

The Covington News

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021



TELLING THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE SINCE 1865

\$1



Dezaria Johnson

SPORTS:

ALL-AREA SOFTBALL

The News unveils its top performers from 2020, including MVP, Coach of the Year, top Newcomer and more.

See A8

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INSIDE:

Recipes to help chase away the chill, see **FOOD B1**
Unlikely high calorie-burning activities, see **HEALTH A10**

His Word

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 13:35, KJV

COVID-19: A Global Public Health Crisis

JAIL OUTBREAK

Newton sheriff confirms 22 inmates test positive for COVID-19

By TAYLOR BECK
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COVINGTON, Ga. — Twenty-two inmates within the Newton County Jail have tested positive for COVID-19, Newton County Sheriff Ezell Brown confirmed Friday, Jan. 8.

The positive cases marks the first time since the pandemic began in

March 2020 that an outbreak has occurred among inmates within the jail, according to the sheriff. Brown said he believes most of



Ezell Brown

the inmates potentially contracted the virus from staff members.

Brown said the outbreak was isolated to one section in the county's detention center. All inmates but one are showing "little to no symptoms at all," he said.

"Based on our contact tracing and investigation, we have reason to be-

lieve those 21 residents contracted the virus from staff," Brown said.

"We have one resident that was housed at another facility where an outbreak occurred prior to arriving at our detention center. As always, we test all incoming residents for COVID-19, and they

See JAIL, A3

Georgia General Assembly



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

From left, County Manager Lloyd Kerr and District 5 County Commissioner Ronnie Cowan listen as District 112 State Rep. Dave Belton, R-Buckhead, speaks during a pre-legislative session listening event Monday, Jan. 11, featuring members of the Newton County Legislative Delegation at the Historic Courthouse in Covington.

Absentee voting takes priority in state's 2021 legislative session

Three new legislators begin terms representing Newton County

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

ATLANTA — Half of Newton County's legislative delegation are beginning the 2021 session on a learning curve for their new jobs.

They also will begin their legislative careers as the Georgia General Assembly seeks to reestablish a sense of normalcy after a chaotic 2020 session that safety concerns surrounding COVID-19 delayed for months.

The other half of the county's

delegation includes the sole returning House member, District 112 State Rep. Dave Belton, R-Buckhead; and both its senators, District 17 State Sen. Brian Strickland, R-McDonough, and District 43 State Sen. Tonya Anderson, D-Lithonia.

Belton is beginning his fourth term. His district includes northern, eastern and southeastern Newton County and all of Morgan County.

He said he believed the General Assembly this year will focus on changes to tighten election laws to require more identification to receive an absentee ballot in response to the controversy sur-

rounding fraud allegations in 2020.

Absentee voting allows the voter to make choices on a paper ballot and mail or bring it to an election office. Its use significantly increased in 2020 in response to fears about the spread of COVID-19 in Georgia.

Belton said lawmakers want to address how to better secure the absentee system, which only requires a signature for verification of a voter's identity.

In-person voting on a machine requires the voter to show a photo ID and match a signature to cast a ballot.

See SESSION, A3

Porterdale

Savage, Wescott resign from council

Replacement for Post 3 appointed; special election set to fill Post 1

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

PORTERDALE, Ga. — Porterdale City Council voted Monday to fill one of its open seats and scheduled a special election to fill another in the wake of two of its five council members' resignations.

The remaining council members voted to accept the immediate resignations of Post 3 Councilman Tim Savage and Post 1 Councilwoman Niki Wescott.

They then voted to appoint city zoning commission chairman Michael Patterson to serve the remainder of Savage's term this year.

Savage, who was serving his third term, told council members he was resigning to devote more attention to his wife who is seriously ill.

His term was to end on Dec. 31 of this year. The Post 3 seat was up for election in the city's Nov. 2 election.

By law, council members could appoint someone to serve the remainder of an unexpired term if that term expired within 12 months.

Wescott was forced to resign her seat because she was moving to Florida, council members said Monday.

The council voted to set a March 16 date for a special election to fill Wescott's vacant seat, with qualifying set for February.

See RESIGN, A3



Tim Savage



Niki Wescott

Crime

Henderson charged with kidnapping, carjacking

By DAVID CLEMONS
The Walton Tribune

MONROE, Ga. — The embattled son of a Newton County commissioner faces more legal troubles after he allegedly tried to steal a car from a worker at a Monroe grocery store this weekend.

Jessie Cordavious Henderson, 27, of Covington, was in the Walton County Jail on Monday. He was being held on multiple felony charges.

Henderson is a son of District 4 Commissioner J.C. Henderson. Jessie Henderson has faced legal troubles several times in recent years.

Police in Monroe said a man who got in his SUV to head home from work Saturday night was surprised by a man who

See HENDERSON, A3



Jessie Henderson

Volume 156, No. 4



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Inside

Newton BOC honors locals during latest meeting

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Weather

Wednesday, Jan. 13
High: 53°; Low: 31°
Mostly sunny.

Thursday, Jan. 14
High: 55°; Low: 36°
Sunny.



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BOC appoints Sanders vice chair at first meeting

By TOM SPIGOLON
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COVINGTON, Ga. — Alana Sanders has moved up in the ranks of the Newton County Commission after only one meeting. The board voted 3-2 on Tuesday, Jan. 5, to appoint her as vice chairman after Sanders and veteran member J.C. Henderson said she was ready for the job leading meetings in the absence of the chairman this year.

Commissioners Demond Mason and Stan Edwards voted against the appointment. Henderson and Commissioner Ronnie Cowan voted for it, with Sanders providing the tie-breaking vote for herself.

The narrow vote of approval came after Chairman Marcello Banes recommended a more experienced commissioner serve in the position.

“I suggested Commissioner Sanders get in, get her feet wet, find out all the things that’s going on on the board,” Banes said. “No doubt in my mind that she’s capable of doing it.”

Sanders told Banes she was intelligent enough to do the job and already experienced in using Robert’s Rules of Order and parliamentary procedure to conduct meetings.

“I have done parliamentary procedure since 4-H in fifth grade,” she said.

The vice chairman presides over board meetings when the chairman is absent. It is a one-year appointment and normally rotates to each board member based on the numeric order of their district.

Duties of the chairperson include “preserving decorum and order at all meetings” and “calling for a recess at such times as deemed advisable,” according to the board’s “Rules for the Conduct of Business” adopted in 2016.

This year the vice chairman job rotated

to the District 3 board member after District 2 member Mason served in 2020.

Banes said he recommended Cowan of District 5 be appointed because District 4 member Henderson declined despite being the next person in the rotation.

Henderson said he supported Sanders’ appointment and believed she could handle the job because of such factors as her educational level. Sanders teaches college business courses.

He said Banes also was inexperienced in chairing board meetings when he began leading them after his 2016 election.

“We shouldn’t even be having this discussion,” Henderson said. “She is fully capable and very smart.”

Sanders, in her first meeting as the board’s District 3 member, said she had observed how the board conducted business in the six months since she won her commission seat from three-term incumbent Nancy Schulz in the Democratic Primary election in June.

She said service as vice chair would give any board member considering “moving up” the experience of leading the board.

“Never deter someone from learning,” Sanders said.

Banes said he “agreed with her 100%.”

“We want to give you an opportunity to learn. Not saying that you can’t do it,” he said.

Mason said he knew Sanders had the intelligence to do the job but opposed her appointment because she needed to be more familiar with her job as commissioner before taking on more responsibility.

“I think any new commissioner that comes on the board — it’s their objective to fulfill their immediate elected role, understand that role, get comfortable in that



Special to The Covington News

The Newton County Board of Commissioners Tuesday, Jan. 5, honored Doster “Dos” Harper of Covington for being named the National FFA President for 2020-2021. From left are, first row, Andrew Pollard, Delano Harper, Linda Harper, Lance Harper, Dos Harper, Debbie Harper, Sam Harper, Carole Doster, Doug Doster and Marcus Pollard; second row, Chairman Marcello Banes and County Manager Lloyd Kerr; and, back row, Commissioners Stan Edwards, Demond Mason, Ronnie Cowan, Alana Sanders and J.C. Henderson.



Special to The Covington News

The Newton County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, Jan. 5, honored Mansfield resident Lewis Banks for being named the Georgia County Agents Association’s 2020 Outstanding Young Farmer. From left are, first row, County Agent Ashley Best of the UGA Extension Service; and Brittany and Lewis Banks; second row, Chairman Marcello Banes and County Manager Lloyd Kerr; and, back row, Commissioners Stan Edwards, Demond Mason, Alana Sanders, Ronnie Cowan and J.C. Henderson.

role, and then take on additional leadership roles on the board,” Mason said.

“I know when I was elected in 2018, I had to get comfortable in 2019 and I wasn’t appointed as vice chair until 2020,” he said.

