

Senior News

Georgia

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December 2021
Vol. 35, No. 12

Let us entertain you

by CLAIRE HOUSER-DODD

Here’s hoping everybody enjoyed Turkey Day and gave thanks for all our blessings. Now is the time to get ready for Christmas in earnest. Some already have, and we appreciate all the beautiful decorations. They brighten our spirits and help us praise the Lord and feel the spirits all of the season. Some of my dear friends and I are becoming honest with each other and making a confession.

“We don’t KNOW anything!” Now, we think we do, and we’ve heard things and we have a belief and an attitude... and know what Susie Lou Babcock said. But let me reiterate; “We don’t KNOW anything!” For instance, we heard it on the phone that Johnnie Mac told Harold that Mildred said it. Do you get the gist of this conversation? I’m sure you do. And I’m pretty sure you agree whole-heartedly. Ain’t it a shame, folks! And it

wasn’t so long ago that we thought we knew EVERYTHING. My, how time flies! Just keep the Good Ole Days in mind and close to the heart! We had the best time in forever a couple of Saturdays ago. A friend from Cordele called Daughter and said his one-year-old daughter, Ruby, was going to be in The Miss Camellia contest at Massee Lane, and would we like to meet them out there around 10:30 a.m.? Of course, we would! What could be more fun than a Baby Beauty Contest? Also, this is the first we have ever heard of a Miss Camellia. Naturally we go for that as we are members as well as lovers of Camellias which grow so beautifully here. We know about all the Miss Georgia Beauty Contests. Miss Baby, Little, Teen Miss and Mrs., etc., and wondered at the time if this would turn into a Miss Sasanqua? A Miss Japonica? And so on? Probably not, but the Baby Contest was fantastic. Ruby was precious and had on the most beautiful yellow dress with ruffles, flowers, lace and multiple petticoats. Of course, Mother Katherine had to hold her up and out and all about. It was really a precious show between Mother and Daughter, and we wouldn’t have missed it for the World. The one-year-olds were precious too. They danced and pranced and blew kisses and smiled and poised and fell down on occasion. Their dances were more elaborated, just beautiful! You would have to see it to believe it! Then, no more fun, everybody was ready to go for lunch. We missed all the others. We would have stayed all day! However, we all met over at Sonny’s BBQ and Daddy Shannon told me to try the Red Neck Egg Rolls. They were great... pulled pork, slaw and cheese wrapped in Egg Rolls with a cheese dip. Rednecks can do some things really well!

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New District Lines the Focus of Pre-Leg Breakfast

Subject matter expert **Bryan Tyson** to discuss the process and changes!

Special to *Senior News Georgia*

Submitted by Olivia Reich,
Communications Manager
Columbia County Chamber of Commerce
Olivia@columbiacountychamber.com

EVANS, GA (11/01/21)

The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce will host its annual Pre-Legislative Breakfast on Wednesday, December 8 from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., at Savannah Rapids Pavilion presented by AT&T.

Bryan Tyson, Partner at Taylor English, will discuss the process that goes into redistricting and what came out of the special session that redrew district lines. Tyson focuses on civil litigation, appellate litigation, election law, and government. He primarily represents governments, candidates, and companies in election and campaign finance matters.

Previously, Tyson served as the Executive Director of the Georgia Public Defender Council, a role that has been described as the managing partner of the largest criminal defense firm in the state. He was appointed to that position by Governor Nathan Deal.

The Pre-Legislative Breakfast will also feature a panel discussion with State Senate and House

Representatives from Columbia County. The state leaders scheduled to attend include: Senator Max Burns, Senator Lee Anderson, Representative Robert Leverett, Representative Barry Fleming, Representative Jodi Lott and Representative Mark Newton.

Registration is currently available online at columbiacountychamber.com, or by calling 706-651-0018. Members can purchase a ticket for \$20 or non-members can reserve a seat for \$40.

For more information, contact Taylor Williams, Director of Events & Programs for the Columbia County

Chamber, at taylor@columbiacounty-chamber.com.

The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is a five-star accredited chamber representing over 1,000 businesses in the Greater Augusta area. As a member-driven, business-focused organization, the vision of the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is to ensure and promote the beneficial growth of our community. For more information on the Columbia County Chamber, visit columbiacountychamber.com.



Bryan Tyson

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Taking Care

Family Holiday Survival Tips

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ
lmpetsche@gmail.com

The holiday season is a hectic time for many people, due to the preparations and festivities that typically take place. Staying sane, not to mention enjoying this time of the year, is even more of a challenge for those who don't get along well with their extended family.



Lisa Petsche

Every family has dysfunction, of course, because no member is perfect. But some families are prone to more interpersonal tension than others, due to diverse personalities, circumstances, values and lifestyles among members.

Read on for some tips on how to cope with the almost inevitable stress inherent when relatives get together for the holidays.

Preparation

Make it a point to practice self-care at this time of the year. Eat healthy foods, make time for exercise and get adequate sleep.

Allow plenty of time to get ready for a family event, so you're relaxed and feel your best.

Conjure up compassion for relatives who emanate negativity, bearing in mind that they are unhappy individuals.

Set realistic expectations about family members' behavior. The narcissist, non-stop talker or chronic complainer is not going to change. Plan to steer clear of them if possible, otherwise limit the amount of time you spend with them.

Give yourself a pep talk. Reassure yourself that you are up to the challenge of gracefully handling a few hours with anyone. If necessary, pretend you have a role in a play and, of course, must stay in character.

If you are particularly anxious about a gathering, invite a friend along for support.

Aim to cut your visit short as a last resort. Plan something to look forward to afterwards – for example, visiting your favorite café or watching a holiday movie.

