

# News from under the Gold Dome

With Crossover Day behind us, the Senate is now turning its attention to House legislation and one of our most important responsibilities: crafting the Fiscal Year 2027 state budget. This week, Senate leaders met with agencies and stakeholders to review funding needs and ensure our state remains on a strong financial path.

This process may take time, but it's one of the reasons Georgia is consistently recognized for responsible financial management. Every dollar we approve is taxpayer money, and we take that responsibility seriously. That means asking tough questions, carefully reviewing requests, and making sure we invest in programs that truly benefit Georgia families.

We are also working to make sure state policies do not place unnecessary burdens on our local communities. This week, I voted to pass House Bill 244, which will allow smaller local governments with annual expenditures of

less than \$2.5 million to complete a streamlined audit process. Right now, many small towns are required to conduct full audits every year, which can be expensive and difficult for communities with limited staff and resources. This legislation maintains accountability while giving smaller governments more flexibility so they can spend more time focusing on the services their residents rely on.

Protecting your finances is another priority we addressed this week. The Senate passed House Bill 945, which strengthens protections against financial exploitation. Unfortunately, scams targeting seniors and vulnerable individuals have become more common and increasingly sophisticated. This bill allows banks to place a temporary 15-day hold on transactions if they suspect someone is being financially exploited. Financial institutions are often the first to notice suspicious activity, and this legislation gives them the ability to step in and help prevent

someone from losing their hard-earned savings.

We also took an important step toward helping more children find permanent homes. The Senate adopted Senate Resolution 771, creating the Senate Study Committee on Adoption and Permanency Affordability. For many loving families, the cost of adoption can be a major barrier. This committee will study ways to make adoption more affordable and accessible so that more children in Georgia have the opportunity to grow up in safe, stable homes.

In addition, I have been working to pass legislation that helps keep our environment and communities safe. I sponsored and passed House Bill 956, which allows funding from the Solid Waste Trust Fund to support a statewide solid waste management program. The Solid Waste Trust Fund already supports important efforts like responding to contamination emergencies, disposing of scrap tires

and maintaining and inspecting waste facilities. Expanding its use to support a statewide management program will strengthen oversight, improve sanitation and help protect our natural resources for future generations.

Finally, we had two very special visitors at the Capitol this week. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins and Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper joined members of the General Assembly for a discussion with the Georgia Farm Caucus. This marked Secretary Rollins' third visit to Georgia, and we are always proud to welcome her to our state. I appreciate the work both Secretary Rollins and Commissioner Harper are doing on behalf of our farmers, and I am honored to support their efforts to strengthen agriculture across Georgia and our nation.

As always, hearing directly from you is one of the most important parts of my job. If you have questions, concerns or ideas about issues af-

## Russ Goodman STATE SENATOR



russ.goodman@senate.ga.gov.

fecting our community, please do not hesitate to contact my office. It is an honor to serve you under the Gold Dome.

Sen. Russ Goodman serves as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Consumer Affairs. He

represents the 8th Senate District, which includes Atkinson, Clinch, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes and Pierce counties, as well as a portion of Ware County. He may be reached by phone at (404) 463-1318 or by email at Russ.Good-

## We're Hiring Bus Drivers

Starting Pay Range  
**\$16.09- \$19.67/hour**  
with Benefits



- » Passes a criminal background check
- » Holds a high school diploma or equivalent
- » Completes a pre-employment drug screening
- » Must hold or be eligible to hold a CDL w/ PS endorsement
- » CDL training available



Apply on the Clinch County School website

[www.clinchcounty.com](http://www.clinchcounty.com)

Go to Employment Opportunities under QuickLinks.  
912-487-5321

## County

(Continued from Page 1)

Colten Gosier, Brooks Jenral Deloach, Echols Kenzion Harrell, Atkinson Jackson Culpepper, Irwin Bryce Murphy, Lanier Christian Brown, Charlton Zalachi Brown, Turner Tray King, Turner Quintavius Prather, Turner

**Honorable Mention**  
Issac Williams (Atkinson) Zacari Wilson (Atkinson) Shane Burns (Clinch) Fred Causey (Clinch) Jamari Gloster (Lanier)

Tony Flores (Echols) Austin Burton (Irwin) Anthony Glover (Charlton) Omari Wilson (Charlton) Keontre Ezell (Turner) Hassan Sears (Turner) Jaylen Butts (Brooks) Jamarion Crumity (Brooks) Jayden Berrien (Brooks) Jacob Thigpen (Charlton)

