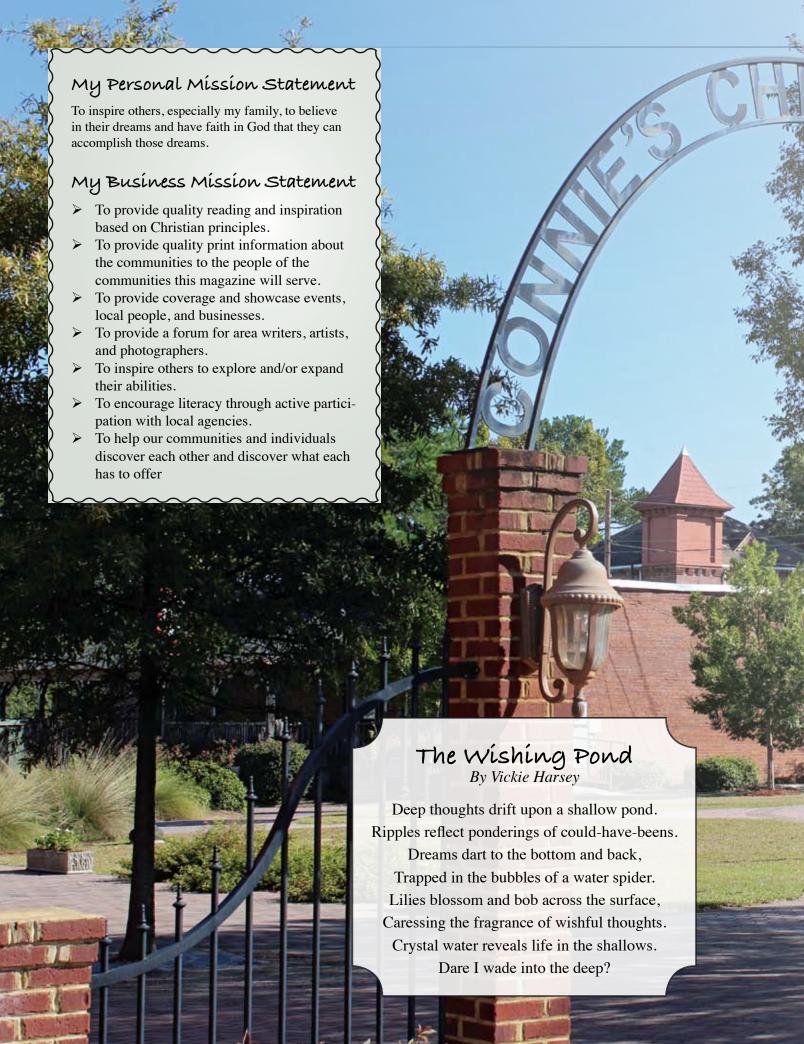
My Georgia Magazine Hometown

Atkinson & Berrien & BenHill & Cook & Irwin & Lanier & Tift





Welcome to

My Georgia Magazine Hometown

My husband Stanley and I invite you to enjoy our new publication. It is about all of "us"—the people, the businesses, and the life of our southern Georgia hometowns.

It is built with Love, Hope, and Faith, and grounded in Christian principles. Our goal for My Georgia Hometown is to connect the communities and counties of our coverage area, to promote growth in each area, and to showcase the best of what makes us "us."

I hope you, our readers, will find more than information in its pages. I hope you will find inspiration and encouragement. Our prayers are that My Georgia Hometown will bless everyone who reads it.

I want to take the time to give thanks to my Lord and Savior for the opportunity to do this magazine. Without His help and guidance, I would not have been able to pursue my dream.

My peace in this endeavor comes from Him. His grace and great mercy have been my keepers throughout the trials and delays, the false starts and detours.

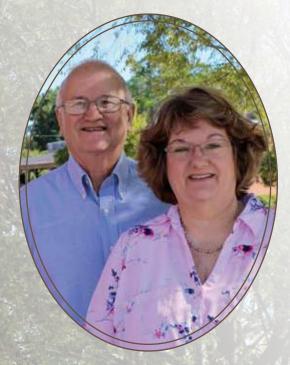
His path led me to enter college late in life to pursue a career that I had never dreamed of. There I found a desire for journalism lying dormant in my heart. My Lord stirred that desire and saw me through two degrees and into a third. He placed me in jobs where each of my skills were tried and developed, all the while preparing me to step into my dream.

Now, it's time to begin a new phase of life and step into the reality of my dream, to wade into the Deep.

Sincerely,

Vickie Harsey

Editor/Publisher



Stanley & Vickie Harsey
Our Staff

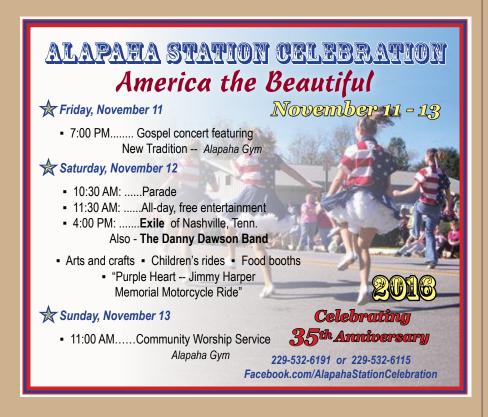


Carmen Statham



Joshua Clements

The Cover



Stealing a Selfie

Matt McDaniel, 6, is caught in the act by his older sister, Holly, 19. The McDaniel siblings Matt, Holly, and Kalee, 9, were enjoying the day at the Berrien County Harvest Festival.

Inside Cover

Connie's Children's Park

Connie's Children's Park, located beside the old Berrien County courthouse, serves as a tribute to Nashville's first female mayor, the late Connie Perry.

The late mayor and the City of Nashville began efforts to preserve and protect various historically significant structures in downtown Nashville and surrounding neighborhoods in 2004.

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Berrien Sports Heroes Civil War Discovery More Teens & Tweens

Kirsten Kenworthy, Alex Kendrick, and Stephanie Kimbrell. The girls are part of the Berrien Cross-Country team.

Meeting Some Giants

The Berrien Middle School girls had an opportunity to meet a couple of film giants at a recent cross-country event held in Albany. Actors Alex Kendrick and Ken Bevel were present to watch their own kids compete.

Pastor/actor Bevel co-starred in "Courageous" (2011). Kendrick is known for his award winning work as a filmwriter, director, actor, and as associate pastor of Sherwood Baptist Church (Albany). His works include: "War Room," Mom's Night Out," "The Lost Medallion," "Courageous," "Fireproof," "Facing the Giants," and "Flywheel."



