

# The News Observer

"Local news means the world to us."

The Vienna News and The Unadilla Observer

The Legal Organ of Dooly County; serving Byromville, Dooling, Lilly, Pinehurst, Unadilla and Vienna.

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THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025

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## Historic Vienna School Burned Down

*Jenkins School Fire, "A Sad Day To Lose Such A Lovely Historic Building That Held So Many Memories For Many People."*



Photos Contributed by Dooly County Zoning

*The old Vienna School / Jenkins School as it burned down last week while crews tried to put out the flames.*

By Tim Franzén  
News Observer Reporter

The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department was first to respond, "Last Tuesday, June 3 at 3:51 p.m. to 202 E Cotton Street in reference to a structure fire. Upon arrival units found the structure to be fully engulfed and started a defensive attack. Shortly after the first units arrived on scene, a Dooly All Call was paged as well as requested aid to Crisp County Fire Rescue and the City of Cordele for a ladder truck.

Vienna Fire would like to thank all agencies who responded and assisted with this fire. Your efforts in assistance with this incident made a huge impact in keeping the fire contained as well as protecting surrounding exposures. We would also like to thank and give a big shoutout to Cafe 41 for providing our firefighters with sandwiches and snacks and Piggly Wiggly of Vienna for providing water to everyone on scene. We are truly blessed and grateful to live in and serve a community

who is always willing to lend a hand.

The fire also was expected to continue smoking for a few days due to the amount of heavy timber (fat lighter) construction. Multiple members of the fire department and law enforcement were keeping a check on it day and night. As long as the smoke is coming from inside the perimeter brick walls everything is good. Thanks for everyone's concern, help and support."

Judge Rooney Bowen III responded, "The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department rocks. We lost an old school icon, but saved everything else nearby. Thank you to all the assisting agencies. This is a prime example of "teamwork makes the dream work."

Unadilla FireRescue spokesperson Kenny Mercer who went to school there said, "UFR was happy to have offered assistance to the VVFD in fighting this fire." Area agencies responded including the Cordele Fire Department who, "Was asked if we could assist our neighbors in Vienna for a large commercial

building fire also known as Jenkins School. Communities that work together thrive together."

In a Facebook post from the Vienna Woman's Club, "Our sincere appreciation goes out to the members of the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department for their dedication and skills during a horrific fire last Tuesday. If not for their persistence, an entire neighborhood could have been lost. Although the historic Jenkins School building is a complete loss, we are grateful that the surrounding homes, warehouses and businesses were protected."

Kenny Calhoun, who attended the school from 1964 to 1970 told 13 WMAZ in Macon that he, "Witnessed the destruction of his former school. He recalled fond memories of riding his bicycle to classes, attending performances in the auditorium and playing on the playground. "There were skits that were done in the auditorium, but it was just a good place to grow up."

According to Janet Joiner with the Vienna Historic Preserva-



tion Commission, "In 1933 on Christmas Day Vienna's School was destroyed by fire. A new school was built on the site by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This was a New Deal program created by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt whose primary goal was to provide employment and relief to Americans struggling during the Great Depression.

The WPA employed millions of

**SCHOOL BURNED DOWN  
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## Board Approves Chief Appraiser to Inspect Abandoned Mobile Homes

By Tim Franzén  
News Observer Reporter

Following the enactment of the Abandoned Mobile Home Act by state lawmakers, Commissioners have agreed to appoint Dooly County Assessor's Office Chief Appraiser Derek Pinkerton as the government official to inspect an abandoned mobile home and would be qualified to determine if an abandoned mobile home is derelict or intact.

Dooly County has received the new ambulance from Custom Works that was purchased in 2022 and as of late last week, radios had been installed into the new truck and the new EMS truck should be in service this week. Officials also agreed that a 2018 EMS Ford Ambulance with 97,044 miles on the odometer should be declared surplus property and sold at govdeals.com.

The River Road drainage project is nearing completion however due to having to cut the pavements, there is only gravel in some places, so the county is seeking a proposal to place asphalt over the patch where there is temporary gravel. Once that is done, the project will be completed. The Dooly County scrap tire program took 120-tons of scrap tires and based on

estimates, the county should receive around \$34,000 in grant funding.

The board learned that back on May 23, Engineer Lance Woods submitted the county application to GDOT. The county then received a check from the Georgia Department of Transportation totaling \$900,264. County Administrator Steve Sanders requested a new checking account at South Ga. Banking Co. for this Fiscal Year 2025 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant Local Road Assistance project with the administrator, county clerk, chairman, vice-chairman and finance director authorized to sign.

An update on the West Road drainage project was provided by County Administrator Steve Sanders, "On each end, the pipe has rotted and those are the ones that need replacing, the bad section on each end. Place some additional pipe there and rebuild the shoulder of the road."

The engineers are recommending due to a shortage at the road department is recruiting a local contractor to perform the work. The board agreed to hire Turkey Creek Excavation to complete the West Road project. The Georgia Department of Transporta-

## Pinehurst Still Awaiting GDOT Reimbursement Payment

By Tim Franzén  
News Observer Reporter

Last Thursday's council meeting featured a report from Mayor Connie Christmas and discussion on the status of an expected Georgia Department of Transportation payment to reimburse the City of Pinehurst, "The invoice for the repairs on Highway 41 has been sent to the securement and (the spokesperson) said he was checking into that to see why they have not paid it yet, but they are planning on reimbursing us for that. (City Clerk) Jackie Chancy, Councilwoman Michelle Harrell and I attended the annual legislative luncheon over in Americus, Ga.

I spoke with another mayor that was in the process of trying to obtain a USDA loan and it was being held up because there are only two people left in the state of Georgia that were working for the USDA and neither one of those were loan officers. So they were having to get people from Kentucky and Florida to help. Also one of the things mentioned at the legislative meeting was that Georgia Power has frozen their rates for the next three years. The 2025 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant funds have been received already and our Local Road Assistance funds have been applied for and received and those funds will be going towards the Evergreen Street project.

We are on Dooly County IT specialist Chris

Flynn's schedule to have the new computer system installed. He is working with all the cities and county offices because most everybody's computer systems are going to have to be upgraded. The Blight Ordinance probably needs to be updated because the only ordinance I found had something to do with overgrown bushes didn't talk about the buildings. We'll need to come up with a new ordinance or add to the one that's already on the books. The speed bumps on Cypress have already been installed and Willie Young is going to try and install the one on West Railroad Street. Starting July 1, we can apply for the 2026 LMIG, so we need to discuss as a council what we need to do."

Several potential projects were discussed. The mayor noted that, "Our July bill will reflect our three-percent sewage increase that we voted on."

The council also agreed to set a budget hearing date of Monday, June 23 at 7:00 p.m. It was also agreed to investigate the possibility of hiring a part-time Utility Clerk. The City of Pinehurst election for Posts one through three-Jessica Butler, Joe Williams and Ms. Jan Peavy will be in November and qualifying will be August 18-August 20 from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The qualifying fee is \$7.20.

