

## District Attorney determines Gordon auction violated no laws

By CHRISTIAN MCKEARNEY  
Staff Reporter

A social media scuttlebutt surrounded the September surplus property auction held by the city of Gordon.

The auctioneer was City Councilman Rodney Evans, despite the fact that Evans doesn't hold an auctioneer's license from the state of Georgia.

One of the items in the auction, a backhoe, was not listed in the original legal ad that ran in the Times-Journal-Post prior to the auction. That backhoe ultimately was purchased at the auction for \$500 by a man named Patrick Bullock, who is the son of city council member Barbara Towles. Towles later delivered the payment for the backhoe to city hall on behalf of her

son. According to a source familiar with the auction, the backhoe "was really old and in really bad shape."

Regardless, the optics were not great, and the chatter began. Someone eventually shared their concerns with Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit District Attorney Wright Barksdale, and Barksdale called in the GBI "to look into whether the laws of Georgia were

violated as a result of the auction," according to the district attorney's office.

Two months passed, and Wrightsdale reached his decision. The Gordon City Council violated no laws during the auction process, he concluded. Nor did any of its council members. As it turns out, according to the district attorney, Evans did not need an auctioneer's license to lead the auction,

"because he did not meet the definition of 'auctioneer,'" wrote Barksdale. State law defines an auctioneer as "any person who, for a fee, commission or any other valuable consideration or with the intention of receiving the same."

"Councilman Evans did not receive a financial benefit or consideration for his actions," according to Barksdale. "In fact, his in-

tention by conducting the auction was motivated by saving the city money."

Meanwhile, Barksdale's ruling about the backhoe is more nuanced and wonky. Despite not being listed among the nine auction items in the legal ad, the backhoe had "an estimated value of \$500 or less," which

**GORDON AUCTION**  
Continued on page 2



Southeast Crescent Regional Commissions (SCRC) recently named Twiggs County as the recipient of a \$1 million SEID grant/SPECIAL PHOTO

## Twiggs County named recipient of \$1 million SEID grant

By CAROLINE WEATHERSBY  
Staff Reporter

The Twiggs County Board of Commissioners announced last week that the county has been named recipient for a \$1,000,000 grant by the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC). Chairman Ken Fowler made the announcement at a Dec. 4 commissioners meeting, directing all credit for the grant towards County Administrator Wilmarie Liz.

According to the SCRC webpage, the State Economic and Infrastructure Development (SEID) grant is designed with the purpose of "fostering growth, strengthening infrastructure, and enhancing workforce development."

**TWIGGS BOC**  
Continued on page 2



### SNAPSHOTS: WCES STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN "TWIN FOR A DAY"

Wilkinson County Elementary School last week held its holiday theme days, and Tuesday was "Twin for a Day Day." Included were two stylish young turtle doves/SPECIAL PHOTOS

## Twiggs Co. Recreation Department 10U Football Team places 3rd in Gray Bowl



The Twiggs County Recreation Department's 10U team snagged 3rd place at this year's Gray Bowl in Jones County/SPECIAL PHOTO

By CAROLINE WEATHERSBY  
Staff Reporter

The Twiggs County Recreation Department wrapped up football season recently with a third place finish at the 2025 Gray Bowl.

Held on the weekend of Nov. 22 and 23, the Gray Bowl is an annual tournament hosted by the Jones County recreation department at its recreation center. The Twiggs County Cobras were honored to be invited to and compete in this year's tournament.

Twiggs's 10U team, for

ages 10 and under, finished 3rd place after defeating Jones County on their own turf. The game was held Sunday morning, and in

ages 10 and under, finished 3rd place after defeating Jones County on their own turf. The game was held Sunday morning, and in



## Boutique shop in Cochran to close storefront at the end of the year to open up mobile unit



Bay & Co. will close their storefront to open a mobile unit  
/CAROLINE WEATHERSBY

By CAROLINE WEATHERSBY  
Staff Reporter

Bay & Co. is closing its doors in Cochran at the end of the year as they begin transitioning full-time into a mobile and online business.

Bay & Co. Boutique and Tanning is located on Cherry Street in downtown and is part clothing store, with a variety of stylish clothes, accessories and decor, and part tanning salon.

The shop is owned by 20-year-old entrepreneur Paisley Martin, a Milledgeville native, who, after being inspired by her father who used to own Cochran Motor Speedway, decided to open up shop in Cochran,

calling the city "a home away from home."

On Nov. 25, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held to honor the new business, which coincided with the Cochran-Bleckley Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours, but despite the excitement surrounding the recent celebration, Martin says the storefront will close on Dec. 31, shifting into a travel-boutique which she will take across the state to different vending events.

"That's where my heart is - to go on the road full time," she said.

A major contributor in Bay & Co.'s success, accord-

**BAY & CO**

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## GORDON AUCTION

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means that the city council had the right to sell it "in the open market without advertisements and without the acceptance of bids," according to Barksdale's ruling.

In terms of any nepotism issues, Barksdale found no legal wrongdoing.

"Georgia law did not prevent Patrick Bullock, the son of a councilwoman, from purchasing surplus property," Barksdale wrote. "The law is silent as to whether family members of elected officials or city employees are prevented from purchasing surplus

property sold or auctioned by municipalities."

Barksdale concluded that no laws were violated, and "the only thing that the city council of Gordon are guilty of beyond a reasonable doubt is failing to appreciate and recognize how their actions created the appearance of impropriety."

"I pray they will be more (cautious) and thoughtful moving forward," Barksdale wrote.

Evans and Towles both lost their re-election bids in November and currently are in their final month of serving on the council.



With the football season officially wrapped up, the Twiggs County Recreation Department will shifting gears towards other sports like basketball/SPECIAL PHOTOS

## 10U FOOTBALL

Continued from page 1

the end, Twiggs came out on top, the final score totaling 20-7.

Ahead of Twiggs in the tournament is Bibb County, which finished in second place, and Warren County, which finished first.

Twiggs Recreation Director Steven Wright expressed pride in the team's performance, not just during the weekend tournament, but during the overall season. The Cobras "started off incredibly strong," he noted, adding, "I'm sure the parents are very proud of them."

Wright said, "They had an excellent season," scoring wins over Wilkinson

and Wheeler Counties.

