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VOLUME 137, NO. 66

DAWSON, TERRELL COUNTY, GEORGIA 39842 - August 20, 2026

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Terrell Co. School System Superintendent Shereca Harvey says the district’s ongoing financial and administrative reforms aim to strengthen operations while protecting the quality of education and services provided to students/SPECIAL PHOTO

Terrell Co. Schools CFO exits after six months as the district continues financial overhaul

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Six months after Tony Lowe joined Terrell County Schools — and just over a year into Superintendent Shereca Harvey’s tenure — his departure as chief financial officer comes in the middle of an overhaul Harvey says is confronting years of financial and administrative practices rooted in a district culture where relationships often took the place of formal systems.

What began with updating policies has since exposed unpaid bills, payroll and benefit problems, and gaps in financial controls, leaving Harvey’s administration trying to rebuild the sys-

tems behind the school district while simultaneously changing the culture that shaped them.

Lowe, who joined Terrell County Schools as finance director in February and was promoted to chief financial officer for the new fiscal year, recently resigned to take a position with the Sumter County School District.

While the departure may have appeared sudden publicly, Harvey said it was not entirely unexpected inside the district. Lowe told her around July 7 that he had been approached about the Sumter County position and was considering the opportunity.

“When you have good people, there are always opportunities,” Harvey said. “I want him to do what’s best for him.”

Lowe’s move also reflects the competition for experienced financial leadership among districts facing similar challenges. Sumter County, like Terrell County, had been operating without a permanent CFO, and Harvey noted that both school systems have been classified as moderate-risk districts by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts.

TERRELL SCHOOLS
Continued on page 7

City council addresses budget, fire fee and wastewater spending



The city council met at city hall on Thursday to consider a proposed fire service assessment, wastewater infrastructure spending and other city business/KATHRYN CROCKETT

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Dawson will enter its new fiscal year without an adopted budget as city officials work toward a September public hearing, while residents could also face a new monthly charge to help fund the fire department.

The Dawson City Council on Thursday approved temporary spending authority beyond the Aug. 31 end of the current fiscal year and discussed a proposed fire service assessment on approximately 1,800 utility customers inside the city limits.

Council also approved more than \$140,000 in wastewater treatment plant equipment and project work, restarted the police department’s K-9 program and heard from a local business owner disputing thousands of dollars in utility charges stemming from a water meter the city acknowledged had not been properly read.

The council discussed creating a fire service district and imposing a special assessment on utility customers inside the city limits to help fund the Dawson Fire Department. City administration initially proposed a charge of \$10 to \$15 per month. Officials said the department’s annual budget is slightly more than \$1 million and that approximately 1,800 utility customers would be subject to the assessment.

CITY COUNCIL
Continued on page 7

Community effort provides food for 150 families in Terrell Co.

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Raine’s Baptist Church continued its community outreach Wednesday with a free food giveaway at the church, providing groceries to area residents while supplies lasted.

The Aug. 12 distribution at 577 Orange St. NE was sponsored by Feeding the Valley and was part of a broader ministry through which Pastor Raymond Andrews and church volunteers regularly distribute food, household supplies and other donated goods at no cost.

Members of the Terrell County Fire Department also volunteered during the giveaway, assisting Raine’s Baptist volunteers with the community event and helping distribute food and other items to residents.

Andrews estimated about 150 people came through Wednesday morning, with additional residents continuing to

stop by after the initial distribution. He said previous giveaways have drawn as many as 300 people.

The church also serves as a Terrell County partner for World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization that provides donated merchandise for distribution in communities. Andrews said the partnership allows the church to receive items ranging from household and sanitation supplies to building materials, with the requirement that donated goods cannot be sold.

“We share,” Andrews said, explaining that donations are not limited to individual families. The church also passes available supplies along to schools, nursing homes and other community organizations.



Members of the Terrell County Fire Department, in red, join Raine’s Baptist Church volunteers following an Aug. 12 food giveaway in Dawson. Firefighters volunteered to assist with the community event, which served about 150 people/KATHRYN CROCKETT

FOOD GIVEAWAY
Continued on page 7



THE DAWSON NEWS

Please Note Our New Phone Number: 229-469-2677

OBITUARIES



Elton Thurman "Bubber" Herrington Jr.

SASSER – Elton Thurman “Bubber” Herrington Jr., 80, of Sasser, Ga. passed away on Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2026, in the Willson Hospice House in Albany. Funeral services were conducted at 11 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 14, in the chapel of Lunsford Funeral Home with Rev. Jeff Henry officiating. Graveside services were conducted at 3 p.m. in the Parrott City Cemetery.

Bubber was born on Dec. 2, 1945, in Americus, Ga., the son of the late Elton Thurman Herrington Sr. and the late Louise Lynette McClung. He was a four-year United States Air Force Veteran, retired from the maintenance department of the United States Post Office and was a member of the Sasser Baptist Church. He was preceded in death by his parents; two sons, Jimmy Herrington and Spencer Herrington; and a sister, Lynette Flournoy.

Survivors include his wife, India Ferguson Herrington of Sasser; grandson, Brett (Jacey) Herrington ; and brother, Mack (Bebe) Herrington.

Memorial may be made to the Sasser Baptist Church P.O. Box 508, Sasser, GA 39885.

Lunsford Funeral Home, Cuthbert, Ga. (229)- 732-2148.

State Senate District 12 candidates are waiting for residency challenge decision

By ALAN MAULDIN
Georgia Trust For Local News

ALBANY – Both sides in a case involving a legal challenge to residency in a Georgia Senate race are awaiting a judge’s ruling in the matter a month after a hearing in a Dougherty County courtroom.

Corey B. Morgan, a former Camilla City Council member who came in second in the May 19 primary in state Senate District 12 to Albany businessman Edward Brown, filed the challenge in the days following the Democratic primary contest.

Brown’s attorney, Chris Cohilas, filed a motion to dismiss the case and a hearing was held on July 1 in front of a judge who is not a member of the Dougherty Judicial Circuit.

Morgan, who himself was ruled ineligible to seek re-election in Camilla after a judge ruled he was not a resident of the city, contends that Brown was not a resident of the district for the two years required to be eligible to seek office. In his challenge, the former council member alleges that Brown had registered to vote in a Nov. 5 Virginia election.

Court filings indicate that Brown cast his ballot in that election by mail in October 2024.

Brown obtained a Georgia driver’s license on Sept. 20, 2024, and updated his voter registration to

Wexford Drive address in Albany at the same time.

“The judge listened to the evidence,” Albany attorney Maurice King, who represented Morgan after Morgan initially filed paperwork himself in the case, said. “It’s clear that Mr. Brown voted in Virginia. If he was a resident of Georgia, he would not have voted in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

“Under Georgia law, the clearest indicator of where your domicile is where you vote and where your vote is counted on election day.”

Among the defenses that Cohilas gave in a filing related to Brown’s request for a dismissal of Morgan’s case, is that no challenge was made within the legal period allowed after qualifying in the election. Paperwork was also improperly served, and Brown was never properly served with paperwork in the case.

Brown’s acts of securing his Georgia driver’s license and establishing his residency in Georgia in September 2024 also show that he met the legal requirements to run on the Nov. 3, 2026, ballot in the state, the response said.

Those technicalities on paperwork should not cloud the issue, King said, who blamed the Dougherty County Clerk of Court’s office for some of the issues that occurred during the period that Morgan was representing himself



Edward Brown

in the legal case.

“I think, basically, it was not his (Morgan’s) duty,” he said. “It was the clerk’s duty. The clerk did not recuse a Dougherty County judge. Cohilas and the defense have had notice since it was filed.”

Ultimately, the attorney said, the senior judge who was selected to hear the case should rule according to the law.

“The gist of the case is that Mr. Brown is basically an ineligible candidate,” King said. “He had not been in Georgia the required time to qualify for that seat.”

Morgan is seeking to either be named as the winner in the election or, barring that, for a new election, the attorney said.

As for Brown, Cohilas said that his residency is not a question.

In his response, he said that the Georgia Secretary of State denied Morgan’s petition seeking to challenge Brown’s qualifications and that Morgan did not meet the pre-election qualification challenge.

“There’s no defense needed,” he said. “He’s a citizen of the state of Georgia. He was born here, raised here. All this is just noise. He won the election You have somebody who lost by 3,700 votes” challenging the election.

Brown won in the three-way contest with 7,881 votes. Morgan finished second with 4,129 votes and Albany firefighter Tracy Taylor was third with 2,636 votes.”

The case is a turnabout in that in the Camilla case Cohilas represented a group of residents who were seeking to remove Morgan from the council based on his residency.

The Georgia Court of Appeals in December 2023 upheld a judge’s ruling on Morgan’s residency.

“It’s ironic now coming from someone who was elected where they did not live,” Cohilas said of Morgan challenging another candidate’s residency.

Prior to the May 19 primary, Terrence Fowler Sr., who filed paperwork as a Republican in the District 12 race, was ruled ineligible based on his address and his having voted in a December 2025 election in Fulton County.

Voters can now request absentee-by-mail ballots

STAFF REPORTS

Monday, Aug. 17 marked the first day voters could request an absentee-by-mail ballot application for the Nov. 3 General Election, according to Carolyn Williams, supervisor of the Terrell County Board of Elections and Registration.

Williams said voters who wish to vote by absentee mail ballot may request an application in person at the Registrar’s Office or by calling the office at (229) 995-5066 or (229) 995-4657. Voters also have the option of requesting an absentee mail ballot online through the

Georgia Secretary of State’s My Voter Page at mvp.sos.ga.gov.