**PINEHURST  
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**ABANDONED MOBILE HOMES  
CONTINUED PG 4A**

# Summer Reading Club 2025 Kicks off with Entertaining Bright Star Theatre Production



"Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz" Photo By Julianne Woodward-Bartlett

By Tim Franzén

News Observer Reporter

Bright Star Touring Theatre featuring Aidan Tsichlis and Luna Giovenella performed "The Wizard of Oz" at both Dooly County Library and Elizabeth Harris Library in Unadilla last Wednesday. Rhonda Bartlett stated, "They were both wonderful performers and singers. Luna has taken voice lessons and her modified rendition of Somewhere over the Rainbow

was beautiful. Everyone had a magical time."

This was the opening act of this year's Summer Reading Program with the theme, 'Color Our World'. The sponsor for the program in Unadilla was the City of Unadilla. For more information, visit: <https://www.brightstartheatre.com>.

This week it's "Animal Tales" at both libraries and Unadilla's sponsor for this week's event is Brannen Motor Company.

Dooly County Library's Summer Reading Club programs begin each Wednesday morning at 10:30 a.m.

For more information, contact Dooly County Library's Manager Jill Klobertanz at 229-268-4687. Elizabeth Harris Library's programs begin at 4:00 p.m. Wednesdays. The library manager is Rhonda Bartlett and you can call 478-627-9303. For information about both libraries visit: <https://www.lbrls.org>.

## Americus Alumnae Chapter Hosts "A Crimson and Cream-Magical Affair" for 2025 Miss Jabberwock Pageant

Contributed

AMERICUS, Ga. — The Americus Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. hosted its 2025 Jabberwock pageant on June 1, 2025, at Sumter County Primary School under the enchanting theme, "Miss Jabberwock: A Crimson and Cream-Magical Affair." The evening highlighted grace, talent, and sisterhood in a celebration rooted in cultural legacy and community engagement.

Jabberwock, a cherished Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. tradition, began in 1925 when Soror Marion Conover of the Iota Chapter in Boston introduced it as a creative way to raise scholarship funds. Inspired by Lewis Carroll's poem "Jabberwocky," the program has since evolved into a national cultural enrichment experience, allowing local chapters nationwide to customize their events. The initiative continues to support personal development and self-expression among young women while generating scholarship and youth programming funds.

This year's Americus event welcomed contestants from the chapter's five-county service area, Dooly, Sumter, Webster, Lee, and Macon counties. These contestants competed in three age-based categories: Little Miss Jabberwock, Miss Junior Jabberwock, and Miss Jabberwock. The crowned winners represented the culmination of hard work, talent, and community support.

We are proud to recognize the following winners:

- Little Miss Jabberwock: Miss Samyrah Morgan
- 2nd place- Miss Kalee Green
- 3rd place- Miss Taliah Blakely

Photo Contributed  
Young dancers from the Southwest Georgia Academy of Performance dazzle the audience with a beautiful ballet routine.Photo Contributed  
The 2025 Jabberwock Court celebrates with crowns, trophies, and sisterhood.

ships and youth initiatives such as Delta GEMS, Delta Academy, and Empowering Males to Build Opportunities for Developing Independence (EMBODI). These initiatives align with the Sorority's Five-Point Programmatic Thrust:

- Economic Development
- Educational Development
- International Awareness and Involvement

nections within our community. Under the leadership of Chair Alicia Green and her dedicated committee, a truly magical affair in crimson and cream was brought to life." Quoting Maya Angelou, she added, "I come as one, but I stand as ten thousand." Dr. Harris emphasized

PAGEANT  
CONTINUED PG 4A

# VVFD Responds to I-75 Entrapment Accident

By Tim Franzén

News Observer Reporter

The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department was dispatched to Interstate 75 northbound early Thursday morning, June 5 at around 12:24 near Exit 117 in response to a collision involving a passenger vehicle and a semi-truck. Reports indicated a possible entrapment.

Upon arrival, VFD personnel assessed the situation and started extrication procedures. Using Genesis extraction tools, firefighters were able to remove the driver's side door and lifted the dashboard and steering column to free the trapped passenger. The injured occupant suffered a dislocated hip and some fractures. He was transported initially to Crisp Regional and then to a higher trauma center.



Photo Contributed

Front end of vehicle completely crumpled.

## MSNTF Makes Arrest on Drug and Pandering Charges

By Crisp County Sheriff's Office

The Mid-South Narcotics Task Force, in collaboration with the GBI Human Exploitation and Trafficking Unit (HEAT), arrested Steven Jones last Monday, June 2. This arrest is the

result of a lengthy HEAT investigation that began in September 2024.

A 42-year-old male Steven Jones from Buena Vista, Ga. was arrested and taken to the Crisp County Jail. He faces multiple charges, including:

Possession of Schedule II Con-

trolled Substance (Methamphetamine), Possession of Schedule IV Controlled Substance and Pandering.

Additional arrests and charges may occur as this investigation is ongoing.

## Six Injured in Two Vehicle Accident

By Tim Franzén

News Observer Reporter

Homicide 0, Forcible Rape 0, According to authorities, the Vienna volunteer fire department, Pinehurst fire department, Doo-

ly County sheriff's department and the Georgia State patrol along with the Dooly County EMS responded to a two vehicle accident on I-75

Sunday night, June 8. There were six patients transported to

Crisp Regional. One of those individuals was injected from the vehicle and was listed in critical condition. The other patients had moderate to minor injuries.

## Representative Stinson Named One of the Exceptional Lawmakers of the Year'

Contributed

The Hank Aaron Terrace at The Battery Atlanta's Truist Park was the venue on the evening of May 27th for the annual James Magazine "Influential Georgians" reception. Approximately 100 attendees—ranging from various state and local elected officials to prominent business, political, judicial and cultural leaders—were welcomed by James CEO/Publisher Phil Kent

Kent presented the James "2025 Georgian of the Year Award" to Georgia Department of Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper, who he called "a highly respected manager with an outstanding work ethic who oversees Georgia's No. 1 industry. He ensures Georgia's food supply chain stays intact and that our food supply is safe." Lt. Gov. Burt Jones assisted in presenting Harper his award, recalling their friendship and service together in the state Senate and calling him "highly qualified and particularly deserving of the high honor to be named James Magazine's Georgian of the Year."

Three "2025 Exceptional State Lawmaker of the Year" awards were also bestowed by Kent. One recipient was state Sen. Greg Dolezal, R-Cumming, elected in 2018 and who he praised for "his work serving on a wide range of important committees including chair of the Senate Transportation Committee." Kent emphasized that Dolezal is known for exceptional constituent service, typified by having recently helped keep several state parks open after a



sudden announcement by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that they would be closed.

The second honoree was state Rep. Patty Stinson, D-Butler, who Kent noted served on the Taylor County Commission before winning a House District 139 seat, which she represented from 2013 to 2023, and who now represents House District 150.

