

# Opinions, yours and ours

## The Chatter Box

By Deborah Bennett

"Deadlines" is a dreaded but necessary word in the newspaper business. So, once again, I would like to remind everyone of our deadlines for submitting items to the newspaper.

The "only" news items we take on Mondays are obituaries, church news and datebook items, and these must be in our hands by 10 a.m. Classifieds and legal ads are taken until 11 a.m., and retail ads must be placed by noon.

Items due by noon Fridays include memoriams, thank you's, wedding and engagement announcements, anniversaries, birthdays and school news.

Items due by 5 p.m. Fridays include letters to the editor, Chatter Box birthdays and anniversaries and general news items.

Items brought after the deadlines may have to be held until the following week. We appreciate your cooperation in observing these deadlines.

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Happy birthday this week to: Katrina Daley, Frank Wilson, Aaron Tanner, Amanda Elizabeth Bragg, Thomas Thompson, Lynn Saxon, Paula Herrington, Darlene Gay, Ashley Burch, Craig Rowland, C.J. Jones, Melvin Siebert, George Robert Dudley Jr., Karen Lane, Cody Burch and Chris Cranshaw.

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Celebrating wedding anniversaries this week are: Mr. and Mrs. Benny Mims, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Black and Mr. and Mrs. Rew Herrmann.

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Military Active Duty List: **Airman First Class Charles S. Woods**, Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas; **Capt. Andrew P. Thomas**, U.S. Marines, 2nd Marine Division, F.A.S.T. Company, Bahrain, Persian Gulf; **Stuart Burrus**, U.S. Air Force, BAFB, LA; **SPC 4 Travis D. Motes**, 1st Calvary Division, Camp Taji, Iraq; **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; **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.



## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

What do you think?

Millen is a nice, quiet town with lots of nice people living here - mostly senior citizens, and lots of children, also.

Do we think of their safety? Do we have furious things lurking in the background? Maybe pit bulldogs; maybe near where our little children are playing, or our little pets are playing near our homes.

Our forefathers in this town would not have allowed something so dangerous to be lurking in the shadows, ready to devour our small loved ones or do serious harm, even to us grownups.

We have to be careful to have child molesters registered, but here are these creatures that we know nothing about until someone is attacked.

I, as a concerned citizen, can't understand why people want these animals; why they don't have a safe place out of the city. Have them registered. What is the purpose of these creatures anyway? Maybe we should find out.

Watch out, they may be nearer your home than you realize.

"What do you think?"

A concerned citizen,  
Mrs. Lee Messex

## Bill Shipp

### THIS IS A JOKE, RIGHT?

Neely Young writes a solid, straightforward column for Georgia Trend magazine. However, the publisher-writer omitted the last paragraph from his current monthly essay, so I will obligingly fill it in.

The last lines should read: "My column this month is a joke. I just thought we needed a few laughs."

Entitled modestly "The Speaker's Tax Proposal," Neely describes House Speaker Glenn Richardson's plan to become emperor of Georgia. Huey Long and Benito Mussolini would become minor historical figures if Glenn's law passes.

These are my conclusions, not Neely's. He describes the Richardson plan with a straight face. That's why I believe that Neely left out the disclaimer.

Check out these excerpts from Neely's piece written after a lengthy interview with the speaker:

"Richardson wants to change the present constitutional system for collecting taxes in Georgia; this would have the effect of increasing the power of the speaker of the House of Representatives and decreasing the power of the governor and the state Senate in governing our state.

"In short, Richardson believes that taxes should shift away from property to the service sector. He is proposing a retail and services sales tax ...

"Called the '4 PLUS 4 = 0' tax, this would eliminate all property taxes for cities, counties and schools. It would apply a 4 percent sales tax on all services and other dollar-for-dollar exchanges and transactions, including food, legal services, accounting services, health care, pest control, electrical utilities and all other business-to-business transactions.

"The plan would also drop state income taxes from 6 percent to 4 percent. Thus, 4 percent sales tax plus the 4 percent income tax equals zero property taxes, providing the 4 PLUS 4 = 0 a name.

"Under Georgia's present tax system, county commissioners, mayors, city councils and school board members levy property taxes and apply these revenues to local needs. If citizens don't like how they spend this revenue, these local government officials can be voted out of office. Under Richardson's plan, the state of Georgia would eliminate this property tax system and, in exchange, collect all taxes from sales and income. The state would then parcel out tax revenues to each county, city and school system.

"Richardson promises that, at first, all government entities would receive the same amount of revenues as under the present system. Later, the state would 'adjust' sales tax revenues to fit each local system's needs, he says.

"According to some local sources, there would be no sales tax exemptions in the 4 PLUS 4 = 0 plan, not even the present sales tax exemption on food. There would be an exception for non-profit hospitals and a somewhat different approach for farm-related products such as timber and cotton. Prescription drugs, interstate commerce and products of manufacturing companies would not be included in the plan — benefiting entities like Delta Air Lines or Lockheed Martin.

"Will the 4 PLUS 4 = 0 system eliminate the need for local school boards, county commissions and city councils? ...

"In answer to that question, Richardson says that there will still be a need for these entities, because they will decide how to spend the revenues the state will give to each county, city and school system.

"Businesses already pay 40 percent of all state and local taxes,

and there is a concern that an additional 4 percent sales tax will be an additional burden on the business service sector, which makes up 80 percent of the businesses in the state.

"Richardson says that the four percent is only a pass-through. People who use the services will still pay the tax, and businesses will only collect the tax. Accountants might disagree, because the tax will show as an expense on a business's general ledger, and could reduce profits from a normal company ...

"Richardson plans to ask voters to approve still another important constitutional amendment concerning how to fund transportation on the same ballot as 4 PLUS 4 = 0.

"He wants to simplify the fuel tax amendment by asking voters to approve another constitutional amendment asking for a flat 30-cent tax on motor fuel, to replace the percentage system in place today ...

"With the state collecting all the tax revenue, this would raise the question of whether we need local mayors and council members, county CEOs or commissioners or school board members.

"For that matter, with so much power residing in the House of Representatives, would we even need a governor or lieutenant governor, except as ceremonial positions?"

"Think back for a moment. The 2007 Georgia Legislature turned in a shocking amoral and unethical performance reminiscent of lawless Dodge City before Marshal Matt Dillon arrived. Does anyone seriously believe Georgians are ready to give this crazy and sometimes corrupt gang of lawmakers even more authority over our lives and pocketbooks?

You can reach Bill Shipp at P.O. Box 440755, Kennesaw, GA 30160.

## 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](mailto:deborah@eastga.net).

## The Millen News

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## 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