

The Covington News

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2020



TELLING THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE SINCE 1865

\$1



SPORTS: Best in class

Players from Alcovy, Eastside, Newton earn All-Region honors

See A7

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INSIDE:

Tips for volunteering during pandemic, see [HEALTH B1](#)
Tasty turkey recipe in time for Thanksgiving, see [FOOD B2](#)

His Word

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalm 107:1, KJV

From the staff,
Happy Thanksgiving!

General Election

Newton prepares for second presidential recount

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

COVINGTON, Ga. — Newton County election officials were following their counterparts in the rest of Georgia on Tuesday, Nov. 24, in beginning a recount of the ballots cast in this year's presidential election.

County election officials Tuesday at 9 a.m. were set to begin a recount by electronic scanner of more than

54,000 votes for president that Newton residents cast in the General Election which wrapped up Nov. 3.

Newton's election office was among those in the state's 159 counties which began recounting roughly 5 million ballots cast in the state's presidential election this month following a request over the weekend by President Donald Trump's campaign.



Donald Trump



Joe Biden

State law allowed Trump, who lost Georgia by fewer than 13,000 votes to President-elect Joe Biden, to seek

a recount due to the margin between them being less than 0.5%.

The election results were certified last Friday after a statewide audit of every ballot that included a hand recount.

Newton County Board of Elections Chairman Phil Johnson said the recount would consist of an electronic scan of the ballots.

"We do not know how

long this will take, but we should be able to calculate once we can scan for an hour or two," Johnson told county political party leaders in an email Monday.

He said the scan must be completed by midnight on Wednesday, Dec. 2.

"It is certainly our hope we can finish in a much shorter time," Johnson said.

See [RECOUNT, A2](#)

Covington on Ice



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

The ice skating rink at Legion Field in Covington opened to the public Saturday, Nov. 21. Above, two experienced skaters help a girl maneuver the ice on the rink provided by Ice Days. See more photos from opening night on A6.

'Very different'

Senior home residents preparing for smaller Thanksgiving dinner amid pandemic

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

COVINGTON, Ga. — At least one Newton County senior living facility is working to celebrate Thanksgiving as closely to previous years as possible amid the increased risks to its residents from COVID-19.

The Oaks at Ashton Hills, which is a personal care home offering memory care and assisted living, will make decisions based on community infection numbers for COVID-19 but is planning the same formal Thanksgiving meal it always hosts for its 50 residents.

The event usually serves about 200 guests, said community relations director



Special to The Covington News

The Oaks at Ashton Hills in Covington is planning the same formal Thanksgiving meal it always hosts for its 50 residents.

Therese Askew.

However, a notice on the facility's website stated that no visitors are permitted in the community "until further notice," while residents are not allowed to leave the facility except for medical care.

"The holidays are going to look very different," Askew said. "We're trying to still have a sense of community when family members aren't here."

As early as March,

See [DIFFERENT, A3](#)

Mansfield resident named state's top young farmer

STAFF REPORTS
news@covnews.com

A Newton County farmer is the Georgia County Agents Association's choice as its 2020 Outstanding Young Farmer.

Lewis Banks operates a 1,000-acre farm in southeast Newton County near Mansfield.

Banks saw an opportunity to make a living operating a sustainable farm by bringing together the farming knowledge passed onto him from

See [FARMER, A3](#)



UGA Extension Service
Lewis Banks, his wife, Brittany, and their children Caroline and Brett pose on their Newton County farm.

Report: Six Newton bridges among 20 most deficient in northeast Ga.

By **TOM SPIGOLON**
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A national transportation research group has rated six Newton County bridges among the 20 most deficient in northeast Georgia based on condition and usage.

However, Newton County officials say they already are in various stages of working to replace most of the bridges on the list.

Two of the listed Newton County bridges are on Brown Bridge Road and are rated the county's worst because they are classified as

deficient and have comparatively high traffic counts.

The remaining Newton County bridges are spread throughout the county and have average traffic counts ranging from 4,000 to 1,700 vehicles per day.

The report is by TRIP, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that provides and evaluates data on surface transportation issues to help decision-makers and the public to establish funding policies that enhance safety and promote economic development.

TRIP compiled the ratings using a GDOT list of deficient bridges. It then ranked them according to their daily traffic counts, said spokeswoman Carolyn Bonifas Kelly.

Bridges rated as deficient either have significant deterioration of a major component; are restricted to carrying only lighter-weight vehicles; or have a carrying capacity of 18 tons or less which restricts larger commercial vehicles, the report

See [BRIDGES, A6](#)

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Inside

See which department came out on top during the second annual Battle of the Badges Blood Drive

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Obituary

James "Jimmy" Walker Laster

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OBITUARY

James “Jimmy” Walker Laster
James “Jimmy” Walker Laster of Covington, GA born on January 4, 1936 passed away on Wednesday, November 18, 2020. He was proceeded in death by his father Jessy Thomas “Tom” Laster, mother Louise Patterson Laster, and brother Thomas Larry Laster. He is survived by his brother Monty A. Laster (Anne) of Covington, GA; daughter Mary Lee Stanley (Jim) of Seneca, SC, son James “Jim” W. Laster, Jr (Kelly) of Franklin, TN, numerous grandchildren and a great grandchild. Jimmy graduated from Auburn University in 1959 where he was a member of the 1957 National Championship Football Team. He later served in the U.S. Army where he was assigned to the Army Security Agency. Following his time in the Army, he was a commercial real estate broker in Atlanta for more than 30 years.

A private family service will be held in honor of his life. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made to the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America. J.C. Harwell and Son Funeral Home, TE Davis Funeral Services, 2157 East Street, SE, Covington, GA 30014.

RECOUNT:

Continued from A1

Each political party can provide up to two monitors, while observers will be allowed to watch what Johnson said would be an “open and transparent” process.

The recount consisted of ballots being run through scanners rather than counted by hand, said Gabriel Sterling, the election systems manager in Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger’s office.

It must wrap up by the end of Dec. 2, posing challenges for a few counties like Fulton poised to hold local elections on Dec. 1.

That process will not involve inspecting or matching signatures on absentee ballot envelopes, which Trump’s allies have called for to weed out any potential instances of mail-in voter fraud — though so far no evidence has been presented of such widespread fraud in Georgia.

State law and privacy concerns currently bar the close level of signature scrutiny that Trump and his Republican supporters in Georgia want, Sterling said at a news conference Monday.

He also noted the initial verification steps were open for both political parties to watch, but neither did so.

Absent specific fraud evidence or a court order, Sterling said state officials see no recourse to inspect signatures on absentee ballot enve-

lopes at this point.

“We anticipate that we will continue to follow the law and follow the process as we have done from the beginning,” Sterling said. “So far, we have not seen anything widespread.”

Amid various fraud claims, Republican allies of Trump have homed in on mail-in signatures as the best way to test the election’s integrity as the president still refuses to concede defeat.

Gov. Brian Kemp, U.S. Sens. David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler, U.S. Rep. Doug Collins and the Georgia Republican Party have all pushed for more comprehensive signature verification.

“We as [Georgia Republicans] will never give up on the fight to make sure that every lawful vote is counted and every unlawful vote rejected,” state GOP Chairman David Shafer wrote Monday on Twitter.

But moves to scrap absentee ballots by inspecting envelope signatures could face tough prospects in Georgia after a federal judge last week rejected a restraining order sought by a Trump ally to halt the election’s certification until signatures could be verified further.

Loeffler’s and Perdue’s Democratic runoff opponents, Jon Ossoff and the Rev. Raphael Warnock,



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News
From left, Vote Review Panel members Mike Hesterley of the Newton County Democratic Party, Karen Brooks of the county Republican Party and county elections board member Dustin Thompson await ballots Friday, Nov. 13, on the first day of the first recount of Newton County’s votes in the Nov. 3 presidential election.

have slammed the two Republican senators for sowing distrust in Georgia’s election system despite the election results’ certification last week.

