

Editorial page

Nolia's Notes

A Teacher named COVID (Dinosaurs or Slime)

by NOLIA BIGGERSTAFF



Has COVID taught you anything? Could you reflect on the past year and write down any lessons you have learned from the virus? I was thinking about what COVID has taught me, and it has taught me a few things.

When I first heard about the dangers of the virus on the news, I heard people say that they were afraid the virus would kill a lot of people, and it has. I learned, however, that during the past year, while people were concerned about dying with the virus, folks were dying from other things, such as heart attacks, cancer, and other health issues and tragic accidents.

I learned not to focus so much on what might happen and to just try to live day by day.

I learned that I could keep myself busy doing things that did not require me to leave the house or our yard.

I learned to not take for granted a trip to a store, even Bell's and the Dollar Stores!

I learned that worrying about my friends and relatives during this virus situation was useless.

I learned that some of my friends and relatives continued to attend gatherings such as funerals and weddings with no problems. Some of them continued to go on vacations and eat out at restaurants with no

masks and had no problems.

Some died, however.

Dwayne and I have been cautious. Sadly, we missed two very important family member's funerals and several funerals of dear friends. We missed several weddings, too. We have missed vacation opportunities and visits with family and friends. We have missed carefree shopping and feeling free to go anywhere and attend events without hand sanitizer and masks.

I have learned not to take those freedoms for granted.

I have learned that I can do without running to the store every time I need something.

I have learned to be thankful that at least I can speak with friends and family on the phone.

I have learned that the entire world can be affected by something that cannot even be seen by the human eye.

I have learned that if those fictitious movies from Hollywood about killer viruses can come true, we would do well not to watch Jurassic Park movies and The Blob movie, because in the year 2021 we might be facing dinosaurs and slimy goo taking over the world!

Most of all, I have learned that prayer is the only thing that brings me real comfort and peace, COVID or no COVID, dinosaurs or slime!

This weeks tips from the BBB

Allowing someone you don't know to drive away with your belongings is among the most stressful aspects of a long-distance move - especially if that move is complicated or maybe prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, some consumers find their stress compounded by fraudulent movers who charge them many times the amount quoted, subject them to unreasonably long delivery windows, hold their items hostage for additional undisclosed fees and leave them with damaged goods.

An investigative study by Better Business Bureau found that scams are widespread in the moving industry, particularly when it comes to interstate moves. BBB receives an average of 13,000 complaints and negative reviews about movers each year, with many complaints describing how experiences with dishonest moving companies have turned into financial and emotional nightmares.

The investigative study - Know Your Mover: BBB Study Reveals Scammers Price Gouge, Taking Belongings Hostage and Destroy Goods - highlights the risk to consumers who do not do careful research before hiring a mover.

According to the study, a fraudulent moving company initially may be helpful on the phone and may have a well-designed website boasting of its many years of experience, well-trained workers, satisfied customers and appropriate licensing. However, the red flags begin when the company claims to be unable to make an in-person inspection and estimate; while it may claim to be local, in reality, it is based out of state and paying for a local post office box address. An initial low-ball quote soon balloons as the company claims - often based on improper calculations - you have more belongings than originally estimated.

The bad actor may demand additional fees before loading and unloading the truck, and it may not deliver your goods until days or even weeks after you move in. In fact, the company you originally paid may not even be the company conducting your move - it may have hired local temporary workers who rented a truck, or it may have acted as a broker with another company.

The U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), a branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation, regulates interstate and international moves. Of the complaints FMCSA receives, the last study showed that 57% involved overcharging. It is believed that fewer than 10% of victims report fraud to BBB or enforcement agencies, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC),

so the actual size and severity of this problem is likely much larger and more severe than statistics reflect.

