



The Martin News

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Pandemic Hits Local Tourism, But Future Bright, Says Spearman



"Tourism has been impacted tremendously with the pandemic," Tyron Spearman, executive director of the Tifton-Tift County Tourism Association, told the Tifton Rotary Club on Wednesday. But at the same time, he described a rosy future for the local industry. New hotel/motel rooms coming to Tifton include 93 rooms at the La Quinta Inn on U.S. Highway 82, 90 rooms at the Home2 Suites by Hilton near Prince Chevrolet, and more than 100 rooms at a new Wyndham hotel on North 41. "This will bring us to almost 1,500 rooms in Tifton," Spearman said. He also noted that "we are moving from a 5 percent tax on motel rooms to 7 percent," and that, for the first time, a portion of that tax is required to go to product development. "Now, we can do some bricks-and-mortar improvements to attract people," he said. He anticipates finishing E.B. Hamilton and Friendly City parks and upgrading Fulwood Park – adding more power stations and water hookups for vendors coming to park events such as the Rhythm & Ribs BBQ Festival in March. Spearman said that he and his staff are attending more trade shows to help attract more people to Tifton, especially to the UGA Campus Conference Center,

for events. "We're competing with the beach – Panama City Beach and Jekyll Island – and also more locally with the Valdosta Conference Center." Upcoming tourism events include a bridal show in February and the Tiftarea Celebration with Will Graham at the Conference Center on Feb. 6-7. Spearman also mentioned the move of his Spearman Agency office to a location at 148 S. Ridge Ave., which has a new tourism shop in front.

Source: Tifton Grapevine

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Tom McCall Is Elected President Of Georgia Farm Bureau



MACON, Ga. – Georgia Farm Bureau (GFB) members elected Tom McCall for a two-year term as president of Georgia's largest general farm organization on Dec. 8. McCall of Elbert County grows wheat, oats, triticale, grain corn, sweet corn and hay. The McCall family also raises beef cattle, hogs and sheep. McCall replaces Gerald Long, who retired from the position after serving as GFB president since 2016. Long, of Bainbridge, served on the GFB Board of Directors in various roles since 1999 including GFB 9th District director, GFB South Georgia vice president and GFB 1st vice president. McCall has been a Farm Bureau member since 1978. McCall's first leadership role with Farm Bureau was serving as the chairman of the Elbert County Farm

Bureau (ECFB) Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Committee. He represented GFB's 2nd District on the GFB YF&R Committee in 1981-82 and chaired the state committee in 1982. McCall represented GFB's 2nd District on the GFB Board of Directors from 1984-1996. He also served as ECFB president for a number of years. McCall served in the Georgia House of Representatives for 26 years from Jan. 9, 1995, when he was sworn into office, until he retired from the legislature at the end of his 2020 term. As a state representative, McCall represented Georgia's House Dist. 33, which includes Elbert and Lincoln counties and portions of Madison, Wilkes and Columbia counties. McCall chaired the Georgia House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee from January 2005-2020. He also served on the House Game, Fish & Parks Committee, Natural Resources & Environment Committee and the Transportation Committee. Mr. McCall graduated from Elbert County High School and went on to achieve an Agriculture Degree from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) and later obtained a Bachelor's degree in Agronomy with a focus in Animal Science from the University of Georgia. McCall and his wife, Jane, are the proud parents of three children: Bud, Al and Katie. Their son, Al, is married to Rachel, and they have two sons named Winn and Wilkes. Their daughter, Katie, studied Early Childhood Education with an emphasis on Special Education, leading her to begin the Friends Helping Friends organization in honor of her brother Bud's memory, who sadly passed away in 2000. She is married to Bristol Archer and teaches PE at Elbert County Elementary. Jane is a retired kindergarten teacher. While Mr. McCall is gratified by the success he has enjoyed in his farming and political endeavors, his greatest joy is in his family.

Source: Georgia Cotton Commission

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ABAC VP-Chief Of Staff To Retire

Paul Willis, executive vice president for finance and administration and chief of staff at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, will retire Jan. 29. "I feel like it's time," Willis said. "I'd like to do a little traveling to see some friends and former students, people we have had relationships with during the 38 years I have spent in higher education." Willis' wife, Shari, plans to retire from the Southwell medical community later this month. "We plan to continue to live in Tifton," Willis said. "We really like it here, and it's a good pivot point for places we want to go." ABAC President David Bridges said Willis has been vital to the college's success. "Paul has transformed every area of ABAC in which he has worked," Bridges said. "His business acumen coupled with his people and management skills have enabled him to take seemingly impossible assignments and create success stories." Willis joined the ABAC administration in 2009 as college enrichment director. ABAC took over the operation of the former Georgia Agrirama in 2010, and Bridges selected Willis as director of the newly named Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village. In 2012, Willis became vice president for external affairs. In 2014, Willis took the reins as vice president for finance and operations, and moved up to executive vice president and chief of staff in 2018. He previously served 26 years in teaching and administration at the University of Florida.

