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*Inside:*

## DEVELOPING WINNING ATTITUDE

Alcovy AD talks state of Tigers' athletic program

See **SPORTS, B1**

*His Word*

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

Psalm 130:5, KJV



# Newton fire engine strikes SUV; 3 injured

By **TOM SPIGOLON**  
[tspigolon@covnews.com](mailto:tspigolon@covnews.com)

COVINGTON, Ga. — Two Newton County firefighters were among those in two vehicles treated at area hospitals Tuesday night after a fire truck struck an SUV and traveled more than 30 yards before overturning on the side of Georgia Hwy. 36. One firefighter was treated for a head injury after being struck in the head during the 6 p.m. incident, said County Manager Lloyd Kerr. Kerr said County Fire



Special to The Covington News

**A collision involving a Newton County fire engine and an SUV left three people injured, including two firefighters.**

Service Chief Mike Conner told him the firefighters were aboard the emergency vehi-

cle and traveling to a fire call when the incident occurred. A Ford Escape SUV was

stopped in the southbound lane of Hwy. 36 and waiting to turn left into East End Road in front of a line of vehicles, the Georgia State Patrol reported. The fire engine, with its lights and siren activated, moved to pass the line of vehicles in the opposite lane. The SUV then began to turn left on to East End Road and the fire engine was unable to avoid the collision, the report stated.

It stated the front passenger side of the fire engine made

contact with the driver's area of the SUV and "continued from the area of impact for 23 feet and left the roadway on the east shoulder." The fire engine then went down an embankment and traveled another 84 feet, overturned and came to a final rest on the driver's side of the vehicle facing south, the GSP reported. Meanwhile, after the collision, the SUV "began rotating counterclockwise"

See **STRIKES, A9**

Part III of a Covington News series

# Banes refutes allegations of P-card misuse

- County open to review card policy
- DA talks staff spending records

By **TAYLOR BECK**  
[tbeck@covnews.com](mailto:tbeck@covnews.com)

COVINGTON, Ga. — Since Newton County purchasing card (P-card) records of 50 employees and officials were revealed last week in Part II of a *Covington News* series, several residents and community stakeholders have been airing out concerns and asking lots of questions. The majority of those questions have been specifically directed toward Chairman Marcello Banes, as his records showed purchases that many viewed as potentially against policy. In review, the policy originally adopted in 2013 states P-cards are meant to be a "more efficient, cost-effective" way to complete small-dollar transactions, but not "bypass or avoid appropriate purchasing procedures." Policy also states P-cards are "not for personal use," and must be used for buying "supplies that are deemed necessary for the operation of the county," and for "legitimate business purposes only." P-cards may

not be used for "entertainment, alcohol or cash advances." In wake of claims that Banes had not abided by the P-card policy, the chairman took time to address those allegations and answer a few questions from *The Covington News*: **THE NEWS:** *Could you provide a few examples of what constitutes "legitimate business purposes?" Something records showed on several different P-card users' statements was a term "meeting with a constituent" or "lunch with a constituent." Could you explain to readers and other county taxpayers what exactly a "meeting/lunch with a constituent" is and entails? How are those for "legitimate business purposes" and not simply a lunch?* **BANES:** *As stated in the Enabling Legislation, part of the Chairman role is "To be the official spokesman for the county government", and "be available to the constituency, citizens and civic associations*

See **P-CARD, A8**



File | Taylor Beck | The Covington News

**Newton County Chairman Marcello Banes speaks during a ground breaking ceremony for the construction of an E-911 tower in June.**



**CATCH UP:** This article is Part III of a Covington News series explaining what P-cards are, analyzing the usage and spending habits of Newton County P-card holders, and uncovering why residents are calling for change. Part I and II are available to read at [CovNews.com](http://CovNews.com).



File | The Covington News

**Bill Nash, right, speaks during a "Save the Statue Peace Rally" held July 12, 2020, at the Covington Square.**

## 'We don't want to fight, but we have to'

Newton monument advocate speaks out after appellate court rules in favor of county

By **TAYLOR BECK**  
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COVINGTON, Ga. — When judges of the state's appellate court ruled advocates' case for keeping the 115-year-old Confederate monument in the Covington Square lacked legal standing, one local businessman believes the Newton County government's case for bringing the statue down doesn't have "standing" either. "You hear about 'concrete damages.' Well, if we don't have standing, how do they have the standing to take it down? It's basically a whim," said Bill Nash, who has lived and worked in the Newton County area for several decades. "They want to check a box and say 'that's what we did.'" "Up until just two or three years ago, the city and the county were proud of that statue," he added. "It is a memorial to the residents of Newton County who never came home from the war, and the wives and children that suffered when they never return home ... You can't snap your fingers and say that something is totally, instantly offensive. I'm sorry, it's not ... It didn't bother you before, but now all of the sudden it bothers you?"

See **FIGHT, A10**





# Newton leaders reinstate mask mandate

Face coverings only required to be worn in county buildings, parks

**By TOM SPIGOLON**  
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Newton Commissioners have reimposed an ordinance that requires masks or face coverings in all county government buildings and parks amid a surge in new cases of COVID-19.

The Newton County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, Aug. 3, voted to reimpose the ordinance through Dec. 31, 2021.

The board first approved the ordinance in August 2020 but allowed it to expire in recent months as vaccinations began and

numbers of new cases dropped earlier this year.

However, new cases in Newton County have risen dramatically in recent weeks — from a seven-day average of three new cases on June 29 to 24 new cases on July 31.

At only a 37% vaccination rate — well below the statewide 46% rate — Newton County appears to be squarely in the path of the Delta variant of the disease which reportedly is more contagious and spreads more rapidly than the original form of COVID-19. Most new COVID cases are among the unvaccinated, officials have said.

County Manager Lloyd Kerr said, “For the time being, we thought it best to go back to the mask re-

quirement.”

Kerr said commissioners could rescind their action if the numbers of infected Newton Countians go down before Dec. 31.

The ordinance requires the county’s 600 or so employees to wear masks when in the public areas of county-owned facilities where they would interact with the public; as well as other county property controlled by the board of commissioners, such as parks.

It also applies to county-owned facilities inside the cities — such as the county administration building and Historic Courthouse — and in unincorporated Newton County.

It requires anyone age 9 and up to wear masks and face coverings when in the public

spaces of any county facilities unless it is a polling place or the Judge Horace J. Johnson Jr. Judicial Building that is controlled by the Alcovy Judicial Circuit.

County Attorney Megan Martin said the ordinance is the same as the one approved in 2020 and continues to allow exemptions for those who object on the basis of health, ethical reasons or religious beliefs.

Other exemptions include a person who is practicing social distancing of at least six feet from anyone not in the same household, those riding in personal vehicles; if a medical provider has advised against the use of a face covering due to an underlying medical issue; when consuming food or beverages; for

identification purposes; providing identity to law enforcement, for purchase of alcohol, tobacco, or prescription drugs; and more.

County Chairman Marcello Banes said he believed reimposing the ordinance was “the right thing to do.”

District 4 Commissioner J.C. Henderson has pushed for more county government action to educate the public about the need for vaccinations, mask wearing and other safeguards against the disease.

He said he had heard people say they refused to get vaccinated for such reasons as the government using it to “track them.”

“Worry about saving your mother’s life, your brother’s,” Henderson said.

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## Property tax rate to drop 14% to fund 2022 county government budget

**By TOM SPIGOLON**  
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — County officials said Newton property owners will see an almost 14% decrease in their tax rate to fund a 2022 county government budget that increased slightly.

Finance Director Brittany White told the Newton County Board of Commissioners Tuesday, Aug. 3, that a property tax rate of 11.145 mills would be needed to help fund the budget — 14% below the 2021 rate of 12.916 mills.

The Newton County Board of Commissioners voted 3-1 with one abstention to approve the budget, which funds the coun-

ty government other than the school system through June 30, 2022.

Commissioners still must approve the property tax rate separately after a series of public hearings.

The proposed rate is also lower than the rollback rate of 11.5 mills. The state mandates that a rollback rate be calculated that would produce the same amount of revenue as the previous year’s rate if reassessments had not occurred.

Commissioners generally had indicated previously they wanted to see a property tax rate lower than the current rate to compensate for higher assessments from

rising land values that would increase tax bills.

However, County Manager Lloyd Kerr said Tuesday the tax rate needed to fund the budget was based on the county’s tax digest — the total assessed value of all taxable property — which increased by \$424 million this year to \$3.4 billion.

It is the sixth consecutive year the Newton County digest has increased from the previous year.

The 2022 budget totals \$118.6 million and delays hiring of 32 new positions until January 2022 while giving a 4.5% pay

**See BUDGET, A7**

### OBITUARIES

**Carolyn Nelms**  
Caldwell & Cowan  
Funeral Home

Carolyn Nelms, of Covington, passed away Sunday, August 1, 2021, at the age of 90. Mrs. Nelms was a resident of Covington for over 21 years. She carved out a career and retired from the dentistry profession. Mrs. Nelms enjoyed family gatherings and entertaining during the

holidays, especially Christmas! She had a big heart for her family and loved making memories with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Mrs. Nelms will be remembered as a loving and caring woman. Mrs. Nelms was preceded in death by her grandson, Kyle Bemis; parents, Edith and Joe Whaley; and brother, Earnest Whaley.

She is survived by her husband of 71 years, Ronald Nelms; daughter, Rhonda Bemis (Robert); grandchildren, Joshua Harms, Ashely Herring, Carolyn Smith; great-grandchildren, Coleman Herring, Amelia Harms, Parker Herring, Anderson Harms, Isabelle Smith, Braylen Herring; sister, Ann Rawlins (Marty); and numerous nieces

and nephews.

A Memorial Service for Mrs. Nelms will be announced at a later date by Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home. Flowers are accepted, or in lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital, 53 Peachtree Center E Suite 100, Atlanta, Georgia 30346, or through their website.

Gov. Brian Kemp’s latest executive order has eliminated restrictions on large gatherings; however, CDC guidelines recommend social distancing and wearing of masks while in public. Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home requests that you observe these recommendations while in our funeral home attending visitations and/or services.

Visit [caldwelland-cowan.com](http://caldwelland-cowan.com) to place online condolences.

NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS FIVE YEAR TAX DIGEST AND M&O LEVY HISTORY 2021 TAX DIGEST & M&O LEVY FOR FY 2022						
The Newton County Board of Education does hereby announce that the M&O millage rate for 2021 will be established at a meeting to be held at 2109 Newton Drive on August 24, 2021 at 7 p.m., and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. 48-5-32, do hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.						
School Digest and Levy	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 (for FY 2022 Budget)
Real & Personal	2,435,281,301	2,713,478,896	2,975,441,463	3,258,126,542	3,480,836,319	3,925,918,245
Motor Vehicles	113,941,390	86,168,030	66,505,500	55,270,640	42,308,040	35,649,010
Mobile Homes	1,804,915	1,666,028	1,623,741	1,889,733	2,012,335	2,019,602
Timber	1,169,405	189,723	731,918	2,129,442	950,166	522,040
Heavy Equipment	143,287	408,655	105,640	163,080	725,903	608,305
Gross Digest	2,552,340,298	2,801,911,332	3,044,408,262	3,317,579,437	3,526,832,763	3,964,717,202
Less M&O Exemptions	389,979,785	438,453,331	458,624,734	490,725,442	494,177,903	493,688,943
Net M&O Digest	2,162,360,513	2,363,458,001	2,585,783,528	2,826,853,995	3,032,654,860	3,471,028,259
State Forest Land Assistance						
Grant Value	4,046,095	4,450,012	5,113,799	0	0	0
Adjusted Net M&O Digest	2,166,406,608	2,367,908,013	2,590,907,327	2,826,853,995	3,032,654,860	3,471,028,259
Net M&O Millage	20.00	20.00	20.00	19.788	19.788	19.788
*Net Taxes Levied (Rounding up)	43,328,132	47,358,160	51,818,147	55,937,787	60,010,174	68,684,707
Net Taxes \$ Increase (Decrease)	2,039,769	4,030,028	4,459,986	4,119,640	4,072,388	8,674,533
Net Taxes % Increase (Decrease)	4.94	9.30	9.42	9.11	7.28	14.46
*This amount represents the amount billed, not the amount collected and does not take into account a collection fee of 2.5% and estimated uncollectible taxes of 1%.						

**William Joseph Nipper**  
Peachtree Crematory  
Services

William Joseph Nipper passed away suddenly on July 31st, 2021 at the age of 55. He is survived by his children Holly and Joey, grandson Eric Jr., and his siblings Tom, Zack, Melissa, John, and Terry. He will be greatly missed.

# REGIONAL REPORT

Read about what's happening across the metro and beyond Newton County's border >>

## Former Good Hope mayor dies

Jimmy Guthrie, who served his country and his community, died Tuesday morning after a battle with cancer.

Guthrie served as the mayor of Good Hope in Walton County for two terms and was elected last year for a third. He resigned in January due to health concerns.

The mayors of Loganville, Monroe and Social Circle ordered flags at city facilities lowered to half-staff.

As mayor, Guthrie helped start the Good Hope Poppy Festival and was instrumental in bringing a Walton County Sheriff's Office precinct to the community.

He also was the mayor during some of the biggest changes in the city's recent history: implementation of a four-way stop at the main intersection in town, the introduction of alcohol sales and approval of a Dollar General.

Guthrie oversaw the improvement of local parks and support of cycling programs. Early in his term, he led the way as Good Hope was recertified as a City of Ethics.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy who came to the community about 1980.

Mayor Pro Tem David Mullis, who served as interim mayor earlier this year, called Guthrie "a phenomenal force in our community" during a reception the City Council held to recognize him.

At the time, former Mayor Randy Garrett — who is now back in the position — called Guthrie "a statesman."

Guthrie also was involved with the Student Success Alliance in Walton County.

