

Opinions, yours and ours

The Chatter Box

By Deborah Bennett

Am I the only one who is living in the dark ages and has never heard of a "blue tooth?" I was introduced to the term last week when a customer came into the news office wearing a "blue tooth" on her ear.

It is a device that allows you to talk on your cell phone, hands free. You just push a button on the earpiece when your phone rings and talk. It can also be programmed to dial your calls by simply speaking instructions like, "Call work," or "Call home."

I don't know how expensive the device is, but it appears to be well worth the money in terms of providing peace of mind for parents who worry about their children using cell phones while driving.

Just don't ask me why it's called a "blue tooth." I suppose it's for the same reason my computer "mouse" is called a "mouse."

The Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade through downtown Millen on Monday had excellent participation, and I salute organizers for a job well done.

Happy birthday this week to: Sharon Jenkins, Hope Keldie, Florine Aaron, Dean Brinson, Iesha Williams, Terry Thompson, Jessica Aaron, Joanne Sharpe, Anna Griffin Herrington, Valerie Hall and Georgia Lee Dudley.

Celebrating wedding anniversaries this week are: Mr. and Mrs. Ray Miller and Mr. and Mrs. Ivy Reid.

Military Active Duty List: **Capt. Donald Slade Burke**, Travis Air Force Base, Fairfield, Calif.; **SPC Grade E4 Arthur Lamont Milton Jr.**, HHC 1-36 Infantry Support, Friedberg, Germany; **Staff Sgt. Gilbert C. Sheppard III**, 48th Brigade, 118th Field Artillery, Ft. Stewart; **Petty Officer 2nd Class Jamie A. Yager**, U.S. Navy, Maryland; **Petty Chief Officer Andy D. Crosby**, U.S. Navy, Elroy Destroyer, Norfolk, Va.; **Stephanie Crosby, R.N.**, U.S. Navy, Lafayette Destroyer; **LCPL Dwain "Cade" Lee**, 1st Marine Division Combat Service Support Group II Security Element, ArRamadi, Iraq; **Jimmy Cooper**, U.S. Army National Guard, 878th Engineering Battalion-Augusta, Persian Gulf; **1st Lt. J.R. Taylor**, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Iraq; **SPC. Daniel Stuart**, 18th MEDCOM, 121 General Hospital, Seoul, Korea; **Capt. Andrew P. Thomas**, U.S. Marines, 2nd Marine Division, F.A.S.T. Company, Yorktown, VA; **Sgt. 1st Class Steven Yager**, 362nd Sig. Company, Korea; **MM3 Jeffrey Sweat**, U.S. Navy, USS Kauffman, MM3 59/E-Division, A-Gang, Norfolk, Va.; **Cpl. Larry Lamont Clark**, U.S. Marine Corp, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C. Bagdad, Iraq; **Khan Young**, U.S. Navy, U.S.S. Kitty Hawk, Persian Gulf; **Robert Milton Jr.**, E-3, U.S. Army, Ft. Stewart, Hinesville, Ga., Mission Kuwait; **SFC Ronnie Perryman**, E-7, Georgia Army National Guard, Battery A, 118th Field Artillery Regiment, 48th Brigade Combat Team; **Arnold R. Mosley**, 2nd Lt., U.S. Air Force, Randolph AFB, Texas; and **Debra A. Mosley**, Tech. Sgt., U.S. Air Force, Randolph AFB, Texas.