Meanwhile, Raffensperger has urged state lawmakers to tighten Georgia law on verifying signature matches when the General Assembly next convenes, which currently would be the regular legislative session set for mid-January. The governor so far has not called for a special session before the runoffs.

Mail-in voting looks to continue taking center stage in Georgia with runoff elections for the state’s two U.S. Senate seats that have drawn intense interest across the country scheduled to be held on Jan. 5.

Nearly 800,000 absentee-ballot applications already have been sent out for the runoffs, meaning next month will likely see similar mail-in voting numbers to the 1.3 million absentee ballots cast in the Nov. 3 elections amid the COVID-19 pandemic, said Ryan Germany, general counsel in Raffensperger’s office.

Georgia’s two Senate runoff races are poised for high turnout due to their unique importance. Wins by both Democratic candidates over the Republican incumbent senators would give Democrats control over the White House and Congress for at least the next two years.

Ahead of the runoffs, State Election Board members on Monday

extended temporary rules put in place for the Nov. 3 elections that allow counties to install absentee-ballot drop boxes and scan absentee ballots a week before Election Day.

Both the drop boxes and early scanning helped counties manage the unprecedented flood of mail-in ballots for the general election and look to do so again for the runoffs, Germany said Monday.

“That is something I think all voters in Georgia will appreciate,” Germany told members of the election board.

The election board on Monday did not take up a proposed rule aimed at cracking down on potential out-of-state voters who may try to register to vote in Georgia for the runoffs amid recent rumors and reports of non-resident voters possibly attempting to do so.

Republican leaders including Shafer and Collins have pressed Raffensperger to clamp down harder on voter residency requirements, while largely Democratic-aligned observers argue tougher rules could disenfranchise poorer Georgians and those in more fragile living situations.

Germany said Raffensperger’s and Attorney General Chris Carr’s offices have agreed to send out an official bulletin advising county elections boards on specifics of Georgia’s residency requirements and verifications, rather than pass any new rules on the matter.

“We think that will accomplish the purpose that we want,” Germany said.

Early voting for the Senate runoff elections starts Dec. 14. The deadline for Georgia voters to register for the runoffs is Dec. 7.

Beau Evans of the Capitol Beat News Service contributed to this report.

Battle of the Badges



Newton County Sheriff’s Office
The Newton County Sheriff’s Office partnered with the American Red Cross for the second annual Battle of the Badges Blood Drive on Nov. 7 at Oak Hill Church of Christ, located off Highway 212 in Covington. Blood donors were asked, by the American Red Cross, to vote for their favorite first responder, who would later be titled the “winner” of the Battle of the Badges. Last year, the winner was the Newton County Fire Department; however, this year, the Sheriff’s Office prevailed and was awarded the trophy. The American Red Cross collected 22 units of blood during this year’s drive, which will impact, change and save 66 lives.



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

Congratulations to the
Caldwell & Cowan Staff for this achievement!

NFDA NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION
Pursuit of Excellence

Rash of shoplifting incidents hits Newton County Walmarts

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Police were kept busy responding to shoplifting reports last weekend at Walmart stores throughout Newton County.

Covington Police Department officers responded to five separate reports — including one in which thieves netted hundreds of dollars worth of stolen items at Walmart at 10300 Industrial Blvd.

Newton County Sheriff's Office also responded to a report of a theft of electronics at Walmart on Salem Road on the county's west side.

The sheriff's office reported two black male suspects wearing face masks stole electronics from the store before leaving in a Ford Ranger between 5 and 6 p.m., said spokeswoman Caitlin

Jett.

City officers then responded Sunday at 7:43 p.m. to a report of two suspects who stole \$926 worth of items, including a computer monitor and four vehicle batteries, before leaving the scene in Ford and Toyota vehicles.

At 7:30 p.m., a man reportedly entered the Covington Walmart. While appearing to be on the phone, he found a computer monitor in the electronics area that was not attached to a store fixture and moved it, a report stated.

The man reportedly then went to look elsewhere in the same area and a second suspect — described as a black male wearing a black hoodie with a University of Georgia "G" logo and also talking on a phone — placed the loose computer monitor in a

shopping cart.

The first suspect exited the store and the second suspect moved to the automotive section, placed four vehicle batteries in his cart and proceeded to the front of the building. Upon seeing two employees at the exit, the suspect left the cart and exited the store, the report stated.

He then returned to the store moments later, grabbed the cart from the place he had left it, and ran with the cart past a single employee before smashing the store doors open.

The suspects then fled the scene in a white Ford Explorer and a tan Toyota Camry, the report stated. Officers were able to get a license number from the Explorer.

See RASH, A6

FARMER:

Continued from A1

his father and the latest research in sustainable practices, a news release stated.

Crop diversification and rotation is Banks' first line of defense against pests and disease. For that reason, Banks includes corn, cotton, wheat, sorghum and soybeans as his cash crops.

In addition, this year he started a 200-acre organic row crop farm. Banks utilizes no-till and strip tillage for greater soil stewardship. Soil and water conservation are essential because 200 acres of his land borders the Alcovy River.

The local soil and

water council has noted Banks' conservation methods, such as building terraces, reduced tillage and working with local city and Georgia Environmental Protection Division. The Upper Ocmulgee River Soil and Water Conservation District awarded him with its "Conservationist of the Year" award earlier this year.

Banks also works in collaboration with city and state officials to implement a municipal nutrient management plan for row crop farming on public lands. To insure soil and waterway protection, Banks follows EPD plans

for waste disposal by following its nutrient management plans.

To document his environmental protection efforts are working, Banks monitors soil fertility and crop nutrition with tissue analysis. He said he values other farmers' and the Newton County Extension Agent's assistance with his efforts.

The purpose of the Outstanding Young Farmers Program is to bring about a greater interest in the named farmer to foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of the farmers' endeavors, to develop a further appreciation

for their contributions and achievements, and to inform the agribusiness community of the growing urban awareness of farmers' importance and impact on America's economy.

Ashley Best, who is the UGA Extension Newton County Agricultural and Natural Resources agent, nominated Banks. His application will be judged at the national level and results will be announced in February 2021.

Banks and his wife, Brittany, have two small children, Caroline and Brett.

DIFFERENT:

Continued from A1

the Georgia Department of Public Health was warning that "elderly people and individuals with chronic medical conditions may have increased risk for COVID-19."

COVID-19 is most often spread through the air by coughing or sneezing, through close personal contact — including touching and shaking hands — or through touching the nose, mouth or eyes before washing hands, according to the department.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently recommended residents not leave nursing homes and long-term care facilities for Thanksgiving because of the dangers posed by the disease.

Seema Verma, administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, wrote in a formal alert to facility administrators, residents, relatives and their representatives Nov. 18 that "with the holiday season fast approaching, we understand that residents and their families will want to spend more time together."

"We also know that some residents may want to leave the nursing home temporarily to visit family and friends for the holidays or other outings.

"While CMS supports family engagement and a resident's right to leave the nurs-

ing home, everyone needs to work together to take extra precautions to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 which can pose an elevated danger to the health of nursing home residents.

"Therefore, CMS recommends against residents leaving the nursing home during this (public health emergency)," Verma wrote.

"We also recommend that facilities find innovative ways of celebrating the holidays without having parties or gatherings that could increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission," she wrote, giving such examples as virtual parties or visits, providing seasonal music, movies and decorations and more.

"With the potential for a safe and effective vaccine on the immediate horizon, extra precautions now are essential to protect nursing home residents until a vaccine becomes available. Leaving the nursing home could

increase a resident's risk for exposure to COVID-19."

At least two drug makers, Pfizer and Moderna, have announced they could have a vaccine ready by the end of the year.

Federal officials have said a Pfizer vaccine will be distributed based on a state's population and the states will decide who receives the vaccine first, the BBC reported.

