

Opinion

A community forum for viewpoints from around the world to your backyard

The Clinch County News

USPS #118-140
113 E. Dame Avenue • Homerville, Georgia 31634
Telephone: 912-487-5337

Published by
AIR Publications, Inc.

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Established in 1894 and published every Wednesday. Entered at the Homerville, Ga. Post Office as periodical rate, Permit No. 118-140. Member of the Georgia Press Association and the National Newspaper Association. Subscription Rates: In Clinch County, \$35 per year. Elsewhere, \$42 per year. Single copy price is .93 cents. POSTMASTER: Address all correspondence to The Clinch County News, P.O. Box 377, Homerville, GA 31634, or e-mail at clinnews@windstream.net.

SPEAK YOUR MIND!

Letters to the Editor

Send your letters to us at P.O. Box 377, Homerville, Ga., 31634, or e-mail to mail@theclinchcountynews.com, or visit our website, www.theclinchcountynews.com.

Jesus and Jam invites community to meeting about potential school

Editor, The News:

To the Community of Homerville, GA -
Is it important to you that your child is not only raised in a Christian home, but also receives a Christian education?

This has been placed deeply on my heart.
As a great-grandparent preparing to send our great-grandchild to Pre-K, I can't help but feel a sense of concern, even fear, about the world our children are growing up in. The reality is, they are facing things at younger ages than ever before, bullying, peer pressure, drugs, confusion, and so much more.

But what if we could be part of the solution?
What if we could create a place where children are not only educated, but poured into with truth, love, and the foundation of Jesus Christ every single day?

That is the vision God has placed before us through Jesus and Jam, to establish a Christian school for grades K-5 right here in our community.

We cannot do this alone. This will take a community coming together, hearts aligned, willing hands, and a shared belief that our children are worth investing in.

If this speaks to your heart, if you believe our children deserve a safe, faith-filled environment to learn and grow.

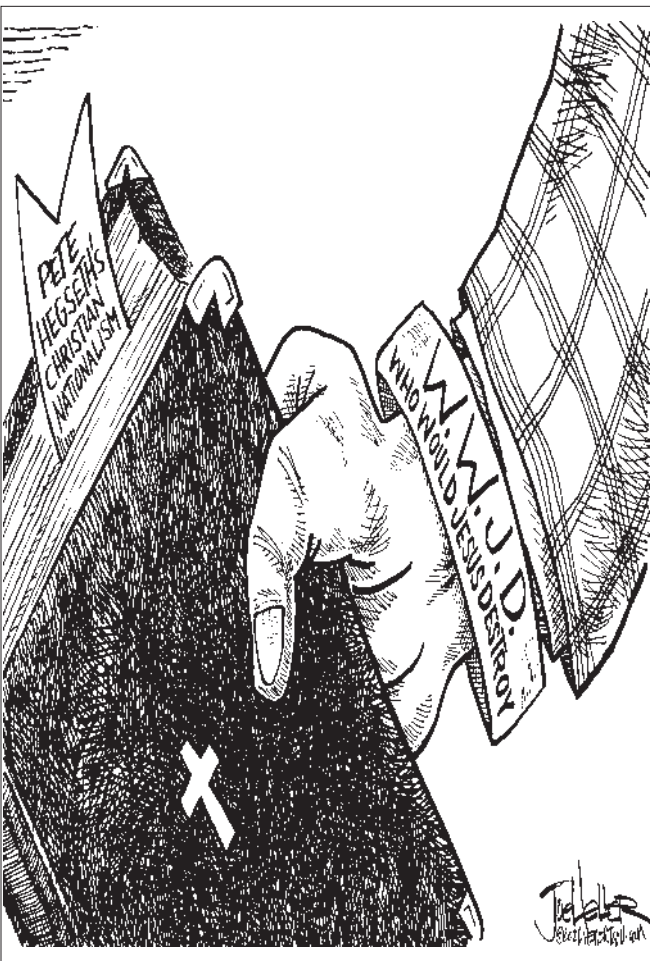
If you want to be part of something that can change generations...

We invite you to join us.
Community Interest Meeting
Tuesday, April 14th @ 6 pm
75 Hampton St Homerville, GA

Come hear the vision.
Come share your thoughts.
Come be part of what God is building.
Because this isn't just about a school...
It's about shaping lives, strengthening families, and planting seeds that will last for eternity.

Let's build something that will impact generations to come.

Lajuanta Mattox
Jesus and Jam
C: 912/337-5342



A thankful goodbye to the children's sermon

As a parent, I've found that I don't particularly want my children to age anymore, but I am thankful they have grown out of, or matured past, some things.