“Voters can go online to request an absentee ballot for November’s election, eliminating the time it takes to mail the application,” Williams said. “The online portal provides a simple and secure tool for our office to better provide an avenue for voters to request an application.”

Williams reminded voters who participated in the May primary or June runoff that those who selected the option to receive all ballots for the 2026 election cycle due to being elderly, age 65 or older, or having a disability will not be required to submit another application this

year.

Their absentee ballots will be automatically forwarded to them.

The deadline to request an absentee-by-mail ballot for the Nov. 3 General/Special Election is Oct. 23, in accordance with Georgia law, O.C.G.A. § 21-2-381(a)(1)(A).

Voters with questions about the absentee-by-mail process are encouraged to contact the Terrell County Registrar’s Office for assistance.

“If there are any questions, please call the Registrar’s Office and we will be happy to assist you,” Williams said.



Feeding the Valley
FOOD BANK

Food bank to host giveaway on August 22

SPECIAL TO THE DAWSON NEWS

Feeding the Valley Food Bank’s next giveaway will be held on Aug. 22 at our new location: S & S Personal Care Home, 475 Cinderella Lane, Dawson, GA 39842 (formerly the Terrell County Hospital). To help ensure smooth traffic flow, please note the following: enter on Cinderella Lane, exit on Crawford Street.



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DID YOU KNOW...?

What fast food chain was first to have a drive-thru?

By JACK BAGLEY
Georgia Trust For Local News

It's hard to think about sometimes, but one year ago today I was recovering from a heart attack ... and I think I've made a pretty good recovery, all things considered. During my illness back then and the convalescence that followed, the one thing that never faltered was the trivia! I managed to have a column ready each week, regardless of circumstances. Not bad, eh? Here's this week's collection of nonsense for you to enjoy, and I hope you do!

Did you know...

... one soldier in World War II actually killed his enemies with a bow and arrow? British Lt. Col. John Malcolm Churchill (1906-1996), known as "Mad Jack," carried a broadsword and longbow throughout the Second World War. He used them, too, along with the bagpipes he also carried. After being released from a German POW camp following the Nazi surrender, Churchill was transferred to the Japanese theatre, where he arrived shortly after the atomic bombs were used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On hearing word that the war had ended, Churchill said bitterly, "If it weren't for these bloody Yanks, we could've kept the war going another ten years!" (You just can't please some people, it seems.)

... who the first president to have cats as pets in the White House was? The first two cats ever kept as pets in the White House were the property of the 16th President, Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865). Their names were Tabby and Dixie, and Lincoln once said Dixie was "smarter than my whole Cabinet." (Of course they were; cats are the smartest.)

... why hamburgers at Wendy's™ are square? Marketing, pure marketing. The company says that its founder, Dave Thomas (1932-2002) wanted customers of the fast-food restaurant to see the quality of the meat. So he ordered the square patties so the meat would extend beyond the round bun. (It made them tasty, too.)

... an actor known for his strait-laced performances was really something of a practical joker? Actor E.G. Marshall (1914-1998) built his reputation on portraying unflappable, businesslike, straight-as-an-arrow characters and ended up being somewhat typecast because he was so good at it. But behind the scenes, Marshall was a man to contend with on the humorous side. For instance, during the filming of the series The Bold Ones, Marshall played a no-nonsense doctor. But while he was wearing the surgical mask, he would often ad-lib profane jokes and non-sequiturs that would crack up the other cast members and require several re-takes. Additional trivia note: Marshall had a standard answer for anyone who asked what his initials stood for: "Everybody's Guess." In reality, Marshall was born Everett Grunz.

... the first fast-food chain to sell drive-through food was In-and-Out Burger™? In 1948, the facility in Baldwin Park, California, began operating with a two-way speaker system that let drivers come up to a speaker, order their food, and have it delivered to their cars. The first true drive-through as we know it today was a McDonald's™ in Sierra Vista, Arizona. On January 24, 1975, that restaurant opened the first drive-through and it was because of the nearby Army base, Fort Huachuca. Soldiers at the time were not allowed to leave their vehicles while wearing fatigue uniforms off base, so the restaurant met them half way – they set up a system where the soldiers (and everyone else) could order from their cars, drive around, and pick up their food. It caught on almost immediately and today, the fast-food establishment that doesn't have a drive-through is a rare sight indeed. (Convenience, taking care of that rumbling tummy ... what else could you want?)

... a casino worker is believed to have stolen half a million bucks from his employer? On September 22, 1992, employee Bill Brennan (born 1958) allegedly walked out of the Stardust Casino in Las Vegas with a bag of cash and casino chips worth \$500,000 ... and has not been seen since. Police searched Brennan's home and found books on identity change and moving overseas, but nothing has been seen or heard from Brennan since the theft. (And they say you can't get away with such things!)

... at one time in the not-too-distant past, cocaine was sold as an over-the-counter drug? Until 1914, anyone who wanted to could go into a pharmacy and buy a gram of cocaine for just a quarter (about eight dollars today). In fact, at the turn of the 20th Century (1900-1901), cocaine was one of America's best-selling over-the-counter pharmaceuticals. Only with the passage of the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act in 1914 was cocaine restricted to needing a doctor's prescription, and in 1922 the Jones-Miller Act put severe restrictions on the manufacture of the drug. (No comment.)

... only one person in history has visited the deepest point on Earth and outer space? Astronaut Kathryn Sullivan (born 1951) was the first American woman to walk in space, a feat she accomplished in 1984. She flew a total of three Space Shuttle missions and spent a total of 22 days four hours in space. Sullivan, a retired captain in the U.S. Navy, has also descended into the Mariana Trench, the deepest part of the Pacific Ocean, in 2020. She served as Assistant Secretary of Commerce in the administration of President Barack Obama (born 1961). (That's someone I would call well traveled.)

... a major automaker names many of its models after winds? Volkswagen uses German words for winds for most of its cars, such as the Passat (trade wind), Golf (gulf stream wind), Polo (polar wind), and Jetta (jet stream). (So that's how the wind blows.)

Now... you know!

A great couch for naps:
Remembering my grandmother

THE NEW
SOUTHERN
DAD



By KYLE DOMINY

"Now you go take you a nap," she would say.

I always obliged and it was some of the best sleep I've ever gotten.

Naps at granny's house were never meant to last though. By 2:30, 3 o'clock the phone calls started coming, friends and relatives checking in and getting caught up on news and events.

"Guess who come to see me," granny would say in a near whisper to whomever was on the other end of the receiver. "Kyle and the babies."

Sometimes I could doze back off to sleep, other times I would lazily roll over on the cushions, peek to make sure the kids were OK and listen in to the conversations. When I finally rose from the couch, she would apologize for the phone waking me.

It was all right, I assured her. Later, as I herded my brood out the door, I'd never tell her goodbye. I'd tell her I loved her and that I'd see

her later.

Eventually, granny got a new sofa, a dual reclining faux leather piece. In my opinion, it was terrible for sleeping, albeit better for sitting on. But the days of afternoon naps gave way to driving kids to and from school, and returning to the workforce. The regular visits to my grandparents house transformed to weekly stop-ins and occasional lunches. I am happy to report that the kids remained regulars, so much so that granny's shopping list included their favorite grocery items.

My grandmother passed away on Aug. 6. Even as her strength failed and she was confined to what would become her deathbed, she assured me that the kids could stay with her anytime they needed to.

When I looked down at her in her coffin for the last time in this life, I didn't tell her goodbye. I told her that I loved her and I'd see her later.

COUCH THEATER



Drew Starkey, left, and Madelyn Cline star in "Outer Banks: Season 5"/Photo courtesy of MovieStillsDB

By DEMI TAVERAS
King Features

Toy Story 5 (PG)

The third-highest-grossing film of 2026 is officially available to rent on Aug. 18, after a box-office run of \$1.096 billion against its \$250 million cost. (Pixar needed the money back since this installment is also one of the most expensive animated films ever made!) Tom Hanks, Tim Allen and Joan Cusack, respectively, reprise their roles as iconic characters Woody, Buzz Lightyear and Jessie; meanwhile, Conan O'Brien ("If I had Legs I'd Kick You") joins the cast as Smarty Pants, a toy that assists with potty training, and Greta Lee ("Past Lives") enters the series as Lilypad "Lily," a frog-themed tablet. The film, which takes place two years after "Toy Story 4," follows our favorite group of toys and their latest debacles as electronics start to take over their playtime with their current owner, Bonnie! Fun fact: Scarlett Spears, who now voices Bonnie, also played Young Glinda in last year's "Wicked: For Good." (Amazon Prime Video)

Outer Banks: Season 5 (TV-MA)

The wait is almost over for the series finale of this hit 2020 series! Fans have followed these characters from the Outer Banks of North Carolina to the Bahamas, South America and Morocco, and they've even had to say "goodbye" to a much-beloved main character, Rudy Pankow's

JJ Maybank. Season 5 kicks off right after JJ's death with his friends drowning in grief, but the Pogues are still determined to track down JJ's killer, his biological father Chandler Groff (J. Anthony Crane), as well as the mythical artifact of the Blue Crown. The Pogues are still getting run out of their own town, and with no other people left to help them besides Sarah's deranged brother, Rafe (Drew Starkey), they embark on yet another unbelievable adventure full of close calls with death and spur-of-the-moment action! Look for all 10 episodes of season 5 to premiere on Aug. 20. (Netflix)

The Invite (R)

This comedy-drama film out now to rent is Olivia Wilde's third directorial feature film, following her 2022 psychological thriller "Don't Worry Darling." Wilde also stars in the film, with just three of her fellow actors rounding out the cast -- Seth Rogen ("The Studio"), Penelope Cruz ("The Bride!"), and Edward Norton ("A Complete Unknown"). "The Invite" takes place over the span of one night in a San Francisco apartment owned by married couple Joe (Rogen) and Angela (Wilde). To Joe's surprise and dismay, Angela has invited their noisy upstairs neighbors over for dinner. But when neighbors Pina (Cruz) and Hawk (Norton) arrive for dinner, the night takes quite an unexpected turn for Joe and Angela, as they receive an extremely alluring invite of their own. (Fandango at Home)

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Billboards

There is a stretch of Interstate 10 west from Jacksonville to the intersection with Interstate 75, a road I have seldom traveled until recently.

