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Editorial | School start date is best for all Board of Education made right choice

The Glynn County Board of Education is to be commended. Its members did something no board has dared to even attempt for some time now. It is allowing children to stay out of school longer in August, one of the hottest months of the year both weather-wise and vacation-wise. And in a resort town, that's something. That's something to be appreciated.

The 2010 school start date voted on and approved recently by the board — Aug. 16 — is a perfect response to those who want children to return to classes early and to those who advocate a later return date. It's not Aug. 5, the earliest date proposed, nor is it Sept. 7, the latest. The date is in between the two extremes. Those familiar with this long-time issue would concede that it was difficult for the board of education to ignore either side of the debate, early versus later. On the one hand, teachers and school administrators requested that August vacation continue to be shortened and that students be made to come back to class

as early as possible. On the other side was Glynn County's tourism community, which depends on youth to fill jobs and on the family vacationers drawn to the islands and beaches.

Educators brandished a valid point throughout the discussion. Since student performance on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test weighs heavily in determining whether a school makes Adequate Yearly Progress, then there should be an all-out effort by teachers and administrators to make sure each and every pupil is prepared. That takes time, time which they do not have if children are allowed to stay out of school longer.

The tourism community also is right on target. When to start school is as much an economic decision as anything else. Fewer jobs means fewer people working, and that's not good for anybody. The majority of the members of the school board showed sympathy and support for both viewpoints by voting to start school next year on Aug. 16.

Another view | Steve Breen



Letters to the editor

Send letters on on topics of general interest to readers in Southeast Georgia by :
• **Mail** Letters to the Editor, The Brunswick News, 3011 Altama Ave., Brunswick GA 31520

• **E-mail** editor@thebrunswicknews.com

• **Fax** 280-0926

Letters should be no more than 250 words in length and may be edited for clarity.

Never too late for God

Dear Dr. Graham: Please pray for me. The doctor says I need open-heart surgery, and I'm scared I won't make it. I've never been a religious person, but is it too late to turn to God? If I died right now I know I wouldn't go to Heaven. — D.F.

Dear D.F.: Sometimes it takes a serious crisis like this to wake us up and make us realize our need of God -- and I believe this is what is happening to you. After all, would you have ever thought seriously about your eternal salvation and your need for Christ otherwise? Probably not. No, it isn't too late for you to turn to God. In fact, I believe God has spared your life so you'd have another opportunity to turn to Him. I pray you won't ignore this. The Bible says, "He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God loves you, and He doesn't want you to die and spend eternity apart from Him.

And you don't have to, because God has provided the way for you to be saved.



Billy Graham

www.billygraham.com

My Answer

That way is Jesus Christ, who gave His life as the final and complete sacrifice for your sins. Only one thing will keep you out of Heaven, and that is your sins. But on the cross all your sins were placed on Christ, and He took upon Himself the death and Hell that you deserve. Don't let another day go by without Him, but by faith open your heart and life to Him and trust Him for your salvation. Then face the future with confidence, knowing that God is always with you, and He will never abandon you. If your life is spared, make it your goal to live for Christ every day. But even if it isn't, rejoice in the glorious hope we have because of Him.

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Letters to the editor | Voices of the community

Clean-up efforts appreciated

The Glynn County 4-H Advisory Council, Keep Brunswick-Golden Isles Beautiful and UGA Glynn County Cooperative Extension Service would like to thank the 94 community volunteers who helped pick up beach trash during the "football weekend community beach sweep" on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1.

Community members from ages 5 to 80 got up bright and early both days and worked together to help make a difference in our own backyard.

Over 100, 30-gallon trash bags of litter were picked up from St. Simons beaches on Saturday morning and about eight 30-gallon bags were collected on Sunday morning. We would also like to thank the staff of the Glynn County Parks and Recreation Department, Law Enforcement, Public Works Department and the GA Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division for their planning, response and hard work during this weekend. Our volunteers arrived at 7:30 a.m. both mornings to find that County staff had been on the scene before dawn already tackling the litter problem.

Plenty of trash and recycle containers were lined up on the beaches just waiting to be used. Trash bags were distributed to beach visitors on site both days in hopes that they would indeed "stash their trash." Thank you again to the volunteers and staff for working hard to make a difference.

Lea King-Badyna
St. Simons Island

Article did not give proof, evidence of dishonesty

Regarding your article ("Officials Lobbying for Friend") concerning the county's health insurance, I would like to make the following comments: Why were bid packages sent to brokers and not directly to the insurance companies for quotations?

The article implies that there is some dishonest or underhanded practices going on between the county commissioners and McGinty Gordon but there is no proof or evidence of such dishonesty. Is there any evidence of this?

The referenced article is very irresponsible and as the editor of The Brunswick News, it is your responsibility to get out legitimate news to your readers.

I personally have done business with McGinty Gordon for 15 years and they have always handled their responsibilities in an honest, responsible manner. In my dealings with them, McGinty Gordon has always acted with high moral character.

