

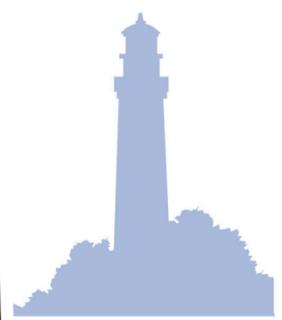
# THE BRUNSWICK NEWS

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Thursday, December 17, 2020

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Volume 119, Number 78

## DOG BOOK

A true story about a dog's ability to help young readers is becoming a book, **LIFESTYLES, 7A**

## SIGNING DAY

Local athletes sign on the dotted line to play college football, **SPORTS, 5A**

## COASTAL ILLUSTRATED

A guide to St. Simons Island's holiday (pizza) pies, **INSIDE**

# Police body cam footage shows aftermath of Arbery shooting

By **LARRY HOBBS**  
lhobbs@thebrunswicknews.com

After Gregory McMichael explained to police how and why he and his son armed themselves, pursued a Black man in a pickup truck and shot him dead in the middle of the street, he asked for a favor.

"I would like to get this blood off my hands," McMichael says to the officer, showing a blood-stained left hand.

The blood was that of 25-year-old Ahmaud Arbery, the unarmed man McMichael's adult son, Travis McMichael, shot three times at point blank range with a shotgun on the afternoon of

Feb. 23 in the Satilla Shores neighborhood.

This scene and other telling moments were captured via the body cameras of Glynn County Police officers who responded to the deadly shooting. The News obtained the body cam videos Wednesday from the clerk's office of Glynn County Superior Court, where the McMichaels and neighbor William "Roddie" Bryan, 51, face felony murder and other charges in connection with Arbery's death.

Prosecutors showed snippets of the police body cam footage during a hearing last month in which the McMichaels were denied bond.

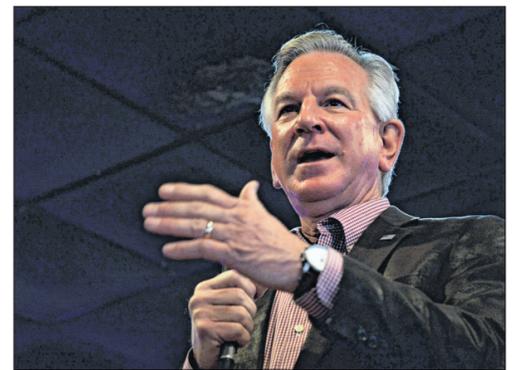
Travis McMichael, 34, with Arbery's blood on his hands and both arms, also expressed a desire to police to wash it off.

Arbery's body can be seen on the footage where he died in the middle of Holmes Road near the intersection with Satilla Drive, the area around his body cordoned off with crime tape.

The body was later covered by county EMT workers, but remained in the roadway.

Arbery was known as an avid jogger, and he was wearing shorts and running shoes on that Sunday afternoon. Some

Please see **ARBERY, 3A**



Terry Dickson/The Brunswick News

U.S. Senator-elect Tommy Tuberville, R-Alabama, speaks to a crowd at Toucan's Ale House Wednesday during a rally for Republican U.S. senators Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue.

# Big names campaign for Loeffler, Perdue in Brunswick

By **TAYLOR COOPER**  
tcooper@thebrunswicknews.com

Toucan's Ale House in Brunswick played host to a list of who's who in the Republican Party Wednesday in a continuing effort to inspire voters to go to the polls in the upcoming runoff election.

Recently elected and recently defeated Republicans from across the country descended on the bar and restaurant at Exit 38 of I-95 Wednesday as part of the Save America Tour to whip up votes for Georgia's two Republican incumbents, U.S. Sens. Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue.

Loeffler faces Democrat Raphael Warnock and Perdue faces Democrat Jon Ossoff in the Jan. 5 runoff election.