"This well-respected lawmaker has worked across party lines to craft policy issues ranging from tax relief to education to healthcare," Kent said. A special guest—former longtime Rep. Calvin Smyre, D-Columbus—assisted in presenting Stinson her award.

Rep. Stinson has served in the Georgia House of Representatives for 13 years. Serving as Vice-Chair of State Planning

& Community Affairs, Agriculture & Consumer Affairs, Appropriations, Health, Higher Education, Rural Development, Special Committee on Resource Management, and Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee of Sales Tax for the Ways and Means Committee.

Stinson states "I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from James Magazine, a highly respected statewide publication that has been a cornerstone of excellence for decades. It is truly humbling to be acknowledged by such a distinguished magazine, and I sincerely appreciate this honor."

Pictured are Calvin Smyre, Former Dean of the House of Representatives and Rep. Patty Marie Stinson.

## Obituaries

### James Madison Woodward, III

James Madison Woodward, III, age 87, of 505 Old Americus Road, Vienna, died peacefully at his home on Saturday, May 31, 2025.

Born in Cordele, he was the son of the late James M. Woodward, Jr. and Janie Forehand Woodward. Upon graduation from Vienna High School, James joined his father in running Woodward Service Station and Auto Parts. He was a member of Vienna Methodist Church, the Vienna Lions Club and served 30 years on the Vienna Housing Authority. He also proudly served over 28 years with the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department including 22 years as chief. His dedication to the fire department has had a lasting effect to this day.

James had strong ties to the family farm which has been in the Woodward family for over 162 years and 7 generations have spent the night there.

James took stewardship and conservation very seriously. In 1993, he was awarded the Forest Stewardship Award from the Georgia Forestry Commission. It was, and still is, something for which the Woodward family is very proud. He also received the 2002 Ocmulgee River Soil and Water Conservationist of the Year Award for Dooly County.

He enjoyed hunting, fishing, arrowhead hunting, riding his tractor and working on the farm as long as he was able. He loved his family dearly and enjoyed spending time with them.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 69 years, Laura Woodward of Vienna; his son, Alan Woodward (Ginger) of Vienna; his daughter, Melanie Lee (David) of Vienna; his brother, John Woodward (Mona) of Albany; his sisters-in-law, Wyolene Morgan and Diane Morgan;

his grandchildren, Heidi L. Hayes (Jason) of Vienna, Lindsey L. Odom (Trey) of Valdosta, Rusty A. Woodward (Elizabeth) of Augusta and Lori W. Wetherington (Ryan) of Perry; his great grandchildren, Katie (Tanner), Hope, Rhett, Catherine, Claire, Hensley, James, Bebe, Sybie and Wynslet.

Funeral services were held at 11 am Tuesday, June 3 in Vienna Methodist Church with Rev. Tommy Mason, Rev. Tommy Braswell and Rev. Larry Wilbanks officiating.

Fire department honors were rendered by the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department.

Rev. Tony Crosby provided music for the service and played two instruments, "It Is Well With My Soul" and "Hymn of Promise.

Frank Morgan, Jr., Arthur Carr, Graylen Hall, Steve Morgan, Reggie Thaxton and Bob Garrett served as pallbearers.

Honorary pallbearers were Charles and Murray Stephens, Marion and Jean Hall, Al and Dee Willis, Wayne and Beverly Peavy, Charles Renfroe and Joan Ragan, Cecil and Benning McGraw, Lady Causey, Raymond and Peggy King, the Coffee Club and the Vienna, Unadilla and Drayton Fire Departments.

Memorial gifts may be made to Vienna Methodist Church, 205 North 6th Street, Vienna, Georgia 31092 or the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 130 North 3rd Street, Vienna, Georgia 31092.

Friends may sign the online register book at [www.brannen-ne-smith.com](http://www.brannen-ne-smith.com).

A recording of the funeral service is available on the funeral home's Facebook page. Brannen-NeSmith Funeral Home of Vienna had charge of arrangements.



By County Nurse Manager  
Cyndi Mercer

At the Dooly County Health Department, we offer affordable, confidential services to support men's health, including: PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) Screening – Included in our Men's Wellness Lab Panel. A1C (Diabetes Screening) – Included in our Men's Wellness Lab Panel, Cholesterol Testing – Included in our Men's Wellness Lab Panel. Blood Pressure Checks – Quick, easy, and available at your visit. STD/STI Testing – Confidential and available for men of all ages. Tobacco Cessation Support –

Resources to help you quit for good. Vaccinations – We carry all vaccines that are on the schedule for infants through senior citizens.

Call us today at 229-268-4725 or walk in Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Labs – No appointment or doctor's order needed for Wellness Panels.

We also provide education and counseling for colorectal cancer screenings, recommended starting at age 45 along with other needed screenings. Ask us how to take the next step. Your health matters – to you, your family, and your future.

### Dooly County K-8 Celebrates Retiring Teachers



Contributed

Congratulations to Ms. Stephanie Tyson and Ms. Yvette Murray on their well-deserved retirement after 32 and 34 years of service in Dooly County, respectively.

Last Thursday, DCK8 celebrated these two exemplary educators at a state-of-the-art retirement luncheon, beautifully catered by Sister Annie's Catering. We were honored to have former principal, Mrs. Sharron

Marcus, as our guest speaker, sharing words of appreciation and admiration for these dedicated professionals and all educators at the luncheon. As they begin this new chapter, we pray that they enjoy every moment of their retirement, filled with love, laughter, and relaxation.

Congratulations again Ms. Tyson and Ms. Murray. You will be deeply missed, but your legacy will live on.

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Calling  
478-825-2432**

### Dooly County Community Calendar

#### Christ Chapel June Food Pantry

Christ Chapel Unadilla will have its next Food Pantry Saturday, June 14 from 10:00 a.m. until 12 Noon at the church located at 400 Jeannette Street in Unadilla. Volunteer check-in is 9:30 a.m.-9:45 a.m. For more information, contact CCU at 478-627-9352.

#### GFWC Vienna Womans Club Announces Museum Hours

The Dooly County Veterans Museum will be open on the following days from June 6, D-Day, June 14, Flag Day-Army Day, September 18, Air Force Birthday, October 13, Navy Birthday, November 10-11 Marine Day and Veterans Day and December 7, Pearl Harbor Day. Private tours can be arranged for other dates and times by texting 229-347-0834.

#### Bingo Night in Byromville

Enjoy Bingo Game night on the second Thursday of every month starting at 6:00 p.m. in the Byromville Municipal Complex. This is for individuals 55 and older. Free entry-fellowship-games and prizes.

#### Town of Dooling Meeting

The Town of Dooling-Town Meeting will now be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month starting at 6:00 p.m. (Except for the months of July & Dec. when no meeting will be held.) If you plan to bring an issue to the board, please contact the Mayor in writing a week before the town meeting to be placed on the agenda.

