

THE TALBOTTON NEW ERA

Serving the people of Talbot County since 1879

VOL. 148 • NO. 17

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

talbottonnewera.com 8 PAGES • 1 SECTION • 4 INSERTS • \$1.00



Photographs By LG Broadcasting

KIDNEY WALK A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS - The Warrior Bean Foundation held a Kidney Disease Awareness walk and event on Saturday, Apr. 18 at the Shiloh Walking Trail. The event was a tremendous success. In the top photo, Tiffany Warrior (middle top photo) a member of the Warrior Bean Foundation and event coordinator is shown at one of the tables where food was being served. The bottom photo shows some of the display tables at the event. The event was designed to bring awareness, support for families and promote health education. The event was a tremendous success.



Photograph By Victoria Kirkpatrick

BUSY NIGHT FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION - The Talbot County Board of Education had a healthy agenda for the Apr. 14 meeting. Among the items to be discussed was the hiring of a new principal for Central High. The board approved the hiring of Michael Coley for the position.

School Board Hears Calendar

By VICTORIA KIRKPATRICK

During the Talbot County Board of Education meeting held on Tuesday, Apr. 14, the board approved the hiring of Michael Coley, Jr. as the new principal for Central High School and discussed the hiring of a head basketball coach and PE instructor in executive session.

Coley will bring 23 years of experience to the position. See story about his hiring also in this issue.

The board heard about the upcoming calendar of events for Central Elementary-High School (CEHS).

The board was informed that the last date for pre-k

and kindergarten registration is May 13.

The following are events scheduled for the schools:

- Milestone and statewide testing dates for Central Elementary and Middle schools will be Apr. 21 through May 5 and Central High will be held Apr. 29 through May 8.
- Inductions to the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) will be held on May 14.
- Field day at the school, eighth grade promotion and kindergarten graduation has been scheduled for May 20.
- Awards day has been scheduled for May 21.
- The last day of school and graduation ceremonies have been scheduled for

May 22 with commencement set for 6 p.m.

The board also voted to enter a memorandum of understanding to partner with Spread the Hope after hearing from Omar McCantz with Spread the Hope.

McCantz told the board a literacy initiative providing brand-new books for primarily grades three through five and with interest in pre-k and kindergarten students was available. She stated grants would be sought through Dollar General for the program.

Spread the Hope is to distribute books through the program to coordinate with school schedules and avoid using instructional time.

Sheriff's Office Investigating After Finding Body in a Car

By JACK BAGLEY

Talbot County Sheriff's Deputies are investigating the discovery of a body inside a parked car at the Dollar General store in Box Springs.

According to reports, Deputies were notified

Saturday morning around 10:21 of the person inside the car at the store. They located the vehicle after a neighboring jurisdiction gave a BOLO, or Be On the Lookout, one hour earlier.

Deputies said there was no threat to the public, and

the name of the individual found inside the car had not been released at press deadline, pending notification of relatives.

The incident remains under investigation, according to reports by law enforcement.

Coley Named High School Principal

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

Talbot County Schools is proud to announce the appointment of Mr. Michael D. Coley, Jr. as the new Principal of Central Elementary-High School (CEHS). With more than two decades of experience in education, leadership, and student development, Mr. Coley brings a dynamic and student-centered approach to the role.

Mr. Coley is an accomplished educational leader with 23 years of experience supporting academic achievement, school operations, and student success at both the school and district levels. He is widely recognized for his ability to build strong relationships among students, staff, families, and the community while fostering a positive and collaborative school culture.

Most recently, Mr. Coley has served in multiple leadership roles within the Quitman County School District, including CTAE Director, Assistant Principal, Dual Enrollment Coordinator, and Athletic Director. In these roles, he has overseen career and technical education programs, supported instructional leadership initiatives, implemented credit recovery programs, and strengthened partnerships with local colleges to expand student opportunities.

Prior to that, he served in Randolph County Schools as Director of Operations and Pupil Services, Assistant Principal, and Athletic Director. During his tenure, he improved operational systems, led disciplinary



Photo By Keniece Adams

NEW CENTRAL HIGH PRINCIPAL - Michael D. Coley, Jr. has been named the principal of Central Elementary-High School. Coley brings more than two decades of experience in education, leadership and student development to the position.

processes as a certified hearing officer, and enhanced financial management practices. He also played a key role in school safety planning and district-wide operations.

Mr. Coley began his career in Sumter County Schools, where he served as a Health and Physical Education Teacher, Graduation Coach, Head Basketball Coach, and Alternative School Director. His diverse experience in both instructional and leadership roles has equipped him with a well-rounded perspective on student success and school improvement.

He holds an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership from Columbus State University, a Master of Science from Troy University, and a Bachelor of Science in Education from Fort Valley

State University.

"Mr. Coley's depth of experience, commitment to student achievement, and proven leadership make him an excellent fit for Central Elementary-High School," said [Superintendent/Board Chair Name]. "We are confident that under his leadership, CEHS will continue to grow and thrive."

Mr. Coley is passionate about improving instructional practices, strengthening school culture, and ensuring that all students are equipped for success beyond the classroom. His leadership philosophy emphasizes collaboration, accountability, and building meaningful connections within the school community.

Please join Talbot County Schools in welcoming Mr. Coley to Central Elementary-High School.

Community Input Sought By Schools

Submitted to NEW ERA

The Talbot County School District is launching a strategic planning process and is seeking input from citizens, staff, parents, students, and civic leaders.

"Community feedback will play a vital role in shaping a plan that reflects the priorities and aspirations of the district and its stakeholders," said Superintendent Jonathan Taylor.

There will be two opportunities for the community to

share input. The first will be an in-person planning session scheduled for Thursday, Apr. 30 from 4 to 6 p.m. in the CEHS Cafeteria. Citizens, staff, parents, and students are invited to participate in a group discussion focused on identifying priorities and opportunities for the future of the district.

For those unable to attend the in-person meeting, an online survey will also be available. A link to the survey will be posted on the district website,

www.talbot.k12.ga.us, the day following the meeting.

All community input gathered through both opportunities will be reviewed by a planning team composed of school staff and community members. This team will use the feedback to help develop the district's vision, mission, beliefs, and strategic goals.

"It is critical to have as many voices at the table as possible so that our strategic plan will truly represent all of our district's stakeholders," Taylor said.

Rep. Buckner to Hold Town Hall Meeting

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

State Representative Debbie Buckner has scheduled a town hall meeting for Tuesday, Apr. 28 at 6 p.m. at the Talbot County Courthouse located at 26 S. Washington Street in Talbotton.

The meeting will adjourn at 8 p.m.

Buckner and Senator Ed Harbinson will present a Talbot County specific leg-

islative update.

Columbus Technical College President Martha Ann Todd will provide a report regarding the career and technical education programs offered this year at Central High School.

Tracie Hardaway, from the River Valley Regional Commission will provide information regarding the River Valley Community Compatibility Study and the UGA regional marketing

campaign for tourism development for Talbot County.

President and CEO of Choose Columbus, Missy Kendrick will be on hand for a Questions and Answers session on the Data Center proposed for north east Columbus.

Please take advantage of learning more from these knowledgeable speakers. For more information feel free to call 706-269-3630.



Photo Submitted

SERVICE AWARDS PRESENTED - At the Apr. 6 meeting of the Talbot County Board of Commissioners employees of the county were honored for their terms of service to the county. Pictured above, Tiffany Prather receives her service award for five years from Commissioner Ken Chapman. Jerry Anthony was recognized for 30 years service and Robin Wilson was recognized for five years service. Anthony and Wilson were not present at the meeting.

Event Planned for Health Department

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

The Talbot County Health Department is holding a "Spring into Good Health" event on Saturday, May 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The event will offer free services for the families of

Talbot County. Some of the free services will include:

- Blood pressure checks
- HIV Testing
- Immunization Information

There will also be free information about family and community resources to include:

- WIC services

- the Children First Program
- Talbot County Fire Departments and more.

There will also be free wellness bags for participants and free hot dogs.

The Talbot County Health Department is located at 1073 Woodland Highway in Talbotton.



Things to Do In and Around Talbot County This Week

Pastor Anniversary

Mt. Airy Baptist Church will be celebrating the 17th Pastoral Anniversary of Rev. Cleo and Lady Patricia Smith on May 3. The guest speakers for the event will be Rev. Brent Terry for the 11:30 a.m. service and Rev. Bruce Alford for the 2 p.m. service. Everyone is invited to come out and help honor rev. Cleo and Lady Patricia Smith.

Usher's Day

The Sweet Home Baptist Church family invites everyone to Usher's Anniversary Day on Sunday, Apr. 26 at 11:30 a.m. Guest speaker for the event will be Rev. Jesse Carreker of New Salem Baptist Church of Talbotton. Sweet Home Baptist is located in Box Springs.

Revival Services

You are invited to revival services at Bethlehem Baptist Church located at 1080 Bethlehem Church Road in Pine Mountain Valley on Wednesday, May 13 through Saturday, May 17. Service will begin each night at 6:30 p.m. Evangelist Ron Coram will bring the word and David and Susie McMillan will lead the music. A nursery will be provided each night. On Sunday, join the church family as they celebrate homecoming beginning at 10:30 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds.

Alumni Banquet

The Talbot County Schools Alumni Association Scholarship Banquet will be held on Saturday June 13 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton located at 5351 Sidney Simons Blvd; in Columbus. The cost of the event is \$75 per person. This year's quest speaker will be Dr. Terrance Ferguson from the TV Show Critter Fixer (class of

1987). You may pay by Cash App: \$talbotcsaa2024 or pay by mail and please make checks or money orders payable to Talbot County Schools Alumni Association and send to P.O. Box 364 Talbotton, Ga 31827. If you have any questions please contact Leticia Cook at 706.326.0099.

