Saturday-Sunday, July 24-25, 2021



Inside:

TELLING THE STORY OF Y

His Word

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1 Corinthians 3:16,

Policy states

P-cards are not for

personal use



breaking updates

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NEWCOMERS'

GUIDE IS BACK

Part I of a Covington News Series

P-Cards:

What they are, why they are needed, and which Newton employees have them handy

By TAYLOR BECK theck@covnews.com

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efore Dorothea **Bailey-Butts** stepped down from her position as coroner May 28, Newton County had approved the issuance of purchasing cards (P-cards) for 51 employees.

P-cards were first introduced to Newton County officials as a "more efficient, cost-effective" way to complete purchasing transactions.

"The program was

Of the county's 50 P-card holders, Chairman Marcello Banes and Purchasing Director **Randi Fincher** have been granted the highest spending limit of \$20,000 per month.

File | The News

After several residents across the community voiced concerns, The Covington News will publish a four-part series over the next few weeks 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.

purchasing process for supplies and services," per the county's P-card program policy adopted by the Newton County Board of Commissioners on Aug. 20, 2013, resulting in a reduction of the number of purchase orders and related documents such as invoices and checks. "Essentially the

designed as an alterna-

tive to the traditional

P-cards are to be utilized as a more effective, 'cost effective

od of purchasing and paying for small dollar transactions," Newton County Finance Director Brittany White told The Covington News. "Employees still have to formally submit purchase orders for all purchases over \$5,000. Prior to a policy that was adopted in 2016, the purchase order threshold was \$2,500 for all purchases."

meth-

The traditional spending method, which is practiced today by employees without P-cards, requires employees to enter a purchase requisition, which entails providing the following information:

• The date the req-

uisition is filled out and submitted to financial administrative services.

 A definitive date the department/ employee needs the material of service. For routine purchases, requisitions should be submitted seven business days in advance of when the purchase is needed. Formal bids or proposals are needed six to eight weeks

in advance. • The name of the department the purchase is for.

 The account number, including the fund

ing limit num-

the department number. • A "requisition number," which is

ber,

defined in the county's policy as the requesting department's identification number.

 The item number, to be listed separate-

Only 2 Newton constitutional

ly and consecutively.

• The quantity of each item and the

See P-CARD, A8

Newton commissioners cut \$500K from proposed FY2022 budget

By TOM SPIGOLON tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. -County officials unveiled a revised 2022 budget plan Tuesday that cuts \$500,000 in spending and delays new hiring until January while retaining a 4.5% pay increase for almost 700 county employees.

During a special called meeting and public hearing Tuesday, July 20, the Newton County Board of Commissioners heard details of the revisions County Manager Lloyd Kerr made to the first version of the 2022 budget that he gave to board members June 1.

Kerr on June 15 had

SINCE 1865



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

Newton County's Board of Commissioners held a special-called meeting Tuesday, July 20, to present a revised budget plan for fiscal year 2022 and hold one of two required public hearings. The budget was slashed to account for pay raises for county employees to "stay competitive."

asked for a month's delay in approval of the budget after saying he wanted to make enough cuts to preserve across-the-board pay increases.

He said the county government needed the increases to remain competitive for new employees and retain

existing employees in a tight labor market.

Meanwhile, commissioners generally had indicated they wanted to approve a

property tax rate lower than the current 12.916 mills to offset an anticipated increase in tax bills because of higher assessments from

rising land values. The spending plan released June 1 totaled \$78.1 million in the General Fund and \$119.2 million for all funds.

Kerr said the new version of the budget contains a revised General Fund total of \$77.6 million, which is a \$500,000 decrease.

The \$500,000 will be used to help balance expenditures with the revenues from whatever lower property tax

See CUT, A7

Volume 156, No. 59



Inside Kemp makes crime a top priority See A3

Weekend Weather Forecast



Saturday, July 24 High: 90° Low: 70° 30% chance of rain



Sunday, July 25 High: 92° Low: 71° · 20% chance of rain Index

Obituaries, A2 Business, A10 Opinions, A4 Sports, B1 Legals, B2 Agriculture, A9

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday, July 24

 2021 Back to School Bash hosted by the Newton County Sheriff's Office is set for July 24 at noon at Newton High School, 1 Ram Way, Covington. Admission is free. Learn more at facebook.com/NewtonSheriffGA.

Friday, Aug. 6

 American Red Cross Blood Drive is set for Oxford City Hall, 110 W. Clark St. in Oxford Aug. 6 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call 800-733-276 to learn more.

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.

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.
- · City of 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 (Georgia Hwy. 81). Oxford Farmers Market is open to farmers, growers, artists, makers and craftsmen who grow or make their own produce or items. For more information, email oxfordfarmersmarket@oxfordgeorgia.org, call 770-786-7004 or find the Oxford Farmers Market on Facebook.

Submit your events to news@covnews.com or mail to 1166 Usher St., Covington, GA 30014



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Regional Job Fair draws crowd to GPTC

By TOM SPIGOLON

COVINGTON, Ga. — The 2021 Regional Job Fair at the Georgia Piedmont Technical College conference center in Covington Thursday, July 22, featured about 50 different companies, government agencies and colleges either needing workers or showcasing their programs to prospective students.

Serra Hall of Newton County Industrial Development Authority and Debbie Harper of the Newton County Chamber of Commerce agreed they were pleased with the turnout after not knowing how many it would attract after the event was offered virtually in 2020.

Hall said the event attracted job-seekers from all age groups.

She also praised the



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

Signs guide job-seekers to the 2021 Regional Job Fair at the Georgia Piedmont Technical College conference center in Covington Thursday, July 22.

partnership between two counties' development agencies, including the Development Authority of Walton County, to help host the Job Fair because neighboring areas typ-

ically compete rather than cooperate on such events.

College President Tavarez Holston said he was pleased GPTC could be the host site for the event and

inform prospective students about its courses while also helping some job-seekers receive job offers on the spot.



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

A Regional Job Fair participant visits the Express Employment Professionals booth to ask about potential career opportunities.



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

A prospective student visits one of the many booths Georgia Piedmont Technical College had at the 2021 Regional Job Fair at the college's conference center in Covington.



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

A potential applicant visits the Hitachi Automotive Systems booth at the 2021 Regional Job Fair at the Georgia Piedmont Technical College conference center in Covington Thursday, July 22.



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News **Rosemary Cook, human resources** director for Pactiv Evergreen's Convers plant, works to check on prospective employees outside the job fair.

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Marion Barnes J.C. Harwell & Son Funeral Home Mrs. Marion Barnes, age 90, of Coving-

ton, Georgia, passed away July 17, 2021. She was born Aug. 13, 1930, to Aubrey and Grace Ewing who have preceded her in death. Mrs. Barnes was

a loving wife, mother, She graduated from University of Geaorgia with a bachelor's degree. Mrs. Barnes loved bird watching, for family. She was a member of Starrs-Church. Mrs. Barnes had a passion for her mission work at the church, helping with the Rainbow Homeless Shelter, and Faith parents, she is preceded in death by her

Mrs. Barnes is survived by her children. Elaine Edwards (Mike) of Hixson, Tennessee, Donna Faye Sowell (Jim) of Lilburn, five grandchildren, six great grandchildren; sibling, Mort Ewing (Faye) of Covington; sisters-inlaw, Margaret Ewing and Zelna Ewing, many nieces, nephews, other family members, and

Funeral services for Mrs. Marion Barnes will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at the Chapel of J.C. Harwell & Son Funeral Home with Reverend

close friends.

Alan Barrett officiating. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Monday, July 18, 2021, from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family request donations to be made to Rainbow Homeless Shelter located at, 7154 Turner Lake Circle SW. Covington, GA 30014 and, Starrsville United Methodist **Church Mission Fund** located at 2786 Dixie Rd. Covington, GA 30014. J.C. Harwell and Son Funeral Home, TE Davis Funeral Services, 2157 East Street, SE, Covington, GA 30014.

As of April 8, 2021, Gov. Brian Kemp has lifted the restrictions for large gatherings and other recommendations throughout Georgia. However, we ask that you still be respectful of the family and others during this time. If you are sick, not feeling well, or have any symptoms of COVID 19, please do not attend the service or services. If you feel the need to wear a mask, please do

TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 21-2-131(a)(1)(A) notice is hereby given that on Tuesday, November 2, 2021 between the hours of 7 AM and 7 PM, a General Election will be held at the City of Covington Council and Courtroom Chambers located at 2116 Stallings Street for election to the office of: **Council Post #1 East Ward**

Council Post #2

West Ward West Ward

Council Post #3 The qualifying fees for these posts are three percent (3%) of the

annual salary of the office or \$270.00. To qualify for the for the above offices a notice of candidacy must

be filed in the office of the Newton County Board of Elections and Registration no earlier than Monday, August 16, 2021 beginning at 8:30 AM and no later than 4:30 PM on August 20, 2021.

Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk 07/25/2021

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grandmother, and great grandmother (Memo). gardening, and cooking ville United Methodist Works. Along with her husband, Don Barnes; brothers, Alton Ewing

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News

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

Kemp adds crime to state's redistricting session agenda

Georgia's top elected leaders vowed this past week to make the current spike in violent crime across the state and particularly in Atlanta a top priority.

Gov. Brian Kemp announced Monday, July 19, he would add crime to the General Assembly's agenda for a special session on tap this fall primarily to draw new legislative and congressional district lines.

Kemp, who gave an update last week on the Gang Task Force he formed two years ago, told lawmakers Monday the state's multi-agency Crime Suppression Unit has arrested 109 criminal suspects, impounded hundreds of vehicles involved in street racing, seized hundreds of stolen firearms and made thousands of vehicle stops.

The governor also thanked the General Assembly for passing laws aimed at human traffickers and street gangs since he took office in 2019.

"These initiatives have helped us move the needle," Kemp said. "[But] the dangerous gangs aren't letting up."

State Supreme Court gets new justice

A judge from the Georgia Court of Appeals is moving up to the state Supreme

Court. Gov. Brian Kemp announced the appoint-

ment of

Judge



Verda Colvin on Tuesday, July 20, to fill the vacancy left at the beginning of



Special | Office of Gov. Brian Kemp

Gov. Brian Kemp speaks July 15 during a press conference about the work of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation **Gang Task Force.**

this month by Harold Melton, who stepped down July 1 as the state Supreme Court's chief justice to enter private practice.

Colvin has served on the Court of Appeals since being appointed by Kemp in April of last year. Before that, she served for six years as a Superior Court judge in the Macon

Judicial Circuit. Prior to her appointment to the bench, Colvin was an assistant U.S. attorney in the Middle District of Georgia. Before that, the native of Atlanta was an assistant prosecutor in Clayton County and assistant general counsel at Clark Atlanta

University in Atlanta. She's a graduate of Sweet Briar College in Virginia, and the University of Georgia's law school.

Presiding Justice David Nahmias was unanimously elected by his colleagues to succeed Melton as chief justice.

Georgia Lottery sets record for profits

The Georgia Lottery generated more than \$1.5 billion for the state's HOPE Scholarship and Pre-K programs during the last fiscal year, a record that came despite a global pandemic that dampened economic activity.

The fiscal year that ended June 30 marked the sixth straight year the lottery has exceeded \$1 billion in profits for education, surpassing the previous fiscal year by \$307.6 million. Fiscal 2021 also was the lottery's 10th consecutive year of growth.

The lottery has returned more than \$23.8 billion to education in Georgia since voters approved a referendum creating the program in 1992. More than 1.9 million students have received lottery-funded HOPE scholarships, while more than 1.6 million 4-year-olds have attended the statewide voluntary Pre-K program.

Three charged with murder after bodies found in Henry County

Three people have been arrested and charged with murder after two bodies were recently found in Henry County.

One was identified as Mirsha Victor, 23, who was killed in Stockbridge earlier this month after being reported missing from the Panthersville area in DeKalb County.

Police confirmed Friday that one of two victims' remains found Tuesday in a wooded area off Hudson Bridge Road were Victor's. The other victim has

not been identified. When detectives executed a search warrant at the apartment of Dennis Lane, located at Hudson Bridge Terrace, they "noticed blood on the floor, in the bathroom and a mattress missing." The mattress was later found at a nearby dumpster with blood stains on it.

Police eventually arrested Lane and two others - Ronisha Preckwinkle and Cleounsee Fisher and charged them with murder.

Fisher's and Preckwinkle's involvement was unknown at the time of publication.

Butts County baby dies of fentanyl overdose; parents face murder charges

Parents of a 18-month-old male baby were arrested on Friday, July 16, and charged with felony murder, cruelty to children in the 1st degree, and possession of fentanyl after a GBI autopsy showed the child died of a fentanyl

overdose. Ashley Bunny Nanney, 29, and Justin Michael Price, 27, both of Jenkinsburg, were being held without bond in the Butts County Jail at last report.

"We had a 330-pound man die of 18 nanograms (one billionth

of a gram) of fentanyl, and the baby had more than that in his system, and he was 30 pounds,' Butts County Sheriff's Investigator Matt Munger said.

The name of the child has not yet been released.

Man dies after police chase in **Walton County** A man died by ap-

parent suicide after a police chase in Monroe ended in a crash Tuesday night, July 20.

The ensuing investigation closed Gratis Road for a brief time.

Walton County Sheriff Joe Chapman said law enforcement were alerted to look for a man who'd been involved in an argument with his girlfriend in Barrow County.

The man wasn't wanted for a crime, Chapman said, but out of concern for his own safety.

