



# Dooly County Veterans Museum

In honor of **Pearl Harbor Day** and those who served.  
The museum will be open **Sunday Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>** from **2-4 p.m.**

Hwy 41 South, Vienna, GA

# 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, DECEMBER 04, 2025

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**UFR November Report**  
*By Spokesman Kenny Mercer*

Unadilla Fire Rescue responded to 11 calls during the month of November including one structure fire, one vehicle fire, two grass brush wildland fires, two cotton picker (farm equipment) fires, one Dooly County EMS assist-support, one smoke scare, two dispatched canceled enroute and one false alarm.



Contributed

The GDC in a news release reported that at Dooly State Prison in Unadilla, Nurse Holly Collins was processing in at the front bunker to report for work, and the following contraband was found in her possession on April 6, 2025 four packs of cigarettes and four packs of nicotine.

Nurse Collins was arrested by Dooly County Sheriff's Office and transported to Dooly County Jail.

Also on April 28 at Dooly State Prison, a suspicious vehicle was located near the facility that was occupied by three civilians- Jerome Lester, Keimon Ukponrefe, and Andrea Wiederkehr. A

search was conducted, and the following contents were found: 2025 grams of tobacco, 12 packs of rolling paper, 12 packs of cigarettes, six packs of burglars, two packs of pain medication, six earbuds, six charging blocks, nine charging cables, a pair of pliers, one hammer, one fish scale, one night vision device,

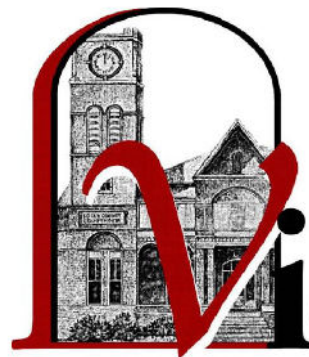
one charging bank, four rolling tapes, 12 bottles of vape juice, one lighter, one pack of razors, three cell phones, one nail clipper, three vapes, two drones, two controllers, batteries and cases for the drones.

Civilians Jerome Lester, Keimon Ukponrefe, and Andrea Wiederkehr were arrested and

taken to Dooly County Jail with pending charges. On April 28 at Dooly State Prison, two civilians were seen carrying duffel bags near the facility. The Georgia Department of Corrections Canine Unit and Dooly County Sheriff's Office were notified of

**DRONES**  
**CONTINUED PG 3A**

## GDC Confirms, “Drones Utilized to Smuggle Drugs- Contraband into Dooly State Prison”



## our community Vienna Council Rewards Hard Working Employees With Compensation Enhancement

By Tim Franzén  
News Observer Reporter

The council took under consideration and gave its approval to an employee compensation enhancement for 2025. City Administrator Michael Bowens stated, “After looking at the budget, we budgeted \$15,100 with a match of the \$500 for an employee that participated. That would be \$11,675 which is \$3,400 under budget. If you maxed at \$250, at \$6,000 it would mean \$9,000 under budget. The budget is able to handle and finances are able to handle the \$500 match.”

Mayor Eddie Daniels shared, “I was well pleased with what had been going on. Our guys have been working, they worked hard at the Pig Jig, and they’ve received nothing but kudos because they put out and I’ve been getting some good responses about them from some of the businesses. So, they worked hard for it. It is my recommendation that we approve and give them the \$500. It’s budgeted, so

I’m all in favor.”

During his City Administrators report, Mr. Bowens said, “We are still attempting to find a contractor interested in providing hay cutting services for the LAS spray field. The guy that had been doing it is ‘getting’ out of that business. We’re still trying to find other contractors to take care of the hay cutting and services that we need on those sprayfields as part of the wastewater treatment. They did a cutting a couple of weeks ago and worked with farmers investigating the possibility of getting someone to do that.

I found out recently that our Georgia Power contact that was providing those streetlight assessments had been emailing her about the lights in the area around Short Street, Delieseline Drive and other areas. (Other streets named as possibly needing improved lighting were Pecan and Hardin Street). (The lady at Ga. Power had) retired

**VIENNA**  
**CONTINUED PG 3A**

## Byromville Shares Locally Grown Foods During Annual Celebration



By Dr. Army Lester

The Byromville Community Reunion Group (BCR) is very excited about the success of their recent Annual Collard, Sweet Potato, and Poultry Celebration. Each year, the group plans a celebration around Thanksgiving to share locally grown foods with members of the community. For the past two years, the group has collaborated with the Byromville United Methodist Church Food Pantry, Community Outreach in Action, and Citizens Organized for Business and Education (COBAE) to make the celebration the best possible. With foods coming from local farmers, the celebration was extra special because the farmers got to see firsthand how important their good works are to the

community.

At the same time, the citizens got to see that they have nutritious and delicious foods right in their backyard. This is a win-win for the farmers and community members. Community members are very thankful to Gibbs Vineyard, which provided collards and sweet potatoes, and House of Raeford, which provided poultry.

Sammie Lewis, president of the Byromville Community Reunion, stated that the group gave out over 100 bags of food and that he looks forward to doing many more community functions in the future. Discussions are already being planned with COBAE and the Senior Class of Dooly County High to conduct community fundraising projects to raise money for

the Class of 2026 Senior Trip. While nothing is confirmed at this time, the group is looking for projects that can help the seniors raise the money for their senior trip, while providing a valuable service to the citizens.

With the BCR holding a 501c3 tax-exempt status, Tashia Smith, chair of the board, stated that raising funds to manage the many projects planned for the next year will be a top priority. Additionally, the group is actively seeking more community partners, such as COBAE, Byromville United Methodist Church, Reedy Branch Baptist Church, and Community Outreach in Action to do this very important work of the community.

## Skeletal Remains Discovered Outside of Vienna

By Sheriff Craig Peavy

A landowner called me Wednesday, November 26 at around 1:30 p.m. to report a deer hunter on his property east of Vienna had possibly located human remains in the woods while tracking a deer. I along

with Dooly County deputies as well as the GBI responded to the location and confirmed in fact that they were human remains.

The GBI along with the GBI's Crime Scene Unit and Dooly County Sheriff's Office are

conducting an investigation at this time.

The remains will be transported to the GBI Crime Lab to try and determine the identity and cause of death. No further information is available at this time.

## The Gateway Center's Adopt an Angel Program

Contributed

For over 20 years, Adopt an Angel has provided toys for children in need. Last year, we were able to serve over 800 children and we hope to meet that this year as well. The Gateway Center offers its services to residents of Dooly County.

The Adopt an Angel program is in need of monetary donations to purchase toys and are accepted at Planters First Bank in Cordele (Adopt an Angel Account) or through PayPal.

**ANGEL PROGRAM**  
**CONTINUED PG 2A**



# ANGEL PROGRAM

CONTINUED FROM 1A

Adopt An Angel Donations

Santa and his elves are looking for donations!

We are in need of Monetary Donations to purchase toys for our Adopt An Angel Program!! Donations Accepted @: Planters First Bank in Cordele (Adopt An Angel Account) or through PayPal

Donation Drop Off Dec.12th & Dec. 15th 9AM-5PM Cordele Lions Club Fairgrounds



Donation drop off will be Dec. 12 and Dec. 15 from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at Cordele Lions Club Fairgrounds. For more information about services provided by the Gateway Center, call 229-273-0600 or visit the website at:gatewaycentercordele.org.

