

The Covington News

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021



TELLING

\$1



SPORTS: LADY RAMS KEEP WINNING

Newton girls basketball team advances to round of Elite Eight in GHSA playoffs

See A8

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His Word

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Proverbs 9:10, KJV

Girl shot at Covington party; police investigating >> [SEE A3](#)

GDOT official says Hwy. 142 bridge replacement could wrap up in about 5-6 weeks >> [SEE A6](#)

Stanton Springs

Documents reveal \$42 billion bond for another data center

Project agreement appears identical to 2018 Facebook deal

By TAYLOR BECK
tbeck@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Another data center is headed to Stanton Springs.

Bond documents for a major economic development at the multi-county industrial park show the issuance is strikingly similar to the one approved in 2018 for Facebook's Newton Data Center, which was operating as Morn-

ing Hornet LLC at the time.

The Joint Development Authority of Jasper, Morgan, Newton and Walton Counties recently approved a \$42 billion bond to Baymare LLC on Feb. 23 for a large-scale project, and also a purchase and sale agreement for more than 628.5 acres of land, priced at \$62,500 per acre.

Both bond issues approved by the

JDA were for \$42 billion. Both bond issues were to fund “a data center and economic development project.”

Bond documents for the current development state Baymare is a Delaware limited liability company. Morning Hornet was also listed as a Delaware limited liability company in

See DOCUMENTS, A3

COVID-19

Teachers eligible for vaccine March 8

By BEAU EVANS
Capitol Beat News Service

Teachers, school staff and certain other vulnerable groups in Georgia will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine starting on March 8, Gov. Brian Kemp announced Feb. 25.

Vaccines will be available for pre-K and K-12 school teachers and staff, Kemp said. Georgia adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as the parents of children who have complex medical conditions, will also be eligible on March 8.

Kemp traced his decision to expand vaccines to teachers on encouraging signs of increasing vaccine production from the Biden administration and the new Johnson & Johnson-brand vaccine that won high safety marks from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration last week.

“Today, we will be taking another step to protect the most vulnerable and get Georgia back to normal,” Kemp said at a news conference Thursday.

Professors and staff at Georgia colleges and universities will not be on the March 8 list of newly eligible vaccine recipients since they are “dealing with an older population” of adult students who have more options to avoid infection than teachers of younger students in grades pre-K through 12, Kemp said.

The governor stressed he wants all Georgia public

See TEACHERS, A7



Brian Kemp



Mason Wittner | The Covington News

Newton County Sheriff Ezell Brown, far right, was among four sheriffs and a groundbreaking Georgia General Assembly secretary that U.S. Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Lithonia, recognized with Pioneer Awards for their service to Georgia's 4th Congressional District.

Newton sheriff among Pioneer Award recipients

STAFF REPORTS
news@covnews.com

DECATUR, Ga. — Newton County Sheriff Ezell Brown was among four sheriffs and a groundbreaking Georgia General Assembly secretary that U.S. Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Lithonia, recognized with Pioneer Awards for their service to Georgia's 4th Congressional District — and their work to break

down barriers and make history in the state — in honor of Black History Month.

“We are currently living in a pandemic, and we will not be able to host an in-person event, but that fact does not take away from the accomplishments these pioneers have achieved,” Johnson said.

“We will all continue to work to-

gether to carry the torch from honorees like Pioneer Award recipient Mrs. Lillian Foston Walker, who has truly blazed a trail for us to follow.”

Brown was Newton County's first African-American sheriff and served in local law enforcement in Newton for more than 35 years before being

See AWARD, A7



Inside

11 Newton students win honors at Regional Science Fair

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Weather

Wednesday, March 3
High: 61°; Low: 38°
60% chance of rain



Thursday, March 4
High: 66°; Low: 39°
Sunny and clear.



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Time to get back out?

Local agent advises how to travel safely during pandemic

By SARAH DAVIS
news@covnews.com

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga. — With stay-at-home orders and mask mandates, people across the country

have been foregoing their normal travels in favor of a safer, closer to home options.

Now, with vaccination rates climbing, people are starting to think about traveling again.

Christina Norris, co-owner of the Social Circle-based travel agency Norris & Associates, Dream Vacations, said she has been providing her clients with information about how to safely travel during the pandemic.

“A lot of people are wanting to [travel], but they don’t know what they need to do to make that happen,” Norris said. “The internet makes it incredibly confusing at times.”

To help make information accessible, Norris has created a tab on her website with updated information about safe traveling.

She also offered free information webinars in which she shared experiences from her own travels and testimonies from her clients’ vacations during the pandemic, as well as information from the Center for Disease Control and Preven-

tion (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO).

However, even with vaccines available to some of the population, COVID-19 still poses an immense threat.

In Newton County alone, there were 6,793 total cases of the virus as of Feb. 24, according to the Georgia Department of Public Health’s website. This danger, Norris said, has caused some of her more at-risk clients to postpone their travels.

“I do have a client who has been desperately wanting to go to Hawaii for months now,” Norris said.

“But with the situation being the way it is with COVID-19 ... it is my job as their travel advisor to advise them of what the current situation is, what the numbers are, what we’re looking at regarding vaccines — the whole scope of it.” Norris said that after evaluating the situation with the help of the client’s doctor, they eventually decided that it would be safer to postpone the trip.

Currently, the CDC’s website recommends that people hold off on traveling at this time, due to high rates of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths across the U.S. For those who must travel, the CDC recommends getting vaccinated if possible, following masking and social distancing guidelines and getting tested for COVID-19 prior to the trip.

Newton County Schools

11 middle school students earn honors at Regional Science Fair

STAFF REPORTS
news@covnews.com

Newton County School System (NCSS) students fared well at the recent Griffin RESA Regional Science Fair, as 11 students brought home awards from the competition.

NCSS students competed, virtually, against fellow students from Butts, Fayette, Henry, Lamar, Pike, Spalding, and Upson counties.

The following is a list of all Newton County School System Regional Science Fair winners. All first place winners will move on to compete at the 2021 Georgia Science and Engineering Fair in April.

2021 Regional Science Fair winners:

- Alexander Ehret, Newton County Theme School, First Place, Grade 6, “How Does Acid Rain Affect Plant Growth?”

- Kathryn Wilber, Newton County Theme School, First Place & Broadcom Masters Award, Grade 7, “Which Mask Works Best?”

- Alex Johnson, Indian Creek Middle, Second Place, Grade 7, “How Do Antacids Relieve Heartburn?”
- Ian White, Indian Creek Middle, Second Place, Grade 8, “Cooling Hot Peppers.”



Special to The Covington News

Alexander Ehret, a sixth grade student at Newton County Theme School, won first place for his project titled, “How Does Acid Rain Affect Plant Growth?” at the Newton County School System Regional Science Fair.

- Nathaniel Ehret, Newton County Theme School, Third Place, Grade 8, “How Does Age Affect the Stroop Effect?”
- Caroline Meeler, Indian Creek Middle, Third Place, Grade 6,

“A Spoonful of Sugar: Glucose in our Food.”

- Cooper Stokes, Newton County Theme School, Third Place, Grade 6, “How Do Different Types of Drinks Affect Teeth?”
- Nevaeh Craven,

Liberty Middle, Honorable Mention, Grade 8, “Trouble With Bubbles Going Pop! Pop! Pop!”

- Kianna Felix, Liberty Middle, Honorable Mention, Grade 8,

See FAIR, A7

OBITUARIES

Alice Jean “Peggy” Cobb

Caldwell & Cowan Funeral Home

Alice Jean “Peggy” Cobb passed away on February 24, 2021, at age 98.

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, to Victor and Ethel Barker, she moved to Atlanta in 1939 and lived in Oxford, Georgia, for the past 48 years, spending her last years in Merryvale Assisted Living and Riverside Healthcare. Peggy was preceded in death by her husband of 65 years, Linton Cobb.

She is survived by three sons and their wives, Ronald and Chery Cobb of Atlanta, Richard and Elizabeth Cobb of Covington and Michael and Caren Cobb of Blue Ridge.