Verma added in a separate Nov. 18 press release that, "The risk may be further increased by factors such as a resident's health status, the level of COVID-19 in the community (e.g., cases or positivity rate), or attendance at large gatherings."

The Oaks at Ashton Hills is located on Eagle Drive in Covington. Askew said about half of its residents are from Newton County, with the remainder from nearby cities like McDonough.

She said The Oaks has worked to over-

come some of the challenges from COVID-19 this year through such projects as creation of a Mother's Day video in May.

It organized its daily activities for residents in smaller groups and put an emphasis on cleaning the facility, Askew said.

Families have regularly visited with residents through closed windows, she said.

"This year has definitely been a challenge," Askew said.

"Our residents have mostly adjusted," she said.

The Oaks' list of preparations for dealing with the disease includes open communication with residents and their families, regular cleanings, requiring healthcare providers to be screened before entering, and more.

Spokespersons for other Newton County personal care homes and nursing homes either declined or did not respond to repeated requests for comment for this story.

Community Calendar

SUNDAY, NOV. 29

• Artists' Sunday at Southern Heartland Arts, located at 1132 Monticello St SW, Covington, GA 30014, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Artists Sunday is like Black Friday or Small Business Saturday but for art! Shop with your favorite artists and give the gift of art this holiday season.

MONDAY, NOV. 30

• The Newton County NAACP will hold an election from 4-8 pm. All members of Newton County branch who are in good standing as of Oct. 30 are encouraged to vote for 2020-2021 officers. Details for voting will be sent via email or call the office at 770-378-1146.

THROUGH NOV. 30

• Virtual Vampire Run from Oct. 1 through Nov. 30. All net proceeds from the race will go toward the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Prospective racers can register for the virtual run at runsignup.com/Race/GA/MysticFallsCovington/VirtualVampireRun and help "take a bite out of blood cancers."

THURSDAY, DEC. 3

• Late Night Christmas Shopping on the Covington Square begins.

• Santa on the Square, from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, DEC. 5

• Lion's Club "Reverse" parade begins at 6 p.m. Floats will be lined up along Newton Drive in front of the YMCA where spectators can drive or walk through the area. Three high school marching bands will also perform.

THURSDAY, DEC. 10

• The Newton County Democratic Committee will hold its Bi-Annual Executive Committee/Officer Elections via Zoom at 7 p.m. Interested parties should visit rebrand.ly/NewtonDemsVOTE for specific details on how to register to vote and for details on how to register to be a candidate.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

THE CITY OF PORTERDALE WILL HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET AT GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH LOCATED AT 474 CROWELL ROAD, PORTERDALE, GA 30070.

THE FIRST HEARING WILL BE ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER, 10 AT 6:30 PM.

THE SECOND HEARING WILL BE ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17 AT 6:30 PM WITH THE ADOPTION MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 7:00 PM.

A COPY OF THE BUDGET IS NOW AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL, AT 2800 MAIN STREET, PORTERDALE, GA 30070, FOR INSPECTION BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:00 A.M. AND 4:30 P.M., MONDAY THRU THURSDAY.

FRANKLIN ETHERIDGE
CITY MANAGER

Tom Spigolon news editor

It's easy to find things to be thankful for this year

In a year in which there were so many things not to be thankful for, I found it was easy to find things to be re-member as well. In fact, it was easy to find the good things in a year filled with COVID-19, mass layoffs, the tanking of a booming economy, social unrest, a seemingly never-ending and very divisive election, and more.



I've got to say, I'm thankful for Newton County, Georgia. I've lived in the Atlanta area for 20 years, in DeKalb, Gwinnett and Walton counties, and worked in and around the north and northwest edges of the metro area. For some reason, I never had a reason to stop here. I had stood in the blazing hot sun for six hours in 2000 at the Conyers office of what is now the Department of Driver Services to get my Georgia driver's license and never imagined there was a whole world beyond Rockdale County. I had heard "In the Heat of the Night" had been filmed in Covington but believed it was somehow farther away

from Atlanta than it is. I thought Oxford College was sitting in the middle of farmland in rural Georgia — not situated right there on the other side of I-20 from downtown Covington.

In June, I was like all the tourists from outside the Atlanta area, showing up to ride the tram for the tour of film locations, as I looked around the Square for the first time.

There was the famous Courthouse, shown in early episodes of "The Dukes of Hazzard."

Anyway, I know very well where Covington is now — sandwiched between towns best known as the birthplace of Emory University and whose signature landmark is an imposing former mill on the banks of the Yellow River.

This year, I'm thankful someone had the foresight to spend the millions needed to renovate Covington's famous Historic Courthouse where the county government is based and convenes.

I'm thankful for the Newton County judges and government officials and residents who reacted to national racial issues calmly and thoughtfully earlier this year — unlike some neighboring counties. An election office that

was organized and did its job well in the midst of numerous challenges resulting from fears about COVID-19 — that made me thankful and should make all Newton Countians thankful even if some have concerns about absentee voting generally.

I'm thankful that we have a republic where people can speak (or write) what's on their minds without fear of government agents showing up on their doorsteps in the middle of the night, no matter how damning it is to that government.

I'm also thankful for a country that will continue to operate no matter who is occupying whichever branch of the government.

I'm thankful for churches and museums and schools and businesses that don't require you to be either Republican or Democrat, black or white, Christian or non-Christian to enter their doors.

I'm thankful Newton County seems to have gotten past some of the acrimony of its recent past, even if it does seem to rear its ugly head every once in a while.

On a personal level, I'm thankful for our newspaper's owner, Patrick Graham, who believed enough in

community journalism to buy this legendary newspaper in 2017, and for hiring me in this insane year.

I'm thankful for my co-workers who welcomed me with open arms this year.

On an even more personal level, I'm thankful for my wife who has put up with some late nights, long hours and weekends I've sometimes had to work since I've been here.

I'm thankful my son and daughter and son-in-law and grandchildren are safe and keeping themselves safe from COVID-19, even though they decided it was best to remain in the foreign country they're living in rather than returning to the U.S. during this world-wide pandemic.

At this point next year, I hope a successful COVID-19 vaccine is widely available, and the country, state and county have moved past the wild divisiveness of the political and social events of 2020.

That's something I hope we will all be thankful for in 2021.

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

Dorothy Piedrahita columnist

Thanksgiving 2020 is one for the ages



Metro Creative Services

Families will resort to face-timing to celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas this year — a scene resembling something closer to "Star Trek" than the holidays.

Is Thanksgiving a myth? The traditional story to many Americans may not be accepted. However, Thanksgiving 2020 will be one historians will write about. In years to come, adults and children will never forget it. Let's face it. Thanksgiving will be different! There will be homeless and hungry people. Men still will go hunting, as my uncles used to do when I was a small child. Families will gather. People will carry on. Is there a green light we can follow? Yes, maybe!



Every day that passes, we grow concerned. It makes no difference what you believe. We are living with COVID-19. I worry each minute of the day about my family and myself.

Let me see if I can take your mind away for a few seconds and make a detour to a land far away. A long, long time ago, there was a sci-fi television show called "Star Trek." I am a Trekkie. Remember these words "Beam me up?" We are living in times of "Star Trek." Many of us will use iPhones and Zoom to celebrate with our loved ones on Thanksgiving in our quest to be normal. These aren't normal times. The world has seen pandemics before. Some of us lived through Poliomyelitis, commonly known as Polio, which mostly affected children. I was a child volunteer. Mother asked me to help organize my friends. The effort went so well. It was a success!

I have my thoughts, like everyone reading my words — words matter! I am sad. Families are grieving for their loved ones. There will be an empty chair at the dining room table.

I will not be with my family. My soon-to-be daughter-in-law learned to make apple butter. She even picked her own apples in north Georgia. She is proud of herself. I am proud for her. It would have been amazing to see her eyes as she

serves her apple butter personally. But we will be home with our parrots and Spike, our Doberman Pinscher, longing to be with our family. But staying home is where we will be.

