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Harris County High Baseball Coach Dies in ATV Accident

By JACK BAGLEY

A January 24 ATV accident in Hamilton has claimed the life of the Harris County High School baseball coach.

According to Harris County Sheriff Mike Jolley, Tony Dimitri, 47, head baseball coach at the high school, died Saturday evening after being involved in a side-by-side ATV accident on private property. Harris County Coroner Joe Weldon said Dimitri was riding as a passenger in the side-by-side when the crash took place between 6 and 7 p.m. on Saturday, January 24, in Hamilton, on private property off Mulberry Creek Road.

Jolley said the driver of the ATV, Darrell Deon



COACH TONY DIMITRI

Guthrey, 44, has been arrested on a felony charge of homicide by vehicle in the first degree and he was also charged with driving under the influence. He was taken

to the Harris County Jail.

The sheriff said the accident took place during an outing involving several families. Jolley added that Dimitri and Guthrey were close friends.

Dimitri was a veteran coach, with more than fifteen years of experience in education and athletics. Before his tenure at Harris County High, Dimitri served as head baseball coach at Russell County High in Alabama and Jordan High School in Columbus.

Additional details on the accident were not available at press deadline, and the circumstances leading up to the crash have not yet been released. The incident remains under investigation.

Always Be Prepared for Severe Weather

Submitted to **NEW ERA**

With all the cold weather we've been having, it's hard to realize that spring is just around the corner. And with spring comes warmer temperatures, longer days, but also turbulent weather. This week is Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Georgia. "Severe weather can really happen at any time," said Darrell Enfinger, Emergency Preparedness Director for the West Central Health District. "We see a lot of it in the spring, so everyone needs to have a plan in place if we have a severe thunderstorm or tornado in our area." Often emergencies happen when we least expect it. If you don't have an emergency kit for your family, now is the time to make one. An emergency kit is essential to your family's safety and health, not only for severe weather, but for any emergency, infectious disease outbreak, or other natural disaster.

Your emergency kit should include but not be limited to:

• At least a three-day sup-

ply of food and water for each member of your family, one gallon of water per person per day. Remember your pets, too. Stock up on food that is easy to make and won't spoil, and a manual can opener.

• A three-day supply of medicines for all family members, a first aid kit, and any other medical supplies that your family may use regularly. Important phone numbers are also a necessity.

• A weather radio, flashlights, or lanterns, and plenty of batteries are a must. Personal care items, emergency blankets, cash, and a change of clothing for each family member are needed.

If you do have an emergency kit, inspect your items to make sure they are still usable.

Here are some other ways you can be prepared:

• For severe weather, such as a tornado, an interior room on the lowest level, or basement is the safest place. Make sure all family members know where to meet. Also, choose someone for an out-of-state point of contact, and agree on a place

to meet away from your home, if necessary, both in the neighborhood and within your town.

• Make sure you know how to turn off gas, water, and electricity at the source in your house. Always keep a fire extinguisher in your home and inspect it regularly.

• Take time to learn life-saving skills, such as CPR and first aid. You may have trouble connecting with 911 and first responders will be strapped for resources.

• Check your insurance policies and coverage for floods and tornadoes. If you don't have coverage for some events or have a high deductible, think about saving money for any repairs.

• During a power outage, refrigerated food should be safe if the power was not out for more than four hours and the refrigerator door was kept shut. Remember, never taste test food! When in doubt, throw it out.

For more information on Georgia Severe Weather Preparedness Week, visit https://www.weather.gov/ffc/swpw_2026.

Low Temperatures and Rain Predicted

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

Editor's Note: This is a weather forecast and is subject to change. Please make sure to check for weather updates. This forecast taken from the Weather Channel extended forecast.

The Talbot County area has been battling cold weather but the temperatures are expected to be warmer next week with the high temper-



atures reaching between 65 and 70 degrees.

Here is what The Weather Channel is predicting for the upcoming week.

Today, Thursday, Feb. 5, the high temperature is expected to reach around 47 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 28 degrees with mostly sunny skies.

Friday, Feb. 6, the high temperature is expected to reach around 61 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 37 degrees. The skies are expected to be sunny with no rain anticipated.

Saturday, Feb. 7, the high temperature is expected to reach around 63 degrees with the low temperature around 33 degrees. The skies are expected to be sunny with only a six percent chance of showers.

Sunday, Feb. 8, the high temperature is expected to continue to rise with the high temperature expected to reach about 66 degrees and the low temperature should be around 43 degrees. The skies will be mostly sunny with a five percent chance of rain.

Monday, Feb. 9, the high

temperature is expected to be 66 degrees again and the low temperature is expected to be around 44 degrees. The skies will be partly cloudy with a five percent chance of showers.

Tuesday, Feb. 10, the skies will be cloudy during the morning hours but will clear and the afternoon hours will be sunny. The high temperature for the day is expected to reach about 67 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 48 degrees. There is a nine percent chance of rain for the day.

Wednesday, Feb. 11, it's going to be warm with the high temperature expected to reach about 70 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 49 degrees. You can expect partly sunny skies but there is only a seven percent chance of rain.

Thursday, Feb. 12, the rain is expected to return today with a 41 percent chance of rain in the forecast. However, the temperatures will still be mild with the high temperature expected to be around 66 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 53 degrees.



Photographs By LG Broadcasting

REGULAR SEASON PLAY WINDING DOWN - The Central Elementary-High School (CEHS) basketball teams had a tough week but are preparing for the regular season finale on Friday, Feb. 6 when the Chattahoochee County High Panthers come calling.

Regular Season Drawing to an End for CEHS

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

Daniels led the Lady Hawks in scoring with nine points. She had 13 rebounds, an assists and two blocks in the game as well.

Other players helping the Lady Hawk offense included: Couch with five points, eight rebounds, an assist, three steals and a block; junior Andrea Thomas with four points and two steals; sophomore Darriuna Leonard with three points, a rebound and a steal and Bunkley with one point, a rebound, an assist and a block.

LADY HAWKS
Schley 59 - Lady Hawks 44

The Lady Hawks traveled to Ellaville on Tuesday, Jan. 27 to play the Schley County High Lady Wildcats

and were defeated by a score of 59-44.

Schley jumped out to an early start and led by a score of 18-3 at the end of the first quarter and increased the lead to 30-13 by the end of the first half.

The Lady Hawks trailed Schley by a score of 44-24 at the end of the third quarter and the Lady Wildcats went on to win the game by a score of 59-44.

Sophomore Darriuna Leonard led the Lady Hawks in scoring with 22 points, three rebounds, an assist and three steals.

Other Lady Hawk players adding to the team's offensive effort included: junior Madison Daniels with seven points, 13 rebounds, two assists, two steals and two blocks; junior Jhi'Aja Couch with six points, two assists and two steals; freshman Kylie Bunkley with five points, a rebound, an assist, a steal and a block; freshman Kor'Zoria Oglesby with two points, a rebounds, and assist and a block and sophomore True DeSue with two points and three rebounds.

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Final
CHS 3 10 11 20 44
SCH 18 12 14 15 59

Senior Brannon Bussey had a good outing for the Hawks scoring 17 points, had nine rebounds, three assists and two steals.

Other Hawks players helping the team's offensive effort included: sophomore Brody Leonard with nine points, six rebounds, five assists and five steals; sophomore Jhi'Quez Hollis with seven points, three rebounds, an assist and a steal; sophomore Michael Bussey with six points and an assist; junior Karmez Mitchell with two points; freshman Jamariyon Mahone with two points, a rebound and two steals and senior Jamariion Williams with two points, a rebound and an assist.

HAWKS
Schley Co. 53 - Hawks 51

The Hawks traveled to Ellaville on Tuesday, Jan. 27 to play the Schley County High Wildcats, a region opponent, and lost a heart-breaker by a score of 53-51.