Returning to Athens after a stay in Ponte Vedra Beach, I needed to make a stop in Albany. I felt serene and refreshed on the first leg of the journey on I-10 where there were no billboards, no roadside trash—just assorted pine and oak trees and clean, clean roadsides.

Soon after segueing onto, I-75 and crossing the Georgia-Florida line, there were billboards galore. I have traveled I-75 for years and have always wondered why the legislature doesn't restrict their proliferation.

State law requires a distance of 500 yards between billboards. That's a little



LORAN SMITH

more than a football field and a half. When you are driving 75 mph it seems like there is a billboard every first down.

I asked out loud, "Why can't Georgia be like Florida," thinking of the colossal beauty of I-10 from Jacksonville to Interstate 75. Alas, when I got home and googled for answers, it turns out that the state with the most active billboard per-

mits is Florida with 32,162. Georgia ranks 17th with 12,360. What a shock. (It is worth nothing that Texas is ranked second behind Florida with 24,262 permits. But spread out over 268,596 square miles to Florida's 53,997 means that you can drive a lot of miles, especially in the panhandle, without seeing a single one.)

Perhaps Florida law, which requires 1,500 feet between billboards on interstates, makes it seem much less in Florida. But how is it that on I-10 from Jacksonville to the I-75 intersection, there are no billboards?

I have ridden highways in Alaska and Hawaii and have driven in Maine and Vermont where there are NO billboards allowed. Here's to the "Big 4, no billboards, no more." With the GPS apps on our car phones, we don't need billboards to help us find where

we will be sleeping or locating a restaurant for a meal.

In recent years, it has been a lot of fun making trips to Maine. There are villages throughout "The Pine Tree State" where you can find a place to sleep and eat without depending on highway-cluttering billboards to get you there.

Maine is a place that attracts artists. They are attracted to its northern lights and the picturesque and rugged landscapes. The coastlines are quietly seductive, and you find such a variety in Maine's shores, fishing villages with a slower pace of life. If you want to go inland, the forests offer painting opportunities, too.

You get addicted to Maine's overall beauty. Every time I am there, I am always thinking about why I don't come more often. Of course, it is such a euphoric

experience to fly into Boston and spend a long weekend taking in Boston's history, restaurants, and the Red Sox—then find your way via U. S. 1 into Maine.

The first trip there, when I realized there were no billboards, I was overwhelmed with my friends Buddy and Lucy Allen, who spend their winters in their hometown of Athens and their late spring, summer, and early fall in Maine. They can go grocery shopping, run to the hardware store, and visit a nearby town without ever seeing a billboard. How nice!

We have been fortunate to visit them at their address in Blue Hill, Maine, a town of fewer than 3,000 people but with abundant musicians and more authors per square foot than anywhere in Maine. And no billboards.

Buddy enjoys sailing, and with Blue Hill situated in the Penobscot Bay area, he is connected to Maine's rich maritime heritage, countless pristine islands, and the most charming of coastal villages.

Just think how nice it would be if visitors who travel in our state could see the farms and fields along I-75 instead of unsightly billboards, many of which are depilated and overgrown.

I remember driving to Florida before the coming of the interstate highways and there were the clever Burma Shave signs. There was humor and cleverness with their messages. They didn't overwhelm like today's billboards.

Georgia is a wonderful state, and it could be even more attractive if it were not for those contemptible billboards every first down.

How do I really know what is going on?

You're a voter. You're trying to figure out who is right. Perhaps who to vote for? Maybe you're just trying to figure out a complicated issue and aren't quite sure what to believe.

I get variations of these questions on a regular basis. People like me who are in the political and government affairs space have to know a little about everything, and ideally, a lot about something. We need to know who are the players on a specific issue that matter. Also ideally, we need to be able to cut through clutter and...how to say this nicely... "strategic hyperbole" to get to the root of problems.

This takes a lot of time and it helps to have some experience across election cycles and through leadership changes. Normal everyday Americans have neither. They don't just want shortcuts; they need them.

Our news media used to fill this role. Local newspapers still fill this gap for most issues which originate and can be solved close to home. I'm thankful to continue to be afforded space where you are reading this.

These outlets are struggling, though it's worth paying attention to the efforts of the Georgia Trust for Local News, which now operates many of the papers where this can be read. A newer rescue operation just began with Chattanooga's paper in Tennessee which covers the extreme NW corner of Georgia. A couple of local entrepreneurs who have expertise in trade publications purchased the Times Free Press, cut out a couple of layers of management, but have stated the focus is to replace syndicated reporting from the New York Times and AP with locally generated and focused content.

When searching for answers to the original questions, I continue to advocate to start local. Understand your community first. Know your community leaders. Some have elected titles. Many do not. But if you want to be part of the solution, you first need to know the people in your area who understand what the problems are AND are working with fellow citizens and the elected officials and bureaucracies at higher levels to solve them.

The next step is to ask yourself if your consumption of news is for information or entertainment. Be honest.

Too many get all of their information from one or two sources. The TV channel never changes from FoxNews or MSNow. The radio dial is set to AM talk or NPR.

If you consider yourself well informed but watch or listen to programming with which you always agree, you're not being educated. You're being indoctrinated while you're being entertained.

A related trap too many fall into is to latch onto one person who loudly picks fights with political entities with whom you disagree. Way too many people see the battle they've long want waged, and then believe the person picking said fight is an honest person or broker.

One of the most recent examples of this fallacy can be seen in Northwest Georgia, where many believed Marjorie Taylor Greene should be anointed the "True Conservative" crown and/or the person best suited to lead the MAGA efforts in a post-Trump Republican party. She's now called for President Trump's removal from office and has said she's no longer a Republican.

Meanwhile, the news networks who were happy to point out every



CHARLIE HARPER
GEORGIA POLITICS

logic cul de sac she entered as they ridiculed her for being the point person for everything they felt was wrong with America and the GOP are now happy to promote her "expert" opinions. The producers of The View can't book her often enough.

The point here is that you can't outsource your opinions to one person, nor can you ever fully write off someone with whom you disagree. Politics is weird, and sometimes even the person you think is "the worst" today may be a vote in odd circumstances you need tomorrow. It's worse when the person you truly believed in becomes a shill for the other side.

The lesson here that should work for most people is to diversify your news consumption and to whom you pay attention. You need to read and listen to sources with which you disagree. You need to ask yourself where they may be right, or be able to articulate clearly why they are wrong. This helps you remain cognitively engaged while avoiding the trap of consuming news as entertainment.

It also helps if you find someone you respect but often or at least sometimes disagree. You need both parties (or a non-partisan) represented here. Understand what a politician's red lines are, and on what subjects they hold as dogma.

Never blindly follow anyone who is just for 110% of what the party line is today. These are the people who will always be for what is popular but often hide when it is time to do what is right.

All of this takes a bit of work, on an ongoing basis. Operating a Republic isn't easy, but protecting our constitutional rights should be worth the effort.

The alternative is outsourcing the machinery that makes America unique and awesome. The consequences of what can go wrong if we set our governance to autopilot are too dear for us to let that happen.

Here are some thoughts on love and loving well

A change of pace today. I am going to give politics and those who practice it the week off. They aren't going anywhere and I am tired of them and their blather. Instead, let's talk about love. Love? Yes, love.

Dr. Bill Burch, my spiritual guide and Preacher Extraordinaire, whose efforts to save my sorry soul have been commendable but remain a work in progress, recently broached the subject in his weekly post.

He said, "Life is judged by a simple question, 'Did I love well?' At the end of each day as we drift off to sleep, we ask, 'Did I love well today?' At the end of our lives as we drift off to death, we ask, 'Did I love well?'" How do we respond to that? As we drift off to sleep, do we say, "I'm going to bed mad and I'm going to wake up mad and I'm going to be mad all day." Or, as we drift off to death, do we say, "I wonder if all that stuff I got



DICK YARBROUGH

mad about over the years was really that important?"

My mother had an iron-clad rule about love. The last words she and my dad spoke before going to sleep at night were, "I love you." Nothing after that. If either were to pass away during

the night, the other would remember the last thing they ever said to each other.

We sometimes toss the term around like a Frisbee. We love certain TV shows. We love weekends. We love football. We love cooking out. As for me, I love banana pudding, the University of Georgia and anything Ray Charles Robinson, of Albany, Georgia, has ever sung, especially "Georgia on my Mind."

But love is deeper than that. In the famous passage in 1 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul says that love is patient and kind, not jealous or proud or selfish or easily angered. That is real love.

Speaking of love, it is mentioned 574 times in the New International Version of the Bible. Those of us who identify ourselves as

being of the Christian faith would do well to read closely, including Christ's admonition to love others as you love yourself. Easy to say. Hard to do. According to my mail, some self-proclaimed Christians are still at the eye-for-an-eye stage.