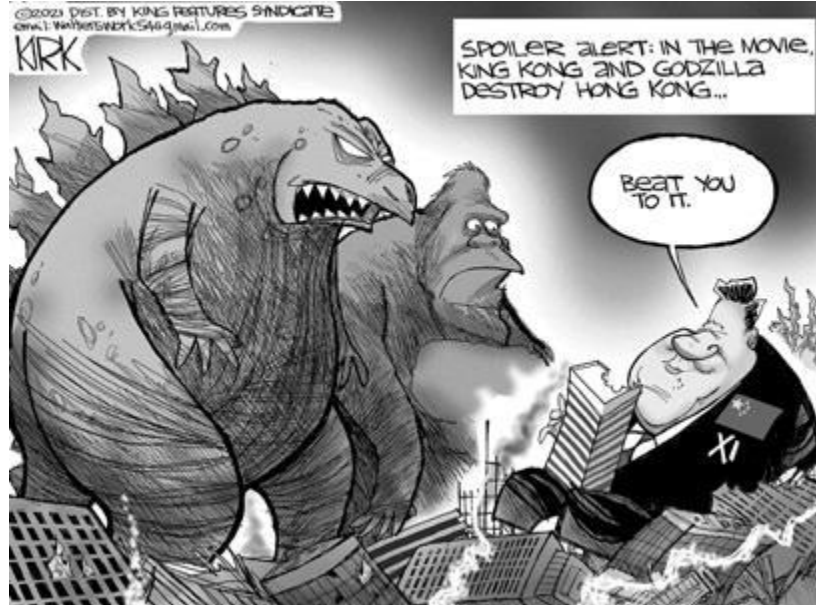
One man relocating his family for a better job opportunity found himself ensnared in one common variation of a moving scam. He obtained a quote of \$5,000 from a moving company that had good online reviews, but a week later, a man claiming to be an "expert estimator" for the company called him with a revised estimate of nearly \$10,000. On moving day, when most of his family's belongings had already been loaded, the man was given a final price of more than \$20,000 - and movers demanded an additional \$1000 in cash when they arrived with his family's items nearly a month later. While the man's employer had agreed to reimburse his move, he was required to repay them the additional \$10,000 he had been charged over the revised estimate.

Enforcement action against moving scams can be difficult. While FMCSA does not have law enforcement power, it is able to send demand letters to bad actors, levy fines and revoke operating authority, and it partners with some state agencies to take legal action. The U.S. Department of Transportation Inspector General prioritizes moving fraud and, along with FMCSA, has supported state and federal law enforcement agencies in prosecuting moving fraud and related offenses. Many moving scams involve Israeli nationals operating from Florida, where the state attorney general has been active in bringing lawsuits against such enterprises.

The best way to avoid such a scam is to do careful research before hiring a moving company. Specifically, BBB advises looking up a mover's license number on FMCSA's website and its BBB Business Profile at bbb.org.

If you find yourself the victim of a moving scam:

- File a report with local police.
- Contact MoveRescue at moverescue.com or (800) 832-1773.
- Go to BBB.org to file a complaint or report a scam on Scam Tracker.
- File an online complaint with the U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration or call 1-888-DOT-SAFT (1-888-368-7238). While the regulator typically does not represent individual victims, it does track complaints and will request the mover's license number.
- File a claim with the insurer listed in your moving contract.
- To review the full BBB Study, visit www.BBB.org/scamstudies.



Consumers get answers from Ga. Department of Agriculture

Consumer Q's is a weekly question-and-answer column by Arty Schronce at the Georgia Department of Agriculture. Please share your thoughts, questions and suggestions with him by phone, mail or email.

Q: Is it true that lavender is one of the ingredients in the formula for Coca-Cola?

A: Lavender can have a refreshing cola-like fragrance when you rub its leaves. There is no telling whether it is part of the secret formula for the famous soft drink, however.

Q: Are there any weeping trees besides the weeping willow?

A: There are numerous species of trees that have varieties with pendulous or weeping branches. The most common is the weeping Higan cherry. This popular tree is much like weeping willow in that its branches are limber and can move in breezes the way the branches of the weeping willow do. Other varieties of trees have pendulous branches, but they are generally stiffer than the weeping willow.