However, County Attorney Megan Martin said she recommended the board not diverge from the order they had established for appointment to the position. Cowan then made a motion to appoint Sanders.

In other action, the county commission:

- Extended the mask ordinance in unincorporated Newton County and in county-owned

facilities countywide through June 30.

- Denied a request from new Tax Commissioner Marcus Jordan to stop requiring county commission approval before waiving penalties or interest for failure to pay property taxes if done for reasonable cause rather than willful neglect or disregard for the law.

- Approved an intergovernmental agreement with the city of Covington for extension of fiber optic cable for expansion of 911 emergency service from Covington Fire Station No. 22 to a water tower adjacent to the General Mills plant off Alcovy Road; and

from Lakeview Drive to a cell phone tower off Williams Brothers Drive in Covington.

The county will provide \$57,000 and the city \$28,000 of the total cost, said County Manager Lloyd Kerr.

- Unanimously reappointed County Clerk Jackie Smith for a one-year term.

- Honored Doster “Dos” Harper of Covington for being named the National FFA President for 2020-2021; and Mansfield resident Lewis Banks for being named the Georgia County Agents Association’s 2020 Outstanding Young Farmer.

- Appointed Lloyd Jackson as the new Dis-

trict 3 member on the county Planning Commission and reappointed Vivian Richardson as District 4 member and Ernie Smith as District 1 member. Other members are Landis Stephens (chairman), Alan Millhouse (District 2) and Jody Smith (District 5).

- Appointed Victoria Redding as the new District 3 member on the county Board of Zoning Appeals and reappointed James Russell as the District 4 member and Larry Corban for District 1. Other members are Dr. Nick Hathorn (chairman), Darren Wiggins (District 2) and Scott Jay (District 5).

OBITUARIES

Billie Sue Bowen

Caldwell & Cowan
Funeral Home

Billie Sue Bowen, of Covington, passed away Thursday, January 7, 2021, at the age of 77. Loving and selfless, Mrs. Bowen was a natural caregiver — she adored taking care of others, especially her brothers and their wives. She was simple, generous, outgoing, and always looking “sharp”. Mrs. Bowen enjoyed cooking, being a people person, and had a special place in her heart for her dogs. She was preceded in death by her parents, William and Mamie Sue Duvall; first husband, Wade Knight; second husband, Sammy Bowen; brothers, Nunaly Hopkins, Don Hopkins, Jimmy

Duvall; step-son, Joe Bowen; nephew, Kenny Duvall.

Survivors include her step-daughters, Rhonda Knight and husband, David, Darlene Burt and fiancé, Ken Brewer; step-sons, Jack Knight and wife, Melody, Aubie Knight, and wife, Dana; grandchildren, Nicole Williams and husband, Josh, Dawson Knight, Logan Knight; great-grandchild, Walker Williams; brother, Fred Hopkins; nephew, Kevin Duvall and fiancée, Shelia Anderson; as well as numerous other loving family members.

A memorial service for Mrs. Bowen was held Monday, January 11, 2021, 2 p.m., at the Chapel of Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home, 1215 Access

Road, in Covington, with Pastor Wilburn Hill officiating, and interment followed in Covington Mill Cemetery, in Covington.

CDC guidelines recommend social distancing (6 feet apart) and wearing of masks while in public. Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home requests that you observe these recommendations while in our funeral home attending visitations and/or services. In addition, gatherings are limited to 50 persons or less in our facility at one time. Please honor these restrictions for the safety of the family, yourself, and our staff.

Visit www.caldwellandcowan.com to place online condolences.

Hazel Edge

Caldwell & Cowan
Funeral Home

Hazel Edge of Covington, passed away Sunday, January 10, 2021, at the age of 75. Mrs. Edge attended services at Shiloh United Methodist Church where she was a member. Her family friends would say that she knew everyone in the county and was known by many as “Aunt Hazel”. She enjoyed cheering on the Georgia Bulldogs and loved eating peppermint ice cream. Mrs. Edge was preceded in death by her parents, Joe Silas “Sim” and Ethel Mae Johnson.

Those left to cherish her memory are her loving husband of 49 years, Robert Edge; brother, Marvin Johnson; brother-in-law, Larry M. Edge; nieces and nephews, Jody L. Edge and wife, Toni, Stacy L. Edge and wife, Jody, Michael L. Johnson, Lauren Anthony and husband, Dan, Michael Steadham; great-niece, Alexis Edge; great-great-nieces and great-great-nephews, Carson Anthony, Annie Anthony, Ella Anthony, Macen Edge; as well as other loving family members.

A funeral service for Mrs. Edge was held Tuesday, January

12, 2021, 2 p.m., at the chapel of Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home, 1215 Access Road, in Covington with Rev. Mike Wadley officiating and interment followed in Lawnwood Memorial Park. Flowers are accepted, or donations may be made to Susan G. Koman For the Cure, 4840 Roswell Rd., Memphis, TN 38105 <https://www.komen.org/how-to-help/donate/memorial-giving/>

Visit www.caldwellandcowan.com to place online condolences.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

HEALTH CARE



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www.shopsneakerasylum.com

Newton County's First Baby of 2021



Special to The Covington News

Piedmont Newton Hospital delivered its first baby of 2021 on Saturday, Jan. 2. Meet Maya Burgamy! Daughter of Heather and Nick Burgamy, Maya weighed in at 8 pounds and 4 ounces, and measured 19 inches. Congratulations to the Burgamys!

JAIL:

Continued from A1

are placed in quarantine for 14 days then are retested before being placed in any other form of population. Unfortunately, the results came back positive for the resident who arrived from the facility where an outbreak occurred. The resident showed more symptoms than the other 21 residents who tested positive ... The resident, who was transported to us from another facility, is currently quarantined in a zero-pressured unit and receiving special attention as a result of his symptoms.”

Due to the outbreak, Brown said he ordered movement be restricted within affected areas and increased the medical staff to provide “round-the-clock attention” to the

COVID-19-positive inmates.

“We regret that this situation occurred, but we are no different from the normal population within the county who tested positive for COVID-19,” Brown said. “From last March up until [Thursday, Jan. 7], we have not experienced a single COVID-19 case in our detention center, and for that we are blessed.”

The mother of an inmate reached out to *The Covington News* on Friday morning claiming her son and others were not being treated properly. Brown said this claim was not true. Protocols in place that took away phone privileges were to protect other inmates and stopping the spread of

the virus, he said.

“I send my regards to the mother who called with concerns about her loved one and not being able to bring him chicken noodle soup, as requested, and to visit for a physical hug,” Brown said. “Her loved one, who is the resident housed in the zero-pressured area, has access to all needs, with the exception to phone services. Keep in mind that the resident cannot leave the zero-pressured area due to the fact he could infect other residents and staff.”

Brown also dispelled any rumors of wrongdoing or the withholding of information and assured full transparency.

“We are, in no way, hiding information from the public regard-

ing the COVID-19 outbreak in our detention center,” he said. “We have never once attempted to hide information, and we are not going to start today. We believe in the highest level of transparency. And these are the facts, regardless of whatever information is being circulated online about this outbreak.”

Following Brown’s statement, the daughter of a second inmate said Monday, Jan. 11, the sheriff wasn’t keeping his word about being transparent.

After speaking with her father, Casey Bennett told *The Covington News* her father claims inmates are not getting properly tested. Rather than each person being tested before entering the facility, inmates’

temperatures are checked but they are not tested if considered normal, she said.

She also feared for her father’s health, noting the 46-year-old inmate had suffered two heart attacks. All Bennett wants for her father and other inmates is to be well taken care of, she said.

Bennett echoed the concerned mother of an inmate, claiming Brown was trying to keep the outbreak quiet and “make the situation look better than it is.”

“I realize my dad’s in jail and the people in there have done some bad things, but they’re humans and COVID is not something to mess around with,” she told *The Covington News* in an exclusive phone interview. “Jail is the

worst place someone could get COVID.”

When *The Covington News* reached out Monday evening for a response to Bennett’s claims, Newton County Sheriff’s Office Communications Officer Caitlin Jett said the sheriff stood by his initial statement.

“The safety and health of all residents and staff are always our top priority,” she said. “Again, we regret this happened, but we are no different from the normal population within the county who tested positive for COVID-19. We strongly believe that the residents are receiving better care at the Newton County Detention Center than they would anywhere else.”

SESSION:

Continued from A1

He said many constituents in his two-county district told him they believed suspected absentee ballot fraud tainted the 2020 elections.

“I’ve received thousands of emails about this — people are very furious,” Belton said.

He said the General Assembly may consider Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger’s request to end no-excuse absentee ballot applications.

A Republican-controlled General Assembly changed state law in 2005 to allow the method of voting, which allows Georgians to request to vote by absentee ballot even if the voter is not challenged

physically or by age or geography.