I will be one of those mothers at home on Thanksgiving Day, face-timing with my family.

I will look at family pictures and remember my past — I recall eating our mother's German chocolate cake. Our mother wasn't a great cook, but she baked only one cake: a German chocolate cake. We owned our pecan trees.

It is my understanding, my son and his fiancé have ordered a German chocolate cake, and I can't wait to taste a slice. Hopefully, they will bring me a slice.

Now, it's time for my Thanksgiving story for 2020:

Once upon a time there was a woman who lived for holidays. She baked the same sized turkey each year. Her back hurts sometimes. She uses rub, which cools her pain.

Her husband always helped her when he was home. He's in the military. She has grown accustomed to him being away for holidays. They are parents of seven children, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

There was a big box delivered to her home. It looked heavy. She opened it, and found her retired husband inside.

So, she wouldn't be alone. Her love had come home to be with her for Thanksgiving 2020.

Although, you may not be with your loved ones physically on Thanksgiving Day, be thankful you are safe and healthy. It will be tough for some families. But Thanksgiving is one day.

Maybe by Christmas families will be able to celebrate together. Then you get those big hugs and kisses.

Hope should always be front and center in your life.

Stay safe and healthy.

Dorothy Piedrahita is a Covington resident who has worked as an activist and in government and business throughout her career.

David Carroll columnist

Thankful for election workers and MV-Free

Hello Thanksgiving, it seems like you're running late. I can't say that I blame you. Most of us have been hiding out at home, or behind our masks, so you can be excused for being a bit anti-social. Still, it's nice having you around. The tur-



keys are smaller, and the gatherings are more intimate, but we still have reasons to be thankful.

I always look forward to writing a "thankful" column, as do many writers. It's a way to give thanks, while also clearing our pockets of little notes we save throughout the year.

I am thankful that I have not yet run out of toilet paper. It makes me reflect on my misbegotten youth,

when we had so much Charmin, we threw it in trees every Halloween.

I am thankful for our election workers. They were warned they would be criticized for their hard work. But they showed up, did their jobs quietly and efficiently, and conducted a fair election under difficult circumstances. They deserve a raise, and they deserve our praise.

I am thankful for people who still take pride in spelling and grammar. I had someone tell me the other day that "your" and "you're" were both correct, as in "Your kidding." No, their not.

I am thankful I overheard this conversation in the doctor's office waiting room: "Well, I can't see, and I can't hear, but I'm glad I can still drive."

I am thankful that Kellogg's and Little Debbie have joined forces to create Oatmeal Creme Pie cereal, which will be in stores in December. It is described as "crispy oatmeal puffs with a cream coating." I am described as "craving it."

I am thankful that my wife wakes up

after I eat breakfast, so she will never know that I will be pouring chocolate milk on Oatmeal Creme Pie cereal.

I am thankful that new restaurants are being built in my town, during the worst economic conditions restaurants have ever endured. That, my friends, is optimism, and I'll take all of that I can get.

I am thankful for the Atlanta Braves. In an otherwise glum year, my team won a National League East division title, and came within one game of the World Series. Smiles have been hard to come by, and the Braves provided many. I'm looking at you, Most Valuable Player Freddie Freeman.

I will never take you, my kind reader, for granted.

I am thankful for your compliments and your criticism. By the time we take another journey around the sun, I hope we will have even more for which to be thankful.

David Carroll is a Chattanooga news anchor. He may be reached at radiotv2020@yahoo.com.

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CLASSIFIEDS

Announcements

For Your Information

THE NEWTON County NAACP will hold an election on Nov.30 from 4:00pm - 8:00pm. All members of Newton County Branch who are in good standing as of October 30,2020 are encouraged to vote for 2020-2021 officers. Details for voting will be sent via email or call the office @770 378 1146.

Jobs

Help Wanted

PROFESSIONAL CLEANING Service seeking hardworking dependable person to clean commercial buildings 20 to 25 hours per week. \$10.00/hr to start. **MONTICELLO AREA. BACKGROUND/DRUG TEST** required. 706-476-0233

LEGALS

Public Notices

Corporations

NOTICE IS given that articles of incorporation which will incorporate **VETERAN'S FAMILY SUPPORT FOUNDATION, INC.** have been delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code (O.C.G.A. Section 14-2-202.1). The initial registered office of the corporation will be located at 490 Freeman Drive, Newton County, Covington, Georgia 30016 and its initial registered agent at such address is **JAMAR WHITE**.

EDGAR LAW FIRM, LLC
HILLARY W. EDGAR
1132 FLOYD STREET
COVINGTON, GEORGIA 30014
TELEPHONE (770) 786-1353

PUBLIC NOTICE #117646
11/25,12/2

Divorces

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

PANZIE S. FANTAUZZI
PLAINTIFF,
-VS-
DIEDORO A. FANTAUZZI, JR.
DEFENDANT.

CIVIL ACTION No.: 2020-CV-2045-5

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

TO: DIEDORO FANTAUZZI

BY ORDER of the court for service by publication dated **NOVEMBER 16, 2020** you are hereby notified that on **OCTOBER 8, 2020** (date of filing) **PANZIE FANTAUZZI** (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 **W. KENDALL WYNNE, JR.**, Judge Superior Court of Newton County.

THIS, THE 16th day of **NOVEMBER, 2020.**

LINDA D. Hays
CLERK OF Superior Court

PUBLIC NOTICE #117649
11/25,12/2,9,16

Juvenile Court

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE INTEREST OF:
B.E. **SEX:** Female
DOB: 06/17/2013 Case #107-20J-0424
A CHILD Under 18 Years of Age

SUMMONS

TO: BRITTANY DEMPSEY, Mother; **MATTHEW EDGE,** Putative Father; **JOHN DOE,** and any unknown, unnamed biological father or other persons claiming to have a parental interest in the minor child named above born to **BRITTANY DEMPSEY** on the date above-listed.

A PETITION to Terminate Parental Rights was filed in this Court on November 3, 2020, by the Georgia Department of Human Services, by and through the Newton County Department of Family and Children Services, concerning the above child(ren). In accordance with O.C.G.A. §15-11-281, you are hereby notified that this proceeding and the hearing(s) specified herein is for the purpose of terminating your parental rights and to place permanent custody of said child(ren) with the Georgia Department of Human Services, by and through the Newton County Department of Family and Children Services, pending adoption. The Court shall mail a copy of said Petition to the last known address of the above-named parent(s) within fifteen (15) days of filing of the Order of Service by Publication. This is a summons requiring you to be in Court. If you fail to come to court as required, you may be held in contempt of court and punished accordingly.

NOW, THEREFORE, you, the party(ies) named above, are commanded to be and appear on the date and time stated below, and to remain in attendance from hour to hour, day to day, month to month, year to year, and time to time, as said case may be continued, and until

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!

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

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

Level: Intermediate

discharged from the court, and you are commanded to lay any and all business aside and to be and appear in said Court at the time and place below stated, each of you then and there to make defense thereto and to show cause why the said child(ren) and all parties named herein should not be dealt with according to the provisions of the law.

NOTICE OF EFFECT OF TERMINATION JUDGMENT

GEORGIA LAW provides that you can permanently lose your rights as a parent. A Petition to Terminate Parental Rights has been filed requesting the Court to terminate your parental rights to your child(ren). A copy of the Petition to Terminate Parental Rights can be obtained from the Clerk of the Newton County Juvenile Court. A court hearing of your case has been scheduled for the 29th day of January, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., at the Newton County Juvenile Court, Newton County Judicial Center, 1132 Usher Street, NW, Covington, Georgia 30014.

IF YOU fail to appear, the Court can terminate your rights in your absence.

IF THE court at the trial finds that the facts set out in the Petition to Terminate Parental Rights are true and that termination of your rights will serve the best interests of your child(ren), the court can enter a judgment ending your rights to your child(ren).

