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our email has changed to editor@gnewsobserver.com

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The News Observer

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, FEBRUARY 05, 2026

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UFR January Report
By *Kenny Mercer*
Unadilla FireRescue responded to 19 calls during the month of January including two structure fires, three wildland fires, one wires down call, one dumpster fire, one natural gas leak, two EMS assist support, one smoke scare, one trouble unknown call and seven false alarms.

GBI Arrests Warner Robins Man for Aggravated Assault on A Police Officer

By GBI

Warner Robins, Houston County, Ga. (January 29) - The GBI has arrested and charged Rashawn Williams, age 21, of Warner Robins, Ga. with Aggravated Assault on a Peace Officer and Aggravated Assault.

The Warner Robins Police Department requested the GBI to investigate after Williams shot a WRPD officer when the officer was responding to a domestic disturbance call.

Preliminary information indicates that at about 8:32 a.m., the 911 Center received a call. While no one was directly speaking with the 911 operator, the operator determined that a domestic disturbance was occurring at a home in the 100 block of Rose Street, Warner Robins, Ga.

Based on the information, WRPD officers responded to the



home. Once on scene, a WRPD officer approached the home. Someone in the home shot at the officer, hitting the officer multiple times. Other officers responding to the scene rendered aid to the officer. Officers discovered a woman outside the home who also had been shot.

The officer and the woman were taken to a local hospital for medical treatment. Both are in critical condition. Law enforcement determined that Williams lived at the home along

with the woman, but officers were unable to locate Williams at the home.

For the next several hours, law enforcement secured the area to locate Williams.

At about 11:10 a.m., Williams was taken into custody without incident. Williams was booked into the Houston County Jail. The investigation is active and ongoing. Anyone with information related to this investigation is encouraged to contact the GBI Tipline.

Anonymous tips can be submitted by calling 1-800-597-TIPS (8477), online at <https://gbi.georgia.gov/submit-tips-online>, or by using the See Something, Send Something mobile app. Once the investigation is complete, the case file will be turned over to the Houston County District Attorney's Office.

Kaleb Green Represents DCSS at State Capitol



Contributed

DCSS senior Kaleb Green represented the school at the state capital last Thursday as part of the Chatt-Flint RESA Student Advisory Council! Despite a busy day at the capital, Kaleb and his fellow students

had the opportunity to meet and speak with members of both the House and Senate.

We're proud of Kaleb for being such a great ambassador for our school and engaging with state legislators to share the student perspective.

Bobcat Spotlight at DCHS



Analice Bufere
Teacher



Alvin Jones
Support Staff



Min'Lea Laidler
Teacher



Kaleena Cotton



Christopher Gonzalez



Camille Taylor



Damarrion Felton



Massiel Morales



Nitrell Lucas



Elysiah Armstrong



Jocelyn Presley

By Chiquita Granville

We believe in celebrating excellence, effort, and leadership and each month we shine the light on those who make our school community stronger.

Teacher of the Month, recognizing an educator who goes above and beyond to inspire, support, and empower our stu-

dents every day.

Analice Bufere, teacher, Alvin Jones, support staff and Min' Lea Laidler, teacher. Bobcat January Spotlight Students of the Month, celebrating a student who demonstrates Bobcat pride through academics, attendance, character, and leadership.

Kaleena Cotton, Christo-

pher Gonzalez, Camille Taylor, Damarrion Felton, Massiel Morales, Nitrell Lucas, Elysiah Armstrong and Jocelyn Presley.

Join us in congratulating our Bobcat Spotlight recipients for this month. Your dedication, positive attitude, and commitment to excellence do not go unnoticed.

Speeding Traffic Stop Leads to Drug and Firearm Arrest

By CCSO

A Crisp County Sheriff's Office deputy conducted a traffic stop last Tuesday on a Ford F-150 traveling 75 mph in a 55 mph zone on Highway 280 at Dockweiler Road. During the stop, the deputy detected the odor of marijuana coming from

the vehicle. The driver admitted to having marijuana in the vehicle.

A subsequent search resulted in the discovery of approximately three ounces of marijuana and two firearms inside the vehicle. The driver, 30-year-old Jonathan Lazo of Rochelle, Ga.

was arrested and transported to the Crisp County Jail.

He was charged with Speeding In Excess Of Maximum Limits, Felony Possession Of Marijuana and Possession Of Firearm During Commission Of Crime.

DCHS Black History Month Program



By Chiquita Granville

Dooly County High School proudly invites our parents, families, and community members to join us for our Black History Program Tuesday Feb. 24 at 9:00 a.m. as we celebrate Black History through the Evolution of Music.

This special program will

take us on a powerful journey through time honoring our roots, recognizing our struggles, celebrating our triumphs, and uplifting the culture that continues to shape generations through music, movement, and expression. We look forward to celebrating history, heritage, and excellence together.

GFC-Ga. DNR and Ga. Dept. of Ag. Team Up



By GFC

Thank you to our Georgia Forestry Commission first responders and our partners at Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Georgia DNR and Georgia Department of Agriculture. While there is still work ahead in the counties hit hardest by the ice storm, we want to pause and recognize the outstanding work

our teams and crews have done before, during, and after the storm. From ensuring essential supplies reached impacted areas to clearing roads of downed trees and doing everything possible to help communities recover. They were there when Georgia needed them (and they still are). Recently there were 25 counties

cleared, 2,800+ miles of roads assessed and 265 miles of roads cleared of debris. In the days ahead, our foresters will continue working with communities and landowners to assess tree and timber damage. For more information, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaForestryCommission>.

Capitol Recap

Contributed

After a slow start, budget week, and an ice storm that halted the return to business as usual at the Capitol, the legislature is off to the races. Due to the winter weather that impacted a portion of the state over the weekend, both the House and the Senate gavelled in pro forma on Monday, but no legislative business took place.

Lawmakers returned on Tuesday and conducted floor sessions and committee meetings through Thursday afternoon, completing legislative days 6-9. We will return to the Capitol on Monday for legislative day 10 next Monday, February 2.

On Wednesday, House Speaker Jon Burns (R-Newington) held a press conference to reveal his highly-anticipated plan to eliminate property taxes for Georgians' primary residences. The Georgia HOME Act proposes eliminating property taxes on homesteads by 2032, while keeping the currently implemented property tax exemptions intact. Local governments may opt in to the proposal at any time before the mandate takes effect.

The legislation also proposes doubling the state homestead exemption semi-annually, limiting revenue growth on other properties to 3%, and provid-

ing for Homeowner Tax Relief Grants averaging \$500 to taxpayers. "Property tax rates have skyrocketed far beyond what most Georgians can reasonably afford or be expected to pay, placing an unfair and unsustainable financial burden on countless homeowners throughout the state," said Speaker Burns. "The Georgia HOME Act enables the elimination of property taxes on homesteads statewide, opening the door to homeownership for young families and providing long-term security for seniors."