Headlining the morning barrage of speakers was Tommy Tuberville, Alabama's newly elected senator and a former Auburn University football coach. Tuberville said he was in the state to get out the vote for Loeffler and Perdue.

"When I come across the border from Alabama, it's always been a fight, but I know we can win this one," Tuberville said, referring to his days at Auburn when facing the college's rival, the University of Georgia.

Please see **CAMPAIGN, 3A**



# BIKE GIVEAWAY

Church to give away 500 bicycles; large turnout expected

By **GORDON JACKSON**  
gjackson@thebrunswicknews.com

During a typical Christmas holiday season, the Greater Works Ministry in Brunswick gives away hams and other food items.

This is not a typical year.

Pastor Mark Baker said this holiday season, the church's congregation agreed the focus should be on the children.

"Over the 24 years of the ministry, we've tried to give back to the community," Baker said. "Because of the pandemic, we decided not to leave the kids out."

The congregation decided to create the first Hope for the Holidays event with plans to give away a variety of toys and educational items. The gifts that will create the most excitement are the more than 500 bicycles that will be given away.

The bikes will be given away on a first-come, first served basis, which several conditions. The children receiving the bikes must be in the vehicle and the bikes must be taken immediately.

Baker recommended people come to the church at 4020 Wylly Ave. in Brunswick in a vehicle large enough to accommodate the bicycles.

The money for the bicycles was

raised through tithes and offerings by the church congregation and residents from St. Simons Island, as well as from too many businesses in the Golden Isles to mention, Baker said. "Many businesses poured in to help us," he said. "We're going to acknowledge them."

Baker said he expects lines of vehicles to form at the church early Sunday morning in advance of the giveaway, which starts 1 p.m.

"We're prepared for over 1,000 people to show up," he said. "If not for the tithes and offerings we wouldn't be able to do this. People have really poured in."

# Oceana report details harm caused by plastic pollution

By **LAUREN MCDONALD**  
lmcdonald@thebrunswicknews.com

Oceana says more than 1,800 different kinds of marine animals in U.S. waters have been affected by plastic pollution and have either choked or been entangled by plastics.

The recently released report used available data on incidents of marine mammals and sea turtles swallowing or becoming entangled in plastic. Oceana, the largest international advocacy organization dedicated solely to ocean conservation, compiled the data by surveying dozens of government agencies, organizations and institutions that collect data on the impact of plastic on marine animals.

The report calls for policies that reduce production and

Please see **PLASTIC, 6A**

## DAYBREAK



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### WEATHER

High 55, Low 35.  
Mostly cloudy. **6A**

### COVID-19 stats as of 3 p.m. Wednesday from the DPH

| GEORGIA |        | GLYNN COUNTY |        |
|---------|--------|--------------|--------|
| CASES   | DEATHS | CASES        | DEATHS |
| 488K    | 9,302  | 4,395        | 120    |

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[sghs.org/covid-19](https://sghs.org/covid-19)

REMEMBER TO WEAR A MASK TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

# Page One, Part 2

## Arbery

Continued from page 1A

Satilla Shores residents told The News that they often saw Arbery jogging through the neighborhood.

McMichael, 65, a retired veteran investigator with the Brunswick Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office and a former police officer, told police afterward that he suspected Arbery of burglaries in the neighborhood. On that day, McMichael said he was in the back of his pickup truck at his residence on Satilla Drive when he saw Arbery run by.

"He comes hauling %#\$ down the street, I mean he's got it hooked up," Gregory McMichael told the officer.

He went inside, told his son and they armed themselves to take action, he told the officer.

"I said, 'C'mon, let's go,'" said McMichael, a former Glynn County police officer before joining the DA's office. "So Travis runs and gets his shotgun."

McMichael then suggested to the officer they had reason to believe Arbery was armed, "because the other night the guy stuck his hands in his pants" when Travis McMichael confronted him, he said.

"So I grab my .357 Magnum, Glynn County P.D. issue, by the way, when I was a police officer," McMichael told the officer.