# Byromville Baptist Church Annual Toyland Concert

**By Brenda Lockerman**

Byromville Baptist Church invites everyone to their 36th Annual Toyland Concert Sunday, December 7 at 6:00 p.m. People of all ages in BBC as well as others from the surrounding communities will be performing. It's always a great event-one that you will surely enjoy.

## A Moment From the Mission Coordinators at St. Paul Chapel

**Contributed**

Imagine it was important enough to be recorded in all four gospels. Imagine a boy with fish

and bread packed for the journey to see Jesus. Imagine a child with just enough food to eat being asked to give it away so others could eat.

# Byromville Baptist Participates in Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

**Contributed**

Byromville Baptist Church announced the creation of 108 Operation Christmas Child gift-filled shoe boxes prepared by the program's volunteers and donors containing toys, school supplies and hygiene items for children in need around the world.

According to sources, "It is a project of the Christian relief organization Samaritan's Purse, and the gifts are delivered with the goal of demonstrating God's love and sharing the message of Jesus Christ. After receiving a shoebox, children can also participate in a 12-lesson discipleship program called The Greatest Journey.

The mission is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in vulnerable situations worldwide. The project also works to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with children and their families. The boxes are collected and distributed globally to children affected by poverty, war, natural disasters, and other crises.

After receiving a shoebox, children can enroll in "The Greatest Journey" program, which teaches them about faith and encourages them to share their beliefs with others.

Individuals can get involved by packing their own shoe boxes with gifts, or by donating online."



# Thanksgiving Blessings in Vienna

**Contributed**

The City of Vienna proudly hosted its Annual Thanksgiving Box Giveaway last week. We were honored to sponsor 15 families around Dooly County as we continue the tradition of giving, gratitude, and community care during this Thanksgiving season. As we reflect on what we are thankful for, we extend heartfelt appreciation to our residents, partners, and supporters whose dedication and kindness help make Vienna a remarkable place to live, serve, and grow.

On behalf of Kaleb Green and the entire Community Development Department, we express our deepest gratitude to our community members, the Administration Department, and Mayor Eddie Daniels and City Council for their continued support. From our city family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving.



Photo Contributed  
City Clerk Margaret Shelley, Kaleb Green with community development and City Administrator Michael Bowens

We find ourselves in a similar place as children in Dooly County go home for breaks from school. No more hot breakfasts or school lunches to sustain them for the weekdays or the weekends. The need is great. For \$10 per child, we can

provide nutritious snacks to ease the food insecurity for a child likely to be called upon to share his meager "fish and loaves" to feed older siblings and household members.

The Mission Coordinators have worked with Dooly County

Schools to identify 50 students to receive a Snack Attack (gallon size Ziplock full of goods). This Christmas break project will expand to other holiday weekends throughout the year and more students as we work to include Community in Schools

partners to make this mission sustainable and supported along with many organizations here in the Kingdom of Dooly.


For more information, contact St. Paul Chapel at the Dooly Campground in Vienna at 229-582-4544.

GEORGIA811

Utilities Protection Center, Inc.

Know what's below. Call before you dig.

IT'S THE LAW!



City of Vienna  
Public Awareness – Natural Gas Safety  
Protect People First, Then Property

**Purpose:**

The purpose of our natural gas mains and service lines are to transport natural gas to the businesses and individual customers. It is estimated that there are more than 800,000 miles of underground gas mains and service lines in the United States today. Fortunately, pipeline accidents are extremely rare, but do occur. Natural gas is extremely flammable, potentially hazardous, could possibly dissipate oxygen from your dwelling causing suffocation and in the right mixture with air cause a fire or explosion.

The City of Vienna's Natural Gas System consists of the following:

Mains in sizes from 1.5" to 6" of both coated steel and PE Plastic

Service Lines in sizes from 5/8" to 4" of both coated steel and PE Plastic

Odorization Station

Main Line Underground Cut-off Valves

Critical / Emergency Main Line Valves

The gas mains and services lines are buried underground and have a depth range of 24"-36" for gas mains and 12"-18" for service lines. These gas lines are located on most of the streets in the City of Vienna and are monitored on an annual basis for any signs of leakage and corrosion.

That is why it is extremely important that anyone 72 hrs prior to mechanize digging/moving earth in any way, MUST CALL 811 to notify the Utilities Protection Center of Georgia of your intention to dig around what could be utilities that could be damaged. When you call 811 the UPC will notify all utility owners or operators and have them locate and mark all utilities located in the area in which you will be digging.

Know the telephone numbers to call and keep them available.  
City of Vienna Gas – 229-268-4744 Mon-Fri 8:00 – 4:30  
After Business Hours - Emergency – 911 or 229-322-5250  
Georgia Call Before You DIG - 811

**Can You Recognize And React to A Natural Gas Leak?**

Trust your senses. Seeing bubbles in wet or flooded areas, dead vegetation or discolored plants or grass in a normally healthy environment, a hissing sound, and your sense of smell could indicate a gas leak that should be reported immediately to: City of Vienna Gas Department at 229-268-4744 or 911 or 229-322-5250 after regular business hours for immediate response by qualified personnel. If you smell gas inside your home or business, leave the premises immediately, do not call from your home, don't turn on or off any electrical switches, do not attempt to air out the building. If you are on the phone, do not hang it up, lay it down and call the gas department from another phone at a safe distance. Remain away from the premises until emergency personnel have given you the ok to return. Never try to make repairs to stop a gas leak as you could possibly make the situation worse and cause possible damage, injury or death.

Please do not hesitate to call your local natural gas department if you even think that what you smell may be gas. It is better to be safe.

Jeff Priest - Gas Superintendent

Ciudad de Vienna  
Conciencia Pública – Seguridad de Gas Natural  
Proteja las Personas Primero, Luego la Propiedad

**Propósito:**

El propósito de nuestras líneas principales y líneas de servicios de gas natural son para transportar gas a negocios y clientes individuales. Hoy en día se estima que hay más de 800,000 millas de líneas principales y de servicios de gas natural bajo tierra en los Estados Unidos. Afortunadamente, los accidentes de líneas son extremadamente raros, pero si ocurren. El gas natural es extremadamente inflamable, potencialmente peligroso, puede disipar oxígeno de su vivienda causando sofocamiento y una cantidad exacta de aire puede causar un incendio o explosión.

El sistema de gas natural de la ciudad de Vienna consiste en lo siguiente:

Líneas principales hechas de tamaño de 1.5" a 6" de metal cubierto y plástico PE.

Líneas de servicio hechas de tamaño de 5/8" a 4" de metal cubierto y plástico PE.

Válvulas para cortar suministro a las líneas principales subterráneas

Válvulas Críticas/Emergencia para líneas principales

Odorizantes

Las líneas principales y líneas de servicios de gas están enterradas bajo tierra y tienen una medida de profundidad de 24"-36" para líneas de gas principales y 12"-18" para líneas de servicio. Estas líneas están localizadas en la mayoría de las calles de la Ciudad de Vienna y son monitoreadas anualmente para ver cualquier señal de fuga o corrosión.

Es por eso que es extremadamente importante que cualquier persona que vaya a escavar o mover tierra de cualquier forma DEBE LLAMAR al 811 con 72 horas de anticipación y notificar a Utilities Protection Center of Georgia de la intención de escavar alrededor de las líneas de servicios públicos que se podrían dañar. Cuando llame al 811 el UPC le notificará a todos los dueños/operadores de servicios y hará que localicen y marquen el área en la cual usted estará escavando.