IF THE judgment terminates your parental rights, you will no longer have any rights to your child(ren). This means that you will not have the right to visit, contact, or have custody of your child(ren) or make any decisions affecting your child(ren) or your child(ren)'s earnings or property. Your child(ren) will be legally freed to be adopted by someone else.

EVEN IF your parental rights are terminated:

(1) **YOU** will still be responsible for providing financial support (child support payments) for your child(ren)'s care unless and until your child(ren) is/are adopted; and

(2) **YOUR** child(ren) can still inherit from you unless and until your child(ren) is/are adopted.

PURSUANT TO statute, you are put on notice that as a biological father you may lose all rights to your child(ren) named above and will not be entitled to object to the termination of your rights to such child(ren) unless, within 30 days of receipt of notice, you file:

(1) **A** petition to legitimate such child(ren); and

(2) **NOTICE** of the filing of the petition to legitimate with the Court in which the termination of parental rights proceeding is pending.

THIS IS a very serious matter. A party is entitled to an attorney in the proceedings. You should contact an attorney immediately so that you can be prepared for the court hearing. You have the right to hire an attorney and to have him or her represent you. If you cannot afford to hire an attorney, the Court will appoint an attorney if the Court finds that you are an indigent person. Whether or not you decide to hire an attorney, you have the right to attend the hearing of your case, to call witnesses on your behalf, and to question those witnesses brought against you.

IF YOU have any questions concerning this notice, you may call the telephone number of the clerk's office which is 770-784-2060.

THIS IS a summons requiring you to be in Court. If you fail to come to court as required, you may be held in contempt of court and punished accordingly.

WITNESS THE Honorable Jenny S. Carter, Judge of said Court, this 3rd day of November, 2020.

/S/ JANELL Gaines
JANELL GAINES, Clerk
JUVENILE COURT of Newton

County, Georgia

PUBLIC NOTICE #117583
11/11,18,25,12/2

Public Notice

CITY OF COVINGTON NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

NOTICE IS hereby given, per the City of Covington's Code of Ordinances Chapter 16.12 that the below applications were submitted for consideration by the Covington Planning Commission.

1. **REZONING** #PR20-0002:
APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A REZONING OF PARCEL FROM NR2 (NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT - 1) TO NR3 (NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT - 2) FOR PROPOSED FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.
LOCATION: 9155 Jackson Hwy.
TAX MAP Parcel Number: #C064-011
OWNER: ESTATE of William Donald Malcom/Authorized Agent: KCG Development, LLC - Keith Bauer

2. **SPECIAL USE** #PSU20-0008:
APPLICANT IS REQUESTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR A PROPOSED "TAKE 5" OIL CHANGE FRANCHISE.
LOCATION: 3216 Hwy 278
TAX MAP Parcel Number: #C024-4-1C
OWNER: QUIKTRIP Corp/ Authorized Agent: Toxaway Automotive-Preston Willard

THE PLANNING Commission will hold a ZOOM Virtual Public Meeting on December 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.to consider these permits. **PLEASE REFERENCE THE REVISED ZOOM MEETING LINK FOR THIS PUBLIC HEARING**
DUE TO circumstances necessitated by emergency conditions involving public safety and preservation of public services, public access to this meeting is limited to teleconference and video access. **THE PUBLIC MAY ACCESS THIS MEETING BY CALLING 1-929-436-2866.** To view online use the following link:

JOIN ZOOM Meeting
HTTPS://ZOOM.US/J/97638859382

ALL INTERESTED parties are invited to participate. For more information, contact Renee Criswell, at rcriswell@cityofcovington.org, or 770-385-2178.

PUBLIC NOTICE #117645
11/25

Trade Names

NEWTON SUPERIOR COURT
TRADE NAME REGISTRATION

PERSONALLY APPEARED the undersigned who on oath despose and says that: **A.L. BRUNS AND COMPANY, LLC, 40 CROSSFIRE DRIVE, COVINGTON, GA 30014,** is doing business in Newton County, Georgia under the name of **ANIVES, 40 Crossfire Drive, Covington, GA 30014** and that the nature of the business to be carried on at such address is Website offering tools and resources for those weeking to self-help in career development and seeking employment within the hospitality industry..
AARON L. Bruns, Member

PUBLIC NOTICE #117605
11/25,12/2

TRADE NAME REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT
GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY

TO WHOM It may Concern:
PLEASE BE advised that **JAY TERRELL,** whose address is 11471 BROWN BRIDGE ROAD, COVINGTON, GA 30016 and **TERRELL MANAGEMENT, LLC** whose address is 11471 BROWN BRIDGE ROAD, COVINGTON, GA 30016 is the owner(s) of the certain business now being carried on at 11471 BROWN BRIDGE ROAD, COVINGTON, GA 30016 in the following trade name, to-wit: **EXTRA STORAGE RENTAL SPACES;** and that the nature of said business is: **SELF-SERVICE STORAGE FACILITY.**
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 19th day of November,

2020.

PUBLIC NOTICE #117647
11/25,12/2

TRADE NAME REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT
GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY

TO WHOM It may Concern:
PLEASE BE advised that **JOHN A. ANSHUTZ,** whose address is 311 POPLAR HILL ROAD, COVINGTON, GA 30014 is the owner(s) of the certain business now being carried on at 311 POPLAR HILL ROAD, COVINGTON, GA 30014 in the following trade name, to-wit: **POPLAR HILL PECANS;** and that the nature of said business is: **PRODUCTION AND SALE OF PECANS.**

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 6th day of November, 2020.

PUBLIC NOTICE #117604
11/25,12/2

TRADE NAME REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT
GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY

TO WHOM It may Concern:
PLEASE BE advised that **SUTTLES VETERINARY SERVICES, LLC,** whose address is 10257 HWY 142 N, COVINGTON, GA 30014 is the owner(s) of the certain business now being carried on at 10257 HWY 142 N, COVINGTON, GA 30014 in the following trade name, to-wit: **SIGMAN VETERINARY CLINIC;** and that the nature of said business is: **PROVISIONS OF VETERINARY MEDICAL SERVICES, GROOMING SERVICES, BOARDING SERVICES, SALE OF VETERINARY PRODUCTS AND RELATED MATTERS.**

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 30th day of October, 2020.

PUBLIC NOTICE #117653
11/25,12/2

We wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving!

The Covington News

The Covington News will be closed Thanksgiving Day, November 26th and Friday, November 27th to observe Thanksgiving.



Tom Spigolon | The Covington News

Special to The Covington News

Covington on Ice was kicked off Saturday, Nov. 21, at Legion Field in Covington. City staff, including members of the Covington City Council, and their families (bottom, right) were given an opportunity to get on the ice a little early.



RASH:

Continued from A3

The incidents followed an apparently unrelated series of additional shoplifting reports Saturday and Sunday at the Covington store on Industrial Boulevard near I-20. City officers responded to one report Saturday, Nov. 21, and three reports Sunday, Nov. 22, in addition to the Sunday night incident. Officers responded to a report Saturday at about 3:30 p.m. after loss prevention personnel stopped an unidentified suspect at the exit with more than \$76 worth of items which had not been paid for. An officer cited the suspect on a shoplifting

charge, a report stated. On Sunday at 11:25 a.m., an officer cited a female suspect on a charge of Theft by Shoplifting after she passed all points of sale with \$75 worth of items she did not scan, a report stated. Almost two hours later on Sunday at 1:18 p.m., police cited another female suspect for shoplifting after she allegedly attempted to leave the store with \$50 worth of items in her cart that had not been scanned, a report stated. As officers completed that investigation, they were told a loss prevention worker was holding two additional

shoplifting suspects. The Walmart employee told police he observed two individuals put items into a cart and not scan them before passing all points of sale. Officers recovered items valued at \$56 and returned them to Walmart. They then cited and released one suspect but cited the other suspect and subsequently arrested him for an outstanding warrant in Newton County and an outstanding warrant for probation violation from Braselton, the report stated.