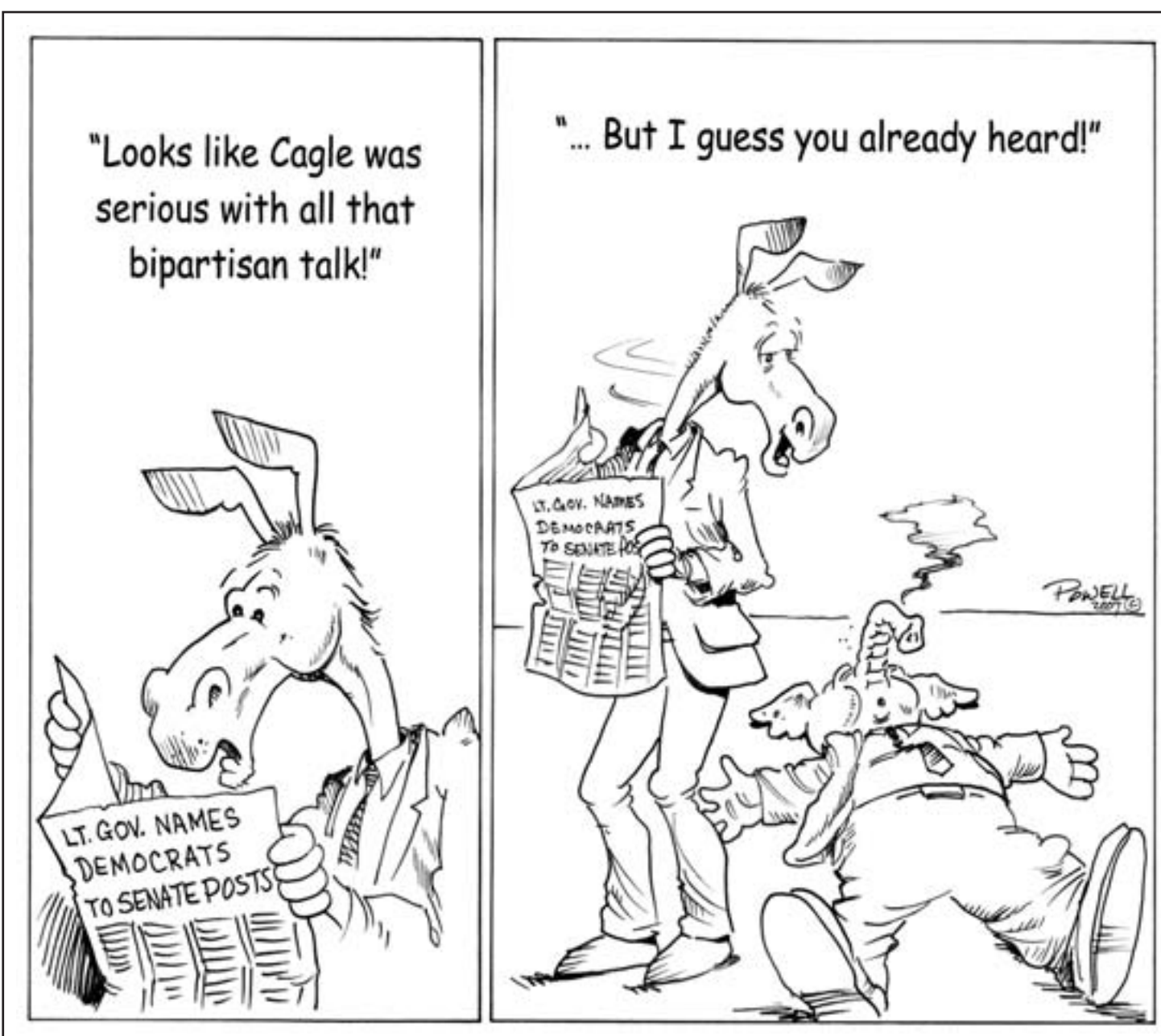
Letters policy

Letters to the editor of *The Millen News* are welcomed and encouraged. These are pages of opinions, yours and ours.

The unsigned editorials generally appearing on the left side of the editorial page represent the opinion of the newspaper and not that of any one person on our staff. Personal columns represent the opinions of the writers whose names appear on them and are not to be considered the opinion of this newspaper, its management or owners. Letters to the editor voice the opinions of the newspaper's readers.

The Millen News reserves the right to edit any and all portions of a letter. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters must include the signature, address and phone number of the writer to allow our staff to authenticate its origin. Letters should be limited to 400 words.

The deadline for letters is Monday at 9 a.m. You can email letters to deborah@eastga.net.



Bill Shipp

TWB: IN MEMORIAM

Georgia lost a legend last weekend. Tom Watson Brown, a rich man and a soft touch for politicians of nearly all stripes, died at age 73 of complications from diabetes. His funeral is to be held at Hickory Hill estate in Thomson, Ga., where his great-grandfather, fiery national Populist leader Tom Watson, lived and worked a century ago.

TWB's services are to be based on the 1922 final rites given to the then-adored Sen. Tom Watson on the lawn of Hickory Hill.

Relatively few modern Georgians know of Tom Watson Brown (or of his namesake) and his good works. TWB never sought public office, but he had a major impact on politics. He claimed to detest Republicans, but he gave generously to GOP causes and invariably supported Republican presidential candidates. At the state and local level, Brown helped dozens of Democrats. He counted liberals and moderates among his best friends. Former U.S. Sen. Wyche Fowler was one of his pals, as was uber-conservative ex-Congressman Bob Barr.

