

Council uninformed as state freezes sewer loans, audits incomplete

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Neither of the two state loans helping to pay for this city's \$10.2 million sewer overhaul has covered any construction at the wastewater treatment plant, the state lending agency told The Albany Herald last week — an account that does not explain a \$109,886 charge city officials told the City Council in August would be paid with loan money.

Both loans have been frozen since at least mid-August because Dawson has not completed its annual audits. The City Council has not been told that in any public meeting record The Albany Her-

ald/Dawson News has reviewed.

The council meets Thursday, preceded by a 5:30 p.m. work session. On the agenda is a consent order update, an ordinance adopting a budget for a fiscal year that began Sept. 1 and a second ordinance authorizing spending past the end of the year that ended Aug. 31. Georgia law requires local governments to adopt a balanced budget before the fiscal year begins.

State records released to The Herald also refer to a second Dawson water project — a "Drinking Water" project separate from the sewer work — that appears in no city record The Herald has ob-

tained and has not been described to the council or the public since at least February.

What the lender says it paid for

The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, which holds both loans, said in written answers Sept. 3 that the larger of the two, tied to the treatment plant, "has only drawn engineering funds." It said the second loan pays a different contractor for sewer line work and "is not co-funded with any other funding source."

Between them, the two statements account for no payment to Southern Champion Construc-

tion, the Savannah firm rebuilding the plant under a \$7.54 million contract. At an Aug. 13 work session, the council was told a change order adding two floating aerators at the plant "will be funded through GEFA in the amount of \$109,886." The change order is not on Thursday's agenda.

GEFA has disbursed \$765,111.14 on the plant loan since August 2022 across seven requisitions, all of it engineering. On the sewer loan, it has disbursed \$1,214,300.79 across four requisitions covering eight pay applications from K-Dug Corp., the Patterson company doing the sewer line work under a contract bid at

\$1,239,018.51.

A fifth sewer requisition, for \$319,930, has been submitted but not paid. Counting it, the city has asked for \$1,534,230.79 against a contract of about \$1.24 million — roughly \$295,000 more than the contract's bid value. GEFA has not said whether that contract has been increased.

Because the loans have not paid for plant construction, that work has been financed by the \$5.82 million federal grant administered by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. All grant money must be spent by Oct. 31. At least

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Calvary Baptist Church hosts First Responders' Appreciation meal

SPECIAL TO THE DAWSON NEWS

On Saturday, Sept. 5, Calvary Baptist Church in Dawson, Ga. hosted a First Responders' Appreciation meal. Pastor Alan Sanders reported this is the third year they have hosted a meal for area first responders, "Our first year was a learning experience as far as getting the word out to all of the agencies in our area. When we sat down and started thinking, we found we have quite a few in our area." He went on to report that this year, they invited Dawson City Fire Department and Police Department, our EMS services, Terrell County Sheriff's Department, Terrell County Fire Department, Georgia State Patrol, Georgia Forestry, Georgia DNR law enforcement, and Air Evac (life flight).

Pastor Sanders went on to report that Calvary Baptist cooked hamburgers, hotdogs, and all of the trimmings to go along, as well as a gift bag for every attendee. Desserts, drinks, and boiled peanuts rounded out the offerings for this meal. First responders could eat at the church or take a to-go plate if needed. "We love our area first responders, and we understand that often they see and deal with tragic scenarios in their line of work. We have been taking them cookies every year around Christmas, and a few years back, we decided that we wanted to do more for them." From that discussion, the idea of a First Responders' meal was born and has become an annual event. This year's event saw around 40 first responders come through.

"The people of Calvary Baptist Church are thankful for the services that our area first responders provide for all of our community. We want them to know, in a tangible way, that we love them and even more than that, God loves them", said Pastor Sanders.

Calvary Baptist Church is located at 674 West Lee Street and has services Sunday morning at 11 a.m. and on Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m.

Calvary Baptist Church hosted an appreciation meal for first responders on Saturday, Sept. 5
/SYDNEY SANDERS, Special Photos



Across the county line, foster care rates reveal a stark divide

By KATHRYN CROCKETT
Staff Reporter

Foster care is intended to be temporary, with reunification the goal whenever children can safely return home and doing so is in their best interest.

But across the county line separating Terrell and Lee, the likelihood of entering foster care looked markedly different last year.

Nine children entered foster care in Lee County. Eight did so in Terrell.

Once population is taken into account, Terrell County's removal rate was 44.3 per 10,000 children — more than four times Lee County's rate of 10.3.

The economic divide is similarly stark. About one-third of Terrell County residents live below the poverty line, compared with about 6% in Lee County. Median household income is roughly \$46,000 in Terrell and \$89,000 in Lee.

Those numbers do not prove poverty caused any individual child to enter foster care. Terrell's eight cases are too few to establish a trend or explain why any particular child was removed.

But they do, however, raise a broader question for one of southwest Georgia's poorest counties:

How often do the conditions associated with poverty — particularly housing and access to services — make it harder to keep families together or reunite them after a removal?

The county figures come from federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System data compiled by Fostering Court Improvement. Among Terrell County's eight removals between April 2025 and March 2026, caretaker inability to cope was cited in four cases, abandonment in three, child behavior in two and neglect in one. More than one reason can be recorded for the same child.

Inadequate housing was not directly cited in those eight cases. But housing has become an increasingly visible issue both in Georgia's foster care system and in Dawson itself.

Dawson's own long-range planning documents identify the need for more safe, affordable housing even as hundreds of housing units sit vacant and uninhabitable.

The city's 2024 comprehensive plan counted 2,054 housing units in Dawson, with more than a quarter vacant. The plan also identified substandard and dilapidated housing in need of rehabilitation and called for efforts to expand affordable housing for low- and moderate-in-



An abandoned home in Dawson sits overgrown and deteriorating, one example of the city's ongoing struggle with blighted and unusable housing. Dawson's long-range planning documents identify both a high vacancy rate and a need for more safe, affordable housing/KATHRYN CROCKETT

come residents.

More than two-thirds of the city's occupied homes were rentals. Just a simple drive around the county seat proves that a vacant house, however, is not necessarily a house a family can move into. Some properties are deteriorated, unavailable for rent or require substantial repairs before they can be safely occupied.

Dawson officials and members of the public alike have increasingly turned their attention to that prob-

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\$1.96 million of it has not yet been requested.

Two days

Correspondence GEFA released to The Herald places the Aug. 13 council statement inside a two-week exchange about frozen money.

On Aug. 11, GEFA Director of Financial Services Jammie Harden emailed the city's finance officer, copying City Administrator and Clerk Roxie Powell: "Would you or Roxie please give me a call regarding the city's pending GEFA draw requests? We wanted to verify some information before attempting to disburse funds."

The council was told about the aerator funding two days later.

On Aug. 17, Powell wrote to GEFA: "I understand that the city is currently not in compliance with the applicable audit requirements and that GEFA funding has been suspended as a result." She asked what steps the city could take in the meantime to keep money flowing, writing that the matter was urgent because the treatment plant "is currently operating under a Consent Order."