This proposal requires enabling legislation and a constitutional amendment, meaning it takes a 2/3 vote of both houses and a majority vote in a statewide referendum before it can take effect. The Senate Finance Committee met on Wednesday in a standing-room-only committee room where the state's high-tech data center equipment tax exemption took center stage. First, the committee heard from the Department of Audits and Accounts (DOAA) regarding the 2025 High-Tech Data Center Equipment Exemption Report, conducted by the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government in accordance with the Tax Expenditures Transparency Act of 2024 (Senate Bill 366).

The auditors estimated that 30% of data centers in Georgia could be attributed to the tax exemption. Based on this estimate, they reported that in FY 2025, state tax revenue from data center construction totaled \$34.6 million, while tax revenues from data center operations totaled \$6.9 million.

Total jobs, including construction and operations, totaled 10,146. State economic growth, measured at a value add of \$1.01 billion in construction and \$433.4 million in operations - an economic ROI of 289% - was significantly higher than the state's foregone revenue, estimated at \$474.2 million. Following the DOAA's presentation, Senate Rules Chairman Matt Brass (R-Newnan) presented Senate Bill 410, which would repeal the sales and use tax exemption for high-tech data center equipment, ending eligibility for new exemptions while allowing those with existing certificates to continue under the prior provisions until the sunset at the end of 2031.

The legislation would not allow any new certificates to be issued after the bill takes effect upon the Governor's signature. No action was taken by the committee on Senate Bill 410 in Wednesday's meeting.

Local Agriculture Teacher Named to Nat'l Leadership Committee

Story and photo courtesy Kylie Garrard

Roger Teeple, agriculture teacher at Dooly County High School, has been appointed to the Professional Development Committee of the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE).

Teeple will serve a three-year term representing Region V, which encompasses Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The appointment adds to Teeple's extensive record of service with NAAE throughout his 43-year teaching career.

He previously served as president of the organization in 2003-04 and has participated on numerous committees over the years. "Mr. Teeple has served Dooly County High School's FFA program for numerous years," said Dr. Monica Kears, Dooly College and Career Academy.

"He is continually teaching our students about horticulture, leadership, partnership with community and businesses, and quality customer service as they advance in employability skills while in class and traveling for FFA."



Photo Contributed

Roger Teeple

Local Student Wins State Cybersecurity Poster Contest

Story and photo courtesy of Kylie Garrard

Tazzariah King, a student at Dooly County High School, has been named a winner of the 2025 GLET Cybersecurity Poster Contest hosted by the Georgia Department of Education. King's creative work demonstrated exceptional dedication to spreading awareness about cybersecurity.

To honor this achievement, King and guests are invited to attend a special recognition ceremony at the State Board of Education meeting Thursday, February 19 at 9:00 a.m. The event will be held at the Georgia Department of Education offices in the Twin Towers/Sloppy Floyd building in Downtown Atlanta.



FA Performs Reenactment of 'Oedipus the King'

Contributed

Mrs. Gloria's Fullington Academy 11th Grade English students re-wrote and re-enacted the ancient Greek play "Oedipus the King." They worked hard on rewriting each scene into "Stranger Things" characters and language. We are sure Vecna, Eleven, Max and the others never realized how pow-



erful their acting skills could be on stage.

FA Seniors Earn CPR First Aid Certification



Contributed

Fullington Academy seniors recently spent a day earning their CPR and First Aid certifications. This hands-on training was provided by Dooly County EMS Director Don Williford and a huge thank you to him for taking time to teach the students.

We appreciate his support and service to our school and community. It's a valuable life skill they can carry with them well beyond graduation.



State of Georgia, Dooly County
Public Notice of Qualifying Fees
 Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-2-131(a) (1), the following qualifying fees were set by the Dooly County Commissioners in their January 8, 2026, meeting:

- County Commissioner, District #2 \$225.00
- County Commissioner, District #4 \$225.00
- Board of Education, District #2 \$180.00
- Board of Education, District #4 \$150.00
- Board of Education, District #3 \$222.00

Qualifying week for the offices listed below will begin at 9am on March 2, 2026, at 9am, and will end at noon on March 6, 2026, at Dooly Election Office 402 Hawkinsville Rd, Vienna, GA 31092. No Cash accepted for qualifying fee. (Check or Money Order)
 County Commissioner, District #2 Board of Education, District #2
 County Commissioner, District #4 Board of Education, District #4

Qualifying for Board of Education, District #3 will be announced at a latter date by the Board of Education.

The General Primary Election will be held on May 19, 2026, and the General Election will be held on November 3, 2026.

Earliest Date to request absentee ballot by mail for the May General Primary / Nonpartisan Election is March 2, 2026

Deadline Date to request/submit absentee ballot application by mail for the May General Primary / Nonpartisan Election is March 8, 2026,

Deadline to register and be eligible to vote in the May General Primary Election and Runoff is April 20, 2026

Advance Voting for the May General Primary Election will begin April 27, 2026, thru May 15, 2026, at the Vienna Voting Precinct at 402 Hawkinsville Road, Vienna, GA for all voting precincts. The voting hours are 8am to 5pm. Mandatory Saturday voting days are May 2nd and May 9th, 2026, from 8am to 5pm.

The Dooly County Election Office may be reached at 229-268-9023.
 Dooly County Board of Elections & Registration
 Election Superintendent
 Betty Bryant, Chairman
 Wayne Wilkin, Vice Chairman
 Brenetta Childs Election Supervisor
 Jessica Fudge, Assistant Election Supervisor
 (229) 268-9023

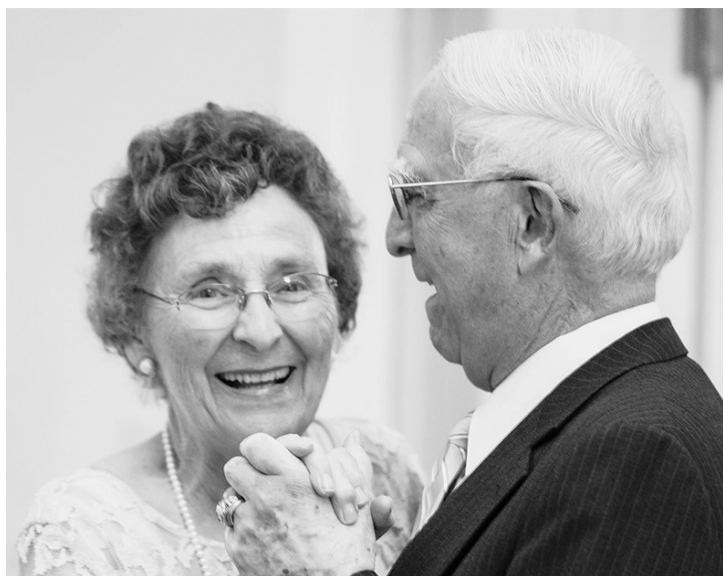
Public Notice

The Dooly County Commissioners will conduct a Public Hearing at 9:30 AM on Thursday, February 19, 2026, at the County Commissioners' Office at 113 N. Third Street in Vienna. The purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive comments on the proposed abandonment of Groves Landing Road. The public is encouraged to attend this hearing. If there are any questions, please contact County Administrator Stephen C. Sanders at 229-268-4228.