Senior Brannon Bussey had a good outing for the Hawks scoring 17 points, had nine rebounds, three assists and two steals.

Other Hawks players helping the team's offensive effort included: sophomore Brody Leonard with nine points, six rebounds, five assists and five steals; sophomore Jhi'Quez Hollis with seven points, three rebounds, an assist and a steal; sophomore Michael Bussey with six points and an assist; junior Karmez Mitchell with two points; freshman Jamariyon Mahone with two points, a rebound and two steals and senior Jamariion Williams with two points, a rebound and an assist.

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Final
TCH 11 14 19 20 64
CHS 8 13 14 7 42

No score reported

The Hawks hosted the Webster County Bobcats on Friday, Jan. 30 but no final score was reported for the game.

Taylor County 64 - Hawks 42

The Hawks hosted the Taylor County High Vikings on Saturday, Jan. 31 and were defeated by a score of 64-42.

The Hawks got off to a good start and only trailed the Vikings by a score of 11-8 when the first quarter came to a close and were trailing by a score of 25-21 at the end of the first half.

The Vikings began to pull away in the third quarter leading by a score of 48-35 and exploded on offense in the fourth quarter to earn a 64-42 victory.

Brannon Bussey led the Hawks in scoring with 15 points, had five rebounds, two assists and two steals; junior Jamal Morgan scored 12 points, had two rebounds and two assists; senior Jamariion Williams scored five points and had two rebounds; Leonard scored five points and had rebound; Michael Bussey scored four points, had a rebound and an assist and freshman Darrin Strickland scored one point, had a rebound and two steals.

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Final
TCH 11 14 19 20 64
CHS 8 13 14 7 42

Up Next for the teams

On Friday, Feb. 6 the teams will end regular season play when they travel to Cusseta to play the Chattahoochee County High Panthers. The Lady Hawks will tip off at 6 p.m. and the Hawks will take to the court at 7:30 p.m.

AROUND REGION 6

GIRLS **BOYS**

Team Region Record **Team Region Record**

Macon County 9-1 Chattco 13-0

Taylor County 8-1 Taylor County 12-1

Marion County 7-3 Macon County 9-5

Schley County 7-4 Schley County 8-5

Chattco 3-8 Marion County 7-5

Crawford Co. 2-8 Crawford Co. 4-9

Central High 1-10 Central High 3-10

Webster County 0-2 Webster County 2-11

Furlow Charter 0-12 Furlow Charter 0-12

Contact The New Era by calling (706) 846-3188 or emailing: starercuryjohn@gmail.com



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Under the Gold Dome

A Report on the 2026 Georgia General Assembly

State Representative Debbie Buckner

The Georgia House of Representatives began the third week of the 2026 legislative session on Monday, January 26, with a pro forma session due to Governor Brian Kemp's State of Emergency declaration after Winter Storm Fern swept across much of North Georgia over the weekend. As soon as road conditions improved, my colleagues and I returned to the State Capitol on Tuesday to resume our legislative business. Throughout the remainder of the week, several House Appropriations subcommittees continued to meet to review specific portions of the Amended Fiscal Year 2026 (AFY 2026) and Fiscal Year 2027 (FY 2027) budget proposals. Other House committees were hard at work this week, holding meetings to take up legislation that was not passed or signed into law during the 2025 legislative session and is still eligible for consideration, as well as newly introduced legislation. The House Rules Committee also convened this week for the first time this session to consider legislation and set our first Rules Calendar and subsequent floor vote. By the week's end, we passed and adopted our first pieces of legislation of the session in the House Chamber.

With the joint meetings of the House and Senate Appropriations committees now behind us, House Appropriations subcommittees began meeting to examine individual sections of the budget proposals in greater detail and assess state agency funding needs more closely. I will continue to keep you informed about both budget bills and provide updates on other important measures as they move through the legislative process.

On Wednesday, the House voted on and passed its first bill of the 2026 legislative session—House Bill 443—legislation introduced last session that would establish an annual fee for reef or migratory fish endorsements for Georgia recreational fishing licenses. Requested by coastal fishermen, HB 443 seeks to regulate both recreational and commercial offshore fishing. HB 443 would set an annual fee of \$10 for Georgia residents and \$20 for non-residents who participate in offshore fishing, and all funds would be

retained by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

With our first Rules Calendar of the session, the House unanimously adopted House Resolution 1008 this week. The resolution would ratify amendments to Georgia's comprehensive statewide water management plan.

In response, the State Water Council adopted amendments in December 2025 and submitted them to the General Assembly on January 12, 2026, with HR 1008 serving as the ratifying legislation. Specifically, HR 1008 would reduce the number of council member appointments, eliminate alternate members, and extend appointment terms from three years to six years. The resolution would also require each council to include at least one representative from each major water and wastewater demand sector, including municipal, industrial, agricultural, and energy interests. HR 1008 was adopted with unanimous bipartisan support and has been sent to the Senate for consideration. These efforts also aligned with the General Assembly's own focus on water policy as the House Special Committee on Resource Management

Water Subcommittee held numerous meetings across the state during the fall of 2025 to study Georgia's water challenges and their impact on the state's economic development.

While the House conducted its legislative business on the floor, our counterparts in the Senate gave final passage to legislation carried over from last session—the first bill of the 2026 legislative session to receive final passage from the General Assembly. If signed into law, SB 148 would bring several updates to Georgia's public schools. The bill would:

- Allow local school boards to offer hunting safety lessons for students in grades six through 12, and DNR would help the school boards develop this curriculum using its existing hunting education courses. This provision of the bill seeks to promote safety and responsibility among students who participate in this popular outdoor activity.

- Establish an outdoor learning center pilot program for ele-



mentary and secondary schools to enhance educational environments by encouraging students and teachers to utilize learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom

- Increase the number of personal days public school personnel may use from accumulated sick leave from three to five days

- Remove the requirement for a physician to oversee automated external defibrillator (AED) programs in schools, which would make it easier for schools to obtain and use these life-saving devices in emergency situations.

Also, this week, House Speaker Jon Burns held a press conference where he announced one of his legislative priorities for the 2026 legislative session—the Georgia Homeownership Opportunity and Market Equalization (HOME) Act of 2026, or House Bill 1116. The bill would enable the full elimination of homestead property taxes, or taxes on primary residences, by 2032 and would provide tools for local governments to make up for lost revenue. To help offset potential revenue losses, the legislation would authorize an optional, flexible five-penny local sales tax, as well as optional local assessments and fees. It would also cap revenue growth at three percent for non-improved, non-exempt properties, establish a homeowner tax relief grant, and double the statewide homestead exemption every other year until 2032, providing phased-in tax relief for Georgia homeowners. HB 1116 was filed this week, and I'll be sure to update you on its progress.

The House will reconvene on Monday, February 2, and will be in session through the end of the week on Friday. The pace of the session is expected to accelerate as committees continue to advance legislation and more measures come before the full House for floor votes. This is the time of year when much of the foundational work of the session takes shape, and long days of meetings and floor votes become the norm. I encourage you to stay updated on future session proceedings and committee meetings—all live streamed on the House website located here.

Things to Do In and Around The Talbot County Area

CEHS Career Day

Central Elementary-High School (CEHS) has announced the 2026 College and Career Day will be held on Wednesday, Mar. 18 this year. The event will be held in the Arthur Miller Gymnasium located at 945 North Washington Avenue in Talbotton from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. For more information, contact Dr. Jenie Carter, counselor by calling (706) 665-8578 Ext. 143 or emailing jcarterII@talbot.k12.ga.us.

BOC to Meet

The Talbot County Board of Commissioners will hold a called meeting on Thursday, Feb. 12 at 9 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Commissioner's Office located at 35 West Madison Street in Talbotton.