The author and theologian C. S. Lewis identified four types kinds of love: Romantic, Affectionate, Friendship and Unconditional, or Agape. Some other sources slice love up into seven parts, including ego, or self-love, a trait most commonly exhibited by our intrepid public servants in Washington and elsewhere. (Oops! I think I said no politics today. My bad.)

I didn't always treat the subject as seriously as I should. It was my very first class in college at what was then Georgia State College, now Georgia State University, in Atlanta. Fall quarter.

Freshman English. 8 a.m. An environment begging for some levity.

Somehow the subject was love although to this day, I'm still not sure how love fit in among conjugating verbs and present participles. Frankly, I didn't love either one, especially at 8 o'clock in the morning.

The professor said love could not be simply defined. I said yes it could and belted out "Love is a Many Splendored Thing." The class thought it was hilarious. I did, too. Not surprisingly, the professor was not amused and I was asked to gather my belongings and leave.

Great. One week in school and I am about to be out of school and trying to explain to my parents that, unlike my strait-laced brother who had sailed through college, I didn't last a month. Fortunately, a little humility on my part and a lot of forgiveness on the professor's part and I was allowed back in and decided to stick to conjugated verbs and participles, past and present, and leave the jokes to the professionals.

So here I am all these years later back on the subject of love. Wiser and more mature than the jokester in freshman English. And more serious. Today I am wrestling with the questions proposed by Dr. Burch. Did I love well today? If not, why not?

Composers Hal David and Burt Bacharach wrote, "What the world needs now is love, sweet love. Not just for some, but for everyone." I agree. We need to focus on loving well. After all, "Love is a Many-Splendored Thing." And I love that we have had this conversation.

The Dawson News

GEORGIA TRUST

— for Local News —

DuBose Porter/PUBLISHER EMERITUS

Pam Burney/GENERAL MANAGER

Member

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1985-2025

Wm. Thomas Rountree

Carl Rountree

Editor and Publisher

Editor and Publisher (1946-1985)

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Terrell County's Oldest Building Institution

Successor to The Dawson Weekly Journal

Established February 2, 1886

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Legals

D-107
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of TIMOTHY DEWAYNE BARTHLOW deceased, late of Terrell County, Georgia are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.
This 12TH day of AUGUST, 2026
RUN: AUG. 20TH, 27TH, Sept. 3rd, 10TH
WENDY GLEATON, ADMINISTRATOR
TIMOTHY DEWAYNE BARTHLOW, DECEASED
COLLIER & GAMBLE, L.L.P
EDWARD R. COLLIER
P.O. BOX 577
DAWSON, GA. 39842
August 20, 27, September 3, 10, 2026

D-102
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of VERLINDA FAYE JACKSON deceased, late of Terrell County, Georgia are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.
This 6TH day of AUGUST, 2026
RUTHELL JACKSON, ADMINISTRATOR
VERLINDA FAYE JACKSON, DECEASED
COLLIER & GAMBLE, LLP
EDWARD R. COLLIER
P.O BOX 577
DAWSON, GA. 39842
August 6, 13, 20, 27, 2026

D-101
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of HENRY LEE DENNARD, JR. deceased, late of Terrell County, Georgia are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.
This 4TH day of AUGUST, 2026
TAMMY GEORGETTE DENNARD, ADMINISTRATOR
HENRY LEE DENNARD, JR., DECEASED
766 FLORIDA SHORT ROUTE
SASSER, GA. 39885
August 6, 13, 20, 27, 2026

D-104
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of MELVIN SHERMAN deceased, late of Terrell County, Georgia are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.
This 6TH day of AUGUST, 2026
BARBARA ALSTON SHERMAN, EXECUTRIX
MELVIN SHERMAN, DECEASED
1174 HEROD HWY
DAWSON, GA. 39842
August 13, 20, 27, September 3, 2026

D-103
IN THE PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF TERRELL
STATE OF GEORGIA
IN RE: LEON CLYDE JOHNS
DECEASED
ESTATE NO: 4142
PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION NOTICE
To: ALL UNKNOWN HEIRS, INTERESTED PARTIES, CREDITORS
BESSIE ARDELLA SHATTLES has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the estate of LEON CLYDE JOHNS deceased, of said County. The Petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. §53-12-261. All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be granted. All objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections, and must be filed with the court on or before SEPTEMBER 7TH, 2026.
BE NOTIFIED FURTHER: All objections to the Petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections. All objections should be sworn to before a notary public or before a probate court clerk, and filing fees must be tendered with your objections, unless you qualify to file as an indigent party. Contact probate court personnel at the following address/telephone number 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.
Carol M. Speir
Judge of the Probate Court
By: CINDY THOMAS
Clerk of the Probate Court
Address: P.O. Box 67
Dawson, Georgia 39842
229-995-5515
August 13, 20, 27, September 3, 2026

D-099
NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER, TERRELL COUNTY Pursuant to the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by Michael Jenkins and Gwendolyn Yarbrough to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as grantee, as nominee for SunTust Mortgage, Inc, its successors and assigns dated 4/25/2016 and recorded in Deed Book 11H Page 478 and modified at Deed Book 13J Page 33, Terrell County, Georgia records; as last transferred to or acquired by Truist Bank, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of \$71,000.00, with interest at the rate specified therein,

there will be sold by the undersigned at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door of Terrell County, Georgia (or such other area as designated by Order of the Superior Court of said county), within the legal hours of sale on September 1, 2026 (being the first Tuesday of said month unless said date falls on a Federal Holiday, in which case being the first Wednesday of said month), the following described property: ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND, LYING AND BEING IN THE CITY OF DAWSON, TERRELL COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND BEING DESCRIBED AS LOTS 1, 2 AND 3 OF BLOCK C OF THE CARVER ADDITION OF SAID CITY, AND SAID THREE (3) LOTS FRONTING 150 FEET ON THE NORTH SIDE OF 6TH AVENUE, AND RUNNING A DISTANCE IN UNIFORM WIDTH OF 168 FEET NORTH. NOTE: THE PROPERTY ADDRESS AND TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER LISTED ARE PROVIDED SOLELY FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES, WITHOUT WARRANTY AS TO ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS AND ARE NOT HEREBY INSURED. TAX ID# D14 015 BEING THAT PARCEL OF LAND CONVEYED TO GWENDOLYN YARBROUGH AND MICHAEL JENKINS FROM ALVAH L. JOINER BY THAT DEED DATED 6/15/2007 AND RECORDED 6/18/2007 IN DEED BOOK 80, AT PAGE 571 OF THE TERRELL COUNTY, GA PUBLIC REGISTRY. PARCEL NUMBER(S): D14 015 The debt secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Security Deed. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law, including attorney's fees (notice of intent to collect attorney's fees having been given). Said property is commonly known as **622 6th Ave NE, Dawson, GA 39842** together with all fixtures and personal property attached to and constituting a part of said property, if any. To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party (or parties) in possession of the subject property is (are): Estate and/or Heirs of Gwendolyn Yarbrough and Charmain L. Weston or tenant or tenants. Truist Bank is the entity or individual designated, who shall have full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the mortgage. Truist Bank Mortgage Loan Servicing P.O. Box 2467 Greenville, SC 29602-2467 1-800-827-3722 Note, however, that such entity or individual is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the loan. Said property will be sold subject to: (a) any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), (b) unpaid water or sewage bills that constitute a lien against the property whether due and payable or not yet due and payable and which may not be of record, (c) the right of redemption of any taxing authority, (d) any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, and (e) any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above. The sale will be conducted subject to (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code; and (2) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 9-13-172.1, which allows for certain procedures regarding the rescission of judicial and non-judicial sales in the State of Georgia, the Deed Under Power and other foreclosure documents may not be provided until final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan as provided immediately above. Truist Bank as agent and Attorney in Fact for Michael Jenkins and Gwendolyn Yarbrough Aldridge Pite, LLP, Six Piedmont Center, 3525 Piedmont Road, N.E., Suite 700, Atlanta, Georgia 30305, (404) 994-7400. 1207-158A THIS LAW FIRM MAY BE ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. 1207-158A

D-098
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of JEFFREY K. AVERETT deceased, late of Terrell County, Georgia are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.
This 22ND day of JULY, 2026
MICHAEL H. GARRISON, EXECUTOR
JEFFREY K. AVERETT, DECEASED
C/O MAT D. GRAHAM
THE GRAHAM FIRM ATTORNEYS AT LAW
P.O. BOX 988
ROME, GA. 30162-0988
July 30, August 6, 13, 20, 2026

D-100
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of OBIE NEWTON GOLDEN, JR. deceased, late of Terrell County, Georgia are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.
This 28TH day of JULY, 2026
HARDY FRANKLN GOLDEN, ADMINISTRATOR
OBIE NEWTON GOLDEN, JR., DECEASED
C/O W.T. GAMBLE, III
COLLIER & GAMBLE, LLC
P.O. BOX 577
DAWSON, GA. 39842
August 6, 13, 20, 27, 2026



The Albany-Dougherty Economic Development Commission is partnering with Albany Area Chamber of Commerce to bring two days of business and workforce engagement to the Albany Civic Center/Special Photo: EDC

Economic Development Commission Expo unites employers with job seekers

STAFF REPORTS

ALBANY – The Albany-Dougherty Economic Development Commission is continuing to expand opportunities for employers and job seekers across southwest Georgia. Organizations that register for the SWGA Career Expo also will gain access to the EDC’s online career platform, where they can post current and upcoming job openings and connect with job seekers before, during, and after the event.