The News Observer
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Obituaries

Amy "Fran" Morris



Amy Frances "Fran" Morris went to be with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on January 7, 2026.

Fran was born on September 9, 1937 in Macon, Georgia, the oldest daughter of the late Lewis and Virginia (Wood) Mobley, but home was Vienna, Georgia. She graduated from Vienna High School and Mercer University, where she continued her successes in debate and her love for theater. She married her high school sweetheart, Clyde Cecil Morris in 1959. She became a Navy wife, supporting Clyde and raising a family in Massachusetts, Connecticut, South Carolina, Singapore, Virginia, Mississippi, and finally Florida. She had a lifelong passion for reading and dark chocolate. In Florida, she returned to "play" both on- and back-stage with the Amelia Community Theater and the Peppermint Players, a travelling children's theater. When Clyde retired, they travelled the world together; Fran enjoyed every garden she saw in the United Kingdom. Clyde passed away in 2023.

Wherever she was, she was a loving mom, a persistent advocate and lifelong cheerleader for her 3 boys and the daughters she'd always wanted: Paul (Terri), David (Michele), and John (Mary Beth). She celebrated each of her 10 grandchildren: Erin

(Thomas), Morgan, Joel, Reed, Collin, Andrew, Miriam, Micah (Kathryn), Joe (Auna) and Ava. She marveled at her 3 great-grandchildren: Joseph, Dorothy & Ezra Clyde.

Wherever she was, she joined a local Baptist church. She served faithfully in 12 different churches; her passion was women's ministry and missions. God led her and Clyde to help start 2 new churches: New Colony in Billerica, MA and Amelia Baptist in Fernandina Beach, FL.

Wherever they are, all her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, her "baby" sister Cile Woodward, sister-in-law Mary Player, plus many nieces, nephews and cousins scattered across the country miss and mourn her. A memorial service will be held 2PM Saturday February 28th at Amelia Baptist Church, Amelia Island, FL with burial 2PM Friday February 27th at Jacksonville National Cemetery.

The family would like to thank the staff at Harmony on the Peninsula in Yorktown for their loving care of Fran for the last 3 years.

In lieu of flowers, please give to Amelia Baptist Church, the Amelia Community Theater or the church or community theater wherever you are. And have a bite of chocolate.

Dooly County Community CALENDAR

| | |
|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb |
| 5 | 6 |
| 12 | 13 |
| 19 | 20 |
| 26 | 27 |

Pleasant Valley Baptist Church
Dr. Beverly M. Bolden
Pastor's Anniversary
Sunday, February 15, 2026
Morning Worship - 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Cynthia Johnson of Destiny Ministries, Warner Robins, Ga, will be the guest speaker

The Anniversary Celebration will begin at 1:30 p.m.

The Rev. James Jordan of the St. Mark Baptist Church, Vienna, Ga. will be the guest speaker. An open invitation is extended to all to join us in this joyous occasion. Dinner will be served

CCU February Food Pantries

Christ Chapel Unadilla will have two food pantries scheduled during February at the church located at 400 Jeannette Street in Unadilla.

No food drive is scheduled for this month.

Pantry hours are 10:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon Saturdays, February 14 and February 21.

Volunteer Check-In is 9:30 a.m.-9:45 a.m. For more information call CCU at 478-627-9352.

2nd Pastor's Appreciation -Feb 15

Shiloh Baptist Church of Elko, Georgia

Celebrates Pastor Roosevelt McWilliams 2nd Pastor's Appreciation

Sunday, February 15, 2026, at 1:30 PM

Guest Speaker will be Rev. Derrell McIntosh of Green Grove Baptist Church. Everyone is invited to attend.

Christ Chapel Bingo Night in Byromville

Enjoy Bingo Game night on the second Thursday of every

Local Club Sponsors 'Love Letter' Campaign

Submitted by Cathy Jones

February is Library Lovers Month and in recognition of this special celebration, members of the Vienna Woman's Club invite you to participate in a special project. Let's show our library a little love.

The Dooly County Library plays a vital role in ensuring that our community has equal access to information and a wide variety of books for enjoyment.

The Library is a meeting place, a venue for author talks, a hub for children's programs, and a place to play Bingo and put together jigsaw puzzles. It's truly a community treasure.

In recognition of Library Lov-



ers Month, we invite members of the community to drop off a personal hand-written 'love note' at the library.

These love letters are long overdue! So show our Library some love this month.

Local Club Announces First Meet and Greet Event for 2026

Contributed

Members of the Vienna Woman's Club invite the community to the first event in the Meet and Greet Author series scheduled for Monday, February 23rd at 4:00 p.m. at the Dooly County Library. Featured author is Melanie Sangster Akin who grew up in Dooly County.

Melanie may be remembered for her weekly column entitled "Mellie's Musings," which was published for several years. Melanie loves farming, especially the animals who live there. From roosters and chickens to goats and cats, Melanie believes each has its own place on a farm.

Her newest book, entitled "Rolling in Clover," features Miss Creely, Hoppy, Ruby Tuesday and Clover. The antics of these characters will make



you smile, laugh out loud or cry. Other published titles include "Gran's Table," which is a collection of recipes and family memories, and "Country Moments," which include poems from the farm. Don't miss this opportunity to hear excerpts read and purchase a copy of one of her books.

Classics and Coffee

Contributed

Book Club Reminder: Cold outside? Perfect excuse to stay in, grab a blanket, and dive into our next Book Club pick. Join us at 1:15 p.m. Thursday, February 12 at Café 41 107 South Third Street in Vienna for a lively discussion of Lady Chatterley's Lover by D. H. Lawrence.

Fair warning, this book caused quite a stir in its day and was

even banned for a while for being a little too scandalous. Makes you wonder what folks in the 1920s and '30s would think of today's movies, TV, and the internet.

Bring your thoughts, your opinions, and your sense of humor. We promise a great conversation and plenty of laughs. Hope you choose to join us.

Fellowship, Ministry, Service at BUMC

Contributed

Join Byromville United Methodist Church for a time of fellowship while serving our community. What to bring to the upcoming Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday, February 8 at 12:30 p.m. Bring two pots of soup, one to share and eat and one pot of soup to freeze and donate.