Sepa los numeros de teléfono y téngalos disponibles.  
City of Vienna Gas – 229-268-4744 lunes-viernes 8:00 – 4:30  
Despues de horas Hábiles - Emergencia – 911 o 229-322-5250  
Georgia Hable antes de Escavar- 811

**¿Usted Puede Reconocer y Reaccionar a una Fuga de Gas Natural?**

Confíe en sus sentidos. Ver burbujas en áreas mojadas o inundadas, vegetación muerta o descolorada en ambientes normalmente sanos, un silbido y su olfato pueden indicar que hay una fuga de gas que deve ser reportada inmediatamente al Departamento de GA de la Ciudad de Vienna al 229-268-4744 o 911 o 229-322-5250 después del horario hábil de servicio para una respuesta inmediata por un personal calificado. Su huelle gas dentro de su casa o negocio, salga del lugar inmediatamente, no llame de su casa, no encienda o apague ningún interruptor eléctrico, no trate de ventilar el área. Si está en el teléfono, no cuelgue, deje el teléfono y llame a la compañía de gas de otro teléfono a una distancia segura. Manténgase alejado de la propiedad asta que el personal de emergencia le de permiso de regresar. Nunca trate de reparar fugas de gas porque puede que empeore la situación y puede causar daño, lastimadura o muerte.

Por favor no tarde en llamar a su departamento de gas natural si cree que huele a gas. Es mejor estar seguros.

Jeff Priest – Superintendente de Gas



DRONES

CONTINUED FROM 1A

the incident. Civilians Jordan Person and Rucker Willendrick were apprehended with the duffel bags, which contained the following contraband: 1752 grams of marijuana, 5062 grams of tobacco, 26 packs of burglars, two earbuds, 10 charging blocks, nine charging cables, a pair of shoes, one digital scale, 23 lighters, seven cellphones, a shirt, 23 vapes, and one sweat pant. Civilian Jordan Person and Rucker Willendrick were arrest-

ed and taken to Dooly County Jail with pending charges.” According to reliable sources, “Authorities have indicated that these smuggling operations are often run by gangs from within the prisons using illegally obtained cellphones to coordinate deliveries with outside accomplices. State and federal laws have been implemented to prosecute individuals who use drones to transport contraband to correctional facilities.”

VIENNA

CONTINUED FROM 1A

about six-seven months ago, but I did talk with the guy that took her place, so he finally has received all the emails that I sent. He will be coming to do that assessment of the need for additional street lights, so hopefully he won’t retire. Community Development employees got together (Monday, Nov. 24) and

were able to assemble around 30 boxes that they distributed to needy families. They worked real hard on those and got those done and it turned out well.” In other news: The City of Unadilla will be holding its ‘Twas the night before Christmas Parade, Saturday, night December 13 at 7:00.

Family Still Seeking Answers in Fatal I-75 Hit-and-Run

Contributed

According to a Be on the Lookout report from Macon Regional Crimestoppers, “The family of Richard Alan ‘Rad’ Dykes is offering a \$12,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the driver responsible for his death. On June 17,2025, Mr. Dykes was struck and killed while working on I-75 southbound near mile marker 109 in Dooly County. The vehicle involved is believed to be a ( possibly red) tractor trailer that fled the scene. With the assistance of Macon Regional Crimestoppers, the Dykes family is asking the public for help in locating the driver and vehicle involved in this tragic accident.



To submit information anonymously, contact Macon Regional Crimestoppers at 478-742-2330, 877-682-7463 or submit a tip online at www.crimestop.us.

Dooly County Community CALENDAR

email: thenewsobservereditor@gmail.com



Christ Chapel Unadilla Food Pantries in December

CCU has scheduled two food pantry dates in December (no Food Drive this month) on Saturday’s December 13 and December 20 from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon at the church. Volunteer check-in is 9:30 a.m.-9:45 a.m. For more information, contact Christ Chapel Unadilla, 400 Jeannette Street at 478-627-9352.

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 6:00p.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.

Dooly County

Library

1200 East Union St., Vienna Mon. - Thurs. 9AM-6PM Fri. 9:30A.M. - 4PM.

Closed Saturday.

Thursdays - COLOR & CHAT. Color books and colored pencils will be provided or you can bring your own. For more information contact Jill Kloberdanz, library manager library at 229-268-4687.

The Elizabeth Harris Library

Unadilla Location:

Tues-Thurs 8:30AM-6PM Friday 9AM-4PM

Saturday 9AM-12PM Noon

Byromville Location:

Tues-Thurs 2:30PM-5:30PM

“An Hour of Encouragement”

Pastor Dean and the New Poplar Spring Baptist Church would like for you to join us every Wednesday night @7pm for “An Hour of Encouragement” on our Conference Call line. Please dial (253) 993-3761. (TFS)

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. (TFS)

Calling all Churches, Choirs, Praise Dancers, Musicians and Motivational Speakers

Contributed

Easy Living Care Home Inc. is preparing for its Third Annual Christmas Celebration on Sunday, December 14 at 2:00 p.m., and we are inviting you to come be a blessing. We’re looking for volunteers who want to share their God-given gifts, whether through song, dance, music, spoken word, or a message of hope. Come sow a seed of love, pour into our residents, and help us make this season extra special for them. If

you or your ministry feels led to serve, please reach out. Your presence, your gift, and your heart will truly make a difference.

Easy Living Care Home Inc. is located at 301 East Beacham Avenue in Unadilla, Ga. Let’s come together and spread God’s joy this Christmas season.

The residents have a Christmas Wish List, so if you would like to help with gifts and donations, please make sure they are received no later than Dec. 22 so every resi-

dent can enjoy something special under the tree on Christmas morning. You are always welcome to bless the residents with items. Gifts can be delivered to Easy Living Care Home or a drop off.

For more information, contact Easy Living Care Home, Inc. at: <https://easy-living-care-home-inc.ueniweb.com/> or by calling 478-627-9022.

Holiday Stroll-Bring on the Holiday Cheer

Contributed

Kickoff the festivities at the “Ole Vienna Hardware Store,” 123 Union Street where you can pick up a warm apple cider and begin exploring the holiday booths. Enjoy shopping for Christmas bows, festive bever-

ages, baked goods, cakes, chocolates and pralines. Create a hand-print ornament or browse hand-painted shells, glass art, honey and other unique artwork. Discover items such as pocket-books, grapevine wreaths and Georgia Grown products.

Then continue the Holiday Stroll downtown with a map of participating businesses, shopping and collecting goodies from each location.

Bring a letter for Santa or write on on-site because his special mailbox will be there for the

event. Come celebrate the evening and get into the Holidays Tuesday, December 9 from 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Don’t forget to sign up in the ‘Ole Vienna Hardware store to win a door prize.



By Brenda Ambrose Lockerman

It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Downtown Byromville thanks to our Post Office and Peoples Propane.



Breakfast With Santa at Byromville UMC

Contributed

Flint RESA (Regional Educational Service Agency), Let’s Read Georgia, Byromville United Methodist Church and St. Paul Chapel will bring a special holiday pantry to our neighbors Saturday, Dec. 20 at 9:00 a.m. Bring your little ones for a delightful morning filled

with joy and wonder.