Pastor Anniversary

Springfield Baptist Church in Waverly Hall will celebrate 15 years of Pastoral Leadership under the guidance Rev. Dr. Alvin M. Bunch, Jr. and Leading Lady Almetta H. Bunch on Feb. 8 at 12 noon. Special guests will be Rev. LaShonda Brown and Valley Grove Baptist Church of Manchester. Master of Ceremony will be Brother Johnny Brown. All are welcome. and dinner will be served.

Outreach Program

Fishing For Youth of America was founded in memory of Richard Nash's mother and father. The program provides fishing supplies for our youth. It is the hope of FFYA to encourage our youth to fish and do other wholesome activities and to stay away from drugs, guns, gangs and violence. If we can get our youth to appreciate the outdoors they make better young people. If you know of a child or grandchild that could benefit from this program we would love to hear from you. It's also a program that benefits children that would otherwise not get anything for Christmas. If anyone would like to support this cause you can give in Honor or in Memory of someone. For more information on how you can be a part of this much needed outreach you may call Richard 478-998-2996.

New Life Services

New Life Community Church invites everyone to fellowship with the church family on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. The church is located at 9108 GAHWY 85 in Waverly Hall at the City Hall building. Rev. Desmond Thornton and associate pastor Rev. Solomon Terry

presiding.

Church Pickup

Friendship Baptist Church located in Woodland is offering a Transportation Ministry free to any person who would like to attend the church. The transportation service will be available every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. For more information please contact Clarence Leonard at 706-427-3443 or Scott Hope at 706-573-8231. A mask is advised and social distancing is required.

Free Produce

Geneva Baptist Church will be giving away free produce to everyone every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. Produce will be given away while supplies last from FTV Food Bank.

Let Us Help You

Christ the King's Outreach Ministry welcomes Harris and Talbot County residents in need of short-term assistance with groceries, utility bills and rental payments and do what the church can to help. Christ the King's Outreach Ministry office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Appointments can be made by calling the Ministry at (706) 663-0090.

Clothing Center

New Beginnings Outreach Ministry of Woodland has a special clothing center. All items are from community donations. We also have household items, baby accessories and furniture. EVERYTHING IS FREE. For more information contact Bro. Richard Crawl at 706-977-5469 or Pastor Searcy at 706-601-6776.

Free to Needy

Pastor William Searcy of The New Beginnings Church of Woodland announces that their Outreach Ministry's Center will be open two days a week from nine to five on Monday and Friday. This will be the last week. EVERYTHING IS FREE. They have clothing, miscellaneous items, including furniture. Remember, this is FREE to the public. Call 706-601-6776.

Change of Service

Valley Grove Baptist Church, Manchester (Tax), will have services on Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. until further notice.

Help for Elderly

The River Valley Regional Commission Area Agency on

Aging is ready to help senior citizens. If any senior citizen in the Talbot County Region has problems or needs help with utility bills or more, please call Woodland Mayor and Board Member of River Valley Regional at 706-256-2900 or 706-256-2928 or Katie Howard at 706-256-2910.

Food Talk Series

UGA Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program is offering free virtual and in-person classes with a series of sessions featuring meals in minutes called "FoodTalk." If you are interested or if you have any questions, please contact Erica Chaney at 706-665-2397 or Erica.Chaney@uga.edu. You can also visit the Talbot County Extension Office at 401 S. Washington Ave. in Talbotton.

How to Submit Items

The Talbotton New Era gladly prints items of interest for the community as well as local church news and events by non-profit organizations. Please note the deadline for items for the community and church events section of the newspaper must be received by 12 noon on Monday, prior to run date to be printed in that week's issue. Items received after the Monday deadline will not appear until the following week. Please do not send items more than once. Items will continue to be printed in the newspaper until the event is over.

Sorry no flyers, items written in all capital letters or items sent as pdf files are accepted. Please email items as an attached on a Word document or as email body copy. Jpgs, pdfs, etc. can not be used by the newspaper for news copy.

Please do not indent or double space between paragraphs and sentences. Please do not use 2025 or spell out months of the year, simply use Sept. 10. Do not use times in this manner 5:00, please use 5 p.m.

Photographs can only be accepted in jpeg format and as an attachment to an email. Please do not attach them to Word documents. Such photographs do not work well.

Please note the newspaper reserves the right to edit or reject any submission for the things to do section.

We appreciate your continued support of the Talbotton New Era newspaper and for your support of the entire Talbot County Community.

DEATHS AND FUNERALS

James Edward Mitchell

March 28, 1955 – January 30, 2026

Worked in Clothing Manufacturing Business

James Edward Mitchell, 70 of Talbotton, GA died January 30, 2026, at his home.

Mr. Mitchell was born March 28, 1955, in Columbus, GA, the son of Ed Roy Mitchell and Blanche Gallops Mitchell. He had worked many years in the clothing manufacturing business mostly in Taylor County. He loved riding his motorcycle and collecting coins and guns. He was preceded in death by both his parents Ed Mitchell and Blanche Gallops Mitchell Woolard along with his brother David Mitchell.

He is survived by his sis-

ter Margaret Nelson of Macon, GA, nephew Brian Nelson of Warner Robins, GA, niece Nancy Goodwin of LaGrange, GA and great-nieces and nephews.

Funeral service for Mr. Mitchell will be held at 1:00 PM Tuesday, February 3,

2026, at the Chapel of Cox Funeral Home, Manchester, GA. The family will receive friends from 12:00pm- 1:00 pm at the funeral home prior to the service. Burial will be private in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Talbotton following the service.

Cox Funeral Home in Manchester, GA will be in charge of the arrangements.

CEHS College and Career Day Scheduled for March 18th

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

Central Elementary-High School (CEHS) has announced the 2026 College and Career Day will be held on Wednesday, Mar. 18 this year.

The event will be held in the Arthur Miller Gymnasium located at 945 North Washington Avenue in Talbotton from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

For more information, please contact Dr. Jenie Carter, CEHS counselor by calling her at (706) 665-8578 Ext. 143 or emailing her at jcarterII@talbot.k12.ga.us

The Talbotton New Era deadline for news and photographs is 12 noon Monday prior to run date.

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Opinions & Ideas

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Political Will? More Like Political Won't

Before you ask, no - I am not abandoning my firm position of not talking about politics, regardless of what the title of this column says. Two things I never discuss are religion and politics, and for primarily the same reason - I have friends on both sides of the issues, and I don't want to lose any of them.

This column isn't about politics per se, though. You'll catch on as we go along.

At the time of this column appearing, we are only a few days away from the scheduled launch of *Artemis 2*, the first manned mission in the *Artemis* space flight program. *Artemis 2* is the mission that will finally take astronauts back to the Moon - and that's what I want to talk about.

Why did it take so long to go back to the Moon?

I vividly remember watching, on that warm July evening in 1969, the grainy footage live from the Moon of Neil Armstrong stepping onto the surface. All three of the TV networks were covering the mission, of course - the biggest thing to happen to humanity in the last 2000 years wasn't going to be preempted by reruns of *Leave It to Beaver*, that was for sure. It's generally accepted that CBS had the overall best coverage, what with Walter Cronkite manning the anchor desk.

As something of a science nerd, however, I was watching ABC, because while Cronkite was an avid fan of the space program, ABC's Jules Bergman was more of a science reporter. I appreciated that, a lot.

It was a wonderful thing, watching the space program build toward that magnificent moment. The fact that we went back to the Moon six more times (with five successes) was the icing on the cake.

Then ... nothing.

All of that technology development to land people on the Moon and we just let it die off.

Why?

Because of a lack of political will, among other things.

The power of the purse is held by Congress, and once we'd put people into space - then on the Moon - there didn't seem to be much of a reason, as they saw it, to go back. Science be hanged, there were problems on Earth that needed to be solved!