Ken Bevel and son with Kirsten Kenworthy.







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Regional Teens Participate in New Ambassador Program

Secretary of State Motivates Teens to Get Involed



The Tift Theatre was the gathering place for teens from several southern Georgia counties when Georgia Secretary of State Brian Kemp dropped in to meet his new ambassadors. Kemp hosted the regional kick-off event and an Open House on September 7.

He opened the doors at his Tift County office for all county officials and the general public to drop by and meet Kemp personally and hear about the amenities offered by the SOS's regional office, and to introduce a new program.

He included the open house as part of the Ambassador tour in an effort to promote the Secretary of State's Ambassador Program which opened state-wide for high school students during the 2016-17 academic school year. The initial program began last spring all across the state with about 14 schools and 150 students participating.

This year, Kemp says the program has gone better than expected with 102 schools and over 800 students participating.

Kemp and his contingent are promoting civic



Teens came from various high schools throughout South Georgia to hear about Kemp's program. From left to right: Riley Roberts (Tift County High), Nathan Miles, Cadet Major JROTC (Crisp County High), and Chandler Watson (Thomas County Central).

participation through voter registration in high schools as well as teaching students valuable leadership skills. The program aims to "...[make] people aware that it's not only important to register to vote, but also [to be] an educated voter and understand how government works so they can let their voices be heard," Kemp told *My Georgia Hometown*.

Nicholas Buford, Outreach Coordinator for the Secretary of State, pointed out, "This is a continuum program and the goal of the Secretary of State as well as the Outreach Department is to make it to a point where all high schools are involved. Right now, we have about one third of all high schools in the state involved."

Inside the Tift Theatre's auditorium, Alexandra Collins, Secretary of State's Outreach Coordinator, took the lead and explained the different projects that the students can do in terms of civic engagement, such as a voter registration drive, attending a city or county

Below: Area teens fill the stage for a group photo with Secretary of State Brian Kemp.

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Turning Boys into Men

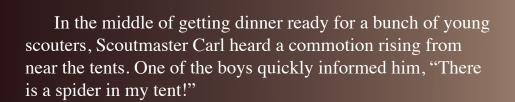
The Scout Master

Carl Hutchinson

"Boy Scouts offers the opportunity to have moments to enjoy."

Hutchinson

Story by Josh Clements



to get the spider out. After the eight-legged trespasser was securely attached to the broom's bristles, Carl acted as if he was going to put it on the lad (who apparently had an intense fear of the creatures). Little did Carl know, that on the last day of the trip, while he laid wrapped up like a burrito in a mummy bag, a granddaddy long-legs spider

The dutiful, but mischievous, scoutmaster fetched the broom

burrito in a mummy bag, a granddaddy long-legs spider would walk across his face. He freaked out and flailed aimlessly in his predicament, his arms bound by the coziness of the sleeping bag. The boys laughed and said it was karma because he had made fun of them earlier.

"Enjoy the moment..."



"Success in training the boy depends largely on the Scoutmaster's own personal example."

Robert Baden-Powell, Founder of the Boy Scouts,

This is just one of the amazing stories Carl Hutchinson can recall after nearly 20 years of scouting. He has seen numerous boys turn into young men during his tenure as Troop 875 Assistant Scoutmaster of Fitzgerald and Troop 832 Scoutmaster of Ocilla, Ga. Many of the Eagle Scouts who passed through his troop had been with him since they were cub scouts. He has had the privilege of seeing four youngsters progress from the rank of Cub to Eagle, the highest rank for a scouter in which, roughly, only two percent of scouts attain.

Few people get to experience the outdoors in all of its grandeur and glory. Hutchinson, however, has spent the latter part of his life doing just that. Along with cooking pizza in cardboard boxes to baking peach cobblers in Dutch ovens, and surviving whole weekends on peanut butter and squished bread, Hutchinson has seen and done more than the average person. From enjoying awe-inspiring scenery on camping trips to meeting exciting new people, he says he owes it all to Boy Scouts.

It takes a special kind of person to want to invest his or her time in young people's lives. Whether it be by making sure they have something to eat when they didn't pack enough food for the trip, or insuring they learn from their mistakes of not packing enough clothes to stay dry, a scoutmaster must nurture the skills needed for survival





in both the wilderness and everyday life. Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scouts, once stated, "Success in training the boy depends largely on the Scoutmaster's own personal example."

Hutchinson has certainly lived up to the task. Both of his sons are Eagle Scouts. He and his sons have also participated in the Scouting High Adventure program, meaning they have been to Philmont Scout Ranch and attended National Scout Jamboree. Also, Hutchinson has earned the Triple Crown of High adventure, meaning that he has attended Philmont Scout Reservation, Florida Sea Base, and Northern Tier near the Canada/US border.

"The outdoors is the classroom. You make plans in the scout hut, but you put the plan into action in the woods," he commented about his love of being outdoors. Sitting on a hillside watching the sunrise with a cup of campfire coffee in hand describes the most surreal times he has enjoyed over the years. "Enjoy the moment," Hutchinson said. "Boy Scouts offers the opportunity to have moments to enjoy."

Along with the adventures involved in scouting, there are many things that are learned and carried into adulthood. Scouting teaches young boys to resolve conflict and controversy between themselves and to work as a team—skills not seen in many adults today. There are also many

Carl Hutchinson, Scoutmaster



Photo by Josh Clements

Twenty years of memories fill the shelves and walls of Hutchinson's office. Plaques, photos, trophies, and awards testify daily that his efforts to change and shape young lives are worth it.



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Scoutmaster, Continued...

local civic benefits to having a Boy Scout troop in the community. Scouts perform many projects that aid the area.

Hutchinson's own troop has completed Eagle projects such as helping restore the monument and wrought iron fence at the Jeff Davis Memorial, landscaping the library garden in Fitzgerald, constructing a 20X30 metal building for Ocilla Methodist Church, and renovating the picnic area at Paulk Park in Fitzgerald.

When asked what he would like to see happen with scouting in south Georgia, Hutchinson responded with a wish to see more parents and adults getting involved with scouting and more churches opening up to scouting. There is always a push to grow scouting in smaller areas, but it does not always happen.

Pointing to one issue, Hutchinson noted, "The problem is getting volunteers to get involved."

Adult participation, however, is not the only difficulty. Often kids who scout are also highly involved with other activities. From school responsibilities to sports, good scouters are generally go-getters who engage in a variety of activities.