Job seekers can create profiles, search available opportunities, and apply for positions directly through the platform. The platform will remain active year-round, providing employers and job seekers with an ongoing resource to connect beyond the Career Expo.

This year, the EDC is partnering with the Albany Area Chamber of Commerce to bring two days of business and workforce engagement to the Albany Civic Center.

Albany EDC SWGA Career Expo
Sept. 24, Albany Civic Center, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Albany Area Chamber Biz Expo
Sept. 23, Albany Civic Center
4 p.m. to 5 p.m. | Business-to-business networking
5 p.m. to 7 p.m. | Open to the public

This year, employers can participate in the SWGA Career Expo and take advantage of discounted pricing when they exhibit at both events.

Business + Career Expo Package
Single Booth: \$500; Double Booth: \$900

Career Expo Only
Single Booth: \$300; Double Booth: \$575

Electricity is available on a first-come, first-served basis, so interested businesses are encouraged to reserve their booth early if power is needed.
The SWGA Career Expo remains one of the region’s premier workforce development events, connecting employers with job seekers from across southwest Georgia. Organizations and job seekers can build meaningful connections, promote career opportunities, and identify future talent.



Albany State University HBCU-UP program demonstrates a strong first-year of success

STAFF REPORTS

ALBANY – Albany State University is building momentum in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education through the continued success of its HBCU Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP) STEM Academy, a key initiative supported by a National Science Foundation grant aimed at increasing recruitment, retention, and on-time graduation of under-represented students in STEM fields.
Now entering its second year, the program supports students majoring in biology, computer science, engineering, forensic science, and psychology by providing academic, financial, and community-based resources designed to ensure long-term success.

The inaugural cohort of 15 students demonstrated strong academic and personal growth throughout the 2025–2026 academic year. The group achieved a cumulative GPA increase from 3.13 in fall 2025 to 3.16 by summer 2026, while also contributing 331 hours of community service. Students also engaged in high-impact experiences, and earned top honors at ASU’s 14th annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, where three participants tied for first place in the poster presentation competition.

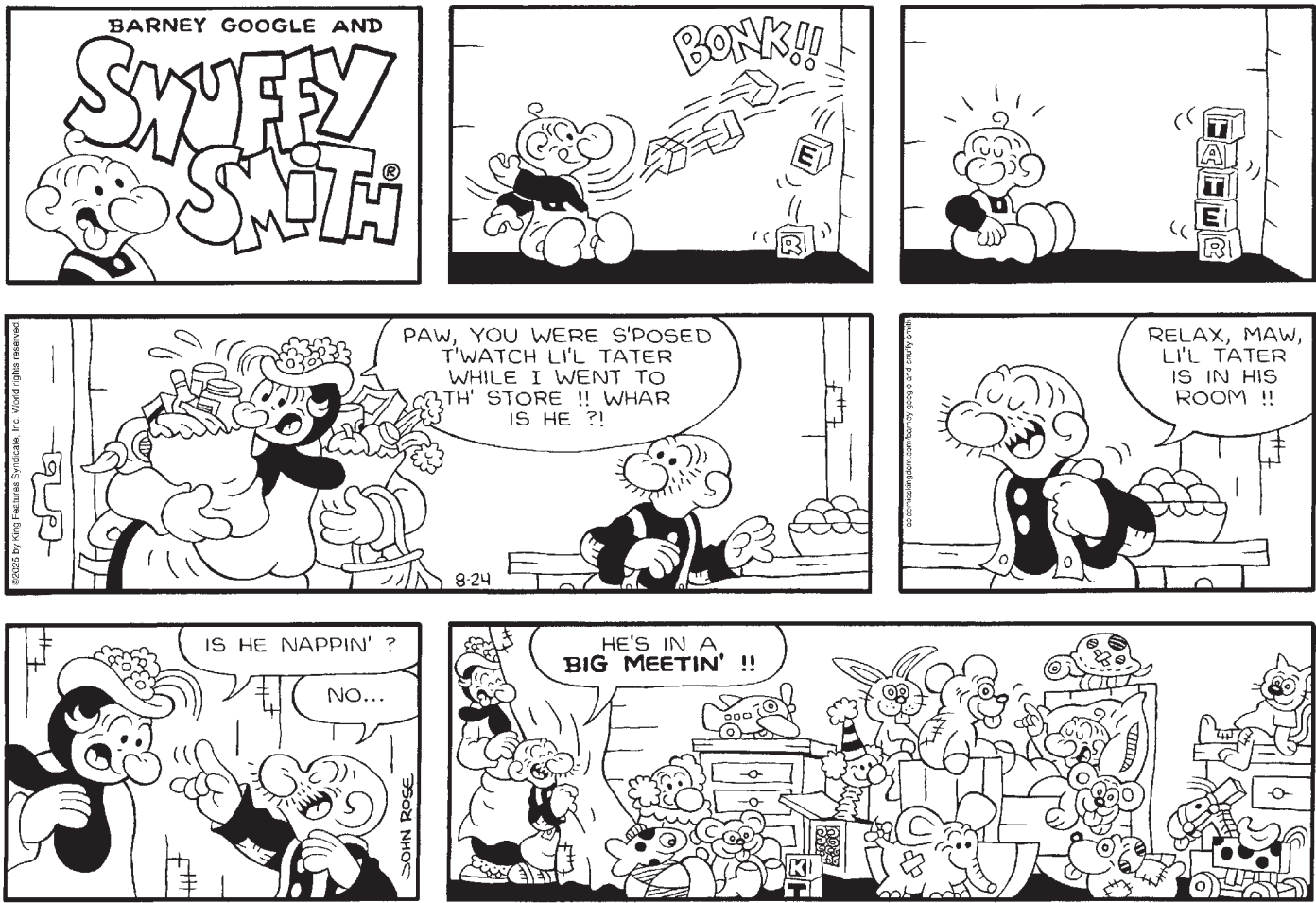
A hallmark of the program is its intentional, student-centered support system. Through structured mentorship, cohort-based learning, and targeted academic development, students are equipped with the tools

needed to thrive in rigorous STEM disciplines.
One student’s journey highlights the transformative impact of the program. After being placed on academic probation following the fall semester, the student worked closely with program leadership to develop a personalized academic plan focused on time management, study strategies and accountability. By the end of the spring semester, the student earned all A’s.
“The HBCU-UP program helped me learn how to manage my time, stay focused, and believe in my ability to succeed,” Albany State sophomore Forensic Science major Nigéria Numa said. “Having that support system made all the difference for me.”
Participants in HBCU-UP receive more than \$1,000 in financial support during their first year, including \$500 stipends at the end of both the fall and spring semesters, as well as a TI-84 graphing calculator to support their coursework. Beyond financial assistance, students benefit from a sustained system of academic and social support, including specialized coursework, mentoring, and opportunities for research and experiential learning.
“The success of our first cohort demonstrates the power of intentional support, community, and high expectations,” Chinenye Ofodile, director of the HBCU-UP program and chair of the Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Physics at Albany State. “We are not only preparing students to succeed aca-

demically, but also equipping them to become leaders, researchers, and mentors who will contribute meaningfully to the STEM workforce.”
As the program continues into fall 2026, 21 new students have been accepted into the next cohort. There are 14 returning participants. The semester will begin with an orientation on Aug. 19 and will include a robust schedule of academic sessions, workshops, and engagement opportunities.
Students will participate in Saturday academies featuring coursework in physics, biology, chemistry, computer science, English, mathematics and college readiness, along with field trips and interactive learning experiences. Additional programming throughout the semester will include mentorship pairings, mental wellness support, academic planning sessions, and community-building events designed to strengthen student engagement and success.
The program’s learning community model ensures that students progress together throughout their academic journey, building lasting relationships with peers, faculty and mentors. As participants advance, they are also given the opportunity to mentor incoming students, reinforcing a cycle of leadership and support.
As Albany State University continues to invest in innovative programs like HBCU-UP, the institution reaffirms its commitment to expanding access, strengthening outcomes, and preparing the next generation of STEM leaders, university officials said.

DEADLINE

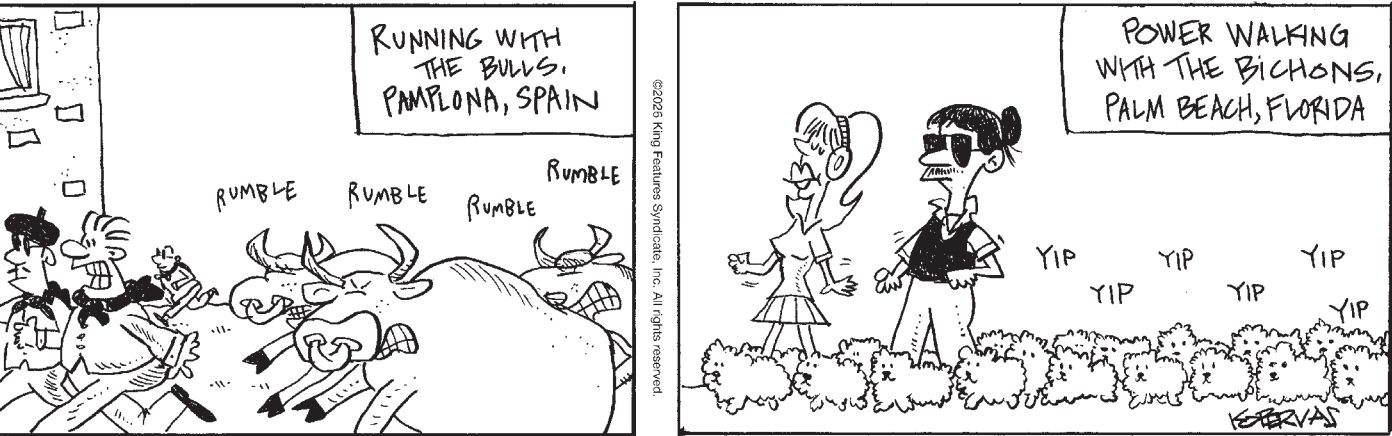
for all stories, advertisements and classifieds for **The Dawson News** is **Fridays at 12:00 p.m.** for the next week’s edition.