— *The Walton Tribune*



From left, Mayor Pro Tem David Mullis and former Mayors George Prather, Jimmy Guthrie and Randy Garrett attend a ceremony in Guthrie's honor Thursday night, Feb. 4, in Good Hope. Guthrie died Tuesday, Aug. 3.

**One injured in Loganville road rage shooting**  
One person was injured in what police are describing as a road rage incident on Atlanta Highway.

The other person involved in the altercation was being interviewed by police detectives Monday afternoon, city spokesman Robbie Schwartz said.

It happened on the westbound lanes of the highway near Main Street just before 11:45 a.m.

Schwartz said two men exchanged gunfire after a collision.

One of the men had multiple gunshot wounds. An ambulance took him to Northside Hospital Gwinnett.

Schwartz said there were no other reports of injuries and everyone involved in the incident was believed to be accounted for as of early Monday afternoon.

— *The Walton Tribune*

## Rockdale judge orders masks required at courthouse

Chief Rockdale Superior Court Judge Robert Mumford has amended a court order to man-

date masks be worn by everyone entering the courthouse.

A previous order only required people not vaccinated to wear masks.

The updated order calls for people to wear masks at all times while inside the courthouse.

The judge said only witnesses and attorneys would be allowed to remove their masks during a hearing or trial.

## Rockdale BOE reduces millage rate for FY22

The Rockdale County Schools Board of Education has opted to reduce the millage rate by 1.883 mills and adopt a rollback millage rate of 22.717, which is, reportedly, the lowest rate in more than a decade.

In June, the board adopted a budget of approximately \$171 million for fiscal year. Approximately 70% of the funds were earmarked for instruction and student support.

## State Supreme Court goes back to remote oral arguments

This month's oral arguments before the Georgia Supreme Court will be held remotely, Chief Justice David Nahmias announced Thursday.

Word that the high court was going back to online proceedings came less than a week after Verda Colvin was sworn in as the newest Supreme Court justice during a live ceremony inside the state Capitol and two months after the court resumed conducting in-person hearings at the nearby Nathan Deal Judicial Center.

Nahmias cited the increase in cases of COVID-19 resulting from the highly contagious delta variant and the resulting revision of public health guidelines.

Nahmias said evidentiary hearings and jury trials elsewhere in Georgia's court system that must be done in person should continue subject to "appropriate health protections."

Former Chief Justice Harold Melton issued a string of statewide judicial emergencies after the coronavirus pandemic first struck Georgia in March of

last year.

Although the most recent of those orders expired June 30, the state Supreme Court has extended emergency rules allowing all levels of the court system to continue conducting some proceedings using video conferencing technology.

This month's oral arguments in the Georgia Supreme Court are scheduled to take place Aug. 24, Aug. 25 and Aug. 26. No decision has been made regarding the oral arguments set for mid-September.

— *Capitol Beat News*

## University System of Georgia won't mandate masks, shots for coronavirus

The University System of Georgia is stopping short of requiring students returning to classes during the next couple of weeks to wear masks or get vaccinated against COVID-19.

With confirmed cases of the virus, hospitalizations and deaths on the rise in Georgia, the university system issued guidelines this week urging but not mandating masking and

vaccinations.

"The University System of Georgia recognizes COVID-19 vaccines offer safe, effective protection and urges all students, faculty, staff and visitors to get vaccinated either on campus or with a local provider," the guidelines stated.

"Additionally, everyone is encouraged to wear a mask or face covering while inside campus facilities. The system continues to work closely with the Georgia Department of Public Health to prioritize the health and safety of our campus communities."

With the particularly contagious Delta variant of the virus spreading, about 600 of the nation's 4,000 colleges and universities have ordered students to get fully vaccinated in time for the fall semester, while hundreds also have imposed mask mandates.

The schools have cited new guidelines from the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommending that even fully vaccinated Americans mask up indoors.

The University System of Georgia policy is in keeping with Gov. Brian Kemp's position on virus mandates. Like other Republican governors, Kemp has resisted calls to require Georgians to mask up or get vaccinated throughout the course of the pandemic.

Kemp has been getting pressure from both sides of the mandates debate. Some Republicans have urged him to prohibit local school systems from imposing mask mandates.

Other legislators have urged the governor to impose a statewide mask mandate.

— *Capitol Beat News*

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Dick Yarbrough columnist

## Methodist squabbles show ‘organized religion’ an oxymoron

My wise father once advised me to never talk politics or religion with people. You will never change their minds, he said, and they will spend all their time trying to change yours. That may be true but sometimes I can’t help myself.



It is hard not to write about politics and those who practice that arcane art. Humor-impaired wingnuts on both sides of the political spectrum are so much fun and such easy targets.

But, if you think political wingnuts can be righteously-indignant, try the Bible thumpers who will pull out one sentence from one verse of one chapter of one book of the Bible – Old Testament or New Testament, take your pick – to convince us that they are on the side of God and everybody else is going to hell in a wheelbarrow.

My favorite was the guy who justified carrying guns to church by saying Jesus would approve (Luke 22:36), forgetting Matt 5:38- 41 and that darned old 6th Commandment – something about “Thou Shalt Not Kill.”

I’m not sure my prayers make it through the ceiling, so I am in no position to speak for God but I have the feeling he is concerned with the behavior of us who identify as “religious.” We don’t seem to always walk our righteous talk. Maybe that is why almost a fourth of Americans identify themselves as “No Religion,” compared to 1972 when only 5% made that claim. Since 1972, those who identify with one of the mainline Protestant denominations have gone from 28% to 11%. Catholics have declined from 27% to 23%.

A 2019 American Family Survey found that for Millennials and even GenXers, the most common religion is no religion at all. The “Nones” claim 44% of the 18–29 age group, and 43% among those who are 30–44. That is a dramatic change from other generations. Further, the survey found that only 5% of unaffiliated Americans say they are now looking for a religion that would be right for them. If my abacus is correct, that means 95% are not.

Who should we blame for those kinds of attitudes? The millennials? The GenXers? Or maybe those of us who profess to believe in God should heed Matthew 7:5: Get the

log out of our own eye before we worry about the speck in the eyes of others.

There is an ugly spectacle currently taking place in Cobb County between the largest church in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church, Mt. Bethel, and North Georgia Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson. The bishop sought to move Mt. Bethel pastor Jody Ray to a new position. Ray refused to go.

So what is the problem? The bishop, a lawyer-turned-theologian, is a liberal who is about as clumsy as an elephant on roller skates and Mt. Bethel is a member of the Wesleyan Covenant Association, a group of conservative Methodist churches planning to split from the UMC next year in part over LGBTQ issues dividing the church. Mt. Bethel’s lay leaders have alleged Ray’s reassignment is punishment for his and their beliefs.

Hauptert-Johnson says she has that right to move ministers and to her point, Methodist clergy agree to the concept of itineracy when they enter the ministry. Evidently, Dr. Ray was absent the day that subject was discussed in class.

Hearing the publicly-traded tirades between the two groups is dismaying. It has gotten up-close-and-personal. Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson says that Mt. Bethel has “cast dispersion on our whole system and dragged it through the press and I think that is pretty despicable.” Ray says, “What the world needs right now is a courageous church that’s willing to stand for what is right and what is true even when there’s persecution, even when there are those who speak against us.”

Both sides in this nasty spat have agreed to arbitration and hopefully a satisfactory conclusion will be reached. I don’t know what form the arbitration will take, but I wonder if Hauptert-Johnson and Ray have thought about sitting down in a room alone and asking themselves: What would Jesus do? I suspect, for starters, he would have the two of them park their egos and read the Sermon on the Mount.

Who knows how this is going to work out but one thing for sure, this kind of internecine squabbling isn’t good for organized religion. But then, maybe “organized religion” is an oxymoron. Can I get an amen?.

*Dick Yarbrough is an award-winning columnist from Georgia.*

Jody Hice guest editorial

## A noble profession

Throughout the spring, I attended signing ceremonies for the talented and hard-working students in the 10th District who were



nominated to and accepted by a U.S. Service Academy. There are limited prestigious slots available, and our district is sending seven young people to service academies this year. I could not be prouder of each and every one of them, and I am thrilled to be a part of their journey.

For those young people hoping to attend a U.S. Service Academy or simply learn



Special to The Covington News

**“Our district is sending seven young people to service academies this year. I could not be prouder of each and every one of them”**

more about it, I’ll be holding my annual Service Academy Day on Saturday, Aug. 21, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Georgia Military College in Milledgeville. This event is an outstanding oppor-

tunity for high school students interested in serving our nation to speak with representatives from the U.S. Military, Naval, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine, and Air Force academies, as well as

members of my team, about best practices for applying to these prestigious institutes.

I am honored to have nominated so many talented, intelligent, and hardworking students from the 10th District to these academies. I look forward to getting to know the next generation of young leaders. To register for this event, please send an email to [GA10Noms@mail.house.gov](mailto:GA10Noms@mail.house.gov) by Tuesday, August 17, 2021. Then, visit my website to learn how to receive a Congressional nomination.

*Rep. Jody Hice represents Georgia’s 10th Congressional District, including Newton and Walton counties among others, in the U.S. House.*

Chris Bridges columnist

## New school year brings both new, old challenges

Many students in the area have already returned to the classroom for the start of a new school year.



One thing that is a certainty is that students today face as much stress as ever. Young people have always had peer pressure, as well as pressure from adults, to do things both wise and unwise. That continues to be true in 2021 just as it was in 1989 when I graduated high school. It’s a generational thing and it will always continue.

Bullying remains a big concern today. This is an issue which has always gone on. It goes beyond “kids will be kids.” There is no justification for bullying. Some school districts handle and control it better than others. Others like to keep it all hush-hush and pretend it is not an issue.

When I was a student, I was one of the fortunate ones. I only had to deal with a few isolated cases of bullying. When I was in middle school, a high school senior decided he would zero in on me. I let it slide the first couple of times but then it got old.

To me the solution to this problem was simple: I told my father about it. While I did not witness the conversation, I do know that after my father had a heart-to-heart talk (it was a one-sided conversation my father later told me) with the one who was doing the bullying that it never happened again.

School systems today would frown on a parent handling a situation in this manner. In all likelihood the law would be called to

prevent the parent from doing so.

Part of the problems with our young people today is the lack of a strong family foundation. There are many reasons for it but a young student has much less of a chance in this crazy world without that family support.

It is so beneficial to have a supportive father and mother. In some cases, the child is wrong and good parents understand that. In other times the bureaucracy of a school system (whether large or small) can be infuriating.

Who knows what might have transpired from my situation without my father to step in and put an immediate stop to it.

Social skills for today’s student seem way less than they were in my generation. Part of it is always looking at a phone. Today’s young person literally has the world at their fingertips so what is actually going on around them seems of little interest.

I bet if you asked 100 random high school students when was the last time that they ever read an actual newspaper (one you turn the pages for) then 99 would say never. The number might even be 100.

On the other hand, all 100 would have a Facebook page, Twitter account and a long list of contacts they text on a daily, if not hourly, basis. Many spend hours a day watching YouTube videos. Sure some are educational but others are well, you know.

Texting has also led to less socialization. You don’t have to actually talk to someone. You can just send them a text and then look at

their reply.

Of course, having a cell phone is not all bad. I like the fact I have one when I travel. Phones today can help you locate places or certainly call for help if it is needed. For those reasons alone it is probably essential for young people to have them.

All students should be involved in at least one activity at school beyond sitting in a desk in a classroom. Even smaller schools today offer a wide variety of activities. Whether a student participates in a wide selection of sports, drama, literary, band or even clubs such as 4-H, there really is something for everything. Being involved in something, anything, is such a vital part of the education process.

It’s never easy being a teenager or pre-teen. That’s something that will probably never change. I don’t have kids but I have always felt I would be the type of parent who would wrap their’s in bubble wrap and never let them leave the house. I would worry about

them constantly.

So, it’s not easy for parents either. Most of the people I went to high school with now have grown children themselves. The clock keeps turning with each passing school year.

Hopefully students can have a good 2021-22 school year without harm or fear or any cause for concern. That’s probably wishful thinking but it’s something I do think about with the start of each new school year.

We haven’t even touched on the ongoing COVID-19 situation. In recent conversations with family and co-workers, it appears the pandemic is about to crank up again. Even those who are vaccinated probably will have to begin wearing a mask again soon.

Students today continue to face pressures as they did in the past. No doubt they always will.

*Chris Bridges is a former sports editor for The News. Reach him at [pchrisbridges@gmail.com](mailto:pchrisbridges@gmail.com).*

# The Covington News

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# County board splits on opposition of tax collection services fee increase for cities

By **TOM SPIGOLON**  
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — County commissioners narrowly voted to tell Tax Commissioner Marcus Jordan they opposed his plan for charging an additional fee to do property tax collections for the five cities in Newton County.

The board voted 3-2 on Tuesday, Aug. 3, to object to the additional fee.

Jordan recently sent the city governments intergovernmental agreements that state he wants \$3.50 rather than the \$2.50 charge that past tax commissioners imposed — to serve as their property tax collector.

The agreement indicated the Board of Commissioners was requesting the fees which brought an outcry from city officials, County Manager Lloyd Kerr said.

“Their impression is the county is attempting to collect an additional dollar from them,” Kerr said.

Kerr and County Attorney Megan Martin said city officials in Oxford and Covington had asked them why the county was asking for the money. The tax commissioner is actually receiving the fees, Martin said.

She told commissioners Kerr asked her to draft the resolution stating the Board of Commissioners’ opposition to the extra \$1.

“We’re not saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on what Tax Commissioner Jordan can do,” she said. “He can set fees,” Martin said. “This is more of a piece of ‘propaganda’ that comes from the board saying we don’t support charging our cities any more.”