She is also survived by six grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Peggy was a member of the Allen Memorial United Methodist Church in Oxford.

Her love, kindness, grace, generosity and per-

sistence will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Peggy was a strong advocate for her entire family each of whom she loved deeply and unconditionally. She was always there for anyone in need of help.

A private service will be conducted for immediate family members with Internment at the Lawnwood Memorial Park Cemetery in Covington. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the charity of your choice.

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.

This obituary was prepared with love and affection by Mrs. Cobb’s family. Visit www.caldwellandcowan.com to place online condolences.

Michael Lee Smith

Roper Funeral Home and Crematory

Michael Lee Smith, age 49 of Fairmount, Georgia passed away Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at his home. He was born December 15, 1971 to Gordon and Patricia Smith in Covington, Georgia.

Michael is survived by his wife, Cheryl Marie Little of Fairmount; brothers and sisters-in-law, Jeff and Susan Smith of Conyers, Timmy and Connie Smith of Covington; sister and brother-in-law, Sabrina and Dan Wardell of Loganville;

brother and sister-in-law, Buddy and Stephanie Smith of Texas; sister, Melinda Johnson of Oxford; mother-in-law, Rosemary Little of Fairmount. Several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews and other relatives also survive.

He was preceded in death by his father, Gordon Smith and his mother, Patricia Huggins.

A Memorial Service will be held 11:00 a.m., Saturday, March 6, 2021 at Waleska Church of God of Prophecy; 127 Dry Pond Road; Canton, GA 30114

A second memorial service will be held 11:00 a.m., Saturday, March 13, 2021 at West End Baptist Church; 455 South Cherokee Road; Social Circle, GA 30025.

Arrangements are entrusted to the Staff of Roper Funeral Home and Crematory.

Online condolences may be made at www.ropersfuneralhome.com.

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Covington police investigate after girl shot during party

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Police were asking the public Monday, March 1, to be on the lookout for a person wanted for questioning after a 14-year-old girl was shot in the thigh during a party in south Covington Saturday night.

The victim, who was not identified by police, was shot around 11:50 p.m. at a

residence on Oakwood Circle, located off Green Acres Drive, and transported to an Atlanta hospital.

Police released the name of a person wanted for questioning Monday but had not made any arrests by The Covington News' deadline Tuesday morning, police said in a posting on the department's Facebook page.

An incident report stated officers responded to a call

about a person shot in the area of Green Acres Drive and Petty Street Saturday, Feb. 27, at 11:52 p.m.

They later found the shooting occurred at the Oakwood Circle location and discovered the victim at the rear of the residence with a gunshot wound to the upper thigh and "several younger subjects" assisting her.

"I then began to render aid in an attempt to control

the bleeding and provide a patient update for medical units," the officer stated.

Emergency medical workers soon arrived, placed the victim on a stretcher and moved her into an ambulance. She was transported to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, an investigator confirmed.

Officers found several bullet casings and some clothing items, including a pair of

Nike Air Force 1 shoes and a L.A. Lakers flat bill cap, and placed them into evidence.

They also transported two juveniles to the police department for questioning after they were identified as witnesses, the report stated.

An investigation was continuing Tuesday. Those with information were asked to contact Detective Julie English at 770-385-2148.

Bryant appointed Newton County's associate probate judge

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Former district attorney candidate and assistant DA Destiny Bryant was sworn in as Newton County Associate Probate and Magistrate judge Friday.

Probate Judge Melanie Bell appointed Bryant and swore her in during a ceremony at the Judge Horace Johnson Jr. Judicial Center in Covington.

"Through her time in DeKalb County, her return here, and even into Henry County, I know she, as a professional

and as a person, will embody all of those characteristics that a judge should embody," Bell said in a video posted on the county government's website.

Bryant, a Covington resident, earned degrees from Xavier University in Ohio and from the William & Mary Law School in Virginia.

She worked as an as-



Destiny Bryant

sistant district attorney in the Newton County District Attorney's Office from 2013 to 2015 before moving to the same position in the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office from 2015 to 2019.

She then returned to the Newton County DA's office as a senior assistant district attorney beginning in August 2019.

Bryant was the 2020 Democratic Party nominee for Alcovy Judicial Circuit district attorney but lost in the November General Election to Randy McGinley.

Former Associate Probate Judge Candice Branche was appointed as judge of Newton County Juvenile Court in late December.

Unless a jury trial is requested, Bell hears certain misdemeanors, traffic cases, and violations of state game and fish laws, according to information from the Alcovy Judicial Circuit website.

She and her staff also administer oaths of office, issue marriage licenses and weapons carry licenses, and provide certified copies of birth and death certi-

icates.

The Newton County Magistrate Court's jurisdiction covers issuance of criminal arrest warrants; civil claims up to \$15,000; dispossessories (landlord/tenant); garnishments; foreclosures; commitment hearings; prosecution of misdemeanor deposit account fraud (bad checks); and prosecution of county ordinance violations, the website stated.

Georgia Probate Courts exercise exclusive, original jurisdiction in the probate of wills, administration of

estates, appointment of guardians and conservators — minor and adult — and involuntary commitment, according to information from the website.

Newton County's Probate Court also has concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts in proceedings regarding motions for DNA testing; declaratory judgments; approval of settlement agreements; and a variety of matters involving wills and estates.

County planners vote against recommending townhome rezoning

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — County planning commissioners opposed one new multi-family project and narrowly approved another recently.

The Newton County Planning Commission unanimously voted to deny a rezoning for construction of 120 townhomes on Fairview Road, and narrowly voted to recommend a change in the Future Land Use Map to allow future townhome construction targeting senior renters on Georgia Hwy. 142.

The planning commission makes recommendations on proposed changes in zoning and future land use to the Newton County Board of Commissioners, which makes the final decision.

The Fairview Road request was for a rezoning from its current single-family resi-

dential designation to multi-family residential on a 25-acre site on Fairview Road south of the Ginn vehicle dealership on Access Road west of Covington.

Rezoning was needed for construction of a 120-unit, owner-occupied townhouse complex, said Chris Harrell of Summit Engineering Development.

The site is adjacent to the 318-unit Cobblestone apartment complex that planning commissioners approved for a 35-acre site in October.

It also is near Fairview Elementary School and Clements Middle School.

A plan that Harrell showed planning commissioners included two entrances to the site — including one that created an intersection with Fairlift Drive and the Fairlift subdivision.

Both entrances on the plans showed them connected to long

drives that crossed over a creek and led to townhouses at the rear of the site.

But area residents who spoke during an open forum part of the meeting broadcast on the Zoom digital platform complained the townhomes could increase traffic congestion on Fairview, possibly decrease property values, and further overcrowd area schools.

They noted Fairview Road is a two-lane county road where traffic backs up from its intersection with Access Road and speeding vehicles are safety hazards.

Broderick Johnson Sr. said he was concerned about young townhome residents wandering into neighboring subdivisions because plans did not appear to include any recreational facilities.

Sandra Hines said she bought a home in the area after retiring and

did not want further development along Fairview to increase congestion in the area.

"It's not fair to us," she said. "We do not want any apartment complexes or townhomes in this area."

Zoning Administrator Tracy Hernandez said the planning staff's conditions included wanting the developer to complete a traffic study of the area.

She noted Fairview Road was considered a minor collector road, which is defined as a road that connects local roads with major arterials such as highways and interstates.

Harrell said the plan included a swimming pool and clubhouse and 10 acres available for recreational activities.

A homeowners association will oversee such activities as lawn care and maintenance, he said.

He said he had no problem with staff recommendations for

addition of left turn and deceleration lanes into the entrances.

Backups were a

See PLANNERS, A7

DOCUMENTS:

Continued from A1

2018 bond documents.

Shane Short, lead economic development director for the JDA and executive director of the Development Authority of Walton County, has said he could neither confirm nor deny the most recent bond issue was for another project for Facebook.

Construction of the data center, which will total approximately 2 million square feet, will be completed in phases, bond documents state.