Join us for a festive morning as we share food, joy and community spirit during this Breakfast with Santa event. Children can share their holiday wishes, enjoy a delicious breakfast and revel in the magic of the season. Everyone is welcome.



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 Wesleyan Church**  
Vienna, GA, 229-321-9292  
**Ebenezer Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-2964  
**Evangelistic Tabernacle Church**

**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

Vienna, GA  
**Evergreen Baptist Church**  
Pinehurst, 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  
**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  
**Midway Independent Methodist**

**Akin Insurance Agency, Inc.**  
Local People. Local Service. For a Lifetime.  
Proudly Serving Dooly County for more than 10 years!  
Corner of Union & 3rd  
229-268-4751 • Vienna

**Chad Weesner INSURANCE AGENCY**  
Vienna, GA

**Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Mt. Olive Baptist Church**  
Byromville, GA  
**Mt. Moriah Baptist Church**  
Unadilla, GA  
**Mt. Vernon Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**New Bethel Baptist Church**  
Unadilla, GA 478-627-3775  
**Mt. Zion CME**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-6013  
**Northside Missionary Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**New Bethel CME**  
Pinehurst, GA  
**Pinehurst Baptist Church**  
Pinehurst, GA  
**Pinehurst Methodist Church**  
Pinehurst, GA  
**Pleasant Hill Freewill Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-8746

**Pleasant Hill Baptist Church**  
Byromville, GA  
**Richwood Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Pleasant Valley Baptist Church**  
Pinehurst, GA 229-645-3713  
**Reedy Branch Baptist Church**  
740 Church Avenue  
Byromville, GA  
**Riverview Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Shady Grove CME Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Shiloh Methodist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Smyrna Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-6852  
**Snow Methodist Church**  
Unadilla, GA  
**St. John Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Springhill Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**St. Luke CME**  
Lilly, GA  
**St. Mark’s Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Tippettville Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA  
**Trails of Faith Deliverance Holiness Church**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-4377  
**Turkey Creek Baptist Church**  
Lilly, GA  
**Unadilla First Baptist Church**  
Unadilla, GA 478-627-3615  
**Unadilla United Methodist Church**  
Unadilla, GA 478-627-3330  
**Vienna Congregation**  
Vienna, GA  
**Vienna First Baptist Church**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-4386  
**Vienna Methodist Church**  
Vienna, GA 229-268-4207



# In The Garden With DECEMBER GARDENING

December is a relatively quiet month in the garden, but there are more things to take care of than you might think. With limited daylight hours as we approach the shortest day of the year, this month’s crisp wintery weather can be strikingly beautiful and bitterly cold in equal measure. While we wait for Santa’s arrival, see the following checklist of jobs to keep us gardeners busy.

- Look after the birds - Stock up on wild bird food and make sure they have access to fresh water. Wash and disinfect bird feeders. Clean out bird baths as needed.
- Leave the faded flower heads on your hydrangeas until spring, as they provide frost protection to the swelling buds further down the stems.
- If any of your rose bushes suffered from blackspot or rust during the summer, gather up and remove any fallen leaves still on the ground to reduce the chance of spreading the infection next year.
- Take hardwood cuttings from suitable trees and shrubs.
- Remove yellowing leaves from your winter flowering cabbages and kale— they’re no use to the plant and may harbor pests and diseases.
- Now is a good time to prune fruit trees to maintain an open, balanced structure and encourage quality fruit production. Use clean, sharp

cutting tools to avoid damaging your trees.

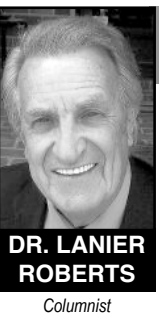
- Prune grape vines after a killing frost.
- If your strawberry plants are over three years old, order some new varieties to replace them. Old strawberries can harbor diseases and tend to lose vigor and productivity.
- Avoid walking on your lawn when it’s blanketed by heavy frost, as this may damage the grass.
- Keep clearing leaves off the lawn to let the light in and prevent dead patches appearing.
- Service your lawnmower by changing the oil, sharpening the blades or installing new ones.
- Wash down all of your garden tools and give them a wipe of linseed oil on the wooden and metal areas to help prevent rusting.
- Choose a dry day to clear out the garden shed in preparation for the spring.
- Repair fences and apply a wood preservative to prevent them from rotting.
- Check tree ties and stakes on newly planted trees to ensure that the trees are still secure following strong autumn winds. Tighten or loosen ties as necessary.
- Build or buy a compost bin. Continue to collect fallen leaves and add to the bin. Turn your compost heaps to mix the

ingredients and help the contents to decompose.

- Carefully plan your vegetable garden’s crop rotation for next year to avoid a build-up of insect pests and diseases.
- Take an inventory of tools and equipment that you need for next year. Add them to your Christmas list!
- Winterize watering systems. Bring hoses and outdoor faucets inside to prevent freezing.
- Clean pots and trays. Scrub empty pots and seed trays to get rid of overwintering pests and diseases.
- Plant trees and shrubs. December is a good time to plant bare-root roses, trees, and hardy shrubs.
- Apply mulch to protect perennial plants and the soil from winter weather.
- Harvest winter crops. Harvest any remaining winter vegetables, such as Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and kale, especially before a hard freeze.
- Plan for spring. Review last year’s garden notes to make plans for the next growing season.
- Order seeds and supplies. Take this quiet time to check your seed inventory and order seeds for the upcoming year. Order summer-flowering bulbs, compost, or manure to add in the spring.
- Take leaf cuttings of your favorite house plants including African violets and begonias.
- Divide Boston ferns and re-pot.

Perform some of these tasks during this month. 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 timlewis1@windstream.net.*



# Writings From The Heart A FEW MUSINGS

1). One of the points I was trying to make a few weeks ago in one of my articles. I said if the Georgia Dawgs could ever get the Alabama crimson Tide out of their minds, then they might win a National Championship every other year. Well, now they are gonna get a chance to make that first step to get them out of their minds as they will be playing them in the SEC championship game in Atlanta in a number of days. Dawgs, please take advantage of this opportunity

and “get that monkey off your backs”! GO DAWGS! Dawgs 31, Tide 21.

2). I was eating in our local McDonnell’s a couple of months ago, and there was an African American man (handicapped) sitting in a booth next to mine. When I finished eating and was leaving, I felt the Lord urging me to give him a \$---- bill. I did. It made him happy. Me too. Did I tell this to brag on myself? No. I did it to obey the Lord and encourage others to do the same when the Lord

speaks to them. It’s a blessing.

3) It’s a blessing encouraging others. I was discussing the Bible to a Christian brother and the subject turned to us reading the Bible. I shared with him how many times I had read the Bible through (including the Begats). This set this man on fire. Every so often he would come to me and share with me how much he had read since the last time we talked. How he was gonna read his Bible through over and over and over again! That thrilled my heart. Encourage someone this week about God’s word. Please do. Psalm 119:11 I have hidden thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Jesus loves us to heaven and back. Have a blessed week. That’s what I’ll be praying. Til next time.

# Abrupt Team Changes Are A Great Chance To Learn

Charlie Harper  
Guest Columnist

College is where you go to learn a lot of things, and sometimes while there you also go to class. It’s the life lessons that tend to stick with you most.