On Aug. 20, GEFA Senior Compliance Auditor Charlette Brown Helvy answered that the agency could not release additional funds "until the outstanding audits are finalized and compliance is formally established." She wrote that "federal regulations strictly prohibit the disbursement of federal funds to borrowers who are not compliant with required financial statement audits."

Harden's message asked for a phone call and did not state that funds were suspended. It was addressed to Dawn Williford, recently resigned finance director and to Powell. Two GEFA requisitions totaling \$369,338.11 remain submitted and unpaid.

What the council has been told

A consent order update has been a standing item on council agendas, including Thursday's. The updates describe construction progress. The one delivered Aug. 13 read, in full: "Consent Order — Clarifiers are rebuilt and the plant is back online. Contractors are now reconstructing the influent pump station. Work is about 1/3 complete."

The November 2024 consent order with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division set two deadlines: sewer line repairs by Dec. 31, 2025, and treatment plant work by March 31, 2026. Both passed with the work unfinished. Neither date appears in

the update delivered Aug. 13, or in any other council record The Herald has obtained.

The Herald has recorded every Dawson City Council meeting since March. A review of those recordings, covering every meeting from March through August, found no mention of either deadline, of the loan freeze, or any official documentation of the audit noncompliance that caused it.

Those recordings are, in large part, the only publicly accessible record of the council's proceedings. The city does not routinely publish council agendas, minutes or meeting packets online before meetings, although it provided The Herald with agendas for its August and September work sessions and regular council meetings in advance.

Georgia's Open Meetings Act requires a local government to make its agenda available on request, to write a summary of the subjects acted on and the members present within two business days of a meeting, and to open its minutes to public inspection no later than immediately after the next regular meeting.

A resident who wanted to know what the council has been told about the sewer project, the consent order or the frozen loans would have no practical way to find out without the city's cooperation.

The city's own Financial Status Update, presented to the mayor and council at the same Aug. 13 meeting, runs six pages and covers cash flow, revenue collections, a tax anticipation note, the budget approach and an "Audit Status Update." It does not mention that the state had suspended the city's loan disbursements over the audits.

That report told council the city had drawn \$350,000 against a \$400,000 tax anticipation note "to address immediate accounts payable obligations and improve vendor payment timelines," leaving \$50,000 available. It also said a representative of Mauldin & Jenkins, the CPA firm engaged on the outstanding audits, "is scheduled to attend the next regularly scheduled council meeting" to brief the mayor, council and citizens on audit progress.

That meeting is Thursday. However Mauldin & Jenkins are not on the agenda.

A second water project

On Aug. 19, Powell asked GEFA what steps were available "to allow the city to maintain funding for its current Drinking Water and Clean Water projects while the audits are being finalized."

GEFA's compliance auditor used the same phrase in reply, writing that the agency was "unable to release additional funds for the Drinking Water and Clean Water

projects until the outstanding audits are finalized."

Clean Water refers to the two loans financing the sewer project. Drinking Water is a separate state program, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, which lends to cities for water supply and treatment. GEFA named that fund in its written answers to The Herald when describing federal requirements that apply to its lending.

The Herald has found no reference to a Dawson drinking water project in any city budget document, council agenda, council packet or set of minutes it has obtained, and no such agreement appears in the records GEFA has produced. The Herald has asked the city to identify any such project and to list every agreement it holds with Dawson.

If a drinking water loan exists, the city's obligations to the state are larger than the \$10.2 million committed to the sewer project, and the money is subject to the same freeze.

What is checked, and by whom

Asked whether it compares the invoices behind a loan requisition against the payment requests the city files with the governor's budget office for the same project, GEFA said its review "is limited to determining whether costs submitted for reimbursement are eligible under the applicable GEFA funding program and are supported by the required documentation."

Asked what prevents the same contractor invoice from being reimbursed twice, once from a loan and once from the grant, the authority said: "Loan recipients are responsible for maintaining appropriate financial management systems and internal controls to ensure that project costs are properly allocated."

Both funders pay the city, not the contractors. Dawson has not completed an outside audit since Fiscal 2022, and it declined The Herald's request for the vendor payment records that would show which fund each check was drawn on.

Nothing in the records obtained by The Herald shows that the same expense was paid twice. The amounts in GEFA's disbursement logs do not match the invoices in the grant file, and the available records do not provide enough detail to trace every payment across both funding sources.

The audits

Dawson's outside audits for Fiscal Years 2023, 2024 and 2025 remain outstanding. The city is listed as noncompliant by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, a delay City Manager Roxie Powell

attributed to "significant turnover within the Finance Department, as well as a financial system conversion during Fiscal Year 2023."

It is not the first time the city has committed to correcting the problems.

In a 2024 compliance report prepared for the state's grant office, Dawson said its Fiscal 2023 and 2024 audits would be submitted by October 2025 and its Fiscal 2025 audit would be completed by November 2025. The city also said it would adopt comprehensive financial-management policies by May 8, 2025, and have a chief financial officer in place by May 5, 2025. The city manager was identified as the official responsible for ensuring those steps were completed.

Ten months after the last of those deadlines passed, the audits are still being scoped, and Powell has again offered to "develop and implement formal financial policies and procedures."

When The Herald asked whether Dawson had submitted a corrective-action plan, GEFA produced the August correspondence in which the city asked the agency for guidance on what such a plan should include.

Thursday's agenda still includes a Finance Department report. The space identifying the finance director, however, is blank.

What is left

The grant deadline is seven weeks away. Both loans remain frozen. The plant loan's draw period expired in June 2023, and its proposed extension hinges on audits the city has not completed. The sewer loan expires in January. Meanwhile, the city's latest quarterly report to the U.S. Treasury lists the project as less than halfway complete.

The council will take up the city budget Thursday.

The central questions remain unanswered: which loan was supposed to fund the \$109,886 aerator change order; what city officials knew about the frozen draw requests when they presented it to council Aug. 13; whether Dawson has an undisclosed drinking water agreement with GEFA, and why missed consent-order deadlines were not reported publicly.

With three overdue audits, no Mauldin & Jenkins briefing on Thursday's agenda and funding deadlines approaching, the larger question is increasingly urgent: How will Dawson pay to finish the work, and what will further delay mean for the future reliability of the city's water and wastewater systems?

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lem.

Code Enforcement Officer Gregory Warren told The Albany Herald last year that most of the properties he encountered that were not meeting city code were residential, and about 30% were unoccupied.

"The goal is to build relationships and to educate the community, show them what needs to be done to revitalize the community and keep it safe and comfortable," Warren said.

Last month, the Dawson City Council also moved forward with provisions in its city code dealing with blighted property as officials continue efforts to address deteriorating buildings.

While there's no established connection between the condition of available housing and Terrell County foster care, it does clearly illustrate the housing environment in which low-income families are being asked to find and maintain safe homes.

And housing is one of the clearest places where poverty and child welfare intersect in Georgia. Between Fiscal Years 2018 and 2022, the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services listed inadequate housing as the sole reason for removing children in more than 700 cases, according to an analysis of federal data by WABE and ProPublica published by The Current.

Housing was cited alongside other concerns in thousands more — about 20% of Georgia's nearly 31,000 removals during the five-year period.