During A Gathering: Dos And Don'ts

Avoid consuming alcohol; otherwise,

limit yourself to one or two drinks.

Disinhibition can cause you to say things you may regret.

Practice good listening skills: pay attention, don't interrupt and ask open-ended questions. Be conscious of your non-verbal language, keeping your posture open (avoid crossing your arms), making eye contact and nodding periodically. This will help you to come across positively.

Show courtesy towards everyone. When you can't manage any more politeness towards a particular individual, find a reason to excuse yourself and move on.

Give people the benefit of the doubt when you wonder if they are being sarcastic or condescending. Use humor to defuse tension.

Count to ten and refuse to take the bait when someone tries to one-up you or goad you into an argument. Instead, adopt a "stupid and cheerful" demeanor – signature advice from syndicated radio host and licensed clinical psychologist Dr. Joy Browne.

Stay away from contentious topics and change the subject if others raise them.

Don't participate in gossip or put-downs of others or bring up unpleasant events.

Engage relatives positively by reminiscing about pleasant times or inquiring about something meaningful to them, such as their children or grandchildren, work, a hobby or a recent vacation.

Breathe deeply if you find yourself getting stressed. If that doesn't help, head to the washroom or step outside, to compose yourself.

Parting Thoughts

If you keep in mind that you can't change anyone's behavior except your own, and that it's always within your power to be civil and, yes, even kind to a certain degree, you will make it through family events, perhaps even better than you anticipated.

If things don't go well in spite of your best efforts to be congenial, plan a vacation over the holidays next year, so you can have a guilt-free break from family functions - and other sources of seasonal stress - and thoroughly enjoy yourself.

Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in health and relationship matters.

On the Cover

Let's Explore Our Christmas Traditions!

By Carolyn Brenneman

Cover: Our Treasured Santa Claus!

The last month of this year is here! December is one of our favorite months as my family and friends bring to life our family traditions and cherish the pleasant experiences of the holidays! It is also the time of the year where we explore new traditions. So, let's get started and take a peek at some of the familiar traditions and what we will try differently this year.

First of all, growing up in the 40's, my mom taught her seven children many Christmas traditions that we, as parents and grandparents ourselves, pass onto our loved ones. My sisters and I have many sweet memories of Christmas day and Christmas eve, and all the fun and excitement leading up to these two special days.

Our mom and dad delighted in inviting aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents, and friends over to our small ranch style home on the snowy and cold Christmas eve to eat some homemade pizza, hot chicken wings and polenta and other delicious foods, and yes, we are Italian. And mom, had many sumptuous treats she baked over the several days leading up to this special event. We certainly indulged our sweet teeth, and still my sisters continue to follow some of her recipes. Mom made the best pink, blue, and white divinity, always coming out perfectly. She made the best Babe Ruth plum pudding, which is a combination of graham crackers, dates, marshmallows, and nuts. It was then pressed into a log shape and sprinkled with powdered sugar, and stayed in the refrigerator for a few hours. But five rolls of this sweet confection were eaten quickly. After all, it was my dad's, my aunt Irene's, and my cousin Jerry's favorite treat.



Toby, our Christmas pet!

And yes, we did other things besides eating! Later on in the evening we watched our favorite Christmas movie that most of the bunch of us just loved. Of course, it was that 1946 version of "It's a Wonderful Life" with Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed. Just thinking about our gathering brings back sweet memories of the family togetherness.

Another family tradition my sister loved to do and still carries on the tradition is making a gingerbread house every year. "It's fun and it allows me to teach the lesson that at the core we are all the same, but there are little things that make us special," proclaims sister Janet.

And, of course, my older sister Cathy,

sat everyone down to tell the story about the Nutcracker and Mouse King. It's the thrilling adventure of a young maiden named Clara and a nutcracker that comes to life on Christmas Eve and battles a Mouse King, from ETA Hoffmann's fantasy story. What joy it brings to us to see our toys come alive!

Then into the late hour of the evening, we waited for Santa Claus with his eight reindeer pulling his sleigh to arrive with more gifts. We loved Santa Claus with his snow-white beard, in his red suit, and carrying his sack of special toys. And to show

continued on page 6

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CHRISTMAS... from page 5

our appreciation, my family made special sugar cookies just for Santa and his helpers to enjoy. It was a ritual, our tradition, even though we figured out that it was dad who really savored those tasty cookies.

My mom taught us many Christmas traditions we still are passing on to our grandchildren. Yes, we still search for a beautiful tree, even though today it may be artificial, treasure hanging our stockings on a mantel, hand wrapping Christmas gifts with beautiful colorful Christmas paper, baking treats and sweets, telling stories of the nutcracker and Mouse King, and singing along with musicals about Santa and his wonderful reindeer.

Also, each year during this time, we now look for new ways to commemorate memories from the last twelve months and create some ornaments to put on our tree. This year, my sisters and I decided to each create a card made of construction paper, and list things we are grateful for. For myself, I am deeply grateful for my

good health, and all of my blessings. An attitude of gratitude is one of the best gifts we can give to ourselves. And now I am creating many cards, one for each of my gratitudes. All my sisters and I feel the serenity when expressing gratefulness for our togetherness and families, sunshine and living in America. This list will expand as the days bring us more insights into our blessings. So, let's find the good in our lives, continue our togetherness and bonding and cherishing these memories that last forever. Have a joyful Christmas!



The Gingerbread House!



