

Unresolved records requests leave taxpayer question unanswered

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Editor's note: Because The Dawson News and The Albany Herald submitted the Open Records requests discussed in this story, the newspapers are parties to the events described. This account is based on dated and verifiable correspondence, email records and written responses exchanged between the newspapers and the city of Dawson.

DAWSON — The city of Dawson will move ahead with its Fiscal Year 2027 budget before completing three overdue external audits, city officials told The Dawson News on July 31, more than three months after the newspaper began requesting the financial records underlying the city's financial decisions.

In the same response, the city said additional requests for documentation have delayed accounting firm Mauldin

& Jenkins' audits. It also clarified that the Tax Anticipation Note approved last month is secured by anticipated ad valorem tax collections, not by a revised Fiscal Year 2026 budget.

The newspaper has not yet been able to review the analyses underlying either decision. Requests for the cash-flow projections, revenue forecasts and supporting financial records relied upon by the city manager, mayor and City Council were still pending as of Aug. 3.

The chronology of correspondence shows the newspapers' first confirmed financial open records request was submitted April 22, with City Attorney Tommy Coleman copied. No response was documented that day.

Georgia's Open Records Act requires an agency to produce responsive records, or respond in writing, within three business days of receiving a request. O.C.G.A. § 50-18-71.

After a week passed without contact, The Dawson News followed up

April 29 with both the city and Coleman. Coleman said he would reach out to City Manager Roxie Powell and that one of them would call back. Powell acknowledged receipt the same day, confirming the request had been received as of April 28 and apologizing for the delay, explaining she had been out of the office.

The parties met the following week on May 4. Following the discussion between The Dawson News and Powell, a revised request was submitted May 5 and accepted for processing. As of Aug. 3, the newspaper had not received responsive records to that revised request.

As additional financial questions arose during public meetings, the newspaper submitted supplemental requests seeking the documents city officials referenced in those discussions, according to verified email metadata on the following dates:

RECORDS
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The City of Dawson will move ahead with its Fiscal Year 2027 budget before completing three overdue external audits, city officials told The Dawson News on July 31, more than three months after the newspaper began requesting the financial records underlying the city's financial decisions /FILE PHOTO

Students return to the classroom as the 2026-2027 school year begins

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

DAWSON — Hallways filled with students, buses resumed their regular routes and another academic year got underway Monday as the Terrell County School System welcomed students back for the first day of the 2026-27 school year.

The return to classes places Terrell County among the earliest districts in southwest Georgia to begin the new academic year, with neighboring school systems opening over a span of more than a month.

The district serves approximately 961 students across three schools, according to most recent federal education data. Cooper-Carver Elementary School serves prekindergarten through fifth grade, Terrell Middle School serves grades 6-8, and Terrell High School serves grades 9-12. The middle and high schools share a campus on Greenwave Boulevard.

Superintendent Shereca Harvey said this year's theme, "Making Waves," reflects the district's commitment to building momentum that leads to lasting success for students.

"As we launch the 2026-2027 school year, the Terrell County School System is excited to welcome our students, families, staff and community back for a year of growth, achievement and opportunity," Harvey said.

The district's work this year will center on three priorities: improving student attendance, strengthening literacy and raising academic achievement across all grade levels.

SCHOOL YEAR
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Motif co-founders Tiffany Cox, left, and Mo Taylor react as community members and city officials welcome the opening of the women's sober living home during a ribbon-cutting celebration in Albany/KATHRYN CROCKETT

'Hope lives here' Motif sober living recovery home opens in Albany

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Just a few months after founders were racing to meet fire safety requirements and raise money for a sprinkler system, Motif officially celebrated the opening of its new women's sober living home last week with a ribbon-cutting attended by supporters, volunteers and community leaders.

For co-founders Mo Taylor and Tiffany Cox, the celebration marked the culmination of a vision that began nearly five years ago and one that she said was sustained by an outpouring of community support.

The opening follows months of preparation and fundraising after Motif announced plans to provide structured sober living for women recovering from addiction, addressing what the founders have described as a significant gap in recovery housing across southwest Georgia.

"I think the biggest thing was the sprinkler system, passing the fire inspection and raising all that money," Taylor said. "Our hurdles have been small. Everything that we have put out there and asked for has been given. Everything in this house — the house and everything in it — has been donated. Every need has been instantly met. It's insane."

During Thursday's celebration, Taylor reflected on how public perception evolved from initial uncertainty to broad community support.

MOTIF
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Terrell Academy tunes up for season with preseason scrimmage

By JOE WHITFIELD
Sports Editor

The blazing South Georgia sun, full uniforms and fans lining the fences made it feel like opening day.

The only thing missing was a game that counted.

Terrell Academy took another step toward the start of the 2026 softball season Friday, hosting Tatnall Square Academy of Macon in a preseason scrimmage at its home field. While the outcome won't appear in either team's record book, the afternoon provided exactly what Lady Eagles coach Ashley Walker wanted — a chance to evaluate his team against quality competition before the regular season begins.

"I thought our pitchers did really well today," Walker said. "I thought we did a good job of competing in the batter's box. We worked a lot of counts and put some pressure on their pitchers to throw strikes."

Terrell Academy consistently challenged Tatnall's pitching staff throughout the afternoon, showing patience at the plate while producing several well-struck balls.

Walker believes the next step is capitalizing on those opportunities in key situations.

"We hit some balls hard," he said. "We just have to do a little bit better job with our approach in different situations."

Defensively, the Lady Eagles showed flashes of solid play but also experienced the type of lapses that are common during preseason competition. A handful of errors extended innings and created additional scoring chances for Tatnall Square.

Walker, however, viewed those mistakes as teachable moments rather than long-term concerns.

"Defensively, we had innings where we gave them extra outs because of errors," he said. "Luckily, those errors were a result of our lack of focus, trying to do too much or simply slowing the game down."

The veteran coach came away encouraged because the issues he identified are correctable before the regular season begins.

"The good thing about today was all of our mistakes are things that can be corrected at practice," Walker said. "Overall, I am pleased with the way we competed."