Ministry projects we will do together: assemble birthday cake boxes for the food pantry, make pet food bags for families in need and portion soup into freezer safe containers to be distributed at our food pantry.



Items you can bring to help: cans of Sprite, cake mixes and frosting, birthday plates and napkins, candles and disposable cake pans. Together, we can turn a simple meal into a meaningful ministry. Thank you for caring for others.

Discover Fullington Academy

A close-knit, Christ-centered school in Pinehurst, Ga. where students are known, valued, and supported. We invite families in our community to join us for our Open House Tuesday, March 3 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. to tour our campus, meet our teachers, and learn more about admissions and registration. If Fullington has been part of your family's story, we're grateful when you help us share this invitation with others.

HELP WANTED

Work Location - 117 E Union Street, Vienna, GA 31092
 Requirements - must have a **Nail Technician License** and at least six months training and experience providing nail technician services
 Resumes to - klal2.kids@gmail.com

(2/5, 2/12, 2026)

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 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**

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- 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**

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- 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
FEBRUARY
GARDENING**

TIM LEWIS
Columnist

Even though February is a relatively slow month for gardening, there are some pretty important tasks that deserve to be considered right about now. This week I would like to offer a few of these.

In past articles, I have briefly mentioned the importance of feeding your established beds of pansies, cabbage, kale, chard, parsley, dianthus, etc. Specifically, add about one cup of 8-8-8 or 10-10-10 or a similar complete fertilizer per 100 square feet of surface area. If using a soluble or slow-release fertilizer, be sure that at least half of the nitrogen it contains is in the nitrate form. Why? Because that is the form of nitrogen which plants can immediately use. The urea and ammonium forms of nitrogen must be broken down by soil bacteria first and then converted to the nitrate form; this takes more time and higher soil temperatures than are normally found this time of year. Check the fertilizer label for this information.

There are quite a few vegetables which can be planted this month in the early spring garden. These include asparagus, beets, carrots, onions, onion sets, leeks, Irish potatoes, radishes, early peas, rhubarb roots, spinach, Swiss chard, and turnips. Don't forget col-

lards, kale, mustard, cabbage, lettuce, cauliflower, and broccoli.

Once in the ground, leafy greens like lettuce, turnips, kale, and mustard prefer to grow fast and steady. The best way to make them happy is to offer them plenty of fertilizer containing a high percentage of nitrate nitrogen (as explained above).

Remember that now is an excellent time to plant shrubs and trees. The perfect time to transplant is on a cool afternoon when the soil is moist from a recent rain. It is permissible to prune way several branches to make the plant small enough to handle easily but no more than one third of the total canopy should be removed. Generally, the fewer roots that are retained the fewer branches that should be sacrificed. Dig a large hole at least twice, and preferably three times, the size of the root ball of the plant to be transplanted. Plant it at the same level it was growing in its original container. Water generously after planting in order to settle the soil around the roots and remove air pockets from the soil.

Many gardeners believe that February is the time to plant Irish potato tubers. Remember that potatoes fare better in a slightly more acidic soil than

most of their vegetable peers. A reading of 5.0 to 5.5 is recommended, whereas most other crops prefer a higher pH range (6.0 to 6.5). The lower pH tends to discourage that age-old nemesis of potatoes—scab. Scab is caused by a bacterium found in the soil. This pathogen usually becomes established in soil which is continuously planted to Irish potatoes. The severity of scab increases as the soil pH increases above 5.5.

Scab is characterized by dark, brown to black surface lesions on the tubers. These lesions are unsightly, reduce tuber quality, and may increase the rot of tubers in storage. Scab can also affect beets, turnips, radishes, and other fleshy-rooted crops. Control scab by planting resistant varieties. Varieties with resistance to scab include Dark Red Norland, Kennebec, Superior, Norchip, and Atlantic. Those without resistance are Red Pontiac, Katahdin, and Yukon Gold.

Clean out bluebird boxes and other bird houses this month. It won't be long before our feathered friends will be coming back around to nest in them.

Overgrown liriop (border grass) can be trimmed now. Mow the scraggly leaves at your mower's highest setting. Don't worry—they will grow back quickly in the spring.

There are many interesting and important gardening tasks to be done in the dreary month of February. Have good success with all of them!

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.



**Joiner's Corner
THE OPEN
GATE**

NEIL JOINER
Columnist

As I approached the traffic light in downtown Vienna in September of 2025, a truck pulling a horse trailer stopped in front of me. A message, perhaps a quote from Mr. Ed's stable, was printed across the back. "Live like someone left the gate open."

That bit of humor reminded me of Dude, a mammoth-sized dog of unknown ancestry. He rode shotgun with our son from California to Georgia during the early part of the Covid pandemic. Seth, Dude, and a chihuahua named Louise slept in their rental vehicle, only making a few essential stops.

Dude decided to live with us, but for a while refused to stay inside our fenced back yard. We thought he had an amazing jumping ability until we caught him climbing over the chain link fence, a possibility we had not considered. He could have traveled the world once he reached the other side, but chose instead to patiently wait at our back door.

The big fellow had been accustomed to indoor living on the West Coast. It took him a

while to understand that our rules were different. He eventually adjusted and became a beloved part of our family, then died too young and broke our hearts. That horse-trailer advice reminded me of Dude, because even if we had left the gate open he would not have ventured far.

In a way that's a good thing. He knew where he wanted to be and wasn't tempted by open gates. Sometimes, though, we can be too cautious and miss out on opportunities.

Yogi Berra said, "When you get to a fork in the road, take it." His humorous quip perhaps contains a bit of subtle wisdom. We don't always take either fork, choosing instead to stay where we are and linger in indecision. Or we turn around and retreat because the road less traveled can be scary. Like a fork in the road we never take, we shy away from the open gate.

Some gates are no doubt best left closed, but I'm thinking today of those which are promising. There are a lot of reasons we may be reluctant to go through them. Fear is one

that can stop us in our tracks. It can cause us to do nothing or to make half-hearted attempts.

One way I've found helpful in dealing with fear is to ask, "What's the worst that could happen?" I think I heard that from someone giving pointers on public speaking. I've made a few talks over the years and almost always get nervous, so sometimes I ask myself that question. It reminds me that the worst that can happen is not all that bad.

The truth is the audiences I've spoken to have all been friendly ones. Even if my mind went blank or I lost my notes, the people would have been understanding. None would have called for tar and feathers.

In a nutshell, here's my thinking. If you come to a fork in the road, make the best choice you can then go for it. If you're fearful about tackling something you know is worthwhile then ask yourself, "What's the worst that could happen?" That can help you decide whether to rev up the engine or hit the brakes.

And if you don't remember anything else from today's ramblings, I hope you'll hang on to a little bit of horse sense which Mr. Ed would have surely embraced. "Live like someone left the gate open."