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 GA HWY 85 in Waverly Hall at the CityHall 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. Jpegs, 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 attached them to Word documents. Such photographs do not work well.

Please note the newspaper reserves the right to edit or reject any submission to the newspaper for the things to do section or the newspaper. We appreciate your continued support of the Talbotton New Era.

Early Voting Begins on Monday, April 27th

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

The Talbot County Board of Elections and Registration has announced that the Early Voting hours have changed from the May 19 General Primary/Non-Partisan Election.

Early/Advanced Voting will be held at the Board of Elections and Registration Office located at 1761 Geneva Highway in

Talbotton.

Early Voting begins on Monday, Apr. 27 and will end on Friday, May 15.

The Early Voting dates and times are as follows:

Monday, Apr. 27 through Friday, May 1 from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Saturday, May 2 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Monday, May 4 through Friday, May 8 from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Saturday, May 9 from 9

a.m. until 5 p.m.

Monday, May 11 through Friday, May 15 from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Absentee By Mail ballot applications can be requested via e-mail to: elections-registration@talbotcounty-ga.org and online at.mvp.sos.ga.gov. Ballots can also be picked up at the Board of Elections & Registration office or by calling 706 665-8270 to request an application.

CEHS to Hold Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration

By JOHN KUYKENDALL

Central Elementary-High School (CEHS) has announced dates and times for Pre-K and Kindergarten registration for students who are new to the system.

Registration will be held on the following dates between the hours of 9 a.m.

and 2 p.m. on May 13.

The following items will be needed to register a student for Pre-K: a birth certificate; ear, eye and dental records; a Social Security card; an immunization certificate; a picture ID; proof of residency (utility bill); proof of income and proof of insurance (medicaid, private

insurance, Peachcare or Wellcare).

To register a student for Kindergarten the following items will be needed: a birth certificate; ear, eye and dental records; a Social Security card; and an immunization certificate.

Please note that all documents are required to register a child.

Skynyrd Tribute Band at President Theatre

Submitted to NEW ERA

Join us at the President Theatre on Saturday, April 25 for a tribute to Lynrd Skynyrd, the Jacksonville,

Florida band that defined the southern rock sound in the 1970s.

Our tribute band, SkynFolks out of Atlanta, recreates the authentic sound of the Florida band on well known hits such as Free Bird, Sweet Home Alabama and other classics of southern rock.

The tribute show begins at 7 pm, and tickets cost just \$25 each. Buy your tickets in advance through the President Theatre website or purchase them at the door if seats are still available.

The early career of Lynrd Skynyrd ended tragically in 1977 when three members of the band died in a plane crash, and the other members were seriously injured. The surviving band members reunited for a tribute tour in 1987 and went on to produce seven more studio albums between 1991 and 2012. Although all the original members of Lynrd Skynyrd have passed away now, the band still performs regularly with new members at venues around the country.

Photograph Credit Correction For the CEHS Sports Banquet

In the Apr. 16 issue of The Talbotton New Era there were several photographs of the Central Elementary-High School Athletic Sports Banquet. The photographs were emailed to the newspaper by one of its correspondents and did not clarify the photographs were taken by Keniece Adams of Central Elementary-High School. Ms. Adams contacted the newspaper about the error. We apologize to Ms. Adams but the newspaper was not aware she had taken the photographs.

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TALBOT COUNTY, GEORGIA

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX PROCEEDS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

Project Description Per SPLOST Referendum	Estimated Cost			Expenditures	
	Original	Current	Prior Years	Current Year	Total
Resolution #070102:					
Recreational facilities and equipment	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 538,382	\$ -	\$ 538,382
Public safety facilities	2,000,000	2,000,000	608,329	-	608,329
Roads, streets and bridge purposes	3,500,000	3,500,000	1,117,661	-	1,117,661
Courthouse	1,500,000	1,500,000	404,784	-	404,784
County Commissioners annex	1,000,000	1,000,000	219,650	-	219,650
Resolution #070107:					
Roads, streets and bridge purposes	1,200,000	1,200,000	916,193	-	916,193
Public safety facilities	400,000	400,000	260,208	-	260,208
Recreational facilities and equipment	400,000	400,000	176,954	-	176,954
Courthouse	1,600,000	1,600,000	1,109,737	-	1,109,737
Town of Geneva	100,000	100,000	77,866	-	77,866
Town of Junction City	100,000	100,000	77,866	-	77,866
City of Talbotton	100,000	100,000	77,866	-	77,866
City of Woodland	100,000	100,000	77,866	-	77,866
Debt service	Debt service	Debt service	1,046,054	-	1,046,054
Resolution #070114:					
Jail construction	1,200,000	1,200,000	939,582	-	939,582
Roads, streets and bridge purposes	800,000	800,000	432,999	-	432,999
Recreational facilities and equipment	1,200,000	1,200,000	146,508	-	146,508
Public safety facilities and equipment	400,000	400,000	137,019	-	137,019
Town of Geneva	100,000	100,000	78,210	-	78,210
Town of Junction City	100,000	100,000	78,209	-	78,209
City of Talbotton	100,000	100,000	78,210	-	78,210
City of Woodland	100,000	100,000	78,209	-	78,209
Resolution #070120:					
Community building	1,020,000	1,020,000	641,867	1,527,764	2,169,631
Roads, streets and bridge purposes	1,360,000	1,360,000	1,075,690	160,409	1,236,099
Public safety facilities and equipment	680,000	680,000	232,468	223,739	456,207
Town of Geneva	34,157	34,157	32,311	9,211	41,522
Town of Junction City	57,576	57,576	54,114	15,526	69,640
City of Talbotton	315,544	315,544	297,967	93,608	391,575
City of Woodland	132,723	132,723	125,924	35,789	161,713
	\$ 21,600,000	\$ 21,600,000	\$ 11,138,703	\$ 2,066,046	\$ 13,204,749

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Rain to Return Over the Weekend

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 World extended forecast.



This week the Weather Man says that the Talbot County area can expect mild temperatures again in the upcoming week but rain has returned to the forecast and expected to be here by the weekend.

Here is what Weather World is predicting for the upcoming week.

Today expect partly cloudy skies with a high temperature of 80 degrees and a low temperature of 56 degrees. Winds are expected to reach speeds of about five miles per hour and will be coming out of the Southwest.

Friday, Apr. 24, skies will continue to be partly cloudy with the high temperature expected to reach around 83 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 58 degrees. Winds are expected to reach speeds of about seven miles per hour and will be coming out of the Southwest.

Saturday, Apr. 25, skies were expected to be sunny today with the high temperature reaching about 87 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 60 degrees. Wind speeds are

expected to increase and reach a speed of about 11 miles per hour and will be coming out of the West Southwest.

Sunday, Apr. 26, rain is expected for the day with an 83 percent chance of rainfall and temperatures are expected to be a little cooler. The high temperature for the day is expected to be around 72 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 65 degrees. Winds are expected to reach speeds of about 10 miles per hour and will be coming out of the West Southwest.

On Monday, Apr. 27, the rain is expected to continue with an 89 percent chance of the wet stuff. The temperature is expected to be a little lower again with the high expected to reach about 70 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 62 degrees. Wind speeds will increase again and are expected to reach a speed of about 13 miles per hour and will be coming out of the East.

For Tuesday, Apr. 28, the chance of rain will decrease to about 66 percent but the wet stuff is expected to con-

tinue to fall. The high temperature for the day is expected to increase and reach about 84 degrees with the low temperature expected to be around 63 degrees. Wind are expected to reach speeds of about 11 miles per hour and will be coming out of the South Southwest.

On Wednesday, Apr. 29, rain is expected to continue to fall with a 77 percent chance of rain being predicted. The high temperature for the day is expected to be around 88 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 65 degrees. Winds speeds are expected to reach around 10 miles per hour and coming out of the West Northwest.

On Thursday, Apr. 30, the rain is again expected to continue for the day with the chance of rain being predicted at about 87 percent. The high temperature for the day is expected to be around 81 degrees and the low temperature is expected to be around 58 degrees. Winds are expected to reach speeds of about 12 miles per hour and will be coming out of the West Northwest.



Photos By LG Broadcasting

COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR HELD IN MANCHESTER - The annual community health fair was held in Manchester on Saturday and was well attended. Pictured are some of the booths at the event: Get Meriwether Reading (top left), Meriwether County Family Connection (top right) and Georgia Department of Public Safety and the Meriwether County Sheriff's Office (bottom photo).



Photo By Mary Byers

SPRING FLING IN WARM SPRINGS - The City of Warm Springs held its annual Spring Fling event last weekend, and the back alleys and avenues were lined with booth after booth with any assortment of wares you could imagine from crochet to 3D printed art.



Manchester Council, Citizens Discuss Audit

By MARY BYERS

Manchester opened their monthly city council meeting by addressing the audit report for the fiscal year 2025. Council member Delisha Hodo wished to correct her prior inquiry, noting that the request was from herself and not the entire city council. She also stated that her intentions for the inquiry were not to come off "heavy-handed." The report stated that the main two findings from the F.Y. 2025 Audit were in regards to bookkeeping not being maintained as well as it should be and that the same individuals recording funds were doing so without oversight by another person. These issues have been present and remain unresolved for the last two fiscal year findings. One solution would be to hire a financial consultant, which the city has not had since Oct. 2019, but that would cost the city anywhere from \$75-100k plus benefits. Another possibility to make improvements is that the city could expand their coverage through Abbott Jordan & Koon to include year end findings. It



Photo By Mary Byers

ASKING CONSIDERATION - Rowan Carter appeared before Manchester's mayor and council for consideration to be appointed to the library board of directors.

was emphasized that the money and numbers are accurate, nothing is unaccounted for, but that there is a risk factor to how it is being conducted.