The timing of Friday's scrimmage was especially valuable with the regular season just days away. Terrell Academy opens its 2026 campaign Tuesday with a formidable road test at defending GIAA state champion Southwest Georgia Academy in Damascus, giving the Lady Eagles little time to dwell on mistakes and every reason to sharpen their focus.

If Friday's preseason tune-up was any indication, Walker believes his team has a solid foundation. Now the challenge shifts from learning lessons in a scrimmage to putting them into practice when the games begin to count.



Michaela Zingarelli delivers a pitch during the Lady Eagles' preseason scrimmage against Tatnall Square Academy/JOE WHITFIELD



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RECORDS

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June 26 — an update was requested on Downtown Development Authority and Dawson Theater records. Coleman responded and said no additional documents had been received, though they had been requested. No additional information has been provided since.

July 13 — following council discussion of the tax anticipation note, The Dawson News requested the financial records supporting the budget and recovery presentation.

July 14 — the city transmitted notice of an emergency meeting to approve the temporary loan.

July 27 — The Dawson News followed up on digital records and inspection.

July 30 — The Dawson News requested the audit status and budget timeline, prompting the city's July 31 response.

Aug. 3 — The Dawson News again followed up on inspection rights, labor charges and the analyses supporting the tax anticipation note.

During the course of those requests, The Dawson News became

aware of reports that they had declined to pay open records fees assessed by the city. The chronology of correspondence does not support that characterization.

On July 13, the city notified The Dawson News that one request could involve approximately 1,598 pages of responsive records and estimated production costs at \$185.04.

The Dawson News did not refuse payment. The same day, the newspaper asked whether the requested records already existed electronically and whether they could be produced digitally rather than photocopied. No response to that question has been documented.

The Dawson News also asked the city to clarify inspection rights under the Open Records Act and to explain how the labor charges included in the estimate were calculated. Those questions remained pending as of Aug. 3. The distinction matters because of how the statute treats electronic records and costs.

Georgia law directs agencies to produce electronic copies of records the agency maintains electronically, and allows a requester to ask that records be produced

in the format in which the agency keeps them. Municipal budgets, audits, spreadsheets and accounting reports are commonly created and maintained in that form. The law also guarantees a right to inspect public records in person — a step that can narrow the volume of material that ultimately has to be copied.

The statute caps copying at 10 cents per page for letter- or legal-size documents. Charges for search, retrieval and redaction are limited to the prorated hourly salary of the lowest-paid full-time employee with the skill and training to do the work, and no charge may be made for the first quarter-hour.

At the maximum copying charge allowed under Georgia law, reproducing 1,598 pages would account for \$159.80 of the \$185.04 estimate, leaving approximately \$25.24 attributable to labor. The Dawson News has asked the city to explain how that labor charge was calculated because its estimate appears inconsistent with the hourly compensation reflected in the city's publicly available payroll records.

The requested records concern financial decisions already made

— or expected to be made — involving public funds, including borrowing, budget development, audits and other actions that directly affect taxpayers.

Among them are the city's delayed external audits, which provide the independent review of municipal finances relied upon by bondholders, lenders, grant agencies and residents; the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget, which will determine how public funds are allocated in the coming year; and the financial analyses supporting the Tax Anticipation Note approved by the City Council at a July emergency meeting.

The requests also seek the assumptions underlying budget presentations, cash-flow projections presented to elected officials, and records related to the Dawson Downtown Development Authority and the Dawson Theater loan default status.

Reviewing those records allows The Dawson News to verify statements made during public meetings, place government decisions in context, identify inconsistencies when they exist, and report on the city's finances using the official records on which elected officials relied rather than second-hand

descriptions or characterizations.

As of Aug. 3, the following remained unresolved:

A revised completion date for the Mauldin & Jenkins audits, and a fuller explanation of the delay.

The supporting analyses, cash-flow projections and revenue forecasts relied upon for the tax anticipation note.

The proposed Fiscal 2027 budget, the public hearing schedule and the adoption timeline.

Which responsive records exist in electronic format, and arrangements for in-person inspection.

The labor rate used to calculate open records charges.

The status of the Downtown Development Authority and Dawson Theater repayment obligation, and whether additional documents have been received.

Additional records explaining the city's financial recovery plan and the budget assumptions presented to the mayor and council.

As part of The Georgia Trust for Local News, The Dawson News and Albany Herald will continue reporting on the city's finances as records are produced, and will update readers as outstanding requests are fulfilled.

SCHOOL YEAR

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Harvey said the school system is aiming for at least 90% of students to attend school regularly, emphasizing that "students must be present to learn." The district is also placing renewed emphasis on early literacy, with a goal of increasing the percentage of third-grade students reading on or above grade level by the end of the school year through targeted instruction, intervention and family engagement.

In addition, Harvey said the district will continue investing in high-quality instruction, professional development for educators and data-driven decision-making while expanding college and career readiness opportunities and maintaining safe, supportive learning environments.

"Our theme, 'Making Waves,' is about creating positive change that moves our students, schools and community forward," Harvey said. "Every student matters, every day counts, and every success

builds momentum for the future."

Students returned to classrooms Monday following the summer break, beginning a school year that will include instruction, athletics, extracurricular activities and state testing before concluding next spring.

Terrell County was one of at least a dozen Georgia school systems opening Monday, according to a regional roundup. Dougherty County Schools, Thomasville City Schools, Tift County Schools, Worth County Schools, Randolph County Schools, Stewart County Schools, Quitman County Schools, Miller County Schools, Lanier County Schools, Clinch County Schools, Clay County School District, Decatur County Schools and Valdosta City Schools also welcomed students back Monday.

Elsewhere in southwest Georgia, the academic calendar remains staggered. Lee County Schools are scheduled to begin classes Wednesday, while Sumter County Schools opened July 30, making it one of the first districts

in the region to return. Webster County Schools have one of the state's latest opening dates and are scheduled to begin Sept. 8.

Private school students in Dawson will return later this week. Terrell Academy is scheduled to begin its school year Friday with a half-day session, according to the school's published calendar.