The Spats



Out on a Limb



"This dates back to one of the early Antiques Roadshows!"

King Crossword

Answers

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

MAGIC MAZE

Answers

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Layer

4 Radiant

9 Soup legume

12 Dubai's coun-try, for short

13 Kin of "Presto!"

14 Online chats, briefly

15 Keyboard piece for two

17 Impose

18 Pained sounds

19 Nobel-winning Mother

21 "Hooray!"

24 Story lines

25 Hollywood's Gabor

26 Genetic stuff

28 Nasser's suc-cessor

31 Stinging insect

33 Pop

35 Arias for one

36 Animal's nose

38 Mexican Mrs.

40 Teeny

41 "Phooey!"

43 Disney exec Michael

45 1912 Olympic legend

47 MGM motto start

48 Tease

49 Teen's for-malwear

DOWN

1 Young dog

2 Chou En- —

3 Pro vote

4 Acknowled-ged

5 Blessing

6 Actress Lucy

7 "Get Here" singer Adams

8 Tends the lawn

9 Stops talking

10 Flightless birds

11 Hammett pooch

16 M-Q connec-tion

20 Some HDTVs

21 Evergreen trees

22 Nobelist Pavlov

23 Latin ballroom dance

27 Small batter-ies

29 Sheltered

30 Wedding cake layer

32 Kitten's sound

34 Visionary

37 Designated clothesline

42 Succinct

44 Lith., once

45 Small combo

46 Mound

50 Non-Rx

51 Newt

52 — Lanka

53 Boston squad, for short

MAGIC MAZE • MEASURED WORDS

K P N K I F C A X V S Q O L J
H E C A F X V D R A Y E N I V
T R S P N O L J I H L R F D B
M Y M X V (F O O T A G E) F T R
P I I O M K H T N A M T O O F
I C L I N C H Y W R G E O E D
B Z E E N X A W A E U M T T R
Q O N I A R L D J I A I H E G
F D C C D G R I N C H R O A R
Y X W V T A E N O T S E L I M
S D R A Y L A H R P O P D N L

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: A FIELD OF GRAPEVINES

- Cinch

Clinch

Diameter

Footage
- Foothold

Footman

Footwear

Grinch
- Halyard

Lanyard

Mileage

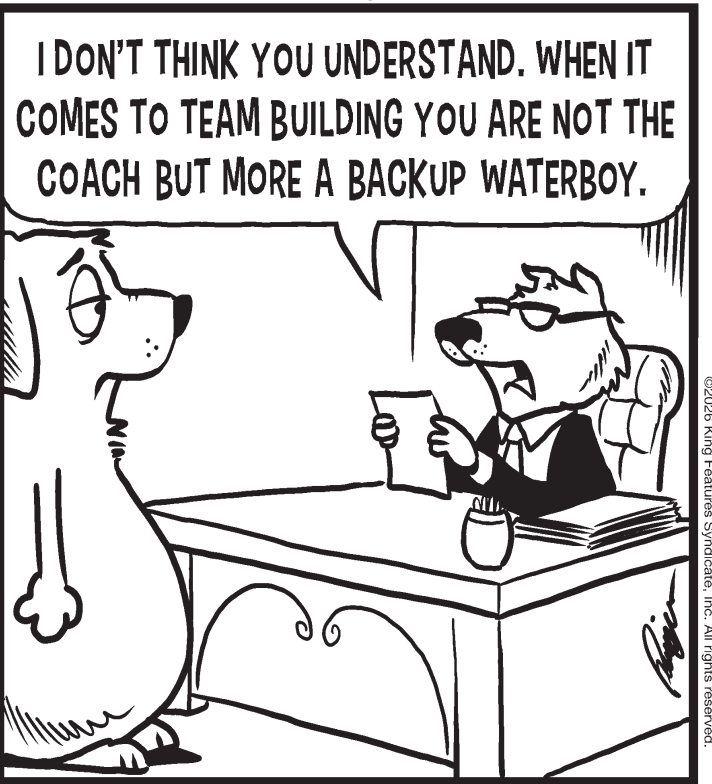
Milestone
- Perimeter

Smile

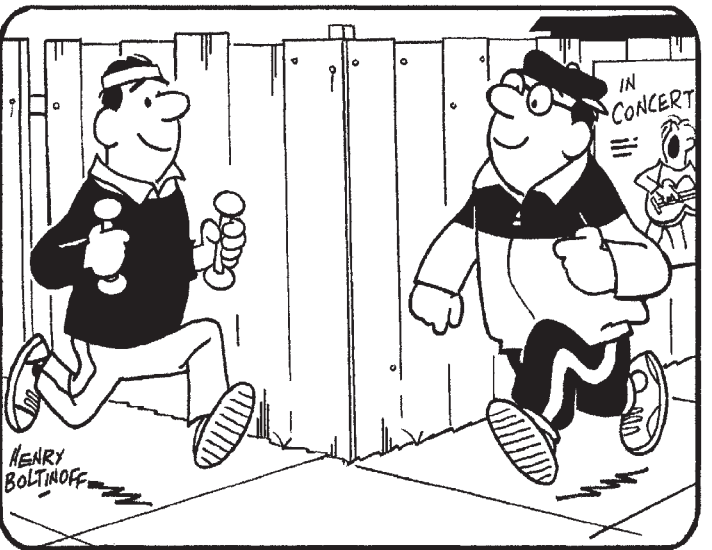
Yardarm

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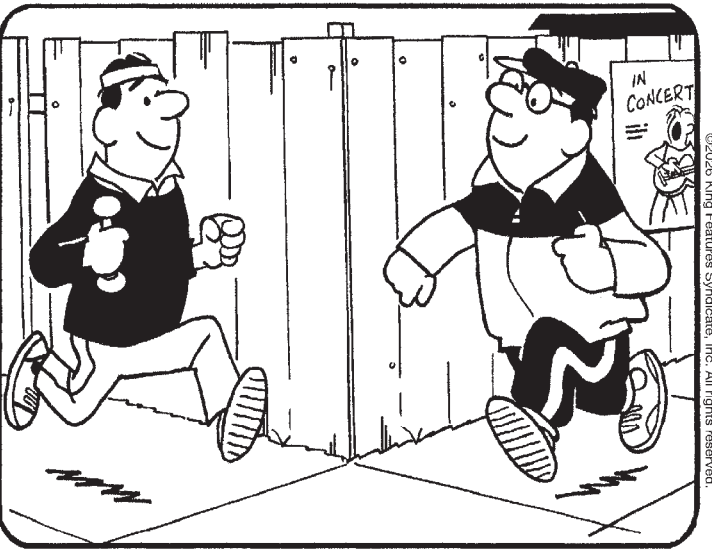
Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Arm is raised. 2. Poster is smaller. 3. Weight is missing. 4. Cap is reversed. 5. Line in sidewalk is moved. 6. Leg is moved.

It pays to advertise in your local paper!

CITY COUNCIL

Continued from page 1

At \$10 per month, the charge would generate approximately \$216,000 annually. At \$15, it would generate about \$324,000.

Council members leaned toward a lower amount during the discussion, with \$8 per month emerging as the preferred starting point. Officials said the money would be maintained separately and used specifically for fire services. No final assessment was approved Thursday. City officials told the council the amount could be discussed this month and brought back for a vote next month.

Dawson's fiscal year begins Sept. 1, but city officials said the 2026-27 budget will not be adopted before the fiscal year begins. The council approved Ordinance 2026-12, allowing city expenditures to continue beyond the Aug. 31 end of the current fiscal year while officials complete the new budget.

The meeting agenda specifically described the ordinance as temporary spending authority, allowing continued city operations if the Fiscal 2027 budget was not adopted by Aug. 31.

A proposed budget was presented in connection with Ordinance 2026-13 but was not adopted Thursday. The council instead scheduled a public hearing for Sept. 17 at 5:30 p.m., with the budget expected to return for adoption after the hearing. Residents who want to review the proposed spending plan before the hearing should request a copy from the city if it is not otherwise made publicly available.

Council approved a series of expenditures associated with Dawson's wastewater treatment system, including replacement pumps and additional work on the larger treatment plant project.

A \$16,416.60 sludge pump was approved to replace equipment that officials said is no longer functioning properly. Council also approved a \$15,000 bypass pump associated with the Tyson Foods wastewater system. Both pump purchases are to be funded through SPLOST revenue.

Council additionally approved a \$109,886 change order for two additional aerators and a new control panel, funded through the wastewater project's supplemental work allowance. Together, the three items total \$141,302.60.

Officials said much of the equipment at the treatment plant is aging and either needs replacement or significant work.

The city also reported progress on the broader wastewater project. Rebuilt clarifiers are back online, while reconstruction of the influent pump station is approximately one-third complete.