Scouting has allowed Hutchinson to build relationships with boys and their families. The shelves in his office are laden with Scout memorabilia and pictures. They are there to remind him of good times and the lives he has impacted. These little reminders cheer him up on bad days when the storms of life appear.

The perfect analogy happened when a scout wasn't prepared for a trip up Mt. Philips. A hailstorm came up and everyone was freezing. One of the boy's clothes were wet and he had not packed a jacket. In his tent, Hutchinson found a few dry clothes in the scout's pack and got him through the week.

His mother called after the trip and asked, "What happened out there? He came home a different kid."

To Hutchinson, that is where the Boy Scouts excel, changing the lives of young boys and making them into young men who can not only withstand a storm, but also grow within it.

For information about becoming a scout leader or a boy scout, contact the South Georgia Council of the Boy Scouts of America, or visit the website:

www.sgcbsa.org.

Boy Scouts of America was founded in 1910.

On My Honor, I Will Do My Best...



Eagle Scout Evan Creamer recited the Boy Scouts oath at a meeting of the Berrien County Rotary Club where he was the featured speaker. Creamer and Alapaha District Director Linda Miller were in Nashville to raise awareness about scouting and promote a fundraising challenge to the Rotarians. The challenge included making the extra effort to not only recruit more scouts, but to also recruit more scout leaders.

In her address, Miller stressed that a misconception about the scout's goals needed to be cleared up. She pointed out that making an Eagle Scout is not

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Alapaha District Director Linda Miller, Evan Creamer, and Rotary president, Keith Stone

the ultimate goal of becoming a boy scout. The goal is help a boy become a First-Class scout, ensuring that they grasp the essential survival and life skills being taught.

"A First-Class scout gets a taste of citizenship, service, first aid, and outdoor skills," she said, "Those skills... will serve them well into the future."

She added that only four or five percent of scouts continue the program to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout.

To demonstrate the impact that scouting can have on a boy's life, Eagle Scout Evan Creamer explained how becoming a boy scout shaped his own life. The skills and values that are promoted are more than just words to him—they are goals to be appreciated and accomplished through disciplined training.

After reciting the oath to the lunch-time crowd, Creamer explained how, during a certain scouting event, the oath became more than just words on a page to him. It was his first time away from home on a rugged journey

through the foothills of the Rocky Mountains that put Creamer's skills to the test. He made a choice to improve himself daily by helping other members of the team. During the 12-day event, he observed how many of his scout-mates were doing the same thing. By working together, the group became a smoothoperating machine, packing and unpacking, traveling for miles on foot and on water, to reach their destination. There were no comforts except what was necessary for survival, and each scout was responsible for carrying his own load. The trip to the Northern Tier High Adventure Base (in the Great Northwoods) was more than just a boat ride down a river.



Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Creamer's other adventures include traveling through the Florida Keys on 90-foot "Tall" sail boat at the Florida National High Adventure Sea Base. He also received the Triple Crown of National High Adventure Award.

"If you're willing to look for it, there is always some adventure to be had," Creamer said of scouting.

Creamer's latest adventure started this fall when he became a freshman at Valdosta State University. Among the many heavy books in his backpack are a set of life skills that will ensure his success in the halls of higher learning.





A Homeplace for the Heart

The Art of David Malcolm

Story by Josh Clements

What would you do if you had to look at the same scenery every day? Most of us would get bored and long for a change of view. Too often in small town America, that is the case. One artist has challenged that idea with his artwork and illustrated how we can see so much without ever looking away.

Raised in the rural town of Fitzgerald, Georgia, David Malcolm graduated from Fitzgerald High School in 1953 and followed with a degree in graphic design from the University of Georgia in 1958. After working as an educator in the public school system and eventually retiring from Ben Hill/Irwin Tech (now Wiregrass Tech), he is now focusing on his own artwork.

Malcolm got started with art by watching his father, who was also an artist. He noted that he draws heav-

ily from the outdoors as a source of inspiration. His works have covered such things as trees, birds, flowers, and other natural landscapes. Charles Burchfield, legendary watercolorist of the early 20th century, is his favorite American artist. Many of Malcolm's own works share similar themes with Burchfield's including numerous depictions of woods and wildlife.

Currently, Malcolm has his 52part masterpiece titled Home Place on display in various venues from the Georgia Museum of Agriculture The old abandoned home place stands weathered in the sun; a relic of the distant past whose earthly days are done. And, if those walls could talk, what a story they would tell of many loving memories kept within that hollow shell.

- David Malcom, from his book, **Home Place**

to other art galleries in the area. The series of paintings chronicle the changing seasons, times of day, and weather for a single solitary homestead, with each individual painting having its own personality.

Think of the pieces as a time-lapse video, painstakingly recreated using acrylic paint and a keen eye for detail. Each painting displays an old farmhouse sitting on a hill with an old well and tree stump in the foreground and a country church sitting off in the distance behind it. Tucked into the stump are an axe head and an old plow blade. Each element maintains its own individual meaning.

According to Malcolm, the well represents the natural resources that have blessed the area, while the axe head and plow blade remind the viewer of a day when

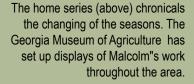
hard work was a way of life. The

abandoned farmhouse embodies a bygone era of virtue and integrity begotten only through the sweat on one's brow. A beautiful yet ever evolving eastern sky reveals God's handiwork and the many ways life can change around a specific place in time.

Though today these pieces can be found displayed together in local galleries, Malcolm knows that they may one day be separated. As a means of keeping them together, he has published a book so that the 52







"There is nothing more rewarding than to be able to create or produce something that's yours, that's original, that's an expression of who you are."

David Malcolm



Sculpture of Albert Pinkham Ryder, one of his favorite American painters.



pieces of the Home Place would always be together for the world to see. Copies of the book can be found where his artwork is displayed, as well as the Fitzgerald Chamber of Commerce.

After spending a lifetime with art, from teaching it to designing props at the Grand Theater, and from serving as president of the local Arts Council to receiving a lifetime achievement award from the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce, Malcolm has certainly seen the arts community change. Though he prefers the old way of painting, he also recognizes the need for newer technology to continue to bring art to newer generations.

After establishing an arts program at Fitzgerald High in 1962, Malcolm realized that the arts fill a need in humanity. "There is nothing more rewarding than to be able to create or produce something that's yours, that's original, that's an expression of who you are." He then continued, "You must find your medium through exploration and through that exploration find the one that best helps to express yourself, whether it is music, dance, photography, painting, or sculpture."