Jordan admitted he could make the agreements with city governments unilaterally because he is one of four county officers the state constitution allows to operate mostly independently from the county governing body.

“I’d be hard-pressed to break the law for my mother, much less anyone else,” Jordan said.

He said a county commission vote to oppose the \$1 fee would give him “cover” if a taxpayer asked him why he was not collecting the extra money from cities.

Commissioners Stan Edwards, Demond Mason and Ronnie Cowan voted for it and commissioners Alana Sand-



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

**Chairman Marcello Banes presents Covington resident Keelyn Harper with an award and commends her for “outstanding citizenship” in rescuing an entrapped and injured motorist from a burning vehicle on the side of County Road 213 on June 10.**

ers and J.C. Henderson voted against it.

Cities often contract with the Tax Commissioner’s office to do collections because of the cost savings.

In other action Tuesday, the Newton County Board of Commissioners:

- Approved a resolution authorizing hunting and trapping of coyotes by E. Pat Campbell and Bobby Bates at least 100 yards from residences on county-owned tracts totaling 211 acres on Lower River Road and 424 acres on Forest Tower Road.
- Approved a resolution approving 2022 budget appropriations to “Entities conferring substantial benefits to citizens of Newton County.”

The entities include McIntosh ECD Council, Newton County Community Partnership, Nelson Heights Community Center, Newton County Board of Health, Washington Street Community Center, Newton County Library System, View Point Health, Newton County Industrial Development Authority, Newton County DFACS, Alcovy CASA, and Highway 278 Community Improvement District.

- Approved a Legal Services Agreement for an indigent defense contractor for Newton County Juvenile Court totaling \$41,250 with funding already in the Juvenile Court budget.

- Approved change orders totaling \$19,572 for Barnsley Construction’s expansion of the Newton County Sheriff’s Office facility on Alcovy Road. The changes bring the total contract price to \$3.4 million but will complete the project, officials said.

Funding is from SPLOST and the county’s Capital Fund.

- Approved awarding Bagwell Fence a \$132,533 contract to

replace guardrails along bridges on Henderson Mill Road, Mt. Tabor Road and Hazelbrand Road and along Crowell Road and Jack Neely Road. Funding is from the 2017 SPLOST.

- Approved a contract with Sunbelt Construction for Design Build Services at Washington Street Community Center and Cousins Center for \$45,750. With funding from SPLOST and the Capital Fund.

- Approved contract with Lose Design for design services for Yellow River Trail system for \$29,500 with funding from SPLOST.

- Approved purchase of right of way and easements for Snapping Shoals Creek Bridge Replacement Project on Brown Bridge Road for \$19,600. Funding is coming from federal funds and 2017 SPLOST.

- Approved contracts with Southeastern Psychological Associates, View Point Health and Advantage Behavioral Health Systems to provide treatment services for participants in Newton County Superior Court’s Resource Court programs.

Funding will come from the state Criminal

Justice Coordinating Council.

- Approved a Tax Assessors Office request for refund for erroneous street light fees paid by LeeAnn Makowski in the amount of \$172.88 per tax year of 2018, 2019 and 2020.

- Approved a resolution to abandon a portion of FFA Camp Road.

Also at the Tuesday meeting:

- Chairman Marcello Banes presented Covington resident Keelyn Harper with an award and commended her for “outstanding citizenship” in rescuing an entrapped and injured motorist from a burning vehicle that had wrecked on the side of County Road 213 on June 10.

- LaTonja Hamp, executive assistant to Banes, introduced The Bicentennial 200 Awards Committee, explained its purpose and announced plans for upcoming events.

- County Manager Lloyd Kerr presented Exemplary Service Awards to county Animal Services director Cynthia Wieman and staff member Katelyn Bigley for their work to help remove a potentially rabid bat from a residence.

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Friday, Aug. 13

- Live at Legion Concert Series featuring Blair Crimmins & The Hookers playing swing and jazz at 7 p.m. at Legion Field, 3173 Mill St. For more information, visit <https://cityofcovington.org/index.php?section=visit-calendar&evtid=815>.

### Friday, Aug. 20

- Free Family Movie Night featuring “Playing with Fire” Aug. 20 at Wolverine Field at 8134 Geiger St. in Covington. For more information, visit [newtonrecreation.com](http://newtonrecreation.com).

- The Almond Turner Foundation Golf Tournament is set for a 9 a.m. “shotgun start” at the The Oaks Golf Course, 11240 Brown Bridge Road.

Proceeds benefit the AJT Foundation Scholarship Fund. For more information, call 404-236-9807 or visit [theajtfoundation.org](http://theajtfoundation.org).

### Ongoing

- The county’s new Splash Pad is open to the public for the season at Denny Dobbs Park, 6244 Highway 212, daily except Monday throughout the summer. Days and times are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.; and closed on Mondays for maintenance.

- Farmers Market hosted by the Newton County Parks and Recreation is held every Tuesday through Oct. 26 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Denny Dobbs Park at 6252 Hwy. 212 in Covington.

- Oxford Farmers Market is scheduled for Thursdays and Fridays, noon to dark; and Saturdays, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., on the City Green on Emory Street.

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# Newton BOE to consider reduction of tentatively approved tax rate

**By TOM SPIGOLON**  
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — The Newton County Board of Education reportedly is considering reducing its property tax rate despite approving a tentative rate that was needed to pass the 2022 budget in June.

Board spokeswoman Sherri Partee said board members have discussed decreasing the tentatively ap-

proved rate of 19.788 mills, which, if left in place, would produce more revenue this year because of an increase in assessed property values countywide compared to last year.

Partee said the board will not set the final millage rate for 2022 until Aug. 24 at 7 p.m. — after public hearings scheduled for Aug. 17 at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., and Aug. 24 at 6 p.m.

The 19.788-mill rate is the same property tax rate for Newton schools as the previous three years. However, the state government by law defines it as a tax increase because a 14%

increase in assessed property values countywide in the net tax digest this year would increase the tax levy on property owners by the same amount compared to last year.

The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair market value of \$200,000 is approximately \$171.99 and the proposed tax increase for non-homestead property with a fair market value of \$175,000 is approximately \$143.57, according to school system calculations.

The tentatively approved rate is 2.051 mills higher than the

rollback rate of 17.737 mills that would produce the same amount of revenue as last year if there were no increase in assessments.

The tentative rate is calculated to fund a \$201.2 million budget for 2022 the board approved June 22 after they used \$12 million in reserves to balance it, according to meeting minutes.

However, the board approved the budget June 22 so it could go into effect on July 1. Because the final county tax digest had not been released on June 22, the board based the budget num-

bers they approved on a tax digest estimate lower than the recently announced final digest amount — meaning more revenue may be available.

This year’s net tax digest is \$3.47 billion, which is a 14.5% increase from \$3.02 billion last year.

The net tax digest is the total of assessed values of all real property in the county after all exemptions are removed. Real property is generally defined as land and buildings.

Properties owned by the government, school systems and churches are among those ex-

empted from property taxes by law.

Newton County’s tax digest has increased 60% in five years since the 2016 digest totaled \$2.16 billion.

The public hearings on the property tax rate, also known as the millage rate, and the regular meeting are set for the board room at the Newton County Board of Education Administrative Offices at 2109 Newton Drive in Covington.

For more information, visit <https://newtoncountyschools.org/cms/one.aspx?pageId=167647>.



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## SOS sends out notices to 185K ‘non-contact’ Georgia voters



Special to The Covington News  
**Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger's office announced this week it would be sending notices to more than 185,000 state voters.**

in any way — either directly or through the state Department of Driver Services — for two general elections.

The notices going out this week will classify those Georgians’ voter registrations “inactive” if they do not respond within 30 days.

Federal law prohibits removing voters from the rolls during general election years due to federal mandates before

federal elections.

The last voter purge Raffensperger conducted in 2019 removed nearly 300,000 voter files that had been deemed obsolete. That purge sparked a legal challenge from Fair Fight Action, a voting rights advocacy group founded by 2018 Democratic gubernatorial nominee Stacey Abrams.

Following Raffens-

sperger’s June announcement, Fair Fight Action launched an online tool, GeorgiaVoterSearch.com, to help voters in danger of being purged from the state’s voter lists.

“It is critical that every Georgia voter check their voter registration status to make sure it is active and up to date,” said Liza Conrad, voter protection director for Fair Fight Action.

“GeorgiaVoterSearch.com will allow Georgia voters to make sure they are not unjustly stripped of their access to the ballot box.”

Raffensperger pointed to legislation then-President Bill Clinton signed in 1993 requiring states to regularly maintain their voter lists.

Georgians receiving a notification from Raffensperger’s office can return it, postage-free, to avoid being classified as inactive.

## Ossoff seeks to codify right to vote in federal law

**By DAVE WILLIAMS**  
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — The right of Americans to vote in federal elections would be codified in federal law for the first time under legislation introduced this week by U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga.

The Right to Vote Act is aimed at new laws around the country legislatures in Republican-controlled states have passed or con-

sidered since last year’s elections, including an election-law overhaul in Georgia that took effect July 1.

Ossoff’s bill would empower U.S. citizens to challenge in court any state or local government act that makes it more difficult to vote. Defendants in such cases would have to demonstrate a legitimate governmental interest in enacting such a law and that the new law is the least restrictive alternative available to accomplish that goal, Ossoff said Thursday.



Jon Ossoff

Ossoff said the aftermath of Democrat Joe Biden’s victory over incumbent Republican President Donald Trump last November points to the need for establishing a statutory right to vote.

“We see that politicians in Georgia and states across the country are seeking to restrict access to the ballot, targeting Black voters just to gain a partisan advantage in elections,” Ossoff said.

Georgia Republicans have defended the law the General Assembly passed last March as restoring public trust in the electoral process by making it harder for those bent on committing voter fraud either at the polls or through absentee ballots.

Democrats have

criticized the additional restrictions in the new law as voter suppression pushed by Republicans determined to reverse last year’s high-turnout victories in Georgia by Biden, Ossoff and fellow Democratic Sen. Raphael Warnock.

Along with Ossoff’s bill, congressional Democrats are working to pass other legislation that would set national voting standards.

Republicans, including Gov. Brian Kemp, say such efforts represent an unconstitutional usurpation of states’ rights to run elections.

A companion bill to Ossoff’s legislation has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Mondaire Jones, D-N.Y.



# Newton to host second survey and public meeting on Transit Master Plan

## SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

news@covnews.com

The Moving Newton Transit Master Plan is hosting a Public Meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 11, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Turner Lake Banquet Facility in Covington. The meeting will present findings from the county's transit needs assessment, collect input on the draft transit vision, and offer one-on-one discussion with the project team.

This is an open-house-style meeting. Community members may drop in at their leisure.

Attendees will also be able to participate in the Transit Preferences Survey on-site, a news release stated.

Turner Lake Banquet Facility is at 6185 Turner Lake Road NW in Covington.

In addition, the Transit Preferences Survey for the Moving Newton Transit Master Plan is

open for public participation through Aug. 27.

This second survey is designed to gain more insights into the feasibility of specific transit services and operations for Newton County.

Topics include potential transit service types and options, service frequency, fare costs, and more. The survey builds upon input collected from a first community survey and public meeting carried out in late spring 2021.

All community members are invited to participate.

"Your feedback is important to us!" a news release stated.

The Transit Master Plan will evaluate and recommend transit services and strategies for the County based on local conditions, population trends, and the potential need and demand for establishing services in Newton County.

Please visit the project website at [www.movingnewton.com](http://www.movingnewton.com) for more details and to sign up for project updates!

Learn more at [movingnewton.com](http://movingnewton.com) or contact [info@movingnewton.com](mailto:info@movingnewton.com).

# Conyers Back-To-School health event slated for Aug. 14

## STAFF REPORTS

news@covnews.com

CONYERS, Ga. — As schools across the metro area are back in session, Akash Shanmugam, who is an intern with the Oxford College Interfaith Youth Core cohort, has organized a "Back-To-School Barbecue: Healthy by Choice" event in an effort to encourage residents to get vaccinated.

Shanmugam said the community health event would be held at Wheeler Park, located at 1350 Parker Road in Conyers, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Aug. 14.

"Vaccination rates among adolescents have lagged and slowed the larger effort to develop community-wide immunity to COVID-19," Shanmugam said. "As schools reopen and the Delta variant continues to pose a serious threat, we need to improve the health of our communities and increase



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Residents can get free food and their COVID-19 vaccine at the "Back-to-School Barbecue: Healthy by Choice" event scheduled for Aug. 14 at Wheeler Park in Conyers.

the vaccination rate in Georgia."

Shanmugam said COVID-19 vaccines would be available for anyone age 12 and older at the event. There would also be cholesterol and blood

pressure screenings and physicals administered at no cost.

There will be free barbecue at the event, Shanmugam said, and school supplies and other prizes would be distributed to partici-

pants.

The event is being sponsored by Congressman Hank Johnson, Rockdale County Commissioner Doreen Williams and others.

## BUDGET:

Continued from A2

increase to almost 700 county employees.

Spending in the budget's largest part, the General Fund, totaled \$77.6 million — a 1.4% increase from the 2021 budget.

The overall budget, however, increased spending 41% from 2021 mostly because expenditures for projects funded by the 2017 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) were included, Kerr said.

Commissioners Stan Edwards, Demond Mason and Ronnie Cowan voted for the budget.

Commissioner

Alana Sanders voted against it and said she opposed the budget because parts of it were not made transparent enough.

She said she objected to a contribution to a nonprofit for the July 4 fireworks show being listed under a special events category without the nonprofit's name.

Sanders also objected to requiring a nonprofit like the county June-teenth committee to justify its need for a contribution when the same requirement was not placed on others.

Commissioner J.C. Henderson abstained

from the vote. He said he believed the budget should have been smaller and based on a tax rate that was lower than 11.145 mills.