"I am not now, nor have I ever been, a member of the Republican Party. I will never forgive Republicans for what they did in 1861 (the year the Civil War began)," he once told a GOP candidate who made the mistake of referring to Brown as "my fellow Republican."

In his last years, Brown resided in a vast 19th-century mansion, Ivy Grove, just off the Marietta City Square, where he kept a 10,000-volume library, much of which was devoted to Civil War history.

He regarded the South's defeat at Gettysburg as a singularly tragic event in the history of the Western world. Some people scoffed at TWB as a throwback and a dinosaur. Others proclaimed him a conservative champion of the Old South. Tad, Brown's 40-year-old son, described his father as a "Jeffersonian Democrat."

None of those labels quite fit. Educated at Harvard and Princeton, he possessed an extraordinarily complex intellect. Although Brown was one of my closest friends, hardly a day passed without Brown engaging me in heated but never angry debate on current events. I regarded my talks with TWB as the equivalent of a vigorous physical workout.

Brown's fortune came mostly from ownership of Spartan Communications, a chain of broadcast stations in medium-sized markets, which he inherited from his father, Walter "Red" Brown, a well-known Washington radio journalist whose 1930s' nickname came from his liberal leanings. In 2000 Brown sold Spartan to Media General, a larger communica-

tions company. He also owned a 6 percent share of the Atlanta Falcons, which he sold to the team's present owner, Arthur Blank.

In the 1970s Brown served as an attorney instrumental in bringing MARTA to metro Atlanta, an achievement he later bemoaned as spoiling "civilized places like Lenox Square. I cannot help but feel like the Robert Oppenheimer of public transportation," he said.

Though Brown's wealth may have ranked in the billion-dollar range, his name seldom appeared on any list of rich and influential people. That suited him fine. He shunned the limelight and despised the kind of hangers-on and yes-men who often gather around the famously affluent.

He gave extraordinary sums to Mercer University, UGA and several other units of the University System of Georgia. He was the driving force behind Mercer University Press, one of the most prolific academic publishers in the nation. His Watson-Brown Foundation, administered by son Tad, has awarded scores of university scholarships to needy students. TWB subsidized the Atlanta Press Club's televised election debates.

In recent months, TWB stirred controversy in Athens with his restoration of the home of T. R. Cobb, a foremost legal authority of antebellum Georgia. Brown's decision to paint the house in its original pink caused neighborhood consternation. When Brown was told of the "pink" protests, he chuckled, "Tell 'em to call it 'salmon' - but it's still pink."

Tragedy was a frequent grim visitor in Brown's life. Two sons and two wives preceded him in death.

Yet he was a consummate optimist and activist, continuing to keep a full schedule of engagements including speeches even as his health failed. He insisted last year on going on a prolonged sea voyage to Central America and through the Panama Canal.

He once advised a would-be public speaker: "Tell 'em what you think and leave no stone unturned. The greatest compliment ever handed me followed a speech I made to an Augusta Rotary Club. 'Well, Tom,' my host said, 'I think you managed to offend everybody here at least once.'"

Reading back over this column, I realize that this is a too-brief recitation of a few highlights from the full life and exciting times of a wonderful and great man - and my cherished friend and confidant. I shall miss him as long as I live.

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PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

Jenkins County has received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to complete a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan (PDM) for the County and all incorporated jurisdictions. This grant has been awarded in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K).

Jenkins County will be holding its initial kick-off meeting on Thursday, January 25, 2007 at 10:00 am at the Fire Station at 919 College Ave., Millen, GA

The purpose of the meeting will be to create a committee that will meet on a regular basis to identify hazards and risks in Jenkins County and to create a plan to mitigate for identified hazards. This plan is required by FEMA. Citizens, Elected Officials, Business Representatives, School Officials, Public Safety Officials and surrounding counties are invited to attend this kick-off meeting.

Persons with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language should contact Carol Cates, County Administrator prior to January 25, 2007 at 478-982-2563. Persons with hearing disabilities can contact us or use the Georgia Relay Service at TDD 1-800-255-0056 or Voice 1-800-255-0135.

The Millen News Deadlines

FRIDAY AT NOON:

Wedding Announcements
Engagement Announcements
Anniversary Announcements
Birth Announcements
Memoriams and Thank You's

FRIDAY-5PM:

School News, Chatter Box Items,
General News Items.

MONDAY-9 AM:

Letters to the Editor

MONDAY-10 AM:

Datebook Items, Church News & Obituaries

MONDAY-11 AM:

Classified & Legal Ads

MONDAY-NOON:

Retail Display Ads