Chapman said Monroe police found the vehicle in Mathews Park on East Marable Street. The man apparently fled the scene and Monroe officers pursued him, eventually performing a PIT, or pursuit intervention technique, maneuver designed to end the

chase. The car came to a stop at the Walton Electric Membership Corp. solar power facility bordered by Gratis, William "Cap" Jackson and Ike Stone roads. a little over two miles

Chapman said officers didn't detect any movement from the vehicle and contacted the Sheriff's Office, which sent its SWAT team and activated a drone to look in the windows of

north of Mathews Park.

the vehicle. It was determined the driver had a self-inflict-

ed gunshot wound.



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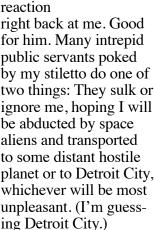
The Covington News

Dick Yarbrough columnist

Vernon Jones talks about running for governor

Strong opinions begat strong reactions. I recently begatted a strong opinion about Republican guber-

natorial candidate Vernon Jones and he begatted a strong



It seems I remarked that at the recent state Republican convention on Jekyll Island, a number of delegates booed the incumbent governor who got a voting rights bill passed that Democrats hate, guided us through an unprecedented pandemic and presides over a state budget surplus of nearly \$3 billion. Not enough for the boo-birds. They think he didn't do all he could have or should have done to ensure Donald Trump's reelection.

Instead, they cheered for Vernon Jones, who is running against Gov. Brian Kemp in the upcoming Republican primary. I found that interesting, given that to quote an anonymous modest but much-beloved columnist – Jones carries more baggage than an airport carousel. That is what begatted me a phone call from the man. It seems he had read that somewhere.

In case you happen not to be familiar with Vernon Jones, he is a former state representative (1993 to 2001 and 2017 to 2021) and was chief executive officer of DeKalb County from 2001 to 2009. Now, he has decided to take a shot at becoming our 84th governor.

He is also a newly-minted Republican, having changed parties in January of this year. "I'm a Black MAGA man," he told the conservative Breitbart News recently, referring to Trump's Make America Great Again movement. To date, he has not been formally endorsed by The Man himself, but he has received the endorsements of Trump lawyer, Rudy Giuliani; Bernard B. Kerik, former New York police commissioner, pardoned by Donald Trump after having served time for felony tax and false statement charges; the Atlanta Tea Party and

As to switching parties Jones reminded me quickly that such folks as Ronald Reagan, Sonny Perdue, Nathan Deal and – yes – Donald Trump did just that.

Russ Abernathy, former

Henry County Chief of

Police.

His platform is purered Republican: "Refund police, not defund police;" ban the teaching of Critical Race Theory in Georgia public schools; pro-life and an "A" rating from the National Rifle Association while in the Legislature. He thinks what differenti-

ates himself from Kemp or any other Republican is that he can broaden the party's appeal with Blacks.

Jones says that Democrats take the Black vote for granted. He believes many Blacks are more conservative than given credit and thinks the Democratic Party is "pandering" to Black voters "The Democratic Party does not want Black people to leave their mental plantation," he says, "They don't want to accept that we are free people with free minds."

Vernon Jones believes he is the only Republican that can beat Stacey Abrams. "I want to see Stacey Abrams try and play the race card with me," he says. He's got a point there.

Jones saves his harshest criticism for the governor. "We lost two **United States Senate** seats and we lost the presidential election because of Brian Kemp. He is directly responsible for that happening. He was so afraid of Stacey Abrams running against him that he caved into her," referring to an agreement between Abrams and Kemp prior to the last election which changed signature verifications and added drop boxes. "He has no backbone. He doesn't stand up to Stacey Abrams."

Jones is busy crisscrossing the state and making his case as the Republican gubernatorial candidate and recently won a straw poll of Republicans in Forsyth County.

As for the baggage to which I refer, Jones has had what the Atlanta Newspapers call a history of "misconduct" regarding his treatment of women. He denies all charges and says he was never found guilty of any improper conduct "with anyone, at any

time." Can Vernon Jones indeed defeat Brian Kemp in the Republican primary and the Democratic candidate who is predicted to be Stacy Abrams in the 2022 general election? Logic would say it is a steep uphill battle but Jones

thinks he can win. Remember that I'm the guy who stated unequivocally some years back that an obscure state senator from Bonaire named Sonny Perdue could never defeat a powerful sitting governor named Roy Barnes. And how did that turn out?

Dick Yarbrough is an award-winning columnist from Georgia. Reach him at dick@dickyarbrough.com.

Chris Bridges columnist

It's time to move on, start looking ahead

e've heard plenty of adjectives to describe the 2020 election. In fact, we are still hearing them.

Words such as fraudulent,

corrupt and illegitimate are just some of the more

commonly-used ones. In reality, it's not about any of those things.

What it's really about is being poor losers. We are all guilty of it. It's the same in sports as it is politics. We have a built-in human nature response to think if our team or our candidate or favored political party loses, then it must have been because the other side cheated.

In football, we complain about the officiating. In elections, it's about votes not being counted right. Hey, it doesn't matter if they were counted multiple times with very little, if any, change in the grand total.

When we don't like the scoreboard, be it at the end of a game or a contested election, then we cry foul. It hasn't always been that way, at least not in politics.

Certainly, none of

us particularly like it when our candidate loses. I'm the same way, although voting for a third-party candidate in general elections most of the time means I am more used to losing in the end than most.

But we have to be realistic. Just because our candidate loses doesn't mean the other side cheated or that there was mass corrup-

My philosophy on election results has always been a simple one. I'll stew over them for a week or so and then suddenly my find starts looking ahead to the next election.

It's gotten that way for football as well. When one of my teams loses, I get mad for a day but immediately will look ahead to the next week. To me, that's the best way to handle it.

Besides, we all know nothing is going to change the outcome of the previous game. It doesn't matter how many officiating mistakes the league office admits to, the outcome is going to stand. It will never be reversed.

When it comes to the 2020 election, some are still hoping for the outcome to be overturned. Some Facebook comments of late (by someone

I respect actually) claimed that Donald Trump had actually won Arizona and that Georgia would be the next to move from the Joe Biden camp to the Make America Great Again column. Folks, it's not hap-

pening. Wishing it so doesn't make it reality. Oddly enough (or perhaps not oddly) an Associated Press story released the same day as that Facebook post about the Arizona vote outcome, detailed how there were only a small number of cases of repeat votes. There were certainly not enough to change the outcome.

Yet some people continue to cling to hope that Trump is going to return to the White House. We're not talking about after the 2024 election if he should run then, but we are talking about now, as in 2021. Of course, being a

sore loser is not delegated to just Republicans. Here in Georgia, Stacey Abrams and many of her supporters are still complaining about the 2018 governor's election. The election was stolen and such, them still claim.

I said at the time the best thing Abrams could do was to say "we fought a good fight but now we have to look ahead." The fact she made that race so competitive helped turn the tide in Georgia to the point our state now has two elected Democrat US Senators. That was something that would have been unheard of

not that long ago. Not liking the outcome of an election does not mean there was massive fraud. There are always a very small number of votes that can be questioned and challenged. There is nothing wrong with requesting a recount. But at some point, it has to be time to move on and accept what has happened.

Georgia Democrats should be looking at 2022 and not back at 2018. Likewise, Republicans need to be working for 2024 and not hoping against hope that the 2020 presidential election is somehow overturned. Georgia Republicans also need to be very focused on 2022.

It's not easy accepting defeat but some at some point we have to. Deep down we know it's true. Let's put 2020 in the rear view mirror for good and start looking ahead.

Chris Bridges is a former sports editor for The News. Reach him at pchrisbridges@ gmail.com.

Your Letters to the Editor

NCSS thanks businesses for continued support

Dear Editor: It's hard to believe that students will soon report back to school for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. This week we officially welcomed approximately 200 new teachers to our district at our annual BEST Teacher Induction Program. Our Partners in Education made a great impression on the new teachers and showed once again that Newton County School System has the absolute best school partners by donating over 50 door prizes for the event. We received, gift bags, tote bags, gift cards and more! The new teachers were definitely excited at the prospect of taking home one of the wonderful prizes.

Although we an-Want to share your opinion?

Send a letter to the editor via email at

news@covnews.com, or mail your letter

to us at P.O. Box 1249, Covington, GA

30015. You can also deliver letters in

person at our office located at

1166 Usher St. in Covington.

nounce the name of each business or organization that donates a door prize at the time of the drawing, so that our local community is also aware of their commitment, I'd like to publicly thank the following school Partners in Education for donating gifts for our new teachers: Macedonia Baptist Church; Georgia Association of Educators; United Bank; Communication Workers of America Local 3205; Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. Phi Omicron Zeta Chapter; Spectacular Eyecare; American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Unit 32; Golden's Deli; UMAS Karate; **Snapping Shoals** EMC; Zion Baptist

Church; Burge Plantation; and Josten's.

Thank so much for supporting our schools! And thank you to all of our Partners in Education who continually support our students and schools throughout the school year. Our community is blessed with businesses, organizations, churches,

and civic groups that truly care about the children and employees of Newton County Schools. We look forward to working with all of them during the course of the 2021-2022 school year!

> Sincerely, Sherri Partee NCSS Director of Public Relations

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Newton congressman arrested in protest for voting rights

By AMY B. WANG

The Washington Post WASHINGTON — Rep. Hank Johnson (D-Ga.) was arrested Thursday at a voting rights protest on Capitol Hill, making him the second Democratic member of Congress in a week to be detained while demonstrating in support of federal voting legislation.

Johnson had been attending a "Brothers Day of Action on Capitol Hill" protest organized by the nonprofit group Black Voters Matter. Video footage from the event showed Johnson and others linking arms and lined up outside the Hart Senate Office Building, chanting "Hey, hey! Ho, ho! The filibuster has got to go!" The peaceful protest was



Johnson

son and several other activists being handcuffed and detained.

U.S. Capitol Police confirmed they arrested 10 people Thursday for "unlawfully demonstrating outside of the Hart Senate Office Building," and charged them all with "crowding, obstructing or incommoding." All have since been processed and released, police said.

Johnson's office confirmed the congressman was among those

arrested Thursday, and that he had been protesting "voter suppression bills and laws throughout the country, including Georgia, that target students, the elderly and people of color."

"In the spirit of his dear friend and mentor — the late Congressman John Lewis Rep. Johnson was

getting in 'good trouble' fighting for and protecting civil and voting rights for all Americans," Johnson spokesman Andy Phelan said in a statement.

Johnson and others were demonstrating to push Congress to pass the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. The former would implement standards for voter access

and revamp rules on campaign finance and ethics, while the latter would restore a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Activists and Democratic state lawmakers have implored Congress to pass federal voting legislation, as GOP-led state legislatures and Republican governors have enacted or tried to enact voting restrictions across the country.

In March, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp (R) signed into law a restrictive voting bill that curtails the use of drop boxes and imposes new ID requirements for mail voting. The state faced immediate blowback from Democrats and civil rights groups, as well as economic consequences as

corporations spoke out against the bill.

Republican state lawmakers in Texas have also been trying to pass new voting restrictions, only to have Texas House Democrats stage

dramatic walkouts on two separate occasions to break quorum and stymie Republicans' efforts. Earlier this week,

more than 75 people many of them poor and low-income women were arrested at a rally outside the Supreme Court in which they demonstrated in support of voting and workers' rights. Last week, Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-Ohio), the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, was detained at a similar protest in which she and other activists called for the

passage of federal voting legislation and for abolishing the filibuster, the Senate rule that requires 60 votes for most legislation to pass.

"I stand in solidarity with Black women and allies across the country in defense of our constitutional right to vote," Beatty said in a statement after her arrest. "We have come too far and fought too hard to see everything systematically dismantled and restricted by those who wish to silence us. Be assured this is just the beginning. This is our power.

Our message." Johnson represents a portion of Newton County in Georgia's 4th Congressional District. Vanessa Williams

contributed to this report.

Lawsuits claim BD released cancer-linked chemical since 1960s

By TOM SPIGOLON

tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. An Atlanta-based law firm said Thursday it has filed more than 150 lawsuits claiming medical sterilization company BD Bard has released a chemical linked to cancer into the air surrounding its Covington plant since the late 1960s.

However, BD Bard officials said in a statement the company "denies all of the allegations in the civil lawsuits and will vigorously defend these allegations in court."

The law firm, Penn Law, said in a news release July 22 that all 154 lawsuits involve claims against BD for cancer "caused by the release of ethylene oxide into the air in the Covington community," the release stated.

The plaintiffs are Covington residents or others who lived within a close proximity to BD Bard's plant for a number of years, the release stated.

"Some of them actually worked at BD, but the claims focus on the effects of the exposure during their time as residents in the community and not as employees," the release

The suits filed in Gwinnett County State Court in Lawrenceville allege that decades of ethylene oxide (EtO) emissions created a "cancer cluster" among those living or working within a five-mile radius of the Covington plant, stated a release

from the firm. It said a report by the EPA, the National Air Toxics Assessment, revealed three areas in Georgia having



Becton, Dickinson and Company in Covington has been accused of leaking cancer-causing emissions since the 1960s. File | The News

increased cancer risk from EtO, including one in Covington and two in Cobb County where Sterigenics operates a plant, the release stated.

"In the area surrounding BD Bard's Covington facility, it is estimated that ethylene oxide causes approximately 214 cases for every 1 million people exposed. The EPA deems the pollution risk unacceptable when it surpasses 100 cases for every million people exposed to a chemical."

Disclosures of unreported releases of EtO from the BD plant in Covington and Sterigenics in Smyrna in late 2019 led to public calls for tighter regulations of such facilities.

A state law approved in 2020 requires manufacturers using EtO to report any waste spills or gas releases to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division within 24 hours. The division's director then must post the information on the agency's website.