Board members approved the document Tuesday after Kerr cut \$500,000 from a first version he gave to board members June 1.

He asked for a delay in approval after saying he wanted to make enough changes to preserve across-the-board pay increases included in the first version.

Changes included a decrease in spending by \$379,000 by delaying the hiring of 30 new

full-time and two new part-time employees until January 2022.

As a result, the 2022 budget includes pay increases for the 694 employees on the county's salary grade plan — including those in departments headed by constitutional officers like the tax commissioner and sheriff.

Kerr said the county government needed the increases to remain competitive for new employees and retain existing employees in a tight labor market.

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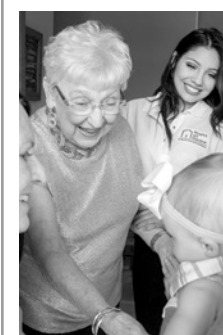
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# NOTICE OF PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The Newton County Board of Education has tentatively adopted an M&O millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes by 11.56%. All concerned citizens are invited to two separate public hearings on this tax increase to be held in the Board Room at the Newton County Board of Education Administrative Offices, 2109 Newton Drive, Covington, Georgia. The first meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on August 17, 2021 and the second meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on August 17, 2021.

This tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 19.788 mills, an increase of 2.051 mills. Without this tentative tax increase, the millage rate will be no more than 17.737 mills. The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair market value of \$200,000 is approximately \$171.99 and the proposed tax increase for nonhomestead property with a fair market value of \$175,000 is approximately \$143.57.



# P-CARD:

Continued from A1

on a regular basis.” With a busy schedule, as the chief executive officer of the county, lunch is often a productive time to meet with someone who has a concern that affects members of our community. “Meetings with constituents” include lunches with business owners, stakeholders,

community members and community partners. Most of my meetings are not at lunch or involve food purchases. Food-related meetings are helpful for a few reasons. One, with a busy schedule, every minute is required to perform the duties of chairman. Second, I find mealtime

puts people at ease and makes the conversation more approachable, which can be helpful when discussing difficult and uncomfortable topics. Third, I believe it is good to meet with the people who live in the county in order to identify the needs of the county and to collaborate on how to meet the needs of the people in the county in the most efficient way possible. Finally, providing food for meetings with staff and other county employees has proven to boost morale and make the meetings more engaging and productive.

**THE NEWS:** After The Covington News conducted an Open Records Request for all P-card spending documents for all Newton County cardholders from June 2020-June 2021, records showed you, Mr. Banes, had spent \$12,895.90 over that period. Statements confirmed \$3,633.43 (28.2%) was spent on food-related purchases, and of those food related purchases, \$3,346.15 (25.9% of total spending) was spent specifically on food for meetings and lunches with constituents. Among the documented “meetings with constituents,” there were two instances that documents showed the only persons present were you and your wife, Cheneeka. Would this not be considered a personal use of the P-card? If not, could you please explain how these instances are not considered personal? If they were personal, did you pay these amounts back to the county? If so, can you show documents?

**BANES:** During a one-year period, I know I have had well over 100 lunches or dinners with my wife, Cheneeka. My wife has volunteered hundreds of hours at county weekend events when we have been short staffed or needed her particular assistance. She has assisted me during numerous weekend duties that I have performed as chairman. In the one-year period that you requested my P-card activity, you have identified two instances where I have produced receipts where I paid

for lunch for me and my wife. While you only identified two, there are actually three totaling less than \$92. I have taken my wife to a lunch with others to get her perspective on certain county issues. I’ve taken her to a newly opened local business owned by a husband and wife that contacted me through my office for an appearance and discussion regarding county affairs. I have taken her to lunch on one occasion because of her commitment to help at one particular county event. I consider these to be a legitimate expense that is far exceeded by the benefit received.

**THE NEWS:** Before and after publishing these findings, members of the public, specifically taxpayers, have voiced their concern to The Covington News that they believe this spending amount on “meetings with constituents” and food related expenses is excessive. What would you say to that claim?

**BANES:** It is impossible to perform the role of chairman of Newton County without regularly talking with the people who live here or those who are employed by the county. I not only want to hear the concerns of the people of Newton County, I want them to know that the chairman’s office is accessible because I represent them. Meeting with members of the community, fostering relationships with stakeholders and building [morale] of county employees are essential to performing my job. Many elected officials have a supplement in addition to their salary to fund items such as lunches and food for meetings. Based upon the Enabling Legislation and the customary expenses of previous chairmen, these “meetings with constituents” and food related expenses are appropriate.

**THE NEWS:** Readers and taxpayers have also stated to The Covington News on many occasions that they do not understand why you would spend a sizable amount of money on things like “uniform cleanings,” work boots and car washes. Could

you address those concerns? How are these things considered as “legitimate business purposes?”

**BANES:** Again, as the chief spokesman for the county as stated in the Enabling Legislation I represent Newton County. I represent the county on job sites, at ground [breaking events], statewide economic development meetings and televised announcements. As you can see by the P-card purchases of others with county vehicles, a monthly membership to an unlimited “drive through” carwash is typical. My county vehicle travels throughout the county, on job sites, dirt and rural roads. It gets dirty frequently. When the vehicle is dirtier than usual, I will get the vehicle detailed. I often have to meet with heads of industry, state representatives, and congressional delegates with the goal of impressing upon them the professionalism of Newton County and its representatives. It is critical that when engaging in my duties as chairman I am putting the county’s best foot forward. These expenses are incidental to achieve this goal. These exact expenses also have been cleared by county policy and/or our county attorney prior to them being incurred and are customary expenses of previous chairmen.

County Manager Lloyd Kerr also answered a few questions on behalf of the county government as a whole to further explain P-card policy and procedures:

**THE NEWS:** After reviewing P-card policy and procedures, it is understood there are certain things county employees and officials can and cannot use P-cards for, such as personal items, cash advances, alcohol, etc., but the term “personal use” seems to be quite broad. Is there a guide for P-card users to refer to if an item, activity or service is ever in question?

**COUNTY:** An item is for personal use if it is not of relevance to performing duties as detailed in an employee’s job description, or the Enabling Legislation of the county, or Georgia’s Constitution, depending on the user. As you have noted in an earlier article, each purchase has a log sheet, in which the description of the purchase is noted.

**THE NEWS:** Could you provide a few examples of what consti-

tutes “personal use?”

**COUNTY:** Personal use would be for something that does not fall under the job description. Each P-Card user has different roles therefore their work-related use would be different. For example, part of the duties of Chairman Banes, as stated in the Enabling Legislation, says “To be available to the constituency, citizens and civic organizations on a regular basis” therefore a lunch with constituents is in line with performing that duty. However, for, say, someone in Information Services whose description doesn’t include to be available for constituency, that use would be different.

**THE NEWS:** With what many argue as broadly, loosely defined terms within the P-card policy, how can one differentiate or draw the line between what is legally acceptable versus what is ethically acceptable?

**COUNTY:** We follow state law along with our own legal policies, which ensures we do things that are legally acceptable. Newton County also has ethic policies and guidelines. That, coupled with the character of the people we employ, help us stay in line with what is ethically acceptable. All Newton County employees and our elected officials are cognizant of the fact that we are funded by the taxpayer, and their actions reflect that responsibility.

**THE NEWS:** Will the county consider taking a look at the nearly 10-year-old P-card policy and aim toward tightening up these definitions to ensure taxpayers dollars are being spent in the most efficient and prudent ways possible?

**COUNTY:** Yes, we are always wanting to improve what we do in terms of transparency, efficiency and being as prudent with taxpayers’ funds as possible.

Also in response to the P-card records report published Saturday-Sunday, July 31-Aug. 1, District Attorney Randy McGinley issued the following statement to The Covington News:

“I believe that any department head and county employee must never lose sight of the fact that they are paid by the citizens and taxpayers,” McGinley said. “Therefore, they must always keep this in mind when taking any action or incurring

See P-CARD, A9

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## P-CARD:

Continued from A8

any expense. When I took office as the District Attorney, I elected to decrease the limit for my County issued P-card from \$5,000 to \$1,500. I did not see the need to have a such a high limit. My P-card stays in my office, and I do not carry it at all unless I have had to go out of town for work purposes. I recently went through the procedure of having a hotel expense paid for by the county my having it pre-approved and having a check for that expense. However, I ultimately had to pay for that hotel with my P-card when the hotel refused to accept a check.

“My Victim Services Director [Leslie Smith] does have a \$5,000 limit. As the victim services director, she is often responsible for arranging travel expenses for victims. In the event that we have multiple victims/witnesses for a certain trial or a month that sees multiple trials, \$5,000 is not at all unreasonable. As an example, just a couple years ago, a victim in an Aggravated Child Molestation (and numerous other similar charges) and her mother, who was also a witness for the trial, moved across the country prior to trial. Because of the awful and serious nature of the charges, we were not willing to just give this person a lighter plea recommendation because the victim moved. Therefore, the case proceeded to trial and the expense of flying the victim, her mother, and a sibling back to Georgia for trial had to come from our office’s budget.

“For many reasons, trials can be continued at the last minute. Because of this, we often wait until very close to

## STRIKES:

Continued from A1

for about 25 feet before it “left the roadway on the east shoulder and continued rotating counterclockwise for an additional 76 feet before coming to a final rest facing west.”

Two firefighters, driver Sam Sheppard, 24, and Tyler Busbee, 22, were inside the fire engine’s cab and “were bounced around” before a self-contained breathing apparatus came loose and struck one of them in the head, according to Kerr and the GSP report.

They were treated at Piedmont Walton Hospital in Monroe, while the 19-year-old SUV driver was treated at Piedmont Newton in Covington.

The engine is stationed at Fire Station 1 on Covington Bypass Road, Kerr said.

Sheppard was cited for violating state law governing authorized emergency vehicles — though the report did not specify the violation.

The Georgia Department of Public Safety’s Motor Carrier Compliance Division was notified and will also



The Walton Tribune  
**Randy McGinley speaks during an election night watch party on Nov. 3, 2020, in Monroe. That night he was elected the Alcovy Judicial Circuit’s District Attorney.**

the trial date to book a flight and hotel rooms for victims. I understand this sometimes means that the flight may be more expensive, but it is a better choice than paying for a ticket only to have the trial continued. Travel insurance does not cover this circumstance. Trials such as this often take days; therefore, our office had to pay for flights for multiple people and for hotel rooms for multiple days. Ultimately, the trial ended in a conviction for all charges and the defendant was sentenced to life in prison.

“Any travel expenses such as this, must be approved by my victim services director and me. However, the taxpayers of our county should also be aware

that I anticipate further expenses like this in the near future. We currently have multiple cases of child victims of serious crimes that have moved out of the state. Part of that is just based on the normal moving of people as they live their lives as time passes. But having an entire year without trials due to the ongoing pandemic means that these cases are older and people cannot put off their lives forever. I asked to increase the amount of money that is in my budget for witness/victim travel because of this. This increase was questioned by a county commissioner at our budget meeting. I explained the reasoning and it appeared everyone was satisfied with my explanation.”

In the final part of this series on P-cards, hear from readers’ and Newton County residents’ take on the issue, and learn what could be done — if anything — to make changes, whether it be at the hands of residents, county officials, the district attorney’s office or state leaders.

# Man found dead near Jersey

**STAFF REPORTS**  
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — State agents are investigating after a man was found dead in a home on Jersey-Social Circle Road.

The property’s landlord found the man Monday and called the Walton County Sheriff’s Office, which in turn called in the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

GBI officials said it wasn’t clear how

long the man had been dead. The body was to be transported to a state crime lab for an autopsy.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Sheriff’s Office at 770-267-6557 or the GBI in Athens at 706-552-2309.

Tips also may be sent to the GBI at 800-597-TIPS (8477) or online at <https://gbi.georgia.gov/submit-tips-online>.

**CITY OF OXFORD  
MUNICIPAL GENERAL  
ELECTION  
NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-2-131(a)(1)(A), notice is hereby given that on Tuesday, the 2nd day of November 2021, a General Election will be held in the Community Center at 110 West Clark Street, Oxford, Newton County, Georgia, for elections to fill City Council Posts 4, 5, and 6 for 4-year terms. Qualifying fees were set on January 11, 2021 by the Mayor and City Council at their Special Called Meeting. Qualifying fees have been set at \$144.00 for each Council Post.

Qualifying will be held at Oxford City Hall, 110 West Clark Street, Oxford, Newton County, Georgia. Qualifying dates and times are Monday, August 16, 2021 through Friday, August 20, 2021 beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m. each day.