*joinerscorner.com
neiljoiner@gmail.com*

**Walker: Weeks Two
and Three Under the
Gold Dome**



**By Sen. Larry Walker III
(R-Perry)**

We are now well into the 2026 Legislative Session, and our work under the Gold Dome is moving quickly. Even with winter weather trying to slow things down, the Senate stayed on track thanks to the swift and tireless efforts of our first responders, linemen, National Guard members and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) crews. Their dedication and professionalism kept our communities safe and allowed the Senate to remain focused on delivering results for Georgians. Over the past several weeks, much of our time has been spent reviewing Governor Brian Kemp's budget proposals for the Amended Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 and the FY 2027 budget.

Thanks to years of conservative financial stewardship, Georgia's economy remains among the strongest in the nation. That fiscal discipline allows us to make smart, strategic investments while respecting taxpayers and keeping our state on a path of long-term growth. I am especially encouraged by the proposed \$100 million investment for the rehabilitation and replacement of rural bridges, along with \$250 million for GDOT's Local Road Assistance Program.

Reliable infrastructure is critical to keeping our state connected by supporting daily travel, commerce and emergency services across all 159 counties, particularly in our more rural areas.

Senate Republicans remain focused on policies that strengthen families, grow our economy, and keep Georgia a great place to live, work, and raise a family. That means lowering costs, protecting homeowners, supporting educators, and ensuring the government lives within its means, just like Georgia families do every day. This week, the Senate took an important step forward for students and teachers with the final passage of Senate Bill 148. SB 148 expands flexibility in how learning happens by encouraging hands-on and outdoor education opportunities, while also making common-sense updates to teacher leave policies.

This legislation helps students develop a deeper appreciation for the land that makes our state so unique and gives Middle Georgia educators access to learning environments that go beyond the traditional classroom. Just as importantly, it recognizes that teachers are the backbone of our schools and provides them with the support and flexibility they need to help students succeed.

I was proud to support this legislation and grateful to my Senate colleagues for working together to see it across the finish line. I also recently introduced Senate Bill 409 to protect Georgia homeowners by requiring greater transparency when insurance companies use aerial or satellite imagery to assess properties.

While these tools can play a role in modern insurance

practices, homeowners deserve proper notice and a clear understanding of how their property is being reviewed. SB 409 strikes a responsible balance between innovation and fairness, ensuring Georgia families are treated with respect. We also made progress on one of our top priorities for protecting homeowners. Senate Bill 382 passed out of the Senate Committee on Finance and now moves forward in the legislative process.

This bill would establish a statewide base-year homestead exemption for all local governments and streamline the process for calling referendums on local sales taxes. For too long, some homeowners have faced unrelenting property tax increases as local governments opted out of existing protections. SB 382 restores fairness and ensures everyone plays by the same rules. I look forward to continuing to push this legislation toward final passage. We head into our fourth week under the Gold Dome, I appreciate hearing from you and value your input as the legislative session continues.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns, or ideas. It is an honor to represent you and to fight for Georgia's future. Sen. Larry Walker III serves as President Pro Tempore of the Senate. He represents the 20th Senate District, which includes Bleckley, Dodge, Dooly, Laurens, Pulaski, Treutlen and Wilcox counties, as well as a portion of Houston County. He may be reached by phone at (404) 656-0095 or by email at Larry.Walker@senate.ga.gov.



**Parables To Ponder
REACHING OUT TO
LOVED ONES IN
HEAVEN**

BILLY POWELL
Columnist

When precious loved ones die, we are faced with the crushing prospect of never seeing them again. It is a pain that reaches the very depths of our souls, a heartache that is inextinguishable. The attempts of others to soften its blow through consoling words only accentuate the reality of our loss. Only time will diminish the intensity of our grief. It is something that we must work out with the Lord.

A little girl named Julie lost her father. She was so grief stricken that she decided to write her father a letter. To transport her letter to heaven, she placed the letter inside an envelope, and with a string attached it to a helium balloon. She released the balloon and it soared heavenward until it went out of sight. Julie anxiously waited for the mailman every day, but a letter from dad never came. Becoming

increasingly disappointed and sad with each passing day, Julie withdrew into a shell and became sick at heart.

A hunter in another state found the balloon hanging in a tree and retrieved it. He read Julie's letter and shared it with his wife. The couple didn't know what to do at first, but finally decided to answer the letter. Addressed to Julie, their response related how the letter was found in a tree and that her daddy would want them to send this reply: "My darling Julie, although I am now in heaven, I know that you tried to reach me. I want you to know that I am all right and that I love you very, very much." When the letter arrived, the little girl's mother read it and burst into tears of joy. She then painstakingly read the reply to Julie, who for the first time, smiled, and what a big smile it was. She be-

lieved in her heart that her dad had sent her a message from heaven through the inspired thoughts of those who found the balloon.

This story may seem far-fetched, but it is not, for the scriptures declare that "we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses"—our loved ones. We are constantly reaching out to them. We sit at their graves and draw close to them in our thoughts. We dream of them. We watch beautiful sunsets and sense their presence. We gaze at majestic rainbows and know they are somewhere beyond their horizons. Oh, how much we want to see them again. But praise God, we will see them. The Holy Scripture states, "When the last trumpet sounds, the dead in Christ will rise first and then those who are still alive will rise to meet them in the clouds, and we shall forever be with the Lord. Comfort one another with these words." What a grand and glorious reunion day it will be. Jesus assured us of this eventuality when He declared, "Because I live you shall live also."

lamb before its shearer is silent. So He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth. So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

My friends, that's what we Christians need to be doing right now. Share the gospel and go tell somebody about Jesus. Especially all our lost loved ones. Let's run to the chariot of lost souls and tell them the redemption story about Jesus's shed blood. Amen. Jesus loves y'all to heaven and back. Until next time.