BRIDGES:

Continued from A1

stated. The most deficient Newton County bridges — and third and fourth worst in the 12-county region — was Brown Bridge Road’s bridges over the Yellow River and Snapping Shoals Creek. The 59-year-old bridge over the Yellow River is 2.5 miles west of Covington and carries an average of 14,220 vehicles per day, according to the report. Brown Bridge Road’s Snapping Shoals Creek bridge is in western Newton County and was built in 1963. It carries an average of 10,410 vehicles per day, the report stated. However, Newton County government is in the process of acquiring right of way land for replacement bridges for both, said county spokesman Bryan Fazio. Construction is set to begin on both in 2021, with funding coming from federal and 2007 SPLOST funds, he said. Others in the top 10 in Newton County are a 61-year-old bridge on Bethany Road at Snapping Shoals Creek; and a 55-year-old structure on Henderson Mill Road crossing Bear Creek one mile north of the Jasper County line. The Bethany Road bridge was built in 1959 and crosses Snapping Shoals Creek. It carries 4,155 vehicles per day. The replacement bridge is being designed and will be funded under GDOT’s Low Impact Bridge Program, Fazio said. Projects in the program must meet low impact criteria such as no geometry or grade changes and have low environmental impacts,

according to GDOT. County officials are working on a plan for replacement of Henderson Mill Road’s bridge, Fazio said. GDOT also recently awarded a construction contract on another Newton County bridge listed among the top 20 most deficient bridges. The County Road 213 bridge over West Bear Creek west of Mansfield will be replaced with a structure 0.256 of a mile in length. Williams Contracting Co. received the \$1.258 million contract to replace the 64-year-old bridge which is crossed by 1,770 vehicles daily. Completion is expected by September 2021 and also will be replaced under GDOT’s Low Impact Bridge Program. The county also recommended in a 2018 action plan that the 50-year-old Dial Mill Road bridge over Little Haynes Creek at the Rockdale County line be replaced within the next few years. The bridge, which is also on the TRIP list, can only handle a maximum of seven tons and “should be an immediate priority due to the traffic volumes experienced on that roadway,” the county’s plan stated. It carries almost 2,000 vehicles per day. TRIP’s top 10 Northeast Georgia list also included the Jersey-Social Circle Road bridge over the Alcovy River northwest of Social Circle in Walton County; three Clarke County bridges inside the city of Athens; and two Barrow County bridges.

Important safety information from Atlanta Gas Light

Every day, underground pipelines safely transport natural gas to homes and businesses throughout the country. Atlanta Gas Light operates, secures and maintains the pipelines in our service territories.

Call before you dig

Before digging on your property, state law requires you call **811** to have your utility lines professionally marked – for free! You must wait the required amount of time before you begin your project. Pipeline markers indicate the general area of the pipeline, but not its exact location or depth. A pipeline may not always be marked in all areas, so it is important to always “Call Before You Dig.” If a pipeline right of way is adjacent to your property, you have a responsibility to ensure no new installations of landscaping or physical structures are placed in the right of way, which interferes with our ability to keep the pipeline safe through routine monitoring and maintenance.

Information about transmission pipelines operating in your community can be accessed online at <https://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov>, courtesy of the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS).

Water heater safety

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission urges all users to lower their water heaters to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Carbon monoxide

Incomplete combustion of any fuel produces carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is poisonous and has no odor, taste or color. Carbon monoxide detectors are helpful, but they are no substitute for using equipment safely. This includes having your appliances inspected once a year by a certified contractor.

Appliance safety

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- It is important that you have your furnace inspected by a qualified specialist.
- Be sure all furnace controls and emergency shut-offs are in proper working condition.
- Keep trash and other combustible materials away from your air, heating and water heating systems.

Pipeline integrity management is a process for assessing and mitigating pipeline risks to reduce both the likelihood and consequences of incidents. We have a comprehensive plan that fully addresses these processes, especially for locations deemed high-consequence areas.

To learn more, visit atlantagaslight.com/integritymanagementplan.

If you smell gas, act fast!

Even though natural gas pipeline incidents are uncommon, you can help prevent emergencies by knowing the signs of a potential problem.

LOOK for blowing dirt, discolored vegetation or continued bubbling of standing water.

LISTEN for a hissing or roaring noise near a natural gas appliance or line.

SMELL the distinctive, rotten-egg odor associated with natural gas. Natural gas is colorless and odorless, so we add a chemical odorant called mercaptan for easy detection. This odorant has a distinctive “rotten-egg” type odor. You should act any time you detect even a small amount of this odor in the air.

If you suspect a natural gas leak, do the following:

DO NOT try to identify the source or to stop the leak yourself.

LEAVE the area immediately and move a safe distance away from the potential leak, while avoiding any action that may cause sparks.

AVOID using any sources of ignition, such as cellphones, cigarettes, matches, flashlights, electronic devices, motorized vehicles, light switches or landlines, as natural gas can ignite from a spark or open flame, possibly causing a fire or explosion. Natural gas is nontoxic, lighter than air and displaces oxygen. In severe cases, if not used properly, it can also lead to asphyxiation.

CALL Atlanta Gas Light at **877.427.4321** or **911** once you are out of the area of the suspected leak and in a safe place. Stay away until Atlanta Gas Light or emergency personnel indicate it is safe to return.

Note: Do not solely rely on sense of smell to determine if a gas leak exists. Be aware that some individuals may not be able to detect the odorant because they have a diminished sense of smell, olfactory fatigue or because the odor is being masked by other odors in the area. Certain conditions may cause the odorant to diminish so that it is not detectable. Some gas lines, due to their unique function, may not have odor at all.

For more information, visit atlantagaslight.com/safety or call **800.427.5463**.



Online Survey: Please take a moment to complete an online survey about natural gas safety and you at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L6DTN69> to help us make sure we are keeping our communities safe.

SPORTS

The Covington News

Prep Football — Playoffs, Round 1

Postseason kickoff

All area teams clinch playoff berth; first round begins Friday

By MASON WITTNER
mwittner@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — In the season of giving thanks, the local football scene has plenty to be thankful for this week.

The GHSA regular season drew to a close on Friday night, but none of the four area teams were left at home. Instead, they'll all be taking part in Thanksgiving week action as the first round of the playoffs kick off Friday.

Playing on Thanksgiving week traditionally means you've advanced to the third round of the state playoffs. However, due to the pandemic pushing the season back, all postseason qualifiers will get to gobble down an extra dose of football after Turkey Day.

Here are the four local first-round matchups to keep an eye on this weekend:



No. 2 Alcovy vs. No. 3 Brunswick

Classification: AAAAAA
When: Friday, Nov. 27 @ 7:30 p.m. ET
Where: Sharp Stadium in Covington, Ga.
Winner's Second-Round Opponent: No. 1 Lee County/No. 4 Tucker



No. 4 Social Circle at No. 1 Macon County

Classification: A-Public
When: Friday, Nov. 27 @ 7:30 p.m. ET
Where: Macon County High School in Montezuma, Ga.
Winner's Second-Round Opponent: No. 2 Warren County/No. 3 Mount Zion



No. 3 Newton at No. 2 Lowndes

Classification: AAAAAA
When: Friday, Nov. 27 @ 8 p.m. ET
Where: Martin Stadium in Valdosta, Ga.
Winner's Second-Round Opponent: No. 1 North Cobb/No. 4 Pebblebrook



No. 2 Eastside vs. No. 3 SW Dekalb

Classification: AAAAA
When: Saturday, Nov. 28 @ 7:30 p.m. ET
Where: Sharp Stadium in Covington, Ga.
Winner's Second-Round Opponent: No. 1 New Manchester/No. 4 Hiram

Visit covnews.com later this week for in-depth previews of each game and quotes from the local head coaches.