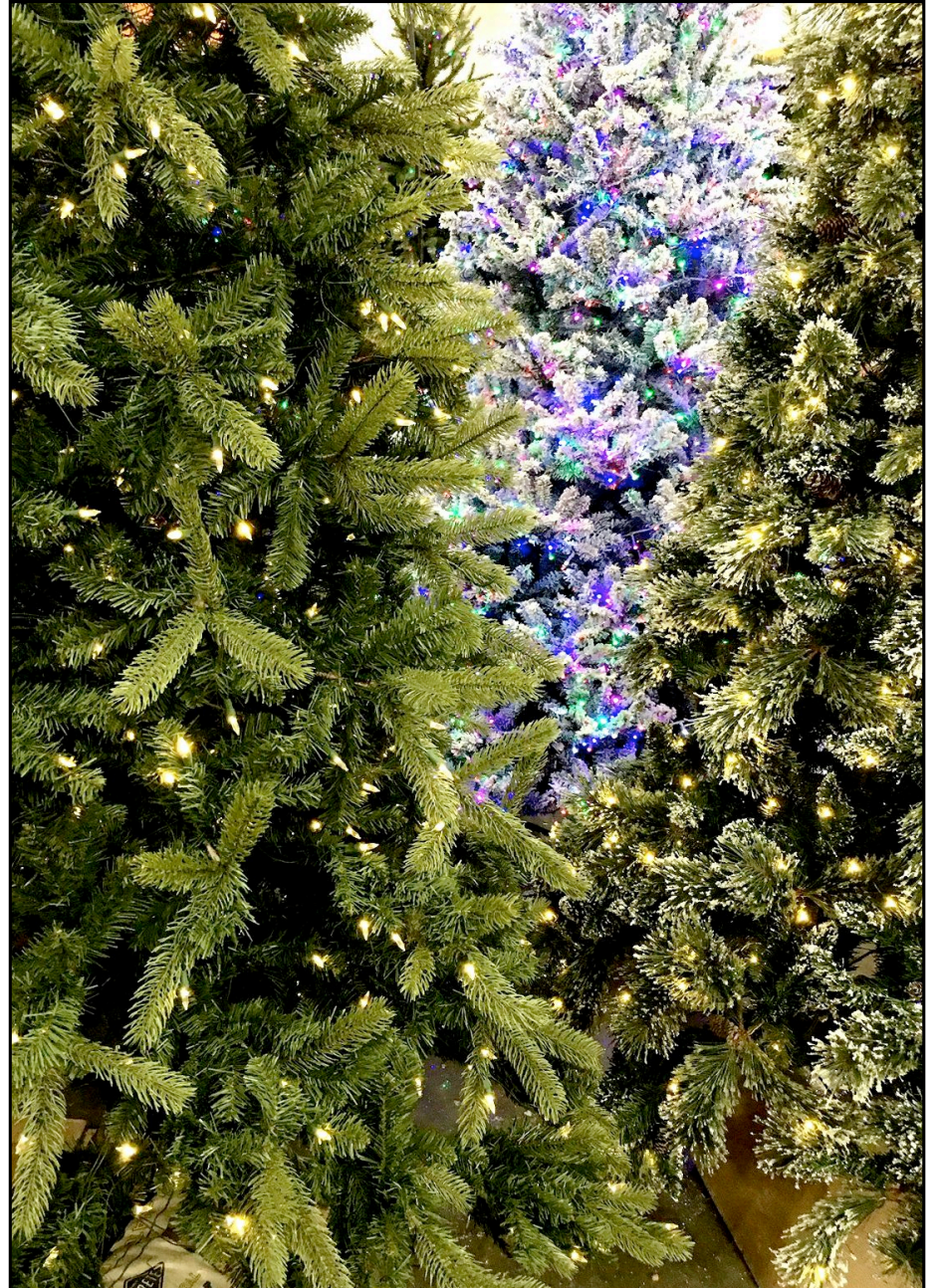
Beautifully decorated Christmas tree!



Creation of Santa Claus sleigh and reindeer!



The Nutcracker and wrapped gifts!



Beautiful artificial Christmas trees!



Special to Senior News Georgia

The story goes that Ebenezer Scrooge had a night of “ghostly” visitations the evening before Christmas Day. It supposedly changed his mind about what Christmas really meant and on Christmas Day he visited the home of his nephew and family. It was a wonderful celebration as they dined on Christmas dinner and shared memories of days gone by. It truly seemed that Ebenezer had changed his mind, but had his heart been changed?

Our setting is the day after Christmas and we will soon see if that night of “ghostly” visitations had done the trick or if it is going to take another night of sleep-

lessness for our Mr. Scrooge and a visitation by another ghost – The Holy Ghost.

~ Tickets now on Sale ~

~ Show Dates ~

- Friday, December 3rd at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, December 4th at 1:00 p.m. & 3:30 p.m.
- Monday, December 6th at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, December 11th at 1:00 p.m. & 3:30 p.m.
- Thursday, December 16th at 7:00 p.m.
- Friday, December 17th at 7:00 p.m.

~ Congratulations to Our Cast ~

- **Ebenezer Scrooge** – Greg Hatfield
- **Fred Scrooge** – Dave Dillard
- **Tobias O. Phineas** – Patrick Hallisy
- **Bob Cratchett** – Ulrich Groves
- **Emily Cratchett** – Shelby Aycox
- **Agitha** – Heather Massey
- **Blossom** – Chevele Allen
- **Fiola** – Valarie Chapman
- **Alfred** – Timothy Edwards

For complete information contact ENOPION by phone at 706-771-7777 or email at info@enopion.com!

