

THE POSTSCRIPT

Patron of the Arts

By CARRIE CLASSON
Columnist

My landlord, Jorge, is a patron of the arts.

When I imagine a patron of the arts, I imagine some fabulously wealthy person in the past, supporting the creation of art in Italy or New York—someone with an impossibly luxurious lifestyle, maybe with a couple of designer dogs on diamond leashes standing at attention nearby.

None of this sounds much like Jorge. Jorge runs a small hotel in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, and spends most days either repotting plants or greeting customers.

But I don't know what else to call him because, for more than a week now, he's kept three artists working full-time. They show up with paints and brushes and they work all day (except for a lunch break on the roof).

They started out by making more suns. When my husband, Peter, and I checked into his hotel, Jorge had 2,504 smiling sun faces hanging from every wall of the courtyard. The artists made another dozen sun faces, some of which look like superhero suns, and I assumed that was why they were here—maybe there was a goal to hit 3,000 by year's end. What do I know?

But the artists never left. Yesterday, they showed up with two enormous blank canvases and set them up in the courtyard. I was terribly curious about what they were up to, but was afraid figuring that out would require more Spanish than I could manage.

I eventually learned that these canvases were going into hotel rooms. Depictions of the town's skyline, with the stunning 17th century gothic church, were being painted on both and, naturally, there would be a smiling

sun in the bright blue sky. The artists were working from little photos Jorge provided, but the photos were small and fuzzy, in black and white and, of course, there were no smiling suns in the photos.

I think it's a wonderful idea. The artists are down in the courtyard right now and appear to be having an excellent time. I see these artists working away and it touches my heart.

"Where does Jorge get his money?" Peter wanted to know.

Peter worries that we are not paying Jorge enough and when the eight-room hotel is not full, Peter frets that Jorge will go out of business. But Jorge has been doing this a long time, so I tell Peter not to worry.

I was walking through the artisan market, as I do almost every day, when I saw a hand-painted T-shirt that I loved. I told the young woman running the shop that I loved it, but it was too big.

"Eduardo could make you a smaller one," she told me in Spanish.

"Eduardo?" She pointed to the T-shirt. At the corner of the artwork, there was a signature. It said, "Ed."

"Oh! Does Eduardo paint all the clothing here?"

"Yes!" The young woman said enthusiastically. "Eduardo... or his mother."

That sealed it. I had to have a T-shirt now that I knew it would be personally painted by Eduardo... or his nameless mother. In a world where so much of what I experience and own is so much the same, it's wonderful to know there are artists out there, making beautiful things one at a time.

My T-shirt was finished four days later and I've been wearing it nearly nonstop. I don't think this makes me a patron of the arts, certainly not on Jorge's level, but it thrills me to know I have a shirt that is exactly like no other and that I provided a little work for Eduardo... or his mother.

Till next time,
Carrie

Carrie Classon's memoir is called "Blue Yarn." Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.



Back in the Day

100 Years Ago This Week

Clifford Walker of Monroe, former Attorney General who was defeated by Governor Hardwick in the last gubernatorial campaign, has announced that he will run for governor in the democratic state primary this year.

Officer Henry Sturdivant surprised his many friends in Washington and the county last Sunday by slipping to Atlanta and getting married. Mr. Sturdivant's bride was Miss Lora Campbell of the Gate City.

The governor has issued a proclamation urging all citizens to buy nothing which was grown or made outside the state, if a comparable item originating within the state is available. At a mass meeting at the Courthouse, a large number of local citizens voiced support of the plan and went one step further. They pledged to buy nothing that is grown or made outside the county if a similar product, originating within the county, is available.

The baseball team of the Academy of Richmond County defeated the WHS team by a score of 7-1 in a hard-fought game Friday.

85 Years Ago This Week

The Washington Daffodil Club announced this week that it will sponsor its annual Spring Flower Show April 23. It will be held at the Woman's Club from 4 to 7 p.m.

Along with other camps throughout the nation, the CCC camp near Washington will observe the fourth anniversary of the organization of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Sunday. The public is invited to attend and to inspect the work the group has accomplished.

At the next general election, voters will be called on to decide whether or not the state should institute a program for the payment of assistance for the aged who are in need, for the blind and for dependent children.

Barbara Stanwyck and Joel McCrea are featured in "Banjo On My Knee," at the Strand on Monday and Tuesday. Supporting players include Helen Westley, Buddy Ebsen, Anthony Martin and Walter Catlett.

75 Years Ago This Week

Conservationists have determined that foxes are the greatest threat to wildlife, due to their large numbers and the variety of diseases they carry. Therefore, a new program has been set up under which citizens will be paid a bounty of \$2.00 for each fox that is killed. To claim the bounty, the person must cut off the fox's ears, and turn them in to one who will pay the bounty. It has not yet been determined who will be designated to receive the ears and pay the bounties.

A 3% sales tax measure was passed in the Georgia House of Representatives but was killed in the Senate.

Governor M.E. Thompson has named State Senator Frank Arnold of Washington as an aid to the Governor.

Troupe Harris Jr. was named to the dean's list at Mars Hill College for the Fall Semester.

50 Years Ago This Week

Lions Club President Pete Kopecky welcomed four new club members last week: Frank Jackson, Jerrell Pharr, Ed George and Wayne Mixon

The Board of Trustees of Wilkes Academy has announced the hiring of Dr. Robert L. Gattton as headmaster, to fill the vacancy caused by the departure of Raymond Dix at the end of the school year. Dr. Gattton will come from Brenau Academy in Gainesville where he served as dean.