Attorney Darren Penn of Penn Law said, "We continue to hear from victims who attribute their cancer and other medical diagnoses to ethylene oxide expo-

sure. "We will work tirelessly to ensure the victims of this cancer-causing emission are given a chance to have their story heard and possibly protect others from similar pain and suffering.

"This will not be the end of the claims filed against BD Bard," Penn

In reply, BD Bard said in a statement, "As part of our commitment to employees and the communities we call home, BD has been continuously employing technology to control ethylene oxide (EtO) emissions effectively at its Covington and Madison plants for

more than 20 years." It stated that, according to ambient air monitoring data collected over the last two years, average concentrations of EtO in air samples in the Covington area "are consistent with typical EtO background levels identified by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) in other parts of Georgia and by the U.S. **Environmental Protec**tion Agency in other parts of the United

States." "Based on extensive air monitoring data collected over the past two years, average concentrations of EtO in ambient air samples in the Covington, Georgia, area are generally lower than the concentrations observed at

EPD's background air monitoring station in south DeKalb (County), as well as in General Coffee State Park in Southeast Georgia, a five-hour drive from Atlanta."

It said Georgia residents can review actual air monitoring data for their community collected by the Georgia EPD on the agency's website.

The company stated the Covington average of 0.28 micrograms per cubic meter of air is the "average of both EPD monitoring data from areas near BD's sterilization facility and data from a third-party engineering company performing air monitoring around BD's Global Distribution Center in Covington, as required

by EPD." "The data also show that average EtO concentrations across the greater Atlanta area are about the same in areas where EtO sterilization facilities operate and areas where they do not,"

the company stated. BD and its predecessors have operated the facility for more than half a century, since 1967, in Newton County. It employed a total of about 1,000 at three different locations in northeast Covington in late 2020.









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Henderson to Covington: Consider 'forgiveness' instead of eviction

Newton commissioner calls for city-county partnership to provide aid for families at risk of losing home

By TAYLOR BECK

COVINGTON, Ga. Newton County District 4 Commissioner J.C. Henderson said he was disheartened by the news of local families at risk of being evicted in the coming weeks.

On July 6, Covington Housing Authority Executive Director Shamica Turner told the Covington City Council that when the federal moratorium on evictions runs out at the end of the month roughly 10% of the total 308 units could be evicted because they were behind on rent payments.

When Henderson heard the news, he said something needed to be



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"I would hate to see those 30 families those kids — to be put outside over a few dollars and cents," Henderson told the city council Monday, July 19.

Henderson suggested taking a look at using American Rescue Plan funds, as he said surroundings cities were discussing, to help families facing potential homelessness. Though the Covington Housing Authority is not an entity of the city, Henderson also believed a "forgiveness" option should be considered for authority residents.

"I think you should look at just forgiveness of that debt," Henderson said. "And say if you don't start paying up after this, you can start transitioning out."

The moratorium was first put into place in April 2020 when there was a spike in unemployment and millions of families struggled to maintain a reliable income in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than one year later, despite the wide availability of a vaccine and improving unemployment rates, Henderson said the novel virus is still



Special | Vimeo

Newton County District 4 Commissioner J.C. Henderson speaks during the Covington City Council's meeting Monday, calling for the city to look at ways to help families at risk of eviction.

impacting lives.

'We're still in the pandemic," he said.

Henderson said his family recently said good-bye to his sister, who died of the virus. Months before, his cousin also died of COVID-19.

He encouraged anyone who was able to get the vaccine to do so.

"It's not over," Henderson said.

The commissioner believed there was a way to help the families but said it could require the city and the Newton County government to join forces.

"Maybe we can work together — the city and

county," Henderson said. "I like working together ... because I've worked [for the city of Covington for 23 years ... so if we could work together and help those families, I sure would appreciate it."

During the time set aside for council members' comments, Councilman Kenneth Morgan and Councilwoman Hawnethia Williams each agreed with Henderson, saying it would be a good idea for Covington to partner with the county and try to come up with ways to help.

Tucker explained to the city council July

6 that when the moratorium first went into effect, the housing authority suspended all late fees and evictions related to rent payments, but she said the moratorium didn't mean residents didn't have to continue paying

"There should have been payments all along, and we have done payment plans, but at this point it is either pay or go," Tucker told the council. "We are going to have to evict some people. I know that they will call you, and by the time that they call you, they will be in tears. They will be distraught and have a lot of sad stories. While we have listened and done everything that we can to make sure that people are aware of all the rules, and that they can pay their rent, sometimes there was incorrect information that they heard that said that you don't have to pay. That is not true."

Tucker said residents of the housing authority who suffered a reduction in income could have filed an income change request, but they needed to do that at the time it was reduced.

She said most residents receive some type of income, whether it be through work or some type of assistance program, but it isn't a "livable wage." However, she said residents' rent amount was only

30% of their income, so if there was a reduction in income, the rent amount could also be lowered after submitting a change request form.

Because approximately 90% of the authority's funding is from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Tucker said there wasn't much more they

could do. "We have done everything that we possibly can to make sure that people throughout the pandemic could have a safe, comfortable place to call home," she said. "The good news is that people with small balances have been catching up and turning in the paperwork as required. Unfortunately, HUD says the paperwork is only effective when you turn it in. So if you didn't turn it in eight months ago when your income changed, you owe those eight months of rent based on what your income was then. Some of them have been lackadaisical about it all along. Some people have called and said they thought they didn't have to pay rent, and they do. Two or three residents have not paid a dime since the moratorium started, but that's not indicative of the majority of resi-

It can take up to three months from when an eviction is filed before a person may actually be evicted, Tucker said.

dents, not at all."

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SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

The first day of school is

quickly approaching. Newton

County School System (NCSS)

students will report back for the

2021-2022 school year on Mon-

To answer any questions or

alleviate any concerns parents

might have, NCSS encourages

new to the district or returning

— to participate in their school's

'Open House is a wonderful

way for parents to meet their

child's new teacher, pick up

class schedules and school sup-

ply lists, obtain parking and bus

route information, and just learn

"Each of our schools will hold

first day of school. Whether your

all about the upcoming school

year," said NCSS Superinten-

an Open House just before the

child is new to the district or

has been with us for years, we

encourage you to take your stu-

dent to visit school during Open

Although the district calendar

announced set hours for Open

House, in a continued effort

to continue social distancing

dent Samantha Fuhrey.

families — whether they are

day, Aug. 2.

Open House.

House.'

Newton County Schools schedules open house events practices to help reduce or eliminate the spread of COVID-19,

> Open House hours and some will offer both in-person and

virtual options. **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** Each elementary school will host Open House on July 27. Schools have posted information specific to their Open House on their school website. Just click on the link below to view your school's Open House plan. NCSS asks that families limit participants to a maximum of two parents/guardians per family. While masks are not required,

schools have expanded their

they are highly recommended. MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle schools, with the exception of Newton County Theme School, will host Open House on Wednesday, July 28, between the hours of 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Grade levels will be staggered as follows:

• Eighth grade, 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.

• Seventh grade, 4:30 p.m. –

• Sixth grade, 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. While masks are not required, they are highly recommended. A maximum of two parents/guardians per family is suggested/ requested.

HIGH SCHOOL High schools, with the exception of Newton College & Career Academy, will host Open House on Thursday, July 29, between the hours of 4:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Schedules will be staggered by grade level or alphabet. NCSS asks that families limit participants to a maximum of two parents/guardians per family. While masks are not required, they are highly recommended. High School students who also attend Newton College & Career Academy may attend their Open House between the

hours of 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. SELF-PACED VIRTUAL PROGRAM

The Self-Paced Learning Program will hold three separate virtual open houses to answer any questions:

• July 27 from 9 to 11 a.m. Join Zoom Meeting

https://newton-k12-ga-us. zoom.us/j/7237560688

• July 28 from 1 to 3 p.m. https://newton-k12-ga-us. zoom.us/j/7237560688

• July 29 from 4 to 6 p.m. https://newton-k12-ga-us. zoom.us/j/7237560688

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\$1.7M in federal funding for Newton County trails, creek protection clears first hurdle

Proposed pedestrian trail and conservation projects totaling \$1.7 million in two Newton County locations have cleared a first hurdle toward federal funding.

U.S. Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Lithonia, announced Tuesday, July 20, he secured \$4.9 million for eight community-funded projects in the 4th Congressional District in 2022 appropriations bills for three departments.

Among the eight projects is a \$900,000 initiative in Oxford to protect the Dried Indian Creek corridor and build a trail; and an \$800,000 multi-use trail along the side of Fairview Road in west Newton, Johnson said.

propriations Committee draft bill is the first step in the funding process. The full Appropriations Committee, House of Representatives and Senate still must approve the requests, Johnson said.

Inclusion in the Ap-

"These projects are critical investments for Georgia 4th (Congressional) District," said Johnson, a senior member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Oxford city government requested \$900,000 for its Dried Indian Creek Corridor Protection and Connection Initiative.

City officials said a planned 10- to 12-footwide multi-use trail will be 1.01 miles in length. It will be built in the 100-year floodplain, cross 14 properties and include signage detailing the history of the creek and the surrounding area, city officials



File | The Covington News

Workers pave a part of the Cricket Frog Trail. Officials are trying to get more funding for more proposed trail plans.

"It will be a key segment in eventually providing connectivity to (Covington) and its trail system," they told Johnson.

The project would protect the Dried Indian Creek corridor from further degradation through land donations and purchases, and conservation easement purchases, Johnson said.

It also would provide public access to the corridor via an ecologically-sensitive multiuse trail along the land acquired or secured through conservation easements, Johnson

Newton County government requested \$800,000 for the Fairview Road Multi-Use Trail project.

It is planned as a 2.5mile pedestrian/bicycle trail along the south side of Fairview Road in Newton County, according to the county Transportation Department which submitted the request.

Almost all of Fairview Road has no existing sidewalk. The proposed trail would connect Clements Middle and Fairview Elementary schools to communities along Fairview Road to provide a safe route for children to and from school, county officials told Johnson.

"Fairview Road has an existing 80-footwide right of way and can accommodate a path without the need for additional right of way acquisition," officials told Johnson.

The trail would be an eight- to 10-foot-wide concrete trail and connect neighborhoods and communities between I-20 and the Rockdale County line.

The path is proposed to end at the Rockdale County line but could link in the future with a new multi-use trail under construction along Salem Road in Rockdale County, officials said.

District 3 Commissioner Alana Sanders represents the Fairview Road area on the Newton County Board of Commissioners.

She said residents have said parks and recreational opportunities "for the youth and active agers" are needed because residential development is taking over available green space.

"Once officially approved, this project will not only provide the activity needed but safety to a community because of the absence of sidewalks," Sanders said. "This project will help us get the ball rolling and ease the minds

of parents for those children who walk to school or want to ride their bikes."

She said that "this is what I have been expressing to my colleagues on the board of commissioners and that we must listen to the taxpayers to assist with fulfilling their needs."

Sanders said she told County Manager Lloyd Kerr the lack of sidewalks were a safety

"There was a discussion of completing a mileage of sidewalks per year to correct this problem.," Sanders said.

Sanders noted two schools operate on Fairview Road "and the priority should always be safety."

"This can also start a partnership with the school system where we make sure that sidewalks exist around all public educational institutions in the county," she said.

"The length of the trail, and that it can be used for bike riders and walkers while connecting to the neighboring county, gives the residents in both areas the opportunity to build a healthy relationship and possibly gain a workout buddy.

Johnson said the funding for all the projects represents "investments in health care, education, infrastructure and our overall quality of life."

"Anyone who says government doesn't work for the people should feel confident in this process as we move forward," he said. "It doesn't matter where you live or how much you make; we all benefit together."

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told Johnson.

Continued from A1

rate can be calculated based on the new tax digest, he said.

The new General Fund total represents a 1.4% increase in expenditures compared to the 2021 budget.

When the General Fund is added to all other funds that make up the budget it totals \$118.6 million and represents 41% of additional spending compared to 2021.

However, Kerr said the increase is "largely due to budgeted expenditures" in the 2017 SPLOST fund that only gets its revenue from a 1% sales tax.

He said changes to reduce the June 1 budget included use of more than \$1 million in 2017 SPLOST revenues — rather than the General Fund — to pay the company ABM

for what the county owes on a contract to provide energy savings in county government

facilities. Other 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.

He said he did not anticipate hiring delays affecting operations. The time required to train many employees meant they would not be ready until around October anyway, he

"I don't know that it will make that significant of an impact," Kerr said.

Commissioner Stan Edwards said he was concerned about the delay in hiring code and building inspectors. About 90% of the calls he receives are about inspection delays, Edwards said.

Kerr said the inspector positions are difficult to fill and the county is considering relying on builders to hire private inspectors to provide reports to the county, which Georgia law allows.

He also said the decreases he made in the budget were offset by a number of spending needs he found — such as a larger-than-expected increase in a contract with Naphcare totaling \$106,000 for medical services at the Newton County Detention Center, and \$300,000 for overtime pay for the fire department that had not been included in the original

The budget still

includes proposed increases of between 3.5% and 4.5% for the 694 employees on the county's salary grade plan — including those in departments headed by constitutional officers.

Kerr said a pay increase for all positions was needed in such departments as Public Works where some jobs have a starting pay as low as \$11 an hour. An equivalent private sector position is paying about \$13 an hour, he said.

An additional public hearing on the revised plan is set for Aug. 3 at 6 p.m., followed by final approval of the budget at a 7 p.m. meeting, at the Historic Courthouse at 1124 Clark St. in Covington.