On the Cover

D. J. Brown... Fort Valley Native, Born and Bred!

by CLAIR HOUSER-DODD

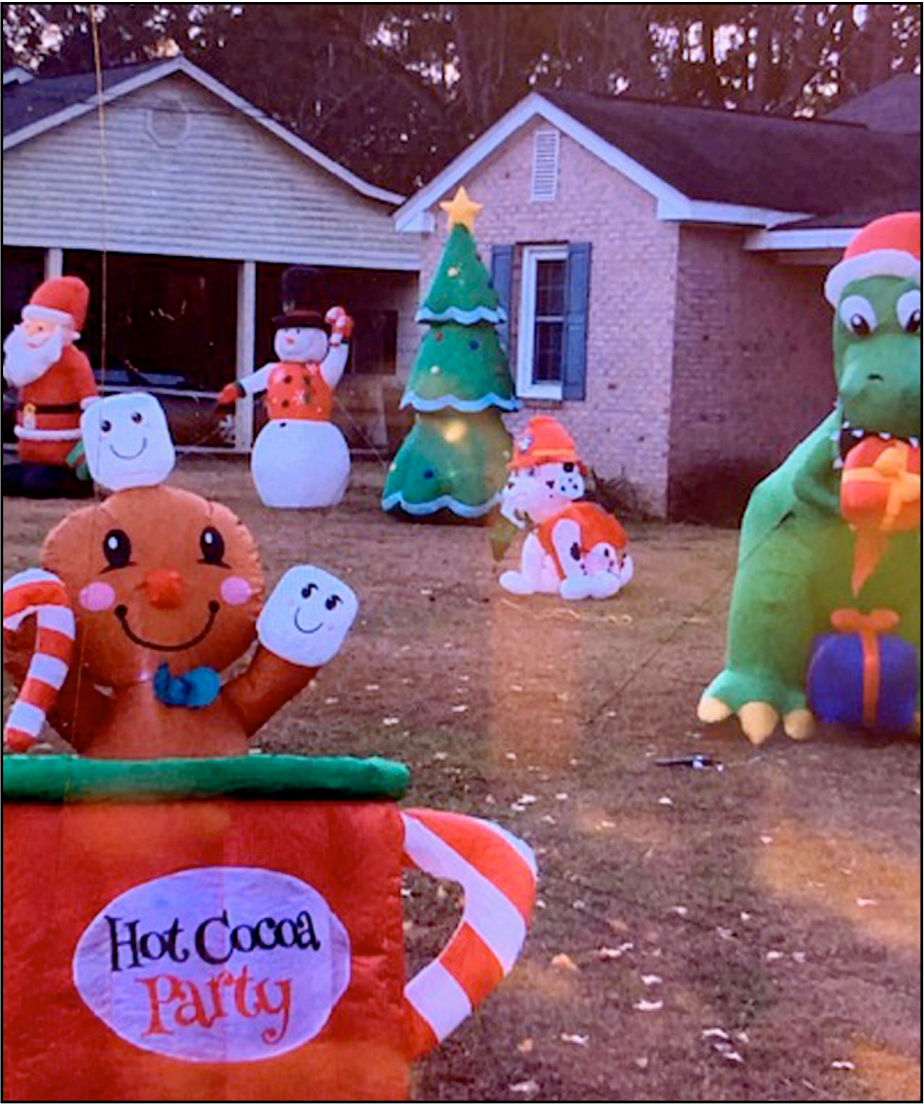
Mrs. D. J. Brown is a Fort Valley native, born and bred. It's like fresh veggies, just plain better and more fun to write about.

D. J. is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Moye and graduated from Fort Valley High School. She worked for Bell South in Macon for 30 years and in 2000 retired here in the Valley and now the fun begins.

Everybody knows D. J. (and they know she's not a Disk Jockey) as a friend as well as a friendly face to all. Sick or well, she has that personality that wins you over. And it was needed as she was with Avera's Drug Store for ten years when Doc Avery and Pete Peterson were running it, then while Bill Hopkins was the pharmacist, and again with Gary Sheffield until he retired. That was another ten years (2001-2011). All in all, ten fun years with Gary and all the others.

Now we see D. J., or hear her on the phone, at our new pharmacy on Commercial Heights. She started out with Laura Peavy around 2017 and is continuing on with the new owners; Johnathon O'Conner, Joey Mall, and Chase Studstill who say she can stay there

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D. J. BROWN

from page 8

forever – we can see her now at 95 – still smiling and making customers do the same. That's what is needed. So many businesses have NO friendly faces, NO customer pluses!

On the creative and arty side is D. J.'s power in the kitchen. She bakes the most delicious cakes; like 14/15-layer caramel ones that make you jump up and down and drool at the same time. People order them for home and family, for presents and to take on vacation. Hey, if you are going visiting and really want to be welcomed, how about presenting your host with a 14-layer chocolate cake! You're bound to be a hit! We know somebody who takes one large caramel to Texas!

Another thing we love and appreciate about D. J. is how well she keeps her yard. In the Fall she had it decorated with yellow Dahlias (a photo shared), a Cross, and an American Flag. What could be nicer? Well, one thing maybe. Her old flag was frayed and grayed, and one afternoon she came home to find it folded and laying in her carport. Lo and behold, Johnny Becham had struck again. She had a brand-new American Flag waving in all its bright colors in her garden.

In the tradition of celebrating the season, she now has it decorated with all sorts of Christmas decorations.



We say congrats to D. J. for being so much fun; and, as one who loves her – a nephew who calls her Aunt Bean-A-Bean – we say, thank you for sharing.



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Five Ways to Avoid Delivery Scams and Package Thefts This Holiday Season

by KELVIN COLLINS, President/CEO,
BBB of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

OFFICES

- **Macon:** 277 M.L. King Jr. Blvd, Ste 201, Macon, GA 31201
- **Augusta:** 4400 Columbia Rd, Ste 100, Augusta, GA 30907
- **Columbus:** 233 12th Street, Ste 911-B, Columbus, GA 31901

For holiday shopping, most consumers love the convenience of making purchases online and having them shipped straight to their doorstep, especially post-pandemic. But with millions of packages delivered each year, con artists and thieves have developed many ways to steal from shoppers. Fortunately, there are also many ways to protect yourself from their shady tactics.

