

News from under the Gold Dome

With just one week left under the Gold Dome, we are fulfilling our responsibility to lower costs, protect your family and make sure Georgia continues to lead in responsible government.

This week, the Senate took up House Bill 974, a \$38.5 billion budget that reflects both the strength of Georgia's economy and our commitment to conservative financial stewardship. Unlike the federal government, which continues to rack up debt with no tangible plan to pay it back, Georgia is constitutionally required to balance its budget, and we do it the right way.

We are making targeted investments in education and our future workforce, including \$70 million to place a literacy coach in every K-3 classroom. At the same time, we are expanding the Georgia PROMISE Scholarship to give families more options and greater control over their child's education, because we trust parents, not bureaucracies, to make those decisions.

We're also standing by the people who have dedicated their lives to public service. By contributing \$100 mil-

lion to the Employees' Retirement System, we are ensuring that Georgia's retirees can remain here, continue contributing to our communities and live with the dignity they've earned.

In our district, this year's budget will allocate \$5 million for the renovation of University Center Building 1 at Valdosta State University and \$575,000 for the construction of the Willis L. Miller Library in Valdosta. I appreciate the Committee's work in supporting our local educational facilities.

We are continuing to cut through government overreach and protect your wallet through a variety of measures that have also passed through the Senate this week.

House Bill 1247, the Georgia Bureaucratic Deference Elimination Act, and the Red Tape Rollback Act send a clear message that unelected agencies do not get to make up rules that hurt your bottom line without accountability. For too long, government has expanded through regulations that never faced a vote. We are putting a stop to that and restoring power where it belongs, with the people.

At the same time, we are making practical, common-sense updates to keep Georgia the best place to live and do business. House Bill 1112 allows businesses to round to the nearest five cents as pennies are phased out, a small but meaningful step to reduce inefficiencies and reflect the realities of today's economy.

In our classrooms, we are choosing focus and safety over distraction. House Bill 1009 establishes a bell-to-bell cellphone ban in high schools. Parents and teachers alike have seen the impact of constant screen time, less engagement, more distraction and fewer real conversations. This legislation helps restore discipline in the classroom, improve academic outcomes and ensure students are attentive in emergency situations.

We are also continuing to stand up for Georgia's rural communities and the industries that keep them strong. The Keep Georgia Forested Act supports our forestry manufacturers, protects jobs and helps stabilize an industry that has been hit hard by economic pressures and storm damage. This session, we've made

sure that every corner of Georgia, from our largest cities to our smallest towns, has a path forward.

I'm proud that the Senate agreed to the House substitute to Senate Bill 523, which strengthens protections against discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, and country of origin in our public schools and postsecondary institutions. With antisemitism on the rise, this legislation reinforces our commitment to ensuring every student feels safe and respected in the classroom. It now heads to the Governor's desk for signature into law.

The Senate also passed House Bill 1266 to ban all personal watercraft on the Ogeechee River. The Ogeechee River is an important part of our state's ecosystems, and prohibiting watercraft other than law enforcement vessels will help preserve the river's wildlife habitats and natural beauty. HB 1266 now awaits the Governor's signature as well.

Finally, we passed House Resolution 1416, creating a Joint Study Committee on the Generational Sustain-

Russ Goodman STATE SENATOR



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ability of Family Farms. Both chambers have recognized the vital role agriculture plays in Georgia and the challenges farmers continue to face. This committee will take a closer look at how we can support farm families and help ensure their operations remain strong for generations to come.

As we approach our final legislative day, I encourage you to stay engaged and reach out with any questions or concerns. Your voice matters, and it contin-

ues to shape the work we do here 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.Goodman@senate.ga.gov.

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Let's Talk Local

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need or want and something for every income level — making the store accessible and welcoming to all shoppers.

Choosing a downtown location was an easy decision. "Location, location, location," Crews said, noting that being in the heart of Homerville allows the business to stay connected to the community. That connection is important to the Crews family, who say they are always ready to encourage and support fellow community members, especially during times of need.

One of the things they love most about being part of downtown is the strong sense of community. Like many small businesses, C&C Treasures experiences the natural ebb and flow of

retail. There are seasons of abundance and seasons that require patience and perseverance. Crews acknowledges that owning a small business comes with long hours and hard work.

Her advice to anyone considering opening a business in downtown Homerville is clear: don't expect to get rich quickly. Instead, go into it because you truly love what you do and are prepared for the dedication it requires. "It is definitely not a 9-to-5," she said.

When asked to complete the sentence, "Downtown is special because...", Crews' answer was simple and heartfelt: it's home.

For more information, C&C Treasures Vintage and Thrift can be reached at (912) 646-9841.

The family of our beloved mother Ena Naylor, would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who sent flowers, shared kind words, and showed their love and support during this difficult time. Seeing the family names and thoughtful gestures meant so much to us.

We are truly grateful to everyone who attended the service, reached out, and kept our family in their thoughts and prayers. Your presence and support brought us comfort and will always be remembered.

With sincere appreciation,
Britnee Tylor & Zolya Mcmillian

CLINCH COUNTY'S COMMUNITY CALENDAR

04 2026 April

EVERYTHING GOING ON IN CLINCH COUNTY IN ONE LOCATION!

SHARE YOUR LOCAL MEETINGS, SCHOOL EVENTS, BIRTHDAYS, WEDDINGS, AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES HERE.
E-MAIL TO NEWS@THECLINCHCOUNTYNEWS.COM

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
			• Panther baseball vs. Wheeler county @ 5:30 pm	• Panther baseball @Charlton County at 6pm	• Panthers baseball vs Charlton County @ 6 pm	• Timberland Jubilee 9 am to 3 pm
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Easter	• County Commissioners meeting @ 6pm • Panther baseball vs. Telfair County @ 4pm	• Panthers baseball @ Echols County at 6 pm	• Clinch baseball vs. Irwin County @ 4 pm	• Homerville City Council Meeting @ 6pm		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	• Panther Baseball @ Lanier County at 6 pm		• Panther Baseball @ Telfair County at 5:30 pm	• Panther Baseball @ Turner county at 6 pm	• Panther Baseball @ Pierce County at 6 pm	
			Taxes Due			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			Earth Day	• Clinch County Board of Education meeting @ 6 p.m.		
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

To submit an item for Clinch County's Community Calendar, e-mail news@theclinchcountynews.com. Birthdays are \$25, and will be carried over every year at no extra cost. Weddings are free if the announcement appeared in the newspaper; \$25 if it didn't. The News reserves the right to move items to front-page briefs due to space constraints, or exclude an item if deemed inappropriate. Church services can be listed on the church page. Call 912-487-5337 with any questions.