Following Hodo's overview, the city's include year end findings. It

Georgia State Retirees Meeting Set for April 27 in Woodbury

The Tri-County Chapter of the Georgia State Retirees Association (GSRA) will hold its quarterly meeting at Doodlum's Barbeque and Fruit Stand located at 18600 Main Street in Woodbury on Monday, Apr. 27 at 11:30 a.m.

Lunch can be purchased individually.

The Tri-County Chapter includes retirees from Meriwether, Harris, Troup, Talbot, Upson, and Pike counties.

Several local legislators and GSRA state officers have been invited to speak about the last legislative session.

Join your fellow retirees and prospective retirees for this informative meeting.

For more information,

contact Joy Evans at 706-656-0046 or Kay Garrett at 706-846-3422 or Kathy Clements at 706-655-2390.

GSRA is an organization established and maintained by state retirees for state retirees. We advocate for retirees as well as active employees and keep you informed about any changes or impacts to your retirement benefits through monthly newsletters, media sites, annual statewide meetings, legislative liaison team, action alerts, and local chapters with regular meetings. Join your fellow retirees and prospective retirees and help us help you.

The state retiree website is www.mygsra.com

Talbotton New Era Deadlines

Please be aware that the Talbotton New Era deadlines are as follows:

- Legal notices must be received by 12 noon Friday prior to run date. Legal notices received after that date will publish in the following week's issue.
- Classifieds and

Advertising must be received by 12 noon Monday..

- Obituaries, news, photographs, etc. must all be received by 12 noon Monday.

Be adhere to these deadlines.

To contact the New Era dial (706) 846-3188 or email starmercuryjohn@gmail.com

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

Talbot County's Youth Fishing Rodeo 2026 Registration Form

Sponsored by Talbot County Board of Commissioners

When: Saturday, May 2nd, 2026 **Time:** 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

Where: Talbot County Park Pond, 170 Park Street, Talbotton, Ga. 31827.

Anglers must be 4-16 years of age by May 2nd, 2026. Limit of 10 Fish per Child.

Registration is open on a first come first serve basis. Registration will close when full. The entire family is welcome, but only registered children may fish.

For more information you may call Peter Nolan at 706-570-0904.

Young Angler's Information. Please fill out separate form for each child fishing

Name of Child: _____ Age: _____

(Circle One) Male/ Female *Anglers must be 4-16 of age by May 2nd, 2026

Will this be your first time fishing? (Circle One) Yes / No

All children must be accompanied and Supervised by an Adult.

Parent/Guardian: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature & Waiver: _____

Date: _____

THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A WAIVER OF ALL LEGAL RIGHTS AT EVENT

"The Limit of Fish Taken the day of the Rodeo will be 10 Fish per Child"

Autos For Sale

Wide Variety To Choose From

- 17 Ford Expedition, Black, \$7,900
- 12 Dodge Ram, Crew Cab, Red, \$8,600
- 18 Chevy Equinox, Silver, \$7,900
- 09 Chevy Colorado, Ext. Cab, White, \$5,900
- 17 Jeep Renegade, Silver, \$6,400
- 19 Chevy Equinox, Black, \$8,900
- 20 Ford Fusion, Blue, \$7,900
- 18 Honda Accord, Black, \$11,900
- 18 Dodge Journey, Red, \$7,400
- 21 Chrysler Voyager Van, White, \$6,900
- 21 Ford Ranger, Crew Cab, Black, \$11,900
- 12 Chevy Colorado, Ext. Cab, White, \$6,400
- 19 Dodge Ram, Crew Cab, Black, \$11,900
- 16 Honda CRV, Maroon, \$9,800
- 18 Honda Civic, Black, \$8,900
- 21 Honda Accord, Black, \$12,900
- 14 Ford F-150, Ext. Cab, 4x4, Gray, \$12,900
- 20 Toyota Camry, Blue, \$12,900
- 11 GMC Canyon, Ext. Cab, White, \$6,400
- 18 Chevy Equinox, Black, \$7,900
- 22 Nissan Altima, White, \$10,400
- 18 Chevy Tahoe, Silver, \$13,900
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THE TALBOTTON NEW ERA

USPS 532-880

a division of

The Georgia Trust for Local News

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Music Can Bring Back Some Painful Memories

When I am driving around in my car, I like to listen to satellite radio. My preferences shift from the great radio shows of the past to the best music ever, that from the 1970s.

Your mileage may vary on that "best music" comment but it's my column so I can say it's the best music.

I started working in radio in 1976, spinning the hits at WLAG-AM in LaGrange and later at WTRP-AM, where I've remained in one billet or another since. Later this year, in fact, I will celebrate 50 years in broadcasting. Those early years were probably the best ... and, on reflection, the music was the best and the worst.

Listening to the hits of the 1970s takes me back, back to high school (I graduated in 1975) and, as mentioned, my first years in radio. There are very, very few songs from that time period that I don't like to listen to, and one of them was at one time a real favorite.

I refer to the song "Dancing Queen" by the Swedish group ABBA.

Don't get me wrong; that is one of the classic songs to come out of the '70s. But it also is, in my mind, associated with someone I retain very fond memories of, someone who isn't with us any more.

I've never told this story in print, and I seldom make reference to it verbally. It's one that bubbles beneath the surface but rarely breaks through. However, I recently found some old photographs from my going-away party when I went into the Air Force, and the person I'm referring to was at that party. The photos show the two of us laughing, goofing off, and dancing together.

Her name was Kathleen. She was the daughter of an Army officer assigned to Fort Benning while I was at Spencer High School in Columbus, and she was assigned to Spencer as well.

She arrived at the start of her junior year, as I was beginning my sophomore year. We were both in the Drama Club and were both cast in the big show that year, *The Skin of Our Teeth* by Thornton Wilder. Kathleen had the female lead and I had one of the lesser male roles.

I won't say I was her first friend at Spencer, but I was among the first, and because we both were in Drama our friendship became very strong. And I'll admit here that I fell hard for her; the way any red-blooded American teenager does when someone wonderful comes into their lives. Let's put it this way ... I crushed on Kathleen so hard my feet hurt.

We studied lines and rehearsed scenes together at school when we could, and because we had several class-



Jack Bagley

Musings of An Aging Mind

es together the next year (I skipped my junior year) we were in each others' company quite often. From my perspective, it was fabulous.

After graduation, I moved back to LaGrange and, on my 17th birthday, enlisted in the Air Force. During that summer we had kept in touch with letters and phone calls, and when my parents said I was having a going-away party, I invited Kathleen and four other dear friends from school. They all showed up and we had a fantastic time.

Kathleen even kissed me goodbye.

My Air Force career didn't pan out, sadly, and I came home and started working in radio. Recording my first show for Kathleen, I added a bit about my long-standing feelings ... and in her return letter, she quite lovingly and with great friendship shot me down.

Rather than be driven away by the romantic rejection, I used it to make our friendship stronger. We saw each other from time to time, she in Columbus and me in LaGrange, but then life got in the way and we drifted apart. These things happen.

In 1995, when my graduating class was planning our 20-year reunion, I was hoping beyond hope that Kathleen would be there. At the time I was married and had a child, and I knew nothing romantic could ever come of seeing her, but I knew I'd have a great time just being around her once again.

She didn't attend. She missed the 30-year reunion as well. I was one of the folks trying to find graduates for the 40-year reunion, and that's when I learned why she'd not attended.

In October of 1983, while working in Austin, Texas and going to graduate school there, Kathleen had been murdered by a man who she had let into her apartment to use her phone.

Her mother, who I absolutely adored then and now, told about that in an online essay. I learned more details and was devastated.

For many reasons, "Dancing Queen" ties with her in my mind, and I can't listen to that without thinking of her.

Finding those photos from the party brought back a flood of happy memories, and the sad realization that she's gone.

Rest easy, Kathleen.

My Age Doesn't Matter But Getting Old Does

Well, it's that time of year again, as much as I hate to admit it, I will soon be another year older. Don't ask my age because it really doesn't matter and I'm not sure I remember any way. It's been a lot of years since my mother brought me into this world and that is the one thing I do know and assure I can feel.

Each day brings a new surprise. As a kid I loved surprises because usually it meant you were going to get something good. Now, I'm surprised every day when I wake and feel a new pain somewhere in my body. After a little while, you just get used to it and go on about your business.

About the only good thing I know about growing old is that all my dark secrets are safe with my friends. That's because not one of them can remember those secrets.

Seriously though, growing old is not that bad if you don't mind having the eyesight of a mole in the daylight, the hearing of a young man that shot a triple barrel shotgun without any ear protection, and pain in almost every part of your body.

There's all the medications to. Let's not forget them.

We take medicines to wake up, medicines before we eat, medicines after we eat, medicine between meals and medicines at bed time. The really sad part is that we are not sure what all the medicines are for, we can't remember.

When we start aging the first thing that happens is that we receive free hair highlights. Some people call them wisdom highlights, or as they are commonly known... gray hairs.

The second thing you will notice is that your eyes begin to play tricks on you. The vision begins to change almost monthly, then come the bifocals, to trifocals, to the cataracts and surgery and back to the bifocals.

I haven't experienced hearing aids just yet, but I've noticed the volume on my television is low and I can't understand why when I have it set at 85 to 90. Last week, I set it at 100 and the dang people in the show kept mumbling and I still couldn't make out what they were saying. Dumb actors.

As I grow older I also notice that things are really beginning to click for me. Don't believe me, just listen when I move and you can hear



John Kuykendall

Publisher & Editor

my neck, back, arms clicking and when I walk my knees sound like someone is playing maracas.