#### Bethlehem Baptist Church

Worship With Us Each & Every Sunday. Worship starts at 11:00am. Bible Study on each Sunday at 5:00pm. Jerry Jamal Sanders, Sr., Pastor. (TEN)

Please watch Bobcat Bulletin via Facebook - Instagram. FB Dooly County High School.

## ESTATE / YARD SALES

**Multi-Family Yard Sale**  
**Mt. Olive C.M.E. Church**  
**1206 Knoxville St., Fort Valley**  
**Saturday, June 14th**  
**7am - 11pm**  
Household Items, Clothes, Furniture, etc.

## School Board Attends Retreat

By Tim Franzén  
News Observer Reporter

The Dooly County Board of Education held a board retreat last Tuesday and Wednesday at the K-8 Academy in Pinehurst. During the meetings, the school board agreed to employ Rodneisha Cannon as an Early Intervention Program reading teacher at DCES and Carlotta Brown as a school system K-12 Math Specialist effective July 1, 2025. Officials also accepted the resignation of Yasmin Roblerto Morales as a School Nutrition Worker effective immediately.

## DCHS Canning Plant Now Open

Contributed

The Dooly County High School Canning Plant is now open and starting this week it will be open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pricing is \$5-a-bushel, Blanching-\$3-per-bushel. Canning with can and lid included is \$1.75 per

can. If the customer provides the jar, lid and ring, it's .50 cents a jar. No new processing two hours prior to closing.

If you have questions, contact Mr. Roger Teeple at 828-391-0537 or Mr. Philip Gentry, Jr. at 478-397-5436. The plant is located on Highway 27 Hawkinsville Road in Vienna.

## Dooly 4-H Represented at Ga. Officer Training



Contributed

Dooly County 4-H'ers Jarvis Bennett, Southwest District Senior Board President, and Kimora Odom, Southwest District Senior Board Member and Dooly County 4-H Leader Quadarius Hardy who attended a recent Georgia 4-H Officer Training.

## CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your Guide To Local Houses of Worship

### Athens Hill Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-4883

### AOH Church of God

Vienna, GA 229-268-1903

### Bakersfield Baptist Church

Vienna, GA

### Bay Point CME

Byromville, GA

### Bethel Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-2848

### Bethlehem Baptist Church

Byromville, GA 229-433-2102

### Big Poplar Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA

### Brown Chapel Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA 478-627-9466

### Byromville Baptist Church

Byromville, GA 229-433-2505

### Byromville Methodist Church

Byromville, GA 229-321-9292

### Camp Creek Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA 478-627-3929

### Vienna Church of Christ

Vienna, GA 229-268-1994

### Vienna Church of God

Vienna, GA 229-268-1404

### County Line Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA

### Destiny Worship Center

International Ministries

Vienna, GA

(478) 273-8112

### Dooling Baptist Church

Byromville, GA

### Double Branch Freewill Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA

### Drayton Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-8456

### Drayton United Methodist

Vienna, GA 229-321-9292

### Ebenezer Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-2964

### Evangelistic Tabernacle Church

Vienna, GA

### NAPA Brooks Auto Parts

229-268-2700

313 W. Union St., Vienna

Open Through Lunch

Eddie Conner, Manager

### THE CITIZENS AGENCY

"Dependable Insurance"

121 N. 3rd Street

P.O. Box 486

Vienna, GA 31092

229-268-2800

### Evergreen Baptist Church

Pineville, GA 229-645-3476

### Faith Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-2798

### Forest Chapel Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA 478-645-3476

### Harmony Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA

### Healing and Deliverance Church

Unadilla, GA

### Liberty Baptist Church

Pinehurst, GA 229-645-3584

### Lilly Baptist Church

Lilly, GA

### Lilly Methodist Church

Lilly, GA 229-433-5691

### Macedonia Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-1582

### Little Poplar Baptist Church

Byromville, GA

### Living Water Baptist Church

Unadilla, GA

### Mars Hill Baptist Church

Vienna, GA 229-268-6795

### Akin Insurance Agency, Inc.



## In The Garden With HEAT AND DROUGHT TOLERANT ANNUALS

TIM LEWIS

Columnist

Since heat and drought has been an issue for gardeners for some time, this week I would like to suggest some annual plants which perform well under the hot, dry conditions that we have grown so accustomed to here in middle Georgia. While most annuals require constant moisture during the growing season for best growth and flowering, these will flower profusely with less moisture, thus saving on the old water bill. All of these will require water initially to establish a good root system but, once established, will require infrequent watering. All perform best in full sun in well-drained soil.

Portulaca or Moss Rose (*Portulaca grandiflora*) is a succulent often used in pots and baskets or as a ground cover. Only a few inches tall, it can tolerate the severest of droughts. A native of Brazil, flowers come in a wide array of colors—red, white, pink, orange, yellow, bicolors—single or double. It is tough and will bloom well into the fall. Portulaca will actually flower better if kept on the dry side.

Gomphrena (*Gomphrena globosa*) has flower heads like clover and are available in white, pink, lavender, yellow, and red. This old-timer is a favorite of many due to its durability, its use as a cut and dried flower, and its tolerance of poor soil. The dried flower heads retain their color for long periods. Height ranges

from about 9 to 24 inches, depending on variety.

Dusty miller (*Senecio cineraria*) is grown for its foliage rather than its flowers. Its silvery-gray leaves are often used as accents in borders, edging, and container plantings. They tend to bring out the best in presentations with red, blue, and purple hues. Heights range from 8 inches to 16 inches. Compact and bushy, they prefer hot and dry conditions. Moist sites tend to cause them to rot.

Gazania (*Gazania rigens*) is a heat-loving daisy. Typical daisy flowers come in bright shades of yellow, orange, bronze, pink, white, red, and various combinations. Flower heads are 2 to 4 inches in diameter. Foliage is dark green and dandelion-like in appearance with white, fuzzy undersides. Plants range from 6 to 12 inches tall. Flowers tend to close at night and reopen the next morning.

Melampodium (*Melampodium paludosum*) is an excellent heat and drought tolerant annual. Small, golden yellow flowers cover the 8 to 15 inch mounding plants all summer long. They tend to reseed themselves too.

Vinca (Periwinkle) (*Catharanthus roseus*) is a popular drought tolerant annual which has been grown for many years and is one of the most heat tolerant of all annuals. Native to Africa, vinca has glossy green leaves with white

midribs, and comes in spreading types which grow only a few inches in height to upright types which can get up to 15 inches tall. Flowers come in red, white, pink, blue, apricot, salmon, lavender, and white and often have contrasting centers or "eyes." Like dusty miller, vinca actually prefers to stay on the dry side or root rots will often result.

Cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*) is an airy and delicate flower which adds a nice texture to the summer garden. Native to Mexico and sometimes called Mexican aster, cosmos is available in a wide array of colors such as yellow, white, scarlet, and pink. Its leaves are finely cut, its blossoms daisy-like and dainty. Plants reach up to 12 inches in height.

