

OPINIONS, Too

Election shenanigans in Bladen

My my.
The election of 2018 is not over yet. One of the biggest recalcitrant congressional districts is the neighboring U.S. 9th Congressional District.

It appears on the face of it that Republican Mark Harris won his election over Democrat Dan McCready by approximately 900 votes.

Not so fast. It turns out there was a fellow in Dublin by the name of Leslie McCrae Dowless who may have tried to pull a fast one with absentee ballots.

North Carolina state investigators are trying to determine if Dowless's actions violated North Carolina election laws. Actually, they are investigating not only the November mid-term election but also the May primary election.

This past Monday, the State Board of Elections issued a subpoena to the Harris campaign.

In a nutshell, the issue is not about typical voter fraud. It is about absentee voter fraud. It is about the practice of visiting people at their homes and helping them apply for absentee ballots.

Once the absentee ballots were mailed out, the group under the control of Dowless went back to the

addresses of the recipients of the ballots, helped them fill out the ballots, and then collected them to, in theory, turn them into election officials.

Dowless was employed by the Red Dome Group, a GOP consulting firm based in the suburbs of Charlotte according to reports in the press.

There is now a distinct possibility that the November election will be invalidated and the State Board of Elections

will call for a new election between Harris and McCready. They are now separated by a mere 905 votes in Harris's favor.

Republicans have argued that irregularities in the absentee vote in the 9th District were not widespread enough to make a difference in the outcome and have called on the board to certify Harris's win.

Harris's chief consultant, Andy Yates, confirmed that Dowless was hired by Red Dome to work on the campaign but denied that officials were aware of any illegal activity.

Yates has acknowledged that Harris, a pastor from the suburbs of Charlotte, "was aware of Red Dome's relationship with Mr. Dowless and believes like I do that Mr. Dowless operated within the bounds of the law." Yates said Dowless assured him he was not illegally collecting ballots.

Dowless, 62, is vice chair of the Bladen Soil and Water Conservation District

and has a criminal record. Court records show he was convicted of fraud, perjury and passing a worthless check in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

In the primary and general elections, a large number of returned mail-in ballots came from a single street in Bladenboro, according to state records — Pecan Street, where the Village Oak Apartments, a cluster of public-housing units built around a giant oak tree, are located.

Stay tuned and you folks in the 9th District had better get ready for another election very soon.

What a mess.

Royce Harper, Mayor, Town of Tabor City

Words from the Mayor



Excitement is building in the community for the annual

Christmas parade which will be held this Thursday night.

The line up will take place on Stake Road, and the route is unchanged from previous years.

Crowds usually assemble in the downtown area and head over to the library after the parade is over. The Chamber of Commerce has lined up a lot of entertainment, the annual tree lighting, and of course a visit by Saint Nicholas. I hope to see you downtown for all of these events.

On behalf of the Town Council, I would like to extend our heartfelt sympa-

thy to the friends and family of Ricky Dudley who passed away last week.

Ricky was a member of our Public Works staff and was assigned to the wastewater treatment plant. He resided in the Williams Township area, but spent most of his time with his family in Reigelwood.

Ricky was stricken with cancer last Summer and had hoped to return to work and pursue a state license to operate sewer plants. He will certainly be missed.

A word of thanks goes out to the members of the Tabor City Police Department who are making a specific effort to increase their presence in our commercial areas during the holiday season. Hopefully this presence can be a deterrent to crime.

Chief Dowless and his staff always welcome citizens calling on them whenever you see something suspicious taking place in their neighborhood. By cooperating together, we can create a safer Tabor City.

As the gift giving season moves into full swing, lets all remember to S-M-I-L-E, that is Spend Money In the Local Economy. Our Tabor City businesses will be here with service after the sale....something you just can't get ordering something on line.

Our local businesses support our schools, our recreation programs, our festival, and so much more. Let's all give our local folks a chance to earn your business this Christmas season.

McLeod Health Hints

Robotic surgery

Today's healthcare choices represent centuries of discoveries, improvements in treatment and development of new tools for care.

Surgery, like all fields of medicine, is forever changing. There are three options for surgical procedures: traditional open surgery, minimally invasive surgery, and robotic-assisted surgery.

Traditional surgery is performed through a large, open incision. The larger incision allows the surgeon access to the area where the operation is to take place.

Minimally invasive surgery or laparoscopic surgery is performed through tiny incisions with the use of minimally invasive instruments. The instruments function as the surgeon's hands and a laparoscopic camera allows the surgeon to view inside the body. The camera's image is projected onto a monitor in the operating room for the surgeon to view while performing surgery.

