (Said Curve Having A Radius Of 1959.859 Feet And A Chord A Distance Of 154.135 Feet On A Bearing Of N 27° 15' 18.3" E) To The Point 57.84 Feet Right Of And Opposite Station 12+246.514 On Said Construction Centerline Laid Out For Fall Line; Thence S 43° 53' 30.8" E A Distance Of 36.52 Feet To A Point 90.29 Feet Right Of And Opposite Station 12+241.511 On Said Construction Centerline Laid Out For Fall Line; Thence S 18° 18' 47.5" W A Distance Of 73.40 Feet To A Point 92.26 Feet Right Of And Opposite Station 12+220.000 On Said Construction Centerline Laid Out For Fall Line; Thence S 19° 03' 41.0" E A Distance Of 132.83 Feet To A Point 22.84 Feet Left Of And Opposite Station 1+053.647 On Said Construction Centerline Laid Out For South Lakeview Dr.; Thence Northwesterly 52.600 Feet Along The Arc Of A Curve (Said Curve Having A Radius Of 403.107 Feet And A Chord Distance Of 52.563 Feet On A Bearing Of N 51° 36' 00.9" W) To The Point 19.71 Feet Left Of And Opposite Station 1+038.222 On Said Construction Centerline Laid Out For South Lakeview Dr.; Thence N 55° 20' 18.4" W A Distance Of 91.22 Feet Back To The Point Of Beginning, Containing 0.226 Acres, More Or Less.. Said property is commonly known as 103 Lakeview Dr S Ivey, GA 31031. The indebtedness secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Security Deed. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of the sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law, including attorneys' fees (notice of intent to collect attorneys' fees having been given). The entity having full authority to negotiate, amend or modify all terms of the loan (although not required by law to do so) is: Freedom Mortgage Corporation, Attention: Loss Mitigation Department, 11988 EXIT 5 PKWY BLDG 4 FISHERS IN 46037-7939, Telephone No.: (855) 690-5900. Nothing in O.C.G.A. Section 44-14-162.2 shall be construed to require the secured creditor to negotiate, amend, or modify the terms of the security instrument. Said property will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, whether or not now due and payable), 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 other matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above. To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party(ies) in possession of the property is (are) Larry S Bennett, a married person or tenant(s) or other occupants. The sale will be conducted subject to (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code, (2) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed, and (3) any right of redemption or other lien not extinguished by foreclosure. The sale is conducted on behalf of the secured creditor under the power of sale granted in the aforementioned security instrument, specifically being Freedom Mortgage Corporation as Attorney in Fact for Larry S Bennett, a married person. Nestor Solutions, LLC 214 5th Street, Suite 205, Huntington Beach, California 92648, (888) 403-4115, TS # 2024-10926-GA. For sale information, visit: <https://www.nestortrustee.com/sales-information.com> or call (888) 902-3989.

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Tourists and business travelers continued flocking to the Peach State last year, injecting billions into the economy, according to new state numbers from Gov. Brian Kemp.

A record 174.2 million traveled across the country and the globe to visit Georgia in 2024 and spent \$45.2 billion, up 4% from the year before, he said in a statement issued by his office Friday.

The governor traveled to Savannah for a state tourism conference where he revealed the numbers. He credited Georgia's cultural attractions, its communities and its scenery — from coasts to mountains — for a third re-



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September 11, 18, 25, & October 2, 2025

W25-075
State of Georgia
WILKINSON COUNTY
Notice to Debtors and Creditors
RE: ESTATE OF John Riley McNeal Sr,
All debtors and creditors of the Estate of John Riley McNeal Sr, deceased, late of Wilkinson County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the Personal Representative(s) of the estate, according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the Personal Representative(s)

Timothy Lee McNeal
1227 Brooks McNeal Road
Gordon, GA 31031
This September 08, 2025

September 18, 25, October 2, 9, 2025

W25-071
IN THE PROBATE COURT OF WILKINSON COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA
IN RE: ESTATE OF
Carolyn Snead, DECEASED
ESTATE NO. 288
PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION NOTICE

TO: Corey Mack
and to whom it may concern:
Eddie Louis Snead has petitioned for **Eddie Louis Snead** to be appointed administrator(s) of the estate of **Carolyn Snead**, deceased, of said county. (The petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond, waiver of reports, waiver of statements, and/ or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. section 53-12-261.) All interested persons are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be granted. All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and must be filed with the Court on or before **October 6, 2025**.