House Speaker David Ralston, however, said he does not favor changes to no-excuse absentee ballot requests.

Belton also said he does not foresee lawmakers in 2021 changing the way the Secretary of State is chosen because such an act would require a referendum to change the state constitution.

Ralston had suggested the General Assembly, not voters, choose the Secretary of State in the wake of the controversies surrounding Georgia’s election system and criticism of Raffensperger.

President Donald Trump and members of his own party sharply criticized Raffensperger, who is a Republican, and both U.S. senators called for him to resign in 2020 for not addressing alleged voter fraud Trump said led to his defeat in Georgia.

No hard evidence has been found to substantiate any claims of fraud in the absentee ballot system.

Also during the 2021 session, Belton said he also foresaw lawmakers working to approve the remaining money needed for \$2,000 teacher pay raises Gov. Brian Kemp promised in his gubernatorial campaign after lawmakers approved only

half of the amount needed last year.

Three freshmen House of Representatives members representing parts of Newton County who were elected Nov. 3 joined Belton, Strickland and Anderson in being sworn in to new terms Monday, Jan. 11, at the State Capitol in Atlanta.

They included District 113 State Rep.-elect Sharon Henderson, D-Covington; District 109 State Rep.-elect Regina Lewis-Ward, D-McDonough; and District 110 State Rep.-elect Clint Crowe, R-Jackson.

Henderson, who is the only Newton County resident in the delegation, defeated

five-term incumbent Rep. Pam Dickerson in the June Democratic Primary for the District 113 seat.

Henderson’s district covers part of northwestern Newton County.

Lewis-Ward defeated four-term incumbent Republican Dale Rutledge for the District 109 seat in the General Election. District 109 includes part of western Newton County

Crowe defeated Democrat Ebony Carter for the District 110 seat in the General Election after incumbent Andrew Welch did not seek re-election. District 110 includes southwestern and western Newton County.

RESIGN:

Continued from A1

They were required to call a special election to fill the Post 1 seat because its term of office ended in more than 12 months. Wescott was elected in November 2019 and her term was to expire in December 2023.

Deadline for qualifying as a candidate for the Post 1 seat is set for Feb. 19, which is 25 days before the election.

The two resignations left only three voting members — the minimum number required for the five-member board to conduct business during a meeting. Mayor Arline Chapman only votes in case of a tie vote by the council.

One member, Mike Harper, was forced to attend Monday’s meeting virtually because he and his wife were recovering after testing positive for COVID-19.

“It’s no joke,” Harper told council members. “This is rough stuff.”

In a related action Monday, the council voted to set the qualifying fee for the city’s Nov. 2 election for Post 3, 4 and 5 council seats at \$72.

Also Monday, the council decided not to consider a proposal to waive its occupational tax on businesses for 2021 after hearing it will cost the city \$5,500 in revenue.

Councilman Chambers said he would not stand in the way if other council members wanted to implement it. However, he said he did not believe the loss of the revenue would be worth the small benefit \$100 would give individual business owners.

“I would not lie down in the road and prevent this,” he said. “(But) I really don’t think it will make a differ-

ence.”

Porterdale City Council also Monday:

- Asked audience members for names of at least two nominees for vacant positions on the city zoning commission, both to fill a vacancy and to replace Patterson, who was the chairman.

- Heard from City Manager Frank Etheridge who said a new municipal court clerk is being trained to replace Martha Cain, whose last day in the position is Friday.

He added that the police department should be fully staffed soon when two new officers complete their training.

- Appointed Councilman Lowell Chambers as mayor pro-tem. The position chairs meetings in the absence of the mayor, among other duties.

Tom Spigolon news editor

Legalized gambling poses real benefits

The MegaMillions drawing Tuesday, Jan. 12, paid out \$615 million to the winner — if there was one.

The odds of any one ticket holder winning it was one in 302 million, but the odds of winning any of the Mega Millions prizes was one in 24.

Who hasn't been in a hurry to buy something at a convenience store and gotten behind someone taking their time and sampling the many lottery products available?

Or gone to any of the greyhound tracks which were readily available to take vacationers' cash on trips to Florida?

I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee, in a state in which gambling was illegal. Just over the Mississippi River, in West Memphis, Arkansas, Southland Greyhound Park was happy to take Tennesseans' money.

At one point while I was growing up, legal types opined that even giving cash prizes to the ladies, like my grandmother, from bingo winnings at churches was in violation of Tennessee's constitutional ban on winning cash on games of chance.

So, when our state approved the Georgia Lottery in the 1990s, Tennesseans rushed to buy fists full of tickets from Georgia stores near the state line — so much so that Tennessee approved its own lottery in the 2000s.

Now, advocates for bring-

ing legalized gambling to Georgia will be back at the Capitol in Atlanta this month to tell lawmakers, again, about the financial benefits casinos, horse racing and sports betting will bring our state.

The Capitol Beat News Service says legislation authorizing online sports betting in Georgia has the best odds of advancing this year.

"It's the easiest one to pass," state Rep. Ron Stephens, R-Savannah, told the news service.

Stephens is chairman of the House Economic Development and Tourism Committee. "It clearly does not require a constitutional amendment. ... It's just a matter of us giving the [Georgia] Lottery Commission direction and authority they already have," he said.

Proponents have been trying to convince lawmakers to legalize casino gambling and parimutuel betting on horse racing in Georgia for almost a decade. Two-thirds majorities in the state House and Senate are required to approve constitutional amendments and put them on the statewide ballot — and those majorities have not materialized yet.

Sports betting only requires simple majorities to get through the two legislative chambers because it could be accomplished simply by amending the law that created the Georgia Lottery during the 1990s, proponents say.

"Sports betting also enjoys the advantages of being a relative newcomer to the debate, having been taken up in the General

Assembly for the first time during (the 2020) session. Lawmakers haven't had time to grow tired of talking about it," the news service said.

Atlanta's four professional sports teams are backing the plan as a way to generate more fan interest, especially to offset some of the losses from shortened seasons and limited attendance because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Braves, Falcons, Hawks and Atlanta United even formed a coalition last winter to lobby on the legislation's behalf, the news service reported.

"Increasingly, the cellphone is the primary means of entertainment for younger fans," said Billy Linville, spokesman for the Georgia Professional Sports Alliance. "[The teams] have to engage them or they'll go elsewhere."

They also note sports betting is legal in nearly 24 states. It produced \$131.4 million, or more than \$4 million per day — in wagering last month in Tennessee after legislation legalizing sports betting took effect Nov. 1.

In New Jersey it led to \$4.55 billion in wagering — with \$3.8 billion of that bet online.

Proposed legislation in Georgia will call for dedicating 20% of the proceeds from sports betting in Georgia to the HOPE Scholarships program, the news service reported.

The program was kept solvent by the Legislature and former Gov. Nathan Deal in 2011 as increasing student enrollment and tuition costs threatened its

solvency.

State Sen. Brandon Beach, R-Alpharetta, said the state is going to have to find different revenue sources than Coin-Operated Amusement Machines and the lottery which, despite producing more than \$4 billion a year in revenue, is unable to fund the HOPE scholarship.

Other lawmakers like Rep. Alan Powell, R-Hartwell, chairman of the House Regulated Industries Committee, would like to put money generated by casinos in Georgia toward health care.

This state needs the money any or all forms of gambling will generate.

Part of the state's portion of gambling proceeds could go to help low-income families to cover when they can't when their children receive the HOPE Scholarship, as Democrats have expressed.

Competition could hurt the lottery program's revenues but I don't see how the audiences for each are exactly the same.

If some kind of education program can be enacted to mandate that people be informed about the potential for addiction to gambling, it would enhance it greatly for me.

I think it's time Georgia finally seriously consider approval of something this year — even if it's only sport gambling which is being done anyway.

Tom Spigolon is news editor of The Covington News. He may be reached at tspigolon@covnews.com.

Letters to the Editor

Reader wants healing, unity after US Capitol events last week

Dear Editor:

I too am very concerned about the state of affairs across the United States of America, but especially in Georgia and particularly in Newton County.

It is obvious to me that continuing to talk past each other has gotten us nowhere except where we are this Jan. 9, 2021.

I would like to have the opportunity to actually communicate with my fellow Newtonians, not to try to have my ideas prevail, or to change my fellows' minds, but rather to have a dialogue, person to person, human to human. My wish is to reconstruct the social fabric that has been intentionally torn asunder so that those of us who claim to be followers of Christ can remember what loving our neighbors as we love ourselves means and the point of the moral of the Good Samaritan.

At the very foundation of each of us is a human being endowed with the gift of life from God.