**Writings From The Heart
IF WE LOVE OUR UNSAVED
LOVED ONES LET'S DO
WHAT PHILIP DID**

**DR. LANIER
ROBERTS**
Columnist

Acts 8:26 thru 35. Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candance the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his char-

iot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. The place in the Scripture which he read was this: He was lead as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a

Deadline for legals 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. 26-0002
IN RE: ESTATE OF Edward Frank Cannon, Jr., DECEASED
NOTICE OF PETITION TO FILE FOR YEAR'S SUPPORT

The petition of LINDA CHAPPEL CANNON, for a year's support from the estate of EDWARD FRANK CANNON, JR., deceased, for decedent's surviving spouse, having been duly filed, all interested parties are hereby notified to show cause, if any they have, on or before March 2, 2026, 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 on or before the time stated in the preceding sentence. 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
 PO Box 304
 Vienna, GA 31092
 (229)268-4217
 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, 2026
 0775-VNO

NOTICE PROBATE COURT OF DOOLY COUNTY
RE: PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTING OF THE ESTATE OF DEDRICK FUDGE ESTATE NO. 18-044

TO: ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST
 The County Administrator, John W. Sherrer, Jr., acting in his capacity as Administrator of the Estate Of DEDRICK FUDGE has filed a Petition for Approval of Annual Return in reference to the estate of DEDRICK FUDGE. This is to notify you that objections to the petition, if any, must be filed by February 28, 2026. All objections to the petitioner

must be in writing setting forth the grounds of any such objections and all pleadings must be signed before a notary public or probate court clerk. If any objections are filed, a hearing, will be scheduled for a later date in the Probate Court of Dooly County, Courtroom 11, located at Second Street Vienna, Dooly County, Georgia. If no objections are filed, the petition may be granted without a hearing. Rooney Bowen, Dooly Probate Judge By D. Fluellen, Probate Court Clerk 104 2nd Street South Vienna, GA 31092 229-268-4217 1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2026 0769-VNO

NOTICE PROBATE COURT OF DOOLY COUNTY
RE: PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTING OF THE ESTATE OF FRANCES KEENAN aka HAPPI KEENAN ESTATE NO. 18-0011

TO: ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST
 The County Administrator, John W. Sherrer, Jr., acting in his capacity as Administrator of the Estate Of Frances Keenan aka HAPPI KEENAN has filed a Petition for Approval of Annual Return in reference to the estate of Frances Keenan aka HAPPI KEENAN. This is to notify you that objections to the petition, if any, must be filed by February 23, 2026. All objections to the petitioner must be in writing setting forth the grounds of any such objections and all pleadings must be signed before a notary public or probate court clerk. If any objections are filed, a hearing, will be scheduled for a later date in the Probate Court of Dooly County, Courtroom 11, located at Second Street Vienna, Dooly County, Georgia. If no objections are filed, the petition may be granted without a hearing. Rooney Bowen, Dooly Probate Judge By D. Fluellen, Probate Court Clerk 104 2nd Street South Vienna, GA 31092 229-268-4217 1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2026 0768-VNO

NOTICE OF ELECTION OF Ocmulgee River SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUPERVISOR February 1, 2026
To all qualified voters in Dooly

County:
 Notice is hereby given that on November 3, 2026, a non-partisan election will be held to elect 1 supervisor(s) for Dooly County in the Ocmulgee River Soil and Water Conservation District. District Supervisors serve as unpaid state officials who represent their counties in support of soil and water conservation activities.

March 6, 2026, is the last day on which nominations for candidates for the election will be accepted. The signatures of at least 25 qualified electors of the county are required to nominate a candidate. Candidates must also be qualified electors of the county. Nominating petitions must be received in the office of the Dooly County Election Superintendent at 402 HAWKINSVILLE HWY, VIENNA, GA GA, 31092, no later than 12:00 noon on March 6, 2026. Petitions may be obtained from the Conservation Commission at the address below, from the Commission's website at <https://www.gaswcc.org/> or from the Election Superintendent of Dooly County.

GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Mitch Attaway, Executive Director
4310 Lexington Road
Athens, GA 30605
 1/29, 2/5, 2026
 0770-VNO (GNS 54191)

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF DOOLY COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA
CIVIL ACTION NO. 25DV-0117
CRAIG COOPER, PLAINTIFF VS.

MEGHAN HANNAH COOPER, DEFENDANT
NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

By order for service of publication dated the 31st day of December, 2025, you are hereby notified that on the 3rd day of November, 2025, Craig Cooper, filed suit against you for divorce.

You are required to file with the Clerk of the Superior Court, and serve upon Plaintiff an answer in writing within city (60) days of the date of the order for publication. WITNESS, the Honorable Amy B. Bryant, Judge Superior Court. This the 22nd day of January, 2026. P.B., Clerk Dooly County Superior Court

1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2026
 0771-VNO

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF DOOLY COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA
IN THE INTEREST OF:
CASE NUMBER: 046-26J-0005
J. S., a child. DOB: 10/11/2017
SEX: M

TO: RAQUAN BROOKS, putative father of the above-named child.
Any other person(s) claiming a parental interest who appear to the court to be proper or necessary parties to the proceeding and to the above-named child.
SUMMONS AND NOTICE

On January 15, 2026, a petition was filed in this court under the above style, seeking to terminate the parental rights of the parents of the above-named children. THIS IS A SUMMONS REQUIRING YOU TO BE IN COURT. If you fail to come to court as required, you may be held in contempt of court and punished by imprisonment for up to twenty (20) days and/or a fine of up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00).

Now therefore, you, the party(s) named above, are commanded to be and appear on the date and time stated below, and to remain in attendance from hour to hour, day to day, month to month, year to year, and time to time, as said case may be continued, and until discharged by the court, and you are commanded to lay any and all business aside and to be and appear before the Juvenile Court of Dooly County, Georgia, located at The Crisp County Courthouse, 510 North 7th Street, Cordele, Crisp County, Georgia 31015 on the 8th day of April, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., to answer the allegations of the petition. The parent(s), guardian(s), legal custodian(s) or any other person(s) having physical custody or control of the above-named child(ren) are hereby commanded to bring the above-named child(ren) to the aforementioned hearing at the aforesaid time and place.

If you are served with this summons by publication as provided by law, you are likewise required to appear before this court at the above-stated date, time, and place to answer the allegations of the petition. A copy of the petition seeking termination of

the parental rights of the parents of the above-named child(ren) may be obtained at the office of the Clerk of the Juvenile Court of Dooly County, Georgia, located at 104 Second Street, Vienna, Georgia 31092.

TO ANY BIOLOGICAL FATHER REQUIRED TO BE SERVED PURSUANT TO O.C.G.A. §15-11-283: Please be advised that any biological father who is not the legal father of the above-named child(ren) may lose all rights to the child(ren) named in the petition brought in the above-styled matter and will not be entitled to object to the termination of his rights to the child(ren) unless, within 30 days of receipt of this notice, he files a petition to legitimate the child(ren), AND a notice of the filing of the petition to legitimate with this court.

NOTICE OF EFFECT OF TERMINATION JUDGMENT

TO THE MOTHER, BIOLOGICAL FATHER AND LEGAL FATHER OF THE CHILD(REN) (IF ANY):

Georgia law provides that you can permanently lose your rights as a parent. A petition to terminate parental rights has been filed requesting the court to terminate your parental rights to your child. A copy of the petition to terminate parental rights is attached to this notice. A court hearing of your case has been scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on the 8th day of April 2026, at the Juvenile Court of Dooly County, Georgia, located at The Crisp County Courthouse, 510 North 7th Street, Cordele, Crisp County, Georgia 31015.