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P-CARD:

Continued from A1

ordering unit. • An item description, including detailed specifications such as brand names, model numbers, size, color,

type, grade, etc. • An "exact" location where the items are to be delivered.

- A list of suggested vendors to purchase the item(s) from.
- The unit price.
- The line total.
- The total of the requisition, per vendor.

• Justification, or brief explanation of why the product and/or services are needed.

P-cards essentially put an end to the monotony that accompanies submitting purchase orders, but as the P-card policy states, they are not intended to "bypass or avoid appropriate purchasing procedures.'

White said P-cards work similarly to a personal credit card.

"So the charge is made and then we receive a monthly statement with all the

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transactions for that monthly billing cycle," she said. "The cardholder then puts together the log sheet with the account coding and description and turns that in to [the finance department] with the receipt copies."

The P-card policy requires all users to keep every receipt, packing slip and charge slip for documentation.

Once the activity log and other necessary documentation is completed, the policy calls for cardholders to send that information to their superior for approval. In some instances that may be an elected official, and for others it may be a department head. After reports are OK'd, the paperwork is then forwarded to administrative services for payment.

Total amounts billed are charged to the individual departmental accounts, per the policy. So as an

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example, when P-card transactions are made by a sheriff's office employee it is funded by monies within the sheriff's office budget. The county's budget is primarily made up of revenue generated through taxes. Newton County's proposed budget for the 2022 fiscal year is \$118.6 million. Commissioners hope to approve the budget by Aug. 3.

Only two P-cards are not directly tied to a single department budget, White said. Those include one for the finance department, currently held by White, and one for the purchasing department, currently held by director Randi Fincher.

"The finance and purchasing cards are utilized to be checked out by departments who do not have P-cards, so those two cards may come from various department budgets," White said.

In order to become a P-card holder, one must first qualify and then apply.

To qualify, the applicant must be an employee of the Newton County government. The application must be approved by the applicant's department head or an elected official, according to policy. Once approved, prospective cardholders must review the policy and procedures, and sign the Purchasing Card Agreement in front of the county's P-card administrator.

P-cards are issued in the name of the individuals of various county government departments applying to become a cardholder, and all purchases made with the P-card must only be made by that cardholder. P-card spending does not affect cardholders' personal credit.

To date, there are 50 county employees with P-cards. When Bailey-Butts resigned, her card was returned and later cancelled, which was proper protocol. As readers will see next week in Part II of this series, the former coroner only made one purchase with her P-card on April 30, totaling just more than \$450, which was spent on office supplies at Office Depot.

Current Newton County P-card holders and their associated monthly spending limit:

 Cynthia Wiemann, Animal Control — \$1,000 Nwaka Hughes, BOC Office — \$1,500

- Latonja Threets-Hamp, BOC Office \$1,500
 - Marcello Banes, Chairman— \$20,000
- James Brown, Cornish Creek \$5,000 Sanquanish Rockmore, Cornish Creek — \$2,500
- Leslie Smith, DA's Office \$5,000
- Christine MacDonald, DA's Office \$1,500
- Randy McGinley, District Attorney \$1,500
 - Jody Nolan, EMA \$1,500 Wendy Peacock, EMA — \$5,000
 - Jason Johnson, Facilities \$5,000
 - Brittany White, Finance \$5,000
- Randi Fincher, Finance \$20,000 Bradly Todd Stapp, Fire Services — \$5,000
- Michael Conner, Fire Services \$5,000
- Billy McCullough, Fire Services \$1,500 Amanda Shoemaker, Human Resources — \$5,000
- Tim Singley, Information Systems \$5,000
 - Scharita Greene, Juvenile \$3,000
 - Kendra Mayfield, Juvenile \$4,500
 - Janell Gaines, Juvenile \$4,500 Laurie Riley, Keep Newton Beautiful — \$500
 - Terri Hall, Public Defender \$500
 - James Palmer, Public Works \$5,000
 - Greg Sullivan, Recreation \$5,000
 - Teresa Williams, Senior Services \$1,500
 - Freda Reed, Senior Services \$2,000
 - Brice Smith, Sheriff's Office, \$1,000
 - Billy Leazer, Sheriff's Office, \$2,500
 - Marty Roberts, Sheriff's Office, \$5,000 Mike Cook, Sheriff's Office, — \$2,500
 - Brandy Burch, Sheriff's Office, \$2,000
- Ezell Brown, Sheriff, \$5,000 Vincent Loveless Jr., Sheriff's Office, — \$500
- Brandon Esque, Sheriff's Office, \$1,000
- Jerry Carter, Sheriff's Office, \$2,000
- Sammy Banks, Sheriff's Office, \$2,500
- Jack Redlinger, Sheriff's Office, \$500 Amanda Peters, Sheriff's Office, — \$1,000
- Keith Crum, Sheriff's Office, \$1,000
- William Bowen, Sheriff's Office, \$500
- Donnie Granger, Sheriff's Office, \$500 Demeca Howard, Sheriff's Office, — \$500
- Terrance Spring, Sheriff's Office, \$500
- Selena William, Sheriff's Office, —\$1,000
- Richard Howard, Sheriff's Office, \$1,000
- Ary Grijalva, Sheriff's Office, \$1,000
- Kathy Kitchens, Superior Court \$2,500 Marcus Jordan, Tax Commissioner — \$5,000

Editor's Note: This list was read into the minutes of a Newton County Board of Commissioners meeting in April and later approved.

Once appointed interim coroner, Tommy Davis did not inherit Bailey-Butts' P-card, nor did he apply for one, according to White. She believed Davis did not have a P-card at any point during the previous 12 years he spent as coroner.

Of the current cardholders, 20 are employees of the Newton County Sheriff's Office, including Sheriff Ezell Brown.

Brown and Tax Commissioner Marcus Jordan are the only constitutional officers who possess a P-card. Clerk of Courts Linda Hays and Probate Judge Melanie Bell do not have P-cards.

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the Board of Commissioners to have a P-card, and because of this, he sometimes uses his P-card to pay for things like training courses for other commissioners, White confirmed. District Attorney Randy McGinley also holds a P-card. Banes and Finch-

er have the highest monthly spending limit at \$20,000. Eight cardholders, including Keep Newton Beautiful Manager Laurie Riley, Public Defender Terri Hall and six sheriff's deputies have the lowest monthly spending limit at \$500.

Brown and Jordan each have a monthly spending limit of \$5,000. McGinley's limit is \$1,500.

Prior to her resignation, Bailey-Butts had a monthly spending limit of \$5,000. The combined total

of all 49 P-card user's monthly spending limit equates to \$155,500.

P-card users are also required to keep their spending under the assigned amount designated at the time the card is issued. Per policy, the county, through administrative services. sets the spending limit for each cardholder, and maintains the power to adjust the limit, if needed.

Any cardholder who doesn't abide by any aspect of the policy is subject to revocation of the P-card, disciplinary action and even termi-

nation. Of all the rules found within the 12-page P-card policy and procedures framework, the one stating P-cards are "not for personal use" remains under scrutiny today, particularly from residents. The policy states the cards 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 recent weeks, as well as years past, many residents have accused officials of misuse, alleging some purchases previously made public could be classified as personal and illegitimate concerning county business.

Next week, in Part II of a series on P-cards, The Covington News will examine the usage and spending records from June 2020-June 2021 for each P-card holder in Newton County.



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Saturday-Sunday, July 24-25, 2021

AGRICULTURE

The Covington News



Metro Creative Service

Livestock and poultry producers who suffered losses as result of the pandemic can apply for assistance through USDA's Farm Service Agency through Sept. 17.

USDA offers aid to livestock producers for pandemic losses

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

news@covnews.com Livestock and poultry producers who suffered losses during the pandemic due to insufficient access to processing can apply for assistance for those losses and the cost of depopulation and disposal of the animals under the USDA's Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program (PLIP) Livestock and poultry producers can

apply for assistance through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) through Sept. 17. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, authorized payments to producers for losses of livestock or poultry depopulated during 2020 due to insufficient processing

access as a result of the pandemic. PLIP payments will be based on 80% of the fair market value of the livestock and poultry and for the cost of depopulation and disposal of the animal. Eligible livestock and poultry include swine, chickens and turkeys. Pork producers are expected to be

USDA has set aside up to \$50 million in pandemic assistance funds to provide additional assistance for small hog producers that use the spot market or negotiate prices. Details on the additional targeted assistance are expected to be available this

the primary recipients

of the assistance.

Eligible livestock must have been depopulated from March 1, 2020, through Dec. 26, 2020, due to insufficient processing access as a result of the pandemic. Livestock must have been physically located in the U.S. or a territory of the U.S. at the time of depopulation. Eligible livestock owners include persons or legal entities who, as of the day the eligible livestock was depopulated, had legal ownership of the livestock. Packers, live poultry dealers and

contract growers are

not eligible for PLIP.

PLIP payments compensate participants for 80% of both the loss of the eligible livestock or poultry and for the cost of depopulation and disposal based on a single payment rate per head. PLIP payments will be calculated by multiplying the number of head of eligible livestock or poultry by the payment rate per head, and then subtracting the amount of any payments the eligible livestock or poultry owner has received for disposal of the livestock or poultry under the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) **Environmental Quality** Incentives Program (EQIP) or a state program. The payments will also be reduced by any Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 1 and 2) payments paid on the same inventory of swine that were depopulated.

There is no per person or legal entity payment limitation on PLIP payments. To be eligible for payments, a person or legal entity must have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) of less than \$900,000 for tax years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Eligible livestock and poultry producers can apply for PLIP starting, by completing the FSA-620, Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program application, and submitting it to any FSA county office. Additional documentation may be required. Visit www.farmers. gov/plip for a copy of the Notice of Funding Availability and more information on how to apply.

Applications can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. To find your local FSA office, visit www.farmers.gov/service-locator. Livestock and poultry producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee.

New capitol exhibit celebrates farm life



The colorful ag exhibit at the state Capitol highlights the seasons in which various Georgia crops are harvested and some of the ways farmers use technology, such as apps and drones to monitor their crops for diseases or pests and to conserve water.

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

news@covnews.com

ATLANTA — Under the golden dome of the Georgia State Capitol, a new exhibit in the Georgia Capitol Museum shines a spotlight on agriculture in Georgia. The exhibit is designed to educate visitors on the importance of the state's No. 1 industry.

The Georgia Capitol Museum is a unit of the University of Georgia's Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, which rallied a team of UGA historians and archivists to create "From Your Farm to Your Table," a permanent exhibit to highlight the influence of agribusiness on Georgia's economy and culture.

Karin Johnston Dalton, museum registrar and collection and exhibitions manager for the Georgia Capitol Museum, said the idea for the agriculture exhibit came from Georgia Sen. Valencia Seay, D-Riverdale, who sponsored a bipartisan bill to create this exhibit. The bill was passed by the Georgia General Assembly in 2014 and signed by then-Gov.

Nathan Deal. "Senator Seay feels she has really learned a lot about agriculture (during) her time in the Senate, and she wanted children - especially those from urban settings – to learn not only where our food comes from, but that agriculture could be a viable career path for them," Dalton said.

The colorful exhibit highlights the seasons in which various Georgia crops are harvested as well as some of the ways farmers use technology, including the use of apps and drones, to monitor crops for diseases and pests and to conserve water. The exhibit includes an interactive kiosk where students can explore games and videos featuring interviews with urban farmers in and around the Atlanta area.

The drone featured in the exhibit was donated by Andrew Paterson, **UGA Regents Profes**sor and director of the **UGA Plant Genome** Mapping Laboratory, and Changying Li, professor and head of the UGA Phenomics and Plant Robotics Center.

The drone was used to monitor the growth of cotton plants in plant genetics research at the Iron Horse Farm, which is part of UGA's College of Agricultural and **Environmental Scienc**es (CAES).

UGA Libraries staff involved in creating the exhibit included Sheryl

Vogt, director of the Russell Library and the Georgia Capitol Museum; Ashton Ellett, polities and public policy archivist for the Russell Library; and Karin Dalton. UGA Libraries' science research and instruction librarian and subject liaison to CAES Kelsey Forester, along with Bryce Trotter and Jennifer Somers of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, assisted with fact-checking the

The design for the new exhibit is an update to the Capitol Museum exhibits, which were last renovated in the late 1990s, Dalton added.

text. Dalton said.

Seay hosted an

unveiling ceremony for the exhibit on June 4 for members of the Georgia Legislature and Capitol staff.

Seay, who grew up in Atlanta, was first introduced to agriculture while serving on the Georgia House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee before being elected to the Senate.

At this time, all guided tours of the Capitol are suspended until further notice, per the museum website, but the Capitol is open for self-guided tours. All Capitol tours are free.

Visit libs.uga.edu/ capitolmuseum for more information about visiting the Capitol.



- Georgia was the first state to charter a state university - The University of Georgia - founded in 1785. It is also the state's land grant university.
- Georgia was the first state to create a state department of agriculture.
- The first agricultural experiment farm and state were established in Savannah in 1735.

To learn more about Georgia agriculture and how to become a Farm Bureau member, go to www.gfb.org

Newton County Farm Bureau

PO BOX 390 Covington GA 30015 770.786.7201



GEORGIA AGRICULTURE: TOUCHING OUR LIVES EVERY DAY.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

The Connucton News



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

Saturday-Sunday, July 24-25, 2021

Bill Joris uses a Z-60 Dent Machine inside Harris Band Instruments' repair shop to remove a dent from a trumpet. The shop is located at 3830 Salem Road in Covington and specializes in instrument repair, as well as offering instrument sales and lessons.

