

A weekly note from Shelly Berryhill

Things I'm Thinking About

This newsletter is for the topics I am interested in. Maybe you will be also.

August 31, 2026

About



Shelly J. Berryhill is an honor graduate of Georgia Tech and the founder of Georgia Appraisal Services in Hawkinsville, Ga. For more than 20 years, he has served his community as a city commissioner while serving on numerous local and state boards including the Municipal Employee Benefit board and the Gas Authority of Georgia. He chairs the Pulaski Archway Executive Board. He was previously selected as Citizen of the Year by the local Chamber of Commerce.

He teaches Sunday School at Broad Street Baptist Church where he serves as a deacon. He and his wife Vonnie raised two children, Kristen and Kyle.

Spiritual

There is a Bible a lot of churches keep on the phone. The Passion Translation. YouVersion has it in an expanded review. Bethel has paused selling it. Some pastors have said they no longer have confidence in the scholarly foundation. I am not here to try the case. I teach Sunday school. If the book in your hand is in review, that is not a small thing. We do not need a pretty paraphrase. We need a text we can trust.

AI

The big AI shop, OpenAI, hit pause this month. Their own write-up said they cannot rule out critical cyber capability on a model they have not released, and on August 18 they said they already took a two-week pause on some training and the largest planned run is still on hold. Sam Altman said the capabilities were outstripping the pace of safety and alignment. I am not a lab guy. What I take from it is simple: the demo and the real thing are not the same, and even the people building it are saying slow down.

Appraisals

Freddie Mac's 30-year went from 6.58 in late July to 6.69 the week of August 6, then eased to 6.65 the week of August 20. That is still a hair above last August. Daily quotes did not even follow the little dip. Mortgage News Daily had 6.77 on August 21. Demand already tends to soften when rates sit over 6.64, and we have been sitting there.

Metro Atlanta pending sales were down 32 percent from a year ago in the July GAMLIS print. About 67 percent of the January-through-July solds had a concession, median \$5,000. Buyers are choosing, not chasing. For Georgia, this is still not a floodgate. Shop the quote you are actually being offered. The house still has to support the number.

City government

I want to talk about something that does not show up much on Facebook, but it is how a town actually keeps itself up.

On August 20, Hawkinsville opened bids for a water-main replacement in the Commerce Street area. That is not a study. That is real pipe in the ground — new line, hydrants, valves, and sidewalk — paid in part with a community development grant and city money. The award has not been posted yet, and I am not going to guess a start date.

In the same stretch of weeks, the city put a paving package out to bid. Ten streets. Those bids are due September 11. Pulaski County put another paving package out — about 13.6 miles of county road, bids due October 2.

Water and pavement. That is the work.

Productivity

AI was sold as less work. This month the talk is more work. Harvard Business Review called it botsitting — you hire a bot and then you get a second job managing the bot. A former OpenAI person told the BBC they were at 70 hours a week, and the sprints inside those labs have been reported as high as 90. Altman said he does not expect a four-hour workweek, and that we are all going to be much busier than we thought. That matches what I see. Most people still use it like a search engine. The ones who go further are not sitting on a beach. They are just carrying a bigger load.

— Shelly

From the bookshelf

Through the Veil — How John's Gospel Walks You Through the Temple

John's Gospel is not a race. It is a walk. Lamb, altar, laver, table, menorah, incense, veil. Then the garden. A short book by Shelly Berryhill. Digital PDF, \$7.95.

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