### Girls

Coach of the Year- Aleshia Sumpter Charlton

Player of the Year- Ja'kari Northcutt- #2 JR-Atkinson

Offensive Player of the Year- Christiona Farmer- #13-SR-Charlton

Co-defensive Players of the Year- Janiya Smith - #32- Turner & Janiyah Thomas - #12- Brooks

**1st Team**  
#5-Irwin County-Ava Avant

#10-Irwin County-Emalea Newell

#3-Lanier County- Dakota Williams

#5-Lanier County-Dallal Turalic

#4-Turner County-Aalunah Edwards

#25-Charlton County-Makayla Lambert

#22-Charlton County-Sincere Humphries

#23-Charlton County-Trenity Hamilton

#2-Brooks County-Jaliyah Butts

#3-Clinch County-D'Marrea Magby

#13-Clinch County-Tara Stevens

#5-Clinch County-Jhi'Nieral Mingo

**2nd Team**  
#4-Lanier-KK Trejo  
#1-Lanier-Bri Locklear

#20-Echols-Ella Bone

#10-Turner-Amber Jackson

#5-Turner-De'Mariana Graddie

#12-Charlton-Ryanna Mitchell

#0-Charlton-Deekayla Mackey

#22-Brooks-Kmana Grier

#34-Brooks-Rahasia Frazier

#11-Atco-Makenzi Merrell

#12-Clinch-Makailey Cobb

#12-Irwin-Brooklyn Gordon

#31-Irwin-Brynlee Brown

**Honorable Mention**

#15-Brooks-Kimora Hardy

#13-Brooks-Ceasia Horne

#1-Clinch-Destiny Tolbert

#23-Clinch-Journee Johnson

#4-Atco-Trinity Bolden

#0-Atco-Rachel Vince

#5-Atco-Mackenzie Hayes

#1-Turner-Destini Sanders

#20-Irwin-Shalia Lampkin

#11-Irwin-Ziyah Robinson

#15-Echols-Zoey Church

#22-Echols-Jayden

Carter #2-Lanier-Aubrey Allen

## COME SEE US AT YOUR HOMETOWN BUTCHER SHOP

- We've got fresh seafood!
- Best steaks in town!
- All of our 'specialties' - hogshead cheese, BBQ sauces, baked potato topper, pimento cheese
- No need to cook - we have it already prepared daily
- Call us about catering your event!

**Richard's** MEATS & SEAFOOD  
14 PLANT AVENUE • HOMERVILLE • 487-5822

## ACTION PACT HEAD START

Give Your child a Head Start

To schedule an application appointment, contact us at:  
**Clinch County Head Start- 912-487-5304**  
282 Carswell St., Homerville, GA 31634

REGISTRATION  
NOW OPEN  
FOR  
2026-2027

### Key Benefits

- No-Cost
- Birth to 4 Years of Age
- Quality Education to Support School Readiness
- Family-Well Being & Partnerships
- Health & Nutrition Services
- Individualized Services
- Disability & Mental Health Support for Children & Families
- Provides Services for Teen and Expectant Mothers
- Parent Engagement & Volunteer Opportunities
- Male Involvement
- No Transportation

Head Start is a federally funded preschool program with services provided at no cost to enrollees. Applicants must be income eligible; however, priority is given to children with a diagnosed disability (IFSP/IEP), children in foster care, and children experiencing homelessness, regardless of income. Anyone receiving SNAP benefits with current proof is categorically eligible.

## UGA Blueberry Field Day

Hosted by the UGA Blueberry Breeding Program and UGA Berrien County Extension Office

**Date: March 27, 2026**

**Time: 11:00 am to 3:00 pm**

**Location: UGA Alapaha Blueberry Research Farm, Alapaha Georgia (<https://goo.gl/maps/yC54vkyALCqP8waS9>; about 2.7 miles south of Alapaha on US Hwy 129)**

**After farm visit, we will serve lunch at the UGA Berrien County Extension office followed by an educational session.**

Presenter	Title
Dr. Luan Oliveira	Precision Agriculture Blueberry Trials.
Dr. Jonathan Oliver	Blueberry Disease Management
Dr. Angelos Deltsidis	Postharvest management of Georgia blueberries
Dr. Ashfaq Sial	Monitoring and management of insect pests in blueberries
Federica Rossi	From Light to Fruit: How Selective Pruning Affects Blueberry Yield and Quality
Natalia Espinoza	Optimizing fertilizer use: How do fertilization practices impact soil health and blueberry nutrition?
Sindoor Nalajala	Breeding Better Blueberries: Expanding diversity through hybridization

- **Any trouble finding the farm please contact Benjamin Reeves at 229-445-5962**
- **Pesticide credit hours will be available**
- **In the event of inclement weather, the program will be promptly rescheduled**