He said the two jumped in the pickup truck and pursued Arbery. He expresses dismay that the unarmed Arbery would not stop to talk with two armed men. "We see him go around the corner, and we pull up beside him, 'Hey, stop! Stop! We want to talk to you.' And he just keeps on running. He was looking right at us. I mean this close to him, you know,"

McMichael said, his arms outstretched.

Bryan joins the chase at some point, using another pickup truck to block Arbery's path, McMichael said. Bryan also used his cell-phone camera to video the pursuit and the deadly final encounter.

"The guy (Arbery) turns around and started running back this way. Roddie pulls out in his truck and kinda blocks him. I said, 'Travis, go back that way.' He said, 'No, I'm gonna go head him off.'"

When the video Bryan took of the pursuit and shooting was leaked to the public in early May, the graphic death of Arbery ignited national outrage. The GBI arrested the McMichaels two days later and arrested Bryan later in the month.

At one point, when Travis McMichael backed his truck up alongside Arbery and tried stopping him again, Gregory McMichael told the officer. "And he's right here, and he starts running past us," he said. "Travis backs up and says, 'Stop, stop, we want to talk to you.' Or something to that effect. I don't remember his exact words."

The last segment of Bryan's video shows him following in his pickup truck as Arbery runs down the street, approaching the armed McMichaels who are stopped in the middle of the road. Travis Michael is standing in front of the open driver's side door as his father crouches in the truck bed with his handgun, that video shows. The video shows Arbery running around the passenger side of the truck. Suddenly, Travis McMichael is in front of the truck with his shotgun as Arbery reaches the front of the truck.

A struggle ensues for possession of the shotgun, during which McMichael

fired three times with buckshot. Arbery stumbled to the pavement after the third shot.

Gregory McMichael gave police this version of the fatal events:

"Travis gets out with the damn shotgun and runs up there. I said, 'Travis don't shoot. Don't do anything.' The guy (Arbery) turns and comes at him and they start wrestling and Travis shoots him right in the damn chest. (Travis) had no .... The guy was trying to take the shotgun from him.

"He's got it on video," McMichael said, referring to Bryan.

As the officer walks off, McMichael again mentions his law enforcement credentials.

"Yeah, I was chief investigator with the DA's office," he said.

McMichael said he checked for a pulse on Arbery's neck, and also checked his right hand for a weapon.

"I rolled him over to check his pulse ... " McMichael said. "I pulled his arm out and then I realized he didn't have anything in his hand. And I saw this ain't going to last long."

McMichael told the officers Arbery had been caught several times on camera burglarizing a house on Satilla Drive. The house in question would turn out to be a home under construction with open bay doors. Though he was seen entering the structure on the home's surveillance video, the property owner has said Arbery did nothing wrong.

The McMichaels and Bryan remain in the Glynn County Detention Center, awaiting trial, each charged with one count of malice murder, four counts of felony murder, two counts of aggravated assault, one count of false imprisonment and one count of criminal attempt to

commit false imprisonment.

Other moments from the police body cam footage include:

- Gregory McMichael, looking across the wide border of crime scene tape to the other side, gazing beyond Arbery's covered body in the middle of the road. "What are they doing with my son?" he says, watching as officers question Travis McMichael on the other side. "Are they ..."

"I don't know, sir," the officer tells him.

Moments later, the father asks, "Are they going to put him in handcuffs?"

"No no no," the officer says. "Why would he be in cuffs?"

- Bryan explains to officers that he tried unsuccessfully to block Arbery's path several times. He then gives an account of the final confrontation that appears to contradict his own video. (Bryan told police he had not seen the video he took at that time.) He tells officers Arbery came straight at Travis McMichael after McMichael stepped out of the truck's driver's side, rather than run around the passenger side, as the video shows.

"About that time he come over and he just started wailing on his face — the Black dude started hitting the White dude in the face," Bryan said.

