

Senior News Georgia

Providing Helpful Information for Mature Adults in GEORGIA!



*Seniors Are
Ready For Some
Fun This March!*

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March 2025
Volume 39, No. 3

Taking Care!

Enhance Your Ability to Cope With Changes and Challenges!

By Lisa M. Petsche – lmepetsche@gmail.com

While it has rewards, caring for a frail or ill older relative can be physically, psychologically and emotionally demanding. The caregiving journey is particularly challenging when it continues over a long period of time, and when the elder has a progressive disease, complex needs, a prickly personality or mental impairment.



Lisa Petsche

Some caregivers cope better than others with the ups and downs of providing care. The reasons can be

varied, but one of them has to do with resilience, the “ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change” (Merriam-Webster dictionary).

If you’re a caregiver, read on to learn about strategies for fostering resilience. They can help you cope with the ongoing stress and periodic crises involved in caring for someone with a chronic illness.

Coping Tips.

Accept the reality of your relative’s disease. Denial will prevent you from moving forward and getting the help you may need.

Learn as much as possible about the illness and its management, and educate family and friends to help them understand. Information is empowering.

Pick your battles. Don’t make a big issue out of every concern.

Use positive self-talk. Emphasize phrases such as “I can,” “I will” and “I choose.”

Do things that bring inner peace, such as meditating, reading, writing in a journal or listening to music.

Create a relaxation room or corner in your home – a tranquil spot you can retreat to in order to rejuvenate.

Develop a calming ritual to help you unwind at the end of the day. Avoid consuming news before going to bed.

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Look after your health: eat nutritious meals, get adequate rest, exercise and see your primary physician regularly. Stay connected to your friends as much as possible.

Minimize contact with people who drain your energy or make you feel inadequate – those who are pessimistic or critical, for example.

Simplify your life. Set priorities and let unimportant things go. If finances permit, hire a housecleaning service or a personal support worker or companion for your relative, to free up some of your time and energy.

Be flexible about plans and expectations. Recognize that there'll be good days and bad days, and how you and your relative feel will fluctuate. Take things one day at a time

Give yourself permission to feel all emotions that surface, including resentment and frustration. Remind yourself that you're doing your best and are only human.

Don't keep feelings and problems to yourself – seek support from a family member, friend or counselor. Join a community caregiver support group, or an Internet group if it's hard to get out.

Seek help from your primary physician or a counselor if you continually feel sad, angry or overwhelmed. There is no need to suffer, because depression is treatable.

Accept offers of help. Ask other family members to share the load and be specific about what's needed. Find out about community support services – including respite care options – and take full advantage of them. Information can be obtained from the local office on aging.

Don't promise your relative you will keep them at home forever. It's important to keep all options open, since it's impossible to know what the future holds.

Do something nice for someone who is going through a difficult time. It takes your mind off your own situation, boosts your self-esteem and strengthens the relationship. It may also help to be reminded that other people face challenges, too.

Look for ways to include laughter and joy in each day. This will enhance your relationship with your relative and others with whom you come in contact, and help foster a positive outlook.

Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and freelance writer specializing in boomer and senior health matters. She has personal and professional experience with elder care.

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Senior News & Views of Georgia

Flint Energies plans April 1st rate changes!

Submitted by:

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Effective with Consumer-member billings that begin on April 1, Flint Energies' residential base charge will move from \$35 per month to \$36 per month, continuing a long-term initiative to gradually align this monthly access charge with the fixed costs of operating the electric system. This increase equals \$12 for one year of service, approximately the cost of a fast-food lunch. Flint Energies' residential rate will remain steady at the current 10.55 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh), where it has been since 2017.

"As a non-profit electric cooperative, every Member shares in both the costs and the benefits of electric service," says Flint Energies Chief Executive Officer Jeremy Nelms. "The Co-op has faced rising costs across various areas, including materials, operations, maintenance, credit card fees, postage, and right-of-way expenses. The Co-op's Board and staff are dedicated to minimizing expenses and improving efficiency to help manage costs for all Members, as they are also Members themselves. Despite this base rate change, the cost of electricity has increased less than many other common expenses for Members."

Base rate changes will also be in effect for the other rate schedules which were previously billed at \$35 per month. Those rate schedules will be billed at \$36 per month and will affect approximately 1,000 non-residential accounts. Members may compare current residential rates online at the Georgia Public Service Commission website: <https://psc.ga.gov/utilities/electric/residential-rate-survey/?s=Winter+2025&u=&c=1000>.

The base charge, or access fee, covers the costs of operating the Cooperative and delivering power. It also includes covering the Co-op's cost to maintain more than 7,200 miles of electric lines and 52 substations, while providing 24/7 service and an outage reporting system. The wholesale power cost adjustment rider, which can change monthly, fluctuates based on the costs to generate power.