Georgia appellate courts have ruled that unstable housing and employment alone do not constitute abuse or neglect sufficient to justify removing a child. But once housing becomes part of a foster care case, securing an adequate home can be

come one of the conditions a parent must meet before a child can return.

The state has historically spent comparatively little helping families solve that problem directly. During the same five-year period, DFCS spent more than \$450 million through programs that could be used to preserve families, according to the investigation. Less than one-half of 1% went toward housing assistance.

Meanwhile, the state was paying at least \$830 to \$980 a month to place one child in a standard foster home, with substantially higher costs for children requiring specialized care.

A DFCS spokeswoman told WABE and ProPublica that untreated mental health conditions, substance abuse or other underlying issues often accompany housing instability and that the agency refers families to community resources.

But for parents who have addressed other concerns, housing can still stand between them and reunification.

Georgia children whose reunification cases cited inadequate housing spent a median of about 11 months in foster care, compared with eight months for children whose cases did not, according to a separate analysis of federal foster care data. That is roughly 95 additional days apart.

Housing is not the only resource that can be harder to secure in a rural community.

Amanda Farley, who now coordinates Terrell County Family Connection, previously described the problem while discussing Family Connection's work in neighboring Calhoun County.

"To get anywhere, it's a 45-minute drive; so a lot of our projects are centered around trying to bring things directly to citizens," she said.

Terrell County Family

Connection brings together DFCS, schools, health providers, local government, law enforcement and nonprofits with the stated goal of addressing the root causes of problems facing families. Those barriers can become even more significant when a parent is working toward reunification.

A case plan may require counseling, substance-abuse treatment, drug testing, visitation and court appearances while the parent also maintains employment, transportation and appropriate housing.

A service being available somewhere in southwest Georgia does not necessarily mean a parent can easily get to it.

Terrell County's data also show why the story does not end when a child enters foster care. Three of the county's eight removals last year involved children who had previously left the system and returned.

At the end of March, 23 Terrell County children remained in foster care. Twelve were living with relatives, while seven had already spent more than two years in care. And among 12 children who entered foster care during the previous reporting period, only one reached permanency within 12 months. Statewide, nearly one-third did.

SOWEGA CASA provides court-appointed advocates for children in Terrell County and the Pataula Judicial Circuit, following cases through

the court and child welfare systems with the goal of helping children reach safe, permanent homes. Those outcomes depend on far more than the reason recorded on the day a child is removed.

They depend on whether relatives can provide a safe home, whether parents can reach required services, whether suitable housing is available and how quickly caseworkers and the courts can resolve the conditions that brought a family into the system.

That is what makes the difference between Terrell and Lee counties worth watching beyond a single year.

Terrell's removal rate was more than four times higher, and poverty nearly six times as prevalent, than in Lee County just a stone's throw away. That disparity plays out in a community already grappling with blighted housing, limited services and the basic difficulties of getting help in a rural county.

For Terrell County, the question is not simply why eight children entered foster care last year. It is whether families in Dawson and across the county can get the housing, transportation and support they need before a temporary crisis becomes a permanent separation.

Across the county line, the numbers look very different. The challenge is understanding why.

Bishop, friends pay last respects to former congressman

STAFF REPORTS

ALEXANDRIA, Va. - U.S. Congressman Sanford D. Bishop Jr. is among the dignitaries and close friends lamenting the loss of former Congressman Charles Floyd Hatcher of Georgia, who passed away Tuesday at his home here. He was 87.

"Today, Georgia lost a true public servant and leader," Bishop, who ousted Hatcher from his District 2 House seat in 1992, said. "Former Congressman Charles Hatcher was born in Georgia, served our country in the United States Air Force, and returned to southwest Georgia after earning his law degree and practicing in Albany."

"He served in the Georgia House of Representatives from 1973 to 1980 and subsequently in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1981 through 1993. While we competed in the 1992 Democratic Primary for Georgia's Second Congressional District, which I won, I was glad to have his support and counsel nonetheless as I started my tenure on Capitol Hill."

Hatcher, a congressman, attorney, veteran, and family man, was born July 1, 1939, in Doerun. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1958 to 1962 before attending Georgia

Southern University, where he earned a bachelor's degree. He went on to earn a law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1969.

Following law school, Hatcher developed a thriving law practice in Albany that soon led him to public office. He first represented his community in the Georgia House of Representatives from 1973 to 1980 and then in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he represented Georgia's 2nd Congressional District for six terms, from 1980 to 1992.

He continued his public service as a presidential appointee at the U.S. Department of Agriculture during the Clinton administration. He volunteered locally for Meals on Wheels and other charitable foundations while also serving as an active member of Washington Street United Methodist Church in Alexandria.

"Charles leaves behind a legacy of love and compassion through his work and the relationships he built," Bishop said. "My wife, Vivian, and I extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Krysta, his children, his grandchildren, and loving family as well as all those whose lives he touched and helped make better. We will miss him dearly."



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DID YOU KNOW...?

Do you know why we call television "TV"?

By JACK BAGLEY
Georgia Trust For Local News

Happy few days after Labor Day!

You do realize that you had this past Monday off (most of you, anyway) because of the Labor Day holiday, the last unofficial weekend of summer. Autumn doesn't officially get here until later in the month, but with Labor Day weekend, summer is officially over. Back to the grind, boys and girls.

But there's something right here to help you get through it... trivia. The minutiae of life, as it were, to give you pause to say, "I didn't know that!" Until you read it here, and then you know. Enjoy this week's lesson!

Did you know...

... only one movie has ever produced four women in the same cast nominated for Best Acting Academy Awards? The 1950 production All About Eve had its four leading ladies nominated: Anne Baxter (1923-1985) and Bette Davis (1908-1989), each nominated for Lead Actress; and Thelma Ritter (1902-1969) and Celeste Holm (1917-2012), each receiving a nomination for Supporting Actress. While that made a first, none of them won. (That figures.)

... what the oldest professional sports league in the United States is? Major League Baseball, established in 1869, is the oldest league. (Batter up!)

... a city in Switzerland offers a bizarre way to celebrate a child's birthday? In the city of Lucerne, Switzerland, parents can hire an evil clown to follow their child in the week leading up to his or her birthday. The clown, played by actor Dominic Deville (born 1975), wears orange hair, a demonic-looking face, floppy shoes, and has the goal of making the child terrified up to the last moment – when he smashes a birthday cake into the poor kid's face. Of course, parents can call Deville off if the child is becoming traumatized, but Deville says the service is "all in fun."

... the luckiest man on Earth may well be living in Australia? In 1999, Australian truck driver Bill Morgan (born 1962) was involved in a traffic accident in which he was seriously injured, and while he was recovering he suffered an extreme allergic reaction to medication which stopped his heart. Morgan was clinically dead for 14 minutes until he could be revived. He was in a coma for twelve days but emerged with no brain damage. Not long after recovering, Morgan bought a Lottery ticket which won him a brand new car worth around \$24,000. The Melbourne television station did a story on the win, and asked him to recreate scratching off a newly-bought Lottery ticket for the camera. Morgan did ... and won \$250,000.