Popular Delivery Scams

Delivery scams and theft are particularly prevalent at the holidays, when more packages are being shipped. Scammers are hoping shoppers are busy or distracted and will act without thinking.

The first scam to look out for are phishing emails that pose as official notices from delivery companies. These either contain a “tracking link” or a message that the “shipper” is having difficulty delivering a package to you. Clicking the link either takes you to a form that asks for personally identifying information, or to a site that downloads malware onto your computer.

Another delivery scam involves fake “missed delivery” tags. Scammers place a note on your door that claims they are having challenges delivering a package to you.

They ask you to call a phone number to reschedule your delivery, but it’s really a ruse to get your personal information.

Another issue holiday shoppers face is package theft. Many consumers have had their packages

stolen before they arrive home from work. Thieves snatch packages from doorsteps or lobbies of apartment or condo complexes. Criminals even follow delivery and postal trucks.

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AVOID DELIVERY SCAMS
from page 10

When the truck leaves, the crooks move in and grab the parcels.

How to Avoid Delivery Scams

Take precautions to ensure a safe delivery: If you are having a valuable or fragile item delivered to your home, purchase shipping insurance. In addition, always get tracking numbers for your purchases and check the shipping progress periodically.

Watch out for calls or emails about a missed delivery. Legitimate delivery services usually leave a “missed delivery” notice on your door. If you receive a missed delivery notice, examine the form carefully to make sure it is authentic and only then follow their instructions. Keep track of what you’ve ordered so you have a better idea of what is coming and when.

Request a Signature: Chances are this feature may come with a price tag, but it may be worth the extra fee. Requesting a signature means that a delivery service won’t be able to drop a package on your doorstep unless someone is around to sign for it.

Don’t leave packages sitting on your doorstep. Packages left sitting outside are particularly vulnerable to theft. To ensure safe delivery, have your package delivered to your workplace, or to a trusted friend or neighbor who will be home to accept delivery. Some delivery companies now have lockers where your packages can securely wait for you to pick them up using a one-time code to open the locker.

Open your delivery upon receipt to check for damage or signs of tampering. Contact the seller immediately if you believe something is wrong with the shipment or if it’s not what

you ordered. Also, be sure to review the seller’s return policy for damaged or unwanted items.

For More Information

To learn more about how to avoid scams, visit BBB.org/AvoidScams. If you’ve been the victim of a delivery scam, please report it at BBB.org/ScamTracker. Your report can help others avoid falling victim to similar scams.

Kelvin Collins is president & CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving the Fall Line Corridor, serving 77 counties in East Alabama,

West Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Central Georgia, East Georgia and Western South Carolina. This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the International Association of Better Business Bureaus (IABBB). The Better Business Bureau sets standards for ethical business behavior, monitors compliance and helps consumers identify trustworthy businesses. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: BBB.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.

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BBB Holiday Alert: Think twice before buying from these social media ads

by **KELVIN COLLINS, President/CEO, BBB of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.**

OFFICES

- **Macon:** 277 M.L. King Jr. Blvd, Ste 201, Macon, GA 31201
- **Augusta:** 4400 Columbia Rd, Ste 100, Augusta, GA 30907
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Social media advertising is an effective way for small business to get the word out about their products. Unfortunately, the same goes for scams. BBB Scam Tracker has received thousands of complaints about misleading Facebook and Instagram ads. In fact, the 2020 BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report found that online purchase scams were the most common cons reported to Scam Tracker and the category with the most victims, and online purchase scams have spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Look out for these common scams reported to BBB Scam Tracker:

Products That Claim to Support Charity: As you scroll through your Facebook or Instagram feed, you see an ad from a small business selling adorable jewelry, t-shirts, or other merchandise. The best part? Some of the proceeds from the sale will go to a charity that helps rescue animals, foster children, or support another worthy cause. Some consumers even report getting direct messages from sellers promoting the products and asking them to spread the word to friends and family.

You make your purchase. But when your merchandise never gets delivered, the doubts start to build. When you contact the company about your purchase, they are suddenly unreachable or reply with an

autoresponder. In reality, the product never existed. It was all a ploy to get your money.

Free Trial Offers: Many of these misleading advertisements tout celebrity endorsements and promise a trial of the hottest new skin care or nutritional supplement for the minimal investment of shipping fees. What consumers report is that once they agree to the terms and conditions of these offers, they realize they have agreed to multiple monthly shipments for products in excess of \$70-

\$100 each.

Before you sign up for these “limited time offers” research the company online, see if there are any other consumer complaints, read the terms and conditions you are agreeing to carefully, and if you can’t find any terms and conditions, that is a red flag. Watch out for pre-checked boxes and make sure that you know who and where the company is that you are purchasing from.

continued on page 13

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Solar panels sold separately.

SOCIAL MEDIA AD SCAMS
from page 12

Counterfeit Merchandise: Name brand goods are prime targets for unauthorized duplication, from sporting goods to designer apparel and handbags. If you purchase any of these products you may run the risk of not only receiving a poor-quality product, but it may not meet environmental and safety regulations either.

Look out for red flags. This includes items that are priced significantly lower than what other retailers are charging, spelling and grammatical errors in the advertisements, and poor-quality images. These are all signs that the advertisement may be for a counterfeit product.

Engaging Ads, Poor Customer Service: This category covers a broad spectrum of complaints that BBB receives, from ads for beauty products to trendy clothing to kids' toys. The advertisements look great, and the products are often inexpensive. This means that consumers purchase without doing any research into the website or the company behind it. However, weeks pass, and the products never arrive. When the buyers reach out to customer service, they get a vague answer, or they don't hear back at all.