Phase 1, which is estimated to cost \$750 million, is expected to be finished by Dec. 31, 2026. With 900,000 square-feet of interior space, the Phase 1 facility's completion will add approximately 50 new jobs. Phases 2, 3 and 4 facilities

are estimated to cost \$550 million each for 400,000 square-feet of interior space per facility, and each phase will have completion dates in 2028, 2030 and 2032, respectively.

The listed dollar amounts and facility dimensions were identical to those found within bond documents for the 2018 Facebook deal.

If approved by all four counties, Baymare will make payments in lieu of taxes, or PILOTs, starting in April 2027 at \$2 million and increase by \$1 million every two years until April 2033, totaling \$5 million per year. The payments will be due even if the phases are not completed on time.

Newton and Walton counties will receive

37.5% of the revenue, Morgan County will receive 15% and Jasper County 10%.

The PILOT payments will compensate the four counties for lost tax revenue due to the tax exempt status of the property.

The bonds will be issued as what Short called "phantom bonds," where the JDA issues the bonds and then Baymare purchases them. The JDA will take title to the project and then lease it to Baymare for a period of time so the bonds can remain tax exempt.

Though Baymare will appear to make rent payments to cover debt services on the bonds, no money will change hands since the company will have bought the bonds.

School and county property taxes will be abated during construction.

As part of the deal, Baymare will also provide up to \$3 million to fund construction of a two-lane frontage road that runs parallel to the project and a spur to improve traffic flow, which will begin as soon as the deal is completed.

Baymare will also pay the JDA a bond issuance fee of \$1.5 million.

An official announcement to reveal the unnamed industry and celebrate another historic investment is expected after the deal is finalized later this month.

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Tom Spigolon news editor

Press played big role in Civil Rights Era

The county government was gracious enough to allow me to claim an unclaimed spot in the parking area for the drive-in-styled, free showing of the film “Selma” at Legion Field in Covington last week-end.



The county’s Bicentennial Committee hosted the event, and the early spring in Newton County brought temperatures in the 60s at showtime. Seeing the movie for the first time laid bare what Black residents in the South endured for simply trying to use the rights they legally had but did not realistically enjoy in much of the South in 1965.

What really struck me was the role the national press played in awakening the rest of white America to what some white local government officials were doing to try to keep everything “normal” in their town by not allowing Black residents to peacefully protest for their rights.

In contrast to one recent president’s best efforts to sew mistrust of the national press, The New York Times played a prominent role in bringing many of the atrocities of 1965 to light, such as the “Bloody Sunday” march

in which 58 people were treated for injuries state troopers inflicted on them with a variety of weapons, including bullwhips.

It drove home the fact that if we want to avoid the government abuses portrayed in the movie — and which actually happened — then a strong, independent local and national press is required.

The title of the critically acclaimed 2014 movie is somewhat misleading: Its focus is mostly on Martin Luther King’s private and public struggles as he worked to gain full voting rights for Black Alabama residents in the three months between his acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize in Norway in December 1964, and him leading a five-day march from Selma to Montgomery in March 1965.

However, the three marches activists attempted across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama — the latter two led by King who missed the “Bloody Sunday” first march — were climactic points in the film.

King knew he had to use mass protests to gain a reaction from local officials if he wanted to make gains for Black Americans in the Jim Crow Era because such events would be covered by the print and TV media of the day.

He warned that if protests were done outside the times he knew there would not be coverage — at night, for example — then state officials knew they had free rein to use violence against protesters without the glare of TV lights.

There were, after all, no cell phones equipped with video cameras or social media platforms like Facebook to get the word out, as is the norm today. This also was before CNN and MSNBC and Fox gave us what some might consider to be slanted news 24 hours a day.

As you would expect, real-life Georgians played a main role in the marches, including former U.N. Ambassador and Atlanta mayor Andrew Young, longtime civil rights leader Hosea Williams and, especially, Congressman John Lewis who suffered a skull fracture at the hands of billy-club-wielding Alabama state troopers on “Bloody Sunday.”

It also struck me about how far Selma residents were willing to go to try to make things go back to “normal” for themselves — despite a rapidly changing world in which Black residents were fighting for the same rights they legally had but were not allowed to use.

White-run local governments routinely flouted laws with which they did not

agree when it came to Black residents.

In one eye-opening scene, a character played by one of the movie’s producers, Oprah Winfrey, tries to register to vote.

Backed by famed segregationist governor George Wallace, the Alabama state government in 1965 took a hands-off approach to local governments’ efforts to deny Black residents the political power afforded by their rights.

As a result, it allowed local voter registrars to have the power — as portrayed in the movie — to require Black residents to, for example, recite the preamble to the Constitution or name all the judges in Alabama before they could register.

Yes, it was a serious film about a serious subject.

However, it was nice to see all the Newton County locations used in a nationally distributed film, such as the space now occupied by the Bread and Butter Cafe on the Covington Square converted into the Selma Delicatessen; or the interior of the first floor of the Historic Courthouse turned into the Hotel Albert — where some of the movie props still remain more than seven years later.

Tom Spigolon is news editor of The News. Reach him at tspigolon@covnews.com.

David Carroll columnist

Great memories on renowned party line

Most young people have never seen a telephone attached to a wall. Let’s face it, if all of us were suddenly confined to a phone cord that only allowed about 10 feet of space, we’d go crazy. What? We can’t talk on the phone while on the porch, in the back yard, or most importantly, in the car? What would we ever do with ourselves?



Not to mention this: as far as we know, no one listens in on our modern-day telephone conversations.

Cell phones far outnumber landline phones in homes across the U.S. Long ago we said goodbye to

operators, tangled cords and directory assistance. Phone books are a thing of the past. And thank goodness we no longer have to deal with party lines.

When I told my children that once upon a time, the whole neighborhood had access to each other’s phone calls, they were dumbfounded. “The people next door could just pick up the phone and listen?” they said. “Yep, they sure could. Along with folks in about eight other houses.” They asked, “What if they needed to make a phone call?” “Well,” I responded, “they would just have to wait. Unless they were really rude, and they would just interrupt you and tell you to get off the phone.” Oh yes, it happened.

Eventually, to prevent

such “hogging,” phone companies limited each call to six minutes. You would get a one minute warning, a final ten-second warning, and then it was goodbye, like it or not.

Party lines were a way of life, until the 1970s. Eventually “private lines” became available, for an extra charge, because it was a great luxury.

Everybody has a party line story. Here’s mine. When I got a weekend radio job at WEPG in South Pittsburg, Tennessee, I was 16 years old. It was my claim to fame, and my only connection to coolness. It only took a couple of weeks before it went to my head. At that time, I also worked in my family’s store, which shared a party line, including our residence next door.

One day, things were a little slow in the store, so I walked over to the house and called into the radio station for something. The disc jockey put me on the air. I guess he thought that two deejays talking would be deeply entertaining. I have no idea what we were talking about, but I’m sure I was doing my best to sound like a big deal. No doubt I was promoting my show for the upcoming weekend, and trying to sound really hip. About a minute into the conversation, my mother got on the line. She was working in the store, which had apparently gotten busy all of a sudden.

I was right in the middle of some very amusing big-time DJ chatter when the radio listeners heard a woman’s voice: “David, I need you....come help me right now!”

The deejay at the station started laughing uproariously. “Who was that? And why does she need you so desperately?” I certainly didn’t want to say, “Uh, my mama needs me...I gotta go!” So instead I said, “Wow, I don’t know what’s going on, heh heh. You know how these party lines are! Well, good talkin’ with you, see ya on Sunday!”

I raced over to the store, and after the throng of customers had cleared out, I said, “Mom! You embarrassed me on the phone in front of thousands of radio listeners!” (I probably exaggerated by a few thousand). She showed no sympathy, basically explaining that the store came first. And you wonder why I got into radio.

Folks have some great memories of party lines. I asked a few of my Facebook friends. Some say they remember “the old ladies” gossiping about everyone in the neighborhood, who were listening to every word! (It was better than going out to the clothes line, especially in bad weather.)