Twiggs kicked off football season back in September, with a dominant 28-0 victory over Washington County in their first game, which set the tone for a successful season throughout the fall.

He also directed credit toward team coaches that led the boys to many victories throughout the season, including Coach Marc, Coach Ford, Coach Jay and Coach Bimp.

With the football season wrapped up, just in time for the winter, the Twiggs rec department has started shifting gears toward other, indoor sports with the basketball season starting this past Saturday.



Bay & Co. in Cochran will close their storefront at the end of the year to open a mobile unit /CAROLINE WEATHERSBY

## BAY &amp; CO

Continued from page 1

ing to Martin, is her family. Many of whom have watched the company grow since its inception. It's with her uncle's help that Martin was able to convert a travel trailer into a mini-boutique. At the ribbon cutting ceremony, it was her son who cut the bow.

She highlighted her mom especially, who operates as her business accountant.

"I really couldn't do it without her," said Martin. "Anytime I need her to open for me, she opens for me. Anytime I need her to go with me [somewhere], she does it. She's my right hand man - or my right hand woman!"

Martin originally opened the Bay and Co. storefront in May, alongside her online shop with the same name. Though she's hitting the road, Martin assures the online shop will remain open.

From now until Dec. 31 when the storefront closes, Bay & Co. will be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

## TWIGGS BOC

Continued from page 1

construction might cause disruption to the business, including trucks that may need to be rerouted. With the commissioners' approval, Howell would be able to make these negotiations concrete. Commissioners approved his request, and negotiations will likely continue for the next few months.

"Whatever it takes to get this project going, we ought and need to do it," said Chairman Fowler. "This is going to be a significant amount of revenue for Twiggs County, Georgia."

Commissioners also approved three road repair contracts, including an emergency repair on Field Road in the amount of \$4,990, additional patching on Field Road in the amount of \$3,014.60 and on Perry Road in the amount of \$4,995.88.

The board also approved the amount of \$2,750 to be paid to Turner Construction for contracting work done on the fire station.

During the meeting, a conversation about billing was had among the commissioners. Turner Construction recently sent the county a bill in the amount of \$7,300, including a hefty \$3,000 rental fee. Commissioners were previously quoted \$5,800, however after commissioners requested an itemized bill for documentation, the county received the \$7,300 bill.

Commissioners indicated they will speak with the company to discuss the additional charges before approving payment for the rest of the bill, but in the time being, approved a \$2,750 portion to be paid while the bill is being worked out.

Also recognized at the meeting is Development

Authority Executive Director Judy Sherling, who invited Twiggs County and the city of Jeffersonville to apply for the University of Georgia's Archway Connected Resilient Communities (CRC) Program. The goal of the program is to help rural communities expand local development opportunities, identifying areas where businesses could thrive.

All it would take, according to Sherling, is sending out 8-10 representatives from the county to meet with UGA experts. The program is completely free, she added.

Jeffersonville resident Quartz Durham, along with Planning and Zoning Director Monte Bloodworth, approached the board to request a rezoning of Durham's 1.2 acre property on Maulk Thompson Road, to allow for a body shop where Durham can repair his vehicles.

Commissioners conferred with the county attorney whether or not Durham's property needed rezoning.

Howell told commissioners that if Durham only intended to work on his own vehicles, then technically, he wouldn't need to rezone the property. He explained that rezoning would only be needed in the future if he intended to use the shop to work on other vehicles as a business. Then, said Howell, the property would need to be rezoned from residential to commercial.

In the end, the decision was made to leave the property as residential.

In other county business, Paul White was approved for reappointment to the Board of Assessors, and a holiday schedule, the same as the state's, was set for 2026.

During public com-

ments, farmer and home-steader Karen Milbee took to the podium to plead with county commissioners about starting an animal control service.

Milbee, who owns property in both Twiggs and Bibb Counties, explained to the board that she works with Bibb County Animal Services in seizures and relinquishing of livestock, caring for and rehoming over 750 animals in the last six years.

"During this time frame, we've had severe animal problems where we have dogs coming on to my property and slaughtering animals. I have begged for help over and over again. Not only am I having to help these animals, I'm having to bury animals because we have no animal control," she said, tearfully. "This week was another incident."

Milbee indicated that, though she has spent much of her life here, raising not only her children but her grandchildren, she's considering leaving if issues can't be resolved.

"The stress and anxiety that I have been under by not being able to properly care for what I am trying to do here and make a difference is unreal. I'm paranoid now, watching my cameras, scared that these same dogs are going to get

off the road that they're on and come back and finish slaughtering what I got left. It's horrible. It is horrible to live this way."

Milbee rehoused many of her own personal animals because of the ordeal. Recently, she gave up all of her pets except for her chickens.

"I can't even do that, you guys. I wake up Monday morning to my chickens being slaughtered. A baby cat being slaughtered... Two days later, they're back again coming to take what I got left, which isn't much at this point. Am I going to have anything left?"

She expressed that she is not the only one struggling with animal attacks in the community, and that many others are struggling as well. She's previously brought up the concern with the sheriff's office, and though she agrees they have "stepped up," their resources are limited.

Milbee told commissioners she created an outline that she would soon send to the commissioners, detailing a plan that might serve as a good start.

"We need to consider some sort of animal control for this county...." she said. "We're not only failing our community. We're failing these animals as well."



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# Dozing on the couch during a timeless Christmas special

Now that the halls have been decked, the mistletoe hung and the tree is fully trimmed, it's time to start another annual tradition — binge watching Christmas programs.

Fifty-six years ago this week, the holiday classic "Frosty the Snowman" first hit the airwaves. The 25-minute cartoon, based on the 1950 Gene Autry song of the same name, was the first seasonal show watched in my house this year. About half an hour is all I can seem to stay awake after I sit down on the couch. Yes, I've reached that stage of fatherhood where I near-instantly fall asleep when I try to watch television.

So don't ask me if I've

seen the latest buzz-worthy program, but I have seen the intro seven times.

"Frosty" is probably the last of the great network television Christmas specials, with "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and the original production of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" all debuting within the previous eight years. After the 1960s, small screen producers seemingly lost the ability to capture the magic and meaning of the season, though Mr. T made an impressive street Santa in 1984. He wasn't the jolly old elf people were used to. I pity the fool that doesn't believe in Christmas.