Source: Tifton Grapevine

A Trip to the Zoo

December 27th, 2019 is "Visit a Zoo" day. If you are looking to make your zoo trip an overnight adventure for your family, consider visiting Zoo Atlanta in Atlanta, Georgia. Zoo Atlanta dates back to 1889 when it was a traveling carnival operated by George W. Hall. It is home to some of the most exotic animals in the world. A number of rare and endangered species are featured in the park, including Komodo dragons, Arakan forest turtles and clouded leopards. In 1999, Zoo Atlanta introduced an exhibit of giant pandas, becoming the fourth zoo in the US to house the rare animals. The grounds of Zoo Atlanta cover 40 acres. It is open every day of the year except Thanksgiving and Christmas. An indoor playground, an outdoor playground, a petting zoo and an interactive naked mole rat tunnel play area are available for children to enjoy. A zoo gift shop sells mementos, toys and collectible items. Always remember for a day trip, Chehaw in Albany is a great zoo to enjoy for the day with the family. There is a park to play in and enjoy a picnic, animals to visit, feed and interact with, train ride, gift shop to browse around in and much more. Be sure to plan your zoo trip and have a great time with the family.

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Dates to Remember

December

- 14th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 15th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 15th ~ Books & Bubbles at Margaret Jones Public Library
- 15th ~ WCHS Boys JV Basketball Home 4:30PM
- 15th ~ WCHS Girls Basketball Home 6PM
- 15th ~ WCHS Boys Basketball Home 7:30PM
- 16th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 16th ~ Kiwanis Meeting at Noon
- 17th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 18th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 18th ~ BFHS Gift Wrapping 4pm-7pm
- 18th ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 18th ~ WCHS Girls Basketball Away
- 18th ~ WCHS Boys Basketball Away
- 19th ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 19th ~ BFHS Gift Wrapping Noon-4pm
- 19th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 20th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 20th ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 21st ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 21st ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 21st ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 22nd ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 22nd ~ Books & Bubbles at Margaret Jones Public Library
- 22nd ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 22nd ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 23rd ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 23rd ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 23rd ~ Kiwanis Meeting at Noon
- 23rd ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 24th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 24th ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 24th ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 25th ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 25th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 25th ~ Merry Christmas from The Martin News
- 26th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 26th ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 27th ~ Festival of Lights at Chehaw in Albany
- 27th ~ Wild Adventures Christmas
- 28th ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 29th ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 29th ~ Books & Bubbles at Margaret Jones Public Library
- 30th ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 31st ~ WC Schools Closed for the Holidays
- 30th ~ Kiwanis Meeting at Noon



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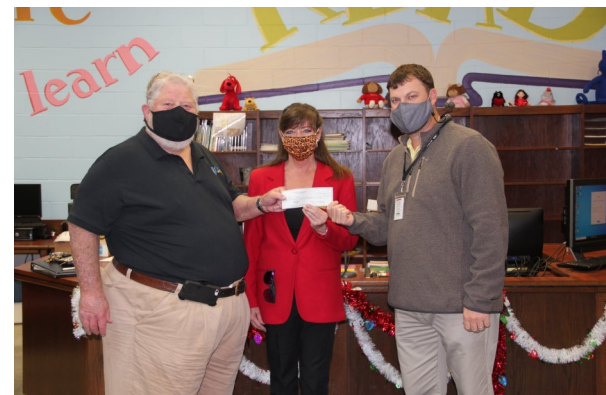
What's Your New Year's Resolution?