Despite having such a solid foundation for

Continued on Page 20

2016 Landmark Art Show





ABOVE: Daniel DeCristofaro.

art lessons in college, starting with water

RIGHT: DeCristofaro's carvings, like the drake bufflehead and the shoveler/spoonbill, are on display at the Landmark. He started out making decoys, but the hobby quickly became art. From the decoys came blacksmithing to make the special carving tools he needed. He teaches carving classes at Landmark. His works are on display.



ABOVE: Shepard brought her ukulele to the Landmark Art Show and joined Daniel DeCristofaro for an impromto music jam. The old tunes such as the Tennessee Waltz and 1950-60s music wafted through the doors, drawing the attention of passerbys.

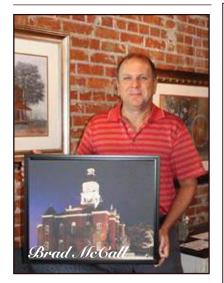
BELOW: The hands of a craftsman at work, coaxing the beauty of music from the strings of his 1970 guitar. DeCristofaro hales from East Hampton, Long Island near upstate New York, where he played with the band, The Memories. "I don't read music. I don't write music. I do it all by ear," he tells MGH.







The artists showcased at the Landmark: Shirley Petty, Ollene Osborne, Joan Shepard, and Patsy Hickox. Not pictured are Daniel DeCristofaro, Brad McCall, Sheila Nugen Hudson, Joyce Royals, Linda Griffin, Carolyn Chambers, Bonnie Miller, Sandy Chaput, and Ardella Vedas.



ABOVE: Brad McCall, photographer, displayed some of his city art, such as the historic Berrien County Court House.

The Landmark recently hosted several area artists to showcase the talent around Berrien County. The gift shop, owned and operated by Patsy Hickox, has been serving the Nashville area since 2004. And, yes, it still serves the fudge her husband made famous.

Hickox herself is an accomplished artist. Many of her paintings adorn the walls of her gift shop. She is best known for her scenes of historic buildings and homes located around south Georgia. Begininng as teen painter at St. Simons, she perfected her art by workshopping with artists she knew. Back in Berrien County, she spent 27 years working with the Board of Education. After retiring, she started The Landmark gift shop. She currently serves on the Board of the Berrien Council for the Arts.



LEFT: An honored painting by Ollene Osborne. It hangs in Georgia State Capital, on loan from Osborne and The Georgia Arts Council.

Osborne, a retired registered nurse, started painting late in life. She began with watercolor, then moved to acrylic and oil. She prefers landscapes and takes her inspiration from artist Thomas Kincaid. Osborne and her husband owned and operated The Victory House for 29 years.



Shirley Petty (73 years old) says she started painting when she was a kid on the walls of the house. She officially started painting in high school. In 2015, she painted the series for the Art Show. For 32 years she was an art teacher at Berrien County High School. She perfers to paint animals, landscapes, and buildings. Petty, who is right-handed, now has Parkinson's Disease. She has taught herself to paint with her left hand. The works on display demonstrate her desire to overcome the obstacles.

BELOW: Country girl, Sheila Nugent Hudson, studied art under Petty at BCHS. She put her brushes aside while she raised her family, and has

recently picked them back up again. Her favorite scenes are night scenes such as her moonscape. She also loves photographing and painting birds and butterflies.



ABOVE: The concert line stretched down several city blocks.

RIGHT: The band SoulShine! performed for the pre-concert crowd.

BELOW: Restaurants, Cirillo's and Our Daily Bread, were overflowing with hungry patrons.



RIGHT: Fans crowded the aisles and danced as the band closed with familiar favorites "Let Your Love Flow" and "If I Said You Had a Beautiful Body..."

Bellamy Brothers Kick Off Concert Series for Fitzgerald's Grand Theatre

By Vickie Harsey & Josh Clements

The fans were dancing in the aisles as the love flowed inside the Fitzgerald Grand Theatre when the Bellamy Brothers took the stage, performing their best compositions from 40 Years: The Album.

The band, who began their musical journey in 1976, delighted the crowd with familiar songs, such as "Let Your Love Flow" and "Redneck Girl." Some of the newer tunes reflected on "accepting the fact that we're getting older" (as Howard Bellamy told Rolling Stone in a 2015 interview).

A quick glance around the packed auditorium attested to the fact that, no matter what age, the fans still enjoy rocking to the band's country rhythm.

Outside, on the street, a new generation was catching onto the redneck vibes. Kenny Morgan (14-yrs-old) stopped his bike long enough to listen. Although he had never heard of the band, he said that he liked the beat and thought all the activity downtown was "cool."

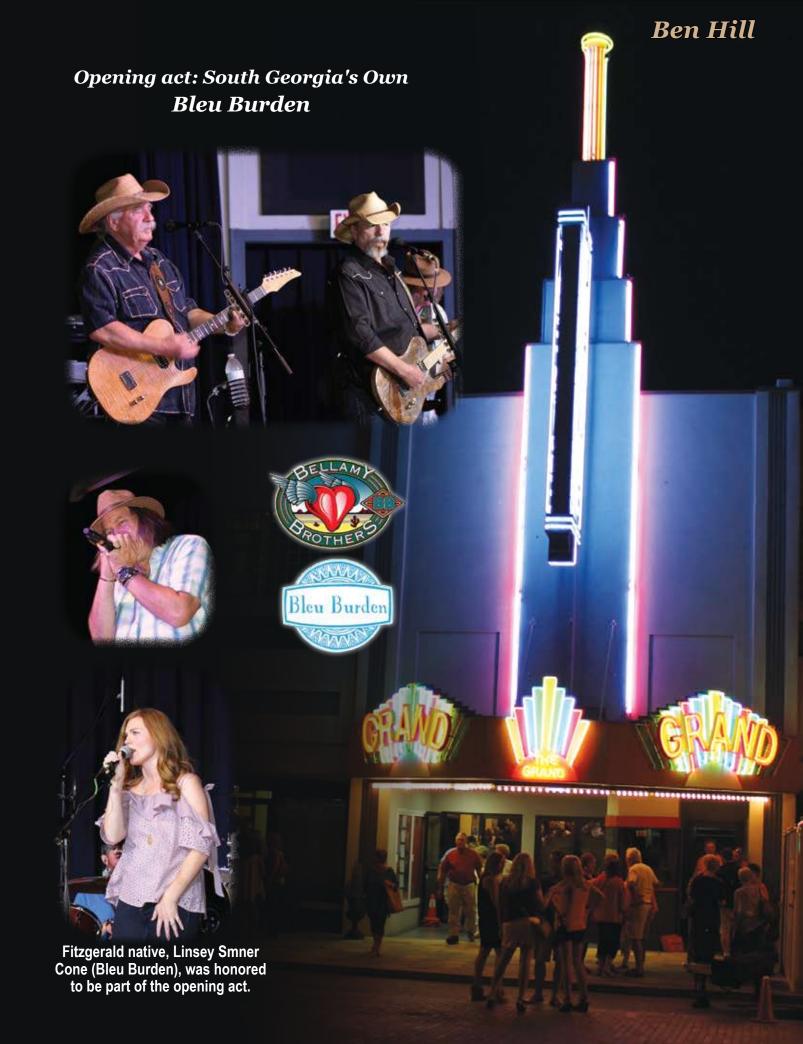
The event-filled evening kicked off the Grand Concert Series for the historic theater. It opened with a street party with a performance by local band, SoulShine!, and other live music streaming from Cirillo's and Our Daily Bread restaurants. Inside, concertgoers toured the Grand Theatre's lobby which was decorated with