Local resident and business owner Robert Albritton appeared before the council to dispute a utility bill that had climbed to roughly \$6,000 after the city discovered his property still had an older water meter that was not being read electronically. City staff acknowledged the meter had not been replaced when other meters in the system were upgraded. Because the old meter was not being captured by the city's electronic reading system, Albritton had continued receiving minimum water charges even as he continued paying the utility bills sent to him.

The city's meeting agenda identifies Albritton's utility bill as one of two scheduled public comments Thursday. City staff said they reviewed his historical usage and calculated a \$4,335.33 credit, which would leave a balance of \$1,720.61, including other utility charges.

Albritton disputed the remaining amount, repeat-

edly emphasizing that he had paid the bills presented to him and questioning why his meter had not been replaced when others across the city were upgraded. City officials acknowledged the failure to identify the old meter was an error on the city's part. Albritton was directed to meet again with city staff to review his individual bills, payments and the calculations used to determine the proposed credit.

The council approved an agreement to restart the Dawson Police Department's K-9 program. Police officials said grants and other outside assistance are covering much of the start-up expense, including the dog, training, food and veterinary care, leaving the city primarily responsible for the assigned officer and certain equipment.

The five-year canine-officer service agreement addresses compensation, city-paid care and equipment, and assignment requirements. Police officials told council the officer selected for the program intends to move his family into the area and described the longer-term agreement as a way to protect the city's investment in the program.

Council also approved an amendment to the city's retirement plan intended to reconcile the plan with terms contained in a previous city manager's employment contract. Officials explained that the employment agreement provided for immediate vesting in the city's retirement plan, while the retirement plan itself required a one-year waiting period.

The amendment was presented as necessary to correct that conflict and honor the terms of the employment agreement.

Council moved forward with Ordinance 2026-11, adopting Chapter 8 of the Dawson city code governing finance and taxation. The provisions cover more than general budgeting and taxation and include rules involving hotel-motel taxes, purchasing cards and blighted property.

City officials also discussed the long-running effort to complete Dawson's new website. The city has already paid approximately \$6,000 for development, and staff said the site is about 95% complete. The remaining issue involves control of the city's domain and the fact that its email accounts and new website would otherwise be hosted on separate servers.

Officials said maintaining the arrangement could leave the city paying two companies for hosting services. Staff recommended obtaining the rights to the website the city has already paid for and moving it to the server that currently hosts the city's email accounts. The proposed change also would reduce monthly website maintenance costs from \$150 to \$99.

Council also considered a conditional-use request involving property at 1051 Flint Street NE. The matter was scheduled for a public hearing and involved replacing an older manufactured home with a newer one. The address is confirmed in the council's meeting materials.

The Dawson City Council's next regular meeting is scheduled for Sept. 10.

The public hearing on the proposed 2026-27 city budget is provisionally scheduled for Sept. 17 at 5:30 p.m. The hearing will give residents an opportunity to weigh in before the council considers final adoption of the spending plan.

The proposed fire service assessment also is expected to return to the council for further consideration, potentially adding a new recurring charge to utility bills for customers within Dawson's city limits.

FOOD GIVEAWAY

Continued from page 1

Recent donations have included light bulbs, cleaning and sanitation products, toys, roofing materials and other goods. Andrews said World Vision's donations are particularly valuable because the organization pro-

TERRELL SCHOOLS

Continued from page 1

His exit nevertheless creates another transition for a Terrell County finance department that has spent much of the past year rebuilding.

Lowe arrived as Terrell County was navigating significant turnover, addressing financial issues uncovered after Harvey became superintendent and preparing for multiple audits. His previous experience with the Dougherty County School System and accounting firm Turner & Jones gave him a school finance background Harvey said proved valuable as the district worked to rebuild its financial operations.

"He came in at a time where it was very tense, overwhelming," the superintendent said.

Rather than immediately putting another CFO into the same environment, Harvey said the district plans to bring accounting and consulting firm Mauldin & Jenkins back to help stabilize the financial operation, assess what remains to be corrected and help identify Lowe's eventual replacement.

"I'm bringing in a group so that the next CFO will not be overwhelmed," Harvey said. "They're going to clean things up, get us where we need to be."

She described the arrangement as a "bridge" between the transition that began last fall and the financial structure she wants the district to have going forward.

Two of the three members of the district's finance team remain, Harvey said, and Lowe has continued working with the district to finish some outstanding matters.

A finance office already under pressure

Lowe inherited an operation that had already undergone substantial upheaval.

Harvey said a series of personnel departures in finance began last fall. As the dust settled, the district discovered some vendors had gone unpaid for extended periods, including bills that predated her July 2025 move into the superintendent's office.

"We worked to just cut vendor checks to try to get a hold on those things," she said. "Most of those have been cleared up."

Other discoveries raised more serious concerns.

Harvey said the district found open payable transactions related to employee benefits and later received notification from the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia that money was owed for certain current and former employees.

"The concern was monies were taken out of individuals' checks, but they were not paid," Harvey said.

Those concerns helped lead the district to seek an independent review.

A payroll performance review by Mauldin & Jenkins subsequently identified widespread documentation deficiencies, benefit discrepancies and weaknesses in internal controls. The firm reviewed 36 pay periods dating to 2023 and identified, among other issues, 18 off-cycle payrolls issued between January 2023 and June 2025.

Harvey said some of what emerged from the review was not surprising because district officials already knew problems existed.

"The off-cycle paychecks were surprises," Harvey said.

The district has since eliminated the practice, she said, adding, "You can't just walk into payroll and say, 'OK, I need a payroll check cut today.'"

From relationships to systems

For Harvey, the financial problems are part of a larger institutional issue she says she began trying to address before officially becoming superintendent.

Harvey, who previously worked in the Terrell County School System from 2009 to 2014, was familiar with the district when she returned to its leadership. She said relationships had historically played a significant role in how the system operated.

She does not necessarily characterize every old practice as improper when it began. Instead, Harvey said laws, regulations and expectations changed while some of the district's internal practices failed to change with them.

vides quality merchandise that can be put directly into the hands of people and organizations that need it.

For Andrews, getting those resources into the community is the point.

The church's outreach efforts are ongoing, with additional food give-

"The system operated off of what were known as best practices at one time," the superintendent said. "But as things evolved and changed, the systems did not evolve and change."

After being selected to lead the district, Harvey said her first focus was policy. She had district policies reviewed and updated and brought outside professionals in to examine departments, including human resources and payroll.

That process uncovered compensation discrepancies among employees with similar jobs, including differences that did not appear to correspond with experience. The district subsequently commissioned a compensation study.

Harvey said the larger objective is to build an organization that operates through established procedures rather than depending on particular individuals or longstanding relationships. Turnover, she said, did not create all of the district's weaknesses. It exposed them.

"People left," Harvey said. "I think thinking, or hoping, in some regards, that things would fail. They, in my opinion, didn't fail. It exposed what was not in place."

She said her administration is now doing the harder work of establishing policies, procedures and expectations that can survive changes in personnel.

Budget would have required \$393,000 from reserves

The financial overhaul is also changing how Terrell County spends its money.

Harvey said projections developed by Lowe showed the district would have needed to pull approximately \$393,000 from its fund balance if officials had not made adjustments to the Fiscal Year 2027 spending plan. The Board of Education ultimately adopted a \$13.2 million general fund budget, approximately 9.3% smaller than the previous year's budget, while maintaining nearly \$10.8 million in unreserved general fund reserves.

Harvey said the district's circumstances also prevented officials from following a conventional budget-development process.

In a typical school system, departments may begin developing spending requests months before a new fiscal year, she said. Terrell County's finance staff was instead simultaneously dealing with audits, rebuilding internal operations and preparing a budget.

"We did not have that option," Harvey said.

The resulting reductions were spread across administrative positions, staffing and programs.

Some vacant positions were left unfilled, including a special education specialist and dual enrollment coordinator, with those responsibilities absorbed by remaining staff. The district eliminated the assistant superintendent of plant operations position because Harvey said its responsibilities duplicated services available elsewhere in the district.

The director of assessment and accountability position also was dissolved, with its duties divided between the chief academic officer and director of student services. Several employees previously working 230-day contracts were reduced to 220 days.

At the elementary level, the district eliminated some part-time positions held by 49% employees. Cursive writing is now incorporated into English language arts instruction rather than offered separately, and a STEM exploration class is not being offered this year.

The district also stopped paying the employee portion of health insurance benefits for part-time retirees, a practice addressed during the financial review.

Cutting a position does not always cut the cost

Other expenses are proving more complicated. Harvey said one example involves employees who serve in multiple roles. Some bus drivers also work in school security or custodial supervision, while some paraprofessionals and secretaries work as bus monitors.

Because nonexempt employees must receive overtime for qualifying hours beyond 40 in a work week, combining jobs can sometimes cost substantially more than the salary attached to the secondary position alone.

aways and distributions of donated goods planned as supplies become available. Upcoming events and available items will be announced through social media and The Dawson News to help connect resources with Terrell County residents and organizations that can use them.

Harvey estimated that work budgeted at roughly \$4,600 for a bus monitor could ultimately cost approximately \$9,000 when performed by an employee whose combined responsibilities push the employee into overtime.

Those expenses illustrate why Harvey says rebuilding the district's finances involves more than simply looking for individual line items to cut.

After policy, she said, one of her priorities is examining staffing plans to determine whether the district's staffing formulas align with the funding generated by the students it serves. That has become increasingly important as enrollment declines.

Earlier budget projections showed Terrell County anticipating a \$1.36 million decline in revenue for FY 2027 amid enrollment losses and reductions in state and federal funding.