I don't know if you've noticed, but in the fifty-plus years since *Apollo 17* was the last lunar mission, we haven't solved any of those problems. In fact, many have gotten worse, despite the massive amounts of money that has been thrown at them.

Finally, though, we're



Jack Bagley
Musings of
An Aging
Mind

going back to the Moon, with the *Artemis 2* crew doing an updated version of the *Apollo 8* mission - go out there and swing around the Moon, then come back. A test of the hardware, you might say, with four astronauts aboard.

While I am admiring the effort and can't wait to follow the mission, I have to ask ... what took so long? Why did we have to wait half a century to do it again?

It comes back to a case of political will - or, in this case, political won't.

As I understand it, some members of Congress don't think the space program is worth the money being spent on it. Sure, we get new science, and we get new technology, but the cost is just too high to them. I really don't understand that kind of opposition.

Others, I hear, want to make sure some of the money gets spent in their districts, no matter how far those districts may be from Florida or Texas. This I can understand, at least a little.

And a few see the value of a vigorous, expanding space program, and those are the ones I can support.

I mean, we even have now a branch of the military concerned with space! The Space Force was a fully logical extension of the U.S. military, even though it isn't directly concerned with manned space flight (yet).

All that being said, one must remember that the first, most important job of any Congressman is getting re-elected. Making decisions that would solve problems or advance our society could mess up re-election because once the problems are indeed solved, why would we want to re-elect them?

There are numerous reasons we haven't returned to the Moon in the past half century, but to me, they just don't pass the smell test. The original plans called for us to have a permanent base there by now, and human exploration of Mars and the Asteroid Belt would also be going on. Those who control the money, however, didn't see fit. That's how Elon Musk's SpaceX took such a commanding lead in space exploration.

Good luck, *Artemis 2*. Take us back to the Moon, and let's head for the stars.

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What Life is Like in the South With the Cold

It is easy to tell that winter has finally come to Georgia. Not our normal January weather at all.

Normally, in this part of the world our average January temperatures are mild by comparison. The normal temperature is about 55 degrees on the high side and around 33 degrees on the low side. Recently, we have seen temperatures on the low side and only around 40 degrees on the high side.

It's been so cold that my shadow was seeking a cave to hibernate in. Luckily, we dodged the expected ice storm and we should be thankful for that because southerners don't know how to handle that crap.

Let's face it, southerners are built for lows that don't reach that freezing mark and we don't like snow and ice. Why? One reason is because we don't see it often but the main reason is the south just ain't equipped to handle such events. We don't have the spray trucks in the south that spray the ice and snow. We don't have snow plows and our homes ain't got built in generators so we freeze our buns off. That's the real rea-

son we don't like it.

Ice ain't our friend! It's way too slick and dangerous, especially when we are toting our hunting rifle or carry our concealed weapon.

Heck, it's really dangerous driving on snow and ice in the south. We don't have snow chains but we do have 4X4s and that is also a problem cause when we have snow or ice every clown in the south with such a vehicle is gonna be on the road trying to see how fast it will run and stay steady on the road. Accidents are a major problem when we get snow and ice in the south.

The only good thing about the darn snow and ice is that our weather does return to somewhat normal and the stuff don't last but a few days. Not like up north where the snow piles up to six and eight feet high. How in the world do them Yankees stand that kind of life? Rattles my brain to think about it.

In the south, our closets ain't full of winter clothes. We probably have a few hunting jackets, maybe a hoodie or two, but we ain't got no arctic tundra style

coat or jacket. Heck, if we had one we might break it out to wear once every 15 years or so. Mostly, we got all-weather coats. Not to keep us warm but to keep the rain off our backs. Yep, we know about rain in the south, but we don't know much about ice.

We do understand wind chill in the south. All you gotta do, if you don't know about wind chill, is walk out in the rain in the south during winter and those 10 and 15 mile per hour winds will let you know right quick how much colder you can (and will) get.

The reason we had low temperatures is because we have damp cold, something Yankees don't know about. The south is wet and it stays wet because during late summer and early fall it rains almost every day. So when winter comes the ground is

wet and our cold is damp and the makes it feel really cold.

Southern women really hate the cold because they have to put on their boots and they can't walk around barefoot or with flip flops on. When a southern gal has to wear shoes that ain't comfortable to them, somebody is going to be in for a bad day.

In the south, we grill year round, we like to fish and hunt and get outside. We can't do that when the weather is in the single digits. You ever had to deal with a country boy who can't get out the house? That's a worse day than a woman having to wear uncomfortable shoes.

Just so everyone knows, this column is meant to be humorous and does not present any reflection to the real life of southerners. Or maybe it does, slightly ... or more.

At any rate, I hope you all stay warm and maybe a little laughter will help you feel all warm and cozy inside. Probably not with this dang single temperature weather. As a southerner, I'll be glad when we return to those 55 degree days of winter.

Remembering the Liberty Tree

Before going further, I must apologize for an error. I previously submitted news articles on the event I am promoting in this column, but with the wrong date and hope to correct that while providing a bit of education.

This year is the 250th birthday of the United States and hopefully there will be celebrations across the country.

One such celebration takes place 11:30 am Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the Harris County Public Library as a dedication ceremony is held for the Liberty Tree recently planted at the library by members of the Sons of the American Revolution.

This will be the second Liberty Tree planted in Harris County, which begs the question: what is a Liberty Tree?

The short answer is a particular Princeton Elm that was located in Boston, Massachusetts, became a focal point for early revolutionary fervor, and chopped down by British Loyalists.

The longer answer is a part of American History that should be taught in classrooms.

GROWTH rings tell us this particular tree began growing in 1646. Despite

flooding rains, droughts, oppressive heat, winter snows, and occasional blizzards, the tree grew and flourished during its 129 years of life.

Tensions were rising between English masters and the American colonies, and on Aug. 14, 1765, a crowd gathered under the tree to protest the Stamp Act, which was yet another tax fostered on the colonials by the British. Hanging from the tree was a stuffed effigy carrying the initials AO, which stood for Andrew Oliver, the person in charge of collecting the tax. Also hanging from the tree was a boot with painted green sole. The boot represented two members of the British government, the Earl of Bute John Stuart, and George Grenville as they were considered responsible for the Stamp Act. Most important, this was the first real act of defiance to the English Crown that would ultimately lead to the American Revolution in ten years.

Those yearning for freedom would continue meeting under that tree, which became known as the Liberty Tree. The tree became so well known that Paul Revere featured it in an engraving known as "A View of the Year 1765".

With the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766, the Liberty Tree was decorated with flags, and streamers, and a commemorative plaque was placed on it.

The Liberty Tree continued to be a focal point and meeting place for those seeking to overthrow British rule. The funeral procession for victims of the Boston Massacre passed by the tree and at least one British Loyalist was tarred and feathered under the tree. The Liberty Tree was featured in an article written by Thomas Paine in 1775 and published in "The Pennsylvania Gazette".

In late August 1775, the British and their lackey Loyalists cut the tree down, chopping it into firewood to erase a growing symbol of American independence. That effort failed and it would not be forgotten as after the British were kicked out of Boston, the stump of

the Liberty Tree continued to be used as a focal point and meeting place, playing a historic role in the American Revolution.

It would be after the American Revolution the Marquis de Lafayette visited the tree's remains and said, "The world should never forget the spot where once stood Liberty Tree, so famous in your annals."

Today there is a small park where the Liberty Tree once stood and across the street a plaque and stone monument remembering the tree and honoring the "Sons of Liberty".

And that is the story of the original Liberty Tree.

THE dedication ceremony of the Liberty Tree at Harris County Public Library is open to all.

Today this Liberty Tree is just a sapling, but as the years pass it will grow into a stout and strong tree, and long after we are gone may it continue to serve as a living tribute to those brave colonials, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice to build a new nation.