A new year is upon us. I can't believe it is almost 2021. New Year's Day has traditionally been seen as the ideal time to make your all important New Year's resolution. Unfortunately, while our heart and minds are in the right place, New Year's resolutions can cause a lot of unneeded stress. Don't set yourself up for failure in 2021 by vowing to make changes that will be hard to keep. Instead use these steps to help make your resolutions for the New Year a success. 1. Pick one thing to change. If you want to change your life or your lifestyle don't try to change the whole thing at once. It won't work. Instead pick one area of your life to change to begin with. Make it something concrete so you know exactly what change you're planning to make. If you're successful with the first change you can go ahead and make another change after a few weeks. Changing one thing at time will make you more likely to stick with the changes. 2. Realize ahead of time that it won't be easy, but it will be worth it. Anticipate the problems you might face with the changes you want to make. Once you've identified these problems, they will be easier to cope with when they arise. 3. Pick a start date. You don't have to make these changes on New Year's Day. Pick a day when you know you will be enthusiastic and surrounded by positive people. 4. Accept failure. If you do fail, don't hate yourself for it. Make a note of what caused your set back and learn from it. Trying is the key. Keep trying and you will succeed. 5. Reward yourself. Rewarding yourself will help keep you going during the hard days. Remember, the harder you work at obtaining your goals, the more you will deserve and feel you have earned those rewards. I am looking forward to 2021 with great new visions and plans for the new year! A new me is a better me, so start making plans for your new you. Good Luck at being the best you that you can be in 2021!



Worth County Primary School is very grateful for the support the local Kiwanis Club gives the school system. The Kiwanis Club donated clothes to the clothes closet for WCPS.

Source: WCSD



Worth County Primary School is very thankful for the community and their support with the Maddex Johnson Fundraiser. The Kiwanis Club also partnered with this fundraiser and we were able to make a significant donation to the family to help with medical expenses for Maddex.

Source: WCSD



Thank you to the Kiwanis Club of Sylvester for donating these jackets for the Worth County Elementary School clothes closet. We appreciate all that the Kiwanis Club does for our school as well as our community.

Source: WCSD

Taking a break is good for the soul. And what's even better for the soul is taking a break with friends and family and painting! Once a month, Allison Kilcrease hosts a painting class at the Margaret Jones Public Library with a different theme to paint. The one for January is already scheduled so be sure to call the library and schedule your spot now. They will explain the cost and where to meet. All you do is show up and have a great time. Relaxing is the best medicine.



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TCFEE Awards Incentive Grants \$17,374 For Projects At 6 Tift County Schools



The Tift County Foundation for Educational Excellence (TCFEE) this week awarded a total of \$17,374 in Incentive Grants to nine teacher projects at six Tift County schools. TCFEE President Kaylar Howard and Executive Committee member Laura Cutts delivered the grants, designed to encourage and allow outstanding teachers to put their best ideas into practice in the classroom. A committee annually reviews the grant applications and makes the awards, primarily funded through investment income earned from TCFEE "Chairs" endowed through the years. The foundations first Incentive Grant was presented in 1990. Through the years, 748 grants for a total of \$546,374 have been provided by the TCFEE. This year's grant recipients are: Belinda Grif-

fin, Annie Belle Clark Elementary, \$6,537, "Virtual Reality Headsets," funded from the Virginia Short Lindsog Language Chair, the Syd Blackmarr Arts Chair, and the Virginia Tift Brumby Music Chair. Selena Johns, Annie Belle Clark Elementary, \$189 (partial), "LED Board Scrolling Sign," Joe Courson Media Chair. Teresa Yancey, Annie Belle Clark Elementary, \$200, "Adopt-a-Pet Reading Initiative," funded by the Julian Cannon Reading Skills Chair, the Cathy Kvien Family Reading Chair, and the Teri Nalls Reading Angel Chair. Ginger Harn, Charles Spencer Elementary, \$3,000, "Robotics Club Funding: Sphero BOLT Power Pack," Mikie Wolff Humanities Chair. C. Greer. J. Judy, J. Nixon, K. Bristol, and I. Ruhlen, Len Lastinger Elementary, \$697.94, "Materials for Science & Social Studies: Microphones for Reader's Theatre," Homer Rankin Journalism Chair. Whitney Ratliff Turner, Northside Elementary, \$3,000 (partial), "Educational Gaming: Nintendo Labo Devices and Kits," Bob Wight Challenge Chair. Ashlyn Reaves, Northeast Middle School, \$1,200, "AG Mechanics Tools & Greenhouse for FFA & Agricultural Classes," William & Hattie Hanna Agriculture Chair. Mickey Bentley, Tift County High, \$2,000, "Utility House Construction Funding," Sara Bowen Gibbs Mathematics Chair. Melissa Busbin, Tift County High, \$550, "Snap Circuits for Teaching Logic Games," Glenn W. Burton Science Chair. Pictured From left, back row, at Tift County High are Fred Rayfield, Career, Technical & Agricultural Education (CTAE) director; Principal Chad Stone; Mickey Bentley, CTAE construction teacher and Incentive Grant recipient; Kaylar Howard, president of the Tift County Foundation for Educational Excellence (TCFEE); and Laura Cutts, TCFEE Incentive Grants chair. In front are students Zachery Gillespie and Charles Bryan.