With that in mind, we’re going to turn to the “sport” of college football as a backdrop for yet another illustration of how the world actually works. Coach Lane Kiffin has once again transitioned between programs in the most Kiffin way possible, quitting Ole Miss on the cusp of a serious playoff run and joining perhaps their most hated rival.

While officially that is their in-state rival in Starkville, it is LSU that keeps tweaking Ole Miss’s basket of insecurities. Now they’ve stolen the “hot” head coach, branded Oxford a place you go as a stepping stone, and made the Ole Miss faithful question if they’re really going to be able to maintain their program in an arms race that seems clear to elevate a select few to an uber-elite tier.

Here we have a clash between those who view college football based on nostalgia, tradition, part of an educational experience, funded by donations and those who continue to demonstrate that college football is a multi-billion dollar business. Those on the side of big business are running up the score like they were John Heisman coaching against Cumberland.

Protecting the façade of amateur athletics, however, is part of the business model. Thus, those taking the bag and running still have to pretend that tradition, loyalty, and commitment are important. This demonstration is often served as a heavy handed dose of false piety.

Note Kiffin’s comments short-

ly after winning the Egg Bowl last Friday. Despite the decision not only to leave having already been made – something that is now clear given that he had already lined up most of his coaching staff to abruptly leave with him – he noted that he was going to have to pray about it, as well as talk to two coaching legends, invoking Pete Carroll’s relationship with his dad.

Heartwarming. For about 36 hours.

Kiffin’s exit laid bare the realities of the new business model. There was a bit of a standoff as he seemed to expect if not demand that he be allowed to continue to coach his current team while beginning recruiting efforts for his new team. Many of those recruits are likely currently wearing Ole Miss uniforms or have stated their intention to be in Oxford next fall.

In hindsight, hiring Kiffin was a roll of the dice. He had a defined history of abrupt and aggravating exits. His dithering a few years ago on staying with Ole Miss – then getting a much bigger contract to stay – is seen as a distraction for another good year that came apart at the end. One could say they knew what they were getting into when he was chosen to be the one to elevate the program. A business decision, if you will.

The fake piety doesn’t land just on the head of the coaches and schools who hire them. Sports journalists too are dragging out their fainting couches and doing their best pearl clutches. The very networks who have pumped billions into this “amateur” sport are doing their best to be shocked, SHOCKED!, that a brazen money grab for scarce elite coaching talent could take place.

If you look at the above scenarios, you can extrapolate these hard earned life lessons from college into daily adult life. The parallels to politics are clear.

We have our teams. There’s a lot of nostalgia involved. We tell ourselves our team is the good guys; those hated rivals are backwards idiots who don’t know how the world works and should apologize for even existing. Just seeing their jerseys makes us mad.

Yet deep down we know most of it is just business. The more we dig in to our side, the bigger the business grows. And of course, we have media and influencers doing their best to make sure we stay “engaged” – which means angry.

The major players make sure to play along with fake piety, too, so that we can continue to pretend. So many contemplations begin with “after much consideration and prayer” right before we are told that God wants the politicians to do what elevates them the highest and quickest.

But then, sometimes our coaches change teams, abruptly. Whether they do a 180 on an issue (see Ukraine and Israel) turn on the leader of their own party (see Green, Marjorie Taylor) or change parties altogether (see Duncan, Geoff), the fans too have to decide if they stay or if they go.

The hard lessons are the ones that stick with you. Sometimes they make you look inward, and make sure you’re supporting the right team, for the right reasons. Other times they make you realize you got caught up in the desire to win, but lost what you were fighting for along the way.



# Parables To Ponder LOOK AND PRAY BEFORE YOU LEAP

Without a scriptural hint that a mysterious personage was about to make an appearance in scripture, he suddenly appeared in Genesis 14. Abraham had just returned from a hard fought, but victorious battle against four Canaanite kings who plundered the land and captured Abraham’s nephew, Lot. In retaliation, Abraham and his fighting men overwhelmed the enemy kings and rescued Lot.

Following the battle, the King of Sodom went out to greet the triumphant Abraham. At that moment, a mystifying figure appeared. He was identified as the ‘King of Salem’ (pre-Israelite Jerusalem) and the ‘Priest of the Most High God.’ This impressive priest-king presented bread and wine to Abraham and his weary warriors. Then, he bestowed a blessing on Abraham in the name of the Most High God and praised God for giving

Abraham a victory in battle. To return the gesture, Abraham presented the priest-king with a tithe of his possessions. Abraham then returned all the confiscated food supplies and captives to the kings.

This priest-king who blessed Abraham later returned to scripture when an unknown author brought him back into focus in the Book of Hebrews. The Hebrews author refers to him as the ‘King of Righteousness’ and wrote that he had no father or mother, no birth, no death, and no genealogy. He was likened to the ‘Son of God.’ The king-priest was greater than Abraham because the scripture declares that “the one who blessed another is greater than the one who is blessed.”

Not only was the priest-king greater than Abraham, he was greater than Levi, the leader of tribe of Israel chosen to lead the Levites in the priesthood.

The tithe that Abraham presented to the priest-king was a precursor to the tithe that was later instituted by the Law of Moses, which required the Levitical priests (descendants of Levi) to collect from the Israelites a tithe amounting to 10 percent of their crops and animals. This tithe was used to support the Temple and the tribe of Levites, who inherited no arable land in God’s division of Canaan.

The mystery character who blessed Abraham was named Melchizedek, who was the prototype of the High Priest who was to come, namely Jesus Christ. No earthly priest can “remain a priest forever,” and no mere human is “without father or mother.” If Genesis 14 described a theophany—and some scholars believe it does—then the pre-incarnate Christ came in the person of Melchizedek to bless Abraham. Centuries later, this same Jesus shed His sinless blood at Calvary to reconcile sinners back to God so that we might have an eternal home with Him—a place where there will be no sorrow, crying, pain, or death.

# Electric car drivers to get more charging stations in Georgia

By Ty Tagami  
Bureau Chief  
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Electric vehicle owners will eventually have another 26 places to recharge when motoring through Georgia after the state awarded \$24.4 million in federal funding to build chargers along highways and interstates.

“This investment will help further secure our status as a national leader in innovation and infrastructure for years to come,” Gov. Brian Kemp said

of the money from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The Act, which took effect in 2021 during the administration of President Joe Biden, allocated \$5 billion nationwide over five years to foster a network of electric vehicle charging stations.

Georgia’s share was \$135 million.

The money is awarded in public-private partnerships and covers up to 80% of project costs.

Six winning bidders were an-

nounced last week by the Georgia Department of Transportation. This was the second round of contracts, with the first issued last year.

The chargers — four at each site — must be installed and maintained for around the clock operation for at least five years. They must be equipped with Direct Current Fast Charging ports, which can fully recharge a vehicle battery in as few as 20 minutes.

See a map with locations at <https://arcg.is/zCya9>

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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.