Speaking of the Grinch, the older I get the more I

## THE NEW SOUTHERN DAD



By KYLE DOMINY

understand this beloved character. The Grinch didn't hate Christmas, he liked peace and quiet, and we all know that if there are

children around, there is little peace on Dec. 25, at least while they are awake.

As for Christmas movies, let's set the record straight:

"Die Hard" is a holiday story, and is best watched late on Christmas Eve while trying to put on the finishing touches, placing presents around the tree and doing the work that Santa Claus will take all the credit for. It is not quite Christmas without bloodying your knuckles on a present assembly project and stifling your foul language by stuffing one of Santa's cookies in your mouth. Yippee ki-yay ...

Many people flock to a production of "The Nutcracker" to mark the holidays. This timeless ballet essentially tells the tale of two spoiled children and a broken toy. The two-hour show could be cut dramatically if the father character would learn to control his

unruly son.

I've been workshopping an update to "The Nutcracker." It's set in a trailer park and instead of a rat king there's a bunch of raccoons. It will be a short show for all the dads that have trouble staying awake. I'll let you know when the casting call goes out. Rednecks need ap-

ply. Whatever you watch this Christmas season, I hope you have a couch full of folks to watch it with. The most wonderful time of year is often the most stressful, and moments with family can be few and far between. I'll let you know what movie or television show I watch next with mine, and I promise I'll try to stay awake this time.

## DID YOU KNOW...?

### Did two airline CEOs settle a dispute with an arm wrestling match?

Dear Santa,

To tell you the truth, I don't want anything special for Christmas this year. I know, based on my past history, that's pretty amazing, but at my age... Well, I already have everything I need and a great deal of what I want.

So if you had anything specific for me, please leave it under the tree of a deserving soul who could use it better than I. If you stop by anyway, I'll leave out the milk and cookies.

Love, Jack

By JACK BAGLEY  
For Georgia Trust For Local News

Time for that honored tradition: my annual letter to Santa Claus!

*Did you know...*

... you may have practiced stultiloquence? We all have, I'd guess. Stultiloquence means silly or senseless talk, or babble. (Sounds like the language of most politicians, if you ask me.)

... when a French queen got married, her husband wasn't even there? Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) was part of an arranged marriage to the man who would become King Louis XVI of France (1754-1793) as a way to seal the union between her native Austria and France. The wedding took place on April 19, 1770, but Louis wasn't there; rather, Marie's brother Ferdinand (1754-1806) stood in for the groom in a proxy wedding in Vienna. Louis and Marie held a ceremonial wedding on May 16 of that year at Versailles. (But which day was their anniversary?)

... a president of the United States was an honored guest at a circus wedding? On Feb. 10, 1863, circus dwarf "General Tom Thumb" (born Charles Sherwood Stratton, 1838-1883) married another circus dwarf, Lavinia Warren (1842-1919) in a production staged for the "Greatest Show on Earth" by circus promoter Phineas T. Barnum (1810-1891). More than 2,000 guests attended the wedding, including President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), his wife Mary (1818-1882), and Lincoln's entire cabinet. The ceremony was dubbed "The Fairy Wedding" by the press. (No word on what the couple called it.)



In 1992, Stevens Aviation's CEO, Kurt Herwald, challenged Southwest Airlines' CEO, Herb Kelleher, to an arm wrestling match after both airlines were using the same slogan, "Just Plane Smart." Herwald won but gave the slogan to Kelleher in exchange for a \$5,000 donation to Herwald's favorite charity/SPECIAL PHOTO

comment on this.)

... the kiss at the end of a wedding ceremony has a historical precedent? People who study such things have said that the kiss comes from ancient Rome, where tradition had a kiss used to sign a contract. (Hard to take that back.)

... some of the sets of a classic science fiction movie are now a tourist destination? In the desert of Tunisia, in Africa, the sets of the planet Tatooine from Star Wars (1977) were built, used, and then abandoned after filming was complete. But the desert preserved the sets, and now they are a popular tourist destination in that country. You can even stay the night in Luke Skywalker's home. (The Force may, indeed, be with you.)

... the movie Jaws inspired a widespread fear and hunting of sharks? The 1975 film, which (if you didn't already know) was about a monster great white shark attacking swimmers at a New England beach

resort, caused such a backlash against sharks that they have been intensely hunted ever since. Several nations have, in fact, enacted steps to protect sharks. Additional trivia note: In a stunning twist of irony, the man who wrote the novel Jaws, Peter Benchley (1940-2006), was a strong supporter of shark conservation.

... a World War II UFO incident was kept from the public by orders at the highest levels? It was not until 2010 that documents were released showing that British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874-1965) ordered a report of a UFO incident from the early 1940s involving an unidentified pilot of the Royal Air Force to be sealed. Churchill said he was concerned the report would create a mass panic, and made the report secret after conferring with General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969). The report itself has still not been released. (The Little Green Men were pleased.)

Now... you know!

#### NOTICE REGARDING THE PROPOSED 2026 TWIGGS COUNTY BUDGET; NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2026 TWIGGS COUNTY BUDGET; AND NOTICE OF SPECIAL CALLED MEETING ON DECEMBER 17, 2025

Twiggs County notifies the public that the Proposed 2026 Budget for the County is available at the Twiggs County Board of Commissioners Office located at the Twiggs County Georgia Courthouse, 425 Railroad Street, Jeffersonville, Georgia 31044.

Twiggs County provides further notice that a public hearing on the Proposed 2026 Budget will be held during the special called meeting of the Board of Commissioners on December 17, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. at the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, 1st Floor, Twiggs County Courthouse, 425 Railroad Street, Jeffersonville, Georgia 31044.

Any person wishing to be heard on the Proposed 2026 Budget may appear at this public hearing.