Publisher Taylor Beck asked in his Jan. 9 editorial "What will it take for us to live out our namesake as the United States of America?" I am asking you if you are willing to help establish communication across our divided, citizenry holed-up in our comfortable, ego and ideology supporting cocoons?

In order to perceive our fellows as members of our society, we first have to acknowledge each other as fellow worthwhile individuals.

JJ Hayden
Covington

David Carroll columnist

Columnist remembers Charley Pride and "Mary Ann"

All right, let's get this column started. Who wants to talk politics?

How about a show of hands.

Nobody? Don't you want to

know why I think those runoff elections turned out as they did? You know, how one side

encouraged people to go to the polls, and the other side said, "Nah, don't bother, it's all rigged."

Don't you want me to remind you that Georgia gets to do this all over NEXT YEAR, with the governor's race and the Raphael Warnock Senate seat on the ballot again?

This means you have approximately 90 days of peace before the next round of toxic commer-

cials begins.

Aren't you curious about my thoughts on Joe Biden, Donald Trump, Mitch McConnell, Bernie Sanders, Chuck Schumer, Nancy Pelosi, and why you have to be at least 75 to be a government leader?

Still no show of hands. I can't blame you. We could all use a sanity break. Most folks just wish Congress would show up one day, vote to print more money, deliver our supersized stimulus checks directly to our recliner, and then take a lengthy, quiet recess.

In the meantime, some other things happened in recent weeks. In lieu of politics, I will use this space for other topics.

First, let me pay tribute to Charley Pride, the first Black country singer, who conquered all odds to hit it big in the 1960s. I am glad I met him, with one in-person chat, and one phone conversation. I once wrote a column about him, and a mutual friend was kind enough to send it to him. I had written that he was underappre-

ciated, and I expressed amazement that no one had done a Charley Pride biographical movie.

His manager told me that he loved the column, so I requested a telephone interview with him. A few weeks later, I got the thumbs-up. I was told, "You can call him tomorrow at 1:30, but you only get 15 minutes, because he will need to rest up for a show in the evening." That worked out fine for me, because I would need to start working on my daily newscast at 2:30.

The next day, I called him at 1:30 sharp. He answered, and I immediately began thanking "Mr. Pride" for taking a few minutes out of his day to talk to a small-town yokel like me. He stopped me mid-sentence. "Well first, you have to call me Charley, there ain't no Mr. Pride here." He reminded me that yes, he did have a show that night, so he couldn't talk for a long time, but he was happy to oblige.

What followed was one of my favorite interviews. My new friend "Charley" was eager to chat. His wife Rozene was nearby, and

if he couldn't remember a name or a song title, she was ready and willing to help. At the time of our conversation, he was 83. Officially, according to the Country Music Hall of Fame, he was 79. He filled me in on how he lied about his age when he was playing minor league baseball. He figured he would have a better shot at getting a contract if the team thought he was 17, instead of 21. He would have more "good years" ahead of him. That's when we began identifying his birth year as 1938 instead of 1934, and the later date is engraved on his Hall of Fame plaque. As he told me with a laugh, "I guess that plaque will always be wrong, but it's too late to change it now."

He asked me a couple of times if I remembered a certain song, and I didn't, so he would sing it to me. If I never achieve anything else, which is quite likely, I can always say that I got Charley Pride to sing to me, several times on the phone.

Our scheduled 15-minute chat grew to an hour and beyond, and I actually had to

wrap it up due to my own time constraints. I think he really enjoyed it, and I know I did. By the way, he kissed the same angel good morning for 64 years, because Rozene was with him until he passed away on Dec. 12.

We also lost Dawn Wells, best known as Mary Ann on "Gilligan's Island" just a few days later. I met her in 2005 at a Chattanooga high school where she was visiting with prospective young actors. She was charming and talkative. When my photographer said, "Young lady, just stand right here," she said, "Thanks, and by the way, I'm 67!" She looked a few decades younger, and when we finished, she came in for a hug.

I didn't mind one bit. It's always a pleasure to meet a celebrity who's just as nice as you had hoped.

David Carroll is a Chattanooga news anchor. He may be reached at rادیوت2020@yahoo.com.

The Covington News

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LEGALS

Public Notices

Abandoned Vehicles

PURSUANT TO OCGA 40-11-1(1), Shenitra Motley states that the following vehicle has been abandoned (abandoned February 2020) and will be sold at a later date.
2003 ACURA MDX Touring
VIN # 2HNYD18953H536758

SHENITRA MOTLEY
215 BETTY Ann Ln,
COVINGTON, GA 30016
(770) 713-2306

PUBLIC NOTICE # 117765
01/13,20

Debtors Creditors

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS

ALL CREDITORS of the estate of **ELIZABETH BODEN MCGEHEE** deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned.
THIS 7TH day of January, 2021

ELIZABETH HATHORN McGehee
EXECUTOR OF THE Estate
OF ELIZABETH Boden McGehee
C/O ROBERT Stansfield, Esq.
GREER, STANSFIELD & Turner, LLP
P.O. BOX 1617
COVINGTON,GEORGIA 30015
(770) 786-4390

PUBLIC NOTICE #117787
01/13,20,27-2/3

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS

ALL CREDITORS of the estate of **JOSEPH BRADFORD WRIGHT, III** deceased, late of Newton County, Georgia are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned.
THIS 7TH day of January, 2021

KERRY LAU Wright
EXECUTOR OF THE Estate
OF JOSEPH Bradford Wright, III
C/O ROBERT Stansfield, Esq.
GREER, STANSFIELD & Turner, LLP
P.O. BOX 1617
COVINGTON, GEORGIA 30015-

Fun by the Numbers

Here's How It Works:


Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

							5	7
6	3							8
9					5	1		
		3		7				
				4				5
5		2			6		9	
	9	4					1	
				9		8		3
1					7			

Level: Intermediate

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

6	1	5	3	7	4	2	8	9
8	4	2	9	5	1	7	6	3
9	7	3	2	6	8	5	1	4
4	3	8	5	2	7	6	9	1
7	2	6	4	1	9	8	3	5
1	5	9	8	3	6	4	7	2
2	8	1	7	9	5	3	4	6
3	9	4	6	8	2	1	5	7
5	6	7	1	4	3	9	2	8



CITY OF COVINGTON
JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The City of Covington is currently accepting applications for the position of **Tree Trimmer** in the **Electric Department** with a starting hourly rate of \$16.01 to a maximum hourly rate of \$23.50 depending upon qualifications. This position performs tree clearance/pruning work to cut and remove trees, limbs, branches, brush and other obstacles in the close proximity of electric lines operating at voltages of 12,470 or more, and elsewhere on City streets and other property where required. Minimal education and experience qualifications include graduation from high school or GED equivalent, minimum of two (2) years' experience in tree clearance/pruning work (at least one of which should have been at the level of trimmer or better), and minimum of one-year experience in bucket work. Any equivalent combination of relevant education and work experience will be considered. Qualified applicants may apply via our website by downloading an application packet at www.cityofcovington.org or may apply in person (**Drive-thru only**) at the City of Covington, 2194 Emory Street, Covington, Georgia 30014. This position will remain open until 4:00 p.m. on Monday, January 25, 2021. The City of Covington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

1617
(770) 786-4390

PUBLIC NOTICE #117786
1/13,20,27-02/3

executed by **James F. Moss, Jr.** to New Century Mortgage Corporation dated May 24, 2005, and recorded in Deed Book 1920, Page 340, Newton County Records, said Security Deed having been last sold, assigned, transferred and conveyed to Deutsche Bank National Trust

Foreclosures

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER

BECAUSE OF a default under the terms of the Security Deed

Company, as Trustee, for Carrington Mortgage Loan Trust, Series 2005-NC3 Asset Backed Pass-Through

CERTIFICATES, SECURING a Note in the original principal amount of \$93,500.00, the holder thereof pursuant to said Deed and Note thereby secured has declared the entire amount of said indebtedness due and payable and, pursuant to the power of sale contained in said Deed, will on the first Tuesday, February 2, 2021, during the legal hours of sale, before the Courthouse door in said County, sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash, the property described in said Deed, to-wit:

ALL THAT tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 199, 9th Land District of Newton County, Georgia, and being shown as 1.171 acres on Moss Road on that plat of survey for James F. Moss Jr. prepared by Knight Surveying, Inc. and certified by John Elwin Knight, Georgia R.L.S. No. 1945; said plat being dated February 8, 2000, revised May 30, 2000, and being recorded in Plat Book 34, Page 89, Public records of Newton County, Georgia, and said plat by reference thereto being incorporated herein and made a part hereof for a more particular description of the property hereby conveyed.

SAID PROPERTY is known as **118 Moss Road, Covington, GA 30016**, together with all fixtures and personal property attached to and constituting a part of said property, if any.