CITY OF OXFORD  
ELECTION QUALIFYING OFFICER

PUBLIC NOTICE - CITY OF COVINGTON						
The Mayor and Council of the City of Covington does hereby announce the millage rate will be set at a meeting held on Monday, August 16, 2021, 6:30 P.M. in the Council Room at 2116 Stallings Street, Covington, GA 30014. Pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A., 48-5-32, the Mayor and Council does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year’s tax digest and levy along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.						
City of Covington	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Real & Personal	700,848,247	749,473,640	806,346,658	856,812,113	853,104,822	855,397,963
Motor Vehicles	12,507,220	9,742,100	7,611,280	6,560,870	3,829,030	2,894,050
Motor Homes	75,881	72,284	73,413	66,218	79,596	71,284
Timber - 100%	-	-	-	57,353	-	-
Heavy Duty Equipment	50,278	280,035	73,640	163,080	144,726	286,462
Less M&O Exemptions	109,437,674	131,704,342	135,662,514	148,028,940	138,406,225	124,639,937
Net M&O Digest	604,043,952	627,863,717	678,442,477	715,630,694	718,751,949	734,009,822
Gross M&O Millage	11.064	10.856	10.832	11.084	10.796	11.123
Net Millage	7.654	7.654	7.654	7.413	7.186	6.839
Net Tax Levied	4,623,352	4,805,669	5,192,722	5,304,970	5,164,952	5,019,893
Net Taxes \$ Increase	215,264	182,317	387,053	112,248	(140,018)	(145,059)
Taxes % Increase	4.88%	3.94%	8.05%	2.16%	-2.64%	-2.81%

PUBLIC NOTICE						
The Newton County Board of Commissioners does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set and adopted at a meeting to be held at the Newton County Historic Courthouse - Boardroom, 1124 Clark Street, on August 17, 2021 at 7:00 PM. Pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. 48-5-32 do hereby publish the following presentation of the current years tax digest and levy along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.						
CURRENT 2021 TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY						
COUNTY - WIDE	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Real Property	2,048,328,326	2,289,220,430	2,531,520,229	2,784,778,295	3,005,054,706	3,429,514,338
Personal Property	386,952,975	425,382,511	445,069,861	474,533,536	476,978,911	497,628,655
Motor Vehicles	113,941,390	86,195,200	66,523,820	55,281,680	42,317,130	35,662,250
Mobile Homes	1,804,915	1,666,028	1,623,741	1,889,733	2,012,335	2,019,602
Timber - 100%	1,169,405	189,723	731,918	2,129,442	950,166	522,040
Heavy Equipment	143,287	408,655	105,640	163,080	725,903	608,305
Gross Digest	\$ 2,552,340,298	\$ 2,803,062,547	\$ 3,045,575,209	\$ 3,318,775,766	\$ 3,528,039,151	\$ 3,965,955,190
Less M&O Exemptions	389,979,845	438,577,331	458,744,734	491,178,708	494,621,840	494,139,535
Net M&O Digest	2,162,360,453	2,364,485,216	2,586,830,475	2,827,597,058	3,033,417,311	3,471,815,655
State Forest Land Assistance Grant Value	4,046,099	4,450,012	5,286,223			
Adjusted Net M&O Digest	2,166,406,552	2,368,935,228	2,592,116,698	2,827,597,058	3,033,417,311	3,471,815,655
Gross M&O Millage	16.76	16.821	16.701	16.69	16.386	14.58
Less Rollback	-3.77	-3.38	-3.26	-3.26	-3.47	-3.43
Net M&O Millage	12.99	13.441	13.441	13.43	12.92	11.145
Total County Taxes Levied	28,141,621	31,840,858	34,840,641	37,974,628	39,179,618	38,693,385
Net Taxes \$ Increase	1,317,716	3,699,237	2,999,782	3,133,988	1,204,989	-486,233
Net Taxes % Increase	4.91%	13.15%	9.42%	9.00%	3.46%	-1.28%



## Continued from A1

“They had Facebook pages and screenshots of people saying anything derogatory,” Nash said. “That was

Only one document, which was a copy of an email sent to former Commissioner Nancy Schulz after the July 14 vote, included a threatening statement toward the statue: “Instead of moving this statue, I urge you to put forth a motion to have public display of its destruction with dynamite.”

A decision to remove the statue was within the same timeframe as Rockdale and Henry counties' action to pull



**Newton County Board of Commissioners voted 3-2 in July 2020 to have the 115-year-old Confederate memorial statue removed from the Covington Square. Many across the community have opposed the decision.**

In the commissioners' "rush" to vote down the statue, Nash said there's no legal plan for what to do with the statue if removed.

"It concerns me that they just want to pull it down just for the sake of pulling it down," he said. "Their plan is to simply remove it and hide it away in a storage yard, which would break another aspect of the law. [Chairman Marcello] Banes has stated he would just put it in a lot over here. Well, as of lately, I've heard about putting it in a cemetery. The law says specifically it can't go to a cemetery. The law says it must go to an equally prom-

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The **City of Mansfield's Mayor and Council** does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the **Mansfield Community Center on August 9, 2021 at 7:00 PM** and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.

I N C O R P O R A T E D  A R E A	INCORPORATED		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	V A L U E	Real & Personal	12,336,086	13,050,898	14,058,390	16,171,001	16,538,593	17,855,652
		Motor Vehicles	269,410	198,650	159,770	137,960	106,150	146,040
		Mobile Homes	2,326	2,326	2,326	2,326	5,140	5,140
		Timber - 100%						
		Heavy Duty Equipment						
		Gross Digest	12,607,822	13,251,874	14,220,486	16,311,287	16,649,883	18,006,832
		Less Exemptions	2,736,624	2,343,493	2,711,906	3,477,849	3,008,057	2,721,374
		NET DIGEST VALUE	9,871,198	10,908,381	11,508,580	12,833,438	13,641,826	15,285,458
	R A T E	Gross Maintenance & Operation Millage	4.7170	4.6000	4.4240	4.1570	3.9080	3.8670
Less Rollback (Local Option Sales Tax)		0.1170	0.1760	0.2670	0.2490	0.0410	0.4550	
NET M&O MILLAGE RATE		4.6000	4.4240	4.1570	3.9080	3.8670	3.4120	
TAX	NET M&O TAXES LEVIED	\$45,408	\$48,259	\$47,841	\$50,153	\$52,753	\$52,154	

The Newborn Town Council does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at the Newborn Town Hall on August 27, 2021 at 3pm and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levv. along with the history of the tax digest and levv for the past five years.

INCORPORATED	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Real & Personal	10,050,238	10,523,443	11,012,080	12,308,523	13,850,924	15,420,853
Motor Vehicles	349,800	286,880	237,890	196,300	170,670	146,510
Mobile Homes	0	0	0	0	2,326	2,236
Timber - 100%	0	0	0	0	0	
Heavy Duty Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	
Gross Digest	10,400,038	10,810,323	11,249,970	12,504,823	14,023,920	15,569,689
Less M& O Exemptions	618,895	572,692	536,830	545,987	574,697	569,782
Net M & O Digest	\$9,781,143	\$10,237,631	\$10,713,140	\$11,958,836	\$13,449,223	\$14,999,907
State Forest Land Assistance Grant Value						
Adjusted Net M&O Digest	\$9,781,143	\$10,237,631	\$10,713,140	\$11,958,836	\$13,449,223	\$14,999,907
Gross M&O Millage	1.879	1.862	1.825	1.766	1.580	1.409
Less Rollbacks	0.017	0.037	0.059	0.186	0.171	0.165
Net M&O Millage	1.862	1.825	1.766	1.580	1.409	1.244
Net Taxes Levied	\$18,212	\$18,684	\$18,080	\$18,895	\$18,950	\$18,660
TOTAL COUNTY	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total County Value	\$9,781,143	\$10,237,631	\$10,731,140	\$11,958,836	\$13,449,223	\$14,999,907
Total County Taxes Levied	\$18,212	\$18,684	\$18,080	\$18,895	\$18,950	\$18,660
Net Taxes \$ Increase	-249	\$472	-605	\$815	\$55	-290
Net Taxes % Increase	-1.35%	2.59%	-3.24%	4.51%	0.29%	-1.530%



# SPORTS

The Covington News

## State of the Program

### Developing a winning attitude



File | The Covington News

Alcovy's football team looks to bounce back from a dismal record of 2-7 in 2020.

Tigers' AD says program working to establish tradition of success

By PHILLIP B. HUBBARD  
phubbard@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — When Thomas Lowe was first hired as Alcovy High School's athletic director in 2019, he told The Covington News he wanted the program to have a "winning tradition."

But the biggest obstacle that has stood in the way of establishing a winning tradition is the mentality of the players.

Now, over two years later, it seems the mindset is changing.

"When I first got here, I felt like it was OK to lose here at Alcovy," Lowe said. "Now, the

See DEVELOPING, B5

**Smiles of the Month**  
*These smiles are so bright we have to wear shades. We are beaming with pride!*

Madison Knight	Khia Singleton
Torianna Losch	Mary Lindsey Whisnant
Sophia Patterson	William Whisnant
Emilia Sayago	Chloe Wilson
Lucas Sayago	Cole Wilson
Manuel Sayago	



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#### Pursuit of Excellence Award

For the 15th consecutive year, Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home, Covington, has been named a recipient of the National Funeral Directors Association Pursuit of Excellence Award. This Award is presented by NFDA annually to firms that have demonstrated a commitment to raising the bar on funeral service excellence by adhering to strict ethical and professional standards and providing outstanding service to families and communities.

Congratulations to the Caldwell & Cowan Staff for this achievement!

NFDA NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION Pursuit of Excellence

## Prep Softball



Phillip B. Hubbard | The Covington News

The Lady Rams spent all summer hosting workouts and tryouts. Now, they're ready for the season to start.

### 'Ready to compete'

Lady Rams eye big year on the diamond

By PHILLIP B. HUBBARD  
phubbard@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Summer workouts and season tryouts are beneficial to a team's success. Throughout both, a team finds out who they are and who will play each position.

It's important to host workouts each offseason, but they can become mundane after a while.

Newton High School's softball squad, in particular, has had its feel and is ready for the regular season to commence.

"You always come in wor-

ried," head coach Virginia Tucker-Smith said. "But, so far, the girls have committed and we're excited getting started. We've had enough of just practicing. We're ready to compete."

The Lady Rams finished the 2020 season with an overall 17-10 record (6-6 region record) where they finished fourth in Region 4-7A. They were then swept by Lowndes County in the first round of the state playoffs.

The 2021 season starts on Saturday at Pike County High School in Zebulon. Newton will play two contests against Upson-Lee High School and Pike County. The two games will be a part of the Border Bash Tour-

namment. But the Rams are in a more comfortable position heading into the season compared to years past.

Normally, the Lady Rams struggle to fill a varsity and a junior varsity roster. That's not been an issue this offseason.

The only potential problem could be the lack of size. Smith, though, plans to use this weakness as an advantage for her squad.

"We've got a lot of speed even though we're small," Smith said. "We can bunt and stuff like that, so we'll utilize that."

Another advantage the Lady

See COMPETE, B5

### Cutshall selected to 12U Select Baseball Festival

By PHILLIP B. HUBBARD  
phubbard@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — On Monday, July 26, a special announcement came for a young baseball player based in Covington.

William Cutshall was one of five players from Georgia selected for the Second Annual 12 Select Baseball Festival. The festival will take place on Sunday, Aug. 15, at the TOP Chops East Cobb Complex in Marietta. Perfect Game will host the event which is the world's largest elite youth

baseball and softball platform and scouting service.

While players will take part in various baseball-related activities, that isn't the most important part of the festival.

Players will also help with fundraising efforts to assist Slater Elementary School in Atlanta as part of the Perfect Games Cares Foundation's Grow the Game Fund. Before the game, players will interact with students at Slater Elementary through the Purpose Built Schools

Atlanta's partnership to positively affect Atlanta Public Schools. The mission to help these schools become more successful and give students better chances to flourish in their academics and extracurricular activities.

Jennifer Ford, who is the executive director of the Perfect Game Cares Foundation, said she is excited about what this year's festival will help change.

"The Perfect Game Cares Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charity, is proud to partner

with our 2021 12U Select players to raise important funds for underserved children through the PG Cares Grow the Game Fund, and in particular, the children and families of Slater Elementary in Atlanta," Ford said. "Together, we can make a difference in the lives of these beautiful children."

The Select Baseball Festival is one of over 8,600 events Perfect Game hosts each year throughout the country while based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



**BULLSEYE**  
**ACCOUNTING SERVICES INC.**  
"Where Accuracy Counts"

762.435.7002 | bullseyeacct@gmail.com | Monticello, Ga.

Accounting | Payroll Services | Tax Preparation





# LEGALS:

Continued from B2

**BEFORE SEPTEMBER 13, 2021**, at ten o'clock am.

**MELANIE M.** Bell, Judge By: Marcia Wynne, Clerk Probate Court  
**NEWTON COUNTY, GA**

**NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT**  
**1132 USHER STREET**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200672**  
**8/8**

**CITATION**

**RE: ESTATE of RAY CARGILE**  
Minor

**GLORIA ANN CARGILE**, Executor has petitioned to be discharged from Office and all Liability. All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause as to why said petition should not be granted. All objections must be in writing and filed with this Court on or before September 13, 2021, at ten o'clock am.

**MELANIE M.** Bell, Judge By: Marcia Wynne, Clerk Probate Court  
**NEWTON COUNTY, GA**

**NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT**  
**1132 USHER STREET**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200572**  
**8/8**

**CITATION**

**RE: ESTATE of THURMAN BINDER, DECEASED**  
**SANDY A. HOWARD, ADMINSTRATOR** has petitioned to be discharged from Office and all Liability. All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause as to why said petition should not be granted. All objections must be in writing and filed with this Court on or before SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, at ten o'clock am.

**MELANIE M.** Bell, Judge By: Marcia Wynne, Clerk Probate Court  
**NEWTON COUNTY, GA**

**NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT**  
**1132 USHER STREET**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200645**  
**8/8**

**CITATION**

**TO: DEREK MAYWEATHER**

**TRENICE ADAMS** has filed for Temporary Letters of Guardianship of the Person(s) **MYA MOODY** minor(s). All objections must be in writing and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 18th, at ten o'clock, a.m.

**MELANIE M.** Bell, Judge  
**BY: DANYELL** Thomas, Clerk Probate Court, Newton, Georgia

**NEWTON COUNTY Probate Court**  
**1132 USHER Street, RM 148**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200633**  
**8/1,8**

**CITATION**

**TO: TO UNKNOWN FATHER & ALL INTERESTED PARTIES**

**CRYSTAL FRIESON** has filed for Temporary Letters of Guardianship of the Person(s) **A'DIOR STAYS** minor(s). All objections must be in writing and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 18th, at ten o'clock, a.m.