Zinnia (*Zinnia species*) hails from Mexico and is one of the easiest flowers to grow from seeds. They can be sown directly in the garden. Available in a wide range of colors, blooms can be single or double. Plants range from a dwarf 6 inches tall to 4 feet tall. Zinnias love the heat so much that, when the weather is cool, they don't grow or flower very well. They make excellent cut flowers.

Here are some additional tough annuals you gardeners may wish to add to your gardens for a beautiful show of color all summer long:

- Cleome (Spider Flower)
- Globe Amaranth
- Begonias (Fibrous or Wax)
- Nicotiana (Flowering Tobacco)

Try these heat-loving, drought tolerant annuals in your garden this summer. You'll be glad you did!

*Tim Lewis is a Georgia Green Industry Association Certified Plant Professional, gardening writer, and former Perry High School horticulture instructor. He can be reached at (478)954-1507 or [timlewis@windstream.net](mailto:timlewis@windstream.net).*

## PAGEANT

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that the event is a tribute to the legacy of Black Girl Magic and the strength of the Sorority's 22 Founders.

The Americus Alumnae Chapter invites families nationwide to participate in the Sorority's youth initiatives. These programs foster academic success, emotional growth, leadership development,

and civic responsibility among youth.

Parents interested in enrolling their children in Delta GEMS, Delta Academy, or EMBODI may contact Chapter President Dr. Deatrice Harris at the Americus Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. via email at [americanusalumnaest.org](mailto:americanusalumnaest.org).

## Mercedes-Benz expanding operations in Sandy Springs

By Dave Williams  
Bureau Chief

Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA - Mercedes-Benz will move up to 500 jobs to an existing facility in Sandy Springs as part of the automaker's plan to establish its North American headquarters in Fulton County, Gov. Brian Kemp announced Thursday.

The company's "1MB" facility opened in 2018 and currently supports about 800 jobs.

"We're excited that a job creator that already has close ties to Georgia is doubling down on the

choice and growing their presence here," Kemp said. "Georgia continues to lead the way in the future of mobility and technical innovation."

"This strengthens our position for continued growth and reinforces our established commitment to the U.S. market," added Jason Hoff, CEO of Mercedes-Benz North America. "Bringing our teams closer together will enable us to be more agile, increase speed to market, and ensure the best customer experience."

The Sandy Springs facility will house the company's existing sales teams as well as financial

services teams and corporate functions.

Also on Thursday, Mercedes-Benz also announced plans to build a state-of-the-art research and development hub near the headquarters facility. The company expects the move to be completed by August of next year.

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's Global Commerce team worked on the project in partnership with the city of Sandy Springs, the economic development agency Select Fulton, the Metro Atlanta Chamber, and Georgia Power.

## DCSS Teacher-Staff Member of the Year Announced



Contributed - Congratulating Ms. Bowens for DCHS and Dooly County School System's teacher of the year and Mrs. Taylor as DCHS staff member of the year.

## The News Observer

115 East Union Street, P.O. Box 186 • Vienna, GA 31092 • 229-268-2096 • Fax 478-825-4130

Send all submissions to:  
[editor@ganewsobserver.com](mailto:editor@ganewsobserver.com)

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**OUR POLICIES:** Signed Letters to the Editor are welcomed. Please include address and phone number.

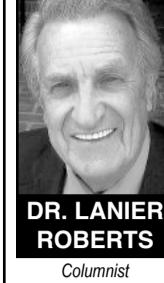
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## Writings From The Heart



## GOD HEARS US THROUGH THESE SCRIPTURES

DR. LANIER ROBERTS

Columnist

I DELIGHT ONESELF IN THE LORD Psalm 37:4,5 Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. (Yes, He will).

II WE HAVE CONFIDENCE TOWARD GOD I John 3: 21,22 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments

do those things that are pleasing in His sight. (He loves for us to please Him).

III ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE IF WE BELIEVE Mark 9:23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes". (Come on, folks, let's put on those "believing shoes" on and start running for the "possible things" from God).

IV BELIEVE AND RECEIVE Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say to you, whatsoever things you ask when you pray, believe

that you receive them, and you will have them." (One thing is for sure, if we don't try, it's not going to happen. Ready? I am).

V EXERCISING OUR FAITH HAS A LOT TO DO WITH SUCCESS Luke 17:6 So the Lord said, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say unto this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea', and it would obey you." (Not literally, but our faith should be that it COULD LITERALLY HAPPEN!).

GOD'S RICHES COMES OUR WAY Phil. 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Let's cultivate those riches so they come our way. Amen).

The Lord loves y'all to heaven and back. Until next time.

## Parables To Ponder Mosaic Law Could Not Save Man



BILLY POWELL

Columnist

On the third month following the exodus from Egyptian bondage (circa 1450 B.C.), God commanded Moses to assemble the Hebrew people at Mount Sinai to hear His laws.

The thunder and lightning on the mountain coupled with God's voice frightened the Israelites so badly that they said to Moses, "You speak to us and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, less we die." Thereafter, God spoke to the people through Moses. The rules and statutes imposed on the Israelites became known as the Mosaic Law.

The laws that God gave Moses can be grouped in two major categories: (1) the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and (2) 613 individual ordinances that are sprinkled throughout Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Numbers.

This corpus of rules imposed on the Israelites became collectively known as

the "Law." Paul made references to the Law in his epistles on faith. Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law.

After 1400 years of living under the Mosaic Law, the Jewish people had failed miserably. All the various laws became impossible to keep, causing the Israelites to go through endless cycles of sin followed by animal sacrifices for forgiveness. Thus, redemption became a temporary thing that lasted from one day to the next. But God had a solution: "In the fullness of time," He sent His Son.

Consequently, "What the law could not do due to weakness of the flesh, God did by sending His own Son" (Romans 8:3).

In one fell swoop, Jesus achieved eternal redemption for all mankind. He did so, "not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most

Holy Place once for all to obtain eternal redemption." (Hebrews 9: 12-14). "If the blood of bulls and goats sanctifies the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who offered Himself without spot or blemish, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" One drop of Jesus' divine blood was sufficient to pay the price for all of mankind's sins from creation to the end of the age.

If salvation could be achieved through obedience of the Law, Christ died for nothing.

Since the scripture states that "man is not justified by works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ," shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! The real question is "How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" The fact is that a person who is truly saved has no desire to break God's commandments.

To summarize, the "Law of Moses was not meant to save men, but to show them their need to be saved, and thus to lead them to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

## PINEHURST

CONTINUED FROM 1A

In other news:

- City Clerk Jackie Chancy will be out of the office June 16-June 18.
- The special primary election for Public Service Commissioner will be Tuesday, June 17. Early voting will be May 27-June 13 at the Vienna Precinct.
- Christ Chapel is having one more food pantry on Saturday, June 14 from 10:00 a.m. until 12 Noon.