BE NOTIFIED FURTHER: All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections. All objections should be sworn to before a notary public or before a probate court clerk, and filing fees must be tendered with your objections, unless you qualify to file as an indigent party. Contact probate court personnel for the required amount of filing fees. If any objections are filed, a hearing will be scheduled at a later date. If no objections are filed, the petition may be granted without a hearing.

Bradasia A. Mims
Judge of the Probate Court
Carol Hodnett
Clerk of the Probate Court
Wilkinson County Probate Court
100 Bacon St
Irwinton, GA 31042
478-946-2222

September 11, 18, 25, & October 2, 2025

W25-079
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

All creditors of the estate of WILLIAM BENNIE PRICE JR., late of Wilkinson County, Georgia, deceased, are hereby notified to render their demand to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.

This 22nd day of September, 2025.
Rodney Gordon Price, Executor
171 Dedrick Road
McIntyre, Georgia 31054
By: W. Ryan Frier, Esq.
FRIER & OULSNAM, P.C.

From the fairgrounds to the fields

State of Georgia's agriculture stands tall

Agriculture has been and continues to be the backbone of our state. It feeds our families, fuels our economy and sustains communities from Clinch to Murray County. Fall has officially arrived, and you don't have to look far to see cotton fields turning white, peanuts being dug, pecans beginning to open and families preparing for the Georgia National Fair here in Perry. This is the season when the hard work of our farmers comes full circle, and it's time we pause to celebrate them.

Every October, the Georgia National Fair gives people of all ages the chance to see what agriculture looks like up close. For many young students, it's the first time they will experience livestock shows, meet FFA or 4-H members and start to truly understand our farmers' dedication to growing the food that ends up on their table. It's a celebration and teaching moment to remind us that agriculture is a calling passed down from generation to generation.

This month, the Sunbelt Ag Expo will bring together farmers and innovators from across the Southeast and beyond in Moultrie. Billed as "North America's Premier Farm Show," the expo showcases the latest precision ag equipment, tools and technologies. It's also where farmers trade ideas and find new ways to remain competitive in a changing world. Events like this highlight both the heritage and the future of agriculture in Georgia.

Our farmers and foresters rise before daylight, manage forces outside their control and shoulder the responsibility of feeding our citizens

and sheltering much of the nation. They need freedom to do their jobs and the assurance that their state government will defend them when it matters most.

That's why I was proud to support Senate Bill 144 earlier this year. This legislation is based on the common-sense principle: if a product meets federal safety standards, that should be enough. SB 144, ensures that companies providing agricultural inputs like fertilizers and pesticides won't be dragged into frivolous lawsuits for not adding warnings beyond what the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) already requires.

Why does that matter? Without access to these EPA-approved products, Georgia farmers can't stay competitive. Across the country, we've seen lawsuits weaponized against companies that produce fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, even when those products cleared rigorous federal review. Those lawsuits drive up costs and land squarely on the shoulders of the people growing the cotton in your shirts and the produce on your table.

SB 144 shuts that door, giving certainty to suppliers, stability to farmers and the tools they need to keep producing strong, healthy crops. It's a law rooted in the common-sense principles that Georgia farmers live by every day.

Through the Fiscal Year 2026 state budget and as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, we made significant investments to strengthen agriculture for the next generation. That includes \$7.3 million for



By STATE. SEN. LARRY WALKER

new vocational and ag-ed equipment, so students in more school systems have access to the hands-on tools they need to learn. It also provides over \$50 million in capital projects for the Georgia Department of Agriculture, including upgrades to state labs and critical facility improvements.

We also put new resources into promoting Georgia-grown products and our state's forestry industry. A new pilot program for Georgia-grown wood will open doors for our foresters so their products reach more markets here at home and abroad. These targeted, conservative investments support Georgia jobs, families and communities dependent on agriculture. They prove that state government can make a real difference when it works with the people it serves.