Before buying, do a quick online search. Google the website name with the words “complaints,” “reviews,” and “scam” to see what other customers are saying. Check the “About Us” or “Contact Us” information on the company’s website to see if they contain actual contact details for the business. If the only way to contact the company is through a form this is a red flag.

Apps of Unknown Origin:

While scrolling through your feed you may feel compelled to download the latest “free” app. Beware! By downloading this app, not only are you opening up your device to these unknown entities, but you could also possibly be signing up for recurring subscription fees. Victims report being charged fees as high as \$99 every seven days.

Before you enter your user-

name and password, read the reviews. Also read the description of the app carefully and look for spelling and grammatical errors. Check that the developer's website is a working website and read the terms and conditions carefully (\$99 every 7 days adds up quickly).

For more ways to protect yourself from social media shopping scams, see BBB's tips for smart shopping online. You can also find more general tips at 10 Steps to avoid scams.

If you've been the victim of a social media ad scam, share your experience at BBB Scam Tracker. Your report could help other consumers avoid falling victim to similar scams.

Kelvin Collins is president & CEO

of the Better Business Bureau serving the Fall Line Corridor, serving 77 counties in East Alabama, West Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Central Georgia, East Georgia and Western South Carolina. This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the International Association of Better Business Bureaus (IABBB). The Better Business Bureau sets standards for ethical business behavior, monitors compliance and helps consumers identify trustworthy businesses. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: BBB.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.

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***\$100 ADT Visa Reward Card:** Requires 36-month monitoring contract starting at \$28.99/mo. (24-month monitoring contract in California, total fees from \$695.76), and enrollment in ADT EasyPay. Requires minimum purchase price of \$449. One (1) Visa Reward Card valued at \$100 is redeemable seven (7) days after system is installed, wherein an email is sent to the customer's email address associated with their account with a promo code. The customer must validate the promo code on the website provided in the email and a physical card will be sent in the mail. Installation must occur within 60 days of offer expiration date to receive card. Applicable to new and resale sale types only. Card is issued by MetaBank®, N.A., Member FDIC, pursuant to a license from Visa U.S.A. Inc. No cash access or recurring payments. Can be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. Card valid for up to 6 months; unused funds will forfeit after the valid thru date. Card terms and conditions apply. Reply by 10/15/2021.

****Theft Protection Guarantee:** Customer may receive reimbursement of up to five hundred dollars (\$500) of Customer's homeowner's insurance deductible (if any) if, and only if, ALL requirements for Theft Protection Guarantee are met to ADT's reasonable satisfaction. Customer must request reimbursement within 60 days of property loss. Request must be mailed to ADT and include: Theft Protection Guarantee certificate signed by Customer, a letter from Customer requesting reimbursement, a copy of the police report, and a copy of the accepted insurance claim. ADT reserves the right to reject any application for reimbursement that does not comply with all of the requirements.

†ADT Money-Back Guarantee: Money back guarantee only applies after ADT has made attempts to resolve a system related issue and has not been able to resolve that issue within the first 6 months of your contract. Equipment must be fully removed before a refund will be processed. Conditions preventing normal system operation cannot be caused by the customer.

Interactive Services: ADT Command Interactive Solutions Services ("ADT Command") helps you manage your home environment and family lifestyle. Requires purchase of an ADT alarm system with 36 month monitoring contract ranging from \$45.99-\$59.99/mo with QSP (24-month monitoring contract in California, total fees ranging \$1,103.76-\$1,439.76), enrollment in ADT Easy Pay, and a compatible device with Internet and email access. These interactive services do not cover the operation or maintenance of any household equipment/systems that are connected to the ADT Command equipment. All ADT Command services are not available with all interactive service levels. All ADT Command services may not be available in all geographic areas. You may be required to pay additional charges to purchase equipment required to utilize the interactive service features you desire.

General: Additional charges may apply in areas that require guard response service for municipal alarm verification. System remains property of ADT. Local permit fees may be required. Prices and offers subject to change and may vary by market. Additional taxes and fees may apply. Satisfactory credit required. A security deposit may be required. Simulated screen images and photos are for illustrative purposes only.

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DF-CD-NP-Q321

Opinion

ACCLIMATION TO ESCALATION!

Special to SeniorNewsGeorgia

by Daniel W Gatlyn, USN Ret. Minister/Journalist

There is the possibility that "Acclimation to Escalation" will have left you in the wake of unscrupulous happenstance! That being the case, just call it "Rolling with the Punches!" If you have not noticed the drastic increase in prices over the past few months, someone needs to stir you from the pillow! Slice it as you may, but the terror of inflation has invaded every corner! Voices from every direction have sounded off; with few tangible responses rendering help. Needless to say, there are numerous questions and comments surrounding the dilemma, some of which will only produce more headaches.


Are there reasons for the problems? Of course! Is someone responsible? Absolutely! Have we any experience in these matters? Primarily with the older generation. Can we – and will we – cope with the challenging conditions? We really have no choice! We can become beligerant; and, we will! A lot of noise will be heard, but little will be constructive! We have become so accustomed to sumptuous manner that we find it difficult to "slimmer down!"