	2026 Proposed
Revenues:	
Property Taxes	\$ 5,947,074
Sales Taxes	\$ 524,053
All Other Taxes	\$ 1,341,385
Court Fees/Fines	\$ 1,442,400
Fees	\$ 139,409
Grants	\$ 662,956
Other	\$ 1,497,288
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 11,554,565</b>
Expenditures:	
Unallocated	\$ 890,000
Elected Officials	\$ 131,746
Administration	\$ 588,075
Registrars	\$ 252,958
Tax Commissioner	\$ 386,891
Tax Assessor	\$ 438,080
Board of Equalization	\$ 8,887
Clerk of Superior Court	\$ 315,172
Magistrate	\$ 207,391
Probate	\$ 351,097
Solid Waste/Recycling	\$ 454,596
Sheriff	\$ 4,746,512
Coroner	\$ 76,806
Fire & Rescue	\$ 939,175
Water-Payroll	\$ 122,956
EMA	\$ 172,906
Road Department	\$ 1,149,764
Direct Assistance	\$ 399,922
Senior Center	\$ 94,187
Transit	\$ 96,142
County Agent	\$ 50,615
Buildings	\$ 300,598
Planning/Zoning	\$ 58,123
Recreation	\$ 105,581
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ (12,338,179)</b>
<b>Net General Fund</b>	<b>\$ (783,614)</b>
Other Funds	
E911 Fund Revenues	207,186
E911 Fund Expenditures	(207,186)
Transfer to/from General Fund from E911	\$ 0
Water Fund Revenues	187,943
Water Fund Expenditures:	
GEFA Loans	125,424
Other Expenditures	113,349
<b>Total Water Fund Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 259,131</b>
Transfer to/from General Fund from Water	(71,188)
Amount Budgeted to Transfer from TIA to Gen Fund	\$ 400,000
Amount Needed from Gen. Fund Reserves to Cover Shortage	\$ 454,802
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$ (0)</b>

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO ADOPT 2026 TWIGGS COUNTY GEORGIA BUDGET

Twiggs County provides notice that pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 36-81-6(a), the Board of Commissioners shall adopt the 2026 Budget for Twiggs County at its regular meeting on December 18, 2025 at 6 p.m. at the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, 1st Floor, Twiggs County Courthouse, 425 Railroad Street, Jeffersonville, Georgia 31044.

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## The Grand Ole Opry

The Grand Ole Opry has just reached the century mark, bringing forth a flood of memories of this grand event, which dates to 1925 when its inaugural show was known as the "WSM Barn Dance."

I grew up listening to the Opry on Saturday nights and never thought there would ever be an opportunity to find my way to Nashville. And, heaven for-bid, that there would ever come a time when I would be invited backstage and meet some of the stars I had listened to over the years.

A longtime friendship with Whispering Bill Anderson became my nexus to many happy evenings backstage at the Opry, both at Opryland and a couple of times at the old Ryman Auditorium where the Opry had its beginning.

With Georgia playing Vanderbilt every year in football and basketball, my

travelogue in the late fifties was pretty much confined to Atlanta and Nashville when it came to sports and entertainment.

My first trip to Music City was to see Georgia play Vanderbilt, in the late '50s, best I recall. My mentor and friend Dan Magill, Georgia Publicist, got me a press box ticket, representing the student newspaper, The Red & Black.

From that austere beginning, I have made many excursions to Nashville for a variety of reasons. It has always been an attractive city with fine restaurants, an invigorating history, and a vibrant atmosphere. I remember spending time at "Printer's Alley," which is where numerous publishing houses were located.

The Alley also became a nightclub district, with several bars and restaurants. You go to one of the most popular establishments

such as the Carousel Club, where the owner, Boots Randolph, at some point would get up unannounced and perform his signature saxophone number, "Yakety Sax." Those country music stars were like your next-door neighbors. They were stars who didn't act like they were stars.

Kay Russell, the wife of Fred Russell, the dean of Southern sports-writers, played tennis with Minnie Pearl for years and often had lunch with this doyenne of Nashville. One of Georgia's biggest supporters, Claude Cook from Lumber City, brought Eddy Arnold to his farm to quail hunt and to see the Bulldogs play between the hedges. When he introduced me to this country music icon, who sold over 85 million records and is ranked by Billboard as the No. 1 country artist of all time, I was overwhelmed. I listened to Eddy Arnold on a country station, WJAT out of Swainsboro, on a noon show sponsored by Purina and couldn't believe I was in

a relaxed conversation with him.

With Georgia playing Vandy in Nashville in October several years, I watched the World Series backstage at Opryland with Roy Acuff, Little Jimmy Dickens, Hank Snow, and others. The seventies were the years of Big Red Machine, the Cincinnati Reds, who were a favorite with the Opryland fraternity. With Cincinnati being only 135 miles from Nashville, the Reds were like a hometown team to the Opry brotherhood.

It was always fun to play Kenny Rogers's golf course in Colbert and see him and Marianne around town. It is nice that Luke Bryan hangs out in Athens for home football game weekends, and it was a signature moment to enjoy breakfast prepared by Trisha Yearwood for my wife and me a couple of years ago and talk about small-town living with her and Garth, along with her sister, Beth, and Beth's husband, John Bernard.

On a trip to Nashville in



**LORAN SMITH**

the eighties, Bill Anderson took me to Roy Acuff's home on the Opryland grounds and left me with "The King of Country Music," while he ran an errand. We sat on Acuff's porch for an hour or so with him talking about his life in country music.

He was grateful for the good life, having grown up in simple times in Maynardville, Tenn., which is 26 miles north of Knoxville. He discoursed with abiding respect for country music and the icons he was affiliated with at the Opry. Most

of all he lamented the loss of his wife, Mildred Louise. The humility of that conversation made one aware that losing a loved one brings about painful regret regardless of a person's station in life.

A favorite story that I've always enjoyed was from a good friend, Gus Manning, whose love of country music was unsurpassed. Gus was the longtime supervisor of football and basketball tickets at the University of Tennessee. He was fascinated with the long lines that developed at the old Ryman Auditorium and went to see the lady who managed tickets for the Opry. He began asking questions about how she handled certain requests and issues. She stopped him and said in her mountain vernacular, "Mr. Manning we don't have no tickets problems here at the Opry 'cept them what sits on comps."

There has to be a country title somewhere in her down-home verbiage.

## Merry Christmas to 25 million kids across America from The Dells

I got the opportunity to take an unexpected vacation last week. A friend's unused reservation couldn't be moved to a new date but the cruise line would allow for a new traveler's name to be substituted. I spent last week in various spots in the Caribbean, blissfully tuning out the political noise of the day.

Now I'm back. The unseasonable warm and dry weather I left seems to be on a vacation of its own. I was only reminded of the current season when leaving a north Florida restaurant upon my return and being a bit surprised when the hostess gave me the exit salutation of "Merry Christmas!"