If you fail to appear, the court can terminate your rights in your absence. If the court at the trial finds that the facts set out in the petition to terminate parental rights are true and that termination of your rights will serve the best interests of your child, the court can enter a judgment ending your rights to your child. If the judgment terminates your parental rights, you will no longer have any rights to your child. This means that you will not have the right to visit, contact, or have custody of your child or make any decisions affecting your child or your child's earnings or property. Your child will be legally freed to be adopted by someone else. Even if your parental rights are terminated: (1) You will still be responsible for providing financial support (child support payments) for your child's care unless and until your

child is adopted; and (2) Your child can still inherit from you unless and until your child is adopted.

This is a very serious matter. You should contact an attorney immediately so that you can be prepared for the court hearing. You have the right to hire an attorney and to have him or her represent you. If you cannot afford to hire an attorney, the court will appoint an attorney if the court finds that you are an indigent person. Whether or not you decide to hire an attorney, you have the right to attend the hearing of your case, to call witnesses on your behalf, and to question those witnesses brought against you. If you have any questions concerning this notice, you may call the telephone number of the clerk's office which is 229-268-4234 Dooly.

WITNESS the Kristen W. Pack, Judge of said Court, this the 15th day of January, 2026.

/s/PATSY BRIDGES
 PATSY BRIDGES, Deputy Clerk
 Juvenile Court of DOOLY County,
 Georgia
 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, 2026
 0772-VNO

NOTICE TO DERTORS AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF DOOLY
IN RE: GEORGE LUCAS GRIFFIN, III, deceased

DONNA ATHIELA GRIFFIN, having been granted Letters Testamentary and being named Executor of the estate of said deceased, GEORGE LUCAS GRIFFIN, III, in the Dooly County Probate Court, does hereby notify all persons having a claim against said estate 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.

DONNA ATHIELA GRIFFIN
 EXECUTOR OF THE ESTATE OF GEORGE LUCAS GRIFFIN, III
 255 Pine Avenue
 Pinehurst, Georgia 31070
 John W. Sherrer, Jr.
 Attorney for the Executor
 P.O. Box 277
 Vienna, Georgia 31092
 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, 2026
 0773-VNO

Farm Bureau urges Congress to pass farm assistance

By Ga. Farm Bureau

Georgia's farmers are enduring severe financial strain, with record-high input costs and stagnant crop prices resulting in \$800 million in losses for 2025 alone. While the USDA's Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) payments represent a valuable first step, they fall far short of addressing the full scope of cumulative losses and the ongoing challenges producers face. "Our farmers and ranchers would much prefer to be self-sufficient, but the current economic environment simply won't allow it," said Georgia Farm Bureau President Tom McCall. "Contending with ever-rising costs without similar adjustments to the prices we receive is not sustainable. We are

climbing an extremely steep financial hill, and there is no other way to put it: we need help to ensure that our food and clothing continue to be produced by our farmers and not imported from outside our borders where food safety is not a priority."

U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman John Boozman (R-AR) and Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND), who chairs the U.S. Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, recently released a framework to expand farm assistance and complement the FBA program, emphasizing the need for additional targeted relief through appropriations or related measures to bridge producers to future reforms like those in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

Agriculture Committee members on both sides of the aisle have similarly highlighted the urgency of meaningful supplemental aid for family farmers amid market disruptions and high costs. The Boozman/Hoeven proposal includes expanded coverage for the FBA program. Additional funds would cover a greater share of producer losses, allowing farmers to receive bankable and timely assistance.

Include acres that were prevented from being planted as eligible acres under the FBA program. Align payment limitations with improvements included in the One Big Beautiful Bill to ensure assistance better covers the level of losses farmers are experiencing. Additional assistance for losses that

exceed national averages. Providing separate funds for producers who were forced to sell at depressed prices or experienced higher costs of production would help further target the available assistance while allowing the FBA and expanded FBA funds to reach farmers. Expanded support for specialty crop producers. Would provide USDA the funding and flexibility to implement a program that addresses the unique challenges of specialty crops.

Assistance for sugar beet and cane growers. Would provide sugar farmers needed relief in a time of record losses in an oversupplied market. Increased Farm Ownership and Operating Loan limits. Would increase loan limits would improve access to credit that

meets current producer demand. Farm Bureau says Congress must act decisively in the FY2026 appropriations bills to provide immediate, substantial economic relief.

Without it, more farms will close, rural America will suffer, and our domestic food security will be at risk. Timely action is essential to keep Georgia's farms operating and our nation fed from its own soil. GFB is asking Georgians to help protect the state's agriculture by contacting their congressmen today and demanding action.

Pre-drafted comments are available by visiting <https://gfb.ag/GFBtakeaction012726>. Please feel free to edit your comments to give them a more personal touch.

Mercer University Announces Fall 2025 President's, Dean's Lists

MACON, Ga. (January 9, 2026) - Mercer University recently announced the President's List and Dean's List for the fall 2025 semester. Inclusion on these lists requires students to meet rigorous GPA standards specific to the college or school within the University.

Founded in 1833, Mercer University is a dynamic and comprehensive center of undergraduate, graduate and professional education. The University enrolls more than 9,000 students enrolled in 12 schools and colleges - liberal arts and sciences, law, pharmacy, medicine, business, engineering, education, theology, music, nursing, health professions and professional advancement - on major campuses in Macon and Atlanta; medical school sites in Macon, Savannah and Columbus; and at regional academic centers in Henry and Douglas counties

The following area students earned a place on the lists:

Pinehurst, Georgia

Madison Hill, senior, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dean's List
 Anna Vasquez, sophomore, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dean's List

Vienna, Georgia

Kha'Niyah Allen, senior, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dean's List

BPCU Announces Fall 2025 Academic Achievement Honorees - Dooly County

MOUNT VERNON, GA — Brewton-Parker Christian University proudly recognizes the academic achievements of its students for the Fall 2025 semester. As announced by Dr. Justin E. Russell, Vice President for Academic Services, the students are:

President's List: Abby Griggs

To earn Academic Achievement a student must conclude the semester with a 3.0 GPA, Dean's List students ended the semester with a 3.6 GPA or higher, and President's List recipients concluded the semester with a perfect 4.0 GPA. Students were enrolled in 12 or more hours. Brewton-Parker Christian University is the only accredited four-year Christian university south of Macon and north of Jacksonville, FL. The mission of Brewton-Parker Christian University, a Georgia Baptist university, is to develop the whole student through the application of Biblically-centered truth to a liberal arts curriculum in a community of shared Christian values.

Dooly Co. Health Dept. Extreme Cold Weather Alert

By RN and Nurse Manager Cyndi Mercer

Stay warm everyone.

Community Safety Advisory

Weather forecasts indicate extremely cold temperatures over the next 10 days. These conditions can pose serious risks to people, pets, and property. Please take time now to prepare and protect.