Option for Low Income

Members who are approved for the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can be placed on Flint's low-income rate.

After April 1, Consumer-members that confirm their LIHEAP standing with a check payment will be eligible for a reduced monthly baseservice charge of \$18 per month. Local Community Action Agencies administer the LIHEAP program.

About Flint Energies

Flint Energies is a not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by its members in parts of 17 central Georgia counties. Flint employs 220 employees and serves nearly 97,000 electric meters. We are 100% locally controlled and democratically governed by nine Directors elected from among the membership. In 1937, Flint Energies was created to bring people together to meet common needs like reliable electric energy, and our mission remains focused on improving the quality of life in Middle Georgia. Flint Energies is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Follow Flint on X, Instagram and Facebook.

Letter-to-the-Publisher

Subject: Georgia Golden Olympics (Georgia Golden Games, Inc.) Updates

From: Vicki Pilgrim – vcpilgrim@gmail.com

Hi All:

I am writing to make you all aware of the upcoming changes in the Georgia Golden Olympics (GGO) (Georgia Golden Games, Inc). At the annual meeting of the GGO I announced that I am retiring this year. After 45 wonderful and fulfilling years of service, this decision comes with a heavy heart and overwhelming emotion. My passion for the games, the athletes and the incredible experiences I have shared with all of you have shaped my life in profound ways.

Throughout my tenure, I have loved every moment of working alongside such talented athletes, board members, volunteers and supporters. The commitment and enthusiasm displayed by everyone involved in the games have always inspired me, and I am immensely proud to have been a part of Georgia's senior games movement. However, I believe that it is now time for a new leader to take the reins, someone who can bring fresh ideas and renewed energy to the position.


With this announcement the GGO Board of Directors voted to suspend the games for 2025 and to use this year as a transition year for games in 2026. I will continue to work with the Board this year and am committed to ensuring a smooth transition and will do everything in my power to support the change in leadership. I have confidence that the games will continue to thrive and evolve, maintaining the spirit and excellence that we have strived for over the years.

I realize that many of you were planning to compete in Georgia this year and are disappointed that the Georgia event will not be offered. Many of our surrounding states are "open" games which means you are allowed to compete in their state. To obtain a list of states that are open, you may go to nsga.com to check dates and registration schedules.

Thank you for all the unforgettable memories, friendships, and support throughout my time with the games. I look forward to witnessing the continued success of Georgia Golden Olympics from a new vantage point.

With my love and warmest regards!

Vicki C. Pilgrim
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Seniors Are Ready For Some Fun This March!

by Carolyn Brenneman, Columnist
Cover: Helen and Carolyn sharing a moment!

Last March I wrote about seniors having fun and this March we will continue to explore just how much fun seniors can experience!

One evening, I attended a senior event and it was anything but dull. From walking into the recreation room, seeing all the people dressed up and ready to have a celebration for



Margaret’s group posing for us.

March “horse races,” I knew there was something exciting to happen. Everyone is a senior who attended and all the attendees believe that aging is simply an excuse to enjoy life even more.

This day is one of the most anticipated events for this month of March, and is known as the “horse races”, a celebration of laughter, friendship and shared experiences. As soon as I enter the clubhouse dressed, well in a fancy dress, I can feel the excitement in the air. It is contagious. Everyone arrives in colorful outfits, ready to embark on a night of fun and laughter and eating.

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Jane’s team cheering for Lucky.

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The horse races is the name of the event. It allows 6 teams of 18 seniors in a team. Each team has a designated person to be

the jockey for the wooden, face-only horse. The idea, upon the roll of a dice, is for the jockey with his or her horse, to advance on the stage, one stop forward on a square space, until one jockey reaches the 6th square space and thus is declared the winner.

The teams cheer on the team's jockey and horse as she or he advances the one square space at a time. And of course, the one jockey that gets to the 6th space first wins the race. There are three races to-tal.

Tonight, the clubhouse is transformed into a vibrant festival with decorations, balloons, party favors, and many tables. Each table has 18 members, and everyone is all dressed up. The event is well planned. Margaret, a retired travel writer, takes charge of the event planning. With the help of her best friend, Robert, she arranges for the decorations, music, and sign up sheet for each table. Then the event



Dudley Doright ready for action.



Debbie's team is known as the Lumbar Jacks.



Mark dressed as a 70’s hippie.

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starts with people pouring into the clubhouse, eagerly to find their table and seat. We share in delicious food, music, and fun in the clubhouse full of decorations inspired by different seniors.

There are 3 races, and thus 3 different winners each race. The excitement and anticipation of who will win is prevalent and each jockey is cheered on by the crowd.

By the end of the night, hearts are full, as well as stomachs, and the room buzzes with happiness. It isn’t just about the event – it is about the friendships, the joy of trying new things, and the shared laughter that make this night so special.