One friend told me, “There were no secrets. Everyone knew who was sick, who was expecting company for the weekend, and who was fooling around with whom.”

These days, many of us depend on social media to tell us who’s dating who, who got married, who had a baby, and who has arthritis. The party line is still around in the 21st century. Now we call it Facebook.

David Carroll, a Chattanooga news anchor and author. Email him at radiotv2020@yahoo.com.

Dave Belton columnist

Handful of bills hurdle House floor

I was blessed to pass three bills on the floor of the House last week.

The first was a Compact Bill that allows speech pathologists and audiologists in Georgia to join other states with the same minimum requirements so that they may all practice in all these other states. The bill is specifically requested for



by the Pentagon, which I am in close contact with. The military wants the measure so that their military members — and especially their spouses — can easily use their license in these participating states. The Compact will apply to ALL speech pathologists and audiologists in Georgia, not just those in the military. It will also help with telemedicine. The bill passed almost unanimously.

I also passed a similar Compact bill for counselors. As you know, due to the traumatic work that our military heroes have to perform, they are the largest single segment in our society who needs counseling and psychiatric services. This bill would also allow counselors to cross participating state lines, in case of a traumatic event like a horrible storm or a school shooting where there is a great need for many counselors to rapidly deploy to a troubled area. This bill also helps with telemedicine. The bill passed unanimously.

In all, Georgia has passed seven Compact bills for our military, four of which are already in law.

The last bill I passed this week was also for the military. It allows for a young person under the age of 18 to get a drivers license without having to wait a full year. You should be proud that Georgia ranks second in the nation in military recruitment. When our young people enlist, they are often given better initial opportunities if they have a drivers license. Sometimes, these better opportunities mean better rank when they enter. Believe me, there’s a big difference from being a “buck” private to being a Private First Class. This bill also cleans up the confusing requirements for all Georgia residents under the age of 18 to get their license. The bill passed unanimously.

My Teacher Tax Credit Bill should go to the floor this week. Again, it would incentivize teachers to teach at a poorly performing or very rural school by giving 1,000 selected participants a \$3,000 tax credit for five years. Over 3,000 teacher positions went unfilled last year, especially in these schools. The teacher pipeline is shrinking while class sizes and the number of children are going up. Worse, nearly half of all new teachers quit less than five years into their profession. Hopefully, this bill will help to alleviate this. Almost all states have programs like this, showing very good results.

Dave Belton is a Republican from District 112, serving in the Georgia House of Representatives, serving Morgan and Newton counties.

The Covington News

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CLASSIFIEDS & LEGALS

The Covington News

CLASSIFIEDS

Jobs

Drivers Wanted

PI-JON, INC. IS HIRING!

PI-JON IS seeking a CDL B Hazmat driver. To make local gas and diesel deliveries. Flexible Monday-Friday scheduling. Help with Hazmat certification for a good fit.

CALL PAIGE at 770-786-2705 or send your resume to pjioninc@bellsouth.net

Help Wanted

THE LICENSE and Boat Registration Unit announces a vacancy for a part-time position located at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Conservation Center in Walton County. Under general supervision, this position provides excellent service to walk-in customers and over the phone for issues related to commercial licenses, hunting and fishing licenses, disability licenses, lifetime licenses, quota hunts, and boat registrations. **Pay Rate:** \$8.95/hourly up to 29 hours per workweek

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

March 6, 2021

FOR SPECIFIC job-related information and instructions on how to apply, please go to <https://georgiawildlife.com/careers-internships> and look under Available Positions: Seasonal/Part-Time. You may also contact Daniel Brown via phone at 706-557-3251 or email Daniel.Brown2@dnr.ga.gov.

LEGALS

Public Notices

Corporations

NOTICE IS given that Articles of Incorporation that will incorporate. Inc Serves, Inc will be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code (O.C.G.A. 14-3-202) The initial registered office of the corporation will be located at 75 Drummond PL, Covington, GA 30014 and it's initial registered agent at such address is Adriane King.

PUBLIC NOTICE #119981
2/24-3/3,10,17

NOTICE OF INTENT TO VOLUNTARILY DISSOLVE A CORPORATION

NOTICE IS given that a notice of intent to dissolve SMART GROWTH NEWTON COUNTY, INC., a Georgia nonprofit corporation with its registered office at 1118 Conyers Street, SW, Covington, GA 30014, will be delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code. Persons with claims against the corporation are requested to present the name of the claimant and amount of the claim to the corporation by mail to 1118 Conyers Street, SW, Covington, GA, 30014. Except for claims that are currently contingent or that arise after the date of filing of the notice of intent to dissolve with the Secretary of State, a claim against the corporation not otherwise barred will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim is commenced within two years after last publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200003
3/3,10

THIS IS Brooklyn Guarneri, president of non profit corporation "Double Eleven Ranch and Rescue" posting an official notice to voluntarily dissolve this business.

PUBLIC NOTICE #200007
3/3,10

Debtors Creditors

ALL CREDITORS of the estate of **LINDA MARIE MOORE**, late of Newton County, deceased, 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: **NAME OF** Executor: **Cheryle**

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,

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

Level: Intermediate

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!

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

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

Denise Brooks

CHERYLE DENISE Brooks
C/O SHANNON D. Sneed
ATTORNEY AT Law
P.O. BOX 1245
COVINGTON, GA 30015

THIS 11TH day of February, 2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE #119948
2/17,24-3/3,10

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS

ALL CREDITORS of the estate of **MAE EPPINGER HARDY** 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 17TH day of February, 2021

SUSAN H. Aiken
EXECUTOR OF the Estate
OF MAE Eppinger Hardy
C/O ROBERT Stansfield, Esq.
GREER, STANSFIELD & Turner, LLP
P.O. BOX 1617
COVINGTON, GEORGIA 30015-1617
(770) 786-4390

PUBLIC NOTICE #119973
2/23-3/3,10,17

Divorces

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

GUY PITTERSON
PLAINTIFF,
-VS-
KENEISHA PITTERSON
DEFENDANT.

CIVIL ACTION No.: 2021-CV-229-4

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

TO: KENISHA PITTERSON
45 WIMBLERLY Way
COVINGTON, GA 30016

BY ORDER of the court for service by publication dated **FEBRUARY 9, 2021**you are hereby notified that on **JFEBRUARY 12, 2021**(date of filing) **GUY PITTERSON** (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 **CHEVEDA D. MCCAMY** , Judge Superior Court of Newton County.

THIS, THE 10th day of **FEBRUARY 2021.**
LINDA D. Hays
CLERK OF Superior Court

PUBLIC NOTICE #119950
2/17,24-3/3,10

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF

GERORGIA

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

TO: VALERIE JOHNSON
8287 SUSSEY
DETROIT, MI 48228

BY ORDER of the court for service by publication dated **FEBRUARY 22, 2021**you are hereby notified that on October 28, 2020 (date of filing) **LEO JOHNSON** (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 22ND day of **FEBRUARY 2021.**
LINDA D. Hays
CLERK OF Superior Court

PUBLIC NOTICE #200004
3/3,10,17,24

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

TO: DANIELLE LEAKS
4311 TILLY MILL RD
ATLANTA, GA 30360

BY ORDER of the court for service by publication dated **FEBRUARY 18, 2021**you are hereby notified that on February 3, 2021 (date of filing) **CASEY JONES** (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 **JOHN M. OTT**, Judge Superior Court of Newton County.