> memorabilia, such as movie posters and film reels. The smell of fresh popcorn wafted through the lobby, bringing back many movie-night memories.

> On stage, Bleu Burden opened for the Bellamy Brothers. They brought a blend of new age country tunes played with an old school country feel. The crowd cheered loudly as the band performed a rendition of Little Big Town's "Girl Crush." The energy from the band and the vocal interplay between lead singers Linsey Sumner Cone and Chad Parkerson had the audience thirsty to







Brenda Morris: The Hand-Maiden



Morris' crafts have earned her many ribbons. Displayed are her "Made-it-up-as-l-went" vase, made from folded magazine pages, and her Tic-Tac-Toe games..

When we need an extra set of hands to do tasks around the house, we call a handy-man. When the folks at the Atkinson County Extension Service need something done, they call a handy-woman. For the past 20 years, Brenda Morris has been the secretary and general gofer for the the Ag programs and the 4-H office. She does whatever needs to be done to keep things humming along.

When she isn't rounding up county paperwork or random groups of 4-H'ers, she sits back and relaxes with her own brand of handywork—crocheting, sewing, and doing any interesting craft that peaks her interest. Being a very creative person on her own, Morris also takes inspiration from the many 4-H projects going on around her, and has entered (and won) a few local competitions herself.

Morris's latest projects are a basketweaving-meets-paper folding sort of craft that involves folding strips of old magazine pages into long spears. Folding the paper is the easy part. Then the strips have to be woven into the shape of the desired object. Sounds easy enough, but her prize winning paper vase proved to be quite a challenge. It began as a bowl. However, the crafty lady was not daunted

by her project's morphing stages. She just re-envisioned it and pressed on. After all, it was an unwritten pattern that she was using.

"I was making it up as I went along," she laughed.

She also made-up a new Tic-Tac-Toe game for her competitive grand-daughters to play. Using a pile of shells, colorful beads, and some card stock that were lying on her desk, Morris created a fun, different way to play the age-old game. She also made it more challenging by playing it in-the-round. She explained how it worked: Four players get two [tic-tac-toe] cards each and share them with an opponent on either side. As the game moves around the table, each player engages two opponents. The first one to reach Tic-Tac-Toe wins. The variation adds an interesting level of difficulty.

Interesting is a good way to describe Morris and her handy work. She has won a Grand Champion award for a hand-stitched dress and red and blue ribbons for her made-up creations. She's now thinking about taking her hand-made projects Online. Hmmm, an interesting new challenge for the Hand Maiden.



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R-E-S-P-E-C-T

That's What She Gets

Story by Carmen Statham & Vickie Harsey

Allisyn Davis, a recent graduate of Atkinson County High School, is a true country girl. She loves Friday Night Lights, football, fishing, and riding in an old truck down a dirt road. Most of all, she loves Jesus and her family.

"I've always been close to my family," said Davis, the daughter of Tasha and Derrel Davis. "I'd rather hang out with them."

The teen has earned the right to be called AWESOME. Her life has been a testimony of overcoming obstacles, setting and finishing goals, and leading the way for others. Her strong leadership skills have captured the attention of kids and adults alike. So much so, that Davis herself was surprised when, while working on decorations for her own junior/senior prom, adults were coming to her asking for instructions. It was obvious they knew who was in charge. R-E-S-P-E-C-T! That's what this teen gets.

Davis grew up around 4-H. Her mom, Tasha, began working with the club when Allisyn was a toddler. So, it was no small wonder when Allisyn joined 4-H in 4th grade. Before that, Davis overcame speech problems rooted in bashfulness. For a long time, her mom told MGH, her daughter didn't speak, but just pointed. She came out of her "shy-shell" around 3rd grade and "went for it."









Davis gives credit to 4-H for helping her overcome her fears and being able to speak in front of people. Thanks to 4-H she is able to be herself, on a stage or off.

Brenda Morris, secretary for the Atkinson Co. Extension Service, had the opportunity to watch Davis grow up.

"She never backs down from anything she starts. If she's the only one there to work, she does it all by herself," Morris said proudly of Davis' efforts with 4-H.

"I've watched her help other kids before she'd even turn around and start on hers [work]. She always has her ideas in the back of her mind and knows what

RESPECT/Davis, continued on Page 20







the arts in the community, the high school program has been discontinued due to lack of funding and budget cuts. Malcolm feels that this lack of exploration will leave future generations without a way to discover or express themselves.

What David Malcolm's story reminds us is, that even in the change,

there is something constant. The sleepy little towns we grow up in may change, and the dirt roads may be paved; but the values and virtues we learn shape us and never leave. When we look back at days gone by, we realize that, sometimes, the heart is right where we left it—at the old home place.



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RESPECT/Davis, Continued...

she's going to do. She stays all hours of the day or night. Whatever it takes. She's not just a helper; she really cares what the kids do. She is an encourager – that's something we need more of in life," Morris said, summarizing Davis' attributes.

On the day *My Georgia Hometown* met Davis, she and her family were returning from a 4-H trip. The witty teenager was bubbly and full of life, even after a long, crowded ride.

As she bounced into the Extension office, her mind was already whirling with her next projects and presentations. She was also surprised to find that her family had not been pulling her leg about a magazine reporter waiting to talk to her. True to her nature, she rallied quickly, assessed the situation, and got down to business.

