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### Letters to the editor Tuesday

Posted: October 20, 2009 - 12:15am

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Setting the record straight on mercury

We believe Dean Alford is trying to deceive the public about the real risks of building a new coal plant in our backyard. In his Oct. 15 column, he craftily attempts to make it seem absurd that mercury could be a danger when less than a teaspoon will be emitted daily. The critical fact missing from his story, however, is that scientists know it only takes one-seventieth of one teaspoon of mercury to pollute an entire 20-acre lake, making the fish a serious risk to eat.

The U.S. EPA estimates that up to 14 percent of the mercury emitted by coal-burning power plants deposits within 30 miles of a plant and up to 50 percent deposits within 500 miles.

Georgia coal plants already pump nearly 3,000 pounds of mercury into our air and water every year. Dean may find the proven neurological health impacts of mercury poisoning to be "silly," but given that our state has nearly 41,000 lake acres and 2,600 river miles contaminated with mercury, and over 123 fish advisories for consumption from the state Department of Natural Resources, we don't think this is a trivial matter.

Power4Georgians might like you to believe Plant Washington will not harm Georgians. The truth of the matter is it's another dirty coal plant poised to further degrade our waterways and quality of life. Don't be deceived, don't let them pull the wool over your eyes.

ULLA REEVES

Regional Program Director, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

Atlanta

Pt. Wentworth candidates not aiming at division

I read with much concern the letter from James Thomas, a resident of Port Wentworth, who is upset about political candidates who apparently live in the northern section of the city and refer to it as the "north side." ("Pt. Wentworth political faction divisive," Oct. 16)

This phrase has become a reference of division in the city for quite some time by some residents. Unfortunately, this misnomer, if it's to be called that, has nothing to do with the upcoming elections or the fact that it divides the city, citizens' needs or the citizens.

The phrase came about during the annexation of 1989. On Page 1 of Act Number 699 (H.B. 376) Paragraph 4, the phrase "north of the right-of-way line of Godley Road" is found.

Since that time, the phrase North Port Wentworth was born. I don't believe any of these young men now running for office were living in the city at that time. And, like everyone else, just picked up the phrase. Therefore, they can't be blamed for dividing or sectionalizing the city of

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