THIS, THE 18TH day of **FEBRUARY 2021.**
LINDA D. Hays
CLERK OF Superior

PUBLIC NOTICE #200006
3/3,10,17,24

DUI - 1 Second

NOTICE OF SECOND DUI CONVICTION WITHIN 5 YEARS TO BE PUBLISHED

NAME: JOSHUA LLOYD HAVENER
CITY: COVINGTON, GA
COUNTY: NEWTON
ZIP CODE: 30016
ARREST DATE: 03/16/2018
ARREST TIME: 19:24 PM
ARREST LOCATION: SKITTS MTN

RD @ SKITTS MTN DR



DISPOSITION: GUILTY

HALL COUNTY Superior & State Court
CHARLES BAKER, Clerk
225 GREEN Street, SE
GAINESVILLE, GA 30501

PUBLISHED PURSUANT TO
O.C.G.A. 40-6-391A2
2018SR5465N

PUBLIC NOTICE #200010
3/3

Name Changes

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

YOU ARE hereby notified that on the 9 day of Feb, 2021 Maurice Akpan, filed a Petition to Change Name in the Superior Court of Newton County. Maurice Akpan desires to change his/her form Maurice Johnson Akpan to Maurice Mightly Johnson. Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition to Change Name was filed.

MAURICE AKPAN
240 CREEKVIEW Blvd
COVINGTON, GA 30016

PUBLIC NOTICE #119951
2/17,24-3/3,10

NOTICE OF PETITION TO CHANGE NAME OF ADULT

EMMA MARIE BURLESON, filed a petition in the **NEWTON COUNTY** Superior Court on 2/17, 2021 to change name from : Emma Marie Burleson to Emmaline Jo Arter. **ANY INTERESTED** party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition was filed.

EMMA MARIE Burleson
810 WHATCOAST St
OXFORD, GA 30054

PUBLIC NOTICE #200005
3/3,10,17,24

Public Notice

CENTRAL GEORGIA ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION ANNOUNCES UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDIT CHECKS FOR 2015

IN COMPLIANCE with O.C.G.A. § 44-12-236 of the Disposition of Unclaimed Property Act, Central Georgia EMC is attempting to locate

former customer-owners whose capital credit checks were issued in 2015, but have been returned by the U.S. Postal Service as "undeliverable" or have otherwise been unclaimed.

A LIST indicating the names of these former customer-owners can be found by visiting our website, www.cgemc.com, or by viewing the list at our office, located at 923 S. Mulberry St., Jackson, GA 30233. If you know the correct address of these individuals or have any helpful information, please contact our office, or notify the person to contact CGEMC as soon as possible by calling 770-775-7857 or 1-800-222-4877.

THE LAST possible date to claim these funds is August 27, 2021. If not claimed by this date, they will be designated for charitable uses as permitted by O.C.G.A. § 44-12-236.

PUBLIC NOTICE #119953
3/3

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF Newton STATE OF GEORGIA COVTANI UMBLE-EFIJEMUEH PLAINTIFF, V. FRANKLIN EFIJEMUEH DEFENDANT,

CIVIL ACTION NUMBER
SUCV2021000151

ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

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

SO ORDERED, this 4TH day of February 2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE #119926
2/10,17,24-3/3

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that there will be heard before the Judge of the Superior Court of Newton County, Georgia, on the 8th day of March, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., at the Superior Court of Newton County, Georgia, the case of the State of Georgia v. Newton County Public Facilities Authority and Newton County, Georgia, Civil Action No. 2021-cv-354-2, the same being a proceeding to confirm and validate the issuance by the Newton County Public Facilities Authority (the "Authority") of its Revenue Bond (Fire Station and Equipment Project), Series 2021 (the "Bond"), in an original principal amount of \$4,990,000. The proceeds from the sale of the Bond will be applied for the purpose of (a) financing the acquisition, construction and equipping of a fire station and the acquisition of two fire trucks (the "Project") and (b) paying the costs of issuing the Bond.

IN SUCH proceeding, the Court will also pass upon the validity and enforceability of an Installment Sale Agreement, dated as of March 1, 2021 (the "Contract"), between the Authority and Newton County, Georgia (the "County"), pursuant to which the Authority will agree to, among other things, issue the Bond and sell the Project to the County, and the County will agree to, among other things, (a) acquire, construct, equip and operate the Project and purchase the Project from the Authority, (b) pay

the Authority amounts sufficient to enable the Authority to pay the debt service on the Bond (the "Contract Payments") and (c) levy an ad valorem property tax, unlimited as to rate or amount, on all property in the County subject to such tax in order to make such Contract Payments.

PURSUANT TO O.C.G.A. 36 82 100 (the "Audit Statute"), the Authority notifies all interested parties that no independent performance audit or performance review will be conducted with respect to the Bond. However, the Authority will continue to ensure that the proceeds of the Bond are expended efficiently and economically, as intended by the Audit Statute.

ANY RESIDENT of the County, or any other person wherever residing who has a right to object, may become a party to these proceedings. Members of the public wishing to attend the hearing are advised to review the Court's procedures adopted for COVID-19 safety.

PUBLIC NOTICE #119977
2/24,3/3

Public Sales Auctions

NOTICE IS Hereby Given that the undersigned intends to sell the personal property described below to enforce a lien imposed on said property pursuant to the Georgia Self-Storage Facility Act, Georgia Code Section 10-4-210 to 10-4-215. The undersigned will sell by competitive online bidding beginning Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. at www.storageauctions.com. Online bidding will end on Tuesday, March 23rd, 2021 at 3:30PM.

UNIT 477, Dakota Duckett: Tools, workbench, generators, bins, air compressor

UNIT 284, Kenneth Milligan: Televisions, boxes, tires, mattress, table, toys, dressers, storage, bins, heater, sofa, household goods

UNIT 226 Charlie Burley: Washer, Mattresses, rocking Chair, Dryer, Oxygen tank, Desk computer monitor, furniture, (unit is full)

UNIT 197, Remon Smith: Clothes, keyboard, modem, totes, bags

UNIT 270, Robin Jones: Luggage, bags, blankets, boxes, pillows, pans

UNIT 412, Terica Freeman: Pillows, chair, clothing, tote, Hoover star board.

UNIT 236, Marissa Moon: Mirror, Jewelry box, wires, totes, compute, towers, skis

PURCHASE MUST be paid for on the day of the auction with cash and valid ID at the location of the unit. All items are sold as is and must be removed from the property within 72 hours, unless otherwise approved by the Manager, after the time of the sale. Sale is subject to cancellation in the event of a settlement between the owner and the obligated party

PUBLIC NOTICE #200011
3/3,10

Trade Names

TRADE NAME REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY

TO WHOM It may Concern: **PLEASE BE** advised that **STEPHANIA LEVETTE BELL**, whose address is390 ST. ANNES PLACE COVINGTON, GA 30016 the owner(s) of the certain business now being carried on at in the following trade name, to-wit: **A STEP ABOVE HEALTHCARE SERVICES LLC** that the nature of said business is: **HEALTHCARE SERVICES** **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 11th** day of February 2021

PUBLIC NOTICE #119975
2/24-3/3

Grant Notice

The Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Adult Education is requesting grant applications from eligible organizations interested in offering Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education Services. These Federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act grant funds are used to provide services to eligible individuals who are adult (16+) English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries. TCSG will hold a virtual technical assistance Q&A for all interested applicants on March 16 from 10 – 11:30 am. Visit <https://tcsgeu/adult-education/> for more information.

TCSG is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

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UGA-based leadership development institute honors Johnson

STAFF REPORTS
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — The late Judge Horace J. Johnson Jr. was named this year’s Innovations in Community Leadership Award recipient by the J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development at the University of Georgia (UGA).

Johnson was chosen for the award for his “commitment to developing leaders and strengthening his hometown of Newton County and communities across Georgia,” according to the publication UGA Today.

The Fanning Institute presents the award annually to a community or individual that has moved beyond traditional community leadership programming through innovative practices, partnerships and activities that better



Special | University of Georgia

Matt Bishop, far right, director of the Fanning Institute at UGA, presents the 2021 Innovations in Community Leadership Award to Judge Horace Johnson Jr.’s family in Covington recently.

serve participants and their communities. Johnson’s family accepted the award

on his behalf. It was announced at the annual Fanning Institute Community Leadership

Conference, which was held virtually this year on Feb. 18. Johnson, a Covington

resident, served as a Superior Court judge in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit for 18 years until his death in July 2020 at age 61 after testing positive for COVID-19.