**N O T I C E TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF DOOLY**  
All creditors of the estate of **JAMES KENDALL BORUM**, deceased, late of Dooly County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said Estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned.  
JUDITH W. BORUM, Executor of the Estate of  
**JAMES KENDALL BORUM**  
316 Ransom Road  
Unadilla, GA 31091  
Michael G. Gray

**WALKER, HULBERT, GRAY & MOORE, LLP**  
Perry, GA 31069  
478-987-1415  
11/27, 12/4, 12/11, 12/18, 2025  
0754-VNO

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**  
Undersigned, Kathy Ann M. McCray, Marvelyn M. Smith and Leigh M. Thomas, Co-Executors of the **Estate of Geraldine Ellis Morris**, hereby give in terms of establishment comprising Section 53-7-41 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated

notice to all creditors and claimants of the above named decedent's estate to render in an account of their demands, properly attested, to said Co-Executors and all persons owing to said estate are required to make prompt payment to said Co-Executors having postal addresses of 8665 Hwy 41, Vienna, GA 31092, 1750 Findley Rd., Pinehurst, GA 31070, and 8172 Webb Rd., N, Hahira, GA 31632, respectively.  
Kathy Ann M. McCray, Marvelyn M. Smith, and Leigh M. Thomas  
Co-Executors  
LAW OFFICE OF NICHOLSON C. EDWARDS, LLC

Attorney for Co-Executors  
11/27, 12/4, 12/11, 12/18, 2025  
0755-VNO

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA DOOLY COUNTY**  
**IN RE: ESTATE OF ADA NELL BELLFLOWER**  
All creditors of the estate of said deceased, late of said county, are notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to us.  
This 20th day of November, 2025.

**MARY BETH MOORE**  
**433 EARL CROOK RD**  
**MARSHAVILLE, GA 31057**  
11/20, 11/27, 12/4, 12/11, 2025  
0761-VNO

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF DOOLY**  
**IN RE ESTATE OF LORRAINE R. GAUNT, DECEASED.**  
All creditors of the Estate of Lorraine R. Gaunt, late of said County, are notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate

payment.  
This 10th day of November, 2025.  
Charles B. Coley  
Executor of Lorraine R. Gaunt, deceased  
19828 Hwy 27  
Vienna, GA 31092  
J. Mitchell Gibbs  
RAINWATER, GIBBS & WRIGHT, LLP  
P.O. Box 1096  
Cordele, Georgia 31010  
11/20, 11/27, 12/4, 12/11, 2025  
0753-VNO

# Ga. Foundation for Ag accepting 2026 scholarship applications

**By Georgia Farm Bureau**  
The Georgia Foundation for Agriculture (GFA) is offering \$66,000 worth of scholarships in 2026 in support of students planning to or already engaged in studies to prepare them for careers in agriculture and ag-related fields. The scholarships are for students: entering or enrolled in ag-related programs at colleges in the University System of Georgia, Berry College or Emmanuel College; the Technical College System of Georgia; and the UGA College of Veterinary Medicine.  
There are five scholarship classifications: The

Scholarship for Agriculture is for graduating high school seniors who plan to enter college for Fall 2026 semester and pursue a career focusing on agriculture. The GFA plans to award 10 scholarships at \$3,000 each, and the top two ranking applicants will receive an extra \$1,500 each.  
The funds for these awards will be issued for the Spring 2027 semester, and the students must achieve a 3.0 grade-point average in their first semester to receive the funds. The Rising Junior/Senior Scholarship for Agriculture is for current college students who are at least two semesters away from completing their undergraduate degree.

The GFA will award eight of these scholarships at \$2,000 each. The Back to Farm Scholarship is for students who have shown a clear commitment to returning to the farm to build a career in production agriculture. This new \$1,000 award, created with the generous support of Mac Peden, will be awarded to a Rising Junior/Senior Scholarship applicant.  
Applicants are eligible for the Back to Farm Scholarship even if they are not selected as a recipient of the Rising Junior/Senior Scholarship. The Technical College Scholarship for Agriculture is for students enrolled in a school in the

Technical College System of Georgia and majoring in an ag or ag-related field of study.  
The GFA will award four scholarships in this category at \$1,500 each. The UGA College of Veterinary Medicine Scholarship is for current veterinary medicine students specializing in large animal/food animal practice. The GFA will award two of these scholarships at \$5,000 each.  
The deadline to apply for all of these scholarships is March 1, 2026. For more information or to apply, visit: [www.gafoundationag.org/scholarships](http://www.gafoundationag.org/scholarships).

# EPA, Army Corps of Engineers unveil new WOTUS proposal

**By Georgia Farm Bureau**  
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced a proposed rule that would establish what the agencies call “a clear, durable, common-sense definition of ‘waters of the United States’ (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act.”  
The proposal, unveiled at EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C., follows the 2023 Supreme Court decision in Sackett v. EPA. According to the EPA, the agencies developed this proposed rule using input from multiple sources, including a pre-proposal recommendations docket, information from nine public listening sessions, and consultation comments from states, tribes and local governments.

Key proposed revisions include: Defining key terms like “relatively permanent,” “continuous surface connection,” and “tributary” to appropriately delineate the scope of WOTUS consistent with the Clean Water Act and Supreme Court precedent; Establishing that jurisdictional tributaries must connect to traditional navigable waters either directly or through other features that provide predictable and consistent flow; Reaffirming that wetlands must be indistinguishable from jurisdictional waters through a continuous surface connection, which means that they must touch a jurisdictional water and hold surface water for a requisite duration year after year; Strengthening state and tribal decision-making authority by providing clear regulatory guide-

lines while recognizing their expertise in local land and water resources; Preserving and clarifying exclusions for certain ditches, prior converted cropland and waste treatment systems; Adding a new exclusion for groundwater; and Incorporating locally familiar terminology, such as “wet season,” to help determine whether a water body qualifies as WOTUS.  
In addition, the limitation to wetlands that have surface water at least during the wet season and about a jurisdictional water will further limit the scope of permafrost wetlands that are considered to have a continuous surface connection under the proposed rule. These proposed changes are intended to provide clarity and consistency to the continuous surface connection definition.

“When it comes to the definition of ‘waters of the United States,’ EPA has an important responsibility to protect water resources while setting clear and practical rules of the road that accelerate economic growth and opportunity,” said EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin.  
“We heard from Americans across the country who want clean water and a clear rule. No longer should America’s landowners be forced to spend precious money hiring an attorney or consultant just to tell them whether Water of the United States is on their property.” “We are pleased that the new rule protects critical water sources while respecting the efforts of farmers to protect the natural resources they’ve been entrusted with,” said American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall.

“The Supreme Court clearly ruled several years ago that the government overreached in its interpretation of what fell under federal guidelines. We are still reviewing the entire rule, but we are pleased that it finally addresses those concerns and takes steps to provide much-needed clarity.”  
The definition of WOTUS influences Clean Water Act implementation, including whether farmers, landowners and American businesses must secure permits before they can pursue projects that might impact surface water quality. Having a durable, consistent, and clear definition of WOTUS is essential to lowering costs for Americans and accelerating economic growth while protecting human health and the environment.