No, this won't be the annual installment ranting against those who rant against "Happy Holidays," though I will note Hanukkah begins on Sunday evening, Dec. 14. Our friends in Israel will celebrate their first Hanukkah in peace – tenuous though it is, as it always is there – since 2022.

Instead, today we're go-

ing to talk about gift giving. Tis the season, and all.

One of the more substantive news stories from last week came from the business section. "Billionaires" Michael and Susan Dell have decided to give away more than 6 billion dollars to America's children.

The gift is unique in that it's not a pledge to give away the money when they die and thus no longer need it. Many of the uber-wealthy give themselves awards and dinners when they very publicly sign away their estates – often to foundations run by heirs.

It's also not to an NGO or other nebulous bureaucracy that pledges to address children's issues while perpetuating itself on its newfound capital. Nor is it to get a wing named after themselves on a prominent building nor research institution bearing the Dell name.

Instead, they're going to give \$250 directly to as many as 25 million children under the age of 10 to start their first investment



**CHARLIE HARPER**  
GEORGIA POLITICS

account. The only stipulations appear to be that the child be a U.S. born citizen, both the child and parents have valid social security numbers, and the child live in a zip code where the median income is less than \$150,000 – about three quarters of the country.

This gift is designed to scale up a program in the recently passed reconciliation package that authorizes \$1,000 to children born after Jan. 1 of this year and will continue with current funding through 2028. Pro-

ceeds will be invested in stock based index funds so that children can be invested – literally – in our capitalist market system.

The hope is that more will pay attention to these accounts and learn from the ups and the downs. Markets, after all, involve risks. America was built and still thrives by the risk takers.

For years, even decades, we've been fed a steady diet of stories about wealth gaps.

Too many now believe that there is no intersection of Wall Street and Main Street.

Some would have us believe you can't even get from one to the other.

The hope for both the "Trump Accounts" and those made possible by the Dells is that these accounts are just initial investments. They want parents, friends, employers, and eventually the children themselves to add to the accounts over time.

They want the lessons of patience and compounding to take hold before con-

sumerism takes over. Our instant gratification society has normalized getting a \$10 fast food meal delivered for \$30, and prioritized that over saving even a small fraction of each paycheck to first fund rainy day expenses, and eventually to build a real wealth nest egg.

America is the wealthiest country on the planet. Americans are among the worst developed nations when it comes to financial literacy. These two facts cannot peacefully coexist for an extended period of time.

We have dedicated groups and networks who wish to make our country a socialist nation. They love using terms like "late stage capitalism" to pretend that the fall of capitalism is near.

Michael Dell is famous for realizing while in college that he had the opportunity and skills to hustle a bit, and sell some computers from his dorm room. Too many on campuses these days would spend entire sem-

inars explaining why and how he's somehow the bad guy in American culture. Note I put the term "billionaires" in scare quotes above because these very folks now use his hard earned title as a pejorative.

A very select few Americans will ever become billionaires. Every one of us has that path open to us, though few will even select it. Those who do will need skill, luck, timing and even a bit of help along the way to get anywhere close. But all of us have the opportunity to save a little, invest a little, and defer unnecessary expenses to put a bit aside for ourselves.

It is hard? Anything worth doing is. Sometimes, the hardest part is just getting started or even knowing where to start.

Michael and Susan Dell are taking care of that for millions of kids, as a no-strings gift. Even the biggest haters of billionaires should be able to appreciate that.

## You better watch out: Santa Claus has joined the information age



**DICK YARBROUGH**

wish list – Frosty the Snowman, an elf, Bing Crosby – I don't care."

"Your call is very important to us. Currently, all of our representatives are busy serving other customers. Please stay on the line. Your wait time is currently six hours."

"Six hours! You've got to be kidding! In the past, I just called up and talked to whoever answered the phone. It looks like you have automated everything now. I'm sure it saves you money but it is very impersonal and unbecoming of Santa Claus. I would strongly suggest that you..."

"Your call is very important to us. Currently, all of our representatives are busy serving other customers. Please stay on the line. Your wait time is currently six hours."

"This is ridiculous! I have a great mind to..."

"Did you know you can place your orders and track

them by going to our website: [www.santaclausworkshopattheorthpole.org](http://www.santaclausworkshopattheorthpole.org),

backslash, 'good little boys and girls,' forward slash, 'Ho. Ho. Ho.' Or you can find us on Twitter at 'hash tag, dash away, dash away all.'

"I think I'll just forget the whole thing. All I wanted was..."

"Click! "Hello, my name is Siddharth. To whom am I speaking?"

"Thank goodness! I am finally talking to a real person! Listen, Siddharth, I need to check on..."

"This call may be monitored for quality assurance purposes."

"That's okay by me, Siddharth, but all I want is..."

"May I have the last four digits of your Social Security number, please?"

"Yeah, sure but all I want is..."

"Have you shopped with us before?"

"Well, kinda. I used to sit on Santa Claus's knee every year and tell him what I wanted for Christmas, if you consider that shopping. Every year, I asked for a pony. I always wanted a pony but I never got one and I am hoping this might be the year that Santa Claus..."

"Will you be paying for your purchase by credit card?"

"I haven't decided yet if I am going to order anything, Siddharth. As I mentioned, the reason I am calling is I would like to know if..."

"I see here that you don't have one of our Santa Claus Affinity Cards. You might wish to know that for every \$50 you spend, you accumulate points that can be used to purchase airline tickets, discounts at the gasoline pump or a jet ski. May

I send you a card, Mr. Yardburger?"

"It's 'Yarbrough,' Siddharth, and the answer is 'no.' All I want is..."

"It has been a pleasure talking to you, Mr. Yardburger. Please stay on the line for a short customer survey that will enable us to serve you even better in the

future. Have a nice day and thank you for choosing Santa Claus at the North Pole."

Click!

"Hello? Hello? He's gone! Rats! And I never even got to speak to Santa Claus! All I wanted to know was if this was the year when I might finally get my ^#@!# pony!"