Like districts across Georgia, Terrell County's opening week is expected to focus on establishing classroom routines, reviewing school procedures, distributing schedules and preparing students for a full year of instruction before regular academic pacing begins.

Federal education data lists approximately 198.5 full-time equivalent employees working throughout the district during the 2025-26 school year, equating to roughly one employee for every five students.

Terrell County continues to operate as a Georgia charter school system, a designation that provides districts greater flexibility in areas such as scheduling, bud-

geting and instructional programming in exchange for meeting performance goals established through a charter agreement with the state.

Under the district's most recently adopted calendar, students attend 177 instructional days. Employees on 190-day contracts are scheduled to work 190 total days, including pre-planning and post-planning activities that occur before and after students are in the classroom.

The district serves a student population with significant economic needs. Federal data compiled by U.S. News & World Report indicate approximately 71% of students qualify as economically disadvantaged, while the student body is reported as entirely minority. Those demographics influence both federal Title I funding and portions of Georgia's Quality Basic Education funding formula, which allocates additional resources based on student characteristics and enrollment.

Enrollment remains an im-

portant factor for rural districts across southwest Georgia. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates Terrell County's population declined from 9,185 residents in 2020 to approximately 8,656 residents in 2025, a decrease of about 6%. Long-term population trends often affect school enrollment, which in turn influences state funding calculations.

Earlier this summer, the Terrell County Board of Education adopted its Fiscal Year 2027 budget. Later this summer, the board is expected to establish the district's property tax millage rate following Georgia's required public hearing process if the proposed rate exceeds the calculated rollback rate.

Statewide enrollment figures for the 2026-27 school year are expected to be released by the Georgia Department of Education later this fall, providing one of the first comprehensive snapshots of student attendance trends across Georgia following the opening weeks of school.

Harris has Eagles focused on toughness

By JOE WHITFIELD

Sports Editor

Jack Harris has coached football long enough to know winning games doesn't begin on Friday nights. It starts months earlier, long before the lights come on. For Terrell Academy, that process began in the weight room. "The stronger we are, the faster we are," Harris said. "The better we are, the more confidence we have."

After guiding the Eagles through a 4-7 season in his first year after retiring from Terrell County High School, Harris identified one issue that affected nearly everything else. His team simply wasn't strong enough.

The Eagles were forced to shuffle lineups throughout last season after approximately 30 players missed at least one game because of injuries. At times, Harris had little choice but to rely on backups and players learning unfamiliar positions.

"We played hard," Harris said. "But we just couldn't overcome those kinds of problems."

Rather than dwell on last season's setbacks, Harris challenged his players to change the program's mentality. The message has been consistent throughout the summer. "I want you better tomorrow than you were today, and better today than you were yesterday."

It's a philosophy Harris credits to legendary Alabama coach Bear Bryant, and one he believes has taken root inside the Eagles' locker room. "Our seniors have really taken ownership," Harris said. "They've done a great job holding each other accountable. The older kids are showing the younger kids what work ethic and commitment look like."

That accountability has carried over into offseason workouts. Harris praised his players for attacking the weight room all summer, saying the gains extend well beyond adding muscle.

"The weight room builds confidence, too," he said. "It's the physical part, but it's also the mental part. We've got to have the mindset that we're going to be as tough as we can possibly be."

Terrell enters preseason practice with 53 players on the roster, including a large senior class and sever-

al newcomers experiencing varsity football for the first time.

"I love where we are right now," Harris said. "We're still climbing the hill, but we've got our foot in the door."

Competition has been one of the biggest differences. Several positions remain unsettled, something Harris believes benefits everyone. "Iron sharpens iron," he said. "Competition drives athletes."

The increased depth has also allowed Harris to limit many offensive linemen to one side of the ball, a luxury smaller schools rarely enjoy. That should help keep players fresher as the season progresses.

"We're more athletic than we were last year," Harris said. "And we've got kids pushing each other every day."

The Eagles won't have long to wait before seeing how far they've come. Terrell Academy will host a preseason jamboree on Friday, Aug. 7, beginning at 5:30 p.m., with the Eagles facing Frederica Academy in a controlled scrimmage. Southwest Georgia Academy and Calvary Christian will play the second scrimmage.

For Harris, the evening won't be about the scoreboard. It will be about measuring the progress made since the final whistle of last season.

"We're excited," Harris said. "Our kids have worked extremely hard. They've bought into what we're trying to build, and now we just have to keep getting better every week."



Housing Authority of the City of Dawson

553 Lemon Street NE
P.O. Box 724
Dawson, GA 39842-0724
dawsonha@windstream.net

Phone (229) 995-2675
Fax (229) 995-3790

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED

2nd & 3rd Thursday of each month between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm

Documents needed in order to complete application (No Exceptions):

- Birth Certificates for each household member
- Social Security cards for each household member
- Picture ID for each household member 18 years of age and up
- Proof of Income

Please call us if you have any questions!

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Housing Authority of the City of Dawson, in compliance with applicable U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, has prepared a draft version of a Housing Agency Plan outlining the Mission, Goals, Objectives, and Policies and Procedures that will be used as guidance in the operation of all Public Housing developments within our jurisdiction for the next year.

The Housing Authority will be conducting a public hearing at the office of the Authority, located at 553 Lemon Street, NE, Dawson, GA 39842 on Tuesday, August 11, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

This comprehensive plan will be coordinated with all residents of public housing and contains information that will be discussed at the public hearing. The Housing Authority encourages residents, citizens, representatives from public agencies and other interested parties to make comments on the draft plan. The Plan will be available for review during normal business hours at the office of the Authority, 553 Lemon Street, NE, from June 25, 2026 until the hearing.

MOTIF

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"I think they envisioned something more clinical, drug addicts hanging out in the driveway," she said. "This house was built on love. It was built with intention. It was built by many hands. It wasn't only mine and Tiffany's. Really, the community built it. We're the connectors."

The home has not yet welcomed its first resident, though Taylor said interest has been strong as organizers work to find women who are ready to commit fully to recovery.