Because with seniors who enjoy life and want to have some fun, growing older means living life to the fullest, one unforgettable moment at a time. Aging comes with wisdom, experience, and – most importantly – freedom to truly enjoy life. Seniors today are redefining what it means to grow older, embracing new adventures, friendships, and experiences that keep them active, engaged, and happier than ever.

It's about living smarter, embracing joy, and making every day count. With time comes the freedom to have fun without regrets, proving that the best adventures in life can happen at any age.



Shelli s team ready for some fun.

BBB Scam Alert: Scammers are impersonating road toll collection services!

Submitted by Kelvin H. Collins, President/CEO, Better Business Bureau

Serving the Fall Line Corridor, Inc. • BBB.org/central-georgia • Office: 478.742.9034 (*Direct*)

OFFICES: Macon: 277 M.L. King Jr. Blvd, Ste 201, Macon, GA 31201. • Augusta: 119 Davis Road, Ste 3-B, Augusta, GA 30907
Columbus: 233 12th Street, Ste 911-B, Columbus, GA 31901

If you have been on a road trip, then you’re probably familiar with modern tolling systems allowing you to pay your tollfees online. If you anticipate paying for any outstanding tolls, watch out for this text message phishing scam where fraudsters impersonate toll collection services, trying to trick consumers into paying for fake outstanding tolls.

How the scam works

You receive a text message from what appears to be a state tollway collection service, like the Georgia Peach Pass or the Florida Turnpike. The text message says you owe a road toll fee of around \$12, but you need to pay it immediately to avoid a late fee of \$50.

The message includes a link to settle your balance, which appears to be from the state’s toll service, making the message look legitimate. However, if you click the link and provide your personal and payment information on the website, scammers could now have access to that information, and you may have lost some money.

BBB Scam Tracker has received reports of text messages that appear to be from toll collection services. One consumer recently shared, “I received a text message that stated I owed funds from using a tollway. It was not specific and since I do not use a tollway I knew it was a fraud. I deleted the message right away and blocked the number, but I believe it had included a web link.”

Another consumer shared, “I was sent a text message that I owe the Florida Turnpike fee of \$12.51 or face a late fee of \$50. I nor my husband have been anywhere near the Florida Turnpike.”

How to avoid text message phishing scams

Verify your outstanding toll balance with the legitimate agency. Instead of clicking on the link in the text message, go to your web browser, find the toll service’s actual website, and log in to your account to verify if you have any outstanding toll payments. Another way to verify this is by calling the toll service’s customer service line.

Do not call the phone number that texted you or any phone numbers included in the text message. Instead, find the toll service’s legitimate phone number on their website.

Know the warning signs of a fake text. If you receive an unusual text message, there are several things to look for to help you identify if it’s fake. Read BBB’s tips on spotting the red flags of fake text messages.

Don’t click on links or download files that are unexpectedly texted to you. It may be hard to identify if a link sent in a text message is safe. Scammers can disguise a URL to appear legitimate when it isn’t.

Block the number and delete the message. Do not engage with the scammer if you think you received a fake text message. Instead, block the phone number and delete the text message. Refusing to engage and blocking the phone number can help prevent scammers from contacting you again.

If you receive a text message impersonating a road toll collection service, report it. You can file a report with BBB Scam Tracker to help warn others about this new scam. In addition, file a report with the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at ic3.gov.

You can read the IC3’s recent alert about this scam at www.ic3.gov and learn how to report these scams to IC3. Learn more about how to spot a scam by identifying common red flags in various scam types at 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 Email: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.

BBB Scam Alert: Receive a call from Jessica at a loan processing company? It could be a scam!

Submitted by Kelvin H. Collins, President/CEO, Better Business Bureau

Serving the Fall Line Corridor, Inc. • BBB.org/central-georgia • Office: 478.742.9034 (Direct)

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Scammers are at it again, posing as representatives from loan processing companies to trick consumers into sharing personal information, most recently using the name Jessica. This advanced fee loan phishing scam often comes in the form of harassing phone calls and voicemails. The caller insists they need to verify minor details, such as your income, to finalize your loan application. While the message may sound convincing, it's a ruse to steal your private information.

How the scam works

You receive a call or voicemail from someone claiming to be from a loan processing team, often using a common name like "Jessica." The caller says they've been trying to contact you about your loan application and need to verify some final details to complete your approval, although, more than likely, you never applied for a loan. They provide a callback number and application ID to make the message seem legitimate. The voicemail emphasizes urgency, requesting you call back before a specific deadline to finalize the loan.

BBB has received over 500 Scam Tracker reports of this scheme from across the United States between November 2024 and January 2025, indicating that scammers are aggressively targeting consumers. People report receiving multiple calls per day, often from different phone numbers but with nearly identical voicemail scripts. Realistically, there is no loan, and returning the call could lead to scammers collecting sensitive information, such as your Social Security number, bank account details, or other personal data.