Source: Tifton Grapevine



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Gov Honors Fitzgerald Photographer With GA Arts, Humanities Award



Brian Brown of Fitzgerald, a photographer and historian, is one of 10 Georgians who Gov. Brian P. Kemp is honoring this year with a Governor's Award for the Arts and Humanities. Brown began casually photographing old barns and endangered farmhouses in South Georgia in 1998 and started a formal archive in 2008. According to the Georgia Council for the Arts, Brown's "digitally based 'Vanishing Georgia' project is a testament to his interests in photography and history. Since 2008, he has documented over 7,000 locations and maintains an ongoing archive approaching 150,000 images. It is his hope that growing knowledge of the places he documents will educate Georgians of our shared rural heritage." His work has been utilized by such organizations as the Smithsonian Institution, Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Georgia Music Foundation, Georgia Conservancy and Altamaha Riverkeeper.

The Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities honor individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to Georgia's civic and cultural vitality through excellence and service to the arts and humanities. Presented by the Office of the Governor in partnership with the Georgia Council for the Arts and Georgia Humanities, the award recognizes the value of the arts and humanities in the creation of a thriving economy and their contributions to education, innovation, growth and quality of life. Brian Brown's photo of this old Sunsweet mill and store in Tift County is representative of his work chronicling vanishing South Georgia sites and architecture. On his website vanishingsouthgeorgia.com, Brown said, "Oliver Davis owned this old mill and the store in Sunsweet. I made this photo in 2011 and recently learned that it collapsed sometime in 2013."

Source: Tifton Grapevine



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Staying Safe in the Bath

January will be here before we know it. That is a month recognized as National Bath Safety Month. Water and smooth surfaces can together convert the bath into a risky place. The most frequented room of the house, bathroom, is believed to be the most dangerous too. Bath safety is an integral part of general home safety. A study points that one-third of falls occurring at homes occur in the bath. All family members, despite their age or health are at risk. Bath safety products play a vital role in ensuring the safety of a person while in the bath. People with limited mobility need to be extra cautious when it comes to bath safety; in the bathtub; shower and toilet. These areas of the bath should be tailored to suit individual requirements. To ensure bath safety, it is always good to identify areas that are very slippery. Identifying these ahead of time will possibly prevent falls. Look out for areas that are difficult to move about and identify areas that pose a threat. You always want to check if you have any fixtures in the bath that are difficult to reach, use or clean. An important thing to remember is bath safety can be split into two parts: Bath safety procedures and bath safety equipment/products and facilities like modified bathtubs, showers and toilets. Remembering some of these safety tips will help to prevent accidents in your bath. Always use anti skid flooring material in the bath if possible. Keep the floor clean and dry. Install grab bars inside the bathtub and shower. These are good for any age person, not just an elderly or disabled person. Use non-slip strips in your tub or shower. Select impact-resistant shower and bathtub attachments. Put a bath mat with non-skid base next to the bathtub and shower. Install scald-prevention devices. These devices will keep a check on the water temperature which will prevent shower/bath burns. Electrical switches and plugs should always be kept away from water sources. Make sure all electrical outlets have ground fault circuit interrupters. Use door locks that can be unlocked from both sides. This allows someone to get to you if you are ever in need of help. There are concerns though for the safety of seniors while bathing. Bath safety is of vital importance for older persons. Over 75% of slip-fall deaths happen to people who are 65 years and above. The bath area of the house can prove to be extremely hazardous for elderly people if it is not modified to suit their requirements. Bath safety for people who are elderly or have disabilities is further complicated by issues such as medication side-effects, reduced physical ability and diminished vision. These are great bath safety tips for seniors. A transfer bench with adjustable legs is useful for elderly people. They have to sit on the portion of the transfer bench that extends outward and slide into the tub. Latex coated or non-skid bath mat can be placed alongside the tub, this will provide firm footing. Non-slip suction mats or rubber silicone treads fit to the tub will prevent falls. A portable, hand-held shower head is convenient for use. An angle bar fixed to two walls offers support while standing to shower and for sitting and getting up in the bathtub. For elderly people grab bars should be mounted on walls around the tub. Grab bars around the bathtub are required for the safety of older persons. A vertically placed U bar, fixed to the side wall at the base of the tub, ensures safe entry and exit. Horizontally placed support bars are appropriate for lowering or raising the body in the tub. Diagonally placed grab bars are not suggested as the hand may slip thus increasing the chances of a fall. Numerous types of portable seats, chairs, and benches are available for people who find it difficult to sit on the bathtub floor. Inside-the-tub chairs with back support offer great comfort. Chairs with backs that can be placed inside the tub are available in the market; these chairs give the bather a comfortable feel while in the shower. Be sure to check for non-slip rubber tips on the legs of the chair or bench as they provide ample safety. Mechanical bath lifts can help in lowering the person into the bathtub. Some elderly people might have reduced feeling in their hands, and thus they may misjudge the water temperature. A bathing thermometer or plastic water monitor will help them to check the right water temperature before they step into the bathtub. Keeping everyone safe in the bath is very important. Thanks to "A Medical Company" for the great tips on bath safety!