# Intoxicating THC from hemp to be banned in a year, with implications for business and consumers

**By Ty Tagami**  
**Bureau Chief**  
**Capitol Beat News Service**  
ATLANTA — A year from now, people in the hemp industry expect booming growth in a black market for marijuana and illicit hemp consumables.  
That is when beverages, gummies and other products made with THC from the hemp plant will become illegal.  
Furloughed government workers will soon get their jobs back and low-income households will get food stamps, but the government shutdown that ended Wednesday with President Donald Trump's signature on a funding bill places a time bomb under the hemp industry.  
The new law will ban over 95% of hemp extract products, including most non-intoxicating products made with cannabidiol, or CBD, according to the U.S. Hemp Roundtable, an industry group.  
It will have far-reaching effects on hemp businesses and their consumers.  
Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. slipped language into the legislation to restrict hemp products to 0.4 milligrams of THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, the

intoxicating, psychoactive compound found in hemp and in much greater concentrations in marijuana.  
The law's passage effectively closed an opening by Congress in 2018 that allowed a flourishing market for intoxicating products.  
A year from now, hemp products will only be allowed to contain 0.4 milligrams of THC per container. In Georgia, state regulations enacted after the 2018 federal law allowed 10 milligrams per 12 ounce beverage. Each gummy could also contain 10 milligrams, with a maximum of 300 milligrams per package.  
“Our industry just got wiped out,” said Joe Salome, owner of The Georgia Hemp Company. “Anything hemp derived that has THC is no bueno anymore,” he said.  
Salome said the impetus for the pending ban was growing concern about the proliferation of synthetic cannabinoid consumables, including poorly labeled products from China, made with potentially unsafe processes and grown from crops that might not follow U.S. pesticide standards. Children were getting their hands on them.

Salome and other mainstream operators shared those concerns, but he regrets that businesses like his are getting lumped with the bad actors.  
“My dad always said, ‘You are who you hang out with,’” he said. “There are good actors and there are bad actors, but there are a lot more bad actors that brought this down.”  
The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, commonly known as the farm bill, made it legal to sell products containing 0.3% Delta-9 THC by “dry weight.” Georgia's rules also speak to that compound.  
That is the loophole that allowed synthetic, highly-intoxicating products to flood the market.  
“The problem is that the hemp plant contains so much CBD,” said Gregg Raduka, a founding member of Georgians for Responsible Marijuana Policy. “Because the chemical composition of CBD is so close to THC, it doesn't take all that much chemical engineering to change the CBD into THC, but you can still call it hemp-derived THC. And therefore because it's not Delta-9, it's legal.”  
People in the hemp industry draw

parallels between the coming crack-down and what happened when the country banned alcohol, leading to a boom in organized crime.  
“This is a prohibition bill. This is trying to send it all into the underground and it's going to be around no matter what,” said Chris Karazin, founder and chief executive of Carolindica, a company in Raleigh, N.C. that manufactures and sells hemp consumables.  
“It's not like people aren't still going to go looking for this product. You just now force it to the black market,” said Karazin, who makes products for other companies and for sale at his own stores and online, with nearly a fifth of those sales in Georgia.  
Raduka recognized an irony in banning hemp consumables.  
“I'm guessing here that the marijuana industry is not interested in all the competition it's been receiving from the very high THC hemp products,” said Raduka, who retired from a career in substance abuse prevention and treatment and has been testifying at the Georgia Capitol about risks of consuming hemp and marijuana.  
The U.S. Hemp Roundtable says the

ban threatens a \$28.4 billion industry, jeopardizing more than 300,000 jobs.  
“People are going to lose their jobs. People are going to lose their houses,” said Christopher Lackner, president of the Hemp Beverage Alliance. “I know several people have second mortgages on their house because they were following the rules of the 2018 farm bill and creating this category and working with states to create regulatory frameworks.”  
Karazin said his business supports a network of suppliers, from makers of syrups, packaging and marketing materials, to landlords. Bottle shops and restaurants will lose revenue on sales of hemp products, he added.  
But the industry has a year to work with Congress, and Lackner and other advocates are optimistic that they can find a way to allow the market to continue while eliminating unethical actors.  
Salome was trying to be optimistic about that but worried about the future. He said he had at least 50 employees to pay and five retail leases to cover.  
“We owe the bank a bunch,” he said. “I hope I can keep my house.”

# Georgia economy suffers from lack of financial aid for low-income students, advocates argue

**By Ty Tagami**  
**Bureau Chief**  
**Capitol Beat News Service**  
ATLANTA — Nearly every state in the country gives college students financial aid based on financial need.  
Georgia is among the two that do not.  
Advocates who want to see that changed contend the policy is harming the economy by reducing the number of college students who earn a degree after suffering academic setbacks, and by driving high school graduates to attend college in other states, forever forsaking Georgia.  
Georgia has a lottery-funded scholarship, but HOPE is distributed based on academic performance in high school rather than financial need, and

students lose the scholarship if their college grade point average drops too far.  
That is what happened to Jordan Winfrey, a Kennesaw State University student who testified at a legislative hearing Thursday about the affordability of higher education.  
Winfrey wants to be a nurse, in a state that needs more of them, but she struggled with chemistry. Her grade point average fell, she lost HOPE and now, a junior, she works 30 hours a week to cover the loss.  
She has been trying to improve her grades and recover HOPE but has found that difficult while holding a job.  
“If I were able to work fewer hours, I'd be able to focus more on my classes and see my grades improve,” said Winfrey, a native Georgian and the first in her

family to attend college.  
She said all her friends are struggling too, with some dropping out to work.  
Taylor Ramsey, executive director of One Goal, which helps students like Winfrey, said fewer than half of high school students qualify for HOPE, and more than 40% who do wind up losing it in college, falling into a downward spiral like Winfrey, “when we pull the rug from under them and take away that financial aid.”  
It affects everyone, said Ray Li, a lawyer with Legal Defense Fund, a racial justice group. It drives up student debt, creating a drag on the economy when graduates must pay back loans instead of, say, buying a house.  
Georgia has one of the highest average college loan debt rates in the country, he said.

And the lack of financial aid for low-income families is driving a “brain drain,” he said, as talented students choose college in other states that will give them “needs-based” financial aid “because it is cheaper to go somewhere else and they're never returning to the Georgia economy.”  
Li said Georgia has the lowest percentage of high school graduates who stay in state for college in this region of the country. He recommended joining the 48 states that offer needs-based aid, by funding it with \$126 million in reserves held by the Georgia Lottery. He argued that Georgia would recoup the cost many times over in income taxes paid by graduates.  
It is unclear how convincing his recommendation will be for the Georgia General Assembly.

Sen. Max Burns, R-Sylvania, attended Thursday's hearing as a member of the committee studying college affordability. He suggested another course: consider making it easier for students to recover HOPE after their grades drop too far.  
“Good students have challenges especially in that first year or that second year,” said Burns, chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee and a

former President of Gordon State College in Barnesville.  
Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, a Republican running for governor, authorized the study committee. Sen. Nan Orrock, D-Atlanta, who leads it, said her panel will write formal recommendations after its next and final hearing Dec. 2.

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# DCMS Basketball Teams Take On Rival Crisp County

Contributed

Our Bobcats fought hard on the court last week versus Crisp County. In the girls game, it was Crisp County 49-Dooly 3 and in the boys game, it was Crisp County 48-Dooly's boys 38. We are proud of our athletes for their effort, teamwork and determination. Let's continue to support and encourage our student-athletes as they grow and compete.

# Dooly County Opens 2025-2026 Basketball Season on the Road

Contributed

Both Dooly County teams were on the road Tuesday, Dec. 2 against the Webster County Bobcats. The News Observer will have details on those games in the December 11 edition of the paper. Back on Nov. 15, the Lady Bobcats traveled to Montezuma to take on the Macon County Lady Bulldogs and lost 70-39 to open up their 2025-2026 season early.