... why we call television "TV"? You can thank a used car salesman for that. Earl "Mad Man" Muntz (1914-1987) was a businessman and engineer who began as a used car salesman and, during his long and storied career, actually created television sets that people could afford in the early 1950s. Back then, television sets were huge, with a lot of vacuum tubes and other electronics that would be outdated today ... and they were very, very expensive. Muntz actually took an expensive television, systematically disconnected tubes and parts, made sure it still worked, and when he had a bare-bones set, began making them under his name. Oh, and the "TV" part? While the term was used among engineers for years, it wasn't widely used by the public until Muntz came along. Muntz would hire skywriters to put his products into public view. When it came time to sell his sets, his pilots said that by the time they were writing "television" the "buy Muntz" part was dissipating. So Muntz told the pilots to abbreviate it to "TV."

... a famous scientist invented the pet door? British mathematician and scientist Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) made a hole in one of the doors to his home to allow a cat and her kittens to come and go as they pleased, without disturbing him to open the door. The idea of covering the hole in the door with a flexible flap for the pet to push open – and to keep the elements out of the house – came along many years later. (Fido and Felix say thank you.)

... sharks can respond to music cues? Research published in the Animal Cognition journal in 2018 showed that sharks can recognize the sounds of some kinds of music. Jazz music caused five of the eight sharks tested to swim to a corner of their tank to receive a food reward. If you're wondering, Great White sharks are most impressed by heavy metal music. (Somehow, I am not surprised.)

... the human body produces electrical energy? People make so much energy, in fact, that it is equivalent to the power used to light a 100-watt light bulb. To that end, a Canadian high school student, Ann Makosinski (born 1993), invented a flashlight that uses body heat to light the LED bulb in 2013. Makosinski came up with the idea after learning that a friend who lived in the Philippines was failing school because her family couldn't afford electricity, so she was unable to study at night. (See, that is what I call a friend.)

... the Ferris Wheel was not invented until 1893? Now a staple of amusement parks and fairs everywhere, the first one was built for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. It was designed by George W. Ferris (1859-1896) and was made up of 36 passenger cars, each of which could carry 60 people. When the Columbian Exposition closed in 1894, the first Ferris Wheel was dismantled and moved to the Lincoln Park neighborhood. It operated there from 1895 to 1903, then taken to St. Louis to be used at the 1904 Worlds' Fair. It was finally destroyed in 1906.

Now... you know!

Carpool lane: Thoughts on traffic

The city of Atlanta is known for a lot of things, but none more so than its traffic.

The Phoenix City consistently ranks as the worst place in the country when it comes to the daily commute of the people who live and work there. Coincidentally, Atlanta has the largest ratio of tree coverage of any city, so at least it feels like you're in nature while actually rotting away in the driver's seat.

According to the internet insurance broker The Zebra, about an extra 33 hours per year is spent in the car by Atlanta drivers than their counterparts in other urban areas. The average commute in Hotlanta (the city also has many nicknames) is about 33 minutes each way. And that's only to go a mile or two down the street.

To make matters worse, Georgia has one of the highest rates of fatal car crashes at about 16 per every 100,000 people per year. And the drive time is only getting worse. Last year over 200 minutes were added to the rush hour commute time.

I'm not sure how this data is collected, probably cell phone tracking. What an age to be alive, when the little computer in our pocket can tell us exactly how long we've been sitting on the downtown connector. Or maybe there's a man with a telescope on top of the Bank of America Plaza counting cars every morning and afternoon. It's a hell of a way to make a living, but it's honest work.

I can vouch for A-Town's terrible traffic, though my experience was more than a decade ago.

THE NEW SOUTHERN DAD



By KYLE DOMINY

In another life I was one of those daily commuters, strapped into an automobile sitting idle in a sea of brake lights under the haze of exhaust-polluted air. The side effects of sitting in traffic include elevated stress levels, physical and mental strain, high blood pressure and, of course, breathing in those noxious vehicle fumes, not to mention the abuse from verbal drivers, car horns and the obnoxious music coming from one lane over.

The job that had me sitting in the car more than I was working didn't last long. I didn't even look for a new line of employment, but abandoned my post as soon as I was financially able. Shortly thereafter, I fled the ATL altogether and returned to my rural nativity never to sit in daily traffic again.

What a fool I was.

A new town should be topping the traffic list, sleepy little Dudley, Georgia. And it's all thanks to the carpool line at the elementary school. School's only been in session for a few weeks and each endeavor to pick up my child has taken no less than 30 minutes. No matter when I plan to arrive, early or late, I'm stuck in a long line of cars, sometimes stretched beyond the city limits. I think some people drop off their child and then immediately claim a spot in the pick up line.

I lay the blame at no one but myself. I think it's a little cosmic payback for the foul words uttered under my breath, horn honked at a slow driver ahead of me and fist shaken at the stand-still traffic of my youth.

Payback is a you-know-what, and I'd better get comfortable in the driver's seat again.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

By LUCIE WINBORNE
King Features

- * An isolated Israeli city with a high rate of deafness created their own sign language as a way of communicating.
- * Pakistan was the first official Muslim nation in the world.
- * An emoji of a building underneath a pink heart originally symbolized an invitation to meet at a Japanese "love hotel," where rooms can be rented by the hour.
- * At many European operas, whistling actually means boo.
- * The Aetherius Society, a UFO religion, was founded by George King in 1955 after he claimed interplanetary sources instructed him to become "the Voice of Interplanetary Parliament."
- * Cats have more bones than humans.
- * According to several legends, if someone was bitten by a suspected vampire, he or she should drink the ashes of a burned vampire.
- * Rock climbing can improve emotional or attention problems, such as anxiety and ADHD.
- * First performed in 1999, the Sandpaper Ballet includes a musical number that sounds just like someone scratching sandpaper.
- * An EF-3 tornado near Pampa, Texas, was so strong that it drove a corn stalk into a car's radiator.
- * A mother admitted to attending her clique's "chickenpox party," a social gathering where parents expose unvaccinated children to the virus, even though her daughter had been vaccinated, because she feared rejection by the group if she didn't show up.
- * Nearly 90% of London's police officers don't carry firearms.
- * Before the invention of electricity, the only electromagnetic wavelengths present on Earth in any significant amount were those corresponding to the colors seen in a rainbow.
- * In 2005, former Washington, D.C., administrative law judge Roy Pearson Jr. sued his neighborhood dry cleaners for \$67 million after a pair of his suit pants was accidentally sent to another location. (No, he didn't win.)

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOGIC AND ACCURACY TESTING

Notice is hereby given that Logic and Accuracy Testing of the Ballot Marking Devices, Image Cast Precinct Scanners (ICP) units, and Poll Pad units for the General Election to be held Tuesday, November 3, 2026, will begin on September 18, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

The testing will be conducted at the Terrell County Governmental Building, located at:

955 Forrester Drive SEDawson, Georgia

Testing will continue until all voting equipment has been tested.

The public is invited to be present and observe the testing.