A friend of mine once told me that I need to embrace my age and just grow old gracefully. Growing old gracefully is just a king way of saying you look like a prune and each daily your looks are slowly getting worse.

I won't get into the fact that when you get older how hard it is to sit on the toilet, but sitting down is not half as bad as trying to get up.

Of course, at my age you need one of those walk in tubs and showers so you don't have to bend those old hurting knees. But having one won't matter much. In a few more years when I'll need a chair to sit on to take a bath anyway.

Have you ever heard someone say growing old ain't easy? Growing old is easy but

an old body doesn't make it easy.

I read something once that said people of age have emotional well-being. According to what I read, older folks are suppose to have emotional stability, can cope with stress and adversity better than younger folks. Whoever wrote that stupid stuff doesn't have to pay the medical bills of us older folks, buy the 25 prescriptions we need each month or the IRS without dependents or deductions. I'm sure it was written by someone in their late 20s or early 30s.

Seriously though, growing old does have it's advantages, but for the life of me I can't remember what they are. Oh yeah, I forgot to mention that memory is a problem when you get older as well.

So, when you hear that growing old beats the alternative... don't believe it. That old saying what goes up must come down don't apply to old age because age never goes down.

But truthfully, God has blessed me to keep me going and allowing me to live to get older and I'm thankful for every day He gives me.

Value of a Child's Life

When did using a phone become more important than a child's life?

It was midafternoon one day late last week and I was in the front yard watering Theresa's flowers.

School buses were taking children home. Whenever school buses pass by and I am outside, I wave at the drivers and they inevitably wave back. For what those drivers get paid, and the tremendous responsibility they shoulder on a daily basis, they truly deserve our admiration and appreciation. I suspect they rarely receive either.

There are two school buses that come by and drop off children each afternoon. The first one passed, the driver and I exchanged waves, and two houses along it stopped to unload a child.

Shortly afterward, the second bus approached and that driver and I exchanged waves. It stopped three houses down to unload a child. I

wasn't looking at the bus when I heard the driver frantically blowing the horn. I turned and saw ...

The bus was stopped, the flashing red lights were on and the stop sign was clearly swung out. Despite all that, a car coming from the opposition direction blasted past the bus, apparently never attempting to stop. Thankfully, the child was not yet crossing the road, perhaps the alert bus driver stopped her, because if she had I have no doubt that child would have died right there. The speed limit on this county road is 45 miles per hour and there was plenty of sight distance for the driver of the car to see the stopped school bus.

As the car approached our driveway, my right hand was still holding the garden hose, but I lifted my left hand and shouted at the driver, "What are you doing?" as she drove past - possibly oblivious to the tragedy she had



Andy Kober

Columnist

nearly created.

The driver, a white female, never looked. And why not? Because she was engrossed with her phone, which I could clearly see her holding in front of and to the right of her steering wheel.

THERE was absolutely no phone call, no text message, no anything else that was worth that child's life, that could have ended right then and there.

In a split second, multiple lives could have been ruined. The child's life would have been ruined, provided she survived the impact. The

lives of that child's parents would have been ruined as they would have to deal with aftermath of such a tragedy, forever questioning what they might have done different to avoid the tragedy. We can only imagine the emotional horrors the bus driver and other children on the bus would have to face. Finally, the woman whose phone was so much more important than the life of a child - deserving whatever would have happened to her.

Perhaps it is time for Harris County, and other neighboring school districts, to implement cameras on school buses. Our neighbors in Muscogee County already have cameras on school buses. Are their children any more important than our children?

I think not. That's my opinion.

Andy Kober can be reached by email at andykober@hotmail.com

* This Do In Remembrance Of Me * Jesus' Broken Body And Shed Blood

Greetings and blessings! "Then He (Jesus) took the bread, spoke a blessing and broke it, and gave to them (Apostles), saying, 'This My body, given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'" (Luke 22:19). And in (1 Corinthians 11:25), it refers to the cup or wine where Jesus says, "This cup/wine is a new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, you do in remembrance of me." It was Jesus' blood that was shed for the forgiveness of our sin. (Read Matthew 26:28).

So, today I come with the finality of a series of deep enlightenment on the biblical and spiritual significant of Jesus' death, burial, resurrection and ascension into Heaven. I certainly pray that you'll gain perhaps some or more knowledge of the amazing, more so, the divine crucifixion of our Lord, and Saviour, Jesus Christ. However, nowadays, lit-

tle if any details are mentioned in church communions now as to the essentiality of why we do this remembrance memorial. But in contrast, I remember very well when preachers took extreme effort and endless time. And perhaps for some, maybe too long, teaching about the significant, the reason and seriousness for this sacred memorial of Jesus' sacrificial death.

In fact, I remember, personally being scared to and scared not to partake. Therefore, in my studies, it tells that on the night Jesus died, He shared a Passover meal with His apostles, during the meal, Jesus gave fresh meaning to the bread and wine, identifying it as symbols of His impending (upcoming) death.

The taking of the bread and cup/wine proclaims the Lord's death. It is taught that believers participate in the



Pres Hall

Columnist

body and blood of Christ.

Therefore, as modern Christians, we should; Participate faithfully whenever we gather for the Supper; Prepare through repentance and reconciliation; Engage mind and heart-recall the cross, anticipate the crown; Invite unbelievers to observe and hear the gospel embodied; Live the remembrance daily. "Do This In Remembrance Of Me" commands ongoing, communal, Christ-centered remembrance that looks back to



Calvary, and unites believer in present grace. And again, Christ himself originates and commands the practice, placing it at the heart of Christians worship (Act 2:42). Please take this memorial seriously. So let us examine ourselves and not drink damnation to our soul! Read 1 Corinthians 11:28. Thank You Lord!

THE TALBOTTON NEW ERA is published weekly by The Georgia Trust for Local News at 3051 Roosevelt Highway, Manchester, Georgia 31816. *The Talbotton New Era* is published proudly for the citizens of Talbot County and its goal is to produce quality, profitable, community oriented newspapers that you, our readers, are proud of. We will reach that goal through hard work, teamwork, loyalty, and a strong dedication toward printing the truth.

USPS 589-340. Periodical postage paid at Manchester, Georgia, 31816.

FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS call (706) 846-3188 or write to Circulation Manager, *Talbotton New Era*, P. O. Box 426, Manchester, Georgia 31816. Subscription rates: Online and print, \$55 per year; Print only, \$45 per year; Online only, \$25 per year. Prices include all sales taxes. Single print copy \$1.00.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to P. O. Box 426, Manchester, Georgia 31816.

Bible Thought of the Week

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." **Jeremiah 29:11 (KJV)**



Under the Gold Dome

A Report on the 2026 Georgia General Assembly State Representative Debbie Buckner

The Georgia General Assembly reconvened at the State Capitol on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, for the 12th and final week of the 2026 legislative session. We convened in the House Chamber on both Tuesday and Thursday to finish our final legislative session. Notably, we gave final passage to House Bill 974, the state's Fiscal Year 2027 (FY 2027) budget, and by week's end, the House sent a number of additional bills and resolutions to Governor Brian Kemp's desk for his signature or veto, and I will discuss several measures that received final passage during our final week under the Gold Dome.

The General Assembly fulfilled its sole constitutional obligation of the session with the adoption of the conference committee report on HB 974, the FY 2027 budget. The FY 2027 budget is set by a revenue estimate of \$38.5 billion, an increase of \$738 million or 1.95 percent over the FY 2026 budget. Reflected in the budget, the Georgia General Assembly prioritizes early childhood literacy efforts, supports children in the state's foster care system, expands services to Georgians with intellectual or developmental disabilities, bolsters funding to

the state's health insurance plan and improves the state's ability to provide regular cost-of-living adjustments to retired state employees.

Another notable action taken this week was the final passage of House Bill 1193, the Georgia Early Literacy Act of 2026, a landmark measure aimed at promoting and advancing comprehensive early literacy and reading education aligned with the science of reading throughout the state. The Georgia Early Literacy Act of 2026 has now been sent to the governor's desk for consideration and, if signed in to law, would build a comprehensive statewide framework to ensure all Georgia students develop strong reading skills from the earliest grades.

The House also gave final passage to several additional measures aimed at strengthening Georgia's education system and supporting students, families, and educators across the state.

Senate Bill 556 also received final passage and would make several significant updates to Georgia's higher education, student aid, and campus safety policies. The bill would establish the Dedicated Resources to Educationally Advance More Students (DREAMS) Scholarship, a need-based



financial aid program for eligible students attending postsecondary institutions in Georgia. Overall, SB 556 aims to expand access to higher education, enhance student safety, and strengthen Georgia's long-term workforce and financial planning systems.

A major priority of the Georgia House this year was addressing insurance affordability by passing House Bill 1344. Drafted based on the findings and recommendations of the House Blue-Ribbon Study Committee on Insurance Rates, HB 1344 would establish the Georgia Insurance Affordability and Claims Integrity Act to strengthen consumer protections, enhance transparency, and accountability in insurance practices and help stabilize costs for policyholders.

My colleagues and I took

an important step during the final week of session to better serve children in Georgia's foster care system with the unanimous passage of Senate Bill 402. SB 402 mirrors House Bill 943, which also received final passage and would establish similar measures to improve support services and outcomes for children in foster care across the state. The program would be rolled out in phases, beginning in select regions and expanding statewide, with a focus on children who may be at higher risk or who are already receiving behavioral health treatment. By prioritizing early identification and support, both SB 402 and HB 943 aim to improve outcomes for children in foster care and ensure that they receive the specialized care and resources they need to thrive.