That's my opinion.

A newspaper columnist for over 35 years, Andy Kober can be reached by email at andykober@hotmail.com

* Historic Black Wall Street *

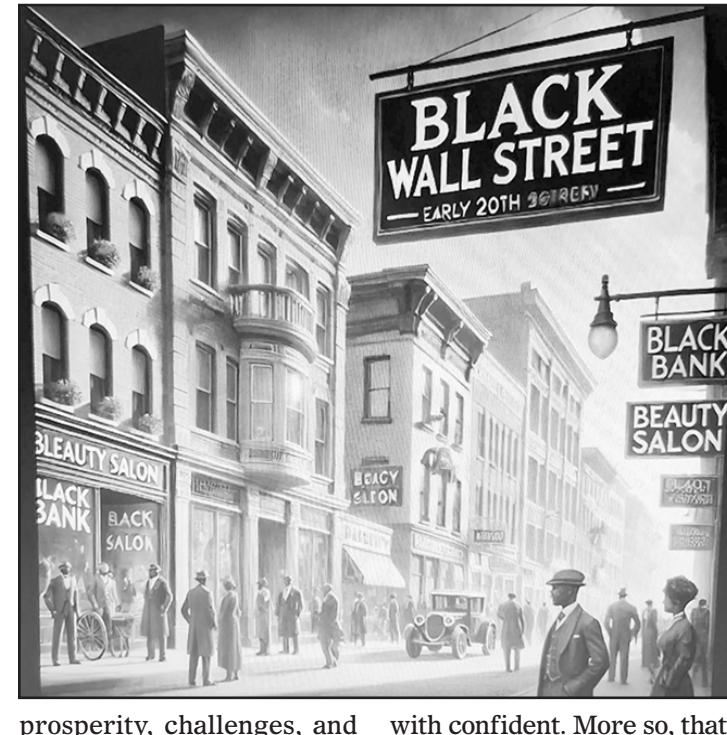
Preserving The Past, Inspiring The Future

Greetings and blessings:

Today, we dive into Negro History Month 2026 to share just a portion of forgotten, and to some, unknown thriving history. Let's begin with Black Wall Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Greenwood's rise as a center of black economic power. Perhaps this column will urge or make you curious enough that you want to know more. And you can by researching further for more details at your convenience. However, this town was a vibrant community established by black African Americans after the Civil War. By the early 20th Century, it had become one of the wealthiest Black communities in the United States, often referred to as "Black Wall Street." Yes, it was one of the most remarkable examples of African American prosperity of that time, more than 100 Black business; beauty salons, banks, theaters, grocery stores, etc. It actually represented the power of vision, resilience, and community in overcoming systemic racism and segregation. A thriving

Pres Hall

Columnist



hub of economic activity, education and cultures, Greenwood offered a blueprint for what Black communities could achieve when united by purpose and determination. Let's know, this story is not just about wealth, it's about the enduring spirit of people who built a self-sustaining community despite immense challenges. While the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre threatened to erase this legacy, the communities unwavering commitment to rebuilding ensured that its impact would endure. Greenwood's journey is more than a historical account. It is a testament to the strength of community, the importance of education, and the pursuit of economic empowerment. So then, by examining its genesis (beginning),

prosperity, challenges, and enduring legacy, we gain insights into the values and strategies that can guide us in building equitable and inclusive societies today.

However, as I was reading this impactful story, I wanted to share it in part with all of you. Perhaps and I do pray that it will inspire, encourage and push us now with confidence. More so, that if they did it then, we too can come together now and do even greater things. Prayerfully we too can unite, organized and make accomplishments that will make a significant difference in our society or community. Ultimately, that's the essence of this story. Whatever we do, God will get the glory!



Public Domain Photo

PILES OF SNOW - This week in 1978 a monster nor-easter struck seven states in the northeast and came to be known as Blizzard of 1978. The truck above was just one of many vehicles that became stranded in the snow.

This Week In American History

1978 -Monster Blizzard Hits Northeastern U.S.

By ANDY KOBER

Here is what happened this week in American History.

• **Feb. 5.** On this day in 1950, South Korean, UN and US forces are moving again, driving communist forces - North Korean and Chinese - back toward North Korea. What had started as a series of reconnaissance-in-force operations has turned into a general attack called Operation Thunderbolt. As probing operations and air attacks continue, two tank battalions, two infantry battalions, an artillery battalion, and a company of engineers known as Task Force Allen are poised and ready to exploit a breakthrough. Meanwhile smaller armored units are probing the Chinese and North Korean defenses. In addition, the US Navy prepares for an amphibious landing at Inchon to draw defenders from the main efforts. Units from I Corps reach the Han River largely unimpeded.

• **Feb. 6.** In 1978, a nor-easter - or extratropical cyclone in the northeast US - strikes Connecticut, Massachusetts, New England, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and New York City. Some of the areas receive record-breaking amounts of snowfall per hour along with record-breaking overall accumulation of snow ever received from a single storm. The storm packs winds of 86

miles per hour causing whiteout conditions in some areas. Known as the Blizzard of 1978, the storm will claim the lives of 100 people and leave 4,500 people suffering various injuries.

• **Feb. 7.** Today in 1962, the US bans all imports from and exports to Cuba. The ban came as a result of Cuba seizing American assets in the island nation after the Cuban Revolution. Though it remains today, the ban has been loosened and tightened since then.

• **Feb. 8.** In 1924, the first case of execution by gas chamber in the US takes place in Nevada. Gee Jon, 29, a member of the Hop Sing Tong criminal society was put to death for the murder of Tom Quong Kee, 74, a member of the Bing Kung Tong society. Born in Canton, Qing China, Jon had immigrated to the US sometime between 1907 and 1908.

• **Feb. 9.** On this day in 1949, Judith Light is born in Trenton, New Jersey. She graduated from Carnegie Mellon University with a degree in drama with her first professional appearance in *Richard III* at the 1970 California Shakespeare Festival. With acting roles few and far between, Light almost quit acting when she landed a leading role on a soap opera. Light moved into mainstream television and movies and is remembered by many as Angela Bower on the sitcom *Who's the Boss?* Now 76, Light remains active.

• **Feb. 10.** In 1950, Operation Thunderbolt continues as Task Force Allen follows the US 25th Division with the goal of seizing the Inchon-Yougdungp'o road, which is accomplished hours ahead of the projected schedule. Driving into the Kimpo peninsula, Task Force Allen splits into two sections with one attacking and securing the airfield and the other attacking up the center of the peninsula. Rangers from the Eighth Army enter Inchon to find the Korean Peoples Army had

fled, leaving behind a force that was quickly overwhelmed. Operation Thunderbolt officially ends the next day. US forces suffer 2,228 killed while the Chinese suffer about 18,000 killed in action.

• **Feb. 11.** Today in 1946, the New Testament of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible is first published in the US. It will be followed by the Old Testament in 1952. The publication draws considerable condemnation and controversy.

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DEADLINES FOR LEGAL NOTICES

Noon on Friday prior to run date.
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COSTS FOR LEGAL NOTICES

\$15 per 100 words times weeks published.
 A typing fee will be charged for legal notices not on a Word document or in regular email body copy. Cost depends on words in legal notice.

Debtors & Creditors Notice

26-009

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

TALBOT COUNTY, GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF DAISY L. NOLEN

All creditors of the Estate of DAISY L. NOLEN late of Talbot 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. This 27th day of January, 2026.

JERETHA HOWARD

Administrator(s) of the Estate of DAISY L. NOLEN, Deceased

ATTY: Tina G. Stanford

2416 19th Ave.