The top items on this list include, in no particular order:
1. Diapers.
2. Potty training.
3. Day care.
4. Learning to read.
5. Notes from the school saying one of their classmates has head lice.

And 6. The children's sermon.
I recalled this Sunday as I watched the children's sermon with a sense of distance and ease - and not of fear-riddled anxiety, as I have for most of the last two decades.

If you're not familiar with the children's sermon, here's the rundown: During the worship service, they call all the kids down to the front and a person sits all the children facing the congregation and delivers a kiddie-flavored mini-sermon.

For the sake of comedy, they often ask the children questions. When my oldest son was 4, he loved the children's sermon. He sprinted down to the front. But he never realized it was

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supposed to be a group activity. He answered all the questions.

With a Stephen Curry-like focus, he blocked out the congregation, all the other children, the fact that he was wearing clothes, and acted as though it was just him and the person delivering the kiddie sermon, casually discussing a lesson from the Bible.

This brought about great torment to my precious nerves. When he was within arm's reach, I could at least put my hand over his mouth when he started to say "My daddy spanked me because I said ..."

Four pews away, I had no such recourse. I was powerless and petrified - half my face in a grin because I expected him to say something funny, the other half quivering in distress, ashen in unease.

Here's an example of what a typical children's sermon was like with my son in those times:

Adult giving the children's sermon: "Do any of you know who

Lazarus is?" My son raises his hand and stands up.

Adult: "Yes. Do you know who Lazarus is?"

My son: "My dog Bubby is in heaven."

Adult: "Well, I'm sorry to hear that."

My son: "Why?"

Adult: "Well, I'm sorry he's not alive."

My son: "I'm not."

My daddy said there are other dogs up there too, and they run all the time, and Bubby likes it up there."

Adult: "Well, we're glad to hear that. Do you know who Lazarus is?"

My son (without hesitation): "He's the blue Power Ranger that I bought at the dollar store."

Adult: "Actually, Lazarus was a beggar, and, hey, you can sit down now." My son sits down.

Adult: "And also please take your finger out of that boy's ear." He complies.

Adult: "Do any of you know what a beggar is?" Big mistake. My son raises his hand and stands up.

Adult: "Yes. Do you know what a beggar is?"

My son: "If I got a shovel and started digging, and I dug for 10 whole minutes, I'd be in China."

Adult: "Okay, does anyone else know what a beggar is?"

Another child gives an appropriate answer.

Adult: "Yes, and there's a story in the book of Luke about Lazarus and a rich man who was dressed in purple and lived in luxury. You can sit down now." My son sits down again.

Adult: "Both the beggar and the rich man eventually died, and..."

My son: "Did they go to heaven, like my dog Bubby?"

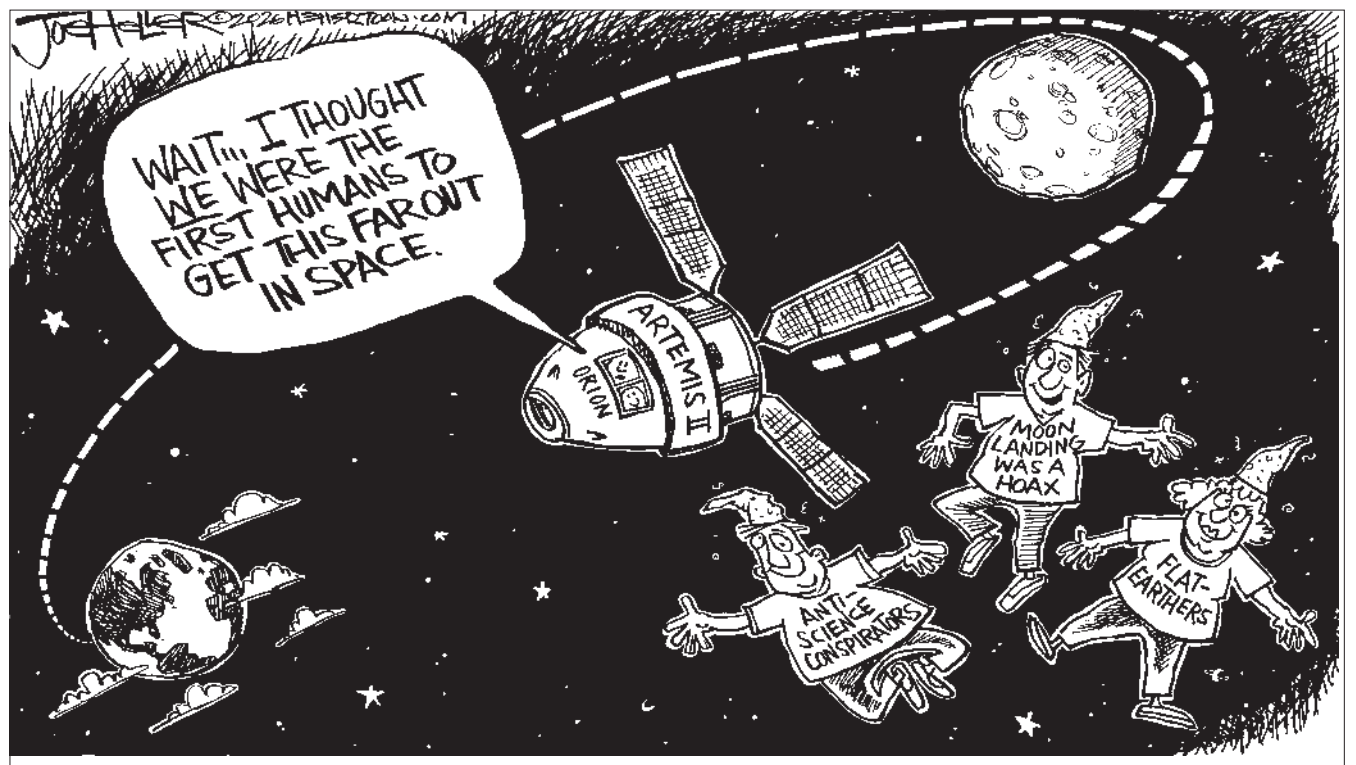
Adult: "Well, yes, but only one of them. Do you know which one?"