Jazlyn Hall was the high scorer for Dooly County in the game with 19, while Ja'Kayla Hooks wasn't far behind contributing with 14 points. The boys and girls teams will also be on the road against the Treutlen Vikings Tuesday, Dec. 9 with tip-off of the girl's game at 6:00 p.m. Dooly will host its first regular season games against Webster County Friday, Dec. 12 starting with the girl's game at 6:00 p.m.

# 2025 King Cotton Award Winner



Photo Contributed  
Wilcox County ANR Extension Agent John Bennett (middle) accepted the 2025 King Cotton Award as part of the 2025 Georgia Association of County Agricultural Agents Annual Meeting & Professional Improvement Conference. L-R - Dr. Camp Hand, UGA Extension Cotton Agronomist; Bennett; Taylor Sills, Georgia Cotton Commission Executive Director

## By GA Cottom Commission

County UGA Cooperative Extension Service agents serve as vital resources for Georgia cotton producers. Agents are known for delivering timely and accurate information and recommendations, which are instrumental for the success of farmers across the state. They also perform community specific research, education, and outreach programs designed to help farmers maximize yields and efficiency. The Georgia Cotton Commission sponsored the King Cotton Awards to recognize outstanding contributions of county agents to Georgia cotton producers. The Junior Award, named the Allen B. Fulford Award, honors the accomplishments and memory of Allen B. Fulford, who served as a county Extension agent and state cotton agronomist. This award credits those with less than 10 years of service. The awards were pre-

sented at the 2025 Georgia Association of County Agricultural Agents Annual Meeting & Professional Improvement Conference in November. The Georgia Cotton Commission is proud to salute the excellent work that County Extension Agents do for farmers across the state. The 2025 Allen B. Fulford Award winner is John Bennett, who serves as the Wilcox County Extension Coordinator and Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent. Bennett started his career with UGA Extension in 2020 in Wilcox County. Over the past five years, he has worked with UGA specialists and local producers to conduct on-farm research such as cotton variety, deer damage, and fertility trials. He is impactful in continuing extension's mission by holding various trainings and updates for producers and sharing his research through oral and poster presentations at national meetings. Bennett also holds a

# Trojans Gain Split in Pre-Thanksgiving Hoops and Hoping to, “Pick up a couple of wins this week.”

By Head Coach  
James Martin

Last week, we played two games Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 24 and Nov. 25 at a Terrell Academy tournament. Monday, we played Terrell who we had played earlier in the summer and we beat them. So we had high expectations and the game did go back and forth in the beginning, but in the third quarter, Terrell ended up taking the lead by 16-points against us. It was a struggle, but then after a time-out, the boys finally ‘calmed’ down and started putting pressure on Terrell and we were able to ‘whittle’ the deficit down to six points. With two minutes left, we ended up having to gamble and they stole the ball and we gave up a couple of open layups at the end trying to and we ended up losing that game by 11-points 48-37, so that was a tough finish, but the team didn’t give up and kept fighting. Last Tuesday, we played Lakeside School out of Alabama and that game was different from all the other games this year. We started up pretty early by 18 in the first half. Then in the second half, they started chipping away and attacked our inside, one of our weaknesses on defense. So, we had to adjust accordingly and they couldn’t catch up. We got ahead by eight with two minutes left and no one scored again until the very last shot of the game. We ended up winning that one by five 63-58. We should have won by more, but I could get ‘mad’ because it was a win. That was a good finish to that game picking up the win against a decent team. So, this week we had two games playing South Ga. STEM Charter at home Tuesday night, Dec. 2 which should be a really good game. I think we’re a little bit better, but they have athletes and we’ll have to see how it goes. Then John Hancock who is way down right now, so that should be a good game us this Friday, Dec. 5 again in Pinehurst with the tip-off at around 8:00 p.m. Hopefully we can get two wins this week, that is our goal and get above .500 and hopefully scoring wise, most of our scoring has been coming from Garlan Godfrey our senior who has had around 20-points in every game he’s played. We’ve got to find some help with a couple of players who scored over 10 against Lakeside. If we can start getting contributions from just a couple of other



Photo by Bonnie Hauesler  
Senior Aidan Hill who plays varsity basketball for the Fullington Academy Trojans.

players that would be ‘huge.’ It seems like it’s 20-points for Garlan and eight points from everybody else, hopefully we’ll find a balance. We practiced Monday after not having that opportunity in awhile and hope-

fully we’ll have a good week. At press-time, the Trojans thus far were 2-3 overall having not played any region games early in the season.

# Ga. LIHEAP Sign Up for Elderly Residents in Dooly County is Dec. 9

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The Ga. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded program that helps low-income households pay their home energy bills. This support can reduce risks such as illness, fire or utility disconnection. Scheduling for the 2025-2026 Heating Program for elderly residents in Dooly County will open Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. by calling 478-209-0958. All household adults must be 65 years of age or older, unless they are under the age of 18. Required Documents (digital copies will not be accepted): Valid Picture ID, Social Security cards for all household members, Proof of income for the past 30 days, current gas and electric bills (must be printed). This program helps with energy bill payments and emergency energy crisis assistance.

Master of Plant Protection and Pest Management from the University of Georgia. The Georgia Cotton Commission is a producer-funded organization located in Perry, Georgia. The Commission began in 1965. Georgia cotton producers pay an assessment enabling the Commission to invest in programs of research, promotion, and education on behalf of all cotton producers of Georgia. For more information about the Georgia Cotton Commission please call (478) 988-4235 or on the web at [www.georgiacotton-commission.org](http://www.georgiacotton-commission.org).

To qualify for LIHEAP in Ga., applicants must be a U.S. citizen or legally admitted immigrant, have a total gross annual household income at or below sixty percent of the state median income and be fully responsible for paying energy costs for the household’s main heating

source. Assistance is provided on a first-come, first-served basis within each agency service area. applicants are encouraged to apply early before funds run out. Households with a credit of \$1,000 or more on their energy bill are not eligible. If you are medically home-

bound, please call (478) 738-3240 on Tuesday, December 9 to request assistance. Homebound is defined as someone who cannot leave their home due to medical or physical limitations. Scheduling for the general public will occur in January, 2026.

# Unadilla Christmas Parade Saturday, Dec. 13

Contributed

The City of Unadilla is excited to announce our ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas Parade. We would like to take this time to personally invite you to participate in what we believe will be the most exciting Christmas parade our community has seen in years. We hope each of you

will take the opportunity to participate in this event and join us as we celebrate the magic of Christmas. The parade is scheduled for Saturday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. It is free of charge to place an entry in the parade. We are looking for entries of all kinds. Individuals, families, busi-

nesses, organizations, churches and schools. We are asking all entries to incorporate the ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas theme. We hope to see lots of lights on each entry. If you have questions, please email [ssin-yard@cityofunadillaga.com](mailto:ssin-yard@cityofunadillaga.com) or call city hall at 478-627-3022.

# ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas Parade

**Saturday, December 13th @ 7pm**  
**Downtown Unadilla**  
**Registration is free! Just scan QR code**

# New Books at Byromville Public Library



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There are three new books in our children’s section at Byromville Public Library come by and check it out Amara’s Farm written by

JaNay Brown-Wood, Apple Pie Tired by Beth Charles Illustrated by Hannah Brinson and Thank a Farmer by Maria Gianferrari, illustrated by Monica Mikai. Byromville

Public Library. Open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Visit [lbrls.org/byromville](http://lbrls.org/byromville) or call 478-433-5100.