## ABANDONED MOBILE HOMES

CONTINUED FROM 1A

Commissioners updated the county on the bridge on Bowen Road at Sandy Mount Creek that needs to be replaced and now GDOT has scheduled a concept team meeting for Wednesday, June 25 online with officials to discuss the need and purpose, logical termini, potential environmental and utility impacts, review alternatives and determine the anticipated public involvement on this project.

The county has learned that the Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs announced the 2025 CHIP Grant awards and unfortunately Dooly County's application was not selected for this year's funding. Mr. Ray Clemmons, who oversees the county's group health insurance through Anthem Blue Cross, spoke to

commissioners due to the fact that the county's insurance is up for renewal July 1. He informed the board that, "There will be a 24.9% increase. There was a loss ratio of 139.8% with Anthem Blue Cross paying out approximately 40% more in claims than Dooly County paid in premiums."

Following discussion, commissioners agreed to accept the Anthem Blue Cross proposal. Also the county's auto, property, heavy equipment and liability insurance will expire July 1 and commissioners agreed to renew that coverage.

In other news: Due to the Juneteenth Holiday, the board of commissioners will conduct its next meeting Wednesday, June 18 at 9:00 a.m.

Deadline for legal submission is Friday Noon prior to First publication.  
Email word document to editor@ganewsobserver.com

## LEGALS

Please enter "LEGAL NOTICE" in the email subject headline. Please be sure to have your contact information listed. Most legal notices run \$15 per 100 words per publication. Plus a \$10 affidavit fee.

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF  
DOOLY COUNTY  
STATE OF GEORGIA  
ESTATE NO. 25-0022  
IN RE: ESTATE OF  
MICHAEL WILLIAM EBERLINE,  
DECEASED  
PETITION FOR LETTERS OF AD-  
MINISTRATION  
NOTICE  
TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES  
and to whom it may concern:

KATHERINE EBERLINE has petitioned for KATHERINE EBERLINE to be appointed administrator(s) of the estate of MICHAEL WILLIAM EBERLINE deceased, of said county. (The petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond, waiver of reports, waiver of statements, and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. § 53-12-261.) All interested persons are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be granted. All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and must be filed with the Court on or before JUNE 30, 2025.

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

Rooney Bowen III, Judge of the Probate Court  
By Denal Fluellen, Clerk of the Probate Court  
Dooly County Probate Court

104 South Second Street  
Vienna, GA 31092  
(229)268-4217  
5/29, 6/5, 6/12, 6/19, 2025  
0714-VNO

### NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE UN- DER POWER OF SALE STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF DOOLY

On January 28, 2016, JIMMY R. McDOWELL and CATHERINE E. WEEKS executed a Deed to Secure Debt in favor of WANDA J. WALKER and EMORY T. WALKER, same being recorded in Deed Book 545, Pages 208-209, Clerk's Office, Dooly County Superior Court. The Deed to Secure Debt secured a Promissory Note in the original principal sum of \$53,000.00 ("the Note").

The indebtedness represented by the Note is now due and payable in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the Note and Deed to Secure Debt.

By virtue of the power of sale contained in said Deed to Secure Debt, there will be sold by the undersigned at public outcry to the highest and best bidder for cash before the Court-house door of Dooly County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale, on the first Tuesday in July, 2025, same being July 1, 2025 all of the following described property:

All that tract or parcel of land situated, lying and being in Dooly County, Georgia, and being part of City Lot No. Twenty-six (26) in the Town or City of Unadilla, Georgia, fronting one hundred twelve and one-half (112 1/2) feet on the North side of Second Street and running back Northerly along the west side of Oak Street a distance of one hundred thirty-three (133) feet, thence Westerly perpendicular to said Oak Street a distance of approximately one hundred fifty-four (154) feet to Beacham Street,

thence Southerly along the East side of Beacham Street a distance of approximately one hundred fifty-one (151) feet to said Second Street. Said tract is in the form or shape of a quadrangle and is bounded as follows: On the North by property known as J. A. Mercer which property was purchased from J. H. Fokes, on the East by Oak Street, on the South by Second Street, and on the West by Beacham Street. The within described and conveyed tract is the same property contained and described in a warranty deed from Wiley C. Shirley and Josephine R. Shirley to John C. Taylor and Mildred Taylor dated October 6, 1958, and recorded in Deed Book 80, Page 57, Clerk's Office, Dooly Superior Court, and the same property as conveyed to John Clarence Taylor, Jr. by deed dated January 14, 1975, and recorded in Deed Book 123, Page 292, Clerk's Office, Dooly Superior Court.

### Property Address: 534 2nd Street, Unadilla, Georgia 31091

The debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt has been declared due because of default in the payments due thereon, and in the due performance of the covenants therein contained, including failure to pay ad valorem taxes. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying same and all expenses of the sale, including reasonable attorney's fees.

Said property shall be sold as the property of JIMMY R. McDOWELL and CATHERINE E. WEEKS and their successors in title, subject to outstanding ad valorem taxes, easements, and other matters as will otherwise appear on the public records in Dooly County and other restrictions of record. To the best of the undersigned's knowledge and information, the above described property is, or

may be, presently in the possession of CATHERINE E. WEEKS.

Ms. Wanda J. Walker is the person with authority to negotiate, amend and modify the terms of the Note and Deed to Secure Debt. Ms. Walker's address is 623 B Woodland Drive, Perry, Georgia 31069. Her phone number is 478-954-6004.

Notice in compliance with Official Code of Georgia Annotated Sections 44-14-162 through 44-14-162.4 has been provided in accordance with the provisions of said Code Section. Take further note that Ms. Walker intends to use the excess funds from the sale to reimburse herself for past taxes that she paid in the amount of \$2,979.80.

The undersigned will execute a deed to the purchaser at said sale as provided in the Deed to Secure Debt.

This the 19 day of May, 2025.

WANDA J. WALKER, as Attorney in Fact for JIMMY R. McDOWELL and CATHERINE E. WEEKS

WALKER, HULBERT, GRAY & MOORE, LLP

Attorneys at Law  
P.O. Box 1770  
909 Ball Street  
Perry, Georgia 31069  
478-987-1415

THIS LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ON BEHALF OF ITS CLIENT. ALL INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

5/29, 6/5, 6/12, 6/19, 2025

0713-VNO

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF  
DOOLY COUNTY  
STATE OF GEORGIA  
CASE# 046-25J-0013

IN THE INTEREST OF A.G. SEX: F

DOB: 06/19/2016

Said child being under the age of eighteen (18) years.

NOTICE:

TO: TONDERICA MILLER, Natural

Mother of Child Named Above:

You are hereby notified that the above-styled action seeking an Order of Guardianship based on the child's, A.G., dependency was filed on March 31, 2025, by the maternal grandmother, Belinda Renee Sims, seeking to be appointed Guardian of the above-named minor child. All objections to the Petition to the appointment of a guardian or the appointment of the Petitioner as guardian, must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and be filed with this Court no later than fourteen (14) days after this Notice is mailed, or ten (10) days after this Notice personally served upon you, or ten (10) days after the second publication of this Notice if you are served by publication. All objections shall be sworn to before a notary public and must be filed with Clerk's Office in this case.