Columbus, GA 31901

762-477-1070

(2:5, 12, 19, 26)

3194 TUCK PERSONS HWY

TALBOTTON, GA 31827
 Administrator(s) of the Estate of LILLIE O. DILLINGHAM, Deceased
 (2:5, 12, 19, 26)

26-008

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

TALBOT COUNTY, GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF MARVIN JARRETT

All creditors of the Estate of MARVIN JARRETT late of Talbot 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. This 27th day of January, 2026.

KEIRA ADAMS

968H MOOTY BRIDGE RD

LAGRANGE, GA 30240

Administrator(s) of the Estate of MARVIN JARRETT, Deceased

(2:5, 12, 19, 26)

Doris Wills

Walter Willis, Jr.

3194 Tuck Persons Hwy

Talbotton, GA 31827

Administrators of the

Estate of Lillie O. Dillingham, deceased

(1:29, 2:5, 12, 19)

General Legals

26-003

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENTS BY GRAND JURY

Pursuant to section 15-12-81(b) of the Official Code of Georgia notice hereby given that the grand jury next convening for Talbot County Georgia, on March 9, 2026 will make certain appointments,

recommendations, or selections to the following Boards: Board of Equalization. Said appointments to be made for full term in cases where the current term of the Board member has expired or will expire and for the remainder of the current term where a vacancy has been created by the death, resignation or removal of the board member.

Notice given this January 22, 2026

Penny D. Mahone, Superior Court Clerk

(1:29, 2:5)

Public Hearings

26-001

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT

Pursuant to O.C.G.A ?15-11-50(f), the Superior Court Judges of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit are

accepting applications for the position(s) of Full and Part-Time Juvenile Court Judge.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. ?15-11-51(a), no person shall be judge of the juvenile court unless, at the time of his or her appointment, he or she has attained the age of 30 years, has been a citizen of the State of Georgia for three (3) years, is a member in good standing of the State Bar of Georgia, and has practiced law for five years.

Applications should be submitted to Edward F. Berry, Chattahoochee Judicial

Circuit Court Administrator by mail or

in person at 308 10th Street, Columbus,

GA 31901. Application and resume must

be received or postmarked on or before five o'clock (5:00) p.m. (est.), on March 31, 2026. Questions about the position(s) should be directed to Edward F. Berry,

Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit Court

Administrator. Contact can be made by

email: eberry@columbusga.org or by

calling 706-653-4190.

Applications may be submitted by incumbents as well as persons meeting the statutory requirements for the position(s).

(JAN 8, FEB 5, MAR 5)

26-006

NOTICE OF ELECTION OF

Pine Mountain

SOIL AND WATERCONSERVATION

DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

February 1, 2026

To all qualified voters in Talbot County: Notice is hereby given that on November 3, 2026, a non-partisan election will be held to elect 1 supervisor(s) for Talbot County in the Pine Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District.

District Supervisors serve as unpaid state officials who represent their counties in support of soil and water conservation activities.

March 6, 2026, is the last day on which nominations for candidates for the election will be accepted. The signatures of at least 25 qualified electors of the county are required to nominate a candidate. Candidates must also be qualified electors of the county. Nominating

petitions must be received in the office of the Talbot County Election Superintendent at 1761 Geneva Highway, TALBOTTON GA, 31827, no later than 12:00 noon on March 6, 2026.

Petitions may be obtained from the Conservation Commission at the address below, from the Commission's website at <https://www.gaswcc.org/> or from the Election Superintendent of Talbot County.

GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Mitch Attaway, Executive Director

4310 Lexington Road

Athens, GA 30605

(1:29)

Probate Notices

26-004

PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION NOTICE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

RONALD E. LEE II has petitioned to be appointed Administrator(s) of the estate of RONALD ERSKINE LEE deceased, of said County. (The Petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. ? 53-12-261.) All interested parties 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 FEBRUARY 23, 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.

SHATARA POWELL

Judge of the Probate Court

By: NI?LEJA WILLIAMS

Clerk of the Probate Court

PO BOX 157

TALBOTTON, GA 31827

706-665-8866

(1:29, 2:5, 12, 19)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

Georgia Transmission Corporation: Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service (RUS), USDA

ACTION: Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that RUS is issuing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), as required by the National Policy Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347), in connection with potential impacts related to the Dresden-Talbot County 500 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line construction, the Dresden 500/230 kV Substation modification, and the Talbot County 230 kV Substation modification (collectively, the Project) proposed by Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC). GTC is requesting funding from RUS to construct the proposed Project.

In accordance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management; Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands; and USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy, the purpose of this notice is also to inform the public of the proposed conversion of wetlands and effects to floodplains and to request comments concerning the proposal, alternative sites or actions that would avoid these impacts, and methods that could be used to minimize these impacts. Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. §§ 300101 – 306108), this notice is to inform the public of the potential impacts to historic properties and request comments.

The Draft EIS has been prepared under the National Energy Emergency as per Executive Order 14156, and USDA Rural Development's NEPA policies and procedures, 7 CFR 1970. These regulations that allow for alternative arrangements in emergency situations do not waive the requirements to comply with NEPA, nor do they complete or alter other environmental requirements (except as provided by other environmental statutes or regulations).

AVAILABILITY: The Draft EIS and supporting documentation is available for public review on the RUS website at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/impact-statement/dresden-talbot-county-500-kv-transmission-line-project>

CONTACT INFORMATION: The publication of this notice initiates a ten (10) day comment period for the proposed Project. To provide comments or request additional information, please contact Suzanne Kopich, Environmental and Historic Preservation Division at: suzanne.kopich@usda.gov. Following the 10-day comment period, RUS will address substantive comments and will prepare a Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD). Notices announcing the availability of the Final EIS and ROD will be published on the RUS website and in local newspapers.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A transmission line corridor and modifications at the two existing end-point substations are currently being proposed by GTC to resolve reliability issues and to maintain the flow of reliable power in the west Georgia area. Specifically, the proposed Project includes: expanding the existing Dresden 500/230 kV Substation to a 5-element ring bus configuration in Coweta County, Georgia; expanding and converting the existing Talbot County 230 kV Substation into a 500/230 kV facility in Harris County, Georgia; constructing a new 67-mile 500 kV transmission line that is 150-feet in width connecting the two substations; and the construction and maintenance of approximately 20 miles of access roads. The transmission line component of the Project includes parts of the following counties in Georgia: Coweta, Troup, Meriwether, Talbot, and Harris.

Along the transmission line, there will be approximately 300 transmission pole structures of varying designs and types—lattice towers, inverted H-frames, and delta monopoles for tangent structures. The average height of these structures will be 140-feet out of ground, with the tallest being 180-feet out of ground and a span of 1,300 feet on average between structures. GTC will acquire approximately 1,200 acres of easement from public and private landowners for the transmission line and will clear roughly 1,011 acres from ground-to-sky to establish in perpetuity an area of low growing vegetation. Modifications to the existing Dresden 500/230 kV Substation are proposed to create a new substation frame to terminate the proposed transmission line. The Project proposes to construct the Talbot County 500/230 kV Substation on the south end of the corridor. This facility will be adjacent to the existing Talbot County 230 kV Switching Station. The purpose and need for the Dresden – Talbot County Project results from changes in generation and evolving interregional flow patterns that are resulting in constraints on area transmission facilities. Per the North American Reliability Corporation (NERC) reliability standards for planning transmission systems, specifically TPL-001- 4, these conditions must have a corrective action plan.

If implemented, the proposed Project would impact wetlands. While the exact acreage of structural and fill related impacts is not known at this time, GTC is committing to having all impacts fall within the limits of the USACE nationwide permit program, which only authorizes projects that individually and cumulatively have minimal adverse environmental effects.

Additionally, if implemented, the proposed Project would impact 53 acres of 100-year floodplains.