I am disappointed that The Brunswick News used such poor judgment in printing this article, but this is not the first time. I have corresponded to you in the past regarding other irresponsibly printed articles and never have I received a response from you addressing my comments or concerns.

It is for this reason that I have elected to cancel my subscription to The Brunswick News. I would rather get my news from a reputable and responsible source.

Phillip Allen
Brunswick

Recent shrimp boil proves success for local GOP

The GOP had a wonderful shrimp boil on Friday. We had about 300 people attending, from McIntosh, Camden Counties and many from Atlanta. On the straw vote, I personally gave out over 250 ballots. Congressman Jack Kingston and his lovely wife, Libby, attended along with many candidates and their wives. I was especially proud to see so many young candidates running for office. One candidate running for insurance commissioner looked young enough to be my granddaughter. We need these young people to bring ideas and strength to the Republican Party. Yet, there were many old-timers attending, many that I haven't seen since the late 1980s. The food was excellent and entertainment couldn't have been better. I want to thank all that came and special thanks to our Chairman Kevin Gough and his event chair Kathy Strickland.

Gussie Gammon
St. Simons Island

Headline suggesting the recession has ended is off

Regarding your headline in the Oct. 30 edition "Signs Indicate Recession Over" — would you please tell me what you're smoking and where I can get some?

Jim Croft
Townsend



The Brunswick News/File

Brooke Zell, 7, from left, her mother Charlotte Zell, Mary Parker, and her daughter, 7 year-old Adi Parker join others in picking up trash on St. Simons beach early Sunday morning. Efforts like these are applauded by residents.

Service dogs should be allowed in courtrooms

You would think that a judge would know the law.

Several weeks ago I wanted to attend the first Edenfield trial in Brunswick, but I was told that I could not bring my service dog into the courtroom. I survived a stroke in 2006 and I use a power chair and travel with a service dog.

I have a prescription for my dog and she is certified. I was in law enforcement for many years and I called Judge Stephen Scarlett's chambers to inform him of my intentions, out of courtesy, to bring my dog into the courtroom. By federal law a service dog can go any place the public can go.

After several calls to Judge Scarlett's office, I was told by his secretary that I could not bring my dog into the courtroom. I have been in many, many courtrooms and I would never do anything to disrupt a trial.

Several days before the trial, I was contacted by a person from Judge Scarlett's office who told me that I could bring my dog into the courtroom if I was "vision impaired." Being vision impaired is not the only reason for having a service dog. These dogs also take care of many other problems. One would think that a judge would know the law.

Sam Pierce
Woodbine

Charging for honoring veterans is unpatriotic

In an article published in your newspaper on Tuesday, Oct. 27, it states that U.S. newspaper circulation is falling due to defections to the Internet and tumbling ad revenue.

However, I am saddened and disappointed that The Brunswick News chooses to increase its revenue through the sale of ads "to remember those who served — a salute to veterans."

In years past, you have sold ads for Valentines Day and Mother's Day.

That is fine and dandy for those who choose to honor their loved ones in this manner, but to charge \$25 to run a veteran's name, rank, branch of service, time of service and where served along with a photo is unpatriotic as it gets.

I will choose to remember my stepfather who fought with the United States Marine Corps during World War II, in

deplorable conditions that no human being should ever be subjected, by placing fresh flowers on his grave.

I will also pay tribute to my numerous uncles and cousins who fought for this great country of ours in the Navy, Army and the Air Force during World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War by displaying the American flag on my flag pole on Veteran's Day.

God bless America and God bless our men and women who are still fighting in a difficult war so that we Americans may have access to the freedom of press.

Debbie Wells
Brunswick

Dredging that causes sea turtle deaths is troubling

On Oct. 30, the Brunswick News carried an article, "Summer Dredging Killed Sea Turtles." It recounts U.S. Corps of Engineers dredging operations carried on in Brunswick and Savannah, in which a total of seven federally protected sea turtles were decimated by hopper dredges.

These operations, funded by federal stimulus monies, were carried out in September, despite the advice of wildlife officials that loggerheads and other sea turtles are most present and active in our coastal waters at the end of the summer and in September.

Dave Allison, Senior Campaign Director for Oceana, was quoted in the article saying, "The killing of sea turtles and putting them at further risk of extinction just to pump money through the system is at the very least unfortunate. I can understand the desire to keep dredge operators employed and keep money going through the stimulus.

But there simply is no real justification for this kind of carnage."

As a contributing member of the Georgia Sea Turtle Center who takes great pride in the achievements and the dedication of the staff and leadership of that marvelous organization, it gives me great personal pain to read about such wanton destruction of seven members of a species that we are struggling so hard to save.

I call upon all coastal residents to write your congressmen and urge them to step forward and prevent such actions on the part of the Corps of Engineers from taking place ever again during the months of May through September in Coastal Georgia.

Dory Ingram
Atlanta



The Brunswick News/File

A sea turtle swims in the ocean. The deaths of turtles due to dredging by the U.S. Corps of Engineers troubles readers.

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