Tips to avoid a loan processing phishing scam

- **Verify the company's legitimacy:** If you're contacted about a loan application you don't recall submitting, hang up and do your research. Look up the company name online and contact them directly using verified contact information.
- **Never share personal information with unsolicited callers:** Scammers often ask for details like your Social Security number or bank account information. Avoid sharing sensitive information over the phone unless you initiate the call.
- **Watch for red flags in voicemails: Be wary of messages with vague details, generic names, or urgent demands for a callback.** Scammers often use scripted messages to target as many people as possible.
- **Avoid calling unknown numbers back:** Resist the urge to call the number back. Returning calls to unknown or suspicious numbers could connect you to scammers or result in unexpected fees.
- **Check for scam reports:** Look up the phone number or details of the voicemail online. Many victims post about similar scams to warn others.
- **Report suspicious activity:** If you believe you've been contacted by a scammer, report the incident to BBB Scam Tracker at BBB.org/ScamTracker.

Stay vigilant and cautious to protect yourself from phishing scams like this one. If an offer seems too good to be true, it likely is!

For more information, visit wwwBBB.org for BBB's 10 steps to avoid scams, and BBB tips to help you watch out for guaranteed loans with upfront fees.

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 Email: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.

Opinion

OPPORTUNITY FOR WARRIORS

by Daniel W. Gatlyn, USN Ret, Minister/Journalist, dangatlyn@gmail.com

America has been blessed with millions of men and women with a patriotic and aspirational slant toward serving in a regimented manner. We can be proud of the multitudes that have given their best years with the liberties of our Nation in the mix. In turn, ambitious Veterans Groups have established opportunities for the same personnel to pursue a continued affiliation, both during and after their active Military years. One such Organization to form an active Outreach is the VFW, or Veterans of Foreign Wars... specifically and historically catalogued to service those who have been to conflicts abroad.

Born of Battle, the VFW was established in 1899; and, is by choice a fraternal, patriotic, charitable, and educational institution, with Headquarters in Kansas City. Over the past 126 years, the VFW has planted Posts throughout the nation. Chartered by Congress, this largest of Veterans Service Groups enjoys a long history of supporting Active Military Members, Veterans, and their families. As a Lifetime Member of the Group and presently serving with Post 6605 in Warner Robins, Georgia; and, as a Columnist for the Local Press, I have been requested to render appropriate phrases surrounding the Organization and its activities... from both a local and national perspective.

As a Retired Member of the U.S. Navy and Veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, I can appreciate the vast opportunities afforded by the numerous Posts of VFW; and, enthusiastically endorse their activities for all who qualify. While the varied activities are similar in all Posts, I will substantially limit my compositions to the Middle Georgia Area; and, specifically to the Warner Robins Post 6605 Activities and Calendar.

The address of this post is 1011 Corder Road, Warner Robins, GA 31088. Telephone Number (478) 922-2154.

The Commander of Post 6605 is Jason Broad, USAF Ret. (Cell Phone: 478-447-0526).

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Columbia County Chamber Foundation to Host 6th Annual Career & College Expo

Submitted by Jamie Miller, Communications Manager
jamie@columbiacountychamber.com

Evans, GA – February 14, 2025

The Columbia County Chamber Foundation, in partnership with the Columbia County School District, will host the Sixth Annual Career & College Expo on Thursday, March 6 at the Columbia County Exhibition Center in Grovetown from 4:00PM until 7:00PM. The event connects area businesses, universities, and trade schools with area middle school and high school students, giving them the chance to explore career pathways beyond their senior year.

“We’ve found that a higher level of interaction creates a bigger impact on the students who attend,” said Columbia County Chamber President & CEO Russell Lahodny. “Giving them the opportunity to utilize the technology and tools they could potentially use in their careers not only helps them visualize their career, but increases their chances of finding one that’s as enjoyable as it is successful.”

Two major companies have made commitments to incorporate some of their latest workforce development technology into the event. John Deere will be letting students try their hand at operating tractors through a virtual reality platform while Piedmont will be guiding them through medical simulations on mannequins. In addition to career-based experiences, students interested in continuing education will have the opportunity to explore dual enrollment and work-based learning offerings.

In 2024, nearly 1,900 area students and parents along with over 100 colleges, universities, and businesses participated in the expo. This year’s expo is focused on creating hands-on, immersive experiences for those in attendance. Designed to educate both middle and high students and parents on the vast career opportunities available, this initiative aligns the educational, technical and trade sectors with businesses.

Those interested in registering for a booth or learning more about the Columbia County Chamber Foundation can visit the official Career and College Expo page at www.ColumbiaCountyChamberFoundation.org/career--college-expo.

The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is a five-star accredited chamber representing over 1,000 businesses in the Greater Augusta Region. 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.