Carolyn H. Williams,
Supervisor

Terrell County Board of Elections & Registration

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50141(a)(3)(A) the City of Parrott will hold a Public Hearing at City Hall, 142 East Main Street, Parrott, Georgia, on September 8, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., at which time the City Council will adopt their 2027 Budget.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 36664, the City of Parrott will hold a public hearing at City Hall, 142 East Main Street, Parrott, Georgia, on September 15, 2026 and October 13, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., at which time the City Council will hear from the public on the proposed variance.

Bobby Poss II

For years in the Athens-Clarke community, the name Poss conjured up images of beer, barbecue, and Brunswick stew—and the colorful proprietor who not only oversaw the production of “Poss Famous Foods,” but who also might be seen dishing out hash at a catered event.

He was hands on when it came to good food and good service. With his downhome style, he often provided entertainment with his engaging personality and his colorful story telling.

His father began the company, but it was the son, Robert E. Poss Jr., who expanded the business into regional sales and developed a popular catering service. For years, he was the concessionaire for Georgia football and basketball game and built “Poss’ Lakeview,” which became a banquet and catering venue.



LORAN SMITH

He was jovially inclined to self-deprecation such as, “If you eat my product, you will think about me all night.” He laughed loudest when the joke was on him. Eventually, his son, Bobby Poss, came along and followed in his dad’s footsteps as a player at Athens High and later the University of Georgia. The senior Poss was a journeyman player, but the court jester of the team. He was

popular with his teammates. Line coach J. B. Whitworth was given to telling the team before a road game, “We are going to take 40 players and Poss,” who took the quip good naturedly. He loved Georgia and also loved being part of the team. He often said, if there was a poker game, he would join the table only if Frank Sinkwich pulled up a chair. He knew Coach Butts was not going to discipline Sinkwich for being a participant in a card game. With time running out in the Rose Bowl, Jan. 1, 1943, Poss ran on the field, passing the referee who was the timekeeper. Poss shouted to the ref as he sprinted to the huddle, “Don’t fire that pistol, I’m going to play in the Rose Bowl.” Bobby, the son of the colorful R.E. Poss, Jr., lettered in 1969-70-71 as a snapping specialist for Vince Dooley. He often carried on a conversation with defensive linemen who would fall victim to Bobby’s conversational chicanery.

Is all politics still local?

How voters make decisions has changed a lot over the years. I have an ongoing debate with a friend and professional associate of mine who still contends “all politics is local”. I contend it eventually ends there, but the genesis of issues that motivate (i.e, anger) voters is national, if not international.

We now have documented evidence of foreign countries and entities that spend billions every year to influence and/or inflame Americans on a variety of topics. Some are meant to advance a particular issue favorable to the funders. Others are just to divide us on behalf of adversarial regimes.

These efforts may start by funding “experts” or student activities on college campuses, influencers on social media, or utilizing investments in private corporations who employ Americans. Ultimately, they’re packaged for national media in red and blue packages and disseminated through

the usual channels. Over the past few decades, the binary decisions demanded by a two-party system combined with the ever increasing power of a central federal government have raised the stakes of primaries. The way to get a nomination is to prove to a small and angry partisan base is to demonstrate a candidate is the most “pure” and unwilling to compromise. The fixation of purity tests combined with promises of everything the base wants combined with nothing they don’t continues to push the two major parties’ positions farther and farther from the center. The decision to enforce adherence to partisan dogma often makes moderates, centrists, or those who wish to think for themselves a bigger enemy than those in the other party. Those who control the parties are well aware there are only jerseys in two colors available. They’re also



CHARLIE HARPER
GEORGIA POLITICS

aware more people are being afraid of being kicked off the team or out of the club than they are of losing. Then there’s the President, himself. A “good Republican” is not allowed to criticize him and remain in good standing. A “good Democrat” isn’t allowed to support him or any of his proposals. There are no exceptions for “but this was good for my state/district/constituents”. So it’s pretty clear that all politics is now national, no? As college football season coincides with the home

stretch of our elections, I invoke the words of now retired coach turned ESPN personality Lee Corso. “Not so fast...” Many of the issues that voters are concerned about, as well as their increasingly hardened attitudes for or against them, are germinated, funded, and distributed in a top down manner. How they manifest themselves, however, are still very local. The current obsession over data centers provides an excellent example. For many, the issue was one that mattered to Silicon Valley, Wall Street, and the talking heads in New York and Washington. Even with Georgia having a long history and presence with data centers rooted in the state’s logistics network of early telecom infrastructure and fiber optic networks, the increasing number of data centers was largely unnoticed by most Georgians until they became a top down national issue. Suddenly, data centers and proposals for new ones appear to be everywhere. So is their opposition.

In fairness to many of the recent opponents, there is a difference from a conceptual argument on TV versus discovering a few hundred rural acres are about to be replaced by industrial warehouse architecture. “Not In My Back Yard” NIMBYs have been a political force from the beginning of democratic voting. Sometimes NIMBYs win unopposed. Sometimes another local force emerges with equal pushback: What’s In It For Me? Headlines over the last few weeks have been dominated by local governments and school boards either raising millage rates, or holding them steady while taxes are increased via higher assessments. Inflation drives up the cost of government services, too. Data Center developers are starting to understand the messaging they’ve been employing is too close to Artificial Intelligence and/or the change technology is bringing to all of our lives. A lot of the pushback is a direct rejection of the companies and products which

have delivered these changes. A single data center, however, has the opportunity to change the entire tax base of a small to medium sized county. Commissioners, City Councils, and School Boards know the voters don’t like data centers today, but they will hate their tax payments forever. The awareness of the problem began as a national issue. The voters are very much acting out locally. So is the politics local or national? Like most political arguments, the premise is itself a false choice. It doesn’t matter where the issue starts. It ends in a pocketbook. “It’s the economy stupid” was James Carville’s admonition to Bill Clinton throughout a campaign against an incumbent that started out way ahead. “It’s the voter’s wallet” is a modern update for local officials trying to deal with nationally fomented anger while attempting to navigate solutions for their constituents.

The latest space probe deepens the mystery of God and the universe

I don’t know about you, but my God is about to get even bigger and my theological beliefs even more challenging thanks to, of all people, Elon Musk. His company, SpaceX, has just launched a rocket with a telescope the size of a bus for NASA that is headed to outer space more than 1 million miles away from earth. The \$4.3 billion Roman

Space Telescope is named after the late Nancy Grace Roman, NASA’s first chief astronomer, and will have an unobstructed view of the universe at least 100 times larger than the Hubble Space Telescope, which was launched into space in 1990. “It’s going to find thousands of supernovae, tens of thousands of planets, bil-

lions of galaxies and tens of billions of stars,” said NASA science mission director Nicky Fox about Roman. “It’s going to be able to do things that we’ve never been able to do before with its massive field of view.” Combined with the Webb Telescope launched in 2021 and Hubble, these three telescopes along with the European Space Agency’s Euclid spacecraft and the National Science Foundation’s Vera C. Rubin Observatory in Chile are set to probe even deeper into the universe. Enter God. Back in July, I observed that our planet Earth resides in a solar system that includes the Sun, eight planets, five dwarf planets, hundreds of moons, and thousands of asteroids and comets. Our Solar System is located in a galaxy known as the Milky Way. The Milky Way is estimated to contain