Throughout her school years, Davis was a Certified Teen Leader in 4-H Club, president and vice-president of FCA (Fellowship of Christian Atheletes), and a member of yearbook staff. While on the yearbook staff, Davis was in charge of the 4-H and FCA pages. She also sold and built ads. She says she had fun learning the new techniques on how to design a page.

She now attends South Georgia College in pursuit of an Early Childhood Education degree. For her chosen career, she hopes to work with kindergarteners.

As she considered what lay before her, Davis sat back, thoughtfully, in her chair and said, "Just like 4-H has helped me overcome my fears and express who I am, that's what I can to do [for] a child – to leave an impact on a child's life. That's why I chose Early Childhood Education."

Her ideal life, she mused, would be to live on Tybee Island, open an arts and crafts shop on the beach, and ride her little yellow bicycle down the street with flowers in the front basket.

Young Entrepreneur Keeps Things Cool

Story by Carmen Statham & Vickie Harsey

An enterprising spirit and self-drive are clearly the qualities of 12-year-old Carter Watson. He started Sno-Biz, a small frozen treat shop in the front of his family's store, Watson's Pools & Patios.

"I had to do something between everything else I do," Watson said.

Carter also talked about what prompted him to start his shop. He said he wanted "...to spend my time doing something productive—[to] learn something."

Carter has several other interests sending him on a developing pathway toward a promising future.

The skills he is gaining now as a young business person are blending into his other skills acquired through school clubs and pool construction. When asked what his plans are for the future, he said he wasn't sure yet, but perhaps some type of engineering.

Making money is only one part of the equation for him. He opened Sno-Biz because he wanted something new to do between juggling school and extra-curricular activities.

Carter attends Berrien Middle School. He is a part of BETA Club, Gifted & Talented Club, and an officer with Future Farmers of America; he is also an Honor Student and attends First Baptist Church of Nashville. He plays baseball and is into Cross-Country. He is interested in joining the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"He is a very smart, intellecutal little boy that is growing into a young man."

Melisa Watson Brown

His extra-curricular activities are embedded in the values of agricultural education, engineering and social enrichment where he can build on his social skills, learn to work together and alongside others, and experience leadership and service.

Carter runs Sno-Biz, but, smiling, he said he lets mom handle the book-

keeping.

"He is a very smart, intellectual little boy that is growing into a young man," says his mother, Melisa W. Brown. "Carter strives to do the very best and that's what he does."

Some of the challenges he faces as a young business owner are used as opportunities to create value in his life. Learning how to talk to people, prioritizing the duties of work with the obligations of school, and being effective in every aspect of the job are just some of the responsibilities he deals with daily. All of these skills will help him later on as an adult in whatever field of work he wishes to follow.

His parents, Melisa W. Brown and stepdad Kevin Brown, and his father, Darron Snipes, are very proud of his accomplishments.

"I had to do something between everything else I do."

Carter Watson







Hometown Writers



Trevor Clayton, 17 years old

Clayton, a student at Lowndes County High, gives a moving testimony of how the GSBR has impacted his life. He is interested in writing and is currently active in the Lowndes High School Off Broadway drama program as a drama technician. The LHS troupe is preparing to perform "FootLoose" at home and in the surrounding area.

The Ranch leaders said, "No, you are not going to break the rules. You will behave and do the right thing."

I want to be a person someone can look up to and know that they can always trust me.

Trevor Clayton



The Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Home Rocks!

by Trevor Clayton

My name is Trevor, and I am a resident of the Georgia Sheriffs' Boys Ranch in Hahira, Georgia. The Ranch has been my home for almost two years now, and I love the Ranch as if it were my real home.

My life improved tremendously when I got to the Boys Ranch because I came from an unstable background. The Ranch has done so many things to help me focus my life on being a kind, respectable person that everyone enjoys being around. The Ranch continuously helps me overcome the numerous problems that I had when I arrived. In a similar manner, the opportunities afforded by the Ranch help other students succeed in life.

I want to begin by explaining a little about how I got to the Boys Ranch. I was fourteen when my mother died in an unfortunate accident. My dad, a drug addict, has never really been in my life because he has always been where he is now, in prison. When my mom passed away, I was lost and didn't know what to do. She was my world.

After her death, I was fortunate that I could count on my family to be there for me, but I did not feel they should be responsible for raising me. I am so lucky that my wonderful and amazing grandmother cared about me enough to find this amazing Boys' Ranch. I prayed that God would help me and guide me down the right path because I was so lost and lonely without my mom. God answered my prayers and put me in an amazing place with many loving and supportive people.

When I first arrived at the Ranch I had my struggles. I wanted to fight the rules and be disruptive because I thought I knew everything. I was so wrong.

The Ranch leaders said, "No, you are not going to break the rules. You will behave and do the right thing."

If I wasn't sure of the right thing to do, they would teach me. My house mom, Michelle, and my house dad, Ken, are amazing. So are my first house parents, Mrs. Crystal and Mr. Anthony. My first house parents did so much for me. They taught me unconditional love, and they still keep in contact with me. Mr. Shaun and Mrs. Leanne, office staff, are also incredible. They work with me all the time.

If I do something wrong, they let me know what I did wrong and tell me how I could fix the situation, so it doesn't happen again. They give me the proper consequences I need to get my attention, just like my mom would. At the end of the day, they still love and care about me and want to teach me the right things, no matter what. They never give up on anyone in any situation. That is one of my favorite things about them.

My house mom is so interactive with me and the other boys in my house. Mrs. Michelle does amazing crafts with us. She lets us pick out what crafts to make, teaches us how to create the craft, and then lets us do one on our own. My house dad is very helpful also. He teaches us how to work on cars so when we have our own we can maintain it. I love that they spend so much time with us because I never had that where I was from. That is something I had always wished for.

Continued on Page 24

Hometown Writers

Our way back

by Mackenzie Jade Gilmore

Sixteen. We were only sixteen. High school, to be completely cliché, was when it started. He picked on me, but it didn't take but a quick second to feel completely engulfed by his smile and his oddly charming tendencies. What did he see in little ole me?

After the first month, he showed up on my door step with heart in hand....and a copper braided bracelet. He told me he had feelings for me. And that he never got feelings for anyone like he had for me. I was so blossom-colored in the cheeks. He knew. I never had to say it. He just knew.

I had to move out of state two weeks later. I didn't get to see him that day. I called him and talked to him though. We talked for a copious amount of hours. About nothing, everything, and all things in between. We tried to date long distance but it was killing us. Over the years, the promise of "I'll come back for you", began to sound, and feel, like a line from a book I could never remember the name of.