Harris Band Instruments standing by to help area musicians in need

By TOM SPIGOLON tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. - Ifproblems arise with a woodwind or brass musical instrument, there's a good chance Harris Band Instruments can solve them for you.

The craftsmen within the walls of the west Newton County business have the skills and equipment needed to repair the instrument, find a missing or damaged part, and replace it if needed.

Harris Band Instruments at 3830 Salem Road in Covington is one of the largest privately owned band instrument repair shops in the Georgia, the owners said.

Its four employees — father and son owners Charles Harris Sr. and Charles Harris Jr. and Bill and Bobbi Joris specialize in the repair of brass and woodwind instru-

"We focus on what we know best," said Harris Sr.

They opened the store after finding a big demand from local musicians looking for quality repair work on brass and woodwind instruments without having to go into Atlanta or having the instrument sent out of state.

The store now serves schools in five counties and music enthusiasts from around the country.

The younger Harris could be seen on a recent day using a small open flame to repair and seal a new pad on a saxophone.

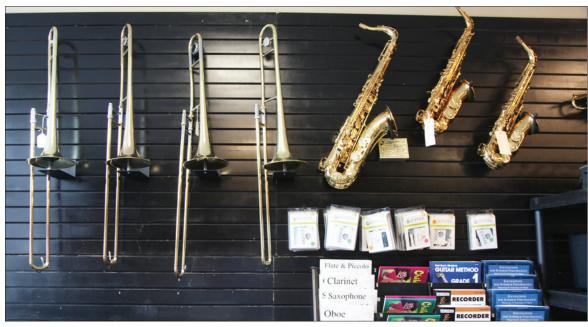
His father, meanwhile, worked to repair a flute as Bill Joris used a specialized machine to smooth out dents in a trumpet.



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

Pictured above, from left, Charles Harris Jr., Charles Harris Sr. and Bill Joris stand with some of Harris

Band Instruments' selection of band instruments for sale or rent.



Harris Sr. worked for years in administration with the St. Petersburg Times newspaper in Florida before retiring and eventually opening the shop with his son.

He also is a musician

who has been active in the **Newton County Community** Band and worked recently as a music teacher at Peachtree Academy.

Harris Jr. recalls his father repairing instruments as he

grew up in the Tampa Bay area. He attended the University of South Florida while there. He worked for three years at a Tampa music store learning the craft. He then spent four years as a cast

member at Disney World

before moving to Covington. The Harrises opened Harris Band Instruments in 2009. They are currently located in the Covington Marketplace shopping center.

Harris Band Instruments typically will service and repair over 500 instruments annually. In addition they also rent and sell between 200-300 instruments each year.

Due to COVID-19, the rental and sales aspect was impacted drastically in 2020, but they persevered through it and are now ready for the return of in-person learning and of course, marching

They offer music lessons for aspiring Clarinet, Flute, Saxophone, Trumpet and Trombone musicians of all levels.

Harris Band Instruments operates on the south end of the Kroger-anchored shopping center in a storefront bearing the single word "BAND," in orange letters.

The walls of the front retail space are lined with brass and woodwind instruments on either side. Music books and song books fill the display area. Glass showcases allow musicians easy viewing of an array of mouthpieces and other brass instruments.

Another wall is filled from top to bottom with an assortment of reeds and accessories for brass and woodwind instruments.

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SPORTS

The Covington News

USL League Two Soccer

East Atlanta FC falls in opening round



Courtesy of East Atlanta FC

The East Atlanta Football Club advanced to the opening round of the playoffs in its first season as a member of USL League Two. The Legends were promptly eliminated, however, suffering a 2-1 loss to The Villages SC.

By MASON WITTNER

mwittner@covnews.com

East Atlanta FC's first campaign in USL League Two came to an end at TowneBank Stadium in Newport News, Va., on Saturday.

A strong second half helped the Legends secure a spot in the League Two playoffs. The club closed out the regular season with 2-1 victory on the road against the Charlotte Eagles. Mere hours later, Charlotte Independence fell to SC United Bantams, 2-1, locking in East Atlanta as the third and final playoff team from the

Deep South Division.
The Legends were paired up against The Villages SC for the opening round of the postseason.

The Villages took an early advantage in Saturday's match. Five minutes after their striker put an open shot wide of the net, Leonardo Paiva sent one home to give his

club a 1-0 advantage at the 10 minute mark.

The Legends took a pair of shots on goal in the 19th and 38th minutes, respectively, but neither managed to break through. In the 40th minute, however, East Atlanta's Adeola Oke laid out for a bicycle kick from the edge of the box and nailed it into the net for the equalizing goal.

In the 52nd minute of the match, the Legends threatened to take the lead on a header from Mohamed Ouaad. The shot was on target, but keeper Jackson Lee deflected the ball off the crossbar to keep The Villages even.

The score remained unchanged until stoppage time, when Paiva dished a ball inside the box to Rafael Vacas, who slipped it past the keeper and into the center of the net to deliver the crushing blow. The Villages held on for the 2-1 decision.



DOGWOOD HILL CREMATOR

VFARS

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

demonstrated a commitment to raising the ba 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 Pursuit of Excellence

Prep Volleyball



Special to The Covington News

Ahead of its inaugural campaign, the Piedmont Academy varsity girls' volleyball team recently attended a camp at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. Pictured in the front row (left to right): Hailey McGinnis, Makenzie Cordell, Mallory Kelly and Bailey Bernard; Back Row (left to right): Addison Phillips, Haiden Crews, Morgan Hayes, Abby Strong (Georgia Southern Eagles volleyball), Samantha Gray, Kailey Goodrich, Daylin Meadows.

Lady Cougars prep for inaugural season

By CHRIS BRIDGES

Correspondent

The Piedmont Academy volleyball program is brand new but the Lady Cougars have been extremely busy this summer.

Piedmont will have its first-ever volleyball team take the court next month. Players recently returned from a camp at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro.

"The camp was amazing," coach Lindsay Moore said. "Our players had such a good time. One of the Georgia Southern players took our girls and worked on the basics and fundamentals. We were all exhausted after going from 8:30 in the morning to 9 at night. The last day of camp we played matches all day and ended up playing 15 times."

The trip to Statesboro was also a quality bonding event for the players.

"The players got so

much out of this camp and I got so much out of it as a coach," Moore said. "Our players are doing much better anticipating where the volleyball is going and how to keep gaps in the defense covered. Our communication on the court is also much improved."

Coach Moore was also able to take her players to Young Americans Christian earlier this summer for a co-practice session. The Lady Cougars will play their first match Aug. 26 at Jones County High School. The initial season will see Piedmont competing with a variety of opponents from both the GISA and GHSA.

Moore, who is assisted by Ashley Kelly, said she hopes to see improvement from the start of the season through the end of the initial campaign.

American Legion Baseball

Covington Post 32 enters state tournament

By MASON WITTNER

COVINGTON, Ga.

— Fielding a squad comprised mostly of Newton County prep baseball stars, the Covington Post 32 American Legion baseball team will go to battle in the state tournament

this weekend.
Post 32 is set to
square off against Post
192 from Evans, Ga.,
in a best-of-three series
starting Friday. The
winner of the series will
advance to the South-

east Regional Tournament in early August.

Led by team manager Bill Dallas, Post 32 is bolstered by a host of familiar names for local high school baseball fans. Among those on this year's squad are recent Eastside graduates Cade Mitchell, Sambo Button, Ethan Booth and Mason Poole, Newton's Zion Ross, Social Circle's Mason Moore and Piedmont Academy's Cameron Mobley.

Mitchell, a lanky

left-hander who plowed his way through opponents for the Eagles en route to being named The Covington News All-Area Pitcher of the Year for 2021, will get the ball in Game 1. The Chattahoochee Valley Community College commit has been a reliable workhorse on the

Dallas confirmed that he'll be turning to Mobley, the ace of Cougars staff that helped guide the team to a GISA

mound for Post 32 this

summer.

Class AA state title this spring, in Game 2.

The first game of the best-of-three series was scheduled to be played Friday night at Legions Park off American Legion Rd NE. Game 2 will take place at the same location on Saturday, July 24, with first pitch slated for 2 p.m.

Should the clubs split the first two games of the series, a tie-breaking third game would be played Sunday, July 25, at 2 p.m. at Legions Park.



The Covington News

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CITY OF PORTERDALE

THE CITY of Porterdale is accepting applications for full-time Public Works positions. This position involves the daily operation of public works and utilities including but not limited to: water/sewer maintenance and repair, installing water meters, inspections, using heavy equipment and tools, pipe repairs, bulk waste and leaf/limb pickup, street repairs, building repairs and maintenance, lawn maintenance and all other duties as assigned. Prior experience is preferred. Must have a valid Georgia Driver's License, a high diploma or equivalent GED. Experience operating heavy equipment is a plus. Must have experience in general maintenance, repair, and construction. Should be knowledgeable of construction materials. procedures, tools, and equipment as well as safety precautions. Must be able to follow oral and written instructions, be able to bend, stoop, walk on uneven terrain

manage multiple jobs and tasks. DRUG TEST and background check will be performed prior to employment. Starting salary is from \$11 per hour along with health, dental, vision, life and retirement benefits. Working hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Applications can be picked up at the Porterdale City Hall, 2800 Main St, Porterdale, GA. 30014 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Complete applications can be faxed to (770) 862-9190 or dropped off in person at Porterdale City Hall. The City of Porterdale provides equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals without regard to their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic

and in inclement weather and be able

to lift up to 50 lbs. Must be able to

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LEGALS

Public Notices

Abandoned Vehicles

ABANDONED MOTOR VEHICLE

ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE YOU ARE hereby notified, in

accordance with OCGA 40-11-19 (a) (2), that each of the below-referenced vehicles are subject to a lien and a petition may be filed in court to foreclose a lien for all amounts owed. order the sale of the vehicle to satisfy the debt.

THE VEHICLES are currently located at 4199 Old Atlanta Hwy Covington, Ga 30014

THE VEHICLES subject to liens as stated above are identified as: VEHICLE MAKE: GREEN Year:0000 Model: UNKOWN VEHICLE ID #: CAZEP50870A020 Vehicle License #: N/A

ANYONE WITH an ownership interest in any of these vehicles should contact the following business

BUSINESS NAME: Chanceys Wrecker Service

ADDRESS: 4199 Old Atlanta Hwy COVINGTON, GA 30014 TELEPHONE #: (770) 483-0698

PUBLIC NOTICE #200589

COVINGTON SQUARE IMPROVEMENTS REQUEST FOR ENGINEERING QUALIFICATIONS AND **PROPOSAL**

THE CITY of Covington (City) is requesting qualifications and proposal from qualified firms to provide engineering services utility relocation and/or replacement, landscaping, and hardscaping of the City's Downtown Square.

FOR MORE information contact Tres Thomas at tthomas@cityofcovington.

Georgia STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS

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STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS FOR THE WEEK 718/21

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882-3437.

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CITY OF COVINGTON COVINGTON JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The City of Covington is currently accepting applications for a Solid Waste Coordinator in the Public Works Department with a starting annual rate of \$55,004.89 to a maximum annual rate of \$80,776.98 depending upon qualifications. This is a supervisory position responsible for directing, administering and supervising all of the programs and activities of the Solid Waste Department, including: coordinating work assignments, scheduling work teams, materials, and equipment, supervising and inspecting work, and developing procedures, rules and regulations for implementing policy. Required training and experience include a High School Diploma or GED equivalent, at least three years of general waste and recycling activity, and one year of management and supervisory experience in waste management, waste disposal and/or recycling operations preferred, or any combination of equivalent education and experience. Qualified applicants can download an application packet at cityofcovington.org or may apply in person at Covington City Hall, 2194 Emory Street, Covington, Georgia 30014. This position will remain open until 4:00 PM on Friday, July 30, 2021. The City of Covington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200585 7/18,25-8/1,8

THE CITY of Covington is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to engineering firms experienced in the development of preliminary engineering plans, final design documents, construction documents, and bid documents for the installation of approximately 3,200 linear feet of water main on Hazelbrand Road NE, Covington, GA 30014. The project purpose is to support the development of new industrial facilities. Responding firms should be technically qualified and licensed to provide these services and experienced in the preparation of plans for State funded projects, specifically grant programs administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Services provided will include preparation of a preliminary engineering report (PER), engineering design plans, and construction documents.

ALL CONTRACTS are subject to State public works and construction contract provisions prescribed by the Georgia Department of Community

REQUEST OPENING Date: Friday, **REQUEST CLOSING** Date: 5:00pm Wednesday, August 11, 2021 FOR THE complete list of specifications, requirements and relevant information, the complete request for qualifications is available on the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's website at www. negrc.org. All questions and inquiries concerning this request for qualifications shall be addressed to Mark Beatty, Planner in writing at mbeatty@negrc.org or (706) 369-5650, Monday through Friday excluding holidays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Interested parties should submit qualification submissions

(4 copies) no later than 5:00 PM

on August 11, 2021 to the address

above date and time may not be considered. We reserve the right to accept or reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities in the

proposal process. MR. MARK Beatty PROJECT MANAGER NORTHEAST GEORGIA Regional Commission

305 RESEARCH Drive **ATHENS, GA** 30605 P: (706) 369-5650 F: (706) 369-5792

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NOTE: THIS post may be updated periodically to reflect any questions received and responses provided.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200564

THE CITY of Covington is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to professional environmental consultants, either as an individual consultant or through an environmental consulting firm, that specialize and bring substantial experience in overseeing environmental remediation cleanup projects. The City seeks a qualified individual and/or firm for a phase I and phase II environmental assessment, cost estimate for interior demolition and remediation of a city

REQUEST FOR Bids/Proposals and additional information may be

ACCESSING THE request for proposals on the City's website at https://www.cityofcovington. org/index.php?section=businessopportunities PROPOSALS MUST be submitted

no later than 5:00 p.m., August 25, **RESPONSES SHOULD** include all identified components. Responses

AFTER THIS time and date will not

PLEASE ADDRESS responses to: WILLIAM SMITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

COMM.DEV@CITYOFCOVINGTON.