PROTECT PEOPLE

- Limit outdoor exposure during extreme cold.
- Dress in layers and cover exposed skin.
- Check on older adults, individuals with chronic illness, and those without adequate heat.
- Use space heaters safely: keep at least **3 feet** from anything flammable and never leave them unattended.



PROTECT PETS & ANIMALS

- Bring pets indoors whenever possible.
- For animals that must remain outside:
 - Dry, wind-protected shelter
 - Use hay or straw for insulation (Do NOT use blankets - they trap moisture and increase heat loss)
- Ensure access to unfrozen water and adequate food.



PROTECT PIPES

- Insulate exposed pipes.
- Allow faucets to drip during extreme cold.
- Open cabinet doors under sinks to allow warm air circulation.



FIRE SAFETY

- Use only approved heating sources.
- Never use grills, generators, or open flames indoors.
- Ensure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working.



CHECK ON ONE ANOTHER

- Check on neighbors, family, and friends.
- A quick call or visit can prevent serious harm.

Prepared by: Dooly County Health Department
 Working together to keep our community safe

DCHS Varsity Girls Basketball Team Visits GT

Courtesy of Kylie Garrard

The Dooly County Varsity Girls Basketball team had an amazing time at Georgia Tech's Teams Day. The players got a firsthand look at college athletics and learned valuable lessons about teamwork and sportsmanship at the next level.



Dooly County Basketball Games Rescheduled

Contributed

Due to weather concerns and student and staff safety, the January 31 away games versus Telfair County were played Monday, Feb. 2 in Telfair County against the Trojans. The games originally scheduled for Monday, Feb. 2 versus Perry were canceled. Tuesday, February 3, the opponent was rival Crisp County in the DCHS gym. Cancer survivors were recognized at halftime during Coaches versus Cancer 'Pink Out Night.'

Both teams then travel to Hawkinsville Friday night with the girl's tip-off at 6:00 p.m. before Dooly's girls play host to Wheeler County Saturday afternoon at 4:30 p.m. with the boys game to follow.



Trojans Focused on Defeating TA and CA to End Losing Streak

By Head Coach James Martin

We had two region games last week playing Westwood at home Tuesday, Jan. 27, a team that beat us by a large number the first time we played them. Our strategy was to come out more aggressive. We had been slow starting games and we started off incredibly with five or six pretty quickly stealing the ball, pressing them and then it went back and forth pretty much the entire game.

At the end, they got up by five points and drilled a three-pointer that put them up by five. At that point, we had to be aggressive and we had to foul and they pulled away and beat us by 13-points 63-50.

Our scoring was kind-a balanced and the high scorers with 14-point-a-piece were Ben Horne and Garlan Godfrey and Aidan Hill had over 10, so we had scored all around, so that

was encouraging. Then Friday, we traveled to Valdosta and played Highland Christian, a team that beat us by one earlier this season and once again, we started off decent, they pulled away, we caught back up, it was back and forth.

At the end of the game, they were up 10 and we cut it to two and then came down and hit two three-pointers and that put us in a deficit of eight. We fouled trying to get one more chance and then by the end of the game, they were up nine, 50-41 and we couldn't catch up. So, we lost both games last week and that seems to be a recurring theme. Senior night was this Tuesday against Twiggs Academy, so hopefully that sparked a little motivation in all of them.

Then Friday, it is the last regular season against our rival Crisp Academy in Cordele, Ga. Hopefully, we can turn this around, take all this frustration we've



#1 Hayden Hatcher and #32 Brandon Bloodworth

had from our losing streak right now and put it on Twiggs and then CA on Friday.

Then, we turn around and play our region tournament and probably play Crisp Academy again

in the first round, but that will be at ABAC in Tifton, Ga. The team and coaches are gearing up for that and hoping for a better week.

Lady Trojans Hope to Finish Regular Season-Undefeated in Region

By Head Coach Van Bailey

The Lady Trojans opened up last week with our final home region game against Westwood last Tuesday who we played a few weeks ago. We came out and had some things to work on. We were glad to see that they were playing man-to-man against us. We had not seen as much as of late, so it was good to get some action offensively against their man-to-man. We started off the game a little sluggish which is what we do at times.

We did accomplish some good things in the first quarter, it just seemed that we weren't able to score as many points as we

would have liked starting off. We jumped up on them 9-4 and really cracked down in the second quarter and made some adjustments in the first and we outscored them 18-4 to go up at the half 27-8. I want to call out our defense holding them to eight points in the half.

That's what we've done this season, allowing our defense to work hard while our offense is figuring things out. We came out in the third quarter and extended our lead to 40-11 before winning this one 50-16 and that allowed us to get a lot of playing time. We were able to do some five and five rotations and get

some depth into our bench and work towards what we're going to need to extend the region and state tournaments coming up in a couple of weeks.

Evelyn Fletcher, our junior, led us in scoring with probably one of her best games she's ever had leading us with 12-points and led us in rebounding with eight. We had a big performance from our senior Izzy Ross scoring 10-points and also as point-guard communicating with the girls, her tremendous defense and getting us in our sets against their man-to-man offense.

That moved us to 6-0 in region. We traveled to Valdosta to play

Highland last Friday and felt like we could take care of business offensively and defensively with our press. We jumped on 'em 29-4 in the first quarter and our kids adjusted well to what Highland was trying to do scoring our most points of the year and at the half, it was 49-9 and ended up winning this game 81-31 with every single girl, all 15 scored points and that doesn't happen very often.

We got a lot of depth and playing time and got the girls in during some meaningful minutes. We were led in rebounding by Kade Vaughan, Avery Howard and Olivia Cawthon with five

Lady Bobcats Make GACA Soccer All-State Watch List

Contributed

We want to congratulate both our senior midfielder Sherly Sandoval and our junior winger Sophia Gracia for making the Georgia Athletic Coaches Association Girls Soccer All-State watch list for the 2026 season. We're extremely proud of them both.



DCRD Youth Baseball-Softball Registration

Contributed

Dooly County Recreation Department youth and softball registration is going on now for the upcoming season. Registration deadline is Feb. 27 and the fee is \$30 per player. Age control date: June 30.

Baseball is eight and under and 12 and under live arm. Softball

10 and under live arm. Tee ball-ages three and four and ages five and six.

Register online at doolycountyga.com/recreation-signup-forms/. Call the office for additional information 229-268-9176. DCRD, building skills, teamwork, and a love for the game.



Photo by Bonnie Huesler #11 Olivia Cawthon

This week, Tuesday was senior night and we have four on the Lady Trojans and two on the Trojans we'll be honoring and then we end the week down at Crisp Academy Friday night with our region rival at 6:00

p.m. I look forward to everyone coming out and supporting the Lady Trojans and Trojans.

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