**MELANIE M.** Bell, Judge  
**BY: DANYELL** Thomas, Clerk Probate Court, Newton, Georgia

**NEWTON COUNTY Probate Court**  
**1132 USHER Street, RM 148**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200634**  
**8/1,8**

**CITATION**

**TO: TO UNKNOWN FATHER AND ALL INTRESTED PARTIES**

**MARIA HARPER** has filed for Temporary Letters of Guardianship of the Person(s) **DA'NILA KIETH** minor(s). All objections must be in writing and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 25TH, at ten o'clock, a.m.

**MELANIE M.** Bell, Judge  
**BY: DANYELL** Thomas, Clerk Probate Court, Newton, Georgia

**NEWTON COUNTY Probate Court**  
**1132 USHER Street, RM 148**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200673**  
**8/8,15**

## Corporations

**NOTICE IS** given that articles of incorporation that will incorporate **BEAUTY WITHIN DARK PLACES- NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION LTD** have been delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code. The initial registered office of the corporation is located at 615 Pebble Blvd, Covington, GA, 30016 and its initial registered agent at such address is LaShawn Kelly.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200674**  
**8/8,15**

## Debtors Creditors

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**ALL CREDITORS** of the estate of **Penny Lynn Carter**, late of 117 Sidney Lanier Dr. Oxford, GA, Newton County, deceased, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, a full itemized statement of their claims and of securities held by them to:  
**PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE:** Stephen L. Lott Personal Representative's Address: **6215 HWY 278 NW #142, Covington,**

GA 30014 This 18th

**THIS 18TH** day of June, 2021.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200607**  
**7/25-8/1,8,15**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **BETTYE GRIER.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 22ND** day of JULY, 2021.

**RASHONDA SHONDELL JACKSON**  
**3179 TARIAN DR**  
**DECATUR GA 30034**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200641**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **CARLIE BELCHER.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 23RD** day of JULY, 2021.

**MARION DRISKELL**  
**40 APPIA WAY**  
**COVIGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE # 200636**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **CLARA SHEPHERD.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 23RD** day of JULY, 2021.

**EARNEST SHEPHERD**  
**10127 LAKEVIEW DR S.W**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200638**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **COTIS D. WEAVER.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 22ND** day of JULY, 2021.

**VASHOFANA BAHT-EL**  
**549 CHAUCER WAY**  
**STOCKBRIDGE GA 30281**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200643**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **HARVEY LEE MCCULLERS, JR.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 23RD** day of JULY, 2021.

**SHARA LYNN GREER**  
**25 BRIAR PATCH RD**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200639**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **JAMES MADDOX.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 23RD** day of JULY, 2021.

**VICKI MADDOX**  
**10105 N. DINAH CIR**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200637**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **JEFFREY KEITH MITCHELL.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 27TH** day of JULY, 2021

**BRIDGET L. MITCHELL**  
**30 MILLERS LANE**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30016**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200635**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **JUDY P. ALLEN.** deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 7TH** day of JULY, 2021.

**CLARENCE S. ALLEN**  
**211 MCDONALD RD**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200591**  
**7/18,25-8/1,8**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **MYCELLA MCPHERSON.** deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate

## CLUES ACROSS

1. Ponds
6. "Unbelievable" musicians
9. Invests in little enterprises
13. Longtime Utah Jazz coach
14. Small sailboat
15. "Luther" actor
16. Round Dutch cheese
17. Detects underwater objects
18. Harsh, grating noise
19. Steward
21. Fencing sword
22. Painful places on the body
23. "Sleepless in Seattle" actress Ryan
24. Sodium
25. Engineering degree (abbr.)
28. Small lump
29. African antelope
31. Electronic point of sale
33. Carefully chooses
36. Ringworm
38. Unrefined
39. Drenches
41. Type of pants
44. Son of Noah
45. Spiritual being
46. Upton Sinclair novel
48. Journalist Tarbell
49. Atomic #21 (abbr.)
51. Born of
52. Rich tapestry
54. S. China seaport
56. Being without clothes
60. Surrounded by
61. Remains
62. Away from wind
63. Dried-up
64. One who can see the future
65. A very large body of water
66. Digs up earth
67. Type of screen
68. Old Norse poet

## CLUES DOWN

1. Millisecond
2. Spanish city
3. Sudden, very loud sound
4. Type of chair
5. Tin
6. Sea eagles
7. Broad volcanic crater
8. Some animals have it
9. Ottoman palaces

representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 22ND** day of JULY, 2021.

**MANUEL REID**  
**125 SUMMER WALK DR**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30016**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200642**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **NAKOSHA M. DAVIS.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 27TH** day of JULY, 2021

**FRIEDA DAVIS**  
**4255 MOUNT READ BLVD**  
**ROCHESTER, NY 14616**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200644**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **ODESSIE FINAZZO.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE8TH** day of JULY, 2021.

**SUSAN F. FINAZZO**  
**55 COHUTTA DR**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200592**  
**7/18,25-8/1,8**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **RONALD STEVEN COGGIN.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 22ND** day of JULY, 2021.

**KAY COGGIN**  
**1500 RIVER COVE RD**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200640**  
**8/1,8,15,22**

**NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of **VIRGINIA W. WIGGINS.**, deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law.  
**THIS THE 29TH** day of December, 2020.

**JACQUELYN BROOKS**  
**190 QUEENSLAND Lane**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30016**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #117781**  
**7/18,25-8/1,8**

## Divorces

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA**

**JOYCELYN SAUL, PLAINTIFF, VS. ALEXANDER C. JACK DEFENDANT.**

**CIVIL ACTION NO.: SUCV2021000-971-4**

**ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION**

**IT APPEARING** by Affidavit, that the above named defendant on whom service is to be made in this case resides out of State, or has departed from the State, or cannot after due diligence, be found within the state

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
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16					17					18			
19				20					21				
			22					23				24	
25	26	27		28			29				30		
31			32		33		34					35	
36				37		38			39				40
	41				42			43		44			
			45				46		47		48		
49	50		51				52			53			
54		55				56					57	58	59
60					61					62			
63					64				65				
66					67				68				

10. Divulge a secret
11. "A Doll's House" playwright
12. "It's a Wonderful Life" director
14. Poisonous perennial
17. Gulf in the Aegean
20. Clothes
21. Chairs
23. Family of regulator genes
25. NY ballplayer
26. Impressive in size or scope
27. Jacques \_\_, Fr. biologist
29. Manhattanite
30. Genus of lemurs
32. Sings to
34. River in southern Italy
35. Supplemented with difficulty
37. Farewell

40. Senior officer
42. Utah resident
43. Begets
47. Boy
49. Violently break
50. Brief appearance
52. Expressed pleasure
53. A light informal meal
55. Fabric with smooth finish
56. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
57. Ancient Greek City
58. Close tightly
59. Commit
61. A way to communicate (abbr.)
65. Heavy metal

## LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

S	A	S	H		B	O	S	O	N		S	A	M	A
O	R	E	O		C	R	A	P		A	R	A	K	
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S	T	O	A	S		S	A	G		S	A	T	I	N
E	N	O			S	U	E		P	O	C	K	E	D
T	A	P			S	I	B		E	A	R		A	D
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S	A	T	E		O	A	S		S	A	B	E	R	
C	A	E	N		A	T	R	I	P		T	R	A	Y
A	R	N	E		G	A	L	L	A		C	E	C	A
B	E	S	T		O	L	S	E	N		H	A	H	N

Newton County.

**THIS, THE 14th** day of JULY 2021.  
**LINDA D.** Hays  
**CLERK OF Superior**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200610**  
**7/25-8/1,8,15**

## Foreclosures

**NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

**UNDER AND** by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Deed to Secure Debt given by **Courtney Burrell** to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS") as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., dated April 27, 2006, and recorded in Deed Book 2176, Page 577, Newton County, Georgia records, having been re-recorded at Deed Book 2942, Page 162, aforesaid records, and as last transferred to The Bank of New York Mellon as Trustee for the Certificateholders of CWABS, Inc. Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-8, by Assignment recorded in Deed Book 2918, Page 289, Newton County, Georgia records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note of even date in the original principal amount of \$171,750.00, with interest at the rate specified therein, there will be sold by the undersigned at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door of Newton County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in September, 2021, to wit: September 7, 2021, the following described property:  
**ALL THAT** tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 40 of the 10th District of Newton County, Georgia, being Lot 59 of Glen Echo Subdivision, Phase One, as per plat recorded in Plat Book 42, Pages 195-198 (more particularly described in Page 197), Newton County, Georgia records, which plat is incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof.  
**THE DEBT** secured by said Deed to Secure Debt has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Deed to Secure Debt. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Deed to Secure Debt and by law, including attorney's fees (notice of intent to collect attorney's fees having been given).  
**SAID PROPERTY** will be sold subject to (a) any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), (b) any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, and (c) all matters of record superior to the Deed to Secure Debt first set out above, including, but not limited to, assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, easements, restrictions, covenants, etc.  
**THE SALE** will be conducted subject to (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code; (2) O.C.G.A. Section 9-13-172.1; and (3) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the security deed.  
**PURSUANT TO** O.C.G.A. Section 9-13-172.1, which allows for certain procedures regarding the rescission of judicial and nonjudicial sales in the State of Georgia, the Deed Under Power and other foreclosure documents may not be provided until final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan as provided in the preceding paragraph.  
**PURSUANT TO** O.C.G.A. Section 44-14-162.2, the entity that has full

authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor is:  
**SELECT PORTFOLIO** Servicing, Inc.  
**ATTENTION: LOSS** Mitigation Department  
**3217 S. Decker Lake Drive**  
**SALT LAKE City, Utah 84119**  
**1-888-818-6032**  
**THE FOREGOING** notwithstanding, nothing in OC.G.A. Section 44-14-162.2 shall be construed to require the secured creditor to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the Deed to Secure Debt described herein.

**THIS SALE** is conducted on behalf of the secured creditor under the power of sale granted in the aforementioned security instrument, specifically being **THE BANK** of New York Mellon as Trustee for CWABS, Inc. Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-8 **AS ATTORNEY** in fact for **COURTNEY BURRELL RICHARD B.** Maner, P.C.  
**180 INTERSTATE N Parkway, Suite 200**  
**ATLANTA, GA 30339**  
**404.252.6385**  
**THIS LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. FC21-023**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200660**  
**8/8,15,22,29**



LEGALS:

Continued from B3

**CERTIFICATES, SERIES** 2006 NC5 is the holder of the Security Deed to the property in accordance with OCCGA § 44-14-162.2.

**THE ENTITY** that has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor is: Decker Portfolio Servicing, 3217 S. Decker Lake Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84119, 888-818-6032.

To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party in possession of the property is George F Jackson, Jr. or a tenant or tenants and said property is more commonly known as **60 Shenandoah Lane, Covington, Georgia 30016**.

**THE SALE** will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the security deed.

**DEUTSCHE BANK** National Trust Company, as Trustee, in trust for the registered holders of Morgan Stanley ABS Capital I Inc. Trust 2006-NC5, Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2006 NC5

**AS ATTORNEY** in Fact for **GEORGE F** Jackson, Jr.

**MCCALLA RAYMER** Leibert Pierce, LLC

**1544 OLD** Alabama Road

**ROSWell, GA** 30076

**WWW.FORECLOSUREHOTLINE.NET**

**EXHIBIT "A"**

**ALL THAT** tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 31 of the 8th District of Newton County, Georgia being Lot 42, of Shenandoah Estates, as shown on plat of Shenandoah Estates, recorded in Plat Book 38, Page 138, Newton County Records. The description of said property as contained on said plat is hereby incorporated herein and by reference made a part hereof.

**MR/MEH 9/7/21**

**OUR FILE** no. 5841807 - FT1

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200656**  
**8/8,15,22,29**

**NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA,**  
**COUNTY OF NEWTON**

**UNDER AND** by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by **Cynthia Haughton** to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC (the Secured Creditor), dated August 21, 2018, and Recorded on August 28, 2018 as Book No. 3742 and Page No. 611, Newton County, Georgia records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note of even date in the original principal amount of \$130,494.00, with interest at the rate specified therein, as last assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by assignment that is or to be recorded in the Newton County, Georgia Records, there will be sold by the undersigned at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash at the Newton County Courthouse within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in September, 2021, the following described property:

**ALL THAT** tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 28 of the 10th District, Newton County, Georgia, being Lot 7, of Windward Way Subdivision, per plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 30, Page 269, Newton County, Georgia records, which recorded plat is incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this description.

**THE DEBT** secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Security Deed. Because the debt remains in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law, including attorney's fees (notice of intent to collect attorney's fees having been given). Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC holds the duly endorsed Note and is the current assignee of the Security Deed to the property. Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC is the entity with the full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the loan.

**PURSUANT TO** O.C.G.A. §44-14-162.2, Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC may be contacted at: 1-800-790-9502 or by writing to 1600 South Douglas Road, Suite 110 and 200-A, Anaheim, CA 92806-5951.

**PLEASE NOTE** that, pursuant to O.C.G.A. §44-14-162.2, the secured creditor is not required to amend or modify the terms of the loan.

To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party/parties in possession of the subject property known as **75 WINDWARD DRIVE, COVINGTON, GA 30016** is/are: Cynthia Haughton or tenant/tenants. Said property will be sold subject to (a) any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), (b) any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, and (c) all matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above, including, but not limited to, assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, easements, restrictions, covenants, etc.

**THE SALE** will be conducted subject to (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code; and (2) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the security deed.

**PURSUANT TO** O.C.G.A. §9-13-172.1, which allows for certain procedures regarding the rescission

of judicial and nonjudicial sales in the State of Georgia, the Deed Under Power and other foreclosure documents may not be provided until final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan as provided in the preceding paragraph.