We also gave final passage to House Bill 1283, the Family Justice Center Act. The measure would authorize the creation of Family Justice Centers—multifacility facilities that provide coordinated services to victims of family violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, human trafficking, and related crimes. These centers could be established by a county or municipal government, a district attorney's office or a designated nonprofit, with governance structures based on whether they would be operated by a government entity or a nonprofit corporation. Importantly, the bill would allow participating law enforcement officers to respond to emergency calls anywhere within a center's service area during emergency circumstances,

regardless of jurisdiction. HB 1283 would significantly reduce the burden on victims and ultimately provide a more coordinated, efficient and victim-centered path to support and justice.

Senate Bill 406, or the Georgia Property Owners' Bill of Rights Act, also received final passage this week to improve transparency and accountability for homeowner associations. SB 406 would guarantee homeowners the right to inspect association records and accounting records, require notice before attorney's fees are collected and clarify covenant voting rules. Overall, the bill would improve oversight, preserve the role of homeowners' associations and provide Georgians with greater protections and clearer recourse when disputes arise—ensuring that homeownership remains accessible to everyone.

Senate Bill 587 would help reunite vulnerable individuals with their trusted caregivers in a timely manner. Furthermore, the legislation would create a publicly searchable animal cruelty database to assist animal shelters, protection agencies and other organizations in screening prospective owners and preventing animals from being placed in unsafe environments. SB 587 would ensure that we are taking proactive steps to protect animals from potential harm, while also helping to protect vulnerable Georgians from child and elder abuse.

Recognizing the critical need to protect survivors of childhood sexual abuse, the General Assembly gave final

passage to House Bill 1187, also known as Trey's Law, to prohibit the enforcement of any nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) or confidentiality agreements that seek to silence victims of childhood sexual abuse.

On Sine Die, several other notable pieces of legislation also received final passage, including House Bill 334, also known as the Sickle Cell Disease Protection Act. This bill would require the Department of Community Health (DCH) to conduct an annual review of medications, treatments and services for sickle cell disease that are eligible for Medicaid coverage. The bill would also ensure that public input, particularly from those with lived experience, would be solicited and considered during each review.

As a part of a long-standing priority of the House, we adopted a resolution aimed at improving mental health across our state. House Resolution 713 encourages healthcare providers to help raise awareness of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, a nationwide resource that connects individuals to mental health and suicide prevention support.

Now that the 2026 legislative session has come to an end, Gov. Kemp will have 40 days to sign or veto legislation that received final passage by the House and Senate this year. Some measures will become state law upon his signature, though some may include a later effective date as specified in the legislation. Any legislation not signed or vetoed within 40 days of Sine Die will automatically become state law.

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

Debtors & Creditors Notice

26-038

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS TALBOT COUNTY, GEORGIA IN RE: ESTATE OF JAMES E. MITCHELL

All creditors of the Estate of JAMES E. MITCHELL late of Talbot County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all person(s) indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment. This 9TH day of APRIL, 2026.

MARGARET NELSON 300 CHARTER BLVD MACON, GA 31210
 Executor(s) of the Estate of JAMES E. MITCHELL, Deceased (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

26-028

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS GEORGIA, TALBOT COUNTY All creditors of the Estate of Alvin Randall Alexander late of Talbot 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 me. This 11th day of March, 2026.

Charlene Phillips
 Executor of the Estate of Alvin Randall Alexander

Gary Ellis Byrd, LLC
 Attorney at Law P. O. Box 119 Hamilton, GA 31811 (4:2, 9, 16, 23)

26-033

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS TALBOT COUNTY, GEORGIA IN RE: ESTATE OF CLEVELAND HOWARD JR.

All creditors of the Estate of CLEVELAND HOWARD JR. late of Talbot County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all person(s) indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment. This 2ND day of APRIL, 2026.

DARLENE HOWARD 405 TEAL ROAD BOX SPRINGS, GA 31801
 Executor(s) of the Estate of CLEVELAND HOWARD JR., Deceased (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

26-035

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS GEORGIA, TALBOT COUNTY All creditors of the Estate of SHIRLEY L. PARKS, late of said County, are hereby notified to render their demands, according to law, to the undersigned, and all parties indebted to said Estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This 8th day of April, 2026.

ROYCE H. PARKS, as Executor of the Last Will and Testament of SHIRLEY L. PARKS, deceased.

Posey, Moye & Cartledge, LLC #1-D Bradley Park Court Columbus, Georgia 31904 (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

26-034

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS TALBOT COUNTY, GEORGIA IN RE: ESTATE OF JOHNNIE REE JACKSON

All creditors of the Estate of JOHNNIE REE JACKSON late of Talbot County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all person(s) indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment. This 7TH day of APRIL, 2026.

OLLIE JACKSON 191 WAVERLY HALL RD. BOX SPRINGS, GA 31801
 Executor(s) of the Estate of JOHNNIE REE JACKSON Deceased (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

26-027

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS GEORGIA, TALBOT COUNTY All creditors of the Estate of Justin Lawrence George late of Talbot County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted

ed to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me. This 20th day of March, 2026.

David Willis
 Administrator of the Estate of Justin Lawrence George

Gary Ellis Byrd, LLC
 Attorney at Law P. O. Box 119 Hamilton, GA 31811 (4:2, 9, 16, 23)

Foreclosures

26-041

FORECLOSURE OF RIGHT TO REDEEM NOTICE Take notice that: The right to redeem the following described property, to wit: Burnam. Willie J & Lavern Estate and all that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 14303. 5th Land District consisting of 4.48 acres, more or less being Lot 5, Block C. This property is located in Talbot County, Georgia and will expire and be forever foreclosed and barred on and after the 21st day of May 2026. The tax deed to which this notice relates is dated the 1st of November 2022 and is recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Talbot County, Georgia, in Deed Book 495 at page 81. The property may be redeemed at any time before the 21st day of May 2026 by payment of the redemption price as fixed and provided by law to the undersigned at the following address: P.O. Box 83, Box Springs, Georgia 31801. (4:23, 30, 5:7, 14)

General Legals

26-036

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF TALBOT COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

KEITH M. FLEMING AND LINDA N. FLEMING v. Estate of James H. Emfinger, Jan T. Cole f/k/a Jan T. Emfinger, Justin Thompson, James T. Wright, Donna Strong a/k/a Donna Wright, Teresa Crayton, CitiBank, N.A., Asset Acceptance, LLC, and all persons known or unknown who might claim adversely to Plaintiff's title to 0.376 acres, Land Lot 175, 2nd Land District, Talbot County, Georgia

Civil Action File No. 2026-CV-089

PETITION TO QUIET TITLE

TO: Estate of James H. Emfinger, Jan T. Cole f/k/a Jan T. Emfinger, Justin Thompson, James T. Wright, Donna Strong a/k/a Donna Wright, Teresa Crayton, CitiBank, N.A., Asset Acceptance, LLC, and all persons known or unknown who might claim adversely to Plaintiff's title to 0.376 acres, Land Lot 175, 2nd Land District, Talbot County, Georgia, including all adjoining landowners. You are hereby notified that the above-styled action seeking to establish title to the below described property against all the world was filed on the 4th day of November, 2025, in the Superior Court of Talbot County, Georgia, Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, and that by reason or order for service by publication entered by said Court on the 27th day of February, 2026, you are hereby commanded to be and appear at said court within 30 days of the date of the order for service by publication to answer said petition and file pleadings before the court.

ALL that tract or parcel of land being 0.376 acres on a survey titled Boundary Retracement for Ryan Taylor Wright dated June 29, 2020, recorded Plat Book 254, Page 159, Talbot County records. Said plat is incorporated herein by reference. WITNESS the Honorable Judges Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, Judge of said court.

This the 30th day of March, 2026.

Clerk of Court Talbot County Superior Court

Gary Ellis Byrd, LLC
 Attorney at Law P.O. Box 119 Hamilton, GA 31811 706 628-5511 (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

26-042

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF TALBOT COUNTY GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTA-

TION VS. 0.104 acres of land; and certain easement rights; and Heirs of Jessie Pearl Dillingham; Johnny C. Johnson; Heirs of Rhuburl Dillingham; David Carter; Kimberly Carter; and Tax Commissioner of Talbot County, individually

DOCKET NO. 2025-CV-069

NOTICE OF SUMMONS

TO: DAVID CARTER, HEIRS OF RHUBURL DILLINGHAM and HEIRS OF JESSIE PEARL DILLINGHAM, Respondents/Condemnees You are hereby notified that the above-styled action seeking Condemnation was filed against you in said Court on August 22, 2025, and that by reason of an Order for Service of Summons by Publication entered by the Court on March 23, 2026, you are hereby commanded and required to file with the Clerk of said Court and serve upon Catherine B. Baity, Condemnor/Petitioner s Attorney, whose address is P.O. Drawer 671, Thomaston, GA 30286, an answer to the Condemnation Petition within sixty (60) days of the date of the Order for Service by Publication. Witness the Honorable John T. Martin, Judge of said Court. Given under the hand and seal of said Court, this the 15th day of April, 2026. PENNY DILLINGHAM-MAHONEY, Clerk of the Superior Court of Talbot County (4:23, 30, 5:7, 14)

26-037

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF TALBOT COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IRENE ELLBECK, MARY BROWN, SHIRLEY METCALF-RICHETTI v. Estate of Ocie Mae Barker, Alfred L. Jackson Estate, Morris Jackson Estate, Dorothy J. Barker, Donell McFarland, Mary D. McFarland, Joyce King, Jeffery L. Howard, Ronald O. Howard, Vivian L. Howard, Tevin M. Howard, and all persons known or unknown who might claim adversely to Plaintiff's title to 9.68 acres, Land Lot 31, 17th Land District, Talbot County, Georgia

Civil Action File No. 2026-CV-015

PETITION QUIET TITLE

TO: Estate of Ocie Mae Barker, Alfred L. Jackson Estate, Morris Jackson Estate, Dorothy J. Barker, Donell McFarland, Mary D. McFarland, Joyce King, Jeffery L. Howard, Ronald O. Howard, Vivian L. Howard, Tevin M. Howard, and all persons known or unknown who might claim adversely to Plaintiff's title to 9.68 acres, Land Lot 31, 17th Land District, Talbot County, Georgia, including all adjoining landowners. You are hereby notified that the above-styled action seeking to establish title to the below described property against all the world was filed on the 9th day of February, 2026, in the Superior Court of Talbot County, Georgia, Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, and that by reason or order for service by publication entered by said Court on the 27th day of February, 2026, you are hereby commanded to be and appear at said court within 30 days of the date of the order for service by publication to answer said petition and file pleadings before the court. ALL that tract or parcel of land lying in Land Lot 31, 17th Land District, Talbot County, Georgia containing 9.68 acres according to a plat dated February 29, 2024, recorded Plat Book 254, Page 334, Talbot County records. Said plat is incorporated herein by reference. WITNESS the Honorable Judges Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, Judge of said court.