John Lindsey was named Grand Prize winner in the Elementary Division of the CSRA Science Fair

at Bell Auditorium in Augusta. His project was on air pollution.

The Small Business Administration has named Addison Burt "Small Businessman of the Year" for Georgia. Burt Lumber Company's payroll has grown from \$40,000 in 1957 to \$600,000 in 1970. Annual sales will surpass \$3,000,000 this year.

25 Years Ago This Week

Boyce Hopkins of Metasville celebrated his 85th birthday on March 23. He received 55 cards wishing him a happy birthday and one of the cards was from President Bill Clinton.

The lovely home of Mrs. Charlie Wright in Tignall was the setting for the Washington-Wilkes Garden Club meeting Tuesday afternoon, March 18.

Jennifer McAvoy's class at the W-W Primary School ended a unit of study on nursery rhymes by dressing up as their favorite character and acting out the rhymes.

Elijah Anderson, 57, recognized locally as a true business entrepreneur and political activist, died Monday, March 17, 1997, after being stricken by a heart attack at his home in Washington.

The Washington Little Theater Company will present its spring production of the musical Brigadoon on four dates in April. The musical is directed by Sue Davidson and stars a dozen talented actors singers and dreamers.

Corrections

Last week, this newspaper reported that Councilman Larry Hill has code enforcement fines imposed against him. Further, we reported that the fines will come into effect after the April 12 court date for the municipal court. All the above information is correct except for the date. The next municipal court date is April 19.

Always striving for excellence and accuracy,
The News-Reporter Team

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ninth week of session with the Georgia General Assembly

By Rep. Trey Rhodes
Georgia House District 120

(Trey Rhodes serves as chairman of the House of Representatives Game, Fish, and Parks Committee and is a member of the Banks and Banking, Economic Development and Tourism, Special Rules, and Ways and Means committees. He represents Greene, Oglethorpe, Taliaferro, and parts of Wilkes and Putnam counties.)



On Tuesday, March 8, I returned to the Georgia State Capitol for another eventful week of the 2022 legislative session. The Crossover Day deadline is approaching in a matter of days, so this week was one of our busiest and most crucial times of the session thus far. We took advantage of an entire committee work day and spent three long days in the House Chamber to vote on a multitude of bills, including the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 budget, mental health care reform legislation, and several other measures that will impact Georgians.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the people of our district!!! This week I qualified to run again for another two year term to fight for your values and beliefs. I look forward to continuing my service to you in the Georgia State House.

Fiscal Year 2023 Budget

Before the week was over, the House came one step closer to fulfilling our only constitutional obligation by passing House Bill 911, the FY 2023 budget. This budget dedicates our state funds for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2022, and ends the following year on June 30, 2023. The FY 2023 budget is set at a revenue estimate of \$30.2 billion, which is a \$2.9 billion or 10.8 percent increase over the FY 2022 original budget, and this budget permanently restores nearly \$640 million eliminated from the budget in FY 2021 during the economic uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last nine months, the House Appropriations Committee worked strategically to identify how to provide more funding to:

Public Safety

Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) is allocated an additional \$18 million, to hire 67 additional staff and retain current staff in critical areas including forensic labs and the medical examiner's office to speed evidence processing and investigations

Georgia Department of Public Safety

\$4.9 million in this budget bill to hire additional state troopers and expand crisis intervention training opportunities for law enforcement officers statewide

Mental Health Services

\$5.5 million is included for the state's accountability court system to create five new mental health accountability courts, provide raises for accountability court employees and provide additional specialized staff support

\$16 million is allocated for additional staff positions and salary increases for the state's prosecutors and public defenders to assist with recruitment and retention

Georgia Department of Law

\$2 million in HB 911 to hire additional staff to focus on prosecuting human traffickers and gang members
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)

\$9.7 allocated to fund a new 16-bed and 50 temporary observation chair behavioral health crisis center, as well as \$3.8 million to retrofit another facility in Augusta to add eight beds and 16 observation chairs

\$6.3 million is budgeted for opening additional bed space at the 18-bed adult medical psychiatric unit at Grady Memorial Hospital

The Georgia Crisis and Access Line is earmarked \$2.1 million to prepare for the launch of the national 988 hotline

\$6.6 million to fund 325 additional slots for the New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Education

As always, educating Georgia's children remains a key priority reflected in the FY 23 state budget, and this budget includes more funding for K-12 education than ever before. The Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding formula for public schools is funded at more than \$11.8 billion. There is also an additional \$3 million to maintain our charter school facilities.

Georgia Student Finance Com-

mission received additional funding for service cancellable loans to boost recruitment and retention among key state employees including state medical examiners, National Guard members, law enforcement officers and mental health practitioners.

These are just some of the highlights that I am most excited to bring your attention to today. A comprehensive list of FY 2023 highlights from the House Budget and Research Office can be found here.

Amended Fiscal Year 2022 Final Passage

In addition, the Georgia General Assembly gave final passage to House Bill 910, or the Amended Fiscal Year 2022 budget this week, sending it to Governor Kemp to be signed into law. The AFY 2022 budget is set at a revenue estimate of \$30.3 billion, which is an increase of \$3.08 billion or 1.3 percent over the current budget. This increase will allow our state to provide additional funding during the current fiscal year for many of our priorities, including more than \$900 million in one-time expenses for our state's infrastructure and \$950 million to provide salary increases for state employees and teachers.

Mental Health Parity Act

We also passed one of the most important, bipartisan bills of the entire session this week with House Bill 1013, or the Georgia Mental Health Parity Act, to provide comprehensive reforms for our state's mental health care system and give Georgians struggling with mental illness the resources they need. This legislation, which has been in the

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