"We're looking for people who are truly looking to set themselves up for the future," she said. "People who know they were at the end of the road. There's nowhere to go but forward. We have a zero-tolerance policy because we're not playing. We get them for a year if they stay a year. It's not a long time, but it can be done. It takes commitment, and it takes discipline. We're just the vessels. They have to do the work."

Unlike a treatment facility, Motif is designed as a sober living environment where residents can continue rebuilding their lives while following a structured program centered on accountability, stability and long-term recovery. Residents also will have opportunities to explore holistic and therapeutic practices that aid in their progress.

The home's design was also intentional, Taylor said, with founders hoping the environment itself communicates dignity to the women who will live there.

"I think it's going to make the women feel special," she said. "Some of them, where they came from, they're not going to know this. This house was built with intention."

The ribbon-cutting concluded with remarks from Taylor, who became emo-

tional while thanking supporters for helping transform an idea into reality.

"Almost five years ago, God placed this vision in our hearts," she said. "We just wanted to open a safe place for women to come and find healing in their addiction. We didn't know it was going to look this good. The outpouring of love from you guys just blows us away every time."

Taylor said both she and Cox view the home as an opportunity to help other women find the same path they experienced.

"Our mission is clear: Go back into the fire and show others the way," she said. "Moments like this remind me there's hope in this community. There's hope in this city, and hope lives here at Motif."

Following the ceremony, attendees gathered for a community prayer asking for the home to become a place of transformation for the women who will soon walk through its doors.

Applications, referrals, volunteer opportunities and donations can all be made through Motif Sober Living's website www.motifsoberliving.org. The organization accepts inquiries from prospective residents, treatment providers, families and community members interested in supporting its mission.

DID YOU KNOW...?

When were airbags first put in U.S. automobiles?

By JACK BAGLEY
Georgia Trust For Local News

August! The hottest month of the year (in most places, anyway). And yet, it's also the month in which most kids go back to school. That, in itself, isn't much of a problem. The problem comes up when the systems get the electric bills for all the air conditioning they have to use. If schools didn't start in the hottest month of the year, the bills wouldn't be so high. Duh. That's your public service thought for the week. Now, on to the trivia!

Did you know...
... Leonardo da Vinci needed ten years to paint the Mona Lisa? Da Vinci (1452-1519) completed the work in 1503, having spent ten years working on the portrait of Lisa del Giocondo (1479-1542). It was one of the first paintings to depict its subject in front of an imaginary background landscape. Additional trivia note: The Mona Lisa is not painted on canvas, but rather on a plank of poplar wood. The painting also receives fan mail each year, and under French heritage law it cannot be bought or sold, despite being literally priceless. (That smile ... that smile.)

... a professional wrestling organization had to change its name because of an animal-rights group? The World-Wide Wrestling Federation (WWWF) was founded in 1952 by two promoters, Roderick "Jess" McMahon (1882-1954) and Joseph "Toots" Mondt (1894-1976). For marketing purposes, the name was shortened to World Wrestling Federation (WWF) in 1979 – almost immediately catching the ire of a group that was already using those initials, the World Wildlife Fund. The animal-rights organization sued over the use of the WWF trademark, and in 2002 the wrestling organization lost. Forced to rebrand itself, the company became World Wrestling Entertainment, or WWE, and removed any trace of the old branding. (That's called laying the smack down.)

... your brain makes decisions seven seconds before you are aware of it? In an article in Wired magazine in 2008, it was reported that scientists using scanning devices on the brains of volunteers noted brain activity seven seconds before the subject announced what the decision to be made was. Those results were common across all of the test subjects. (They didn't scan my brain. It makes decisions I'm not ever aware of.)

... a popular game show host was once on three different shows at the same time? On February 4, 1991, Alex Trebek (1940-2020) took over as the host of the NBC revival of To Tell the Truth. At the same time, Trebek was hosting Classic Concentration on the same network and Jeopardy! in syndication. It was the first time in television history that one host had three different game shows on the air at the same time. (Alex always was something of an over-achiever.)

... airbags are not a new thing in the automotive industry? Autos in the U.S. began being equipped with the air cushion restraint system, or airbags, beginning in the mid- to late 1980s. But the technology wasn't new – it was at least a decade old by then. The first vehicle equipped with airbags was a limited production 1973 Chevrolet Impala. General Motors produced 1,000 of the cars with the more primitive airbag system that protected front seat occupants and only worked in front-end collisions. The option began to be introduced in 1974 on Buicks, Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles. It wasn't until 1998 that airbags were made mandatory in all U.S. automobiles. (Thanks to Mason for the tip!)

... a ride at Coney Island was able to be operated on Sundays during New York's strict law period requiring Sunday closing? In the first part of the 20th Century, the Dreamland amusement park at Coney Island had a water ride called Hell Gate, which took riders on an imaginary ride through ... well, through the opposite of Heaven. Because it was a ride with a religious nature of sorts, the park was allowed to operate it during a period when the laws of the state would otherwise require it to be closed.

... the parade scene in 1986's Ferris Bueller's Day Off was not staged? Director John Hughes (1950-2009) had a scene in the film where Bueler, played by Matthew Broderick (born 1962), jumps on a parade float in Chicago and sings to the crowd. But rather than go to the expense of staging a movie parade and closing off streets in the Windy City, Hughes just found a parade that was taking place during filming and eased a float into it, with Broderick lip-synching to a Beatles song. Additional trivia note: The actual parade provided long shots of the float and the real people of Chicago. Close-ups of Broderick and the others on the float were filmed over the course of additional days. (Everybody loves a parade.)

... today's dirty politics is nothing compared to the early years of the United States? Consider, for instance, the presidential campaign of 1796. Incumbent Vice President John Adams (1735-1826) was taking on Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) to succeed George Washington (1732-1799), who was stepping down after serving two terms. The two men held nothing back in attacking each other. Adams' campaign actually put out a statement saying if Jefferson was elected, "murder, robbery, rape, adultery and incest will be openly taught and practiced." Jefferson's side didn't hold anything back either, accusing Adams of wanting to be a king, not a president. Jefferson also made fun of Adams' weight, referring to him as "His Rotundity." The two men eventually resolved their differences, became great friends, and actually died just hours apart on the same day – July 4, 1826. (Those two make today's politicians seem pretty tame, don't they?)