My son: "We went to the beach and I found a crab and he started digging and I think he was trying to go to China, and then there was this tiger..."

Adult (loudly): "Let us pray..."

And I did - hard. And, finally, after three children and nearly two decades of children's sermons, my prayers have been answered. Amen.

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Scribbled Notes 3

Among my scribbled notes was a mention of the Beech Island Agricultural Club. Bud Trulock, a first cousin to my wife, told me long ago about a meeting he attended as a guest. I'm not sure what brought that conversation to mind more recently. I normally refrain from impolite language, as did Bud, but today I'm making an exception.

Organized in 1856 in South Carolina, the club's agenda for meetings includes electing a chairman for the next month and reading the minutes from 100 years earlier. Bud went because a retiring federal judge was being honored.

When the seasoned jurist was asked to share what he had learned from his long tenure on the bench, an attentive crowd expected to hear eloquent pearls of wisdom. Instead he gave concise advice on flatulence and full bladders. "Never trust a @#\$%," he said, "and never pass up a chance to @#\$. " Laughter and applause lasted longer than his talk.

A letter dated

November 8, 2022, from the Georgia FFA Foundation was stashed among my scribbled notes. It was an acknowledgement of a memorial gift for my fellow Unadilla FFA String Band member Charles Jones. I kept the letter because of the inspiring signature at the bottom, Miracle Daley. I intended to ask about the story behind her name, but my intentions got buried under more scribbled notes.

I hastily recorded a tidbit of family history in 2022. My mother had just recounted details of her mother winning the Silver Cow Evaporated Milk jingle contest. It was in the late 1950s, I think. I remember the prizes but didn't know how she won them.

Grandmama was awarded coupons and a catalog for her first-place entry. The chrome dinette set she selected included a formica-top table plus six chairs with vinyl seats and backs. The other big item she chose was a clothes dryer, which worked great once they got electricity.

I'm kidding about

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the current. The dryer was, however, an oddity at the time, the first in our community that I know of. Her clothes line was left in place, but used only slightly more than the iron dinner bell mounted near it.

Our home also had a double clothes line, almost identical to Grandmama's. Three galvanized pipes, with shorter pipes welded across the top to form a T, supported two strands of coated wire. A fond childhood memory is the wrinkled texture of line-dried muslin sheets. Their slight roughness made them feel cooler for a few seconds, a welcome sensation on hot summer nights.

A March 18, 2022, scribbled note described a newscast that day which showed Vladimir Putin addressing a large crowd in a Russian stadium. As he rallied support for his unwarranted invasion of Ukraine, he commended

Russia's military by quoting John 15:13, "Greater love hath no man known than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

It was disturbing to hear a murderous tyrant citing scripture to promote an unholy cause, but it shouldn't have surprised me. Satan quoted scripture and his helpers still do. Other news that same day showed a Ukrainian city with a line of 110 empty strollers. Four years later the lines are much longer and still growing.

Sobering situations can feel overwhelming. Sometimes I take a frivolous detour and think about lighter moments, like Bud telling me about that old judge at Beech Island. At other times a name on a letter reminds me there's always hope for tomorrow. If we look for it, we can find a miracle daily.