## TIMES JOURNAL POST

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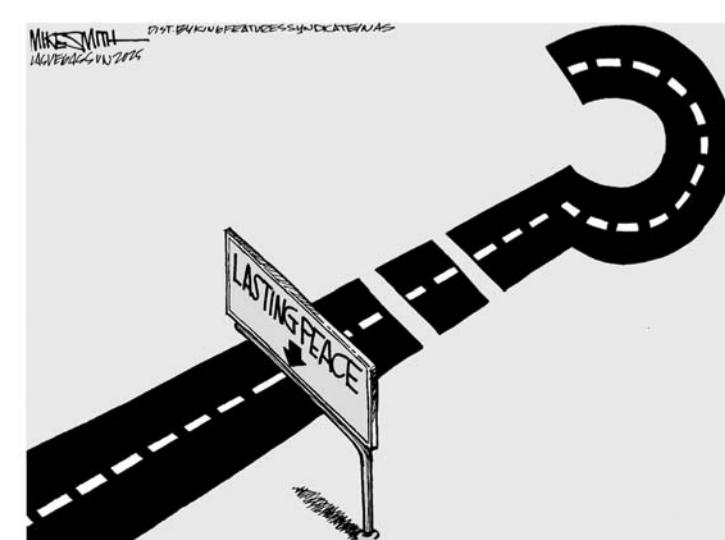
In-county: \$31

Out-of-county: \$37

Senior in-county: \$29

Out-of-state: \$41

[www.timesjournalpost.com](http://www.timesjournalpost.com)



## Legals

## Bleckley Co. Legals

**C25-133**  
NOTICE OF INTENT TO VOLUNTARILY  
DISSOLVE  
CENTRAL GEORGIA BANKING COMPAN  
NY

Notice is given that a notice of intent to dissolve CENTRAL GEORGIA BANKING COMPANY, a Georgia corporation with its registered office at 112 East Beech Street, P.O. Box 539, Cochran, Georgia, 31014, will be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 14-2-1403.1 of the Georgia Business Corporation Code.

CENTRAL GEORGIA BANKING COMPANY requests that all persons with claims against it provide a written notice of the claim to it at James Bates Brannan Groover, LLP, 1 Press Place, Suite 200, Athens, Georgia, ATTN: Erin S. Woodside. The written notice must set forth the following: the basis of the claim in detail, the dollar amount of the claim, the claimant's current business address, and the claimant's current telephone number. Notice is given that, except for claims that are contingent at the time of the filing of, or that arise after, the filing of the notice of the intent to dissolve, a claim against the Corporation, not otherwise barred, will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim is commenced within two years after publication of this notice, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 14-2-1407(b) of the Georgia Business Corporation Code.

December 4, 11, 2025

**C25-135**  
IN THE PROBATE COURT OF BLECKLEY COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF

JIMMIE LEE BLACKSHEAR.

DECEASED

ESTATE NO. 2025819

PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE

TO: NICOLE HORNEDENT and to whom it may concern:

VICTORIA BLACKSHEAR FREENEY has petitioned for

VICTORIA BLACKSHEAR FREENEY to be appointed administrator(s) of the estate of JIMMIE LEE BLACKSHEAR 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. § 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

January 9, 2026.

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.

Johnathan Fordham  
Judge of the Probate Court

December 11, 18, 25, January 1

**C25-134**  
IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF BLECKLEY COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

In Re: Teshanna Kathleen Stephens

Civil Action File No 2025W-01419PW

NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE

NAME

GEORGIA, Bleckley County

Notice is hereby given that Teshanna K. Stephens the undersigned, filed his petition to the Superior Court of Bleckley County, Georgia on the 01 day of July, 2025, praying for a change in the name of petitioner from Teshanna Kathleen Stephens to Dimka K. Stephens. Notice is hereby given pursuant to law to any interested or affected party to appear in said Court and to file objections to such name change. Objections must be filed with said Court within 30 days of the filing of said petition.

This 01 day of July, 2025.

Teshanna Kathleen Stephens

Petitioner

December 4, 11, 18, 25, 2025

**C25-132**  
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

RE: ESTATE OF BILLY R. SMITH, DECEASED

All creditors of the Estate of Billy R. Smith, deceased, late of Bleckley County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to Administrator.

This 13th day of November, 2025.

Billy R. Smith, Jr., Administrator

6845 Clyo Kildare Road

Newington, GA 30446

November 20, 27, December 4, 11, 2025

**C25-131**  
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF BLECKLEY

All creditors of the estate of ETHEL MAE HOBBES, deceased, late of Bleckley County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

SUSAN CLARK, Administrator of the Estate of ETHEL MAE HOBBES

103 Clark Drive

Cochran, GA 31014

Jordan L. Reab

WALKER, HULBERT, GRAY & MOORE LLP

Perry, GA 31069

478-987-1415

November 20, 27, December 4, 11, 2025

**T25-066**  
STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF TWIGGS

All creditors of the estate of ETHEL MAE HOBBES, deceased, late of Bleckley County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

SUSAN CLARK, Administrator of the Estate of ETHEL MAE HOBBES

103 Clark Drive

Cochran, GA 31014

Jordan L. Reab

WALKER, HULBERT, GRAY & MOORE LLP

Perry, GA 31069

478-987-1415

November 20, 27, December 4, 11, 2025

## Twigs Co. Legals

**T25-066**  
STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF TWIGGS

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER

Because of a default under the terms of the Security Deed executed by William E. Williams, Jr. and Caroline B. Williams to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Rocket Mortgage, LLC, FKA Quicken Loans, LLC dated August 11, 2022, and recorded in Deed Book 102,

Page 105, Twigs County Records, said Security Deed having been last sold, assigned, transferred and conveyed to Rocket Mortgage, LLC, FKA Quicken Loans, LLC, securing a Note in the original principal amount of \$154,660.00, the holder thereof pursuant to said Deed and Note thereby secured has declared the entire amount of said indebtedness due and payable and, pursuant to the power of sale contained in said Deed, will on the first Tuesday, January 6, 2026, during the legal hours of sale, before the Courthouse door in said County, sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash, the property described in said Deed, to-wit:

All that certain parcel of land situate in the 23rd Land District in the County of Twigs, State of Georgia, being known and designated as shown by a plat of survey made by Jack C. Brantley, Surveyor, recorded in Plat Book 2, page 160, Twigs County Records, bounded now or formerly as follows: northeast 208.71 feet by Fowler Road; southeast 417.42 feet by lands of Ernest Nicholson; southwest 208.71 feet by lands of Gary Nobles; and northwest 417.42 feet by lands of Gary Noble. The property herein conveyed is the same as that described in Warranty Deed from Cecil C. Slaughter and Betty Willis Slaughter to Jubie R. Sanders and Eunice L. Sanders as joint tenants with Right of Survivorship dated February 22, 1973, recorded in Deed Book W, page 559, Twigs County Records, the said Eunice L. Sanders having died December 11, 1995.