Now... you know!

Poison ivy, dish soap and a cold shower

I grew up believing that I was one of the lucky few that was not allergic to poison ivy.

Countless days of my youth had been spent rambling through forests and fields. My adolescence and young adult life had me working in yards and gardens. Through that time, never once had I experienced the itchy, oozing rash associated with this toxic plant.

Not that I ever made purposeful contact with it, but it never worried when I saw a sprig climbing up the trunk of a tree or the side of a house. That is, until I found out I am very much allergic to poison ivy. And I found out the hard way, of course.

Back when I became a first-time homeowner, I was eager to make my own yard, which was bought as an overgrown mess, resemble the fine landscaped properties where I earned my living. After an afternoon of heavy brush removal, the itching began.

Now, if you've any experience with poison ivy, you know the sensation I am trying to describe. It is one that few words can accurately depict. The feeling goes far beyond an itch. An itch can be alleviated. This takes over your very being and encompasses your thoughts. At its worst you will even entertain an amputation. In the 1850s that was the primary solution for a gunshot wound, snake bite or toxic plant exposure.

Then comes the swelling and the oozing. Which is, quite frankly, as disgusting as it sounds. To cut a long story short, my first real encounter with poison ivy concluded with two miserable weeks of not



THE NEW SOUTHERN DAD

By KYLE DOMINY

trying to scratch at my arms, which were more leaky welts than human limbs.

I thought I had it bad, but I later met an unfortunate soul who inhaled the smoke of burning poison ivy. Look before you burn, folks.

Once healed, I had to overcome my fear quickly, because my spouse wasn't going to live in a house with a half-cleaned yard.

There are numerous over-the-counter medications, ointments and washes marketed to treat or even prevent poison ivy reactions. They can be expensive, of course, but through a little trial and error and logical thinking, I developed my own remedy. Unfortunately, I cannot sell it myself, because I used an existing product, so I'll share my method with you now: Dish soap and a cold shower.

Allow me to explain. Dish soap breaks down grease and oil, right? It's the oil of poison ivy plant that causes a reaction, so dish soap should safely remove the toxins. Wash in cold water, because the temperature contracts human skin pores, blocking the oils from breaching the organ meant to protect the body. I'm surely not the first person to produce this theory, but I'm quite proud of myself because I've had no poison ivy rashes since.

I've also developed a particularly good eye at spotting poison ivy. That is until the other day. This dreaded vine has encroached my territory again, discovered the hard way of course, hitting a patch with the weed eater, undoubtedly creating a shower of potent plant oil.

The dish soap will be kept outside of the kitchen until further notice.

COUCH THEATER



Halle Bailey, left, and Rege-Jean Page star in "You, Me & Tuscany"/Photo courtesy of MovieStillsDB

By DEMI TAVERAS
King Features

The Shards (TV-MA)

Teen drama lovers, you continue to be fed this year, and this latest thriller series hails from none other than creator Ryan Murphy ("The Beauty") and screenwriter Bret Easton Ellis ("American Psycho"). This series is based on Ellis' semi-autobiographical novel from 2023 and takes place in 1981 Los Angeles. Igby Rigney ("Devil in Disguise: John Wayne Gacy") lands his first main role in a TV series as he plays 17-year-old Ellis during his senior year of prep school. He feels like he's on top of the world with his girlfriend and group of friends, until the arrival of a new student named Robert (Homer Gere) shakes up their dynamic. Simultaneous with Robert's arrival is the unexpected presence of a serial killer named the Trawler, who begins abducting people across the city. The first two episodes premiere on Aug. 5. (Hulu)

The Devil's Mouth (PG-13)

Speaking of teen dramas, this survival thriller film features a cast with a couple of actors who got their big breaks in one! Lana Condor ("To All the Boys") and Gavin Casalegno ("The Summer I Turned Pretty") star alongside Kathryn Newton ("Ready or Not 2") as a group of friends who wish

to have one last adventure together in Thailand before graduating from college. So, the friends decide to sign up for a guided swim tour through a cave system called The Devil's Mouth. All is well upon entering the cave, until they probe deeper into the cave and discover a deadly bull shark. With it out for blood, these amateur cave dwellers will have to play the longest waiting game of their lives to see if they can escape this hell in one piece. Out now. (Amazon Prime Video)

You, Me & Tuscany (PG-13)

Halle Bailey ("The Color Purple") and Rege-Jean Page ("Black Bag") lead this oh-so-romantic comedy film premiering on Aug. 7. Bailey plays Anna, a young chef who put her culinary aspirations on hold after the death of her mother. After spending the night with an Italian man named Matteo (Lorenzo de Moor), who mistakenly tells her about his empty villa in Tuscany, Anna impulsively decides to fly to Tuscany and stay in Matteo's villa without his knowledge. Once there, she immediately gets caught by his relatives and, to save face, states that she's Matteo's fiancée. While this appeases his family momentarily, she also encounters Matteo's cousin, Michael (Page), and feels an intense romantic connection with him. Talk about trouble in Tuscany! (Peacock)

NOTICE OF SEALED BIDS
CITY HALL
142 EAST MAIN STREET
PARROTT, GA 39877

The City of Parrott would like to extend drainage pipe by 10 feet under Oak Street in Parrott, Ga.

All interesting parties please submit your bid by 5:00 P.M. Monday **August 31, 2026**. You will be notified at that time of who has won the bid. If you have any additional questions, or concerns please call 229-623-2635.

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Ben Ayers

Benjamin Campbell Ayers is the sort of guy who has a measured style that keeps him not too far right or left of center, with an ability to relate to those who lean to the extreme in either case.

He has a distinguished resume, which began in Heflin, Alabama, where he was born and raised, after which he matriculated at the University of Alabama. Underscoring academic excellence, he was a very good student who had aspiration for advanced academic opportunity. That led him to a master's degree in Tuscaloosa and then a doctorate at the University of Texas.

Having spent the last 30 years at the University of Georgia, he had become



LORAN SMITH

a campus staple and as entrenched as the Arch, the Chapel Bell, and the hedges of Sanford Stadium.