DICK YARBROUGH

another 100 billion to 400 billion stars and at least that number of planets. Scientists think there are at least two trillion galaxies from what they have been able to observe. Now, Roman, Webb, Hubble, et al. are about to tell us we have just scratched the cosmic surface. We are probably looking at trillions of more galaxies and billions of more

planets within those galaxies. Back to my original question: Do we really think God is a one-planet God? (By the way, it may make for awkward writing, but from henceforth, I will not refer to God as “he.” God is God. I Am Who I Am. Theologians please take note.) That particular column drew a lot of response. Surprisingly, I got no negative feedback that the universe began with Adam and Eve. One of the most insightful comments came from a retired Baptist minister in Spartanburg, S.C., Dr. P. Randall Wright. I plan to post his comments on my webpage: www.dickyarbrough.com. Dr. Wright says that people of faith fall into two groups: Guardians of the Orthodoxy who draw “theological lines in the sand beyond which the guardians and the adherents will not step.” He says they station themselves along a perimeter and define what is “right.” Nobody who disagrees is “unchurched” or a “heretic.” But who defines orthodoxy, he asks? A fundamentalist Baptist in south Alabama? A liberal Episcopalian from Boston? You? Me? Rather than being a guardian of orthodoxy, Dr. Wright says, “I’m trying to be a ‘Steward of the Mystery,’ as the Apostle Paul admonished the Corinthian Christians.” He says, “You won’t find a Steward of the

Mystery standing guard along a fence line of doctrine. A Guardian of Orthodoxy tries to protect ‘right’ belief, while a Steward of the Mystery pays attention. A guardian of right belief stands guard in fear of encroachment into or escape out of the perimeter, while a Steward of the Mystery ponders the obvious.” That’s me, Dr. Wright. God has created a universe far beyond our understanding. God is not a one-planet God. That is obvious. Has it shaken my faith? No, but it has made me rethink it. Unlike many guardians of orthodoxy, I am willing to step beyond the perimeter and ask hard questions and ponder the answers. I doubt this will make God feel threatened. But it will likely threaten those afraid to do the same. Dr. Wright says, “The scientists are often more honest than some people of faith. They admit their limitations but keep on searching. Many people of faith claim to have it all figured out and dare others to disagree.” Remember, we are among trillions upon trillions of planets and stars, and the latest space probes indicate we will discover trillions upon trillions more. We have formed a small study group at our church to have an open-minded discussion on the subject of God and a universe beyond human comprehension. You might want to do the same. God can take it.

THE DAWSON NEWS

GEORGIA TRUST

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Albany State University open ticket sales for 2027 Blue & Gold Gala

STAFF REPORTS

ALBANY – Albany State University has opened ticket sales for its 2027 ASU Foundation Blue & Gold Scholarship Gala, an annual celebration supporting student achievement and scholarships. The event will take place April 3 at the Albany State University West Campus Arena.

This year’s gala will introduce a new, student-centered experience designed to place Albany State students at the heart of the evening. Under the direction of Chief University Growth Officer Troy Beetz, guests will hear directly from students about their Albany State experience, accomplishments, aspirations and the opportunities that are helping prepare them for success.

“The Future Is Golden: Celebrating Student Promise. Investing in Possibility.” will serve as the theme for the 2027 Gala, which will feature a Roaring Twenties-inspired black-tie experience, entertainment, student speakers, and opportunities for guests to connect directly with Albany State students.

Presidential Scholars will play a featured role throughout the evening, engaging with guests at tables and sharing their personal experiences as Albany State students. Their participation will provide guests with a first-hand look at the impact of investing in student success and the promise of the next generation of Golden Rams.

A portion of the funds raised through the Gala will support the Presidential Scholars Program; a needs-based scholarship initiative designed to attract high-achieving students, strengthen retention and increase four-year graduation rates.

“Recruiting students is only the beginning,” Beetz said. “Our responsibility is to create an environment where students are supported, challenged and equipped to graduate and succeed beyond Albany State. This gala puts our students where they belong, at the center of the conver-

sation. When our guests hear directly from the students their support impacts, they can see the possibilities their investment creates.”

The 2027 Blue & Gold Scholarship Gala will bring together Albany State alumni, community members, businesses, corporate partners, friends and supporters to celebrate student achievement while investing in the university’s future.

Guests can participate through several ticket and sponsorship opportunities:

Gala Sponsorship – \$25,000: Includes prominent recognition and an elevated gala experience while demonstrating a significant commitment to Albany State students.

President’s Table – \$1,000 per seat: Offers distinguished recognition and premium benefits..

VIP Experience – \$300 per seat: Includes preferred seating, VIP reception access, premium beverage service, special recognition and exclusive ASU gifts.

General Admission – \$200 per seat: Includes dinner, entertainment, and an evening celebrating Albany State students.

Can’t attend, but still want to make an impact?

Sponsor a Student – \$300: Provides an ASU student with the opportunity to attend the Gala and participate in the celebration.

Flexible payment options are available for seating via the online ticket link.

As Albany State continues its focus on recruiting, retaining, and graduating students, the Blue & Gold Scholarship Gala reflects the university’s commitment to putting student success at the center of its institutional priorities, including fundraising and community engagement, university officials said.

Additional information, tickets, sponsorship opportunities, and payment options are available at www.asurams.edu/gala.

Georgia Council for the Arts reaches out to high school students

STAFF REPORTS

ATLANTA -- Students are back at school, and the Georgia Council for the Arts has two opportunities for high school students to build confidence, strengthen communication and analytical skills, and explore their creativity through poetry – either by performing a poem or by writing an original work.

The Poet Laureate’s Prize recognizes an original poem written by a Georgia high school student (grades 9-12). Georgia Poet Laureate Chelsea Rathburn will select one winner and four finalists.

Winner and finalists:

Have their work published in Atlanta Magazine.

Are recognized by the Poet Laureate at a ceremony in the spring.

Receive a signed book of poetry.

Students do not need to be affiliated with a school or organization to participate. Minors must have permission from a parent or guardian to submit a poem.

Submission deadline is Jan. 15 at 11:59 p.m.

Poetry Out Loud is a national poetry recitation competition that helps high school students build public speaking skills and deepen their appreciation of poetry.

Students participate through local competitions organized by schools, school systems or community organizations. Individual students also can participate. The state winner receives an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to compete in the national finals and is eligible for a cash prize.

Free lesson plans and resources make Poetry Out Loud easy to integrate into existing curriculum. Community organizations (including libraries, after-school programs, and arts organizations) also can partner with schools and school systems to create local competitions and expand opportunities for students.

Registration deadline is Jan. 27 at 11:59 p.m.