A few examples suitable for Georgia include weeping varieties of yaupon, bald cypress, flowering dogwood, blue Atlas cedar, white mulberry, oriental persimmon, redbud or Judas tree, Canadian hemlock, winged elm, Scotch elm, crabapple and pussy willow. With so many weeping varieties, it is possible to have a garden that looks like a botanical Niagara Falls.

Q: Is it true that the herb rue can cause burns on the skin?

A: Yes, there are reports that the oils in rue (*Ruta graveolens*) are phototoxic. That is to say, the oils you can get on your skin from handling the leaves will damage the skin when exposed to light. Essentially, the oils act as the opposite of sunscreen. This characteristic of rue was written into an episode of *Downton Abbey* on Masterpiece Theatre on PBS when one of the servants came down with a strange rash on his hands after trimming rue. Rue can be an attractive and interesting plant in the garden, but it should be treated with caution, and children should be instructed about not handling it.

Q: I love lemons. Are there any varieties that are well survive Georgia's winters?

A: Lemons are not winter-hardy in Georgia. However, they are easy to grow as houseplants in sunrooms or sunny windows. The pots should

be set outdoors in the summer. 'Ponderosa' and 'Meyer' are the two most popular lemon varieties to grow as houseplants. If you really love lemons, consider growing other lemony plants such as lemon balm, lemon verbena, lemon thyme, lemon grass and lemon basil.

You may also want to try growing the trifoliolate orange (*Poncirus trifoliata*). It is the most cold-hardy member of the citrus family and will grow throughout Georgia and even farther north. It is almost exclusively grown as ornamental for its interesting branches, white flowers and attractive yellow fruits that look like small, round lemons with a velvety surface. Although the fruit is fragrant and citrusy, it contains little pulp compared with other citrus species. The pulp is extremely sour and chock full of seeds.

If you have questions about agriculture, horticulture, food safety or services or products regulated by the Georgia Department of Agriculture, write Arty Schronce (arty.schronce@agr.georgia.gov) or visit the department's website at www.agr.georgia.gov.

Registration opens for adult softball at recreation dept.

The Lincoln County Recreation Department is hosting "Summer Slugfest," an adult softball league. The season will run June 15-July 22, with games held every Tuesday and Thursday.

Teams can be co-ed or all men with a \$250 registration fee per team. Registration will run from March 15-May 31 at the recreation complex.

League rules include: all team members must be in uniform (jersey); have 15 players to a roster; use 44 core and 375 compression balls; no illegal bats; five homeruns per game; any homerun after five changes the inning.

The end-of-season tournament will be held July 31.

For more information contact LCRD Director LeTrellis Glaze or Lisa Willingham at 706-359-2236.

Mail in tithes

Price Grove Baptist Church members are reminded that they are able to mail in their tithes to Price Grove Baptist Church, P.O. Box 916, Lincolnton, GA 30817.



CRIMSON CANYONS & MESAS NATIONAL PARKS TOUR

10 days, departs June - September 2021

Las Vegas • Grand Canyon • Bryce Canyon • Zion • Capitol Reef • Arches & Canyonlands • and more —

Experience the red rocks of these 6 iconic national parks. Travel through deserts, forests, mountains, and to the very edge of the Grand Canyon in this tour.



promo code N7017
1-866-530-0876

*Free date changes anytime up to 45 days prior to departure for land tours. Deposits and final payments remain non-refundable. Prices are per person based on double occupancy plus \$299 in taxes & fees. Single supplement and seasonal surcharges may apply. Add-on airfare available. Offers apply to new bookings only, made by 6/30/21. Other terms & conditions may apply. Ask your Travel Consultant for details.