**FUNDS USED** at sale shall be in certified funds and payable to "Bell Carrington Price & Gregg, LLC."

**CARRINGTON MORTGAGE SERVICES, LLC** as Attorney in Fact for Cynthia Haughton.

**ANY INFORMATION** obtained on this matter may be used by the debt collector to collect the debt. Bell Carrington Price & Gregg, LLC, 339 Heyward Street, 2nd Floor, Columbia, SC 29201 (803)-509-5078. File: 20-41495

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200625**  
**8/8,15,22,29**

**NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER, NEWTON COUNTY**

**PURSUANT TO** the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by **Nancy L. Hollaway** to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as grantee, as nominee for COUNTRYWIDE BANK, FSB, its successors and assigns dated 4/25/2008 and recorded in Deed Book 2603 Page 26 and modified at Deed Book 3115 Page 283 and modified at Deed Book 3152 Page 124 and modified at Deed Book 3581 Page 140 Newton County, Georgia records; as last transferred to or acquired by PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of \$201,477.00, with interest at the rate specified therein, there will be sold by the undersigned at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door of Newton County, Georgia (or such other area as designated by Order of the Superior Court of said county), within the legal hours of sale on September 7, 2021 (being the first Tuesday of said month unless said date falls on a Federal Holiday, in which case being the first Wednesday of said month), the following described property: All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 43 of the 10th District, Newton County, Georgia, being Lot 20 of Browning Estates Subdivision, as per plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 43, pages 83-86, Newton County, Georgia Records, which recorded plat is incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this description.

**THE DEBT** secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Security Deed. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law, including attorney's fees (notice of intent to collect attorney's fees having been given).

**SAID PROPERTY** is commonly known as **35 Browning Drive, Covington, GA 30016-6216** together with all fixtures and personal property attached to and constituting a part of said property, if any. To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party (or parties) in possession of the subject property is (are): Nancy L. Hollaway or tenant or tenants.

**PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC** is the entity or individual designated who shall have full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the mortgage.

**PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC LOSS MITIGATION**  
**3043 TOWNSGATE** Road #200, Westlake Village, CA 91361  
**1-866-549-3583**

**NOTE, HOWEVER,** that such entity or individual is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the loan.

**SAID PROPERTY** will be sold subject to: (a) any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), (b) unpaid water or sewage bills that constitute a lien against the property whether due and payable or not yet due and payable and which may not be of record, (c) the right of redemption of any taxing authority, (d) any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, and (e) any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above.

**THE SALE** will be conducted subject to (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code; and (2) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 9-13-172.1, which allows for certain procedures regarding the rescission of judicial and non-judicial sales in the State of Georgia, the Deed Under Power and other foreclosure documents may not be provided until final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan as provided immediately above.

**PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC** as agent and Attorney in Fact for Nancy L. Hollaway

**ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP**, 15 Piedmont Center, 3575 Piedmont Road, N.E., Suite 500, Atlanta, Georgia 30305, (404) 294-7637.

**1120-23192A**

**THIS LAW FIRM MAY BE ACTING**

**AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.** 1120-23192A

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200631**  
**8/8,15,22,29**

**Name Changes**

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE** the Name Change of Child(ren):  
**JORDYN ELIZABETH YATES**

**VALINCIA A YATES**  
**PETITIONER,**  
**V.**  
**MICHAEL RUE**  
**RESPONDENT.**

**CIVIL ACTION NUMBER**  
**2021-CV-1717-4**

**NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE NAME OF CHILD**

**VALINCIA YATES** filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JULY 28, 2021, to change the name of the following minor child  
**FROM: JORDYN ELIZABETH YATES to JORDYN ELIZABETH RUE** Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within the time prescribed in O.C.G.A. §§ 19-12-1(f)(2) and (3).

**VALINCIA YATES**  
**4155 N DEARING ST NE**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200663**  
**8/8,15,22,29**

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE** the name change of  
**CRISTIAN GODIREZ**  
**PETITIONER**

**CIVIL ACTION** File  
**# 2021-CV-1610-2**

**NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE NAME OF ADULT**

**CRISTIAN GODIREZ** filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JULY 13, 2021 to change the name from **CRISTIAN GODIREZ to KYLIE YOUNG** Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition was filed  
**DATE: 7/13/21**

**CRISTIAN GODINEZ**  
**130 SPRING LAKE TERRACE**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30016**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200609**  
**7/25-8/1,8,15**

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY**  
**STATE OF GEORGIA**

**IN RE** the name change of  
**KAMELL ERNESTO FERGUSON**  
**PETITIONER**

**CIVIL ACTION** File  
**# 2021-CV-1709-3**

**NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE NAME OF ADULT**

**KAMELL ERNESTO FERGUSON** filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JULY 15, 2021 to change the name from **KAMELL ERNESTO FERGUSON to KAMELL ERNESTO SALAS** Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition was filed  
**DATE: 7/15/21**

**KAMELL ERNESTO FERGUSON**  
**100 WYNDMONT WAY**  
**COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200662**  
**8/8,15,22,29**

**Public Hearings**

**ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT**  
**GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

**AN ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT** (AUP21-000026) HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE PROPERTY BELONGING TO: **DOUBLE T M HOLDING LLC** **WHOSE SUBJECT** PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION IS 10173 PUCKETT STREET CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 0.38 ACRES BEING ON TAX MAP 31 0004 023.

**APPLICANT IS** REQUESTING AN ADMINISTRATIVE USE PERMIT TO OPERATE AN ADULT DAYCARE FACILITY.

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE: **24TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:00PM

**TISH MEETING** WILL BE HELD IN THE NEWTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, 3RD FLOOR BOARDROOM. THOSE HAVING CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PETITION SHOULD ATTEND THE MEETINGS.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200665**  
**8/8**

**AMENDMENT TO THE 2020 UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA**

**A PETITION** HAS BEEN INITIATED, UDOAMD21-001, BY THE NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO AMEND CHAPTER 1 ZONING ORDINANCE: DIVISION 105 DEFINITIONS, ARTICLE 2 BASE DISTRICT REGULATIONS, ARTICLE 4 OVERLAY DISTRICT REGULATIONS, ARTICLE 5 REGULATIONS APPLYING TO ALL DISTRICTS WITH SPECIFIC FOCUS ON SECTION 510-010, 510-020, 510-300, 510-310, 510-410, 510-430, 510-450, 510-540, 510-595, 510-650, AND 510-660, DIVISION 530 NON-CONFORMING USES AND STRUCTURES, ARTICLE 6 ADMINISTRATION; **CHAPTER 2** DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS: ARTICLE 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS, ARTICLE 2 DEFINITIONS, ARTICLE 3 ADMINISTRATIONS, ARTICLE 4 PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENT SPECIFICATIONS, ARTICLE 5 SITE DESIGN STANDARDS, ARTICLE 6 SITE IMPROVEMENTS, AND AMENDING ANY CONFLICTING LANGUAGE.

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE: **24TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:00PM

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HEARD BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE: **21ST DAY** OF SEPTEMBER, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

**THE PURPOSE** of the public hearing shall be for public review. All Newton County residents and any other affected and/or interested persons are invited and encouraged to attend. For more information on this case please contact or Judy Johnson at 678-625-1656. Updated information will also be posted at the following link as it becomes available https://www.ncboc.com/196/Development-Services

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200676**  
**8/8**

**AMENDMENT TO THE 2020 UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA**

**A PETITION** HAS BEEN INITIATED, UDOAMD21-002, BY THE NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO AMEND CHAPTER 1 ZONING ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 2 DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, AND CHAPTER 3 WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE OF NEWTON COUNTY. THE AMENDMENT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING: ARTICLES 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE; ARTICLES 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, AND APPENDICES OF THE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; ARTICLES 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, AND 7 OF THE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE AND AMENDING ANY CONFLICTING LANGUAGE.

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE: **24TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:00PM

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HEARD BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE: **21ST DAY** OF SEPTEMBER, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

**THE PURPOSE** of the public hearing shall be for public review. All Newton County residents and any other affected and/or interested persons are invited and encouraged to attend. For more information on this case please contact or Judy Johnson at 678-625-1656. Updated information will also be posted at the following link as it becomes available https://www.ncboc.com/196/Development-Services

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200677**  
**8/8**

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**  
**GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

**A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT** (CUP21-000002) HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE PROPERTY BELONGING TO: **JACK P DAVIS** **WHOSE SUBJECT** PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION IS HWY 11 CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 46.12 ACRES BEING ON TAX MAP & PARCEL 0112 017.

**APPLICANT IS** REQUESTING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ESTABLISH A CONVENIENCE STORE WITH UNDERGROUND FUEL TANKS IN THE LITTE RIVER WATERSHED. SEC 420-030 A. B. (2) (5).

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE: **17TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

**BOTH MEETINGS** WILL BE HELD IN THE NEWTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, 3RD FLOOR BOARDROOM. THOSE HAVING CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PETITION SHOULD ATTEND THE MEETINGS.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200659**  
**8/4,8**

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**  
**GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

**A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**

(CUP21-000003) HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE PROPERTY BELONGING TO: **KANOE DANIELLE NICOLE** **WHOSE SUBJECT** PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION IS 706 N CROWELL RD CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 5.15 ACRES BEING ON TAX MAP & PARCEL 0043 165.

**APPLICANT IS** REQUESTING A HOME OCCUPATION WITH CUSTOMER CONTACT IN THE R2 (SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) ZONING DISTRICT

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE: **24TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:00PM

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HEARD BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE: **21ST DAY** OF SEPTEMBER, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

**BOTH MEETINGS** WILL BE HELD IN THE NEWTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, 3RD FLOOR BOARDROOM. THOSE HAVING CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PETITION SHOULD ATTEND THE MEETINGS.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200667**  
**8/8**

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**  
**GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

**A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT** (CUP21-000004) HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE PROPERTY BELONGING TO: **SOWELL DODSON** **CONSTRUCTION INC** **WHOSE SUBJECT** PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION IS 11225 HWY 36 CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 3.11 ACRES BEING ON TAX MAP & PARCEL 84 37C.

**APPLICANT IS** REQUESTING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ESTABLISH AN AUTO/TRUCK REPAIR BUSINESS AND BE ALLOWED TO HAVE 25% OF THE PROPERTY TO BE DESIGNATED FOR STORAGE.

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE: **24TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:00PM

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE: **21ST DAY** OF SEPTEMBER, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

**BOTH MEETINGS** WILL BE HELD IN THE NEWTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, 3RD FLOOR BOARDROOM. THOSE HAVING CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PETITION SHOULD ATTEND THE MEETINGS.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200668**  
**8/8**

**NOTICE IS** hereby given that at 6:30 p.m. on August 2, 2021 at 2116 Stallings Street, Covington, Georgia the Mayor and Council of the City of Covington, Georgia, shall provide for a hearing on the passage of an ordinance entitled: "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE COVINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE, ENACTED AND ADOPTED ON THE 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2001, AS AMENDED BY PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS, TO ALTER CERTAIN PROVISION OF TITLE 12 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING SECTION 12.20.010 (DEFINITIONS) OF CHAPTER 12.20 (PARKS) THEREOF, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

**A COPY** of said proposed ordinance is posted on the bulletin board at the City Hall, 2194 Emory Street, Covington, Georgia.

**THIS 3RD** day of August 2021.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200661**  
**8/8**

**REZONING PETITION**  
**GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

**A PETITION** (REZ21-000006) HAS BEEN FILED WITH THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR A REZONING FOR THE PROPERTY BELONGING TO: **MICHAEL JAMES STEVENS** **WHOSE SUBJECT** PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION IS AT HWY 51 CEDAR RD CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 17 ACRES BEING ON TAX MAP & PARCELS 29 023.

**THE OWNER** HAS INITIATED A REZONE REQUEST FROM R-2 (SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) TO AR (AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL)

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HELD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE: **24TH DAY** OF AUGUST, 2021 AT 7:00PM

**A PUBLIC HEARING** WILL BE HEARD BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON THE: **21ST DAY** OF SEPTEMBER, 2021 AT 7:30 PM

**BOTH MEETINGS** WILL BE HELD IN THE NEWTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE, 3RD FLOOR BOARDROOM. THOSE HAVING CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PETITION SHOULD ATTEND THE

MEETINGS.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200669**  
**8/8**

**Public Notices**

**NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

**FEDERAL LAW** prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Act of 2006); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Students, parents, employees and the general public are hereby notified that the Newton County Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment policies.

**THE FOLLOWING** individuals have been designated as the employees responsible for coordinating the school system's effort to implement this nondiscriminatory policy.

- **TITLE II**—Shundreja Neely, 2109 Newton Dr. NE, Covington, (770) 787-1330 ext. 1122
- **TITLE VI**—Brooke Dial, 2109 Newton Dr. NE, Covington, (770)787-1330 ext. 1278
- **TITLE IX**—Dr. Ashante Everett, 2109 Newton Dr. NE, Covington, (770) 787-1330 ext. 1203
- **SECTION 504**—Dr. Ashante Everett, 2109 Newton Dr. NE, Covington, (770) 787-1330 ext. 1203
- **ADA**—BROOKE Dial, 2109 Newton Dr. NE, Covington, (770) 787-1330 ext. 1278
- **CARL D.** Perkins Career and Technical Act of 2006—Dr. Tim Schmitt, 2109 Newton Dr. NE, Covington, (770) 787-1330 ext. 1273

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200669**  
**8/8,15**

**Public Sales Auctions**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY** In accordance with the GA Self Service Storage Facilities Act notice is hereby given that the undersigned will be sold at public sale to the highest bidder in order to satisfy lien of the owner. Bidding to take place on lockerfox.com ending Thursday the 26th day of August, 2021 at 10:00 AM. Said property is Space Shop Self Storage, 6177 Jackson Hwy, Covington, GA, 30014 Bell, Cierra O09 Plastic Bins, Clothes, Heater, Bookbag, Suitcase, TV, Garner, James H18 Dressers, microwave, fridge, clock, bins, clothes, Garner, James H08 Dresser, flatscreen tv, mattress, box spring, clothes, stool. The auction will be listed and advertised on lockerfox.com. Space Shop Self Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200624**  
**8/8,15**

**NOTICE OF** Public Sale of Personal Property: Notice is hereby given that **Budget Self Storage** of Covington, located at 6217 HWY 278 NE Covington, GA 30014; intends to sell the personal property according to the Georgia Self Storage Act, 10-4-210 through 10-4-215 to satisfy the owner's lien.