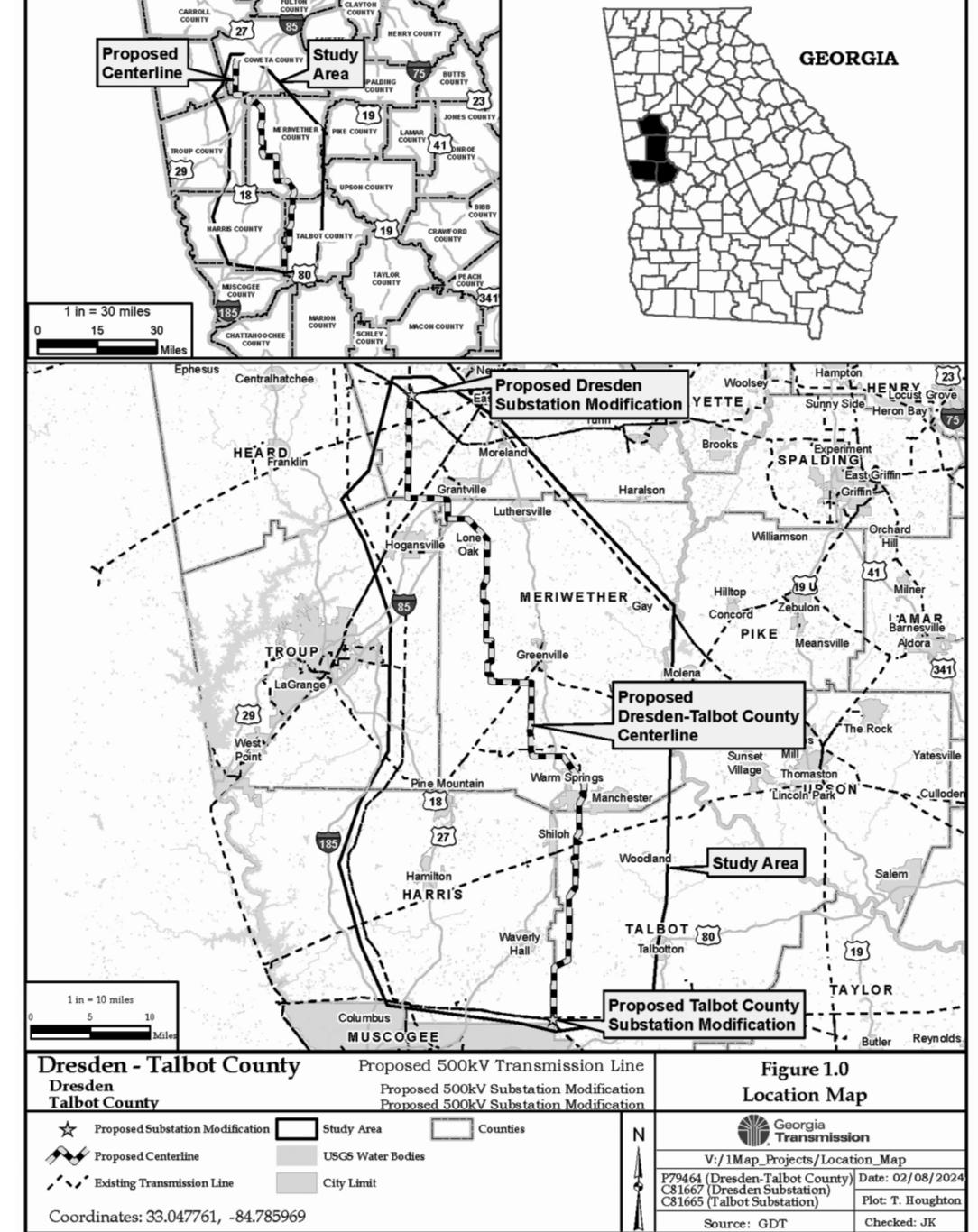
The proposed Project, particularly the transmission line component, would result in adverse effects to four historic resources: 1) Biscuit Hill Farm, 2) Orr Farm, 3) Providence Cemetery, and 4) Kendrick Farm. As part of the alternate Section 106 process outlined in the Programmatic Agreement among the US Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, Georgia Transmission Corporation, and, the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer regarding Compliance with 54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq. for Georgia Transmission Corporation executed on November 12, 2024, these adverse effects are programmatically mitigated through sponsorship of historic research projects approved jointly by RUS and Georgia State Historic Preservation Office.

GTC prepared the Draft EIS for RUS that describes the project, assesses the proposed Project's environmental impacts, and summarizes, as applicable, any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental impacts. RUS has conducted an independent evaluation of the EIS, and finds that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed Project.

Any final action by the RUS related to the proposed Project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review requirements as promulgated in the RUS' Environmental Policies and Procedures.

A general location map of the proposal is shown below.

Dated: January 29, 2026





Is one of the most famous paintings of the Founding Fathers incorrect?

By JACK BAGLEY
didyouknowcolumn@gmail.com

If you will indulge me, I want to use this week's column introduction to wish my little brother a very happy 66th birthday.

The day the column appears in its home newspapers is my brother Mark's birthday, so I want to wish many happy returns of the day to my childhood tormentor, protector, and friend.

Mark and I are as opposite as peas and avocados. He's an outdoorsy type, who enjoys hunting and fishing ... I am a bookworm, happiest indoors and not a big fan of the elements. I never learned to hunt and haven't fished in more years than I care to think. We both retired as teachers, working for many years in the same system - but often, we had to show papers to prove we were related. We're that different.

Happy 66th, Mark. Have 66 more!

Now, on to what you came here for ... the trivia. Enjoy!

Did you know ...

... law allows a "right to light" in buildings? Under English law, the right states that the owner of a building whose windows have received natural daylight for 20 years or more is allowed to prevent any nearby construction that would deprive him or her of that natural illumination. (I'll bet that goes over big at planning commission meetings.)

... Coca-Cola™ saved a town from the Great Depression? During the Depression, the town of Quincy, Florida, had a banker who suggested that anyone who could invest in Coca-Cola, which at that time was selling for \$19 a share. The banker said the stock would boom - and brother, did it ever. At least 67 people in the town of only 7,000 became millionaires when Coke stock skyrocketed, and that made Quincy, Florida, the richest American city per capita. (They had a Coke and really smiled.)

... your "funny bone" is actually a nerve? When you bump your elbow just right, you feel that unpleasant tingling sensation - but it's not because you hit a bone. What you've done is made the humerus bone in your upper arm come in contact with the ulnar nerve. The minor compression sends the tingling sensation. Additional trivia note: the name "funny bone" comes from the name of the upper arm bone, humerus. (Here I always thought it was because the reaction made people laugh.)

... a popular representation of our Founding Fathers is incorrect? The iconic painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, by John Trumbull (1756-1843) is so well known it is even depicted on the obverse of the \$2 bill. There are two things wrong with the painting, however. One is that it isn't of the signing of the Declaration, it's of the presentation of the first draft by Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826). And two ... what is depicted never happened in the first place. Historians note that there was never any time in which all of



the delegates to the Continental Convention were together in Philadelphia, as shown in the portrait. (But it looks so cool on the two-dollar bill!)

... a classic auto in a 1980s television show wasn't what it appeared to be? From 1984 to 1989, *Miami Vice* was one of the top-rated television series in America, and one of the classic features was the Ferrari driven by Sonny Crockett, played by Don Johnson (born 1949). But for the first couple of seasons, the car was not a Ferrari. It was a Corvette, which was doctored by the crew to look like a Ferrari. Eventually, a Ferrari Testarossa was given to the show to use. (Proving once again ... you can do just about anything with the right makeup.)

... why saffron is so expensive? One of the world's most expensive spices, saffron is a very labor-intensive spice to harvest. Each saffron flower produces only three slender threads which must be harvested by hand, just after sunrise. Add to that the fact that saffron has a brief growing season, and you can see why it's so expensive. (Not that I would know, or anything.)