Most will readily agree that the increased cost of goods has far exceeded the personal income! That someone "slipped a cog" is beyond question. While we struggle to keep up, and find a fix, there are alternate avenues that make sense. For the time being, to disagree – to yell and scream – and to gripe unceasingly; will not alter the complexion of things. In summation, we simply have to "get a grip!" Making do is not new, it's just been a lengthy period of time since we were forced to reduce

the budget. While we may be reluctant, American inhabitants have scampered through "leaner times." For the "ancient of age," we have weathered periods of "bare bones;" coping and hoping for better times. Of necessity, we may have to abandon the Emporium style. Face it... the shop till you drop scenario is off the page! To be honest, a good percentage of what we purchased did not have to be; so much so that rationale was summarily discarded. Many will moan and groan, but we can

scale back, and survive. The practice of frugality will put us "back in the game." Shame on the Leaders and Economists who have failed to orchestrate the horizon in just manner; but, rejoice in the fact that elections will again roll around with opportunity to right the ship. Until then, rejoice that sufficient food and raiment remains available... albeit the pace and posture appears jaded. As the age and rage of 2021 descends into history, THIS too shall pass!

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Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Many Americans are fortunate to have dental coverage for their entire working life, through employer-provided benefits. When those benefits end with retirement, paying dental bills out-of-pocket can come as a shock, leading people to put off or even go without care.

Simply put – without dental insurance, there may be an important gap in your healthcare coverage.

When you're comparing plans ...

- ▶ Look for coverage that helps pay for major services. Some plans may limit the number of procedures – or pay for preventive care only.
- ▶ Look for coverage with no deductibles. Some plans may require you to pay hundreds out of pocket before benefits are paid.
- ▶ Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits. Some plans have annual maximums of \$1,000.

Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.¹

That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

Previous dental work can wear out.

Even if you've had quality dental work in the past, you shouldn't take your dental health for granted. In fact, your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.²

Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Consider these national average costs of treatment ... \$217 for a checkup ... \$189 for a filling ... \$1,219 for a crown.³ Unexpected bills like this can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2021. 2 "How might my oral and dental health change as I age?," www.usnews.com, 11/30/2018. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2018 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2018, American Dental Association.

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Columbia County Restaurant Week Restaurant Applications Now Available

Special to *Senior News Georgia*

Submitted by Olivia Reich,
Communications Manager
Ashley Swain, Director of Marketing
Columbia County Chamber of Commerce
Olivia@columbiacountychamber.com
abswain@choossecolumbiacounty.com

EVANS, GA (11/29/21)

The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce and Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau will host the second annual Columbia County Restaurant Week January 24-30, 2022. In an effort to support the local restaurant community, the registration fee is waived for 2022.

In order for Restaurants to participate, their business must be locally or regionally owned and have a location in Columbia County. Chamber membership is not required to participate.

Restaurant owners or managers can apply at <https://forms.gle/PFrcfe4gaQ53D2Mz8>. If a restaurant applies before December 17, additional social media coverage will be offered to them. Deadline to register is January 14, 2022.

For restaurant registration, contact Communications Manager, Olivia Reich at 706-651-0018 or olivia@columbiacounty-chamber.com.

The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is a five-star accredited chamber representing over 1,000 businesses in the Greater Augusta area. As a member-driven, business-focused



organization, the vision of the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is to ensure and promote the beneficial growth of our community. For more informa-

tion on the Columbia County Chamber, visit columbiacounty-chamber.com.

The Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau is a not-for-profit Destination Marketing Organization tasked with promoting Columbia County as a travel destination. For more information on the Columbia County CVB, visit visitcolumbiacountyga.com.

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MKT-P0253

Carl Vinson VA Medical Center Employee Awarded National HeRO for Safety Initiative Amid COVID-19

Special to *Senior News Georgia*

Submitted by **James W. Huckfeldt**
Public Affairs Specialist
Carl Vinson VA Medical Center
Dublin, GA 31021
James.Huckfeldt@VA.gov

Carl Vinson VA Medical Center Dental Hygienist Michelle Lord saw an opportunity to significantly reduce the rate of hospital-acquired pneumonia infections among the VA's residents and Veterans who are admitted to the medical center overnight. Lord created a plan, received support from leadership, and is making it H.A.P.P.E.N., or Hospital Acquired Pneumonia Prevention by Engaging Nurses, and recently received VA's national HeRO award as a result.

"Our dental team saw a need for improvement with oral hygiene among our Veteran residents and we created a plan that achieves several outcomes," Lord said. "By working collaboratively with Nurse Managers, Veterans will be monitored, or assisted, with oral hygiene practices daily reducing the number of hospital-acquired pneumonia cases we report annually."

The National HeRO Award is the highest level of HRO (High Reliability Organization) recognition available within VHA and is reserved to honor employees who advance VHA's journey to high reliability through demonstration of VHA's HRO principles in action. The HRO steering committee votes quarterly to select one winner in each of five categories for a National HeRO Award.

"We are extremely proud of Michelle for this well-deserved honor along with our Dental and CLC staff for making the services we offer to our Veterans even better," Interim Medical Center Director Robert Reeder said. "Significant reduction in hospital-acquired pneumonia is a great goal but improving our Veterans' quality of life while providing their loved ones with peace of mind is priceless."

High reliability organizations, according to the Patient Safety Network, "are organizations that operate in complex, high-hazard domains for extended periods

without serious accidents or catastrophic failures. The concept of high reliability is attractive for health care, due to the complexity of operations and the risk of significant and even potentially catastrophic consequences when failures occur in health care. Sometimes people interpret high reliability as meaning effective standardization of health care processes. However, the principles of high reliability go beyond standardization; high reliability is better described as a condition of persistent mindfulness within an organization. High reliability organizations cultivate resilience by relentlessly prioritizing



safety over other performance pressures."

Reducing the number of hospital-acquired pneumonia cases is especially critical as the COVID-19 and Delta variant further exacerbate respiratory illnesses and infections.