If a natural guardian filed a timely objection to the creation of a guardianship, the Petition shall be dismissed. If a natural guardian files a timely objection to the appointment of the Petitioner as guardian, or is a parent who is not a natural guardian files an objection to the Petition, a hearing on the matter shall be held in Juvenile Court of Dooly County, Georgia, which hearing shall be held at the Crisp County Courthouse, Courtroom 510 N. 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia on July 9, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. If no objection is filed, the Petition for this Guardianship may be granted without a hearing.

SO ORDERED, on this 21 day of May, 2025.

Kristen W. Pack, Judge

Juvenile Courts

Cordele Judicial Circuit

6/12, 6/19, 2025

0715-VNO

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF  
DOOLY COUNTY  
STATE OF GEORGIA  
IN RE: ESTATE OF WILLIE MAE  
SHAW,  
ESTATE NO. 15-0028  
NOTICE  
TO: Roosevelt Lester, Lisa Shaw,  
Belinda Clemons Shaw, Alexis  
Shaw, Cherwanda Lancaster,  
Leonard Jeffrey Shaw, Jr., Nathan-  
iel Shaw, Timothy Shaw, Jerome  
L. Shaw, Ovetta Bouyer, Yvonda  
Danette Leary, Kimberly Mauli,  
Shannon Germaine Leary, Emma  
Louise Washington, Yolanda West-  
Calvin, Johnnie Belinda Shaw, and  
the heirs of Chaqueal Shorts

This is to notify you to file an objection, if there is any, to the petition to probate will in solemn form, in this Court on or before June 23, 2025.

BE NOTIFIED FURTHER: All objection to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections. All objection 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.

Rooney Bowen III, Judge of the Probate Court  
By Denal Fluellen, Clerk of the Probate Court  
PO BOX 304, Vienna, GA 31091  
229-268-4217  
5/22, 5/29, 6/5, 6/12, 2025  
0712-VNO

## 2025 Legislative Session a Good One for Georgia Agriculture

By GFB's Adam Belflower

The 2025 legislative session was successful for Georgia agriculture and shows our state leaders support the agriculture community. Because of action they took from January to April, Georgia continues to be a place farmers and ranchers can succeed. Supporting farmers, foresters, and rural communities impacted by Hurricane Helene was a top priority. House Bill (HB) 223, introduced by Rep. James Burchett, provides multiple tax relief options to those affected by the storm.

This includes an exemption from the state income tax on federal disaster assistance and crop insurance payments received in 2025 due to Hurricane Helene; a reforestation tax credit for trees used in the commercial production of food and wood; and sales tax exemption for the replacement and repair of livestock buildings, poultry houses, and greenhouses in 2025.

The Amended Year 2025 budget also allocated funding for storm cleanup and recovery. Farm Bureau commends the General Assembly and Gov. Brian Kemp for helping farmers and timber owners recover as

they grapple with generational losses. Georgia farmers and foresters compete with neighboring states in global markets. It is important our producers have a level playing field to be competitive. HB 164 by Rep. Steven Meeks reduces transportation costs for producers by permanently increasing the gross vehicle weight variance from 5 to 10% for trucks hauling agriculture and forest products. This bill gives Georgia producers a level playing field by raising the allowable gross vehicle weight to 88,000 pounds.

Every state neighboring Georgia allows producers to haul with at least a 10% variance. Farmers and small business owners have grappled with Georgia's legal climate for decades. Gov. Kemp committed to passing a tort reform package. Senate Bill (SB) 68 and SB 69, both introduced by Sen. John Kennedy, provide certainty and assurance for farmers fearful of frivolous lawsuits and outrageous jury verdicts. If defendants find themselves in the courtroom, they will now be better positioned to display the facts of the case, leading to a fairer proceeding.



Photo courtesy of Gov. Kemp's office.

(EPD) continues to improve access to water resources for farmers.

HB 143 by Rep. Robert Dickey improves Georgia's ag water metering program and advances the work EPD has done in recent years. This bill will bring more irrigators into compliance, remove regulatory burdens on farmers, and save farmers and the state money.

As farmers plan to make de-

cisions regarding their irrigation infrastructure, they should contact EPD to ensure they are compliant with the most recent permitting and metering requirements. Crop protection tools are among the most important tools farmers need to successfully grow their crops.

SB 144 by Sen. Sam Watson recognizes compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's labeling requirements under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), which is the national standard. By aligning Georgia law with FIFRA, this bill ensures that pesticide policies are grounded in rigorous scientific evaluation rather than political narratives.

This bill protects farmers' access to critical crop production tools by reinforcing that manufacturers fulfill their legal responsibilities if they comply with EPA's labeling requirements for registered products. The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension provides a vital resource in fulfilling the university's land grant mission. This year, GFB advocated that UGA receive funding for a North Georgia Hay & Forage Extension specialist and breeder technician positions for Georgia's peach/citrus, blueberry and turfgrass crops. Hay production happens statewide. Providing additional resources to this commodity will equip the current specialist to better serve farmers in South Georgia and allow UGA Extension to provide targeted service to North Georgia.

All the new positions will provide cutting edge research, ensure new discoveries make their way back to Georgia farms and move UGA closer to being the top agriculture college in the nation. The success of this legislative session started with county Farm Bureau members being engaged and having solid relationships with their elected officials.

Because of the strong, grassroots network our organization has across the state, GFB's Public Policy Department is equipped to make a meaningful impact in Atlanta. Thank you to all the members who traveled to Atlanta during the session to advocate for agriculture. In the months leading up to the 2026 Legislative Session, please take time to thank your legislators and state leaders for their support this year. If you don't already know them, please take time to get to know your local delegation and inform them about the importance of agriculture in the communities they represent.



### 2025 LIBRARY SUMMER READING CLUB

DATES: From May 28 – July 23

**May 28 – June 20:** Bring your parent to sign up. We will need your name, age, and a phone number we can use to reach your family. When signing up, you will receive a bag with a reading log, pencils, bookmarks, and more.

**July 1 – 23:** When you hand in your completed log, your name will be added to a raffle for drawings, and you could win some cool stuff on July 24th! You do not have to be present to win.

**SIGN UP by June 30! READ 25 Picture Books or 12 Chapter Books by July 22!**

**Programs are FREE!**

**Wed, May 28, 10:30 am: Book Bash at George Busbee Park**

**Wed, June 4, 10:30 am: Bright Star Theatre**

**Wed, June 11, 10:30 am: Animal Tales**

**Wed, June 18, 10:30 am: Fiddlin' Dan the Mountain Man**

**Wed, June 25, 10:30 am: Wildlife Wonders**

**Mon, June 30, 10:30 am: Ken Scott Magic Man**

**Call Jill Kloberdanz with any questions**

**at 229-268-4687**

**Dooly County Library**

**1200 E. Union St**

**Vienna, GA 31092**



## SCHOOL BURNED DOWN

CONTINUED FROM 1A



A picture of the Jenkins School before the fire.