Prep Softball

BEST IN CLASS

Lady Tigers, Eagles, Rams named to All-Region squads

By MASON WITTNER
mwittner@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Newton County's softball diamonds were oozing with talent this fall, and the regions that Alcovy, Eastside and Newton play in took notice.

Each of the three county softball teams were well represented in their respective All-Region teams.

ALCOVY

A pair of Alcovy softball players earned region honors for the stellar campaigns they produced in 2020.

Region 3-AAAAAA released its all-region teams last week and junior Lexie McDonald represented the Lady Tigers as a first-team pitcher. In her third season in the circle, McDonald served the ace of the staff this fall. She collected 60 strikeouts — 28 of which left the batters looking — and posted a .872 fielding percentage.

Fellow Lady Tiger Mackenzie Parrott earned second team all-region honors as an infielder in her freshman campaign. Parrott batted .216 with eight RBI, but some of her best work came from behind the dish, where she registered 92 putouts with a .943 fielding percentage as a catcher.

Alcovy freshman Ashlyn Hoy was listed among the all-region honorable mentions. Hoy finished the season with a .278 batting average and five RBI while also turning a double play and posting a fielding percentage of .849.

EASTSIDE

Eastside softball's run of five straight 20-win seasons came to an end in 2020, but the club still made a splash in its new region.

The All-Region 8-AAAAA Team was filled with Lady Eagles, including the league's offensive and defensive players of the year, first and second team members and an honorable mention.

Junior Natalie Ray was named the Region 8-AAAAA Offensive Player of the Year. The Ole Miss commit batted leadoff for the Lady Eagles throughout much of the fall, helping spark an offense that averaged 6.5 runs per contest.



Mason Wittner | The Covington News

Alcovy pitcher Lexie McDonald was recently named First-Team All-Region 3-AAAAAA for her stellar 2020 campaign.



Mason Wittner | The Covington News

Junior Natalie Ray, Eastside's dependable leadoff batter, was named the Region 8-AAAAA Offensive Player of the Year.



Mason Wittner | The Covington News

Sophomore Kyla Stroud was named All-Region after leading the Lady Rams with eight home runs this season.

Fellow junior Lauren Burnett was recognized for her work on the other side of the diamond, earning Region 8-AAAAA Defensive Player of the Year honors at short-stop.

Eastside junior Heather Henderson was named the First Team All-Region catcher for her work behind the dish. Meanwhile freshman sensation Dezaria Johnson, who served as the Lady Eagles' ace all season, was named a Second Team All-Region pitcher while Alyssa Cruz, the sophomore with a cannon for an arm, was named a Second Team All-Region outfielder.

Rounding out the Lady Eagles' representation was sophomore Emma Hopper, who was listed as an All-Region Honorable Mention.

NEWTON

Following the completion of a historic season, the Newton softball team had four girls receive all-region honors for their significant contributions.

Aulora Edwards, Hayden Pearson, Kyla Stroud and Ty'Liyah Hardeman were named to the All-Region 4-AAAAAA team. Furthermore, Kaitlyn Neely, Katelynn Anglin and D'myia Jackson were given nods on the All-Region Honorable Mentions list.

Edwards led the Lady Rams with a .379 batting average. The senior was a model of consistency at the plate, scattering 33 hits over 28 appearances. She backed up her play at the plate by being consistent on defense as well, posting a .935 fielding percentage.

Stroud provided a power bat in the middle of Newton's lineup this fall. She finished her sophomore season with a team-high eight home runs while batting .341 with a .412 on-base percentage and a .682 slugging percentage. The Auburn University commit also played stellar defense, fielding at a .981 clip.

Pearson was the ace in the circle for the Lady Rams all season. She went 10-8 as a starter, posting a 3.62 ERA

See BEST, A8

College Hoops

Hagans signs with Minnesota Timberwolves

By MASON WITTNER
mwittner@covnews.com

Former Newton High School standout Ashton Hagans signed an undrafted free agent deal with the Minnesota Timberwolves following the completion of the 2020 NBA Draft on Wednesday.

The news was first reported by NBA Insider Shams Charania of The Athletic.

Hagans spent two seasons playing for head coach John Calipari at the University of Kentucky. After hearing the news, Calipari took to Twitter to express his congratulations for his former player.

"Just got great news! @H23Ash signed a two-way deal with the @Timberwolves!," Calipari wrote in a Tweet. "He's going to have big brother @Karl-Towns with him. I'm looking

forward to big things from Ashton. He's built for this."

As a freshman guard, he appeared in 37 games and averaged 7.7 points, 4.3 assists, 2.6 rebounds and 1.6 steals per contest. He was named the 2019 Southeastern Conference Co-Defensive Player of the Year alongside LSU's Tremont Waters.

Hagans improved his draft stock as a sophomore by averaging 11.5 points, 6.4 assists, 3.0 rounds and 1.9 steals across 30 games in a pandemic-shortened season. His efforts landed him on the SEC All-Defensive Team for the second year in a row.

The former five-star prospect was projected as a late second-rounder by many media outlets, while other mock drafts projected he would go undrafted.



File | The Covington News

Former Newton High School point guard Ashton Hagans signed with the Minnesota Timberwolves after two seasons with the Kentucky Wildcats.

Tips for volunteering safely during pandemic

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
news@covnews.com

Volunteers are vital to the survival of many charitable organizations. Without people willing to offer their time and expertise free of charge, many non-profits would find it difficult, if not impossible, to meet their missions. The global pandemic that began in late 2019 and continued into 2020 changed many aspects of life as the world knew it, and that includes volunteering. Social distancing mea-

sures and stay-at-home mandates from state and local governments discouraged people from leaving their homes, while various health organizations warned aging men and women to stay home as much as possible. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age. In recognition of that threat, many retirees who were heavily involved in volunteering prior



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Because of the rise of COVID-19, volunteers should be cautious when offering their services.

to the pandemic were forced to cease working as volunteers, which could have a negative effect on their mental health as the pandemic continues. Many people have

continued to volunteer during the pandemic, and those that want to do so can take these steps to make sure their efforts to give back are as safe as possible.

- Speak with your physician first. Anyone who wants to volunteer during the pandemic should discuss it with their physician prior to offering their services.
- Contact the organization prior to volunteering and discuss the safety protocols they've put in place to protect the health of their volunteers. Some organizations may not be allowing potentially at-risk volunteers to perform in-person tasks.
- Monitor your own health. If you suspect you are unwell or are even slightly under the weather, contact the charity and tell them you won't be showing up that day.
- Consider virtual volunteering — a safe way to give back that won't expose others to the COVID-19 virus.

Physician says certain measures help prevent prediabetes, diabetes

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Ask any primary care physician associated with Piedmont Healthcare and they will tell you that one medical condition they see far too often is diabetes. In the U.S., 30.3 million adults have diabetes and another 84.1 million have prediabetes. Those numbers are alarming, but it is also concerning because, according to the American Diabetes Association, two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke. According to the American Diabetes Association, 33.7% of Georgia's adult population — nearly 2.7 million people — has prediabetes and 12.1% of the adult population — nearly

1 million people — have diagnosed diabetes. "It is important for people to be aware of their personal risk factors for diabetes," said Dr. Samantha Avoke, an internal medicine physician at Piedmont Physicians Newton Drive Internal Medicine. "They should also know that making lifestyle changes can reduce risk factors and lead to better outcomes." Diabetes is a group of diseases or conditions where there is too much sugar in the blood. Prediabetes means a person's blood sugar is higher



Samantha Avoke

than the normal range (70 to 100), but still below the diabetic range (126 and higher). A fasting blood glucose level of 100 to 125 indicates prediabetes. Diabetics have a resistance to insulin, which regulates blood glucose levels. The more sensitive your body is to insulin, the better it is able to regulate blood glucose. "It is important to maintain annual physicals and keep an eye on blood sugar levels, particularly for people as they age," Avoke said. "People should also be aware of symptoms of both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes." The incidence of Type 2 diabetes, and other associated diseases, can be reduced by making the following lifestyle changes:

Eat healthier: Food affects blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol. It is important to eat more fruits and vegetables, lean meats, and whole grains, drink water instead of soda and choose food that is low in sugar, salt, calories and fat.