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

THE PROCEEDS of said sale will be applied to the payment of said indebtedness and all expenses of said sale as provided in said Deed, and the balance, if any, will be distributed as provided by law.

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 secured creditor.

THE PROPERTY is or may be in the possession of James F. Moss, Jr., successor in interest or tenant(s).

DEUTSCHE BANK National Trust Company, as Trustee, for Carrington Mortgage Loan Trust, Series 2005-NC3 Asset Backed Pass-Through Certificates as Attorney-in-Fact for James F. Moss, Jr.

FILE NO. 08-003395
SHAPIRO PENDERGAST & HASTY,

LLP*
ATTORNEYS AND Counselors at Law
211 PERIMETER Center Parkway, N.E., Suite 300
ATLANTA, GA 30346
(770) 220-2535/HG
SHAPIROANDHASTY.COM
***THE LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.**

PUBLIC NOTICE # 117716
01/06,13,20,27

Public Hearings

NOTICE IS hereby given that after the passage of five (5) days from the publication of this notice, there will come before the Mayor and Council of the City of Covington, Georgia, the passage of an ordinance entitled:

"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE COVINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE, ENACTED AND ADOPTED ON THE 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2001, AS AMENDED BY PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS, TO AMEND CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 3 (SCHEDULES) OF CHAPTER 13.08 (ELECTRIC SYSTEM) OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

A COPY of said proposed ordinance is posted on the bulletin board at the City Hall, 2194 Emory Street, Covington, Georgia.
THIS 8TH day of January 2021.

THE CITY OF COVINGTON

AUDRA M. Gutierrez

CITY CLERK

PUBLIC NOTICE #117788
01/13

Trade Names

TRADE NAME
REGISTRATION
AFFIDAVIT
GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY

TO WHOM It may Concern:
PLEASE BE advised that **CRYSTAL CAMPBELL,**, whose address is 10755 Gum Creek Rd. Oxford, Ga 30054 the owner(s) of the certain business now being carried on at in the following trade name, to-wit: Southern Salvage that the nature of said business is: . Secondary Metal Recycler.
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 7th day of January 2021

PUBLIC NOTICE #117793
01/13,20

Sports betting front, center in renewed legalized gambling debate

By **DAVE WILLIAMS**
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Advocates for bringing legalized gambling to Georgia will be back under the Gold Dome next month, pitching the financial benefits of casinos, horse racing and sports betting together and separately.

But a betting man might give legislation authorizing online sports betting in the Peach State the best odds to advance.

“It’s the easiest one to pass,” said Georgia Rep. Ron Stephens, R-Savannah, chairman of the House Economic Development & Tourism Committee. “It clearly does not require a constitutional amendment. ... It’s just a matter of us giving the [Georgia] Lottery Commission direction and authority they already have.”

Efforts going back the better part of a decade to legalize casino gambling and pari-mutuel betting on horse racing in Georgia have been unable to muster the two-thirds majorities in the state House and Senate required to approve constitutional amendments and put them on the statewide ballot.

Supporters say sports betting, on the other hand, would only require simple majorities to get through the two legislative chambers because it could be accomplished simply by amending the law that created the Georgia Lottery during the 1990s.

Sports betting also enjoys the advantages of being a relative newcomer to the debate, having been taken up in the General Assembly for the first time during this year’s session. Lawmakers haven’t had time to grow tired of talking about it.

Sports betting has the backing of Atlanta’s four professional sports teams — the Braves, Falcons, Hawks and Atlanta United — which formed a coalition last winter to lobby on the legislation’s behalf.

The teams are counting on sports betting as a way to generate more

fan interest, particularly at a time when they have had to shorten seasons and limit attendance because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“Increasingly, the cellphone is the primary means of entertainment for younger fans,” said Billy Linville, spokesman for the Georgia Professional Sports Alliance. “[The teams] have to engage them or they’ll go elsewhere.”

Some new ammunition the sports alliance will bring to the 2021 debate is the revenue numbers sports betting is generating in the nearly two dozen states where it’s legal.

In Tennessee, online sports betting produced \$131.4 million in wagering last month — an average of more than \$4 million per day — after legislation legalizing sports betting took effect Nov. 1.

In 2019, the first full year of sports betting in New Jersey generated \$4.55 billion in wagering, with more than \$3.8 billion bet online.

Legislation backed by the sports alliance to be introduced into the General Assembly this winter will call for dedicating 20% of the proceeds from sports betting in Georgia to the HOPE Scholarships program.

The lottery-funded HOPE program covered the full tuition costs of eligible Georgia high-school students until 2011, when then-Gov. Nathan Deal pushed a cut in benefits through the General Assembly to keep the program solvent amid rising student enrollment and the increasing costs of tuition.

“We’ve got the COAM [Coin-Operated Amusement] Machines and the lottery drawings producing more than \$4 billion [a year] in revenue, and it’s not able to completely fund the HOPE scholarship anymore,” said state Sen. Brandon Beach, R-Alpharetta, who has been the legislature’s leading champion of horse racing. “We’re going to have to find different revenue sources.”

Other lawmakers are advocating other uses for the state’s share of

legalized gambling proceeds.

Rep. Alan Powell, R-Hartwell, chairman of the House Regulated Industries Committee said he’d like to put the revenue generated by casinos in Georgia toward “the No.-1 hole in the [state] budget: health care.”

House Democrats have expressed an interest in setting aside a portion of the state’s share of gambling proceeds for low-income families that can’t afford to cover the funding gap the 2011 cuts to the HOPE Scholarship opened up in the program, or for a new scholarship program to help young Georgians pay off their student loans.

Besides the financial argument, supporters of legalized gambling also argue that illegal gambling is generating billions of dollars in Georgia without the state seeing any benefit.

“All we’re going to do is capture the tax,” Stephens said.

“It’s time to bring it out of the darkness and into the light,” Linville added.

But Sen. Bill Cowsert, R-Athens, chairman of the Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee, said competition for Georgians’ limited entertainment dollars from legalized sports betting, casinos or horse racing could hurt the lottery program’s revenues.

Lawmakers also should consider how casinos, racetracks and/or online sports betting available at the fingertips might affect problem gamblers and their families, he said.

“We need to make certain we educate the gamblers what the risks are ... and do something to make sure they don’t hurt themselves,” Cowsert said.

The 2021 version of the legalized gambling debate should kick off early. Backers of all three options — sports betting, casinos and horse racing — say they plan to pre-file legislation during the first week of January. The 2021 session began Monday, Jan. 11.

Voters may decide time change debate

By **DAVE WILLIAMS**
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — Georgia Sen. Ben Watson doesn’t care whether the Peach State observes standard time all year or daylight saving time.

Watson, R-Savannah, a physician, just wants Georgians to pick one or the other because studies show switching back and forth every six months causes heart disease and sleeping disorders.

“I prefer either way,” he said. “Let’s quit changing it.”

Watson pre-filed two bills this month, one calling for a nonbinding advisory referendum asking Georgians whether they would rather the state observe standard time all year, daylight saving time all year, or whether they would rather continue switching between the two.

Under the other measure, Georgia would observe standard time all year, bypassing a referendum.

A third bill pre-filed this month by state Rep. Wes Cantrell, R-Woodstock, calls for observing daylight saving time all year.

The Senate passed legislation introduced by Watson last March calling for a nonbinding referendum on the issue. But the General Assembly shut down for three months shortly after that vote due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the measure died in the Georgia House of Representatives.

“It just got caught up in the pandemic, and I didn’t press it,” Watson said.

Only two states — Hawaii and Arizona — remain on standard time all year, as do the overseas U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Any state wishing to observe daylight time all year must seek congressional approval.

“My gut is most people would like to go to daylight time all the time,” Watson said. “It may be better to put it on the ballot and see if we can get some consensus.”

Valentine's Date Night

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The Covington News

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SPORTS

The Covington News

Chris Bridges correspondent

Memories of days gone by watching Phil Niekro

The recent passing of Hall of Fame pitcher Phil Niekro brought back a ton of childhood memories including those on the recreation ball field.



Niekro, who began playing for the Braves well before I was born and before the team starting calling Atlanta home, had a lengthy and just as successful career with his knuckleball, which baffled batters for multiple generations. Making his pro baseball debut with the Milwaukee Braves in 1964, Niekro would continue with the organization through its move to Atlanta. He was a major part of the team's magical 1982 season which began with 13 consecutive victories and a trip to the postseason.

Niekro was 17-4 in 1982 and won his fourth gold glove at the age of 43. Despite his age that season, "Knucksie" was nowhere near finished on the diamond. He would eventually play for the New York Yankees for two seasons as well as for the Cleveland Indians and the Toronto Blue Jays.

He was able to finish his career back in Atlanta and on Sept. 27, 1987, made his final appearance. He would retire at the conclusion of the season.