During his tenure, Johnson launched accountability courts for veterans and for parents who are behind on child-support payments.

Outside of his judicial service, Johnson worked to create a Boys & Girls Club in Newton County and assisted in the creation of a mentoring program in the county’s school system.

He was also involved in Leadership Georgia, a leadership training program for young community leaders across Georgia, and was a member of the Fanning Institute Advisory Board which oversees UGA’s J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development.

“Horace truly embodied what it means to be a community leader and a public servant,” said Matt Bishop, director of the UGA Fanning Institute.

“He committed his life to creating opportunities for tomorrow’s leaders and helping others reach their goals and aspirations,” Bishop said. “Horace left a legacy of servant leadership and giving back to his community and throughout this state.”

Johnson, a native of Newton County, attended Oxford College and earned degrees from Emory University and the UGA School of Law.

Gov. Roy Barnes appointed Johnson as a Superior Court judge for Newton and Walton counties in 2002.

GDOT says Hwy. 142 bridge replacement finally nearing completion

By TAYLOR BECK
tbeck@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Completion of the bridge construction on Georgia Hwy. 142 over the CSX railroad is now only five to six weeks out.

The \$14.1 million bridge replacement project has been ongoing since December 2016 and included 1.6 miles of widening and reconstruction for additional lanes on Hwy. 142, beginning at Interstate 20 and extending to Alcovy Road, but several roadblocks have caused it to stall.

The latest troubles came in October 2020 when Georgia

Department of Transportation District Communications Specialist Kyle Collins said the bridge deck did not meet the department’s standards, so it had to be removed and replaced.

Now, Collins said, the deck has been finished and southbound traffic has been successfully shifted onto a portion of the bridge so the project’s final steps — completion of a concrete median and final asphaltting — could be finished.

Collins was hopeful that “major completion” of the project would be reached within roughly 45 days, depending “heavily” on weather.



After nearly five years of construction, the bridge replacement on Hwy. 142 over the CSX railroad in Covington is finally nearing completion.

Special Photo | Georgia Department of Transportation

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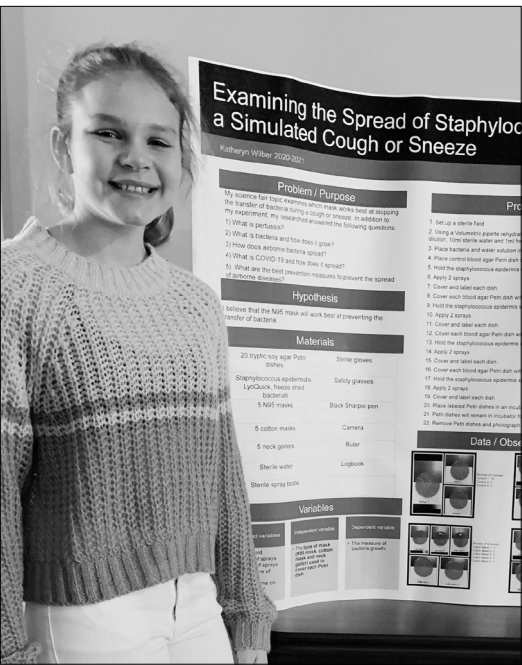
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Special to The Covington News
Newton County Theme School student Kathryn Wilber stands with her project that won first place in the recent Regional Science Fair.

FAIR:

Continued from A2

“Which Makes Sense?”

- Eathen Paten, Newton County Theme School, Honorable Mention, Grade 8, “The Five-Second Rule.”
- Bryson Strickland, Indian Creek Middle, Honorable Mention, Grade 7, “Which Charger Charges Your Phone the Fastest?”

“I am so impressed but definitely not surprised by how successful our students were at the Regional Science Fair,” said Superintendent Samantha Fuhrey.

“I know for a fact and have said for years, that Newton County is home to some of the most academically gifted students in the state. Our students continually prove in competitions such as the Regional Science Fair that they can compete with and out-perform the very best students the state of Georgia has to offer.

“I am so proud of each and every one of our students and wish those moving on to the state and competition the very best of luck. I know they will represent their schools and our school system well!”

AWARD:

Continued from A1

lected sheriff. He is also the county’s first African-American captain.

Brown began his career in law enforcement in 1973 with the Covington Police Department as a patrolman. Since joining the county’s sheriff’s office in 1977, he has served in every capacity of the department from deputy sheriff to lieutenant.

TEACHERS:

Continued from A1

schools to return for in-person classes before year’s end as teachers are vaccinated, saying online classes amid the COVID-19 pandemic have dampened students’ education progress for too long.

“Virtual schooling is leaving too many children behind and parents at their wits’ end,” Kemp said. “We must have students back in the classroom, five days a week.”

The upcoming vaccine expansion for teachers drew praise from State School Superintendent Richard Woods, who called it a

critical step in returning Georgia kids to in-person schooling.

“This is an important step in ensuring all Georgia students have access to in-person instruction and ensuring the safety of students, staff and families,” Woods said. “It has been an incredibly challenging year for educators and families alike, but I believe we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Teachers and other soon-eligible groups will join health-care workers, nursing home residents and staff, first

responders and Georgians ages 65 and older who have qualified for the vaccine for several weeks.

Kemp noted Georgia has doled out nearly 1.9 million vaccines so far, including to more than 800,000 people ages 65 and older who have received at least one of the needed two doses of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Newly eligible teachers and other Georgians clamoring for the vaccine could still face headaches in scheduling appointments for their shots given the state’s limited

allotment, Kemp said. Currently, state officials are receiving 198,000 doses a week from the federal government.

“We will continue to see more demand than supply,” Kemp said.

If all goes well with the March 8 rollout to teachers, Kemp said he will move to expand vaccine eligibility again in late March to additional groups that tend to be more vulnerable to contracting the virus.

Local school administrators will be largely left to their own to decide how teachers and staff should receive their shots, including

whether to host vaccines on-campus at their schools, Kemp said.

State officials are also working with hospitals and health clinics to decide which parents with children who have complex medical conditions will receive the vaccine, said Georgia Public Health Commissioner Dr. Kathleen Toomey.

“We are doing that in conjunction with providers who care for those children,” Toomey said on Thursday.

Officials stressed Georgians should go ahead and pre-regis-

ter now for a vaccine appointment on the state’s sign-up website, even if they are not yet eligible. The website, <https://myvaccinegeorgia.com/>, will automatically alert people once they’re eligible and will schedule an appointment.

Roughly 812,000 people had tested positive for COVID-19 in Georgia as of this afternoon, with nearly 185,000 more reported positive antigen tests indicating likely positive results. The virus has killed 14,989 Georgians.

Two NCSS high schools named 2021 Advanced Placement Honor Schools

STAFF REPORTS

news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Eastside and Newton high schools have been honored as AP STEM Schools for 2021, the county school system announced.

In addition, Eastside was named a 2021 AP Humanities School and Newton High earned special designation as an AP Access and Support School.

The honors were announced because the schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) classes and exams, which are administered by the College Board that also administers the SAT.

AP classes offer rigorous college-level learning options to students in high school. Students who receive a 3, 4, or 5 on AP exams may receive college credit.

According to the Georgia Department of Education, AP STEM Schools are schools with a minimum of five students testing in at least four AP STEM courses — AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Statistics, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, AP Physics 1, AP Physics 2, AP Physics C, AP Computer Science A, and AP Computer Science Principles.



AP Humanities Schools are schools with a minimum of five students testing in each of the following AP categories: one English and language arts course, two history/social science courses, one fine arts course, and one world language course.

AP Access and Support Schools are schools with at least 30% of AP exams taken by students who iden-

tified themselves as African-American and/or Hispanic and 30% of all AP exams earning scores of 3 or higher.

Samantha Fuhrey, superintendent of Newton County Schools, said, “Congratulations to both Eastside and Newton High Schools on being named AP Honor Schools.”

“Our goal is to offer a wide variety of AP courses to not only expose students to the rigorous coursework they can expect in college but also allow them the opportunity to gain college credit in the process.