**ALL BIDS** will be accepted online through www.storageauctions.com. The auction will end on or after 8/24/2021 1:00 p.m. Budget Self Storage reserves the right to withdraw units from such a sale and reject any bid. Terms of sale are cash or money order only.

**TRACY RHODES**, A117, appears to contain; floor tile, ceiling fans, tables, flooring, luggage, lamps, vase, mattress, boxes, chairs, latter, end tables, and household goods

**TRACY RHODES**, A140, appears to contain; tv, chairs, space heater, flooring, doors, ladder, China cabinet, power tools, outdoor tools speakers, and boxes

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200664**  
**8/8,15**

**Trade Names**

**STATE OF GEORGIA**  
**COUNTY OF NEWTON**

**THE UNDERSIGNED** hereby certifies that they are conducting a business in the City of Covington County of Newton, State of Georgia under the name of: Chipotle Mexican Grill #3913 and that the nature of the business is Fast Casual Mexican Restaurant and that said business is composed of the following: **(LIMITED LIABILITY)** Business address: Chipotle Mexican Grill of Colorado, LLC

**610 NEWPORT** Center Drive  
**NEWPORT BEACH, CA** 92660

**THIS AFFIDAVIT** is made in compliance with Georgia Code Annotated Title 10 Chapter 1 Section 490.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #200608**  
**8/1,8**

## DEVELOPING:

Continued from B1

athletes don’t expect to lose. The athletes feel like this is their year to start making a difference and to start winning.”

Lowe stressed he didn’t want spurts of success. He aims for long-term achievement for the program as a whole.

It starts with softball, which didn’t graduate a single player. Then, football has a lot of continuity with coaches and players coming back.

The biggest change from a season ago will be in volleyball. There’ll be almost a brand new coaching staff at the helm of this year’s program.

Across the board, though, there was very little turnover in coaches and players, which plays into what Lowe is wanting to build at Alcovy.

“We have taken [that winning attitude] to more of a program standard,” Lowe said. “We’re not looking at just having one good season. A lot of our major contributors are young. So, we’re looking at years to come, being successful and developing our students.”

Lowe continued to state that he expects all of Alcovy athletics to “become state competitors.”

Another factor of

Lowe’s plan has been branding for the athletic program. Specifically, he mentioned the use of social media as a great tool in accomplishing that.

Alcovy High School, baseball, basketball and football in particular can all be found on Twitter. A few athletic programs can be found on Instagram as well.

For the most part, the feedback about rebranding Alcovy athletics has been positive, but there have been naysayers. That hasn’t deterred Lowe in his mission one bit.

“The only pushback I have gotten has been ‘well, it’s been this way for years,’” Lowe said. “I always say if this is the way it has always been and you’ve gotten the same result, you got to try something different. So, why not trust the direction we’re going if it has proven to work time and time again.”

Lowe plans to continue going this current direction with branding as long as it shows it works. He stressed that he’s a firm believer in sticking with an idea as long as it still works.

As a matter of fact, the negative feedback was expected by Lowe, but he’s pressed on for the good of the students.

“It’s a new day and a new leadership,” Lowe



**Stephon Moore (4) eyes the hoop against Region 3-AAAAAA Grovetown in January. Moore was one of the Alcovy basketball team’s top contributors one season ago. The team hopes to build on successes of last year and make a deep playoff run in 2021.**

File | The Covington News

said. “We’re here for the best interests of our students and putting them in the best position to be successful. My goal is for every student to have post-secondary opportunities regardless of what they pursue.”

With that, Lowe isn’t forsaking the student half of the student-athlete.

He, along with all of the coaches, have bought in to help developing students into more all-around successful students.

Their main focus concerning that is to help provide opportunities for the students to be more successful.

Despite all the setbacks and changes, Lowe is still excited

about the 2021-22 year in athletics. His expectation is for all of the teams to be competitive and for a few programs to make deep playoff runs.

Now, Lowe has recognized that Alcovy has mainly been an underdog, but that doesn’t worry him at all. In fact, that challenge excites Lowe tremen-

dously.

Which, according to Lowe, is what being an Alcovy Tiger has always meant to him.

“There are a lot of people who go to programs that are already established and just build on their legacies,” Lowe said. “I’m one that likes to build. I’ve always liked taking a program that everyone will always look over and put that program in place. Then, before you know it, we come out and shock the world.”

## COMPETE:

Continued from B1

Rams have is the amount of returners. Nine players return from last year’s squad.

According to Smith, it will be the returning players’ experience that helps make this year more successful than last. It’ll be especially important if the Lady Rams accomplish their goal of advancing past the first round of the state playoffs.

“They’ve taken it as a challenge,” Smith said. “They saw how upset last year’s seniors were with our performance at Lowndes. And they understand that, in order to compete with our region, we don’t have time to make mistakes.”

NOTICE						
The Porterdale City Council does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held at City Hall, 2800 Main St., Porterdale, GA on August 16, 2021 at 10:00 am and 6:00 pm; and also on August 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm and pursuant to the requirements fo O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.						
CURRENT 2020 TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY						
City of Porterdale	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Real & Personal	23,240,587	21,307,239	24,413,978	30,359,971	33,494,540	38,444,135
Motor Vehicles	662,990	501,710	501,710	267,860	218,160	198,200
Mobile Homes	5,140	5,140	2,140	5,140	0	0
Timber - 100%	0	0	0	81,469	0	0
Heavy Duty Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Digest	23,908,717	21,814,089	24,917,828	30,714,440	33,712,700	38,642,335
Less Exemptions	3,719,836	3,602,213	3,365,580	2,732,078	2,163,905	2,867,505
NET DIGIEST VALUE	20,188,881	18,211,876	21,552,248	27,982,362	31,548,795	35,774,830
Gross Maintenance & Operation Millage	17.9100	17.9100	17.3140	17.3140	18.0720	14.0720
Less Rollbacks	0.0000	0.5960	3.5910	3.2420	4.0000	0.0000
NET M&O MILLAGE RATE	17.9100	17.3140	13.7230	14.0720	14.0720	14.0720
Total City Value	\$20,188,881	\$18,211,876	\$21,552,248	\$27,982,362	\$31,548,795	\$35,774,830
Total M&O Taxes Levied	\$361,583	\$315,320	\$295,761	\$393,768	\$443,955	\$503,423
Net Tax \$ Increase	-\$1,695	-\$46,262	-\$19,559	\$98,006	\$50,187	\$59,468
Net Tax % Increase	-0.47%	-12.79%	-6.20%	33.14%	12.75%	13.40%

# NOTICE OF PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The Porterdale City Council had tentatively adopted a 2021 millage rate which will require an increase in property taxes by 21.77 percent.

All concerned citizens are invited to the public hearing on this tax increase to be held at the Porterdale City Hall, 2800 Main Street, Porterdale GA on August 16, 2021 at 10:00 am and 6:00 pm.

Times and places of additional public hearings on this tax increase are at Porterdale City Hall, 2800 Main Street, Porterdale GA on August 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

This tentative increase will result in a millage rate of 14.072 mills, an increase of 2.516 mills. Without this tentative tax increase, the millage rate will be no more than 11.556 mills. The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair mark value of \$100,000 is approximately \$0.00 and the proposed increase for non-homestead property with a fair market value of \$150,000 is approximately \$0.00.



Tokyo 2020 Olympics Games

# Covington's Godwin earns bronze in mixed 1,600-meter relay

By JOHN FRIERSON  
UGA Athletic Association

For a guy that didn't make the finals of the 400 meters in either the NCAA Indoor or Outdoor Track and Field Championships, Elija Godwin is a long way from Georgia's Spec Towns Track right now. Despite his disappointments at the two NCAA Championships this year, Godwin made the most of his biggest opportunity of the year. He did reach the final of the 400 at the U.S. Olympic Trials, held at Eugene, Ore., on the same track as the NCAA Outdoors the week before, and finished sixth, earning a relay spot on the U.S. team in the Tokyo Olympics.

"There are a lot of thoughts that come to mind when you think about, I'm actually about to go to the Olympics," Godwin said before leaving Athens. "Sometimes I think about how this is one of the biggest stages I've ever been on, and then I think about it again and I'm like, no, this is THE biggest stage that you can be on as a track and field athlete."

"To be able to have come so far and be able to accomplish something like this, it's amazing to me. I feel extremely blessed and I'm just excited to go out there and see what it will be like."

Godwin, a Covington native and rising senior at UGA, was a part of a history-making quartet July 30 at Olympic Track Stadium in Tokyo. He joined former Bulldog sprinter Lynna Irby, the 2018 NCAA champion in the 400, in the inaugural Olympic heat of the 4x400 mixed relay, a new event that features two women and two men. Godwin led off the race, handed the baton to Irby, who passed it to Taylor Manson, and then Bryce Deadmon



Getty Images

**Elija Godwin of Team United States competes in the Mixed 4x400 meter relay round 1 on day seven of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at Olympic Stadium on July 30 in Tokyo, Japan. Godwin is a Newton High School graduate and is currently enrolled at UGA.**

ran the anchor leg.

The U.S. won the heat easily, but it was then disqualified for a zone violation. About five hours later, the U.S. team's appeal of the disqualification was granted, allowing the team to advance to the final. Godwin ran the opening leg in 45.67 seconds and Irby ran her's in 49.77. The group won its heat by more than a second, with a total time of 3:11.39, which ranked third among all qualifiers.

If Godwin isn't selected for the mixed final on Saturday, he will likely be back in action on Sunday during the men's 4x400 relay qualifying.

At the NCAA Outdoors, Godwin said he ran a poor race strategically in the semifinals, posting a time of 46.18, which was fourth in his

heat and 11th overall, two spots out of making the final. It wasn't all bad at the NCAAs, though. Godwin teamed with Matthew Boling, Arian Smith and Delano Dunkley to place second in the 4x100 relay with a school-record time of 38.54, .06 out of first.

Godwin was able to shake off his disappointing 400 at NCAAs quickly and get his mind right for the Olympic Trials a week later.

"You would think that would hurt my confidence or something negative, but it wasn't that," he said of not reaching the NCAA final in the 400. "I looked at it as, I'm going to turn this moment into something positive. I'm going to come back successful."

"To actually do it, to set your mind to some-

thing, to have a big dream and make a plan, and then actually be able to see it through, it's like a surreal moment. You've got to keep telling yourself it's real."

It's real because he made it real. Godwin won his first heat at the Trials in 44.81, running the second-fastest time overall. In the semifinals, he ran 45.10, placing second in his heat and sixth overall, earning him a spot in the final. In that final, with a spot in the Olympics on the line, Godwin ran 44.94 to place sixth and punch his ticket.

Of course, Godwin didn't know he'd made the team immediately after the race. He walked off the track disappointed in sixth, thinking that he'd had a good shot at third if he'd finished better.

"I was walking off

the track and I got to the tent and everybody was like, 'Congratulations.' When I got to the warmup tent, they gave me my processing papers for the next day because I'd made the team. I remember a hint of excitement but I was more flooded with the emotion of coming in sixth," he said.

"I kind of wish I would have gone back and enjoyed the moment a little bit more, but as a true competitor, coming in sixth isn't something you feel good about initially. Once I realized how big this was, I was able to smile about it, really take it in and be happy about it."

Great comebacks are nothing new for Godwin, who in May 2019 was seriously injured when he was impaled by a javelin. Two years almost to the day after

that, on May 15, at the 2021 SEC Outdoor Championships, he ran a personal-best and school-record 44.61 in the 400.

"It's crazy to me to see my story unfold, and this is another climax in my story," he said.

It's a great story that's still unfolding, on the biggest stage in track and field.

Saturday, July 31, Godwin earned a bronze medal in the 1,600-meter mixed relay in track and field. He earned the medal after running on the relay in prelims, then the U.S. foursome of Trevor Stewart, Kendall Ellis, Kaylin Whitney and Vernon Norwood finished in third in the finals with a time of 3 minutes, 10.22 seconds.

## Steel company sponsors game, donates to local Miracle League



**Special | Newton County Parks and Recreation From left, Jason Savage, Kyle Riddling and Will George stand with Johnny Smith of Peak Steel as he gives a donation to Olivia Miller of Newton County Parks and Recreation's Miracle League program.**

**SPECIAL TO THE NEWS**  
news@covnews.com

Newton County Parks and Recreation hosted its Miracle League All-Star game recently with help from Johnny Smith of Peak Steel.

Smith's sponsorship included the purchase of food, championship rings and a donation of \$5,000 to the Miracle League program. About 40 players participated

and "played their hearts out" before the rains came and cut the game short, said Olivia Miller of the Miracle League program.

The program is designed for special needs community member ages 4 and up.

For more information, call 770-786-4373 ext. 1050 or visit newton-recreation.com/436/Miracle-League.

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## THE COVINGTON NEWS' PET OF THE WEEK



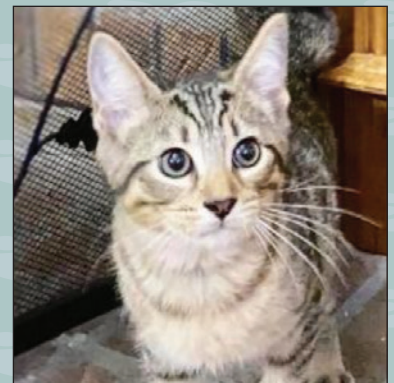
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