This the 30th day of March, 2026.

Clerk of Court Talbot County Superior Court

Gary Ellis Byrd, LLC
 Attorney at Law P.O. Box 119 Hamilton, GA 31811 706 628-5511 (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

Probate Notices

26-030

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF TALBOT COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF ELESTER DILLINGHAM, DECEASED ESTATE NO. 2018-P-011

PETITION FOR SUCCESSOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION NOTICE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

DORIS A. WILLIS & WALTER J. WILLIS has petitioned to be appointed Successor Administrator(s) of the estate of ELESTER DILLINGHAM 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 MAY 4, 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 (4:9, 16, 23, 30)

26-040

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF TALBOT COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

pendent auditor Justin Elliott from Mauldin & Jenkins, C.P.A. and Advisors L.L.C. addressed the findings. He reiterated that there was no findings of misappropriation of assets and that the findings are fairly common for small towns such as Manchester. Part of what goes into what is reported is when they find minor areas that need correcting that add up above the threshold. The city was given an unmodified opinion which is overall good. As always, there is room for improvement. Mr. Elliott stated that he recommends bringing in a third-party for close outs at the end of the year, which A.J.K. seem willing to do. As far as separation of tasks, this can be accomplished many ways including dual signatures or reviewing.

“The city has come a long way in the last four years,” stated Mr. Elliott of Mauldin and Jenkins. “There just needs to be certain significant adjustments made. The city is moving in the right direction.”

The next matter of business was the decision to rezone 709 Warm Springs Hwy from C1 to R3. After the public hearing and discussion, it was decided that the front property lot along the highway would be rezoned to R1 while the backlot towards Ted Anderson would be rezoned to R3 with survey and stipulation. The properties surround these lots will not be affected. Mayor and council approved the rezoning.

Brenda Pierson came before the council to speak on community matters. She was partnered with Meka Lowe and Delisha Hodo to help with utility assistance in the area. They were able to help approximately forty senior citizens in the matter, but this brought on the realization that our community needs drastic help with these matters in general. Transportation, comprehension, and technology all provide hurdles. Cathy is willing to open an office in town, but they are requesting help from the city to find a location. Ms. Pierson proposed the Senior Center be an option to consider and hopes for the city to collaborate and help the citizens.

“If Manchester wants to grow, it needs to meet the needs of those already here,” Brenda Pierson encouraged the council.

IN RE: ESTATE OF DOUGLAS JOHNSON, SR., DECEASED ESTATE NO. 2026-P-19

NOTICE

IN RE: The Petition to Probate Will (and Codicil(s)) in Solemn Form in the above referenced estate having been duly filed.

TO: ELAINE JOHNSON, WENDELL JOHNSON and DOUGLAS BROWN JR. This is to notify you to file objection, if there is any, to the petition to probate will in solemn form, in this Court on or before MAY 11, 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
 Ni Leja Williams
 By: Clerk of the Probate Court
 PO Box 157 Talbotton, GA 31827 706-665-8866 (4:16, 23, 30, 5:7)

26-039

IN RE: ESTATE OF JAMES C. IVIE, DECEASED ESTATE NO. 2024-P-31

All interested parties are hereby notified that Carmen Ivie, as Executive of the above-referenced estate, has filed a Petition for Discharge with the Probate Court of Talbot, Georgia.

All objections to the Petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and must be filed with the Court within ten (10) days of the

date of publication of this notice. This 9th day of April, 2026.

Carmen Ivie
 Executor 1747 Rock Quarry Road, Culloden, GA 31016 (4:23)

26-029

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF TALBOT COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF CORDE' JAMIR PASCHAL, DECEASED ESTATE NO. 2026-P-15

PETITION FOR LETTERS NO ADMINISTRATION NECESSARY NOTICE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The petition of YOLAND NICOLE RUCKER, for an order declaring no administration is necessary in the above-referenced estate having been duly filed. This is to notify you to file objection, if there is any, to the petition, in this Court on or before APRIL 27, 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 (4:2, 9, 16, 23)

Manchester City Council Meeting

Continued from Page 8-A

Rowan Carter appeared before the council for consideration for the Library Board. She is a Pre-K paraprofessional with a degree in English Literature and Composition. She grew up in the library and understands that they provide essential resources for all.

Vic Dowis also appeared before the council Tues. evening to be considered for the Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Dowis has a well-known reputation with the Manchester Recreation Dept. and after a few years of retirement feels ready for a chance to help out and get involved once more.

The Manchester Development Authority also has seats to fill and had several appearances for consideration. First, Ashley Caudill appeared before the council. Originally from Kentucky, her and her husband landed in Manchester and she fell in love with the area. She served on the Thomaston D.D.A. during the brief time they had moved, and she has an understanding of what it takes to see growth. She believes in questioning what may be the norm in pursuit of what is best for the community. She has training, experience, and believes in taking care of what you have to create opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Teresa Collins also spoke for consideration to the M.D.A. Board. Born and raised right here, Mrs. Collins remembers a time when Manchester flourished. She has seen industry and revenue leave our town while surrounding towns grow. She worked for the state for over thirty years and is very active in the community through Operation Good Neighbor and the Empty Stocking Program.

Voting for the appointments to both the Parks and Recreation Board as well as the M.D.A. Board have been postponed to give equal opportunity and consideration for all parties involved.

City Manager Mark Pullium brought before the mayor and council storm drain repair recommendations Tues. evening. The proposals received included approximately \$84k to fix Nebula Rd. and close to \$48k to repair Mayes Way, totaling close to \$132k in repairs for the storm drains. These two storm drains are compromised and it was emphasized that the repairs are urgent. Funds to cover the costs will come from the Local Maintenance

Improvement Grant funds and T.S.P.L.O.S.T. The mayor and council approved the decision to start repairs immediately.

A proposal was made to extend the moratorium regarding the number of liquor stores, vape shops, and offices spaces in the downtown business district. The extension would be for 90 days following the initial time frame which ends in May. It was agreed to consider the matter at a later date with amendments to be made.

Mayor Mark Trimble reminded citizens that the State of the City Address was coming up on April 21st to discuss the city of Manchester's accomplishments. He also reminded everyone that July 2nd will be the city's 250th birthday celebration for the United States of America. There are limited vendor spaces left, but Mayor Trimble encouraged everyone to volunteer. There will be food trucks, vendors, games, fireworks, and The Emerald Empire Band.

Following the mayor, Kevin McCarthy of Rare Earths Americas, Inc. spoke regarding the new business that has made Manchester their home. Located in the old Southern Drawl building, their business is to find rare earth elements that have been discovered here in Georgia. Manchester is central to this operation and will possibly allow the country to rely less on other countries such as China for earth metals to produce super magnets. With Manchester's help, Georgia will be a supply pull away from China moving forward. They are an earth science company with focus in various areas of the United States and Brazil. As of April 14, 2026, they have even listed stock on the New York Stock Exchange.

All council members extended their thanks to the citizens and their involvement that they have shown in city affairs and attending meetings. Delisha Hodo noted that at this rate, the city would need to look into a larger venue for meetings. Mayor Pro-Tem Quardez Warrior reminded everyone that the Keep Meriwether Beautiful Clean Up Day is fast approaching. The date for it is April 25th, and there will be dumpsters located around the county. Councilman Danny Wadsworth commended the Downtown Development Authority for the trees planted along Main St.

FEATURES & CLASSIFIEDS



Photo from Public Domain
REMEMBERING THE FALLEN - Located in Willow Island, West Virginia, this memorial commemorates the tragic deaths of 51 construction workers who lost their lives due to safety violations during construction of a power station cooling tower.

1978 - 51 Workers Die in Nuclear Construction Accident

This Week In American History

By ANDY KOBER

Here is what happened this week in American History.

• **Apr. 23.** On this day in 1951, the Korean War takes yet another twist as Commander-in-Chief of the Chinese Peoples Volunteer Army, Peng Dehuai, is determined to push UN and US forces out of South Korea. Fielding an army of 700,000 soldiers, he sends 270,000 attacking toward the South Korean capital of Seoul. Another 214,000 soldiers are held in strategic reserves to exploit breakthroughs, and the balance are spread across battle lines. Chinese forces include four field artillery divisions, two long-range artillery divisions, anti-aircraft divisions, and four T-34 tank regiments. Peng had promised to present Seoul to Chairman Mao as a May Day gift. PVA forces struck South Korean ROK forces that had not prepared defenses as ordered and once again too many ROK forces fled the battlefield, leaving weapons and equipment for the Chinese to use. A Royal New Zealand artillery regiment was then forced into a retreat of about four miles to relocate near the British Commonwealth Brigade near Kapyong. The ROK 27th Field Artillery Battalion left their guns and ran. Worse, as they fled from the developing battle, they choked the roads being used by American forces heading toward the battle. This left the US 24th Division and 1st Marine Division vulnerable. Meanwhile, the US 7th Marines were holding PVA forces at bay near the town of Hwacheon.