THE CITY of Covington reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200615 7/25-8/8

SPECIFICATIONS AND STANDARD **DETAIL UPDATES REQUEST FOR ENGINEERING PROPOSAL**

WATER AND SEWER TECHNICAL

THE CITY of Covington (City) is requesting a proposal from qualified firms to provide engineering services related to updating the City's water and sewer technical specifications and standard details to meet current

FOR MORE information contact Tres Thomas at tthomas@cityofcovington.

Citations

ANTHONY CAINE FERNATT has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of KEITH EDWARD FERNATT, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

MARCIA WYNNE, CLERK PROBATE

Manager P.O. BOX 1527 **COVINGTON, GA** 30015 678-212-6459

PUBLIC NOTICE #200612 7/25-8/1

CITATION

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE

ESTATE AUCTION Selling By Order of the Executor to Settle the Jean P. Anderson Estate

35 Wesleyan Way, Oxford

- 3 BR/3 BA Brick Home with 5,200 SF
 - Private, Gated Community
 - Inground Pool New Roof

250 River Cove Meadows Social Circle

- 2.04 Acre Residential Lot
- Equestrian Community
 Water/Septic
 - 5 Minutes from I-20 Covenants

Property Sells from 35 Wesleyan Way



For More Information Call 478-743-1511 www.hudsonmarshall.com

AUCTION

Covington, GA 30014

2225 East Street

- 1.128 Acres Residential
 - **TERMS & CONDITIONS**

Visit www.hudsonmarshall.com for Complete Terms

Thursday, July 29th at 2:00 P.M. **Property Sells On-Site**



For More Information Call 478-743-1511 www.hudsonmarshall.com

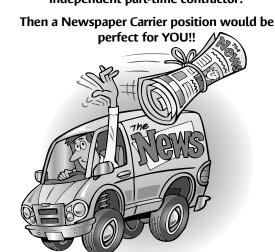


DO YOU LIKE TO DRIVE?

Do you have reliable transportation, a valid driver's license/insurance and are 18 years or older?

> Does working early mornings a few hours for 2 days sound nice?

Would you like to make extra money as an independent part-time contractor?



For more information, contact Circulation Department at 770-787-6397 or come by The Covington News located at 1166 Usher Street, Covington, GA 30014 Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm.

COURT **NEWTON** COUNTY, or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at **GEORGIA**

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE **1132 USHER STREET-148**

PUBLIC NOTICE #200474 7/4,11,18,25 CITATION

COVINGTON, GA 30014

CHEYENNE B. HODGE AND TAMMY HODGE has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of WILLIAM CHARLES MAXWELL, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on

ten o'clock a.m. MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE

MARCIA WYNNE, CLERK PROBATE COURT NEWTON COUNTY, **GEORGIA** NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE

1132 USHER STREET-148 COVINGTON, GA 30014 **PUBLIC NOTICE #200473**

COURT

7/4,11,18,25 CITATION

CHRISTINA **MCGIBONEY** BARROW has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of ROBERT WAYNE MCGIBONEY

See LEGALS, B3

Thursday, July 29th at 11:00 A.M.

- Prime Location in Covington
- Can be Subdivided
 Survey

• 10% Buyers Premium • Close in 30 Days • 10% Down Payment on Auction Day

For More Information, Call Sale Manager Ben Hudson at 404-307-2261

16

19

32

48

57

57. La __ Tar Pits, Hollywood

58. Every one of two or more

62. Peter's last name

59. "Deadpool" actor Reynolds

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

58

51

63

66

69

61. Earlier

33

23

41

56

26

44

62

31

47

50

12

14

17

20

27

35

39

42

45

52

60

64

67

own identity

6. Spoke

5. They follow A

9. End-blown flute

10. Heroic tales

21. Counsels

25. Awesome!

28. Indian city

29. Exclusive

23. Body of water

26. Calendar month

4. Georgetown athletes

7. Hairdressers' domain

8. Extravagantly theatric

11. Member of a Semitic people

12. Members of a priestly caste

27. Native of region in Caucasus

13. Southern Ghana people

53

54

28

29

15

18

25

43

61

65

68

21

30

46

24

36

49

22

40

55

32. Alaskan town

33. Covered with ivy

34. Loose granular substances

37. Written American English

41. Small brown and gray rails

36. Native American tribe

38. Holiday (informal)

43. Get off your feet

44. Express disgust

50. British noblemen

52. Dry, protective crust

47. Put into a silo

51. Tennis game

53. Swiss river

54. Large integers

46. Surface of the ground

40. Add up

49. Belief

ten o'clock a.m.

DECEASED. (THE applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/ or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE **CLERK** MARCIA WYNNE, PROBATE COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT **1132 USHER** STREET-148

COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200499 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

DAVID STRATTION has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of GARY LEE STRATTON, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE WYNNE, MARCIA CLERK COURT NEWTON PROBATE COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON **COUNTY** PROBATE

1132 USHER STREET-148 COVINGTON, GA 30014

ten o'clock a.m.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200497

7/4,11,18,25

ten o'clock a.m.

CITATION

DAVID W. REED has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of KEITH LAWAN CHAMBERS , deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE WYNNE, CLERK MARCIA **PROBATE** COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT **1132 USHER STREET-148**

COVINGTON, GA 30014 PUBLIC NOTICE #200475

7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

DELVER CHARLES ROBINSON has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of MAE ALICE ROBINSON, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE **CLERK** MARCIA WYNNE, NEWTON PROBATE COURT COUNTY, GEORGIA

2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT **1132 USHER** STREET-148

COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200498 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

DIANNE WYATT GARRETT has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of JOAN DOBBS WYATT deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE MARCIA WYNNE, **CLERK** COURT PROBATE **NEWTON** COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE

1132 USHER STREET-148 COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200542

7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

LISA BAKER has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of **EVELYN BELCHER** deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-. 232). All interested parties are hereby

objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m. MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE MARCIA WYNNE, CLERK PROBATE COURT

application should not be granted. All

COUNTY, GEORGIA NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE

COURT 1132 USHER STREET-148

COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200541 7/4,11,18,25

ORA CODY has petitioned to be

appointed Administrator of Estate of ERIC BERNARD CODY deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show

cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be

in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE WYNNE, MARCIA **CLERK** PROBATE COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE 1132 USHER STREET-148 COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200540 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

PAMELA KAYLE LITTELL has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of **KEVIN** JAMES LITTELL, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE MARCIA WYNNE, **CLERK PROBATE** COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE **1132 USHER STREET-148 COVINGTON, GA** 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200496 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

SHANDRIA LASHAY CAMP has petitioned to be appointed nistrator of the Estate of CHRISTOPHER ANTONIO CAMP. deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

MELAINIE M. BELL, JUDGE WYNNE. CLERK MARCIA PROBATE COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE COURT **1132 USHER** STREET-148 COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200500 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

TERESA WILLIAMS has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of VERA K. DANIEL deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE MARCIA WYNNE, CLERK **PROBATE** COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE 1132 USHER STREET-148

PUBLIC NOTICE #200539

COVINGTON, GA 30014

7/4,11,18,25 CITATION

Mary Jan.
WAYNE THE PETITION of Haynes widow ROSCOE HAYNES, deceased, for Twelve Month's Support for having been duly filed, all interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be granted. All objections must be in writing and filed with this Court on or before August 2. 2021, at ten o'clock

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE By: Marcia Wynne, Clerk PROBATE COURT **NEWTON COUNTY, Georgia**

NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE LOST BOYZ SOUTH INC. A 1132 USHER Street- Room 148 **COVINGTON, GA** 30014-2435

PUBLIC NOTICE #200543 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION

TONIA ANN BROWN has petitioned to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of ANNIE NELL BROWN, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at ten o'clock a.m.

MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE WYNNE, **CLERK MARCIA PROBATE** COURT NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE

COURT **1132 USHER STREET-148** COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200494 7/4,11,18,25

CITATION TONIA ANN BROWN has petitioned

to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of JESSIE LEE BROWNL, deceased. (The applicant has also applied for waiver of bond and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A 53-12-232). All interested parties are hereby notified to show cause why said application should not be granted. All objection must be in writing, and filed with this Court on or before AUGUST 2, 2021, next, at

ten o'clock a.m. MELANIE M. BELL, JUDGE CLERK MARCIA WYNNE, PROBATE COURT NEWTON **CLUES ACROSS** 1. Fashion accessory

- Subatomic particle
- 10. Ethnic group of the Philippines
- 14. Popular cookie 15. Fabric
- 16. Alcoholic liquor
- 17. Peter ___, Dutch portrait painter
- 18. Longtime Chicago mayor 19. A famous "Lady"
- 20. Islamic calendar month
- 22. Rocky peak 23. Polio vaccine developer
- 24. Songs sung in open air 27. Military movements
- 30. Male parent
- 31. Beloved hot beverage 32. Female sibling
- C 35. Tackled the QB R 37. Set a dog on someone
- 0 38. Long live! (Spanish) S 39. Porticos 40. Pouch
- S 41. Smooth fabric 42. Enough (archaic) 0 43. Institute legal proceedings
- R against 44. Scarred D 45. Draw from
- 46. Brother or sister P 47. Body part 48. Commercials U

L

Ε

- 49. London soccer team Z 52. Satisfied Z 55. Surgical technique (abbr.)
 - 56. Fencing sword 60. French industrial city 61. Intellectual property organization (abbr.)
 - 63. Helps to carry food 64. "Rule, Britannia" composer 65. One-time Empress of the
 - Roman Empire 66. Intestinal pouches 67. None better
 - 68. "WandaVision" actress 69. Comedic actress Kathryn
 - **CLUES DOWN** 1. Fifth notes of major scales
 - 3. Your consciousness of your

2. Region

COUNTY, GEORGIA NEWTON COUNTY PROBATE

1132 USHER STREET-148 **COVINGTON, GA** 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200495 7/4,11,18,25 NOTICE

RE: PETITION of Melissa D. Sheldon, to Probate Will in Solemn orm, Estate of Jack R. GIBSON, UPON WHICH AN ORDER FOR SERVICE WAS GRANTED BY

THIS COURT ON June 22. 2021

TO: DENNIS K. Gibson

THIS IS to notify you to file objection, if there is any, to the Petition of Melissa D. Sheldon to Probate WILL IN Solemn Form, Estate of

Jack R. Gibson. BE NOTIFIED FURTHER: objections to the petition must be in writing, setting forth the grounds of any such objections. All pleadings/ objections must be signed before a notary public or before a probate court clerk, and filing fees must be tendered with your pleadings/ objections, unless you qualify to file as an indigent party. Contact probate court personnel at the following address/telephone number for the required amount of filing fees. All objections must be filed by August 2, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

MELANIE M. BELL PROBATE JUDGE

MARCIA Wyn ne **CLERK OF PROBATE COURT** 1132 USHER STREET COVINGTON, GA 30014 770 784 2045

PUBLIC NOTICE #200491 7/4.11.18.25

Corporations

INCORPORATION

domestic profit corporation has been duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Georgia on 04/26/2021 by the filing of articles of incorporation in the Office of the Secretary of State and by the paying of fees as provided by Title 14 of the Official Code Of Georgia Annotated PUBLIC NOTICE #200584

7/18.25

Debtors Creditors NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

CREDITORS ALL CREDITORS of the estate of

MARY ANN RAPE, deceased, a resident of Newton County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment. THIS 29TH day of June, 2021. THOMAS A. Rape, Jr. Executor of the Estate of Mary Ann Rape

C/O MICHELLE Chaudhuri, Esq.

1892 GA Hwy 138, SE Conyers, GA 770-483-1431 **PUBLIC NOTICE #200527** 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

Talley & Associates, P.C.

CREDITORS

ALL CREDITORS of the estate of **Penny Lynn Carter,** late of 117 Sidney Lanier Dr. Oxford,

Newton County, deceased, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, a full imtemized 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 AMBROSE WILLIAM GUY deceased, late of Newton County, You are required to render your demands and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to law. THIS THE 25TH day of JUNE, 2021.

REBECCA SOMMA 17 HAMPSHIRE LANE **NEWNAN, GA** 30265

PUBLIC NOTICE #200545 7/4,11,18,25 NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

NOTICE IS hereby given to the

CREDITORS

debtors and creditors of the Estate of BARBARA ANN COLLINS YATES 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 21ST day of JUNE, 2021.

GREGORY H. YATES 2104 HWY 81 S **COVINGTON, GA** 30016

PUBLIC NOTICE #200505 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND **CREDITORS**

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of CATHERINE L. REESE 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 25TH day of JUNE, 2021.

BRANDY HYMAN 206 OXFORD RD **OXFORD, GA** 30054

PUBLIC NOTICE #200544 7/4,11,18,25

CREDITORS NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

of CHARLES ONEAL JORDAN 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 JUNE, 2021. CLARA B. JORDAN

10101 STRAPHINGE TRAIL COVINGTON, GA 30014 PUBLIC NOTICE #200503 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

CREDITORS

CHARLIE JASPER BELL 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 1ST day of JULY 2021. JERRY BELL

PUBLIC NOTICE #200568 7/11,18,25-8/1 NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

600 WINDERMERE DR

LOGANVILLE, GA 30052

CREDITORS

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of FREDERICK R. LOVELL 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.