MG Sprouts in Lincoln County

By Robyn Stewart
Lincoln County Extension Service



As children, many of us experienced the wonder of watching a seed germinate and learning how plants grow. Gardening can provide a variety of forms of engagement for children including designing, planting, and maintaining gardens, harvesting, preparing, and sharing food, working cooperatively with others, learning about science and nutrition, and creating art and stories inspired by gardens and plant life. From colorful flowers, fruits and vegetables, crops like cotton and corn, trees, and more, plants provide a fascinating amount of diversity to the world around us.

There are many benefits of gardening education for children. Many adults recall vivid positive memories of play and exploration in gardens or natural settings. These childhood memories have been connected to an interest in gardening and a positive relationship with gardens and trees as people age. Collaboration in garden settings shows an increase in self-understanding, maturity, responsibility, and interpersonal skills between youth and adults. Gardens can also provide valuable youth education in life and biological sciences as well as nutrition and healthy living.

With UGA restrictions lightening up, Lincoln County Extension is thrilled to announce our partnership with the Lincoln County Library on our first in-person program of 2021, MG Sprouts.

This six-week program is designed for youth ages 6-8 and will introduce students to the wonders of gardening through readings and activities conducted at the Lincoln County Library. Sessions will be held Tuesdays from June 8th through July 16th from 10-11 a.m. and registration is required. Please contact the Lincoln County Extension Office at ugc3181@uga.edu or 706-359-3233 to register your

Festival entries wanted

The American Legion Post 194 and Classic South Quilt Guild is looking for entries for their upcoming quilt, craft and sewing festival scheduled for June 12-13. If you have quilts, sewing crafts, or toys, novelty items, ceramics, paintings, jewelry, etc., please contact Linda Buesching at 706-359-1572 or Al Ewing at 661-666-3749 for more information on entering your items.

Sit, Sew classes

The American Legion is hosting additional classes: "Sit & Sew" classes, meet monthly on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday morning, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

"Quilting Classes" are monthly, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday, 7-9:30 p.m. Call Linda Buesching/Instructor at (706) 359-1572.

Sewing and quilting stations are appropriated spaced and masks are required.

All levels of quilting welcome. The cost is a "donation" to the American Legion.

BOE meeting dates

The Lincoln County Board of Education 2021 meeting dates are follows: May 11, June 8, July 13, Aug. 10, Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14, and Jan. 11, 2022.

The meetings will be held at 7 p.m. at the Board of Education Administration Offices Building at 423 Metasville Rd.

Dinners at Post 194

American Legion Post 194, is resuming its tradition of dinners on Friday nights from 6 - 8 p.m. from "Hoppy's Kitchen."

Friday guests will be delighted with the array of entertainment in the new lounge starting at 7 p.m. with hosts, blues and popular standards singer Al Ewing and country music singer and Elvis impersonator Kelly Ray Burkham.

Music lovers are encouraged to bring their talents or their dancing shoes to the heart of Lincolnton, 1121 American Legion Road.

Activities Thursdays through Saturdays, 5:00 - 11:00 p.m. include pool, karaoke, sports entertainment on multiple screens. The Legion Grill menu is back and available to members and guests.

For more information contact Al Ewin at 706-825-2363, Joe Kelly at 661-666-3749, 706-825-2363, or 706-359-3445. Email djalbaby@yahoo.com or Alpost194@yahoo.com.

Boats4Kidneys.com

Donate your Boat to help
people needing organ
transplants on
MatchingDonors.com

1-800-385-0422

The Lincoln Journal

Established in 1893

The Official Organ of Lincolnton and Lincoln County (USPS 313-660)

Published every Thursday in Lincolnton, Georgia
Peachtree Street, by Wilkes Publishing Co., Inc.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE

One year in Lincoln County - \$26.00

Wilkes, Taliaferro Counties - 26.00

Outside three-county area - \$41.00

(includes 8% state and local sales tax)

Periodicals postage paid at Lincolnton, Georgia

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

The Lincoln Journal, P.O. Box 399

Lincolnton, Georgia 30817

706-359-3229

Email us at: journal@nu-z.net

Visit us online at www.lincolnjournalonline.com