Improve fitness: Everyone should strive to be active for at least 30 minutes a day. You do not have to go to the gym either, walking around the block or doing yard work counts as physical activity, too.

Stop smoking: Your doctor can guide you to many different cessation programs and you will see your health improve in many different ways.

Plan medication: When prescribed medication

related to diabetes, blood pressure or cholesterol, it is important to take the medication as directed by your doctor. "According to the CDC, 80% of adults with prediabetes don't even realize they have it," Avoke said. "Without taking any action, many of those cases will become Type 2 diabetes. People need to see their physicians, get screened, and make the lifestyle changes that will keep them healthy for years to come." For more information on diabetes, visit piedmont.org/diabetes. Avoke is accepting new patients and offers virtual visits. To schedule an appointment with Avoke, visit piedmont.org.

Quality health care is more important than ever.

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FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT

The Covington News

Tasty take on turkey in time for Thanksgiving

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Perhaps no day is more synonymous with a certain dish than Thanksgiving is with turkey. As tasty as turkey can be, this flavorful fowl doesn't find its way onto many families' dinner tables unless it's Thanksgiving day.

Secret family turkey recipes may reign supreme in some households, but holiday hosts with no such resources can consider this unique recipe for "Holiday Turkey" from Andrew Schloss' "Cooking Slow" (Chronicle Books). By slow cooking the turkey, cooks can ensure it's evenly cooked

Holiday Turkey

Makes 15 servings

- 1 fresh turkey, about 15 pounds, preferably free-range
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 quart apple cider
- 2 teaspoons dried poultry seasoning
- Coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Remove the giblets from the turkey and discard (or save for another use). Rinse the turkey inside and out and pat dry with paper towels. Rub it all over with salt and pepper. Refrigerate, uncovered, for at least 12 hours and up to 24 hours. During that time, the surface of the turkey will become visibly dry and the skin will tighten; this encourages a nice crisp skin on the finished bird.

Remove the turkey from the refrigerator one hour before you plan to start roasting. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.

Put the turkey on a rack set in a large, flameproof roasting pan. Drizzle the oil over the top.

Roast for one hour. Reduce the oven temperature to 175 degrees. Pour the cider into the roasting pan and sprinkle the poultry seasoning in the liquid.



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Slow cooking the turkey ensures the flavorful fowl is evenly cooked.

Continue roasting until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of a thigh (but not touching bone) registers to 170 degrees.

Transfer the turkey to a carving board, tent loosely with aluminum foil, and let rest for about 15 minutes (see tip). Meanwhile, skim the fat from the surface of the liquid in the pan. Put the roasting pan over two burners and bring the pan drippings to a boil over high heat. Cook until the juices reduce and thicken slightly, enough to coat a spoon, about 10 minutes. Taste for seasoning. Carve the turkey and serve with cider pan juices.

Resting tip: Slow-roasted meats need far less resting time (pretty much none) than those that are traditionally roasted. The reason for resting meat that has been roasted at a high temperature is to allow juices that have collected in the cooler center time to migrate back into the dryer (hotter) exterior sections after it comes out of the oven. Because slow-roasted meats are cooked evenly and a temperature that keeps most of the juices in place, a resting period is largely unnecessary. A brief resting time does allow the meat to become a little firmer as it cools, making it easier to carve.



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The right ingredients are necessary to produce a bounty of baked goods. It's also essential to ensure those ingredients are fresh.

Stock the pantry with holiday baking ingredients

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Many holiday traditions begin with family and friends gathered in the kitchen or around the dinner table. Food is an integral part of celebrating Thanksgiving, Christmas and Chanukah, and key components of each holiday are tied exclusively to food.

Come the holiday season, many people gather to make delicious desserts for holiday dinners or even as gifts. The right ingredients are necessary to produce a bounty of baked goods. It's also essential to ensure those ingredients are fresh, as age can compromise the taste of some spices, and leavening ingredients like yeast, baking soda and baking powder may lose efficacy over time.

• **Flours:** All-purpose flour is versatile and useful in many recipes. In addition, bread flour, cake flour and pastry flour have attributes that make them better suited for their respective jobs than all-purpose flour. Individuals who follow certain diets, including gluten-free diets, can find alternative flours that can be substituted in many different recipes.

• **Baking soda:** This leavening agent is activated when it is combined with acid and heat. That is why it is often paired with citrus juice, buttermilk and sour cream.

• **Baking powder:** This leavening agent is baking soda mixed with a powdered acid and cornstarch. If baking soda is the only leavening agent, it will

not require the addition of another acidic ingredient. "Double-acting" means carbon dioxide bubbles will form during mixing and again during heating.

• **Yeast:** Yeast takes more time to metabolize and cause doughs to rise than other leavening agents.

• **Sugar:** Granulated sugar is the most common sugar found in recipes. Confectioner's sugar (powdered sugar) is used in frosting and icings. Brown sugar is refined sugar with molasses added, and is used in certain recipes, like gingerbread.

• **Salt:** Granulated table salt is used in everyday baking.

• **Unsalted butter:** Unsalted butter will be the default for baked goods unless the recipe specifically mentions salted butter.

• **Eggs:** Eggs help to bind ingredients together. Large eggs are most often cited in many baking recipes.

• **Milk:** Dairy adds moisture and texture to batters. Alternative milks, such as soy or almond milk, can sometimes be substituted, but the resulting texture may change.

• **Vegetable oil:** Many recipes call for vegetable oil, which has a neutral flavor.

• **Shortening:** Shortening is a solid vegetable fat used to make tender baked goods. Shortening also has a higher melting point, which helps cookies and other items retain their shape while cooking.

• **Flavorings:** It is helpful to have various spices and extracts on hand. Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and allspice are some common baking spices. Almond and vanilla extracts are quite versatile and add extra punch to recipes.

• **Additions:** Mix-ins, such as chocolate chips, cocoa powder, oats, nuts, and dried fruits, often turn up in holiday recipes.

Certain ingredients are essential for baking and holiday cooks can take steps to ensure their pantries are stocked in time for the holidays.

Simplify holiday hosting on the day of the party

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

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Come the holiday season, many people look forward to gatherings with family and friends. Such gatherings are often held in private homes, and that means someone must take on the task of hosting.

There are many advantages to hosting holiday gatherings. Hosts won't have to travel during a notoriously busy time of year to take to the roads and sky. Hosts also won't have to book hotel rooms or arrange for other accommodations, saving them money and

time during a season that tends to be expensive and packed with social engagements.

As the day of their holiday parties draws near, hosts can take several steps to make the day of the party easier, allowing them to spend more time with their family and friends.

• **Choose the right menu.** The right menu can go a long way toward making hosting easier on the day of the party. Various factors, such as food allergies and the size of the guest list, must be considered when planning a holiday menu. As hosts scour cookbooks for

the right foods, look for recipes that don't require everything to be done on the day of the party. Look for recipes that allow you to do most, if not all, of the prep work in the days leading up to the party.

• **Clean the common areas.** Guests likely won't be spending time in every room of your house during the party. So when it comes time to clean, focus on the common areas. Living rooms, dining areas and restrooms should garner the bulk of your attention. If guests might be wandering outdoors, make sure leaves and dirt have been cleaned

off of patios and decks.

• **Make a list of supplies and check it twice.** About two weeks before the party, sit down and make a thorough list of everything you expect to need. Include food, beverages, dining needs and entertainment. A few weeks before the party, purchase items that won't spoil. Doing so saves time during your grocery store trip the week of the party.

Holiday hosts can take several steps in the days leading up to their parties to make hosting easier once guests arrive.



Have a recipe you'd like to share?

Email it to news@covnews.com and be featured in a future edition of The Covington News.

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