Niekro was somewhat of a mythical sports figure among my childhood friends. As young baseball players ourselves we were all in awe of his knuckleball and how effective he made it. We all tried to throw it as well, but none of us had the magic touch that Niekro did.

Even those among us who were pitchers in Little League Baseball failed miserably at throwing a knuckler. I remember during one summer recreation season, my father (our coach) told our pitchers not to try and throw like certain players we watched on television.

Growing up in the Atlanta area offered a great view of Niekro and his many accomplishments. Even when the team wasn't winning (which was most of the time outside of that 1982 season) the games were always must watching.

Whether I was at a friend's house or friends gathered at mine, we all made sure to be around the television set when the Braves began playing another game. Some of the more memorable times came when the Braves were playing on the West Coast which often meant a 10:30 p.m. game time.

On the weekends during sleepovers, it added to the mystique of watching our state's pro baseball team well into the early morning, even if it often meant a loss.

When Niekro took the mound there was always a chance for a win. Of course, Niekro had no control over how poor Atlanta was offensively. He could record 10 or 11 strikeouts but still get the loss in a 1-0 game.

Watching the Braves during the course of their marathon season was something we all enjoyed. As aspiring young players, we wanted to make those playing in the big time and immortalize them as much as possible even

See BRIDGES, A9

Prep Softball

Natalie Ray



ALL-AREA

Top performers from 2020 including MVP, Coach of Year, Pitcher of Year, Newcomer unveiled

By MASON WITTNER
mwittner@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — It became evident early on that the 2020 prep softball season was never going to be normal.

Less than a month into the campaign, Newton County's teams were forced to press pause when the school system suspended all athletics and extracurricular activities indefinitely due to COVID-19. For nearly two weeks following the suspension, it appeared as though the clubs might not get another opportunity to return to the diamond.

But the hiatus proved to be short-lived, granting the players and coaches permission to return to the field and continue their respective seasons as previously scheduled.

sons as previously scheduled.

The result was yet another strong showcase for the student-athletes in our area. Alcovy, Eastside, Newton and Social Circle represented Newton County well by producing memorable softball campaigns.

The Lady Tigers showed signs of development in a growing year with a roster that featured no seniors. The Lady Eagles adjusted to a higher classification and one of the toughest regions in the state by holding their own. The Lady Rams closed the gap between themselves and Eastside, proving to people that there's room for more than one powerhouse softball program in the county.

See ALL-AREA, A9

Prep Baseball

GHSAA releases rule changes for 2021 season

By MASON WITTNER
mwittner@covnews.com

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the GHSA recently announced a series of rule modifications ahead of the 2021 baseball season.

Among the most notable changes made to the rules is the prohibition of sunflower seeds in the dugout and on the field. This, coupled with the prohibition of pitchers "licking fingers, touching any part of their hands to the mouth, or blowing into their hands prior to delivering a pitch" is an effort to limit the spread of fluids during games.

The official GHSA release noted that recent alterations to rules were "meant to decrease potential exposure to respiratory droplets" through various measures.

Other special considerations and rule modifications include: enforcement of social distancing in dugouts, mandatory sanitization of equipment, restriction of on-field celebration following home runs or runs scored, prohibition of sharing bottles or beverages and elimination of postgame handshakes.

The use of face masks or coverings are recommended by the GHSA, but will not be mandatory. Similarly, the GHSA recommends — but will not enforce — the usage of face shields on catching and



Mason Wittner | The Covington News

The Georgia High School Association recently announced special considerations and rule modifications for the 2021 baseball season in response to COVID-19.

batting helmets.

A complete list of the league's considerations and modifications for the 2021 season can be seen online at GHSA.net.

The earliest date for GHSA baseball teams to begin practice is Monday, Jan. 18. Clubs are permitted to play regular season games starting Monday, Feb. 15.



CITY OF COVINGTON JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The City of Covington is currently accepting applications for the position of **Equipment Operator I** in the **Gas Department** with an hourly entry-level rate of \$15.54 to an hourly maximum rate of \$22.82 depending upon qualifications. This position requires the abilities and skills to operate and maintain heavy equipment used in the installation and repairs of the natural gas system, as well as transporting equipment and crews to the job-site. Required training and experience include graduation from high school or GED equivalent, the ability to read, write and perform mathematical calculations at a level commonly associated with the completion of high school or equivalent, and possession of a valid driver's license issued by the State of Georgia for the type of vehicle or equipment operated. **CDL Class A preferred. Must be able to obtain CDL within the first six months of employment.** Qualified applicants may apply by downloading an application via our website at www.cityofcovington.org or may apply in person (**Drive-thru only**) at the City of Covington, 2194 Emory Street, Covington, Georgia 30014. The position will remain open until 4:00 p.m. on Thursday January 14, 2021. *The City of Covington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

WAYSIDE AUCTION

Wayside Auction will be having a Miscellaneous sale Friday Jan. 8th 6:00 PM AND Saturday Jan. 9th at 3:00 PM at 22660 Main Street, Shadydale, GA 31085. Sellers need to be signed in 15 minutes before the auction starts. All sellers will draw for their selling spots. Sellers are allowed to sell any merchandise new or used as long as it falls under state guide lines. No guns, no alcohol, no tobacco and no taxidermy mounts. This will be our regular schedule for miscellaneous sales on Friday nights and Saturday afternoon. Any questions please call Billy or Valerie hope to see you there!!

Billy 678-972-4886 | Valerie 762-435-1026

Larry Kelley | Auctioneer | GAL License AV000614



Mason Wittner | The Covington News
Newton junior Hayden Pearson was named the All-Covington News Pitcher of the Year.



Mason Wittner | The Covington News
Virginia Tucker-Smith was named the All-Covington News Coach of the Year for her efforts leading the Lady Rams.



Mason Wittner | The Covington News
A phenomenal freshman campaign earned Dezaria Johnson All-Covington News Newcomer of the Year honors.

ALL-AREA:

Continued from A8

The Lady Redskins battled their way to a top-two seed in a new region, earning a trip to the postseason.

In the midst of distractions like student-athletes hadn’t seen in recent memory, Newton County’s softball players rose to the occasion. So, when it came time for The Covington News staff to piece together our all-area team, it wasn’t easy narrowing down selections. But, after in-depth analysis and discussion, we firmly believe the girls who received accolades were the ones most deserving of selection.

Without further ado, it’s an honor to present the 2020 All-Covington News Softball Team.

MVP — Natalie Ray (Eastside)

No player in the area meant more to her team this year than junior outfielder Natalie Ray.

Ray was as consistent as they come at the plate for the Lady Eagles. She posted a .487 batting average with a .566 on-base percentage, totaling 41 hits with nine doubles, seven triples and seven home runs. She was a tough out, but even tougher to take down on strikes as she closed out the year with just three strikeouts in 83 at-bats. She drove in 28 runs for Eastside with her bat, but also created numerous scoring opportunities with her feet by stealing 22 bases.

The Ole Miss commit showcased her speed and agility in the outfield as well, recording a .927 fielding percentage.

“Natalie is one of the most talented players I’ve had the opportunity to coach — that I’ve

been fortunate enough to coach — here at Eastside. She’s just an all-around athlete,” head coach Heather Wood said. “She is a player that came in right away as a freshman and made such an impact on our program. This season was no different.”

Shaken up by the stoppage of play early on, Ray took it upon herself to make each outing count. As a junior she knew she’d like get a chance to come back for another season, but she wanted to do everything she could to give the senior class a fitting send-off.

“I played every game like it was the last game because it could’ve been,” Ray said.

A club’s leadoff batter is responsible for setting the tone each game. Ray proved to be the consummate leadoff batter as her outstanding play, coupled with her vocal leadership, constantly made others around her better.

“Her numbers speak volumes and I think it just shows that she is one of the elite players in the country,” Wood said. “It shows by her stats, her work ethic and everything she pours into the game.”

Pitcher of the Year — Hayden Pearson (Newton)

In 2019, Pearson earned Co-Pitcher of the Year honors for a stellar sophomore campaign with the Lady Rams.

What did she have in mind for an encore performance? Utter domination.

The junior right-hander pitched 116 innings for Newton in the fall, striking out 78 batters while allowing just

60 earned runs for a 3.62 ERA. She threw a no-hitter against county rival Alcovy, went toe-to-toe with state powers Parkview and Grayson, and grew as a leader in the dugout as well as on the diamond.

“Hayden’s energy, whether it’s positive or negative, the girls feed off it. So, I tell her all the time that everything depends on her and the catcher. It starts with them,” Newton head coach Virginia Tucker-Smith said. “She has a huge impact on this program.”

Tucker-Smith lauded the junior for leaning into more of a leadership role in her first season as an upper-classman. While the seniors were the undoubted leaders of the club, Pearson took it upon herself to constantly push and encourage her teammates in practice and in games.