• **Apr. 24.** In 1951, Chinese PVA forces continue moving southward because of the ROK bugout and manage to nearly wipe out the British 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment. The US 1st Marine Division and 1st Korean Marine Corps Regiment are in a perilous situation but hold the PVA until ordered to retreat. Then with defense reset near Chuncheon and the Pukhan River, the Marines hold fast. US air assets are hammering the PVA as are US cruisers with naval bombardment, but continued failures of ROK Army forces are costing UN and US forces. With backs to the wall, the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry held against two PVA Divisions, about 20,000 soldiers, calling for and spotting artillery fire that caused a huge number of casualties among the PVA, and forcing them to withdraw – at

least temporarily.

• **Apr. 25.** Today in 1917, Ella Jane Fitzgerald is born in Newport News, Virginia. While still a small child, Fitzgerald's mother moves the family to Yonkers, New York. An outstanding student in school, Fitzgerald is exposed to music in church and develops an interest in jazz. Her mom dies when Fitzgerald is 15, and she drifts into a life bordering on criminal activity that results in her being moved into a reformatory school. At 17 she enters a contest at the Apollo Theater. She plans to dance, but changes and sings, winning the First Place prize. This puts her on the path of greatness, as she dazzles in the genres of jazz, swing, pop, blues, soul and more. She dies at the age of 79 from a stroke. She had suffered from diabetes that resulted in the amputation of both legs below the knees, had damaged her eyesight, and suffered from congestive heart failure.

• **Apr. 26.** On this day in 1607, long before America is a country, the Virginia Company colonists arrive at Cape Henry. The Virginia Company was an English trading company. Cape Henry is located on the northeast corner of Virginia Beach, Virginia. A memorial is located where the colonists landed.

• **Apr. 27.** In 1978, construction is underway on a second cooling tower at the Pleasants Power Station in Willow Island, West Virginia. The tower had reached a height of 166 feet when about 10 am, concrete poured the previous day began to collapse. Concrete, wooden forms, and metal scaffolding began collapsing to the ground inside the tower. Falling to their deaths were 51 construction workers. An investigation resulted in the company being cited for 20 safety violations. It remains the deadliest construction accident in US history.

• **Apr. 28.** Today in 1930, Carolyn Jones is born in Amarillo, Texas. At 18, she enrolls in the Pasadena Playhouse to study acting. At the Playhouse, a talent scout spots her and Jones lands several uncredited roles. But these roles lead to stardom for Jones, both in movies and on television. One of her most noted roles was as Morticia Addams in the hit television series *The Addams Family*. Jones dies in 1983 of cancer.

• **Apr. 29.** On this day in 2004, an Oldsmobile Alero rolls off the assembly line which signals the end of Oldsmobile, a car manufacturing company that had lasted for 107 years. The company started as the Olds Motor Vehicle Company in 1897.

Planets of Space: 1999

By ANDY KOBER

In 1975, the British science fiction series *Space: 1999* aired and introduced audiences to a number of planets including Psychon, Betha, Delta, and Terra Nova.

Lasting just two seasons, *Space: 1999* was based on a premise the Moon had been used for stockpiling nuclear waste. Also located on the Moon, was Moonbase Alpha research center housed in the crater Plato. Some type of magnetic radiation causes the nuclear waste to go critical which blasts the Moon out of Earth orbit and into deep space, through worm holes and other astrological phenomena.

Along their travels, the crew of Moonbase Alpha discover other civilizations which was good as without the Moon, the Earth is rendered uninhabitable with life as we know it going extinct.

Of the planets highlighted in *Space: 1999*, none are real or based on real planets.

Separating fact from fiction, the crater Plato does in fact exist on the Moon. With a diameter measured at about 63 miles, the crater is estimated at over 3.8 billion years old. Inside the crater can be found impact sites from other, much smaller, meteors and asteroids.

Interestingly, astronomers have reported seeing flashes of light, unusual colors patterns and hazy visibility inside Plato. It is thought this is caused by different illumination angles of sunlight.

Space: 1999 can be found on some streaming services.



Switching from science fiction to science fact, on April 25, 1983, *Pioneer 10* passed beyond the orbit of Pluto.

Launched in 1972, *Pioneer 10* was the first space probe to traverse the asteroid belt, the first to investigate Jupiter and the first of five probes to achieve escape velocity, leaving our Solar System. Prior to leaving the solar system, instruments onboard the probe recorded and transmitted considerable information back to Earth.

As it passed through the interplanetary medium, *Pioneer 10* detected helium atoms along with high-energy ions of aluminum and sodium in the solar wind, it also detected a solar shock wave.

Communications with *Pioneer 10* ended on Jan. 23, 2003. At the time it was about 7.5 billion miles from Earth.

Today, *Pioneer 10* is estimated to be about 13 billion miles from Earth headed in the direction of the constellation Taurus and the general direction of the star Aldebaran

Keep your eyes on the sky for passing fireballs.

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

On Tuesday, Apr. 14, 89 people across Delaware, Florida,

Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia reported seeing a fireball.

The fireball was first reported at 5:49 am by a skywatcher in Dortches, NC, who reported, "It had a bright, glowing tail". The fireball was seen as far north as Lyndhurst, NJ, as far east as West Islip, NY, as far south as Lakeland, FL, and as far west as near Cleveland, TN. In Georgia, the fireball was spotted by skywatchers in Dawsonville, Rincon, and Royston. The fireball appeared to be travelling from south-southwest to north-northeast.

Three skywatchers reported hearing noise made by the fireball and six witnessed it fragment into smaller pieces. The fireball was captured on four videos and 31 photographs.

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

We will continue researching planets found in science fiction soon. In the meantime 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!



Did the set of a 1982 horror movie feature a poster for something that would not happen for another six years?

By JACK BAGLEY
didyouknowcolumn@gmail.com

Trying to come up with an introduction to the column this week is akin to trying to pan for gold in that lake in Yellowstone Park that dissolves you ... I'm having no success at all.

So, for the rare moment, I'll just say the heck with it, wish you a wonderful week, and send you on to the trivia. Enjoy!

Did you know ...

... a composer once tried to create a mechanical ballet? George Antheil (1900-1959) became well known for composing musical soundtracks to films such as *The Pride and the Passion*, *Tokyo Joe*, *We Were Strangers*, and many more. But in 1924 he tried his hand at avant-garde composing, creating the *Ballet Mecanique*. The work was written for a fire siren, automobile horns, and an airplane propeller to be used as musical instruments. The work was performed at Carnegie Hall, and according to reports, an elderly gentleman in the orchestra seats allegedly tied a handkerchief to his cane and waved it as a white flag of surrender. (The work did inspire one Spike Jones, I understand. Look it up.)

... carrots were not always orange in color? Back when they grew wild and uncultivated, carrots were actually purple. During the 17th Century, farmers began cultivating mutant strains into their carrots, resulting eventually in the current orange-ish color the vegetable has today. (Who wants a purple carrot?)

... an animal produces a scent that smells like buttered popcorn? The binturong, which is found in Southeast Asian rain forests, looks kind of like a cross between a bear and cat, and the scent produced is used to mark territory and attract mates. (To take to the movies for popcorn, I bet.)

... the set of a horror movie featured a poster for something that wouldn't happen for six more years? In the 1982 film *Poltergeist*, the characters of Robbie – portrayed by Oliver Robins (born 1971) – and Carol Anne, played by Heather O'Rourke (1975-1988), share a room. On Robbie's side of the room is a poster for Super Bowl XXII, which would not be played until 1988. The year 1988 even figures prominently on the poster. No one on the production team could ever explain why the poster was used in the movie, but if you think that's odd, hang on – it gets far stranger. On January 31, 1988 – the day that Super Bowl XXII was played – Heather O'Rourke began exhibiting flu-like symptoms, and the next day was rushed to the hospital after collapsing in her home. On the way to the hospital she suffered cardiac arrest, but was resuscitated. It was discovered that the young girl had a severe bowel blockage that required immediate surgery, but O'Rourke died on the operating table.

... the insignia of rank of a U.S. Army captain was once proposed to be three gold bars? Prior to World War I, officers in the Army wore their rank on cloth and bullion shoulder straps. A second lieutenant had a plain strap, a first

lieutenant had one gold bar at each end, and a captain had two gold bars. During World War I, however, officers wore more basic field uniforms without the shoulder straps, and second lieutenants were being mistaken for regular privates due to a lack of specific insignia. The decision was made in 1917 to make a second lieutenant's insignia the gold bar, with two gold bars for first lieutenants, and three gold bars for captains. However, that change was going to cost a lot of money to implement in designing new production machinery for the metal bars, so they kept the gold bar for second lieutenants, and the first lieutenant's bar became silver. Captains then got two silver bars. (And the respect that those bars earn, I suppose.)

... you may suffer from *gelotophobia*? If you do, you have a fear of being laughed at. By the way, there's no name for the fear of being laughed with – probably because no body is afraid of being laughed with. (If you've ever met me, you know I definitely don't suffer from it.)