Georgia has been named the No. 1 state to do business for twelve straight years. We can't hold that title without protecting our top industry. That means standing up to nuisance lawsuits, investing in rural infrastructure and workforce pipelines, and recognizing that food security is national security. If our farmers can't produce affordably and reliably, we all lose. SB 144 and our budget investments clearly convey that Georgia stands with

its farmers.

This October, as families enjoy the Georgia National Fair, farmers gather in Moultrie for the Sunbelt Expo, and combines roll across our fields, I hope you'll join me in recognizing how vital agriculture is to our lives.

At the end of the day, agriculture supports faith, family and freedom in all corners of our state. It's about parents teaching their children the value of hard work and neighbors lending a hand when times get tough. We must preserve the American Dream for the next generation, and as your senator, I'll continue to fight for policies that honor those values and keep Georgia growing strong.

Sen. Larry Walker serves as Secretary of the Majority Caucus and Chairman of the Senate Committee on Insurance and Labor. He represents the 20th Senate District, which includes Bleckley, Dodge, Dooly, Laurens, Treutlen, Pulaski and Wilcox counties, as well as portions of Houston County. He may be reached by phone at (404) 656-0095 or by email at Larry.Walker@senate.ga.gov.

For all media inquiries, please reach out to SenatePressInquiries@senate.ga.gov.

Tourism sets new record in state of Georgia

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Tourists and business travelers continued flocking to the Peach State last year, injecting billions into the economy, according to new state numbers from Gov. Brian Kemp.

A record 174.2 million traveled across the country and the globe to visit Georgia in 2024 and spent \$45.2 billion, up 4% from the year before, he said in a statement issued by his office Friday.

The governor traveled to Savannah for a state tourism conference where he revealed the numbers. He credited Georgia's cultural attractions, its communities and its scenery — from coasts to mountains — for a third re-

cord-breaking year in a row.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development said more than 17 million of the visitors were domestic travelers here for business and conventions. Their numbers were up nearly 5%, accounting for \$4.6 billion in spending.

Tourism is the state's second-largest economic contributor, according to the agency.

The influx — more than 15 times the state population of 11.2 million last year — bolstered the bottom lines of hotels, restaurants and recreation and transportation businesses.

Government also took a \$5.1 billion cut, with Kemp saying the state and local tax revenues saved each household an average \$1,285 in taxes.



Gov. Brian Kemp speaks at the Georgia Governor's Tourism Conference in Savannah on Friday, Sept. 26/SPECIAL PHOTO

Trump administration gives one-year extension to Georgia's health insurance

By TY TAGAMI
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Georgia's unique approach to Medicaid was set to expire this month, but the state just got a one-year extension from the federal government.

The Pathways to Coverage program, which requires recipients to prove that they work, volunteer or take classes 80 hours a month, will now run through 2026, with modifications intended to increase the number of people who are covered.

As of May, 23 months into the program, there were 7,463 enrolled, well short of the state's

initial projections of 47,000, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services observed in its extension notice to the Georgia Department of Community Health Tuesday.

To "streamline" compliance and expand coverage, Gov. Brian Kemp's administration asked for and received permission to amend the program. Rather than requiring recipients to report monthly about their work and other qualifying activities, they will report annually.

And two new qualifying categories were added: parents of children under age 6 do not have to work or engage in other activi-

ties if the child is enrolled in Medicaid; and childless, able-bodied adults can meet the requirements by complying with other programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Kemp's office said the extension "further validates" Georgia's approach to Medicaid, which will soon be a requirement in every state under new federal law.

A recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that Georgia spent two-thirds of implementation costs on administration rather than on medical assistance, with more than half of the \$80 million going

to contractors.

Kemp blamed the administration of then-President Joe Biden for driving up costs by obstructing implementation. Kemp praised President Donald Trump.

"Unlike the previous administration which chose to sue, obstruct, and delay, President Trump and his team have worked alongside us to improve Georgia Pathways and ultimately deliver a better program to Georgians who need it most," Kemp said in a statement Thursday. "We look forward to continuing that partnership in the months ahead."