“We currently offer 23 different AP courses and continue to work to identify ways to expand and provide additional opportunities for our students with the goal that any high school student interested in enrolling in a collegiate-level course has the access and opportunity to do so.”

“I extend my heartfelt congratulations to this year’s AP Honor Schools,” said State Schools Superintendent Richard Woods. “I commend them for their hard work to build strong Advanced Placement programs and, as a result, provide high-quality opportunities for Georgia students.”

Newborn council votes to deal with code violators

By TOM SPIGOLON

tspigolon@covnews.com

NEWBORN, Ga. — Newborn City Council voted to deal with old and new code violators at its February meeting.

The council voted to approve sending court

summons as final notification to owners of properties on Porter Street and Georgia Hwy. 213 for repeated codes violations.

It also approved sending letters or placards as early notification to owners about codes vio-

lations on two properties on Fulton Street and three on Georgia Hwy. 142.

City codes generally restrict such items as appliances or junk cars left in plain sight from the front of the property, officials said.

In other action, council members rejected a proposal by an area resident for outdoor sales of home goods biweekly on Saturdays.

PLANNERS:

Continued from A3

problem on Fairview but it was a county government responsibility, Harrell said. New townhomes will not have a major effect on the traffic flow, he said.

Harrell added that he met with one homeowners association president and wanted to meet more residents before the Board of Commissioners votes on it.

In other action, planning commissioners narrowly voted to recommend a Future Land Use Map change for a

35-acre site on Georgia Hwy. 142 at City Pond Road.

The site is near the Covington city limits and is in area reserved for Industrial use on the Future Land Use Map. Applicant Jim Chapman Communities wanted its use changed to High Density Residential.

A change would clear the way for the applicant to request a later rezoning of the site, which is now in the Heavy Industrial zone, officials said.

Michael Canady of Jim Chapman Communities said the change is requested for eventual construction of more than 200 two- and three-bedroom rental units for people ages 50 and up with incomes of at least \$60,000.

He said the complex will target a segment of the senior market that no longer wants to own a home or maintain yards.

The site is adjacent to Cinelease Studios-Three

Ring and those living in the complex and employed there would be able to walk to work, he said.

Commissioner Jody Smith said the highway needed improvement.

Pastor Darryl Hooper of nearby Church at Covington asked how owners would be able to keep requiring high-income earners to be residents. Area resident David Mock said he did not want more residential development in the area because

he “moved to get out” of an urban area.

Others questioned why Canady was not developing townhomes for sale to provide a more stable community.

He replied the community’s target customers do not want to own a home.

Planning commissioners voted 3-2 to recommend the Future Land Use Map change.

SPORTS

The Covington News

Prep Basketball – Playoffs



Courtesy of Newton Athletics

No. 4 seed Newton kept its season alive by taking down No. 2 North Paulding, 55-46, in the second round of the Class AAAAAA state playoffs Saturday. The squad is now three victories away from winning a state championship.

THREE WINS AWAY

Lady Rams defeat North Paulding, advance to Elite 8

STAFF REPORTS

news@covnews.com

The clock has yet to strike midnight in Newton’s Cinderella story.

Four days after taking down top-seeded Tift County in the opening round of the Class AAAAAA state playoffs, the No. 4 seed Lady Rams upset No. 2 North Paulding, 55-46, on the

road Saturday night. The victory pushed them back into the Elite Eight for the first time since making a run to the state title game in 2018.

Junior Ashleigh Norris led Newton in scoring for the second straight game as she recorded 18 points in the victory. She and freshman guard Sanaa Tripp, who finished with 12 points, make up

one of the most dominant backcourts in the state.

Newton (8-10) remained on the road as it travelled to No. 2 Woodstock (20-8) on Tuesday to battle for a spot in the Final Four. For complete coverage of the Lady Rams’ quarterfinal contest, please visit covnews.com and pick up a copy of the Weekend Edition of *The Covington News*.

Lady Cougars punch ticket to Final Four

By CHRIS BRIDGES

Correspondent

The 2020-21 season has already been one for the history books for the Piedmont Academy varsity girls’ basketball team.

The Lady Cougars (21-3 overall) have a regular-season region title and a region tournament championship to their credit. And now, for the first time in school history, the program is in the Final Four.

Piedmont defeated Augusta Prep 61-32 last Friday in the GISA Class AA state quarterfinals. The Lady Cougars will now face Westwood on Thursday in the GISA Class AA semifinals in Americus at Georgia Southwestern University.

In the quarterfinal win, which was played in Macon, the Lady Cougars got 32 points from Marissa Holder. The eighth grader connected for seven 3-pointers and made four additional field goals. Holder was also 3-for-3 at the foul line.

“I am so excited at having the opportunity to continue to play for a state championship,” coach Michael Wilson said. “I think it speaks volumes as to how hard the girls have worked this season and over the past couple of years. I think we beat Augusta Prep the same way we’ve been winning games this year. We moved the basketball around offensively and got some good looks inside and were able to turn turnovers into baskets and then Marissa was on fire.”

The performance by Holder has shown the sky is the limit for her before her high school career is done.

“For an eighth grader to have a game like she had is amazing,” Wilson said.

For a full preview of Piedmont Academy’s semifinal game, please visit covnews.com.

No. 2 Rams overpowered by top-seeded Pebblebrook

Newton’s season ends in Sweet 16

By MASON WITTNER

mwittner@covnews.com

MABLETON, Ga. — Newton’s promising season drew to a close inside Kay Jackson Gymnasium on Saturday night.

On the road facing top-seeded Pebblebrook in the second round of the Class AAAAAA state playoffs, the No. 2 seed Rams had their hands full for four quarters. Ultimately, an early hole proved too deep to dig out of as the Falcons collected an 87-59 victory to advance to the Elite Eight.

“First of all, congratulations and hat’s off to Pebblebrook. They’ve got an excellent team,” Newton head coach Charlemagne Gibbons said. “I thought you saw a team [in Pebblebrook] that was built for these playoffs. They had good depth, and they’re really excellent at shooting the basketball.”

The Falcons wasted little time before

showcasing their lethal scoring ability.

A physical defensive approach and high-percentage shots on the offensive end helped Pebblebrook build up a 14-3 lead less than three minutes into the game. The Rams eventually settled in, trimming their deficit to single digits before junior T.J. Clark closed out the quarter with a buzzer-beating 3-pointer that left them trailing 23-17.

But the Falcons quickly returned to form in the second quarter.

Pebblebrook picked the Newton defense apart methodically, slicing and dicing its way to a 43-24 advantage at halftime.

“I thought they got us on our heels right out of the gate,” Gibbons admitted, “and it was just hard from there.”

The second half provided more of the same for both clubs as the Falcons maintained

a 61-45 lead through three quarters before cranking up the dial in the fourth to pull away with the 28-point victory.

Clark finished with a game-high 32 points. Fellow Ram Qua Brown, a sophomore, followed with 13 points, while sophomore Stephon Castle added 12.

“I was very proud of our guys,” Gibbons said. “This is tough for a young team with the expectation that we have for them. We didn’t come over here trying to play close. We came over here trying to win a basketball game. That never changes.”

The Rams rolled out a starting lineup Saturday night that consisted of three sophomores and two juniors. Being eliminated in the Sweet 16 was certainly never the goal for this squad, but it’s apparent that the future is bright on 1 Ram Way.



Mason Wittner | The Covington News

Second-seeded Newton was knocked out of the Class AAAAAA state playoffs with a 87-59 loss to No. 1 Pebblebrook in the second round Saturday.

“It’s exciting, and you should be excited for the future, but we have a lot of work to do,” Gibbons said. “We’re talented, there’s no doubt, but we have a lot of work to do. We look

forward to the future of this program and putting ourselves into the conversation of being one of the top two or three programs in the state next year.”

Pebblebrook will host

fellow No. 1 seed North Gwinnett in the state quarterfinals this week. The Bulldogs advanced to the Elite Eight by grinding out a 38-37 win over No. 3 Northcross on Saturday.