Said property is conveyed subject to all easements for utility purposes and all covenants and restrictions of record.

Said property is known as 758 Fowler Rd, Danville, GA 31017, together with all fixtures and personal property attached to and constituting a part of said property, if any.

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), 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 matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above.

The proceeds of said sale will be applied to the payment of said indebtedness and all expenses of said sale as provided in said Deed, and the balance, if any, will be distributed as provided by law.

The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the secured creditor.

The property is or may be in the possession of William E. Williams, Jr. and Caroline B. Williams, successor in interest or tenant(s).

Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC as Attorney-in-Fact for William E. Williams, Jr. and Caroline B. Williams

File no. 23-081129  
LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP\*  
Attorneys and Counselors at Law  
211 Perimeter Center Parkway, N.E.,  
Suite 130  
Atlanta, GA 30346  
(770) 220-2535  
[https://www.logs.com/](http://www.logs.com/)

\*THE LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

October 30, November 6, 13, 20, 27,

December 4, 11, 18, 25, January 1, 2025

**T25-078**  
IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF TWIGGS COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

TODD S. ANDERSON, Plaintiff

V

**SANDRA F. ANDERSON, Defendant**

Civil Action File no. 2025-V-075

NOTICE OF SUMMONS—SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

TO: Sandra F. Anderson, Defendant Named Above:

You are hereby notified that the above-styled action seeking Dissolution/Divorce was filed against you in said Court on June 18, 2025, and that by reason of an order for service of summons by publication entered by the court on October 7, 2025 you are hereby commanded and required to file with the clerk of said court and serve upon

Todd S. Anderson, Plaintiff, whose address is 2476 Vineville Ave, Macon, GA 31204 an answer to the complaint within sixty (60) days of the date of the order of service by publication. If you fail to do so, judgment by default will be taken against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Witness the Honorable Jon F. Helton, Judge of said Court

This the 13th day of November, 2025.

✓/s/ Karen F. Burke

Clerk of Superior Court

Twigs County

November 20, 27, December 4, 11, 2025

**T25-079**  
IN THE PROBATE COURT OF TWIGGS COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

**IN RE: ESTATE OF EDWIN R. ROBINSON SR., DECEASED**  
ESTATE NO. P-25-069

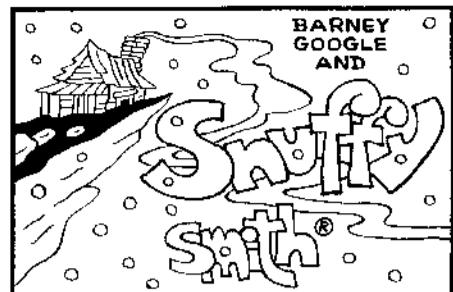
**PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION NOTICE**

**TO: FAITH NICOLE LUCAS and MELISSA CLARK ROBINSON**

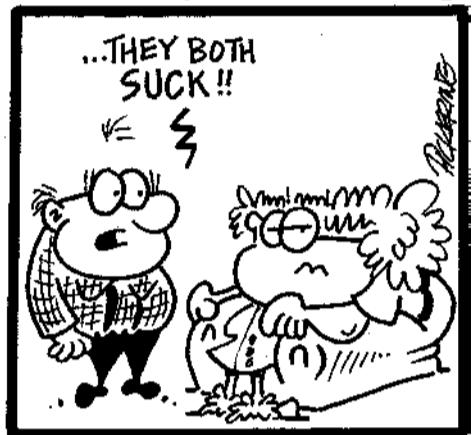
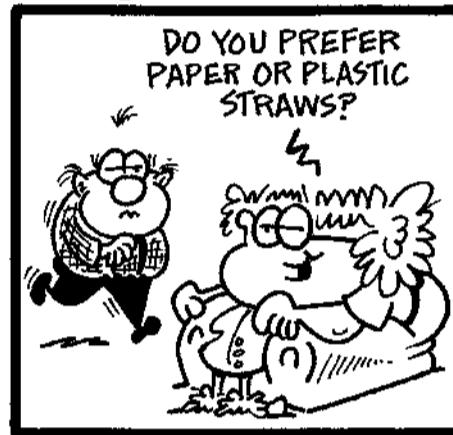
have petitioned to be appointed

administrators of the estate of **Edwin R. ROBINSON, Sr., deceased** of said county.