This means that he has had an exposure from assistant professor to department head to dean to provost, connecting him with faculty, students, and alumni – a versatile academician who also has the common

touch. His old-shoe fit has enabled him to grow, excel, and lead wherever he has been, which has enabled him to manage issues and problem solve with a visionary inclination that will serve him well in his new role as President of Clemson University, 79 miles east of Athens. He will identify well with the constituents in this burg where many of its inhabitants are in touch with the land, keen on hunting and fishing like what he was familiar with in Tuscaloosa and Athens.

The locals will see him at the grocery store and around town, patronizing local establishments (maybe not the Esso Club), and at the golf course—but not right away. He has too much on his plate for that at this point, but he does enjoy the game.

He already knows about the tradition of Howard's Rock, which the Tiger players rub for good luck before they cascade down the slope to Frank Howard Field on gameday.

His biggest problem will be his wardrobe. He is leaving one that was tastefully overwhelmed with red, which now will transition to orange. In Clemson he will be a Damn Good Tiger. It begins with the fact that Ayers really does enjoy college football, but with his background, he knows from time spent in Tuscaloosa, Austin, and Athens, how important football is to the community and the alumni.

With a longtime friendship with Coach Howard, I shared a few with Ben over dinner recently. A favorite had to do with Clemson defeating Miami in the 1951 Orange Bowl, 15-14, which

brought ultimate euphoria to Pickens County.

Coach Howard was the toast of the state and knew he would be considered for a big raise. While I don't remember all the facts, I know that he shocked all state officials when the game ended in Miami, he became a "ten-thousand-dollar man."

A few days later, he was told that state law dictated that no state employee was allowed to make more than the governor who was making something like \$7,500. Howard's replay was, "Well, y'all better change the law."

When the dust settled, the law was changed. Coach Howard got his \$10,000, but every president of every four-year institution and the governor all got raises for \$10,000 or more which brought about this exclamation from Coach Howard: "That's one time those so-

and-so's didn't think there was too much emphasis on football."

As a UGA alumnus, it was enriching to get to know Ben and his wife, Marilyn, appreciating their support of the community. There is something special about the Ayerses. They love the small college-town atmosphere; they are advocates of the power of education for our nation and give of themselves to town and gown compatibility.

They will be enthusiastic fans of Clemson and its constituency, and I am sure Ben will reside in the forefront of trying to help solve the current issues with college sports. After all, he is a natural leader who is selfless and altruistic, and he is also a creative thinker.

Georgia's loss is Clemson's gain.

New school semester: Another year of education investment starts now

While "thinking" about this week's column it I did a frequent development technique, which is to scroll through my various social media channels. I can assure you this is to help get ideas on paper and in no way should be construed as procrastination.

It was a productive detour. In much of Georgia, classes begin again this week. Post after post was the bright smiles of kids on their first day of the school. Parents were quite proud to show the milestones the families were marking together.

One video reel in particular stood out, as it was a friends' daughter setting out for her first day of first grade. Though it's been more than half a century since I took that step, I can still relate to the fears of the unknown for the kid, and for the parents. It's a huge step.

I sent her dad a quick text, noting of course that I couldn't believe she's already in first grade. Watching kids instantly turn into

adults is one way we know we're getting old. I'd rather not speak about former college interns turning 40.

He let me know that she's "excited", and had met her teacher last week who seems nice. She's most looking forward to art class.

I sat with that for a moment and realized that the original topic of today's "serious" column can wait a week. Maybe more.

Instead, I'd like to linger vicariously a bit with some childlike wonder.

We're the adults. Whether the parents of these children or not, we know the trepidations and fears of sending them off into the unknown. We also have the responsibility to ensure they have an environment where they are safe, reasonably comfortable, free of distraction, and able to learn.

More than one half of our state's budget goes to education. Between two thirds and three quarters of local property tax dollars are also earmarked for local schools. In most counties one quarter of the local option sales

taxes collected are added to the pot as well. The federal government then contributes between ten and fifteen percent of total education spending in Georgia, again as a portion of the tax dollars we pay returning to local schools.

We, the adults, spend a lot, from almost every form of tax we pay at each level of taxation, for education. This isn't what is on the mind of the kids smiling for pictures today.

They want a teacher who is nice. They want a class that seems fun.

They're going to learn a lot over the next twelve years. They'll make friends. They'll find that some of the classes that seemed fun might not be. Hopefully they'll learn that a few subjects that once seemed icky are quite enjoyable.

Along the way, they'll become adults. They'll realize at some point that they're the working product of a large bureaucracy. They'll learn that there's a system that places constraints on their individual outputs

in the name of an easier to manage conformity. They'll learn that a lot of what they have to do are things they have no interest in doing.

In short, they're going to learn about life. Some lessons are great. Some are forgettable. And many will stick with us, whether good or bad.

What we as adults can and should be doing is considering how we measure these lessons, and the value they create. We tend to measure education on spending. Those who put the emphasis here always conclude the answer is "more."

We have others at the state level who are asking different questions. "How" is a good start.

The kids starting first grade today don't know about Covid learning loss. The benchmarks used that show a lot of kids didn't master reading by third grade during that shut down are now starting middle school.

Too many are behind. "Literacy" is now the rallying cry.



CHARLIE HARPER
GEORGIA POLITICS

How to fix the problem won't just require spending. It's about how we're spending it, and what tangible results need to be measured.

We're also trying to figure out how to keep kids interested in school in an era where screens are everything, answers to any question are readily available on the internet, and individual thinking is too often optional.

A second video I saw while scrolling this morning was of some guys trying

to see how many balloons lined up in a row they could pop using one throw of different implements. I immediately thought of my high school physics teacher. We learned a lot by dropping things, throwing things, and breaking things.

He walked a fine line with the school's administration. He occasionally got called into the principal's office for crossing it. Yet my classmates can remember him and some of those lessons 40 years later.

Kids like to build things and break things. Today it might be an art class. Tomorrow that creativity might morph into applied physics.