'Not everything is about money'

Harvey said the financial overhaul does not mean the district will simply choose the least expensive way to educate students. She pointed to gifted education as an example. Different service models may allow a district to serve students at different costs, but Harvey said the decision also has to account for whether exceptionally advanced students are being appropriately challenged.

A fourth-grader performing math at a ninth-grade level, she said, needs opportunities beyond the standard fourth-grade curriculum just as a struggling student needs remediation.

"Not everything is about money," Harvey said. "It's about providing a service so that the student who is gifted, who's in fourth grade performing on a ninth-grade math level, can be exposed to advanced concepts."

"We can't just focus on those who need remediation."

That philosophy provides the other side of a financial restructuring that has eliminated positions and reduced spending: Harvey says the objective is not simply to make Terrell County Schools cheaper to operate but to remove inefficiencies so available resources can be directed toward students. The district's larger challenge is doing that while rebuilding systems that Harvey says should have been in place long before the current administration.

Payroll problems affect the budget, she said. Budget problems affect staffing. Staffing affects what happens in classrooms.

"When you operate within a system, even if you look at cars and wheels, if one piece is not turning properly, it impacts so many other systems," Harvey said.

Making it 'hard for parents to choose'

Just one year into her tenure as superintendent, Harvey said the ultimate measure of that work will not be an audit report or a balanced spreadsheet. It will be whether families believe Terrell County's schools can compete with the alternatives around them.

"I want to make it hard for parents to choose," Harvey said. "No school should be a bad school."

She says she wants Terrell County and neighboring districts to be strong enough that families are not forced to decide where to live based on escaping a poor school, she said. For Terrell County, that means changing expectations inside the school system as well as its financial practices.

The district's WAVE commitments — work together, act with integrity, value excellence and empower students — reflect the culture Harvey says she is trying to establish. The district publicly introduced those commitments when she began her tenure in July 2025.

For now, however, one of the most immediate tests is back in the finance office. Lowe helped carry the district through audits, financial cleanup and development of a new budget. The next phase will now continue without him.

Harvey said her plan is to make sure the system no longer depends on any one person to keep it working.

"I'm doing the hard work of leadership now," she said, "helping my team to understand systems, processes and how we follow policy."

Terrell Academy upcoming football season preview

By JOE WHITFIELD
Sports Editor

Jack Harris doesn't need anyone to remind him what happened last season. He lived it every Friday night. One injury became two. Two became five. Eventually, nearly half the roster was affected.

Approximately 30 Terrell Academy players missed at least one game during Harris' first season leading the Eagles, forcing lineup changes that made consistency nearly impossible. Quarterback Bryse Peachey suffered a broken leg after earning Albany Herald Fantastic Fifteen honors, quarterback Josh Cabitat was also sidelined, offensive linemen were shuffled from position to position, and a promising season unraveled into a 4-7 finish.

Now entering Year 2, Harris believes the Eagles are finally positioned to move forward.

"We're still climbing the hill," Harris said. "But we've got our foot in the door."

The biggest reason for optimism begins with Peachey.

Now fully recovered, the senior quarterback has returned at full strength and reminded teammates why he's been one of southwest Georgia's most respected competitors.

"You don't get to coach many kids like Bryse," Harris said. "He's accepted his role as a leader. He leads by his actions, practices hard every day and he's been giving our defense fits this summer."



Terrell Academy football team/SPECIAL PHOTO

Harris laughed when describing the challenge.

"You can't corral him," he said. "He's physical. He's not going to shy away from contact. He'll bring it."

Peachey's return gives Harris the experienced leader the offense lacked for much of last season.

It also helps that the Eagles have more weapons around him.

Senior Hudson Massey takes over at running back after what Harris called an outstanding off-season.

"He's quick, explosive and hard to handle," Harris said.

Junior transfer Alex Klughart arrives from Lee County, bringing

exceptional speed and reliable hands to the receiving corps, while sophomore Colt Eisenhart, a transfer from Deerfield-Windsor, has quickly adapted to the Eagles' system.

Cal Powell enjoyed one of the best summers on the team, according to Harris, becoming bigger, stronger and faster while emerging as another dependable receiving target.

Veteran Sam Hester provides additional experience at split end, giving Terrell more depth than it enjoyed a year ago.

One familiar name will have a different assignment.

After serving as the Eagles' top receiver last season, Walt Lee will spend most of his time in the defensive secondary, returning to offense only in selected situations.

The player Harris may be happiest about, however, doesn't carry the football.

"Everything starts with the offensive line," he said.

It's a phrase Harris repeated often while discussing this year's team.

Senior tackles Billy Summerfield, a three-year starter, and Quint Henley anchor the edges, while junior center Levi Ivey provides stability in the middle. Dylan Freeman, Braden Harris and Jason Birdsong headline the competition at guard, with younger players pushing for playing time.

Perhaps most importantly, Harris believes improved depth will allow many of those linemen to focus primarily on offense instead of playing both ways.

For a small-school program, that's a significant advantage.

"It lets those guys stay fresh," Harris said.

Defensively, Terrell returns much of the same philosophy but with more experience and competition.

Charlie Oosterveen and Grant Suber rotate at nose tackle, while Trey Parrish and Jace Berry work at defensive end.

The linebacking corps features Freeman, Lex Bryant, Brody Cowart and Liam Kelley, who also handles kicking duties.

"He can kick the heck out of the ball," Harris said.

Lee headlines the secondary alongside Willis Henley, Carson Miller, Landon Parrish, Kipton Fraser and Brooks Strickland,

while Mathis Chester and freshman Jackson Moore compete at safety. Charlie Proctor is among several young players pressing for playing time.

Harris said numerous backup positions remain undecided — exactly the type of competition he wants.

"Iron sharpens iron," he said.

The Eagles will need every bit of that depth.

Their schedule offers little margin for error.

Terrell opens Aug. 21 at home against Southwest Georgia Academy, last year's GIAA Class AA state runner-up.

Region play won't get any easier.

Defending state finalist Deerfield-Windsor remains one of the league's measuring sticks under Jake McCrae, while Westfield joins the region with one of the state's most accomplished coaching staffs. Central Fellowship adds another athletic challenge.

"All of the coaches in this region are top-notch," Harris said. "If you're not prepared every week, they'll find your weaknesses."

Still, Harris likes the direction of his football team.

The injuries that derailed last season have healed.

The roster is deeper.

The seniors have embraced leadership.

And after spending the summer becoming stronger both physically and mentally, the Eagles believe they're better equipped for the grind ahead.

"We're excited," Harris said. "Our kids have worked hard. They want to be better, and that's where it all starts."



Bryse Peachey/JOE WHITFIELD

Anderson lays foundation for Terrell County turnaround

By JOE WHITFIELD
Sports Editor

Before Art Anderson can rebuild Terrell County football, he believes he must first rebuild something else.

Trust.

The Greenwave's new head coach inherited more than a football program that finished 1-9 last season. He inherited a group of players who have experienced constant change, with the current junior and senior classes already playing for three different head coaches during their high school careers.

"My staff and I are building trust," Anderson said. "The senior and junior classes have had three head coaches during their time here. Building trust will help everything else come easy."

Anderson, who spent the past several years as the head football and basketball coach at Merry Acres Middle School, was hired earlier this summer to replace Marco Kirk, now an assistant coach at Lee County High School.

His mission extends well beyond wins and losses.

"My staff and I are holding them accountable, building character as well as integrity," Anderson said. "We are establishing faith. They must believe they can be successful on and off the field."

The Greenwave will take the first step in that process Aug. 21 when they open the season at Chattahoochee County before



The Terrell County Greenwave will travel to Cusseta next Friday night to take on Chattahoochee County in the football season opener. New head coach Art Anderson and the team have been working through the summer to prepare for the upcoming season/SPECIAL PHOTO

hosting Scintilla Charter Academy in Dawson on Aug. 25.

As Anderson prepares for his debut, he already knows the identity he wants his team to embrace.

"We will be relentless," he said.

"We will fight until the triple zeros are on the clock. We will be disciplined, be able to handle adversity as well as success. Most importantly, be humble and hungry at the same time."

Although Anderson has been

on the job only a few months, he has been encouraged by what he's seen since meeting the team in late May.

"I'm very impressed with the hunger they already have," he said. "When I met these young men, I told them my expectations. Since then, a consistent 25 players have responded every day."

What has impressed him most isn't one standout player.

It's the progress of the entire

roster.

"These young men have gotten stronger and faster from June 1 to July 24, and I'm talking about significantly stronger," Anderson said. "They're finishing workouts that challenged them when we first started. I'm very proud of the progress we've made this summer."

Anderson said those improvements won't matter unless they translate into Friday nights.

His only expectation in the season opener is that his players compete with confidence.

"We as a staff just want our young men to compete to the best of their abilities," he said. "We're giving them the tools to be successful. We just want them to use those tools."

For Anderson, success in Year 1 won't be measured solely by victories.

He hopes to see his players become better students, stronger leaders and young men prepared for life after football.

"Success is giving these kids the keys to be successful," he said. "That means in the classroom, being leaders on and off the field, graduating, playing on the college level or becoming pillars of the community."

Anderson also knows restoring the Greenwave will require the support of the Dawson community.

"We need their support," he said. "It takes time, patience and a strong will to be great. We have the right people in place to have this program grow and become one to be proud of."

The wins may not come overnight.

The turnaround won't happen in a single season.

But if Anderson succeeds in restoring trust, accountability and belief inside the program, the foundation for Terrell County football's future may already be taking shape.