Bryan said Arbery should have stopped to talk with the armed men. Then he seemed to question the wisdom of chasing Arbery in the first place.

"If the guy would have stopped to find out what was going on — he was obviously up to something — this would have never happened. Should we have been chasing him?" he says to the officer. "I don't know."

- Gregory McMichael, summing up what happened to officers: "To be

perfectly honest with you, if I could've gotten a shot at the guy, I would have shot him myself ... "

- Arbery is still breathing, face down in the road, as the first officers arrive on scene. Gregory McMichael is standing back a ways in a nearby driveway. An officer puts on gloves, rolls over Arbery's body, and applies pressure to his chest. When Gregory McMichael tries to move closer, the officer waves him off with a finger.

"I recognize you now," the officer says to him. "Michael, right?"

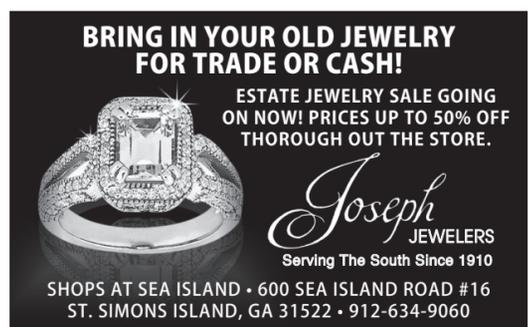
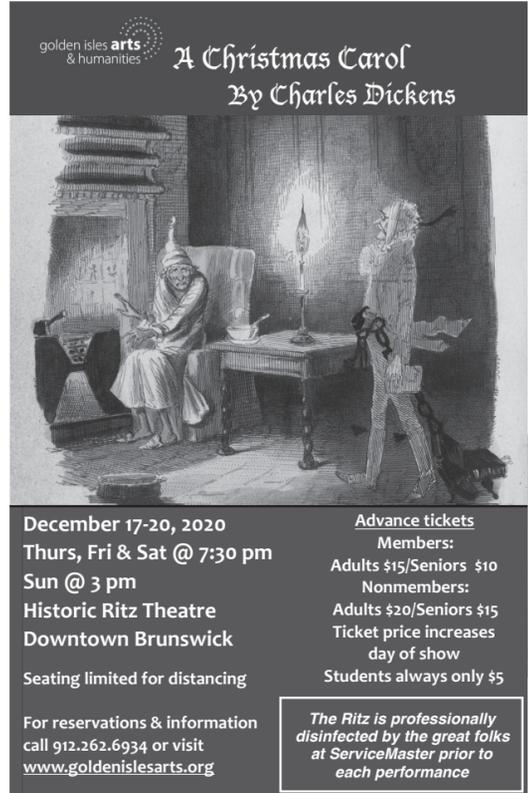
"McMichael, yeah. That's my son Travis over there."

"Just hang out over there for me," the officer tells him, still applying pressure to Arbery's chest.

Then McMichael can be heard saying, "Roddy back here's got it all on video."

Seconds later, Arbery dies. "There's nothing I can do for this gentleman," the officer says, removing his bloodied gloves.

There would be no arrests in Arbery's shooting death until May 7, two days after the GBI took over the investigation.

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## Campaign

Continued from page 1A

Tuberville said it is the decline in education and school curriculums that undermine traditional values and the importance of religion that prompted him to run for office as a Republican.

"We are in trouble," Tuberville said. "The way of life, the freedoms that we have, the liberties that we have that our forefathers, our great-great-grandfather and grandmothers gave us we're losing at a very fast pace."

He said the Democratic Party is attempting to undermine the way of life, freedoms and liberties of Americans. The COVID-19 pandemic illustrated that, he continued, by way of governmental orders shutting down businesses and churches and requiring people to stay home to prevent spreading the disease.

Cities and states with largely Democratic elected officials tend to be more heavy-handed in implementing and enforcing such rules,

he said, a trend Georgia will follow if it, too, elects Democrats, he said.