... years before he became President, Lyndon Johnson had a business deal with another Chief Executive? While still a senator from Texas, Johnson (1908-1973) also owned a Muzak™ franchise in Austin. Johnson sold easy listening background music to President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) to be played in the White House. (That Lyndon, always lookin' for a buck.)

... cashews are not nuts? They are actually drupe seeds. What's the difference, you ask? Well, a nut is actually a dry fruit with a hard shell surrounding a single seed. But cashews are the seeds of cashew apples, fleshy fruits which are classified as drupes. (So don't be druped by the advertising.)

... emotions can run rather strangely during battle? Take, for example, the case of Henry Paget (1768-1854), First Marquess of Anglesey, who was leading a charge of heavy cavalry against French forces during the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. During the battle, Paget had a portion of his leg blown off by a cannonball. When it happened, he shouted to his commanding officer, the Duke of Wellington (Arthur Wellesley, 1769-1852), "By God, sir, I've lost my leg!" Wellington's reply was a calm, "By God, sir, so you have!" (That British stiff upper lip, you know.)

... the Victorian era had some pretty interesting terms for people who cheated on their significant others? Those who were caught doing so were said to have been "carrying tackle" or "being on a left-handed honeymoon." (Left-handed honeymoon?)

... a group of British women wanted to do away with coffee? In 1674, the Women's Petition Against Coffee claimed that the brew was turning British men into "useless corpses." Mental Floss tell us that the group proposed a ban on coffee for anyone under the age of sixty. (Heck, ladies, we're all "useless corpses" on Monday mornings, at least until we have our coffee.)

Now ... you know!

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CLASSIFIEDS

MISCELLANEOUS

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The "Lighter Side" of the News



Courtesy United Press International

Dumber Than the Average Bear

Three people were sentenced this week in an insurance fraud scam that saw them wear a bear costume while damaging luxury cars in California.

Alfiya Zuckerman, Ruben Tamrazian and Vahe Muradkhanyan all pleaded no contest on Thursday to felony insurance fraud and were sentenced to 180 days in jail, while a fourth person involved in the scheme, Ararat Chirkinian, has a preliminary hearing scheduled for September.

The four were caught because they submitted video of three fake attacks on cars to three different companies, but one group of investigators noticed the "bear" in a Rolls Royce moved in ways more similar to a human, The Los Angeles Times and The Guardian reported.

"What may have looked unbelievable turned out to be exactly that," Ricardo Lara, commissioner of California's Department of Insurance, said in a press release.

"Insurance fraud is a serious crime that drives up costs for consumers, and no scheme is too outrageous for us to investigate," Lara said.

State investigators launched "Operation Bear Claw" after State Farm Insurance flagged a claim reporting that a bear entered a 2010 Rolls Royce Ghost and damaged the inside of the car, and included video of the attack, the department said.

A claims investigator recognized that the bear was moving less like a bear and more like a human, and a biologist in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife confirmed that the purported bear was "clearly a human in a bear suit."

The officials also noted that brown bears have not been seen in California since the 1920s.

Investigators then uncovered two similar claims -- one for a 2015 Mercedes G63 and one for a 2022 Mercedes E350 -- that had been submitted to other insurance companies with similar video and were claimed to have occurred at the place, on the same day.

Law enforcement officials later executed search warrants and found a bear costume, which included fake claws, in the suspects' home.

"It's definitely out of the ordinary," Capt. Eric Hood, who led the California Department of Insurance's investigation into the alleged bear attacks, told The Times.

"I don't think we saw anything to that extent in the past where they got a bear suit," he said. "It's unique."

I Wish I Were an Oscar Mayer Wiener ...

A group of students from a Kansas high school rode to prom in style when they were able to enlist the services of an Oscar

Mayer Wienermobile.

Breckan Andrews, a junior at Seaman High School, said the unconventional way he and his friends arrived at prom started when they took a trip to a Sonic fast food restaurant in Topeka and spotted the hot dog-shaped vehicle parked at a local Dillons grocery store.

"One of my buddies was like, 'Can we rent this thing?' and I was like, 'Well, what if we just ask about prom? What if they take us? It's tomorrow,'" Andrews told KSNT-TV. "Like, that'd be insane."

The friends approached Maggie Dawson, the Wienermobile's "Hot Dogger" driver, with their request.

"I'm just used to asking weird questions like that, to be honest. I like talking to everyone and it just made sense in my mind. You miss all the shots you don't take," Andrews told WIBW-TV.

Dawson said the decision was easy.

"It was like a little light bulb," she said. "We were like, 'Well, what time is prom?'" And from there, we checked our schedule, and we were able to make it happen."

The Oscar Mayer crew delivered the students to prom free of charge.

"People take limos," student Cooper Lietz said. "This is basically just a big hot dog limo."

Oldest Bunny

A British couple's pet bunny was named the oldest rabbit living by Guinness World Records at the age of 15 years and 82 days old.

Herbie, a lionhead rabbit belonging to Surrey residents Richard and Melissa Dunham, had his age verified on Nov. 10, 2025, and Guinness World Records has now confirmed he is the oldest rabbit in the world.

The Dunhams said they adopted Herbie when he was just 8 weeks old as a companion for their female rabbit, Flopsy.

"Flopsy loved him and they bonded quickly and were devoted to each other for 10 years," Melissa Dunham told Guinness World Records.

She said Herbie, who has more than doubled his life expectancy, has a big personality.

"Herbie has always been very strong-willed and full of character. One of his favorite things when he was younger was being chased by Richard -- he would deliberately run off, then stop and wait to be chased again as if it was a game he was controlling," she said.

Dunham said Herbie's current hobbies include snuggling with his humans on the couch and enjoying the sunshine in the garden.

Some People Have All the Luck

A Michigan man visited lottery headquarters to collect a \$1 million prize just over a year after collecting a \$366,984 windfall.

The Michigan Lottery said the 47-year-old Muskegon County man scored the \$1 million top prize in the March 26 Millionaire Raffle drawing.

"I really liked the odds of the Millionaire Raffle game, so I bought several tickets," the player told lottery officials.

He said it wasn't his first brush with big lottery luck.

"I won a \$366,984 Fantasy 5 jackpot prize just over a year ago, so when I logged into my lottery account and saw a notification that I'd won the \$1 million Millionaire Raffle prize, I was in total disbelief that I'd won big again," the man said.

"I honestly thought it was some sort of technical error where an incorrect prize notification was sent, so I decided to check back in the morning," he said. "I logged in the next day, and to my surprise, the \$1 million prize was still pending in my account. I'm still trying to process that I'm here again claiming another huge prize!"

The man said he is planning to invest his winnings.

Now That's a Superhero Fan

A Marvel Comics superfan from Britain paid tribute to his favorite heroes and villains by getting 63 characters tattooed on his body.

Tom Radford, 40, earned the Guinness World Record for the most Marvel Comics characters tattooed on the body, taking the title that was previously co-held by Ryan Logsdon and Rick Scolamiero, who each have 34 Marvel tattoos.

Radford, who has been getting tattoos for decades, got his first piece of Marvel ink in 2016, when he had the villain Thanos tattooed on his thigh.

"When I got Thanos tattooed I wanted it placed at the top of my thigh because if it wasn't perfect I could always hide it. Needless to say it was better than perfect and the urge for more began," he told Guinness World Records.

He planned to have one leg covered in Marvel villains and another covered in heroes, but he quickly ran out of space and the tattoos started spreading to his back and other areas of his body.

Radford said he eventually learned of the Guinness World Records title and set his sights on breaking it by his 40th birthday.

"The record was beaten a further two times in the time I started chasing it which made me rethink my strategy. I was always going to just beat it, my original target was 32 but with how often it got broken I decided I should beat it by a lot to give me time to enjoy it," he said.

Radford said his Thanos tattoo is now embellished with an autograph he got from Josh Brolin, who played the villain in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. He was able to do the same with Elizabeth Olsen, who played Scarlet Witch, and he is hoping to add more signatures after attending San Diego Comic-Con later this year.

The Call is Coming From Inside the House

I was brushing my teeth when I heard a chirping noise come from the next room. My brain did not register the sound at first. It had been a typical Thursday morning and I was getting ready for another day at the office, and I assumed the bird-like noise was a notification on one of the too-many cellphones in my house.

But then I heard it again, louder, and more lifelike than before. "Is there a bird in the house?" I thought to myself as I peered around the corner, toothbrush still at work.

Sure enough, perched on the ceiling fan, was a bird.

I'm no ornithologist, but I think it was a mockingbird. That explains why it sounded like it was making fun of me.

"You let a bird in the house," I hollered at no one in particular, though with a mouthful of toothpaste it

sounded more like "Yough mlet um buhrd ihn da huse."

As it turns out, my wife had just let the dog out, and the bird must have let itself in during the process. I reopened the door and began a hasty pursuit of the invader. There was no way I could catch it, and my only hope was for it to leave the way it came. My scheme worked, and the bird's visit came to an end as quickly as it began.

I never even put down my toothbrush. Proper oral hygiene should be a part of everyone's daily routine.

And thankfully so, because my wife was no help at all. It is worth noting that my spouse is terrified of birds. When she discovered a flying creature had breached the walls, she backed into the corner, frozen in fear.

The call was coming from inside the house.

Fans of old horror movies



Kyle Dominy

New Southern Dad

of a dozen or more films.

No, a bird isn't a maniacal killer bent on terrorizing others, but try explaining that to my better half. I don't even keep bird feeders around the house because I don't want to encourage these critters, as important as they are to any ecosystem, from hanging around longer than they have to.

The National Audubon Society claims that bird watching is good for mental health. Apparently there is research to suggest that regularly observing a bird on the wing brings a sense of calm and rejuvenation, helping improve brain function.

That may be so, but let's keep it outside next time.

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