Legals

D-109
IN THE PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF TERRELL
STATE OF GEORGIA
IN RE: WILLIE JAMES MITCHELL, SR.,
DECEASED
ESTATE NO: 4145
PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
NOTICE

To: ALL UNKNOWN HEIRS, INTERESTED PARTIES, CREDITORS
WILLIE J. MITCHELL, JR. has petitioned to be appointed **Administrator** of the estate of **WILLIE JAMES MITCHELL, SR.** 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 28TH, 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
September 3, 10, 17, 24, 2026

D-105
NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
By virtue of a Power of Sale contained in that certain Security Deed from JUDY A HARDISON to MORTGAGE ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION SYSTEMS INC. AS GRANTEE, AS NOMINEE FOR RAPID HOME LENDING INC., dated April 11, 2025, recorded April 17, 2025, in Book 0014B, Page 0726-0743, Terrell County, Georgia Records, said Security Deed having been given to secure a Note of even date in the original principal amount of One Hundred Fifty-Six Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-One and 00/100 dollars (\$156,491.00), with interest thereon as provided for therein, said Security Deed having been last sold, assigned and transferred to UNITED WHOLESALE MORTGAGE, LLC, there will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash at the Terrell County Courthouse, within the legal hours of sale on the **first Tuesday in October, 2026**, all property described in said Security Deed including but not limited to the following described property:

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND BEING A PART OF LOT 3 OF BLOCK 216 IN THE CITY OF DAWSON, TERRELL COUNTY, GEORGIA, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGIN AT A POINT WHERE THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY OF PECAN STREET INTERSECTS THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY OF EAST LEE STREET AND FROM SAID POINT THENCE NORTH 90 DEGREES 00 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 200 FEET AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING. FROM SAID POINT OF BEGINNING, THENCE SOUTH 01 DEGREE 02 MINUTES WEST, A DISTANCE OF 226 FEET; THENCE NORTH 90 DEGREES 00 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 17 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 00 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 7.25 FEET; THENCE NORTH 90 DEGREES 00 MINUTES WEST A DISTANCE OF 226 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 90 DEGREES 00 MINUTES EAST A DISTANCE OF 104 FEET AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING. PARCEL ID: D19-052 BEING THE SAME PROPERTY CONVEYED TO JUDY A. HARDISON FROM ROCKY DWIGHT SPURLOCK BY DEED DATED AUGUST 30, 2022 RECORDED ON SEPTEMBER 07, 2022 IN BOOK 0013G PAGE 0248.

Said legal description being controlling, however the property is more commonly known as **1045 E LEE STREET, DAWSON, GA 39842.**

The indebtedness secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of default under the terms of said Security Deed. The indebtedness remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same, all expenses of the sale, including attorneys' fees (notice to collect same having been given) and all other payments provided for under the terms of the Security Deed.

Said property will be sold on an "as-is" basis without any representation, warranty or recourse against the above-named or the undersigned. The sale will also be subject to the following items which may affect the title: any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, whether or not now due and payable); the right of redemption of any taxing authority; matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or by an inspection of the property; all zoning ordinances; assessments; liens; encumbrances; restrictions; covenants, and any other matters of record superior to said Security Deed.

To the best of the knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the owner and party in possession of the property is JUDY A HARDISON, or tenants(s).

The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed, and (3) purchaser's tendering to Rubin Lublin, LLC, anti-money laundering information as required pursuant to the FinCEN Real Estate Report Rule. Failure to provide information, could result in rescission of the sale.

The entity having full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the loan (although not required by law to do so) is: Cenlar FSB, Loss Mitigation Dept., 425 Phillips Blvd., Ewing, NJ 08618, Telephone Number: 877-909-9416. Nothing in O.C.G.A. Section 44-14-162.2 shall be construed to require a secured creditor to negotiate, amend, or modify the terms of the mortgage instrument.

UNITED WHOLESALE MORTGAGE, LLC
as Attorney in Fact for
JUDY A HARDISON
THE BELOW LAW FIRM MAY BE HELD TO BE ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR, UNDER FEDERAL LAW. IF SO, ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.
Attorney Contact: Rubin Lublin, LLC

3145 Avalon Ridge Place, Suite 100, Peachtree Corners, GA 30071
Telephone Number: (877) 813-0992 Case No. CENL-26-03096-1
rslaw.com/property-listing
August 27, September 10, 17, 24, October 1, 2026

D-112
NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
All creditors of the estate of **LEON CLYDE JOHNS** 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 8TH day of SEPTEMBER, 2026
BESSIE ARDELLA SHATTLES, ADMINISTRATOR
LEON CLYDE JOHNS, DECEASED
3495 GRAVES HWY.
DAWSON, GA. 39842
September 10, 17, 24, October 1, 2026

D-111
IN THE PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF TERRELL
STATE OF GEORGIA
IN RE: MARTHA SHARON DAVIS
DECEASED
ESTATE NO: 4147
PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
NOTICE
To: ALL UNKNOWN HEIRS, INTERESTED PARTIES, CREDITORS
STEVEN DANIEL DAVIS has petitioned to be appointed **Administrator** of the estate of **MARTHA SHARON DAVIS** 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 **OCTOBER 5, 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
September 10, 17, 24, October 1, 2026

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-110
NOTICE OF LOCATION AND DESIGN APPROVAL
P. 1. 0019099

Terrell COUNTY
Notice is hereby given in compliance with Georgia Code 22-2-109 and 32-3-5 that the Georgia Department of Transportation has approved the Location and Design of this project.
The date of location and design approval is: August 27, 2026
The proposed project would consist of replacing the Category II dam with an updated multi-barrel box culvert and an upstream water control structure. The proposed construction will take place on and under State Route (SR) 55. Additionally, this project proposes to add an upstream embankment armoring to resist wave action on the Clarks Millpond riparian pond, and the removal of the abutting gate house. The existing typical section of SR55 consists of two 12-ft travel lanes, one in each direction, with rural, dirt and gravel shoulders, on top of an earthen dam. The project site is approximately 0.4 miles south of Laing Crossroad and the project length is approximately 0.2 miles. The roadway will consist of two 12-ft lanes with 8-ft shoulders (2-ft paved). The bridge culvert will be a triple 10' X 8'. The project will be constructed with an off-site to maintain traffic. The project is located within in Land Lot 270, Land District 4, Georgia Military District 909 and is approximately 9 miles South of Dawson. The estimated construction duration will be 24 months.

Georgia Department of Transportation would be responsible for acquiring property rights for this project. 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:
Contact Name, Sean F. High/Area Manager District 4, Area 5
E-mail Address: SHigh@dot.ga.gov 2060 Newton Road
Albany, GA 31701
Telephone number: (229) 430-4198
Any interested party may obtain a copy of the drawings or maps or plats or portions thereof by paying a nominal fee and requesting in writing to:
Kimberly Nesbitt, State Program Delivery Administrator GDOT Office of Program Delivery
Attn: Athony Tate atate@dot.ga.gov
600 West Peachtree St NW Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 807-7692
Any written request or communication in reference to this project or notice SHOULD include the Project and P. I. Numbers as noted at the top of this notice.
September 3, 10, 17, 24, 2026