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Wreaths Across America at Andersonville National Cemetery

Annual Ceremony to Occur on Saturday, December 18, 2021

Special to *SeniorNewsGeorgia*
by Jody Mays, Chief Interpretation and Resources Management
Andersonville National Historic Site
Jody_Mays@nps.gov

Andersonville National Historic Site invites you to remember and honor our fallen military veterans during this winter season by participating in our Wreaths Across America event on Saturday, December 18, 2021.

Wreaths Across America is a national program with the mission of placing wreaths on the graves of military service members buried in national cemeteries across the country. With the partnership and support of Wreaths Across America, Bennett Family of Companies, the Taylor Foundation, Friends of Andersonville, and the American Ex-Prisoners of War, the park's goal is to place a wreath on each of the more than 20,000 graves in Andersonville National Cemetery. For more information about this program or to sponsor a wreath, go to Wreaths Across America.

At 12:00 pm on Saturday, December 18, a brief ceremony will be held in Andersonville National Cemetery to honor America's armed forces. The ceremony will be open to the public with limited seating available. After the ceremony, attendees will be invited to honor our fallen veterans by placing wreaths on graves in the national cemetery. Park entrance and the event are free. For more information about this event and how to participate in placing wreaths, go to Andersonville National Historic Site's Wreaths Across America Event page.

During this holiday season, we hope you will take a moment to appreciate and reflect on the holidays spent far from family, time spent in harm's way, and other sacrifices made by American military service members for our country. We encourage you to come out and be part of this special opportunity to honor and remember our fallen veterans, and to teach new generations about the price paid for our freedom.

Beginning December 1, wreaths no larger than 20 inches and floral blankets no larger than 2 feet by 3 feet are permitted in the cemetery. Wreaths should be brought in person, or delivered by a florist, directly to the gravesite. To find the location of a specific

grave, go to the National Cemetery Administration's Grave Locator, search the gravefinder kiosk at the Andersonville National Cemetery office, or call or stop by the National Prisoner of War Museum.

Andersonville National Historic Site is located 10 miles south of Oglethorpe, GA and 10 miles northeast of Americus, GA on Georgia Highway 49. The national park features the National Prisoner of War Museum, Andersonville National Cemetery, and the site of the historic Camp Sumter Civil War prison. Andersonville National Historic Site is the only unit of the National Park System



to serve as a memorial to all American prisoners of war. Admission to the park is free. For more information about the park call 229 924-0343, visit our website, or check us out on Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. www.nps.gov

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Utility Bill Collection Scams Increasing

by **KELVIN COLLINS**, President/CEO,
BBB of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

OFFICES

- **Macon:** 277 M.L. King Jr. Blvd, Ste 201, Macon, GA 31201
- **Augusta:** 4400 Columbia Rd, Ste 100, Augusta, GA 30907
- **Columbus:** 233 12th Street, Ste 911-B, Columbus, GA 31901

Have you paid your utility bill? Chances are that you have but that isn't stopping scammers from taking advantage of businesses and consumers by impersonating electric, water and cable company employees looking to deactivate for nonpayment. Utility companies across the area are warning their customers of this scam. Scammers will impersonate utility company employees with threats of deactivation of service... unless they pay up immediately.

Victims report receiving calls where the person on the line identifies themselves as a representative from your local utility company deactivation team. He or she tells you that you are late on your bill and you need to pay immediately, or your utilities will be shut off.

However, in addition to accepting payment by credit card, the caller sometimes wants you to pay by using a prepaid debit cards or gift cards. The scammer instructs you to obtain one and call them back. This is a huge warning sign. Prepaid debit cards and gift cards are like cash. Once you transfer the money, you will be unable to retrieve it

Prepaid debit cards are becoming an increasingly popular method of payment

for scammers. Wire transfer services have tightened their security, so crooks have turned to these prepaid cards instead. The cards are difficult to trace, and you do not need photo identification to collect or spend the money. Be sure you treat a prepaid debit card like cash and remember that transactions cannot be reversed.

Scammers are also using other ways to prey on utility customers. Some will claim that the meter is not working properly and must be immediately replaced – at the customer's

expense – or the service will be shut off. Other scammers are using email and door to door visits to reach customers. Watch out for emails disguised as overdue notices from your utility company.

Tips for Spotting a Utility Scam:

Because local utility companies do sometimes contact their customers by phone, it can be difficult to tell a scammer from a real agent. Here are

continued on page 19



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UTILITY BILL SCAMS
from page 18

some tips:

- Prepaid debit cards or other unusual forms of payment are red flags: If a caller specifically asks you to pay by prepaid debit card, a cash app, or wire transfer, this is a huge warning sign. Your utility company will accept a check or credit card and will usually direct you to one of their payment locations.
- Don't cave to pressure to pay immediately: If you feel pressured for immediate payment or personal information, hang up the phone and call the customer service number on your utility bill. This will ensure you are speaking to a real representative.
- Remember that meters are usually the property of the utility com-

pany and would be the responsibility of the utility to replace or repair.

- Never allow anyone into your home to check electrical wiring, natural gas pipes, cable or appliances unless you have scheduled an appointment or reported a problem. Also, don't get lured outside to view broken meters, wires or point out property lines. This usually results in a second person robbing your house while you're out.
- Always ask utility employees for proper identification. Utility companies provide their employees with identification and won't mind if you call to verify their identity.

There is never a shortage of ways for scam artists to try to separate you from your money, but with a little knowledge and a few questions, you might just be the one that gets away.

For more tips you can trust, visit

bbb.org.

Kelvin Collins is president & CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving the Fall Line Corridor, serving 77 counties in East Alabama, West Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Central Georgia, East Georgia and Western South Carolina. This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the International Association of Better Business Bureaus (IABBB). The Better Business Bureau sets standards for ethical business behavior, monitors compliance and helps consumers identify trustworthy businesses. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: BBB.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.

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