WESLEY FOUNTAIN 13664 BROWN BRIDGE RD COVINGTON, GA 30016

THIS THE 30TH day of JUNE 2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200569 7/11,18,25-8/1

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND **CREDITORS**

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of GARY TIMOTHY HARPER 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 17TH day of JUNE, 2021.

BRENDA HARPER 95 PATTERSON WAY **COVINGTON, GA** 30016

PUBLIC NOTICE #200511 7/4,11,18,25 NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of JAMES EDWARD JENKINS, 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 21ST day of JUNE , 2021.

CREDITORS

JOHN JENKINS 340 PARK ST **MADISON. GA** 30650

PUBLIC NOTICE #200507 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

debtors and creditors of the Estate of **JEAN Y. JENKINS** 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 21ST day of JUNE, 2021.

JOHN JENKINS

340 PARK ST MADISON, GA 30650 PUBLIC NOTICE #200506 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND **CREDITORS NOTICE IS** hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate

of JIMMY PARKER 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 JUNE , 2021. KIRK PARKER

7/4,11,18,25 NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND **CREDITORS**

2141 CONYERS ST

COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200502

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.

211 MCDONALD RD COVINGTON, GA 30014 PUBLIC NOTICE #200591

CLARENCE S. ALLEN

7/18,25-8/1,8 NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

CREDITORS

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of LUCILE U. MCCOLLUM 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 21ST day of JUNE, 2021.

TRUDIE WADE 4080 TROUPE SMITH RD CONYERS, GA 30094

PUBLIC NOTICE #200504 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of MONTA ANN CRAWFORD deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/ or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND

CREDITORS

THIS THE 22ND day of JUNE, 2021.

185 BALLGROUND ROAD COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200501 7/4,11,18,25

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

55 COHUTTA DR COVINGTON, GA 30014

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

debtors and creditors of the Estate of OLLIE J. DUKE deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands and/ or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to

PUBLIC NOTICE #200509

7/4,11,18,25

SHAKELIA M. BELL deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia. You are

required to render your demands and/

9107 CECELIA ST COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200510 7/4,11,18,25

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of

late of Newton County, Georgia. You are required to render your demands

See LEGALS, B4

THIS THE8TH day of JULY, 2021.

SUSAN F. FINAZZO

PUBLIC NOTICE #200592

NOTICE IS hereby given to the

THIS THE 17TH day of JUNE, 2021. DARLENE DUKE P.O. BOX 63 PORTERDALE, GA 30070

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND **CREDITORS**

NOTICE IS hereby given to the debtors and creditors of the Estate of

or make payments to the undersigned estate representative according to THIS THE 18TH day of JUNE, 2021. MONICA LAWRENCE

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND **CREDITORS**

TOMMY PERRY HARRIS deceased,

and/or make payments to the undersigned estate representative

JAMES CRAWFORD

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

estate representative according to

7/18,25-8/1,8

Continued from B3

ACCORDING TO law. THIS THE 15TH day of JUNE, 2021.

SONYA HARRIS 7102 NEED STREET COVINGTON, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200508 7/4,11,12,25

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

NOTICE IS hereby given to the 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,

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,

ALEXANDER C. JACK DEFENDANT.

CIVIL ACTION NO: SUCV2021000-971-4

ORDER FOR SERVICE BY

IT APPEARING by Affidavit, that the above named defendant on whom resides out of State, or has departed from the State, or cannot after due diligence, be found within the state or conceals himself or herself to avoid dervice of the Summons, and it further appearing, either by Affidavit or by verified Complaint on flle, that a claim exists against the Respondent in respect to whom service is made, and that he or she is a necessary or proper patty to the action. IT IS hereby considered, ordered,

and decreed that service be made by PUBLICATION AS provided by law.

SO ORDERED, this 14th day of July

PUBLIC NOTICE #200611 7/25-8/1,8,15

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

CLEOPATRA MCKENZIE PLAINTIFF

DELROY WILSON DEFENDANT

DELROY WILSON

CIVIL ACTION NUMBER 2021-CV-1486-1

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

GEORGE REID MANDEVILLE MANCHERSTER, JAMACIA

BY ORDER of the court for service by publication dated JULY 14 2021 you are hereby notified that on 6-25-21 (date of filing) CLEOPATRA MCKENZIE (plaintiff) filed suit against you for Divorce

YOU ARE required to file an answer in writing within sixty (60) days of the date of the order for publication with the clerk of the Superior Court of Newton County and to serve a copy of the answer upon the plaintiff (if pro se) or upon the plaintiff's attorney (if represented). WITNESS THE Honorable JEFFREY

L. FOSTER Judge Superior Court of Newton County.

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

7/25-8/1,8,15

NEWTON COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

STEPHEN MCMILLIAN

PUBLIC NOTICE #200610

TABATHA MCMILLIAN DEFENDANT

CIVIL ACTION NUMBER 2021-CV-960-3

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

TO:

TABATHA MCMILLIAN

UNKNOWN ADDRESS BY ORDER of the court for service by publication dated JUNE 23 2021 you are hereby notified that on 4-22-21 (date of filing) STEPHEN MCMILLIAN (plaintiff) filed suit against you for Divorce

YOU ARE required to file an answer in writing within sixty (60) days of the date of the order for publication with the clerk of the Superior Court of Newton County and to serve a copy of the answer upon the plaintiff (if pro se) or upon the plaintiff's attorney (if represented).

WITNESS THE Honorable LAYLA H. ZON, Judge Superior Court of Newton County.

THIS, THE 23rd day of JUNE 2021. LINDA D. Hays **CLERK OF Superior**

PUBLIC NOTICE #200529 7/4,11,18,25

Foreclosures

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER IN DEED TO SECURE DEBT

Power of Sale contained in a certain Deed to Secure Debt from CAROL DENISE HOUSE in favor of W.D. BALLARD and NANCY MOCK dated May 2, 2011 and recorded at Deed Book 2905, pages 449-450, Public Records, Newton County, Georgia, the undersigned, W.D. BALLARD and for CAROL DENISE HOUSE, will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door in Newton County, Georgia, during the legal hours of sale, on the first (1st) Tuesday in August, 2021, namely August 3, 2021, the following

ALL THAT TRACT or parcel of land lying and being in the Countv of Newton, State of Georgia, City of Covington, and being more particularly described as follows: **BEGINNING AT** a point on the West

right of way line of Cook Street 136.06 feet North of the intersection of the West right of way line of Cook Street and the North right of way line of Newton Drive; thence running South 84 degrees 45 minutes 21 seconds West 151.82 feet to a point; thence North 3 degrees 18 minutes 28 seconds West 129.50 feet to a point; thence North 84 degrees 52 minutes 38 seconds East 157.70 feet to a fence post corner on the West side of Cook Street; thence South 00 degrees 42 minutes 02 seconds 129.50 feet Est to the Point of Beginning, as per survey prepared by Tru-Line Surveying, Inc. for Brian A. Kinsey and Tara Kinsey, dated September 2, 2006 and being the Seal of W.E. Clonts, GRLS No. 2166. SAID PROPERTY being known as 5123 Cook Street, Covington, Georgia in accordance with the present system of numbering properties in Newton County, Georgia

TAX MAP and Parcel No.: C008000010006000

THE DEED to Secure Debt herein foreclosed securing a Purchase Money Promissory Note dated May 2, 2011, in the original, principal amount of \$90,000.00. The debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt being in default by, among other possible events of default, failure to pay said indebtedness as the same fell due, and the debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt and evidenced by said Note has been and is hereby declared due and payable in full because of said default. This sale will be made for the purpose of paying the remaining principal indebtedness and accrued interest as accelerated. The proceeds thereof will be applied to the payment of said indebtedness and all charges and expenses in connection with said foreclosure in accordance with the terms of said Deed to Secure Debt and the balance, if any, will be applied as provided by law.

PROPERTY SAID will be sold as the property of CAROL DENISE HOUSE, subject to any outstanding and unpaid real estate taxes (ad valorem taxes) or assessments, street improvements, easements, restrictive covenants, and any and all other assessments

appearing of record, if any. NOTICE HAS been given in accordance with O.C.G.A Section 44-14-162.2.

NOTICE WAS also given in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 13-1-11 of intention to collect

THE UNDERSIGNED will execute a Deed Under Power of Sale to the Purchaser at sale as attorney-infact for CAROL DENISE HOUSE, as provided in the Deed to Secure Debt herein foreclosed, and Georgia

THE PROPERTY is or may be in the possession of CAROL DENISE HOUSE, successors or tenants. THE DEED to Secure Debt herein

deed to secure debt securing a purchase money promissory note. RICKY MOCK is the person who has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor. His address is 1175 Cook Road, Covington, Georgia 30014 and his telephone number is 770-597-4525. In addition, he can provide a current payoff amount for day certain at any time.

NANCY MOCK as Attorney-in-Fact for CAROL DENISE HOUSE BY:DAVID A. Henderson*

ATTORNEY AT Law

6169 ADAMS Street, NE

Covington, Georgia 30014 (770) 787-2946

*THE LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. FILE NO.: 21-274(N)

PUBLIC NOTICE #200556

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

THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

UNDER AND by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by Stevie Hall to Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., dated December 16, 2004, recorded in Deed Book 1825, Page 404, Newton County, Georgia Records, as last transferred to Aviator Properties, LLC by assignment recorded in Deed Book 4212, Page 15, Newton County, Georgia Records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND 0/100 DOLLARS (\$27,800.00), with interest thereon as set forth therein, there will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the courthouse door of Newton County, Georgia, or at such place as may be lawfully designated as an alternative, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in August, 2021, the following described property:

SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART

THE DEBT secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, 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

SAID PROPERTY will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above.

AVIATOR PROPERTIES, LLC is the holder of the Security Deed to the property in accordance with OCGA § 44-14-162.2.

THE ENTITY that has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the morto debtor is: Real Time Resolutions, Inc., 1349 Empire Central Drive, Suite 150, Dallas, TX 75247, (214) 599-6363

TO THE best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party in possession of the property is Stevie Hall or a tenant or tenants and said property is more commonly known as 155 Cashew Ct, 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.

AVIATOR PROPERTIES, LLC AS ATTORNEY in Fact for STEVIE HALL

MCCALLA RAYMER Leibert Pierce,

1544 OLD Alabama Road **BOSWELL GA 30076** WWW.FORECLOSUREHOTLINE.

EXHIBIT "A"

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN LAND LOT 68 OF THE 8TH DISTRICT, LOT 58, OF CHESTNUT CORNERS SUBDIVISION, UNIT THREE, ACCORDING TO SUBDIVISION PLAT OF SAME DATED 3/1/00 AND RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 34, PAGE 114-117, CLERK'S OFFICE,

NEWTON SUPERIOR COURT, WHICH PLAT IS INCORPORATED HEREIN AND MADE A PART REFERENCE **HEREOF** BY FOR **THERETO** MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF **PROPERTY** CONVEYED HEREIN. SUBJECT TO that certain security

deed from Stevie Hall to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as grantee, as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc. its successors and assigns, dated December 16, 2004, Book 1825, Page 388, Newton County, Georgia Records. MR/CA 8/3/21

OUR FILE no. 20-03359GA - FT17

PUBLIC NOTICE #200576 7/4,11,18,25

> NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER, NEWTON COUNTY

PURSUANT TO the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given Raymond McDougal and Debra Ann McDougal to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems Inc. as a nominee for FMF Capital LLC, it's successors and assigns dated 9/1/2006 and recorded in Deed Book 2414 Page 464 and modified at Deed Book 3980Page 218Newton County, Georgia records; as last transferred to or acquired by Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, not individually but solely as Trustee for RPMLT 2014-1 Trust, Series 2014-1, conveying the afterdescribed property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of \$128,000.00, 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 August 3. 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:

BEING THE property commonly known as 115 King James Court SE, Conyers, GA. 30013 PARCEL # 0006-233

ALL THAT tract or parcel of land lying and being in land Lot 109 of the 10th District, Newton County, Georgia being Lot 7, Christian Woods Subdivision, Phase Three, as per plat recorded in Plat Book 25 Page 174, Newton County, Georgia records, which plat is incorporated herein and made a part hereof by reference for a more particular and complete description. THE same property

conveyed to Raymond McDougal, by Deed from Alexandra Kathleen Gray, dated 5-24-02, of record in Book 1235, Page 571, in the Register's Office for Rockdale County, Georgia. 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

SAID PROPERTY is commonly known as 115 King James Court SE, Convers, GA 30013 together with all fixtures and personal property attached to and constituting a part of said property if any T best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party (or parties) in possession of the subject property is (are): Raymond McDougal or tenant or tenants

RUSHMORE LOAN Management Services, LLC is the entity or individual designated who shall have full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the mortgage. RUSHMORE LOAN Management Services, LLC PO BOX 52708

IRVINE, CA 92619 888.504.7300

NOTE, HOWEVER, that such entity or individual is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the

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 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. WILMINGTON SAVINGS

Society, FSB, not individually but solely as Trustee for RPMLT 2014-1 Trust, Series 2014-1 as agent and Attorney in Fact for Raymond McDougal and Debra Ann McDougal ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP, 15 Piedmont Center, 3575 Piedmont Road, N.E., Suite 500, Atlanta, Georgia 30305, 1208-3480A THIS LAW FIRM MAY BE ACTING

DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. 1208-3480A

PUBLIC NOTICE #200522 7/4,11,18,25

Name Changes

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

IN RE the name change of CAMRON MAURICE MCCOLLUM

CIVIL ACTION File # 2021-CV-1538-5

> NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE NAME OF ADULT

CAMRON MAURICE MCCOLLUM filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JULY 1, 2021 to change the name from CAMRON MAURICE MCCOLLUM to Asé KAM'RON KNIGHT Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition was filed DATE: 7/1/21

CAMRON MAURICE MCCOLLUM 25 PINEVALLEY LANE **COVINGTON, GA** 30016

PUBLIC NOTICE #200575 7/11,18,25-8/1 IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF

NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA IN RE the name change of

CIVIL ACTION File # 2021-CV-1610-2

CRISTIAN GODIREZ

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 MAYRA MONICA

BANDA

PETITIONER CIVIL ACTION File

MARTINEZ

2021-CV-11530-5 NOTICE OF PETITION TO

MAYRA MONICA MARTINEZ filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JUNE 30, 2021 to change the name from MAYRA MONICA BANDA MARTINEZ to PALOMA ITZEL BANDA Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file

CHANGE NAME OF ADULT

MAYRA

Petition was filed

DATE: 6/30/21

MONICA

objections within 30 days after the

MARTINEZ

35 AUSTIN TERRACES PORTERDALE, GA 30014

PUBLIC NOTICE #200574 7/11,18,25-8/1

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF

NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA IN RE the name change of

PETITIONER CIVIL ACTION File

NENE YAYA BALDE

2021-CV-1428-3

NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE NAME OF ADULT

NENE YAYA BALDE filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JUNE 14, 2021 to change the name from **NENE YAYA BALDE** to NENEYAYA BERETE Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition was filed DATE: 6-14-21

85 LOTUS LANE COVINGTON, GA 30016

NENE YAYA BALED

PUBLIC NOTICE #200528 7/4,11,18,25

Public Notice IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF

NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING,

PETITIONER, MICHAEL ROGERS; TABATHA CHRISTINE ROGERS: THE ESTATE OF HOWARD MITCHELL, UNKNOWN DECEASED; HEIRS OF HOWARD MITCHELL,

DECEASED; ANY OTHER PARTY, KNOWN OR UNKNOWN, WHO HAVE OR CLAIM, ANY RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT PROPERTY. DEFENDANT(S). CIVIL ACTION FILE NO. SUCV2020000646 NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

ANY OTHER PARTY, KNOWN OR UNKNOWN, WHO HAVE OR CLAIM, ANY RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT PROPERTY and THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF HOWARD MITCHELL, DECEASED YOU ARE hereby notified that the

above styled action seeking Quiet

Title, For Declaratory Judgment, and Foreclosure was filed against you in said Court on March 13, 2020 and that by reason of an Order for Service by Publication entered by the Court on June 9, 2021, you are hereby commanded and required to file with the Clerk of said Court and serve upon Plaintiff's Attorney whose address is: ANGELO VASILESCU

TERSUGH TIVZENDA

Crane & Partners, PLLC 10700 ABBOTT'S Bridge Road, Suite 170 **DULUTH, GA** 30097 AN ANSWER to the complaint within sixty (60) days of the date of the Order for Service by Publication. Witness the Honorable Cheveda D.

ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ Schneid,

McCamy, Judge of this Court. **THIS 10TH** day of June, 2021. CLERK, SUPERIOR Court **NEWTON COUNTY, Georgia**

PUBLIC NOTICE #200487

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA ALCOVY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STATE OF GEORGIA, EX REL LAYLA H. ZON DISTRICT ATTORNEY. ALCOVY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,

ONE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED ONE DOLLARS AND 00/100 CENTS (\$1,201.00) IN U.S. CURRENCY **DEFENDANT IN REM.**

RE: RICHARD DARNELL BELL

PURPORTED OWNER

ORDER OF DISTRIBUTION UNDER THE application of the

Honorable Layla H. Zon, District Attorney for the Alcovy Judicial Circuit for an Order of Distribution of the forfeited property pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A. §16-13-49(u) (4)(C), the Court orders as follows: L.THE ONE Thousand Two Hundred Dollars and 00/100 cents (\$1,201.00) in U.S.CW Tency (HEREAFTER "THE defendant

See LEGALS, B5

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LEGALS: Continued from B4

PROPERTY") HAS been forfeited herein to the State of Georgia. 2.THE DEFENDANT property shall pooled together (hereinafter "the pool") for distribution and the pool be distributed in the manner hereinafter

appearing: THAT Eighty Dollars (\$80.00) for court costs due to the Clerk of Superior Court of Newton County, shall be paid from the

THAT ninety Dollars (\$90.00) for publication costs shall be paid to the Covington News;

FROM balance remaining, ten percent (I 0%) thereof shall be paid to the Office of the District Attorney for the Alcovy Judicial Circuit to provide for payment of any and all necessary expenses for the operation of that office, in addition to any other expenses paid by the County to the

District Attorney's Office; THE balance shall be distributed to the governing authority of the city of Covington to then be immediately passed through to the Covington Police Department to be used for official law enforcement purposes pursuant to the provisions

of O.C.G.A. §16-13-49(u)(4)(D). **SO ORDERED** this 1st day of October, 2012.

MARIE E. GREENE Assistant

District Attorney Georgia Bar No. 538751 **ALCOVY JUDICIAL** Circuit WALTON COUNTY Judicial Center

303 SOUTH Hammond Drive- Suite **MONROE, GA** 30655 (770) 267-1548

PUBLIC NOTICE #200614 7/25-8/1

Public Sales Auctions

PUBLIC AUCTION

THE AUCTION will be held at: CHANCEY'S WRECKER Service,

539 MCDANIEL Mill Rd. SW CONYERS, GA 30012 TELEPHONE: 770-483-0698 FAX: 770-922-5223 THESE VEHICLES will be sold at PUBLIC AUCTIONS on the following

Saturday, August 7th, 2021

All auctions start promptly
@ 1:00PM. Registration begins @ 12 noon.

2012 WAUBFAFL4CN016625 CHEVROLET MALIBU 2009 1G1ZG57B49F219957 1977 CHEVY TRUCK CCE677V1469160000 2013 HYUNDAI ACCENT KMHCU4AE0DU339631

2017 **JOURNEY** DODGE 3C4PDDBG6HT592085 2001 TOYOTA SIENNA 4T3ZF13CX1U409492 2015 OPTIMA KNAGM4A76F5634587

ACCORD 2003 HONDA 1HGCM56683A062238 TOYOTA COROLLA 1999 1NXBR12EXXZ263382 LEXUS RX 2003 300 JTJGF10U730152106 **EXPLORER** 1999

1FMYU22E9XUA59493 PATHFINDER NISSAN 2007 5N1AR18W07C608629 HONDA **ACCORD** 1HGCM66503A045446

PUBLIC NOTICE #200590

PUBLIC SALE AUCTION

KING'S 24 Hour Towing and Repair

LLC 3195 HWY 81 South COVINGTON, GA 30016 PH.770-787-6243 8/14/2021 @ 10:00 AM

FORD BRONCO H0062HGD22263 BUICK RENDEZVOUS 2006 3G5DA03L56S602454 CHEVROLET CAVALIER 1G1JF52F647163842 2018 VOLKSWAGON TIGUAN 3VV1B7AX6JM009952 2006 CHEVROLET

TRAILBLA7FR 1GNDS13S662172360 1998 TOYOTA CAMRY 4T1BF22K8WU050403 2010 **BMW** 3SERIES WBAWR3C54AP463225

CHEVROLET 2000 EXPRESS 1GCEG15W8Y1102219 1998 FORD EXPEDITION 1FMPU18L2WLB84304 **DODGE** AVENGER 2013 1C3CDZABXDN702894

2003 KIA SEDONA KNDUP131736373433 LINCOLN TOWN CAR 1997 1LNLM81W7VY653769 2006 **HYUNDAI** SONATA

5NPEU46F26H014412 1999 FORD RANGER 1FTYR14XXXPB05006 2008 HONDA ACCORD 1HGCP368X8A054534

PUBLIC NOTICE #200613

Trade Names

NOTICE IS hereby given that NuSouth Drag Racing League, LLC is conducting business at the indicated address in the County of Newton under the trade name of: NuSouth Group, whose address is 110 Syracuse Lane, Covington, Georgia 30016. The type of business being conducted is any and all legal business in the State of Georgia and the Trade Name Registration Statement and Affidavit required by O.C.G.A. § 10-1-490 has been filed with the Clerk of the Superior Court ofNewton County, Georgia. THIS 12TH day of July 2021. By:

ATTORNEY FOR NuSouth Drag Racing League, LLC SWORN TO and subscribed to this

the 12th day of July 2021. By: Chris Quider, Notary Public

PUBLIC NOTICE #200587

TRADE NAME **REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY**

is 2131 STALLING STREET SUITE

TO WHOM It may Concern:
PLEASE BE advised that
JODASAPH LLC, whose address

2358 COVINGTON GA 30014 and the owner(s) of the certain business now being carried on at 2131 STALLING STREET SUITE 2358 COVINGTON GA 30014 in

the following trade name, to-wit: ON POINTE CONSULTANTS that the nature of said business BUSINESS COACHING This statement is made in conformity with

O.C.G.A. §10-1-490 et seq. requiring the filing of such statement with the Clerk of Superior Court of this

county THIS THE 14TH day of JULY, 2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200606

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The Covington Aeus

College Athletics

Texas, Oklahoma inquiring about joining SEC



Special to The Covington News

Texas and Oklahoma stole headlines during the 2021 Southeastern Conference Media Days this week when the Houston Chronicle reported that the two schools have been engaged in discussions about leaving the Big 12 Conference to join the SEC.

By RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

The last time Texas got a wandering eye for another conference it fueled a series of realignments in college sports that nearly killed the Big 12.

Texas is once again exploring free agency, stealing the headlines at the Southeastern Conference media days and cranking up speculation about another round of conference shuffling. And the Longhorns aren't alone in looking around.

There have been dis-

cussions between Texas and Oklahoma and SEC officials about switching conferences, but no formal invitations have been extended, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Wednesday night.

The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks were intended to be confidential, said officials from Texas initiated the discussion. The Houston Chronicle first reported the discussions.

Adding two members

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would give the powerhouse SEC 16 teams, the most in major college football. Losing two schools would be a devastating blow to the 10-member Big 12.

Questions about the report were greeted by a series of no comments from the primary parties involved, but no denials.

"I'm talking about the 2021 season," SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey said at SEC football media days.

Texas A&M athletic director Ross Bjork was adamant about not wanting the Longhorns, once the school's greatest rival, in the SEC.

"We want to be the only SEC program in the state of Texas," Bjork told reporters. "There's a reason why Texas A&M left the Big 12, to be standalone, to have our own identity.

And that's our feeling." SEC bylaws require at least three-fourths (11) of the members to vote in favor of extend-

ing an invitation to join. "The college athletics

landscape is shifting constantly," Oklahoma said in a statement. "We don't address every anonymous rumor."

A Texas statement offered a similar response: "Speculation always swirls around collegiate athletics. We will not address rumors or speculation."

Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby did not return messages from AP seeking comment. Just last week at Big 12 media days in Arlington, Texas, he talked about how conference realignment was no longer a top concern for the Big 12.

"Not to say it couldn't happen, but it's not one of the things that keeps me up at night," he said.

Any move to leave the Big 12 would be complicated by an agreement its schools made after the last round of realignment to hand their media rights over to the league through their current television deals. The grant of rights lines up with the Big 12's contracts with Fox and ESPN and runs through the 2024-25 school year.

Back in 2010, the then Pac-10 tried to woo Texas and five other Big 12 schools into the West Coast-based conference to form a Pac-16.

Texas stayed put and instead started its own television network. After another flirtation between Texas, Oklahoma and then-Pac-12 Commissioner Larry Scott, Texas A&M bolted for the SEC in 2012 and Missouri followed.

The Big 12, which had already lost Nebraska to the Big Ten and Colorado to the Pac-12, managed to hang on by inviting TCU and West Virginia.

College sports was turned upside down for about three years as conferences jockeyed to fortify themselves and schools scrambled to not be left out. The Big East was poached right out of the major college football business before finally reconstituting as the American Athletic Conference.

Life without Texas and Oklahoma would be uncertain — at best — for the other schools in the Big 12.

Even an unconfirmed report, prompted an assertive response from Oklahoma State.

"If true, we would be gravely disappointed," the Cowboys' statement said. "While we place a premium on history, loyalty and trust, be assured, we will aggressively defend and advance what is best for Oklahoma State and our strong athletic program, which continues

to excel in the Big 12 and nationally."

The mere possibility of adding Texas and Oklahoma to the strongest football conference in the country is certain to draw the attention of the other Power Five conferences. Especially as the leaders of those leagues look to expand the College Football Playoff from four to 12 teams.

Oklahoma is the only Big 12 team to make the playoff, doing so four times. The road to the CFP would be tougher through the SEC but a bigger field could provide more paths.

The SEC recently signed a new television deal with ESPN that gives the cable TV sports giant all of its rights. It is unclear if adding Texas and Oklahoma would create an opportunity for the SEC to increase the value of those contracts for all its members and not just provide enough to cover additions at the

current rate.

The SEC announced earlier this year it had distributed about \$45.5 million each to its members. The Big 12 schools received about \$10 million less from

its conference.
When Texas A&M
coach Jimbo Fisher was
asked about Texas and
Oklahoma being interested in the SEC during
his session with the media in Hoover, he said:
"I bet they would.""

"Listen, we've got the greatest league in ball," Fisher said. "That's the choices they make or what they do, I don't know, but I don't know how I feel about it."



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