D-106
GEORGIA, TERRELL COUNTY
FORECLOSURE AD
Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in that certain Deed to Secure Debt, from **WAVINE SOILBERRY a/k/a WAVINE THOMAS to BANK OF DAWSON** and filed for record on June 2, 2016, and recorded in Deed Book 11-1, Pages 189-193, in the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Terrell County, Georgia, the undersigned will sell at public outcry during the legal hours of sale before the Courthouse in Terrell County, Georgia, on the first Tuesday in October, 2026, to the highest bidder for cash, the following described real property, to wit:
That certain tract or parcel of land lying and being in the City of Bronwood, Terrell County, Georgia and being a small portion of Land Lot #152 in the 12th Land District of Terrell County, Georgia and said Lot being more particularly described as Lot 36 according to the plat of the property of Sam C. McGill and Marian M. McGill by Richard M. Pace, Surveyor, under date of July 10, 1970, which plat is titled "Subdivisions of Lands of Sam McGill", and said plat is recorded in Plat Book No. 3, Page 251, in the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court of Terrell County, Georgia, and said plat and the record thereof are by reference made a part hereto of this description.
The herein described property is a portion of that tract or parcel of land transferred by Warranty Deed from Earl Wilburn, a/k/a Wilborn as Grantor to Wavine Soilberry on the 22nd day of March, 1988, said deed being duly recorded in Deed Book 3-I, Page 365, in the Clerk's Office of the Terrell County Superior Court.
Parcel ID#: B03 064
The debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt is evidenced by that certain note from **WAVINE SOILBERRY a/k/a WAVINE THOMAS to BANK OF DAWSON** in favor of Bank of Dawson, dated May 24, 2016, in the principal amount of \$13,956.96, respectively.
The debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt and evidenced by said note has been and is hereby declared due and payable because of Grantor's failure to pay said note as the same became due. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying said indebtedness including all accrued and unpaid interest thereon and attorney's fees and all expenses of said sale.
Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §44-14-162.2, the person who shall have full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor is as follows: **Barry Lyle, Bank of Dawson, Post Office Box 230, Dawson, GA 39842; Phone Number 229-995-2141.** Provided however, such person shall not be required to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of a mortgage instrument.

This property will be sold as the property of **WAVINE SOILBERRY a/k/a WAVINE THOMAS to BANK OF DAWSON**, who, to the best of the undersigned's knowledge and belief is the parties in possession of said property.

Notice has been given of intention to enforce provisions for collection of attorney's fees and foreclosure in accordance with legal requirements and the terms of said Deed to Secure Debt and note.

Said property will be sold subject to any and all unpaid taxes and assessments, if any, and other restrictions and easements of record, if any.

This law firm is attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Bank of Dawson
As Attorney-in-Fact For
WAVINE SOILBERRY a/k/a WAVINE THOMAS
COLLIER & GAMBLE, LLP
As Attorneys For
BANK OF DAWSON

September 10, 17, 24, October 1, 2026

ODDS OF A CHILD PERFORMING AT CARNEGIE HALL: 1 in 73,000

ODDS OF A CHILD BEING DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM: 1 in 166



Ad Council

To learn the signs of autism, visit autismspeaks.org

AUTISM SPEAKS
It's time to listen.

DEADLINE

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





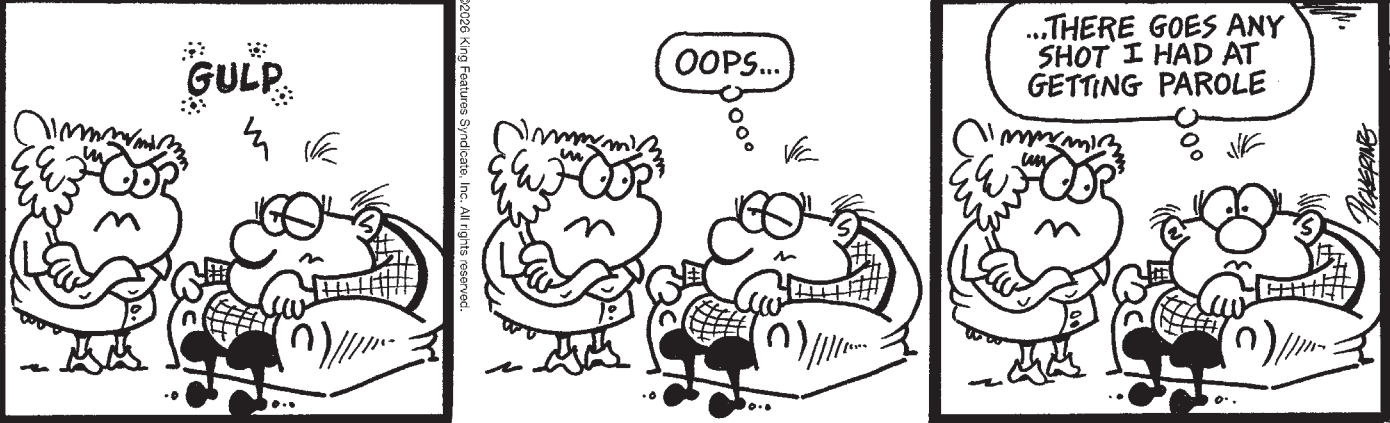
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



King Crossword

Answers

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Magic Maze

Answers

MAGIC MAZE ● — IN A —

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: ONCE IN A — MOON

- Be hurry
Bird cage
Bug rug
Do pinch
- Fill form
Fish pond
Get bind
Get rut
- Gone flash
Once while
One million
Pearl shell
- Peas pod
Pig poke
Rat trap

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Paper on desk is missing. 3. Desk is not as wide. 4. Window is not as wide. 5. Tie is different. 6. Blinds are higher.

It pays to advertise in your local paper!

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Grass clump
5 Pampering, for short
8 Bay Area force, briefly
12 Beige
13 Taunting laugh
14 — Minor
15 Airline to Tel Aviv
16 Greek vowel
17 Endure
18 Lustrous fabrics
20 Ascribe
22 Soda
23 Abysmal
24 Fairy tale figures
27 Surname of Judas

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18				19			20	21				
			22					23				
24	25	26			27	28	29				30	31
32					33					34		
35			36	37					38			
		39					40	41				
42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49					50	51			52			
53					54				55			
56					57				58			

- 32 Terre Haute sch.
33 From — Z
34 Ruckus
35 Element No. 78
38 Recognized
39 Train lines (Abbr.)
40 CBS logo
42 More like Unger
45 Signed over
49 China setting
50 Here (Fr.)
52 Mani counter-part
- 53 Not naked
54 Darjeeling, e.g.
55 "— to differ!"
56 Earth tones
57 Buddhist sect
58 Metal boxes
- DOWN
- 1 Golf props
2 Golden State sch.
3 Dorm alternative
4 Dutch exports
5 Actor
6 Long. crosser
7 Spiced drink
- 8 Inferior
9 Follower of Sigmund's methods
10 Jr.-year exam
11 Challenge
19 Rejection
21 CEO's degree, maybe
24 Trendy
25 Visual communication syst.
26 Protector
28 "Rugrats" dad
29 Late-night host, usually
- 30 Poetic tribute
31 AAA job
36 Three-note chords
37 British verb ending
38 "Consider this a gift"
41 Old pronoun
42 Diplomacy
43 "La — Bonita"
44 Cracker name
46 Mazar of "Younger"
47 Idyllic place
48 Uses a shovel
51 Bee follower

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