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FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT

The Covington News



Metro Creative Services

Eggs take center stage in early spring, but they’re more than just novelties to include in Easter celebrations.

Can be nutritious key ingredient or star on its own

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

news@covnews.com

Eggs are a topic of conversation each spring, largely because of their relationship to the Christian celebration of Easter. Brightly colored Easter eggs are on display, chocolate eggs line store shelves and egg-lined birds nests in trees and bushes dot spring landscapes.

Eggs take center stage in early spring, but they’re more than just novelties to include in Easter celebrations.

- Eggs are nutritious. Eggs are loaded with vitamins A, D and B12 and the nutrient choline. They’re also an excellent protein source in a small package. At 72 calories and packing six grams of protein, eggs can make for a great, filling meal at any time of day.

- Eggs boost brain health. The choline in eggs is a crucial nutrient for memory,

mood and muscle control, according to the University of Missouri Health Care system. Choline also is essential in fetal brain development and can help prevent birth defects.

- Eggs don’t always have to be refrigerated. In countries outside of the United States and Canada, eggs may not be refrigerated and do not have to be chilled. Also, outside of North America eggs are not washed prior to commercial production. However, according to the food resource TheKichn, power-washing eggs removes a protective coating and makes the eggs porous and vulnerable to contamination. A synthetic coating is put on washed eggs.

- Shell color does not matter. The color of the eggshell doesn’t indicate taste, nutritional value or even egg quality. The color of the eggshell

reflects the breed of hen that laid the egg. Red-feathered hens tend to lay brown eggs, while hens with white features lay white eggs. Similarly, the shade of yolk is representative of what the chicken is eating. A dark, yellow yolk means the hen was probably fed green vegetables. Lighter yolks coordinate to corn and grain diets.

- All eggs are “hormone-free.” The term “hormone-free” on egg cartons does not signify anything special. It’s like advertising that snow is cold. The United States Food & Drug Administration banned the use of hormones in all poultry production in the 1950s. All eggs are hormone-free.

- Size and eggshell thickness indicates the age of the hen. Eggs come in different sizes, such as medium, large and jumbo. The age of the chicken determines the size,

with older hens producing larger eggs. Age also affects shell thickness, with younger hens laying thicker-shelled eggs, says Eat This, Not That!

- Eggs won’t hatch. Eggs sold for consumption are not fertilized. Hens that have laid them haven’t mated.

- Many birds lay eggs.

Kiwis lay the largest egg in relation to their body size of any species of bird in the world. However, the ostrich, emu and cassowary lay the biggest eggs.

- The sink or swim test can say a lot about an egg. Eggs become more porous as they age. You can tell if an egg is old by putting it in a glass of water. If it sinks, it is fresh. If it floats, it is an older egg.

Eggs get a lot of fanfare around Easter, and there’s more than meets the eye to that carton of eggs in the refrigerator.

Exciting activities to enjoy this spring

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

news@covnews.com

With its increased sunshine and warmer temperatures, spring is a beloved time of year. For those who live in areas where the weather changes dramatically throughout the year, spring can be a respite from the snow and also a chance to enjoy the outdoors prior to the arrival of the muggy, hot days of summer.

Families can create a bucket list of entertaining and perhaps educational spring activities. Those who want to try something new can explore these ideas.

- Check out a cherry blossom showcase. Cherry trees are popular and beautiful trees that flower in the spring. Their masses of pink and white blossoms are one of the first signals that winter has ended. Cherry tree varieties bloom over the course of several weeks, and climate will dictate how early or late these trees will showcase their spectacular flowers. Visit public gardens and other areas known for their dramatic cherry blossom displays.

- Watch a sunrise or sunset. Take advantage of longer days by enjoying nature’s light show. Wake up extra early and start the day with the sunrise. If you’re not a morning person, then wait until the last of the amber and red streaks light the sky and watch the sun drop below the horizon.

- Fly a kite. There is a reason why the adage “March goes in like a lion and comes out like a lamb” is so fitting. Early spring weather can be gusty and unpredictable. Take advantage of windy conditions by flying a kite by the coast or in an open field.

- Head to a farm or petting zoo. Spring is not only about the rebirth of trees and flowers, but also a prime time for various animals to give birth to their young.

- Check out a small town. Take a road trip to an out-of-the-way hamlet. Spend the entire day there shopping, dining and supporting a small town community.

- Enjoy al fresco dining. While outdoor dining during the pandemic may have been done as a necessity, do not forget how it also can be a relaxing way to enjoy a meal. Find a restaurant with a particularly scenic backdrop and dine outdoors.

- Visit a thrift shop or flea market. Spring cleaning can serve as the catalyst for people to put items on sale. One person’s trash is another person’s treasure. Spring can be a great time to shop for antiques as well.

- Go horseback riding. Enjoy the scenery on the back of a majestic mare or spectacular stallion.

Spring is a perfect season to enjoy various activities.

Newton Bicentennial Committee hosts drive-in movie event

By **TOM SPIGOLON**

tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Newton County’s Bicentennial Celebration Committee hosted a showing of the movie, “Selma,” Saturday, Feb. 27, outdoors at Legion Field in Covington.

The free showing of the movie celebrated Black History Month as well as the county’s bicentennial and its prominent place in the film industry.

“Selma,” released in 2014, was partially shot in Newton County.

County Chairman Marcello Banes welcomed movie-goers to the event, which included the Covington-Newton Chamber of



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

Volunteers handed out free vehicle magnets and popcorn bearing the “Bicentennial Celebration” logo to attendees.

Commerce-produced short film featuring clips of movie and TV productions from the past five decades that used

the county as locations.

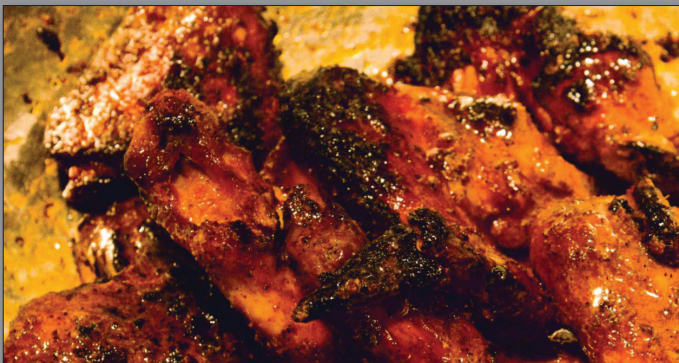
Locations for “Selma” included Airport and Gregory roads, and Conyers, Brown,

Ivy, Lee and Emory streets, according to the Chamber of Commerce.

The Newton County Historic Courthouse at 1124 Clark St. was transformed into “Hotel Albert” in Selma, Alabama, for the movie. Another familiar location was the Town House Cafe on Washington Street.

Other Georgia locations included the Rockdale County Courthouse in Conyers, the Marietta Square, and the Georgia Tech campus in Atlanta.

The Bicentennial Committee was formed to help organize events surrounding Newton County’s 200th anniversary this year.



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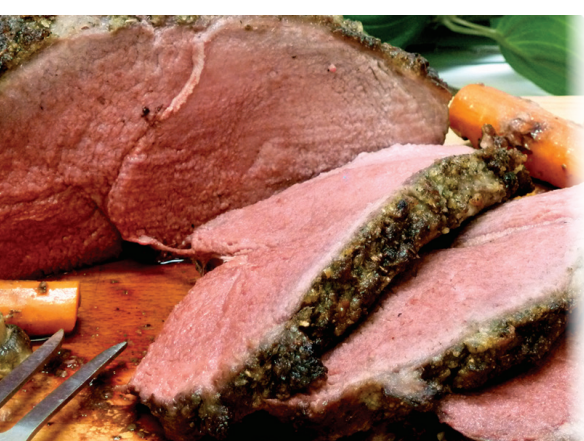
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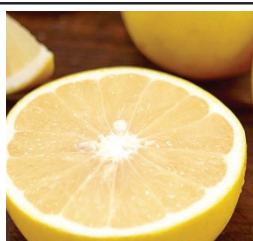
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