As we both got older, we stayed in contact. "I love you" was exchanged regularly. But then there were the sad times where we didn't speak for months. Once I turned nineteen, a vehicle was a part of my getting by. One day, I felt a reminiscent urge. I picked up my phone and messaged a friendly stranger. He messaged back! We only talked for three days when I knew, I knew he was still mine. I told him I was packing up the car and coming to him.

After two days straight and five states across, I made it. From Maryland to Georgia, I made it. As my car crept up his drive way I felt a nervous twinge in my stomach....but then I saw him. At 11:53 at night, pacing and waiting for Me, he walked over to my car, opened my door and before I could fully get on my feet, his oh so familiar embrace captured me. I was home. Sixteen and two months to grown-up and three years. Now we don't say goodbye, we say goodnight. We don't kiss each other with "I'll text you," he wakes me up with cuddles and sweet tea.

We found our way back.

My Georgia Hometown welcomes writers of all ages to submit short stories or testimonial essays. MGH reserves the right to edit texts and to refuse any work that contains inappropriate material.



Jade Gilmore, 19 years old

I was born in Tampa Florida. I attended Croatan High School, the number sev en high school in all America. I did not get to graduate due to being viciously ill then and now. I enjoy writing because I can paint a picture with words and express even the smallest of things in such big ways with such few words. Gilmore now calls south Georgia home.

T1D from the inside

by M. J. Gilmore

I woke up early this morning just like I did the last As I began to get out of bed I stood up way to fast

As I did I knew the reason For this I didn't ask why Dehydrated and dizzy I knew my levels were high

I stumbled for my injection
It never works fast
So I laid back down to rest
And waited for time to pass

Three hours of my life was spent
Waiting to be okay
So I could get right back up again
And carry on with my day

Life as a diabetic changes
With every hours pass
So I'm saying this
This will not last



Mrs. Leanne are also interactive with us. They take us fishing and teach those who don't know how, to fish. Mrs.

Leanne and Mrs. Michelle are both country girls and are comfortable in nature.

That's enough about me. Let me tell you a little bit about the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

This is not a place for bad kids; it is actually the total opposite. The Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes take in kids from broken homes and help them get back on the right track. The leaders provide much love and support for kids and inspire them to pursue their dreams and become what they are passionate about. They make students go to school, encourage everyone to get good grades, and motivate everyone to be the best people we can be. They provide an afternoon study hall, which is where two or three tutors come out every afternoon after school to help kids study. Students still struggling after tutoring can study with other adult Ranch employees, who are willing to help any time. The Ranch pays

for college when the kids graduate from high school—as long as the students stay in the program. They also provide responsible teenagers with a car.

The Youth Homes help students get learners' permits and permanent drivers' licenses when students are of age, trustworthy, and have completed driver's education and 40 hours of practice driving. The program encourages residents to get involved in sports and after school activities, keeping them out of trouble. Leaders help students out no matter what, as long as the kids are doing the right thing.

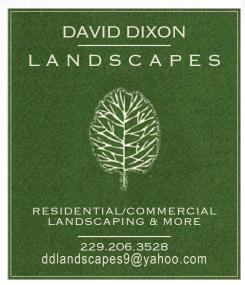
Well, I have said a lot, and I hope I can encourage someone to do the right thing in every situation. Just always remember, nothing is impossible! I want people to know the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Home is an amazing place to live. The program has impacted and changed so many lives, including mine! The staff wants to help kids change their lives, and give them unconditional love and support. The program really has changed me and made me a better person.

When I graduate college, I am going to come back and become a houseparent. I want to impact and

change another young person's life, just as my house mom and dad and the office staff changed mine. I want to give back because if not for the Boys' Ranch, I could be starving on the side of the road, begging for money. I am so thankful for all the people that sponsor the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes. Their support keeps this fabulous mission up and running.

I want to be a person someone can look up to and know that they can always trust me. Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Home helps me attain my goals.

All needy students should have that opportunity.



Compliments of My Georgia Hometown





Kemp Ambassadors, Continued...

council meeting.

During a break, some students had an opportunity to express their thoughts on the program.

Riley Roberts, a sophomore at Tift County High School, told *My Georgia Hometown*, "I think it's a very interesting program, considering what it's about and how it's bringing students into something we normally wouldn't even be concerned about. And, looking at what past schools have done, I think it will be a fun year to do it."

She added, "I try to stay as involved in politics as I can, and this is a great way for me to do that. I think it's important to know how to vote and how to do your research and how to make the most of what you can."

Chandler Watson with Thomas County Central feels having an educated populace is important to voters. "That's what America is all about. It's a representative democracy where We, the People, make our government, not a king. It [making a king] is not what we fought in the Revolutionary War for."

Nathan Miles, a junior at Crisp County High School and Cadet Major with JROTC, shared his thoughts on the program. "I think it's a great way for kids to get involved in their communities. We have a lot of things like this at our school, but we really have no outlets to get involved. Especially in our community, we see that a lot of people—they don't really know a whole lot about our local government. They don't know a lot about our state government. They know a lot about our national news, but they have no way to really make an impact on the nation. Making an impact in your local community is very easy to do; and this is just a great way for people to find ways that they can do that."

The students are also competing to gain points



Kemp explains the Ambassador program to Local news.

to see which school or region across the state can earn the most points. At the end of the school year, the school with the top-achieving students will be awarded trophies.

Kemp pointed out that the students would visit the capitol and attend a luncheon with him. He also noted, "This will allow these participating students to get trained in leadership skills and opportunities, which is going to help them down the road in whatever they would want to do."

According to the Secretary's office, this program isn't just for the upcoming November election, but for years to come.

If a Georgia high school wants to participate in the Student Ambassador Program, their representative should contact the Secretary of State's Outreach Coordinators Alex Collins (404-654-6045) or Nicholas Buford (404-654-6015) or email ambassadorsupport@sos.ga.gov.

Kemp held an open house at his Tifton office where he met with many community and county leaders from across South Georgia. Georgia is one of the few states in which a Secretary of State has set up regional offices to make himself/herself available to his/her constituents.

The Tifion office provides South Georgians access to the same resources offered in the Atlanta office, such as the Professional Licensing Division, the Corporations Divisions, the Securities Division, and the Elections Division.

For more information about the Secretary of State's Regional office, contact Keith Stone at 229-391-3732 or come by the South Georgia Regional Office located at 238 2nd St. E, Tifton, GA. 31794.

You may also visit the SOS website is www.sos.ga.gov.