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Adel Grad Gets Top ABAC Award At Commencement



Jaylee Bass, a writing and communication major from Adel, received the Alumni Association award as the top bachelor's degree graduate in the fall commencement ceremony Thursday at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. To adhere to social distancing guidelines, ABAC hosted three commencement ceremonies, two in Tifton and one in Bainbridge. President David Bridges said Bass “embodies the core values of the award and has devoted countless hours in service to the college through scholarship, leadership, and citizenship. “Our winner has achieved high academic honors and has been named to the ABAC Dean’s List twice and the ABAC President’s List three times,” Bridges said. “This student has excelled in all academic disciplines and maintained one of the highest GPAs in the graduating class.” Bass represented the college as an ABAC Ambassador throughout her academic career. She was a member of the Law Club and the Honors Program and had received Distinguished Honor Student status for three consecutive years. Employed part-time by the Tift Judicial Circuit Public Defender’s Office, Bass was also a contributing writer for the Adel News-Tribune, volunteered at G.O. Bailey Elementary School and at the Tiftarea YMCA. A member of the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers, Bass is headed to law school.

Source: Tifton Grapevine

Books and Bubbles had so much fun last week making ornaments. A special thanks to Miss Cindy for bringing treats and ornaments for the group to make at Books and Bubbles. Be sure to check the calendar of events at the Margaret Jones Public Library to not miss out on any fun! Source: MJPL



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American Textile Plans Expansion At Tifton Plant



American Textile Co. is planning a 105,000-square-foot expansion to its manufacturing and distribution center in Tift County, the Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce announced Tuesday. American Textile manufactures and distributes bedding products to a variety of retailers. “Anyone who sells bedding is our customer,” said Patrick Seiffert, the company’s senior vice president of marketing. Consistent, strong growth over the last decade is driving growth in the Tifton manufacturing and distribution facility.” This is American textile’s third significant investment in Tift County during the past six years, Seiffert said. Construction on the project, which the Tift County Development Authority (TCDA) has approved, is expected to begin soon, said Keith Brown, senior vice president of operations. The addition will bring American Textile’s total square footage in Tift County to more than 500,000, Brown said. Construction is expected to be completed in July, and the expansion is slated to be fully operational by August. Seiffert said the expansion will lead to additional jobs as the company looks to grow its line of pillows. Working with the TCDA and the local government is very attractive,” he said. “They make doing business easy, and Tifton is a great place to grow our company.” Brian Marlowe, president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and TCDA, said, “We value their commitment to our community over the last 10 years and are grateful for their partnership.” American Textile currently employs more than 400 in Tifton, including temporary workers. The company has grown significantly from its initial 30-person team.

Source: Tifton Grapevine

TRMC Receives Donation Through Heart Program



TWG Services made a \$5,000 donation on Wednesday to Tift Regional Medical Center (TRMC) through the Georgia HEART program. “We are so grateful for this generous contribution,” said Alex Le, TRMC chief operating officer. “We appreciate the kind and thoughtful gesture from TWG Services, especially during the holiday season.” “We are so grateful for all of the people that provide health care at Southwell,” said Michael Williamson with TWG Services. “In these extraordinary times, they have gone beyond the call of duty in serving our community. We believe a strong medical presence in the Tifton area is a major economic engine for the region, and health care for our community is vital to our quality of life. ”The Georgia HEART program provides an excellent way for us to support our hospital. It’s a great honor to invest in the continued growth of healthcare services in our hometown.” Donations made to TRMC through the Georgia HEART program qualify for a 100 percent state tax credit. For information, vis-

it www.GeorgiaHeart.org or www.TiftRegional.com/TaxCredit. Michael Williamson, from left, of TWG Services, and Julie Williamson, present a donation to Tift Regional Medical Center/Southwell representatives Alex Le and Justin Beck. The \$5,000 donation is through the Georgia HEART program.

Source: Tifton Grapevine



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