Despite her continued success, Pearson’ humility remains in tact. She deflected all questions about her personal success by shifting the credit to her teammates and coaching staff.

“I feel like our fall season was probably one of our best seasons since I’ve been here because of all the talent on our team,” Pearson said. “We were in a tougher region, and the coronavirus made everything different, but I think we stuck together and played really, really well.”

Whether she was setting the tone for the Lady Rams as a solid ace in the circle, or helping boost the offense with her .333 batting average in 101 plate appearances, Pearson proved to be a linchpin to success.

Coach of the Year — Virginia Tucker-Smith (Newton)

While it was a strong year for all softball teams in the area, perhaps no program was more successful in reaching its goals than the Lady Rams.

Now in her second stint at the helm, Tucker-Smith went into the 2020 season with the hopes of closing the gap between Newton and Eastside. She helped do just that, leading her team to their first win over the Lady Eagles since 2018 in late September.

Additionally, Newton collected a historic victory over defending state champions Locust Grove and Banks County, as well a thrilling extra-inning affair against Mountain View, before punching their ticket to the Class AAAAAAA state playoffs.

“I’m happy to see that the community as a whole has kind of realized that there’s some talent here at Newton, too,” Tucker-Smith said. “It’s always nice to say that you won all the county games. We had some impressive wins in our region and non-region schedules, too. I’m so proud of these girls and everything they were able to accomplish.”

Newcomer of the Year — Dezaria Johnson (Eastside)

Prior to the start of the 2020 season, Eastside’s Wood sang the praises of incoming freshman Dezaria Johnson. Wood said she and her staff didn’t want to put too much pressure on Johnson before she’d ever thrown a pitch at the varsity level, but they

all acknowledged that her ceiling for potential was sky-high.

It didn’t take very long for the rest of the world to realize what they saw in their young pitcher.

Johnson was thrust into the role of primary starter on Eastside’s staff at the start of the year. She didn’t cave but instead thrived under the pressure, registering 79 strikeouts in 112 innings of work en route to posting a 2.36 ERA and 9-9 record in the circle.

“Stepping on the mound my first game, I was so nervous. Being a freshman and being on varsity, I felt like there was a lot of pressure on my back,” Jonson admitted. “But as the season went on I felt relieved because I knew I had a strong defense behind me.”

Wood helped ease Johnson’s early-season jitters by imploring her to throw strikes and rely on the girls working behind her on defense. Once Johnson fully grasped this concept, the anxiety began to shed away.

“I think this year was so beneficial for her in her development as a pitcher and giving her the experience that she needs. Really, I’m thankful that we were able to finish the season because she got so many games under her belt,” Wood said. “We knew right away this summer — with her being so young and so inexperienced — we wanted her on the mound quickly. We wanted her in as many games as we can to really benefit her for the future and help her develop.”

Going forward

Johnson is looking to focus on being more consistent in the strike zone and increasing her endurance. She still has three years of growth and maturation left, but Newton County has already been put on notice about what’s to come.

All-Area First Team

Catcher: Heather Henderson, Eastside

First Base: Kyla Stroud, Newton

Second Base: Ashlyn Hoy, Alcovy

Third Base: Aulora Edwards, Newton

Shortstop: Lauren Burnett, Eastside

Outfield: Katelyn Anglin, Newton

Outfield: Alyssa Cruz, Eastside

Outfield: Halie Richardson, Social Circle

Pitcher: Aubrey Garrett, Social Circle

All-Area Second Team

Catcher: Kaitlyn Neely, Newton

First Base: Emma Hopper, Eastside

Second Base: Riley Hannah, Eastside

Third Base: Tara Poole, Social Circle

Shortstop: Alexa Wykoff, Social Circle

Outfield: Hayden Pearson, Newton

Outfield: Kelsey Ellis, Eastside

Pitcher: Lexie McDonald, Alcovy

Utility: Avery Bledsoe, Social Circle

All Area Honorable Mentions

Emma Thompson, Alcovy

Alexis Hernandez, Alcovy

Ty’Liah Hardeman, Newton

Tara Poole, Social Circle

Macy Langley, Social Circle

Kaylynn Scaffe, Social Circle

BRIDGES:

Continued from A8

if it didn’t improve our own game.

Days were spent swimming, fishing, riding motorcycles and go-carts and playing football in the yard or throwing the baseball around and connecting for home

runs over imaginary fences in someone’s backyard. “If he goes past that tree then it is an automatic home run,” is a phrase we repeated often.

It’s a shame by the time the Braves became an annual contender in 1991 that

Niekro was enjoying retirement. I never had the chance to meet him in person but all indications are he was someone who would sign every autograph that was requested and always had time for the fans.

We can only hope and assume the Braves will honor Niekro during the upcoming season. His remarkable career is certainly worth remembering. We were lucky to have him on “our team.”

Chris Bridges is a former sports editor for The Covington News. He welcomes feedback about this column at pchrisbridges@gmail.com.

Unlikely activities lead to high calorie-burning results

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
news@covnews.com

Burning calories is often a focal point of weight loss efforts. People go to great lengths to burn more calories, but they might be surprised to learn how many they can burn performing relatively routine physical activities.

Men and women also may be surprised to learn that they burn calories differently from one another. According to the Mayo Clinic, men usually have less body fat and more muscle than women of the same age and weight. As a result, men typically burn more calories than women, though body size and composition also affects how many calories a person will burn while performing a given activity. For example, a man who is larger and has more muscle than another man his age will burn more calories, even if both men perform the same activity with the same level of intensity.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture cites the following calorie-burning figures for a 154-pound, 5'10" man who performs certain physical activities. Women likely won't burn as many calories



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According to the Mayo Clinic, men usually have less body fat and more muscle than women of the same age and weight. As a result, men typically burn more calories than women, though body size and composition also affects how many calories a person will burn while performing a given activity.

performing these activities, but each activity can still be an effective way for men and women to burn more calories.

- Walking (3.5 miles per hour): In 30 minutes, a man can expect to burn 140 calories. A man who walks 4.5 miles per hour will burn approximately 230 calories.
- Hiking: A man will burn roughly 185 calories in 30 minutes of moderate-intensity hiking. Women won't burn as many calories, but

both moderate and vigorous hiking are great ways to burn calories regardless of a person's gender.

- Light gardening/yard work: A man will burn approximately 165 calories in 30 minutes performing light gardening/yard work, while he will burn roughly 220 calories performing

more physically taxing yard work like chopping wood. A 125-pound person will burn roughly 135 calories after 30 minutes of light gardening.

- Cycling: Men can burn roughly 145 calories cycling at 10 miles per hour or less for 30 minutes. That figure jumps to 295 calories when men ride at 10 miles per hour or faster. Healthline notes that a 125-pound person can burn roughly 210 calories in 30 minutes when riding between 12 and 13.9 miles per hour.
- Playing with children: Play sessions with the kids can help both moms and dads burn calories. Healthline notes that a 155-pound person may burn 149 calories in 30 minutes of playing with kids at moderate intensity, while a 125-pound person will burn roughly 120 calories in the same time.

No two individuals are the same, so it can be hard for men and women to pinpoint just how many calories they burn performing popular physical activities. But there's no denying that many of the activities adults engage in every day afford them ample opportunities to burn calories.

Common sprain injuries explained

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
news@covnews.com

Athletes and fitness enthusiasts often must contend with injuries. Proper technique and safety protocols can greatly reduce a person's risk for injury while competing or exercising, but no one can completely eliminate their risk of being injured while engaging in physical activity.

Many an athlete has experienced a sprain at one point or another. In fact, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons notes that sprains are among the most common soft-tissue injuries. Because of that, it can benefit athletes to learn about sprains so they're better prepared to confront one should they get hurt while competing or training.

What is a sprain?

According to the National Institute of Arthritis and Muscu-



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Not all sprains are the same, and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons notes some may be mild while others more severe.

loskeletal and Skin Diseases, a sprain is an injury to a ligament, the tissue that connects two or more bones at a joint. When athletes suffer a sprain, one or more of their ligaments are stretched or torn.

What's the difference between a sprain and a strain?

It's easy to mistake sprains with strains, or assume both injuries are the same. But unlike sprains, which affect the ligaments, strains are injuries to muscles or tendons. Tendons are the fibrous cords of tissue that connect muscle to bone. When a person has a muscle strain, a muscle or tendon is stretched or torn.

ligaments of the outer ankle. Sudden twists can result in a sprained knee, while sprained wrists are often the result of falling onto an outstretched hand.

Are there different types of sprains?