Robotic-assisted surgery is an advanced form of minimally invasive surgery where surgeons use a computer-controlled robot to assist in certain surgical procedures. Like minimally invasive surgery, robotic-assisted surgery is performed through a few small incisions.

It is a human driven operation with the surgeon controlling the robot's every move while seated at a console in the operating room. The surgical site is viewed through a high-definition 3-D camera. It is almost as if the surgeon is working from inside the patient's

body. On the console, hand controls allow the surgeon to manipulate the surgical instruments inside the patient. The instruments act as the surgeon's hands and fingers, but on the inside of the body and on a very small scale. These technological advances and instruments offer tremendous agility, versatility, and enhanced visibility.

Robotic-assisted surgery allows surgeons to perform many types of complex procedures with more precision, flexibility and control than is possible with traditional techniques.

Robotic-assisted surgery can be used for many general surgery procedures including hernia repair, gallbladder disease, colon cancer, reflux disease, prostate cancer, kidney disease, and tumor removal.

Robotic-assisted surgery provides many benefits to the patient including: less pain, smaller scars, faster recovery, quicker return to normal activities, and a shorter hospital stay.

Like minimally invasive surgery, robotic-assisted surgery is not for everyone. Talk with your doctor about your condition and to determine the best surgical option for you.

At McLeod Seacoast Hospital, robotic-assisted surgery is performed by general surgeons, gynecologists, and urologists. Surgeons who offer robotic-assisted surgery as an option for patients have undergone additional specialized training. — Dr. Amanda Turbeville, Board Certified General Surgeon with McLeod Loris Seacoast Surgery, 843-399-9774



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F	V	O	A	S	N	I	B	B	B	O	Y	P	A	E	M	R	O	W	P
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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ABRASION
ARAMID
AUTOCLOVE
BASKET WEAVE
BEAM
BLEEDING
BLEND
BOBBINS
BRAID
BROADCLOTH
CLOTH
COATING
CORD
CREEL
CRIMP
DENIER
DENSITY
DRAPE
DYEING
FABRIC
FIBERS
FILAMENT
GEOTEXTILES
GLAZING
LOOM
LUSTER
MOIRE
PERMEABILITY
PLAITING
ROPE
SKEINS
STRENGTH
TWILL
TWIST
WOVEN
YARN

Tabor Talk

Cynthia Nelson,
Greater Tabor City Chamber of Commerce

The Christmas season is upon us.

Thank you to everyone who came out and supported our annual Christmas Turkey Shoot. We appreciate each volunteer who also helped make it a success.

This past Saturday turned out to be a rainy day and night so the last night of the Turkey Shoot has been rescheduled. Instead of one more night, there will be two more nights, so plan to come out this Friday and Saturday, Dec. 7 and 8 for the final nights of the Christmas Turkey Shoot.

The location is on Hwy. 701 Bypass next to DMA and across from Affordable Metal Roofing. Thank you to TC Fire Department for allowing us to use their location.

Don't you just love Santa Claus? Our area youngsters sure do. Bring them to Tabor-town on Thursday, Dec. 6 to take part in or to watch the Annual Night-time Christmas Parade which will step off at 6 p.m.

To sign up to ride in the parade, please call Gail Buffkin at 910-653-3149. Thank you to the Town of Tabor City for organizing such a beautiful parade.

Immediately following the completion of the parade, the Chamber will host a Christmas Tree Lighting event at the Town Gate located near the Tabor City Public Library. There will be Christmas carols and entertainment by the NC Yam Festival Queens with additional entertainment by Chris Avery of the Kevin Sanson Band, as well as the South Columbus High School Marching Stallions.

The Chamber will sell food, sweet, soft drinks, and more at very affordable prices.

Bring your children to the Santa House to see and talk with Santa. The night-time Christmas Parade and the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting is

just what our community needs to put all in the holiday mood.

Tabor City will become a Christmas town SOON. Many businesses and residents have already been decorating. If you think it looks festive now, just wait until Saturday, Dec. 15 when Bringing Back Main leads the efforts to turn our downtown into a Christmas town to remember.

On that Saturday will also host the annual Christmas on the Lake at Lake Tabor. Registration is at 5 p.m. with the Flotilla beginning at 6 p.m.

BRING YOUR BOAT and make it as festive as you can with lights and decorations. Children will be amazed at the reflection of the Christmas lights bouncing off the water.

Santa, the Grinch and Cindy Lou Who will be there as well so come on out and enjoy this event at the lake.

It takes all of us working together to make our community the best it can possibly be so we invite you to join us in our efforts.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Greater Tabor City Chamber of Commerce, please give us a call and one of us will carry a membership application package to you or have one ready for you to pick up.

If you would like information on the benefits of becoming a member, please call us. Memberships are available in various categories.

Our Chamber is your Chamber.