Georgia stands a chance of avoiding that in the upcoming runoff, Tuberville continued. With Republicans holding 50 seats in the Senate and Democrats holding 48, Georgia will decide whether the Senate gets split at 50-50, with Democratic Vice President-elect Kamala Harris holding the tie-breaking vote, or whether Republicans maintain their slim majority.

The Democratic Party remains in control of the House of Representatives and gained the White House in the November general election.

It's a very important issue, Tuberville said, one pressing enough to motivate him to take a trip from Alabama to Brunswick.

"I know I'm not your senator, but I really am. I'm just across the line. I live in Auburn," Tuberville said. "We're going to stick together and Kelly (Loeffler) and David (Perdue) are going to win this election and we're going to fight hard for every state."

Others joining the tour included Rep.-elect Byron Donalds, R-Fla., Rep.-elect Madison Cawthorn, R-N.C., Allen West, chairman of the Republican Party of Texas, and former U.S. Rep. from Florida, and former Republican candidates Kimberly Klacik and Wesley Hunt — just off unsuccessful bids to represent Maryland's 7th Congressional District and Texas' 7th Congressional District, respectively.

West, born and raised in Atlanta, said he had fond memories of South Georgia and went to a handful of summers at Epworth by the Sea. He asked all in attendance to vote against Warnock and Ossoff on the grounds that they do not represent the values and principles that most Georgia residents hold.

The parade of Republican bigwigs didn't end Wednesday. Glynn County GOP Chairwoman Ginny Hall announced an appearance by Loeffler and U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., at 11:30 a.m. Saturday at Brunswick Landing Marina.

County residents can vote early in the runoff at three

locations: the Office Park Building at 1815 Gloucester St. in Brunswick, the Ballard Madison Community Building at 30 Nimitz Drive and on St. Simons Island at Glynn County Fire Station No. 2, 1929 Demere Road.

All three will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. The polls will not be open on Christmas Day, Dec. 25, or New Year's Day, Jan. 1, 2021.

Glynn County residents can vote at any of the three locations regardless of the precinct in which they reside.

A third race on the runoff ballot pits Republican incumbent Lauren "Bubba" McDonald against Democrat Daniel Blackman for a spot on the state Public Service Commission.

Voters can check their registration status or find their polling place by visiting [www.mvp.sos.ga.gov](http://www.mvp.sos.ga.gov). Absentee ballot requests can be submitted via [ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov](http://ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov) or the Glynn County Board of Elections office, 1815 Gloucester St. in Brunswick. The elections office can be reached at 912-554-7060.

## Ga. hospitals break mark for COVID-19 patients

By **JEFF FAMY** and **RON HARRIS**  
 Associated Press

ATLANTA — A record number of people were in hospitals Wednesday in Georgia with confirmed COVID-19 infections, another signal that infections are now more widespread than at the previous summer peak, as public health authorities sought to raise the alarm that

the coronavirus is spreading unabated across the state.

In Atlanta, a group called COVID Survivors for Change set out 1,000 chairs near the state capitol in a cold rain to remember the people who have died in Georgia from the respiratory illness. That number rose Wednesday to 10,228 confirmed and suspected deaths.

"I caught COVID-19 back in March," Marjorie Rob-

erts said at the ceremony. "My first day of symptoms was March 26. Now, nine months later I'm still feeling the remnants. I also lost one of my lifelong friends to COVID-19. I didn't even get a chance to say goodbye. He died in a hospital all by himself. All alone."

The state Department of Public Health, in a weekly report, warned about the continuing spread of infections.

As of Wednesday, confirmed and suspected infections had averaged more than 6,100 over the previous week, the first time that rolling average had exceeded 6,000. At the beginning of November, Georgia was averaging fewer than 2,000 infections a day.

"They reflect our highest case numbers ever, and are not decreasing or leveling off day to day," the department said.

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