... at one time, the U.S. government required car speedometers to show nothing higher than 85 miles per hour? In 1979, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration instituted a rule that auto, truck and motorcycle speedometers could not show anything higher than 85 mph. The idea, of course, was to slow cars down and save gasoline. One of the problems with that rule was the fact that automakers had a stockpile of speedometer dials that went up to 120 mph and higher. To comply with the silly rule, they simply covered over the numbers above 85 and colored the hash marks differently. This, too, was a violation of the law, but the NHTSA never bothered to prosecute. The ridiculous rule had almost no effect on speed or fuel consumption and was repealed in 1982. (The government was doing a lot of silly stuff back then.)

... there's more than one way to fix the outcome of an election? For example, in 1938, voters in Austria were given ballots for an election. The ballot asked one question: "Do you approve of the annexation of Austria by Germany as ordered by our Führer, Adolf Hitler?" The circle for "yes" was three times the size of the circle for "no." Hitler (1895-1945) had conducted the *Anschluss*, or annexation, of Austria into the German Reich on March 13 of that year. To no one's surprise, 99.75% of the voters marked the much larger "yes" circle. (Their government was doing a lot of silly stuff then too.)

... the ocean sunfish lays up to five million eggs at one time? Most of them - over 99.8% - end up as food for other fish. (And after laying the eggs, the sunfish says, "Whew!")

... baby elephants use their trunks as pacifiers? (Well, they don't have thumbs, so there's that.)

Now ... you know!

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Did Earth Once Have a Second Moon?

By ANDY KOBER

On Feb. 9, 1913, a very large meteor shower, not typical of regular meteor showers, gave rise to the idea that Earth might have had a second and small moon.

Beginning about 9 pm, the meteor shower was viewed by people in the northeastern US, Canada, Bermuda, and by crew members on ships off the American east coast and as far south as Brazil. The shower could have been watched by many more people except there was cloud cover over much of the northeast US.

It was an unusual meteor shower in a number of respects. While typical meteor showers grow in intensity, this one did not. Instead there were an estimated 40 to 60 meteors that just suddenly appeared. During typical meteor showers the meteors travel in a variety of different directions. This meteor shower did not, instead all of the meteors traveled an almost identical path from horizon to horizon. Meteors usually flash across the sky, but these did not. Some were watched for five minutes and some of the fireballs for 30 to 40 seconds. Amazement continued because after the meteor shower, some observers reported seeing what looked like a large star that passed overhead with no tail or sparks normally associated with a meteor. The unusual meteor shower produced a sound described as "thun-



dering".

The event was not over as about five hours after the first meteor shower ended, a second was reported. This second shower included three groups of "dark objects" that followed the same course as the first meteor shower.

The phenomenon came to be known as the Great Meteor Procession of 1913.

There have been several theories advanced regarding the meteor shower with Canadian astronomer Clarence Chant suggesting the meteors had been a natural satellite of Earth that broke apart upon entry of the atmosphere. Another theory, advanced by John O'Keefe was the meteor shower came from the final remnants of a circumterrestrial ring around Earth. A part of NASA, O'Keefe was an expert in planetary science and astrogeology.

Next week we'll continue looking at some of science fiction's most noted celestial bodies.

Keep your eyes on the sky for passing fireballs.

Meteors can flash across the sky anytime, day or night, and extraordinarily bright meteors are often referred to as fireballs --- and they are spotted quite often.

On Tuesday, Jan. 27, five people across Alabama and Georgia reported seeing a fireball. The fireball was first reported at 7:10 pm by a skywatcher in Nelson, GA, which is between Canton and Ellijay, and as far north and east as it was seen. The fireball was seen as far south as Kinsey, AL, and as far west as Auburn, AL.

None of the skywatchers reported hearing the fireball make any noise but one witnessed it fragment.

Anyone seeing a fireball is urged to report the sighting to <https://amsmeteors.org>.

Going outside and looking at the sky, especially the night sky, can be fun and educational for the entire family.

There are a number of free apps available to help identify stars and constellations, and some of the apps will show satellites.

Happy skywatching!

FINE PRINT

STACEY ABRAMS



Georgians are Subsidizing an Uneven Data Center Boom

For years, Georgia leaders have boasted that a major reason the state became a hot spot for artificial intelligence data centers was a generous tax break passed in 2018.

However, a new state audit tells a different story — most of those data centers would have come here, anyway.

According to the report, only about 30% of Georgia's data centers can be traced to the tax break. The other 70% were already likely to be built, drawn by cheap land, access to relatively inexpensive power and Georgia's geographic location. Even so, taxpayers are losing nearly half a billion dollars a year to keep the unnecessary, ineffective incentive in place.

In other words, we're overpaying, and it will cost us.

Data centers offer a complicated financial calculus. During the construction phase, those in the building trades are the big winners. However, once the massive edifices are built, employment opportunities evaporate.

Buildings dedicated to towers of computer servers and the transfer of electronic information require only a skeleton crew to maintain. Instead of people, what data centers do need — forever — are enormous amounts of electricity and water.

Because of their need for so much power, Georgia is now planning for thousands of megawatts of new demand largely to serve these facilities.

Instead of funding tax breaks to create jobs, everyday Georgians are instead footing the bill through higher power bills, dramatically increased water rates, louder neighborhoods, fewer trees and more strain on aging water systems — but the burden will not be shared evenly.

As those along the I-20 corridor can attest, many of the fastest-growing data center projects are being built in Black communities and in rural areas. Those who know Georgia's history surrounding land-use decisions know several of these places have historically dealt with the effects of toxic landfills, warehouses and other heavy industries.

Residents often learn about new projects late in the process, when decisions are already made. The limited jobs promised rarely meet the pledges — but the impacts linger.

Democracy is not simply found in the act of voting. Voting is a mechanism through which we demand representative leadership make good decisions on our behalf — and invest our resources wisely. The reflexive tendency to spend billions for headlines and yield little for communities is not right.

It violates the intention of an effective democracy. We cannot justify bad deals under the vague, unproven promise of growth. If the state is giving away hundreds of millions of dollars in corporate welfare, the public should see and feel the benefits.

Technology has been an economic engine for Georgia — from financial tech founded in Columbus to startups powering metro Atlanta. As a legislator, I supported both, and as an author, I have explored the promise and challenges of AI in my books.

I know we don't have to be anti-tech to be pro-accountability.

During my time under the Gold Dome, I supported tax incentives tied to real prosperity and voted against boondoggles that benefited the wealthy and powerful. Using its authority to protect Georgians, the General Assembly must tighten these tax breaks, require proof of real job creation, demand transparency about water and power use, and give communities a real voice in the process before projects are approved.

Right now, too many Georgians are paying the costs of the AI boom, but they're not reaping much benefit.

We don't need ChatGPT or Gemini to tell us that the math doesn't add up. Old-fashioned calculators work just as well — and also consider the bipartisan rebuke to the state's Public Service Commission last November.

Affordable choices for constituents make up the "real stuff" of democracy. As the legislative session heats up and politicians start jockeying for a return trip this coming election season, remember to tell those who speak for you to listen up.

Stacey Abrams is a bestselling author, entrepreneur and host of the podcast "Assembly Required." She previously served as minority leader in the Georgia House of Representatives.

Career Day

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

Central Elementary-High School (CEHS) has announced the 2026 College and Career Day will be held on Wednesday, Mar. 18 this year.

The event will be held in the Arthur Miller Gymnasium located at 945 North Washington Avenue in Talbotton from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

For more information, please contact Dr. Jenie Carter, CEHS counselor by calling her at (706) 665-8578 Ext. 143 or emailing her at jcarterII@talbot.k12.ga.us

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