Photo Contributed



Photo by Don Williford

Intense flames engulfing the room and reaching tree tops.



The Jenkins School after the flames died out. Only skeletal remains of the outer walls were left.

Photo by Don Williford



Photo Contributed

Fire truck and crew in front of the building battles the fire.

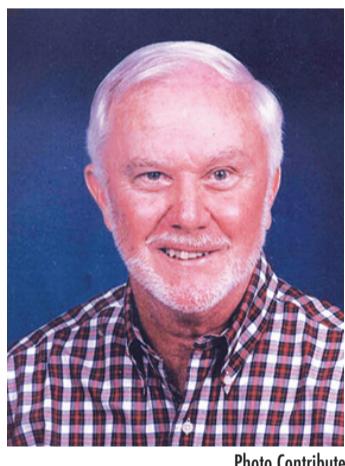


Photo Contributed

Longtime Fire Chief J  
ames Woodward

and served grades 1-12. The building had a lovely auditorium where not only school events were held, but many community events as well.

In 1958, Vienna High School was built on 41 Highway just north of downtown. This school served grades 8-12 and the Vienna School on Cotton Street then became Vienna Elementary School serving grades 1-7. The graduating class of 1959 were the first to attend and graduate from the new Vienna High School on 41 Hwy.

In later years the Vienna Elementary School was renamed Jenkins Elementary after Colonel Joseph H. Jenkins, a former Superintendent of schools and Coach of the famous "Wonder Five" basketball team. This boys' team captured three state championships and barely missed gaining a national title two of those years.



In 1980, Faith Baptist Church purchased the building and opened Faith Christian School serving K-12 grades. Faith Christian School closed in 2010 and the building remained vacant. The vacant school building was destroyed by fire on Tuesday, June 3. This was a sad day in Vienna to lose such a lovely historic building that held so many memories for so many people."

Carl Hobbs, a resident in Vienna stated that he attended Jenkins School, "Grades 1-7 from the Fall of 1963-Spring 1970 and he, "Can still name his homeroom teachers: Bush, Arflin, Forte, Waller, Stone, Hargrove, and Yow."

Bert Gregory, longtime resident and attorney in Vienna shared that the school was,

"Tucked away on Cotton Street, the Jenkins School served as the hub of education in Vienna for many years. At the time, the need was to replace the school building that burned on Christmas morning. Mary Wood Gregory was nursing her infant, Alton Gregory, in an apartment in the Eagle's Nest (Lewis House) and noticed the smoke. She woke others in the house and sounded the alarm. At the time of construction, the school was for the white students only and served all grades.

After integration of the schools, it became an elementary school. Later, when the school system declared it surplus property, it was purchased by Faith Baptist Church and housed the Faith Christian Academy. The flames, as seen through the windows and roof on the afternoon of June 3, 2025, were first noticed just hours after the funeral of long-time Fire Chief James Woodward. The funeral service in keeping with the tradition to honor fallen firemen included a procession around the town square to honor the former chief."

According to his obituary provided by Brannen-Nesmith Funeral Home, "James Madison Woodward, III, age 87, of 505 Old Americus Road, Vienna, died peacefully at his home on Saturday, May 31. Born in Cordele, he was the son of the late James M. Woodward, Jr. and Janie Forehand Woodward. Upon graduation from Vienna High School, James joined his father in running Woodward Service Station and Auto Parts. He was a member of Vienna Methodist Church, the Vienna Lions Club and served 30 years on the Vienna Housing Authority. He also proudly served over 28 years with the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department including 22-years as chief. His dedication to the fire department has had a lasting effect to this day.

James had strong ties to the family farm which has been in the Woodward family for over 162-years and seven generations have spent the night there. James took stewardship and conservation very seriously.

In 1993, he was awarded the Forest Stewardship Award from the Georgia Forestry Commission. It was, and still is, something for which the Woodward family is very proud. He also received the 2002 Ocmulgee River Soil and Water Conservationist of the Year Award for Dooly County. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, arrowhead hunting, riding his tractor and working on the farm as long as he was

able. He loved his family dearly and enjoyed spending time with them."

Bert Gregory continued, "While the two events (the fire that destroyed Jenkins School June 3 and the funeral of Chief Woodward) are unconnected otherwise, it makes for a good footnote to history. Also, it is not lost that the fire was just days before the community would celebrate Pentecost Sunday. The historical reference to Pentecost is when fire from heaven was seen by the apostles and the other disciples. The last bell to sound at Jenkins' School was the fire bell. And with that, this beautiful treasure is no more. The memories will live on through the stories of those who studied in its classrooms, played on its playground and performed on its stage."

Tacey Cason Wall shared, "My childhood school was completely lost to fire (last Tuesday). Heartbroken sounds dramatic but it's not. For those of us who moved away from our childhood communities, there are places and times that will always feel like home in our hearts. For me this school was one of those. If I had to guess, most of my childhood friends who have also moved away may feel the same. Recently, I was describing to Daron just how much I loved this school and that I wished I could take him inside to see it. Just like the water that flooded the fire, my heart and mind were flooded with memories the minute I heard the news."

A simple school built in 1934 formed countless childhood memories for many children who grew up in Vienna and Dooly County. Memories of wooden floors and heavy wooden classroom doors with panes of glass so you could see who was walking in the hallway, just hoping to catch a glimpse of a friend from a different

class or your crush, the heady scent of freshly polished wood floors and old wood mingling together especially on winter or humid days. Radiators to warm the rooms and old-fashioned coat closets to hang your coats in each room. Memories of the auditorium where Kindergarten graduations happened. I performed in the school play in Fourth grade and I received my Gideon's bible in the Fifth grade.

Bathrooms that opened both inside the school hallway and outside of the building too. Memories of sweet friendships forming in 5K and growing, running wild and free on the playground with childhood friends, flying down concrete steps that felt like the steps to the Philadelphia Museum of Art to a six-year-old, running until we were dizzy to make the merry go round fly and standing in middle of the see-saws to see how long we could last. Memories of an old school bus turned into a classroom for gifted students where we got to lie down on bean bag chairs and read for a class period.

The rock lunchroom and my most treasured memories, knowing my Ma-Ma was there on school campus every day and just how many times I used my bathroom breaks to run to see her during the school day. Though fire can destroy the building it can never destroy the memories.

For one moment in time, my 53-year-old self was a carefree kid again and all those childhood friends were there beside me running wild and free - in a place and time that no longer exist. I am very thankful for the safety of the first responders who showed up to fight this fire. I also appreciate the people who took photos so those of us who live away could see."

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