Not all sprains are the same, and the AAOS notes some may be mild while others more severe. The three categories of sprain are:

- Grade 1: Considered a mild sprain, a grade 1 sprain is marked by slight stretching and some damage to the fibers of the ligament.
- Grade 2: A grade 2 sprain causes partial tearing of the ligament and is marked by abnormal looseness in the joint when it moves in certain ways.
- Grade 3: Significant instability can result from a grade 3 sprain, which is characterized by a complete tear of the ligament.

No matter which type of sprain a person suffers, he or she is likely to experience pain, bruising, swelling, and inflammation. The intensity of these symptoms is linked to the grade of the sprain.

Sprains are an unfortunate side effect of physical activity. Learning to recognize sprains can help athletes better understand their bodies should they suffer an injury.

Importance of rest

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Regular exercise has been linked to a host of health benefits. People who exercise regularly can lower their risk for chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes, and routine exercise can improve mood and potentially delay the onset of cognitive decline.

As vital as physical activity is to a healthy lifestyle, there is such a thing as too much exercise. According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, rest is an important part of training. Without ample rest, the body does not have time to recover before the next workout. That lack of rest not only adversely affects performance, but also increases a person's risk for health problems, including injuries that can sideline athletes for lengthy periods of time.

Committed athletes may have a hard time recognizing when they are pushing themselves too hard, and the line between perseverance and overdoing it can be thin. Many athletes credit their ability to push themselves mentally and physically with helping them achieve their fitness goals and thrive as competitors. But it's vital that athletes learn to recognize the signs that suggest they're exercising too much. The USNLM notes that the following are some

signs of overdoing it with an exercise routine.

- An inability to perform at your established level
- Requiring longer periods of rest between workout sessions
- Feeling tired
- Feeling depressed
- Experiencing mood swings or irritability
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feeling sore muscles or heavy limbs
- Suffering overuse injuries such as runner's knee, achilles tendinitis, shin splints, and plantar fasciitis
- Loss of motivation
- Getting more colds
- Unintended weight loss
- Feelings of anxiety

The USNLM urges anyone experiencing these symptoms to rest completely for between one and two weeks. After that period of rest, the body should be fully recovered. However, if any of these issues linger after two weeks, seek the advice of a health care provider. A health care provider may recommend additional rest and/or conduct a series of tests to determine if an underlying issue is causing any of the aforementioned symptoms.

Rest is as vital to an effective exercise regimen as proper technique, ensuring the body has ample time to recover and reducing the risk of overuse injuries.

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When seeking recipes for cold days, consider those comfort foods that can be enjoyed warm to chase away the chill.

Chase away the chill

Sweet, decadent Croissant Bread Pudding perfect on any winter day

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
news@covnews.com

During the height of winter, people increasingly retreat indoors and look for something to within the warm confines of home. Plenty of activities can fit the bill, but some provide the rewarding prospect of a freshly made meal or dessert.

When seeking recipes for cold days, consider those comfort foods that can be enjoyed warm to chase away the chill. “Croissant Bread Pudding” is an ideal choice. Topped with a rum-flavored sauce, it’s sweet and decadent for all the right reasons. Enjoy this recipe from “The Pampered Chef: Stoneware Inspirations” (The Pampered

Chef, Ltd.) by The Pampered Chef Test Kitchens.

Croissant Bread Pudding
Yields 12 servings

Ingredients:
4 large croissants (about 3 ounces each)
1 red baking apple, such as Jonathan
6 eggs
1/2 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
2 cups half and half
1 orange
1/2 cup pecan halves, chopped
3/4 cup butterscotch caramel ice cream topping
1/4 teaspoon rum extract
1/2 cup golden raisins

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly spray a deep baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Slice croissants from top to bottom into 1/2-inch slices. Set aside 16 of the largest slices. Cube remaining slices and place in bottom of baker. Arrange reserved slices over cubes in an overlapping circular pattern. Core and slice apple, leaving peel on; cut slices in half. Tuck apple slices between croissant slices.
2. In a bowl, whisk eggs and 1/2 cup of the sugar. Pour half and half into a microwave-safe container and microwave on high two minutes or until hot. Slowly add half and half to egg mixture; whisk until blended.

Carefully pour egg mixture over croissants. If necessary, lightly press croissants down to coat.

3. Zest orange to measure two teaspoons zest. Juice orange to measure 1/4 cup juice; set juice aside. Chop pecans. Combine remaining sugar, orange zest and pecans; sprinkle over croissants. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown and set in center. Remove from oven to a cooling rack; let stand 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, combine ice cream topping, rum extract, reserved orange juice, and raisins in a microwave-safe container. Microwave on high 30 to 60 seconds or until hot; pour into serving bowl. Serve sauce over pudding.

Health benefits found in 4 popular teas

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
news@covnews.com

When in need of a beverage to warm them up, billions of people across the globe routinely look to tea. That choice has been made since ancient times, as various historians trace the habitual consumption of tea to ancient China.

Anything that has survived since ancient times no doubt has some good qualities, and tea is no exception. According to Penn Medicine, various types of tea each provide their own unique health benefits, some of which may surprise even the most devoted tea drinkers.

1. White tea: A 2010 study published in the Journal of Food Science found that anti-

oxidant-rich white tea boasts anti-carcinogenic properties. Penn Medicine also notes that white tea is a significant source of fluoride, catechins and tannins, ingredients that can strengthen teeth, improve their resistance to acid and sugar and fight plaque.

2. Chamomile tea: Many people like drinking this herbal tea before bedtime because they feel it helps them fall asleep, and one study published in Molecular Medicine Reports in 2010 notes that chamomile tea is widely regarded as a mild tranquilizer and sleep-inducer. Chamomile tea also has been shown to improve heart health. A 2015 study of 64 patients with diabetes published in the

Journal of Endocrinological Investigation found that those who consumed chamomile tea with meals had improved triglyceride and “bad” cholesterol levels compared to patients who drank water.

3. Peppermint tea: The Mount Sinai Health System notes that peppermint calms the muscles of the stomach and improves the flow of bile. Made from dried leaves of the peppermint plant, peppermint tea can help to soothe an upset stomach and help people overcome conditions like constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and motion sickness.
4. Green tea: Green tea is loaded with flavonoids, which Penn Medicine notes improve

heart health by lowering bad cholesterol and reducing blood clotting. In addition, the National Cancer Institute notes that the polyphenols in green tea may protect people against the damage caused by exposure to ultraviolet B radiation. One study published in Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association also associated green tea consumption with a reduced risk of stroke.

Tea has been consumed for millenia. Though many people drink tea simply for its taste, those same people may drink even more after learning about the effects this beloved beverage can have on their overall health.

Did You Know?

Country's top ethnic cuisines



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Chinese food is one of the most popular ethnic cuisines enjoyed in both Canada and the United States.

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
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What constitutes “ethnic” food differs from person to person. Someone of Italian descent may dine regularly on garlic-infused pasta dishes, while a person from another area of the world may find such foods exotic.

In the cultural melting pot of North America, various cuisines representing countries that span the globe are within arm’s length for many people. According to Technomic, a Chicago-based research firm, 77% of Americans enjoy ethnic foods while dining out once a month. Around 38% order ethnic food weekly. In addition, many more people prepare ethnic cuisine at home.

A growing interest in ethnic foods is fueled by young people. Technomic notes that millennials are more apt to try various cuisines. The National Restaurant Association found that 60% of people are likely to “tie their favorite ethnic food to their family history.” Interest in ethnic foods tends to be highest in urban areas where restaurants and ingredients may be more readily available.

When it comes to the top ethnic cuisines enjoyed throughout the states or provinces and territories, Chinese, Mexican and Italian rally for the top spots on diners’ plates. While the NRA has Italian cuisine as earning top-billing, Technomic’s list says that Chinese food, at 76%, followed by Mexican food (74%) and Italian (71%) comprise the biggest ethnic draws. Japanese or sushi comes in a distant fourth at 32% in the United States.

The statistics portal Statista indicates that, as of January 2015, Chinese, American and Italian foods are quite popular in Canada. However, the percentage of people who cook these foods as opposed to eating them out at a restaurant varies. Chinese food is most widely enjoyed in a restaurant setting, while Italian food is frequently whipped up at home.

As immigration tides change, ethnic cuisine may change with them. However, interest in experiencing ethnic dining is likely to remain consistent.



Have a recipe you'd like to share?

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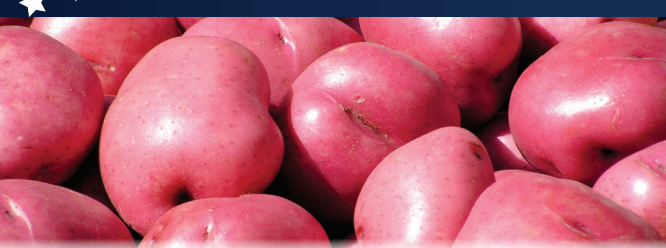


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