Adults need to lean in to creative destruction in education. Twelve years is two lifetimes to a first grader. It's a very short time we adults have to ensure our investments in education pay dividends later. We need to take that childlike wonder seriously as the platform for exploration and learning that it is.

Okefenokee Swamp a world heritage site, but mining threat still looms

Well, it is somewhat old news as I write this, but to those who have fought the fight, it is extremely good news. Our Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge has been officially designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It happened a couple of weeks ago at a meeting of the World Heritage Committee in Busan, South Korea.

Our Okefenokee is in good company, joining such

sites as Yellowstone National Park, the Grand Canyon, the Everglades and the Statue of Liberty, to name a few.

Experts say that being a World Heritage site should be an economic boon. Today, our Okefenokee gets some 800,000 visitors a year and a resultant \$90-plus million pumped into the local economy. With World Heritage status, those numbers could rise to some 1.5 million visitors or



DICK YARBROUGH

more in the next decade according to projections from The Conservation Fund, one of the key players in helping protect, preserve and promote our Okefenokee.

President John F. Kennedy once said, "Success has many fathers, but failure is an orphan." This effort has had a lot of daddies (and mommas.) That includes you, dear readers. Not much I have opined on over

the years has generated as much response as I received from you on the subject. It is obvious that Okefenokee is up-close-and-personal to you.

Most of the orphans are down in Charlton, Clinch and Ware counties, where our Okefenokee is located. They wanted nothing to do with UNESCO and their sinister World Heritage takeover.

Ware County even passed a resolution affirming the county's commitment that "it shall not adopt, implement or enforce any rule, regulation, policy or mandate originated by, or traceable to, the United Nations or a subsidiary entity of the United Nations which infringes upon or restricts private property rights without due process in violation of the U.S. Constitution or Georgia Constitution." Bless their hearts.

If it will make the Ware

County commission feel better, I checked on Gardiner, Montana, near the entrance to the World Heritage site Yellowstone National Park, and they seemed to be doing just fine. No U.N. takeover there. Same with Ochopee in the Everglades. No infringement on property rights reported. Tusayan at the entrance to the Grand Canyon seems to be thriving. If the U.N. is imposing its agenda on the town, they seem blissfully unaware. The Statue of Liberty is still proudly holding her torch on Liberty Island in New York. This is closing the barndoor after the horse has bolted advice, but you and your anti-UNESCO friends might have done your homework first before issuing such poppycock statements.

The anti-World Heritage propaganda wasn't about the United Nations now being able to dictate the education curriculum in Clinch County schools. It was about the designation of our Okefenokee as a World Heritage site making it more difficult for the local timber barons to lease their land on or near Trail Ridge to mine for titanium dioxide so that the world never runs out of toothpaste whiteners.

Roughly 8,000-acres next to the refuge, the trail acts as a dam, creating a huge rainwater basin. Both pro-mining and anti-mining forces have produced studies on the potential impact of mining Trail Ridge, good and bad. I will go with Charles Seabrook, the

longtime environmental writer for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, whose opinions I highly respect, "Without Trail Ridge, the Okefenokee would cease to exist in its present magnificence." In other words, leave Trail Ridge alone. We can always whiten our teeth with baking soda.

It is important to pause here and say while our Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is now officially a World Heritage site, the mining issue is a still and present danger. It hasn't gone away and likely won't until legislation is passed to permanently ban future surface mining. Past efforts to get even a moratorium couldn't get out of a legislative committee, despite bipartisan support.

Gov. Brian Kemp has remained largely silent on the issue, although he hailed the UNESCO decision "a fitting recognition for the Okefenokee that will further strengthen rural communities that surround it."

Whether Rick Jackson or Keisha Lance Bottoms becomes our 84th governor in November, in my opinion, the optics favor a fresh look at a ban on mining. Jackson doesn't need the timber barons' money and Bottoms likely doesn't want it. Mining opponents are energized and ready to make their voices heard. The silliness about a United Nations takeover is just that – silliness. Our Okefenokee is now a World Heritage site. Pogo the Possum says thank you.

THE DAWSON NEWS

GEORGIA TRUST

— for Local News —

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Legals

D-090
NOTICE OF DETOUR APPROVAL
P. I. 0018252 TERRELL COUNTY
Notice is hereby given that the Georgia Department of Transportation has approved the use of and the routing of a detour for this project.
The date of detour approval is: June 29, 2026
The proposed project PI 0018252 is located on Judge Laye Road at Brantley Creek approximately 1.7 miles west of Sasser in Terrell County, Georgia. The existing bridge will be replaced with a new bridge 70 feet long and 30 feet wide, with one lane in each direction. The road will have a speed limit of 35 mph. Approximately 150 feet of the dirt road on both sides of the bridge will be paved, the remainder will be gravel. The existing bridge is currently closed to traffic. An existing detour is in place that will remain in place during construction, with no extra travel time. The total project length is approximately 0.1 miles. The expected time for construction and the detour is approximately 12 months.
The designated detour route will utilize Sasser Herod Road, Bill Whitaker Road and State Route 55 to maintain traffic flow and minimize disruptions. The total length of the detour route is approximately 5.5 miles, with a net additional travel distance of 2.3 miles. Drawings or maps or plats of the proposed project, as approved, are on file and are available for public inspection at the Georgia Department of Transportation: For information or questions regarding the Detour Route, please contact:
Dennis Thacker Area Manager District 4, Area 5
dthacker@dot.ga.gov
2060 Newton Road
Albany, GA 31701
(229) 430-4198
July 16, 23, 30, August 6, 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):
August 6, 13, 20, 27, 2026

HERE'S A TIP!