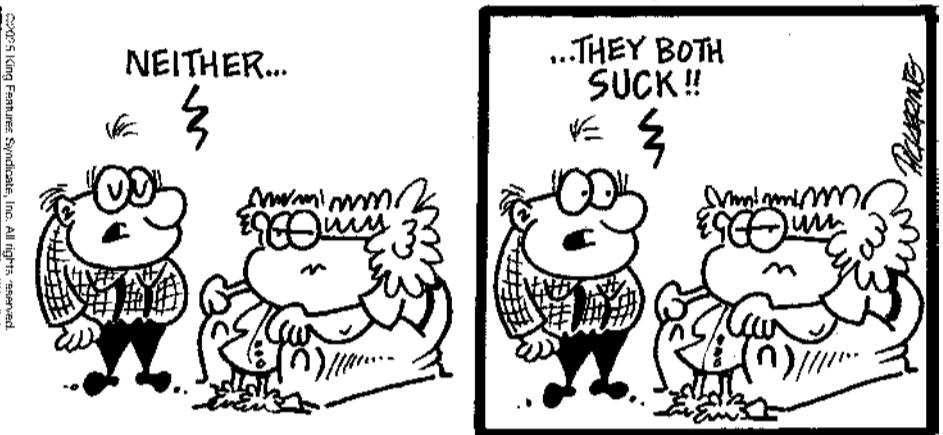
(The petitioner has also applied for



## The Spats



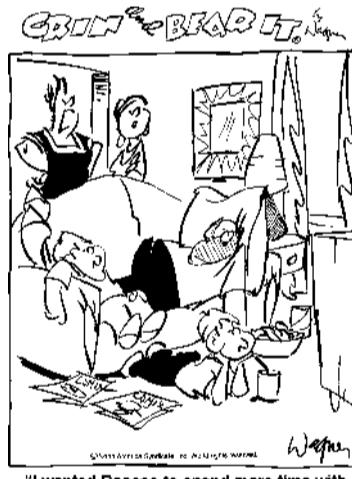
by Jeff Pickering



## Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas



## King Crossword

## ACROSS

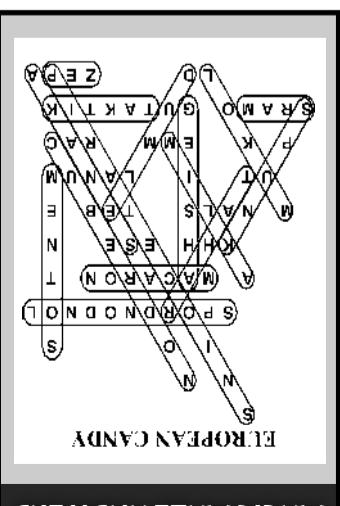
1 Tousle  
5 Resistance unit  
8 Prego rival  
12 Bickering  
13 Zodiac animal  
14 Pub orders  
15 Tabula —  
16 Sheer fabrics  
18 Santiago resident  
20 Playful sea critter  
21 Mormon church, for short  
22 Top card  
23 Army bigwigs  
26 Scolding  
30 "Humbug!"  
31 Cooking fuel  
32 French pronoun  
33 Upbeat  
36 Rose protector  
38 Weeding tool  
39 Spanish gold  
40 Parlor pieces  
43 Bar exercises  
47 Trailblazing congress-woman Shirley —  
49 Power co. supply  
50 Suffix for million  
51 "Levitating" singer Lipa

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				26			27	28	29	
30					31			32				
33			34	35			36	37				
					38		39					
40	41	42				43			44	45	46	
47					48			49				
50					51			52				
53					54			55				

52 Poet Teasdale  
53 Rolling stone's lack  
54 Lair  
55 Threaded fastener  
19 Asner and Harris  
1 Artist Chagall  
2 Beehive State  
3 Spanish ayes  
4 Stable enclosures  
5 Killer whales  
6 Virtuoso violinist Hilary  
7 2001, to Cato  
8 Traveled the rapids  
9 Oodles  
10 Hereditary unit  
11 Cold War initiatives  
12 Sounds of relief  
22 Fan's cry  
25 Sashimi fish  
26 Automobile  
27 "As I see it," in a text  
28 Fish-fowl insert  
29 Tom Collins liquor  
31 "My word!"  
34 Stages  
35 Ritz  
36 Part of TNT  
37 Truthful  
39 "Holy cow!"  
40 Con job  
41 Columbus' home  
42 Evergreens  
43 Crossword hint  
44 — Bator  
45 Lima's land  
46 "Shoo!"  
48 Quirky

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS



MAGIC MAZE ANSWERS

## MAGIC MAZE • EUROPEAN CANDY

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: Home of the U.S. Film Industry

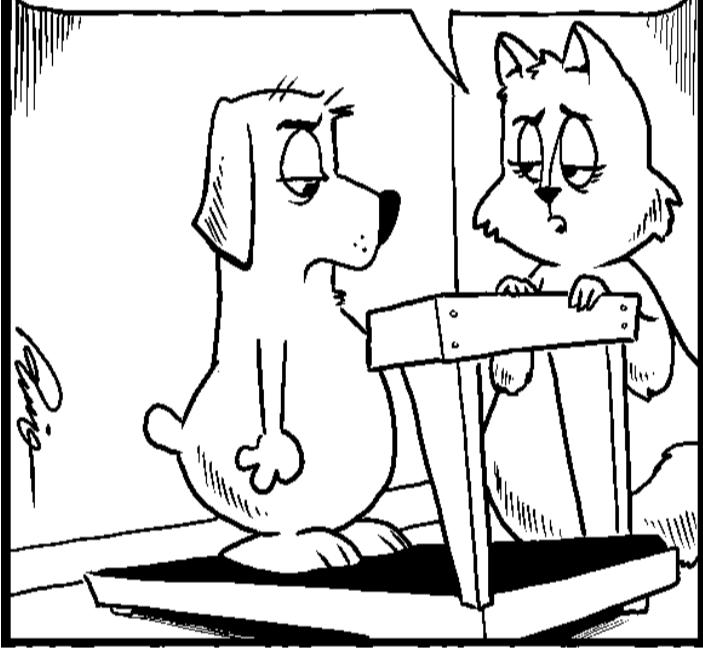
Akanes Kit Kat Mars Pirate Coins  
Cuberon Lokum Mentos Rahat  
Dumle London Drops Milka Spunk  
Geisha Macaron Pez

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## Just Like Cats &amp; Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

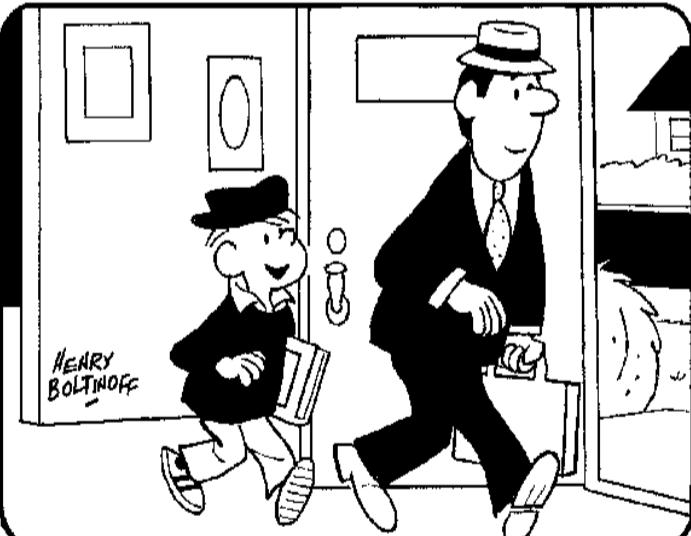
NO, THERE'S NOT A "DOWNHILL SETTING."  
DEAR, I THINK YOU'RE MISSING THE POINT.



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## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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6. Book is smaller.  
3. Land is moved. 4. Picture frame is higher. 5. Stripe is added to sleeve. 6. Picture frame is missing. 7. Door knob is larger.

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