Bellamy Bro., Continued...

hear more. Cone is a native of Fitzgerald and many locals came out to support her and the band. Sharing the billboard with the Bellamy Brothers was a first for Bleu Burden. Cone said that she was proud that she could share the moment with her hometown.

Marveling at the long line stretched around the block, Cone said, "We are overwhelmed by the support everyone has shown [for the event]."

Chad Parkerson called the experience a "definite bucket list check-off."

"We are people who go to work every day and do this [perform] on the side—for fun," he said. "[This] is like a dream... everyone has a dream to be a rock star...This [experience] is legitimate!"

And legitimate, it was. And Fitzgerald has plans to make it happen again.

According to Fitzgerald's mayor, Mark Massee, the event is part of a new effort by many community sponsors to connect the historic Grand Theatre with a series of concerts, as well as continuing to promote its other role in the community.

"We are very excited," Massee said. "This is a first for an event like this."

Massee also pointed out that Fitzgerald has always had a thriving arts community that showcases a variety of entertainment, both local and from the surrounding area.

Neesa Williams, Chamber of Commerce director, was excited as she helped sell the remaining tickets just hours before the concert began.

"Our Grand Theatre is going to be FULL," she said.

People came from all over Georgia and neighboring states to hear the iconic band. Williams and Massee were grateful for the efforts of Hall Wiley and Todd DeMatto, who worked tirelessly to arrange the concert events.

"This is what community is about—working together," Williams said of everyone who helped make the evening a success.

Based on ticket sales, Massee said, "I'm virtually assured that this will happen again. [I]t has exceeded our expectations."

The mayor hopes that this event will dispel the thoughts of "there's nothing going on" in Fitzgerald, or South Georgia.



An Evening at the Grand



Above: Fitzgerald writer/historian, Paul Dunn (88-yrs-old) stopped by to enjoy the ambiance of an evening at the Grand Theatre. The old marquee posters prompted memories of 9-cent Saturday mantinee tickets and selling old newspapers to the fishmarket to earn movie fare.



Above: At last, a security duty that was really fun! Some of our area's finest helped keep everything under control. From Left to Right: David Gaye, Lee Cone, Chris Griffen, and Neal Smith.



Above: Chad Parkerson and Linsey Sumner Cone of Bleu Burden

Left: The bands--Bleu Burden (of Thomasville) and the Bellamy Brothers. Left to right: Austin Taylor, Howard Bellamy, John Streets, Sean McKenna, Cone, David Bellamy, and Parkerson.

"It's a definite Bucket List check-off," Parkerson, of Bleu Burden said about opening for the Bellamy Brothers, meeting and having a picture made with them, "...the icing on the cake."



Festivals, Music & More

Nashville, Hahira & Fitzgerald



Berrien Harvest Festival



OLD CARS!!



KIDS having fun!!



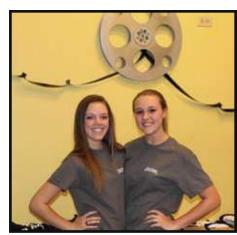
TRACTORS!!



Concert Night at Fitzgerald







Remembering Our Veterans







Honey Bee Festival











Upcoming The ents

Halloween

Nashville - Oct. 29 Fitzgerald - Oct. 27 Reed Bingham Park - Oct 29

Harmony Jubilee

Fitzgerald - Nov. 11-12 Hot Air Balloon Rides Artisan Market & Other Events

Lean-Ox Festival

Lenox - November 19 Arts & Crafts • Food Live Entertainment

Christmas Open House

Fitzgerald- November 13 1 PM - 6 PM

Artists Market On Love

Tifton - Nov. 5 10 AM - 5 PM Tifton Museum of Arts & Heritage

Mistletoe Market

Tifton - Nov. 5 10 AM - 6 PM UGA Conference Center

Christmas Parades

Nashville - December 3 Tifton - December 3 Fitzgerald - December 1

A Nashville Sound...

...Just a little further south of Music City

Down at the Nashville Community Center, South Georgia's own Tammy Kendrick recently had the opportunity to showcase her new CD. Appearing with her, from Nashville Tennessee, were Bobby G. Rice and, from Tifton, Ga., Willie Carver. The crowd that gathered enjoyed an evening of old-style country music.



Tammy Kendrick



Willie Carver



Danny Dawson Band

Above: Over at the VFW, the Danny Dawson Band performed for the Friday night crowd. Dawson's band has become a popular group around South Georgia, appearing at many local venues.



Bobby G. Rice

Photos by Wenda G. Bailey

A-Maze-N-Cane

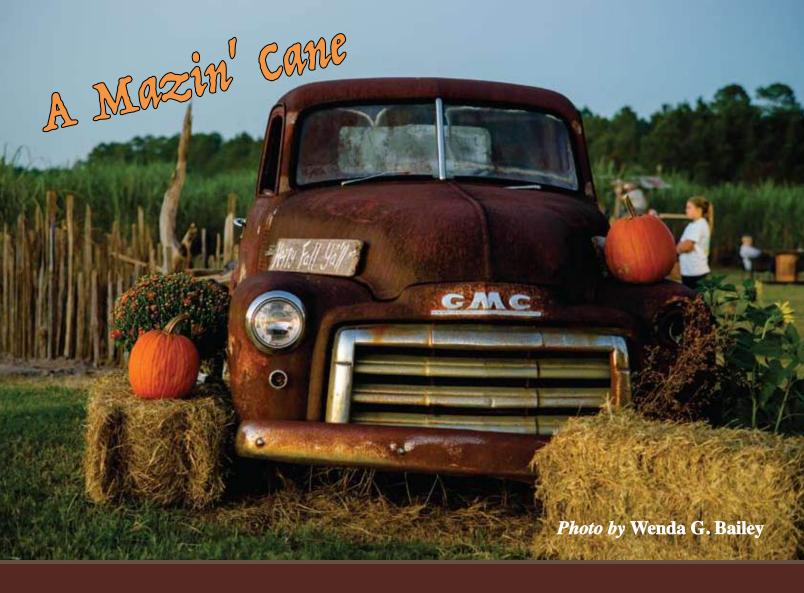
Hey Neighbor! A-Maze-N-Cane is a wonderful family attraction created by a South Georgia cane farmer. Along with a shady cane maze, guests can also enjoy a zip-line ride, marshmallow roast, evening star-gazing, or the mini-farm (for kids only). Refreshments are also offered at the Sugar Shack. Call 229-543-1397 for more information, or visit their FaceBook page.



Hey, Neighbor!







Happy Fall Y'all

My Georgia Magazine Hometown

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