By JOANN DERSON
King Features

* I have a pair of pants I wear to garden in. The knees wore out, naturally, and I went to sew patches on the knees. I left the top of the patch open, and when needed I slip a piece of foam rubber in the knee. Magical knee pads!
* Are you great behind the lens of your camera and love animals? Consider donating your time to your local animal shelter as a pet photographer. Showing Mittens and Fido off to their best advantage can mean the difference in finding a forever home. Check with your local rescue organizations, too!
* To clean your tarnished silver jewelry, simply line a tray or shallow bowl with aluminum foil, lay the pieces on the foil and fill with a hot water and detergent solution (not bleach-containing). You may also use baking soda and hot water. Swish and allow the tarnish to transfer to the foil. Use a soft cloth to dry.
* If your windshield or back window fogs over, try this trick, borrowed from the bathroom: Spread regular shaving cream over the window and wipe clean with a cloth. Buff off any streaks with newspaper. This will last a good while!
* Now is the time to tighten your cane-bottomed chairs. Flip the chair over, then soak the cane with hot water and allow it to dry fully in the sun.
* If your plastic wrap gets sticky, place it in the refrigerator. You can even store it there to keep it easy to unroll.

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
August 6, 13, 20, 27, 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 FRANKLIN 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

D-095
IN THE PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF TERRELL
STATE OF GEORGIA
IN RE: TIMOTHY DEWAYNE BARTLOW, DECEASED
ESTATE NO: 4140
PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE
To: ALL UNKNOWN HEIRS, INTERESTED PARTIES, CREDITORS
WENDY GLEATON has petitioned to be appointed **Administrator** of the estate of **TIMOTHY DEWAYNE BARTHLOW** 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. 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
July 16, 23, 30, August 6, 2026

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-101**

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-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

Georgia receives a perfect rating for election integrity

STAFF REPORTS

ATLANTA – Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger has announced that Georgia earned a perfect five-star rating in the R Street Institute's inaugural Election Policy 50-State Scorecard.
Georgia was one of only four states in the nation to receive the report's highest overall rating and the only state to earn a perfect score in the report's supplemental policy category – validating. Terrell County Elections Supervisor Carolyn Williams said she'd received a letter from the secretary of state touting the state's recent election success.
"Below is a letter I received from (the) Secretary of State," Williams said in an email to The Dawson News. "Georgia has earned a perfect five-star rating in the R Street Institute's inaugural Election Policy 50 State Scorecard. Georgia was one of only four states in the nation to receive the report's highest overall rating and the only state to earn a perfect score in the report's supplemental policy category.
"Georgia truly leads the Nation."
In his letter, Raffensperger wrote: "Georgia has the highest standards for election administration because we don't chase headlines — we deliver results. Our elections are secure, accessible, transparent and accountable.
"While others make excuses or score political points, Georgia has invested in modern technology, clean voter rolls, rigorous audits, and professional election administration that voters trust."
The R Street Institute evaluated every state's election laws and procedures across six key areas: voter eligibility, voter registration, voter list maintenance, voter identification, early voting, tabulation and post-election audits.
Since 2019, Georgia has: Maintained one of the nation's cleanest and most accurate voter registration rolls through aggressive list maintenance and regular audits. Expanded opportunities for Georgians to vote early while preserving strong security measures. Implemented statewide



Carolyn Williams

risk-limiting audits and comprehensive post-election audit procedures that have become a national model. Modernized election systems to improve transparency, accuracy, and efficiency.
Increased public confidence by making election processes more open, verifiable and accountable.
"Good election administration isn't about partisan talking points — it's about earning the confidence of every legal voter," Raffensperger said. "This independent recognition confirms that Georgia has achieved what every state should strive for: elections that are both easy to vote in and hard to cheat."
The R Street Institute noted that states receiving the highest ratings successfully balance voter access with strong safeguards that protect election integrity. Georgia's perfect rating reflects policies that ensure election security while minimizing unnecessary burdens on voters and election officials.
"The Georgia Standards are maintained by our county election directors, poll workers, and the dedicated professionals who administer our elections with integrity every single day," Raffensperger said. "Their commitment to excellence has made Georgia the national leader in election administration."
The R Street Institute's Election Policy 50-State Scorecard evaluated election policies in effect as of June 15, measuring states against objective standards designed to promote secure, transparent and trustworthy elections.



SAVING PAYS



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BARNEY GOOGLE AND SWEET SMITH

HERE'S ALL TH' STUFF I BORRIED FROM YA, LO !! AN' HERE'S ALL TH' STUFF I BORRIED FROM YOU, ELVINEY !! AN' DON'T FERGIT-- I WANT MY WHEELBARROW BACK !!

HEY, ELVINEY, HOW D'YA SPELL "CONTINENT"? C...O...N...

HEY, ELVINEY, HOW D'YA SPELL "GALVANIZE"? G...A...L...

HEY, ELVINEY, HOW D'YA SPELL "METEOR"? M...E...T...

HEY, ELVINEY... ARRG!!

HEY, ELVINEY, WHEN YA GONNA RETURN THAT DADBURN DICTIONARY YA BORRIED FROM US ?!

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

IT'S NICE OUT!!

I THINK I'LL LEAVE IT OUT.

Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

MY DOCTOR TELLS ME I'M OVERWEIGHT. I PREFER TO THINK I'M CALORICALLY UPSCALE.

GRIN & BEAR IT

It's about three gallons thataway.

S I S O A S O P H O G
A V E E E H S I E
X E L A I O I A R J U
L I M E D G E I F R
T S A R E U D E S E E
W E A C T A O V
F L A M E
L O D A P A V A
R A M A E E L T B A
A G E A L I C E
G E D F I D U C I A R Y
I M O L A D U A H U L
C O M A H A L A M E S

Solution time: 26 mins.

Answers

King Crossword

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

E S U F E D
E E
F B M A
F A N
E G
K N U B E D
A E E L
R F F N O
E O M
S N I R A B E D O C E D
T E D
D E C A Y

"DE" WORDS

MAGIC MAZE ANSWERS

MAGIC MAZE

"DE" WORDS

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: TO UNFREEZE

Debark Debug Decry Defend
Debarring Debunk Defame Defuse
Debone Decay Defang Demolish
Debrief Decode Defeat

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

WE NEED TO GIVE UP AND ADMIT WE'RE NOT SMART ENOUGH TO FIGURE THIS OUT. MAYBE THE NEIGHBOR KID CAN COME OVER AND HELP.

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Line in sidewalk is moved. 5. Man is thinner. 6. Briefcase is larger missing. 3. Rear car window is smaller. 4. House window is moved.

It pays to advertise in your local paper!