

The Covington News

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18-19, 2023



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Inside:

'THE VOICE' OF SOCIAL CIRCLE

Bill Dolan has adopted unique ways
of PA announcing over 18 years
Sports, Page B1

His Word

"Not forsaking the
assembling of ourselves
together, as the manner of
some is; but exhorting one
another: and so much the
more, as ye see the day
approaching."

Hebrews 10:25 (KJV)

First Order



Above, local governmental and business leaders and company officials prepare to break ground for a new Whataburger restaurant in the Covington Town Center development on Alcovy Road Wednesday, Feb. 15. Left, Scott Jordan-Wheeler, owner of franchise company Made To Order that will operate the Covington Whataburger location, speaks during the groundbreaking ceremony for the highly-anticipated restaurant The restaurant is targeting an August opening with hiring beginning in May for the planned 24-hour location.

Special |
Newton Chamber of Commerce

Covington City Council

City to seek concert noise limit enforcer for Legion Field

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

COVINGTON, Ga. — Covington City Council has voted to advertise for a sound technician the city would hire to assure live concerts at Legion Field stay within previously set noise limits for the venue.

But the council split on a second vote to limit the users of the city-owned facility to federally-recognized nonprofits and community "partners" after July 1 — voting 3-2 to do so at the special called meeting Monday, Feb. 13.

The council voted to issue a Request for Qualifications



Special Photo

A musician performs during a September 2022 concert at Legion Field.

(RFQ) from prospective sound providers that includes a provision that anyone whose

See CITY, A6

Rivian to Stanton Springs

Court eyes bonds denial

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

ATLANTA — Attorneys for the state government and Joint Development Authority (JDA) joined with Rivian opponents' attorneys to argue before the Georgia Court of Appeals Wednesday about a Morgan County judge's September denial of a financing method for the electric vehi-

cle maker's planned factory near Social Circle.

The financing plan is a major part of state and local incentives totaling \$1.5 billion offered to Rivian to build a factory that would employ up to 7,000 on a site that straddles the line between south-east Walton and northwest

See COURT, A5

Georgia State University's Newton campus

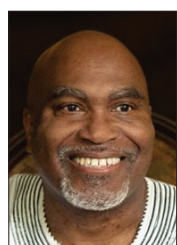
Festival to feature speakers, events, highlights campus' history

STAFF REPORT
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — An award-winning author, a thought-provoking roundtable discussion with college educators and state and county administrators, and a visit from a local film studio executive are just a few of the events planned for the 2023 Daffodil Festival and

Symposium on Georgia State University's Newton Campus, Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 21 and 22.

The two-day event, which celebrates the Newton Campus's acres



Dr. Daniel Black

of blooming daffodils, will also highlight the campus's 15-plus year history, with a special history walk-and-talk on the grounds. In addition to planned speakers, there will be an opportunity for 3D printing, painting, bird-house-making and yoga demonstrations each day.

"The Daffodil Festival and Symposium is a great oppor-

tunity to bring some phenomenal speakers to Newton County," said Tami Thomas, assistant professor of criminal justice and co-chair of the 2023 Daffodil Festival. "All of the presenters and activities surrounding the event are designed to reflect the growth and diversity of our university and specifically the Newton campus."

All events are open to the community and are free.

On Tuesday, Feb. 21 the following events are planned:

10 a.m. — In conjunction with the college-wide Mario A.J. Bennekin Jr. Black History Symposium, award-winning novelist and Clark Atlanta University

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Inside

**High school swimmer
moving to next level**

Sports, B1



Weekend Weather Forecast



Saturday, Feb. 18
High: 57° Low: 35°
• Sunny



Sunday, Feb. 19
High: 63° Low: 44°
• Partly cloudy

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Newton County

German foundation to renovate farmhouse for nonprofits

By TOM SPIGOLON
tspigolon@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — One of the largest private foundations in Germany is seeking to honor a longtime Newton County landowner by creating a sustainable collaborative space for itself and nonprofit leaders and foundations south of Covington.

The Hamburg-based Joachim Herz Foundation will use Little Springs Farm off Georgia Hwy. 36 for its own projects and make it available to its partners

and nonprofit organizations. The project honors the legacy of the late German entrepreneur Joachim Herz who, along with his wife, found peace and solace on the 2,700-acre property off Georgia Hwy. 36 south of Covington, said Foundation spokesperson Thornton Kennedy. “Herz, who built a real estate business in the southeastern United States, died in 2008 and is buried near the lakes he so loved on the property,” Kennedy said.

Beginning in the 1970s, Herz invested in real estate across the southeastern U.S. with a focus on Atlanta. “Since he and his wife spent many weeks a year in Atlanta, they decided to make a home there,” Kennedy said. “They sought the vastness and solitude of the countryside and found it in Newton County.” In the 1980s, the Herzes acquired what is now Little Springs Farm and lived in the home on the property whenever they were in Atlanta. The Joachim Herz Foundation is one of the largest private foundations in Germany and promotes education, science and research in economics and the natural sciences as well as the personal development of teens and young

adults. Projects within this country play an important role due to the founder’s close ties with the U.S., and the state of Georgia in particular, Kennedy said. Plans by the Foundation include converting an existing 4,500-square-foot, mid-20th century home on the property into meeting space with outdoor areas for creativity and inspiration for no more than 50 guests. A large room for meetings and shared meals will be created in the former residential wing. The former bedrooms will be converted into breakout spaces for smaller sessions. Several verandas and seating areas around the house will allow guests to come together both inside and outside.



Special Photo
One of Germany’s largest private foundations plans to convert the former residence of a longtime Newton County landowner for use by nonprofits.

As part of the renovations, the kitchen will be modernized to serve Little Springs Farm’s guests. A new entrance on the north side of the property on Moore’s Farm Road will utilize an existing airplane runway, Kennedy said. It is intended for day use only and there will be no overnight accommodations, Kennedy said. The majority of the farm property is leased

to an independent cattle operator, and hunting clubs lease sections at various times throughout the year. The changes will not affect the cattle and hunting clubs’ operations, Kennedy said. When complete, it will be passive and sustainable which will allow it to operate in a carbon-neutral manner, similar to the foundation’s headquarters in Hamburg, Germany, Kennedy said.



CITY OF COVINGTON JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The City of Covington is currently accepting applications for a **Gas Project Technician** in the **Gas Department** with a starting hourly rate of **\$22.65** to a maximum hourly rate of **\$33.27** depending upon qualifications. Qualified applicants **MUST** apply on our website by downloading an application packet at **cityofcovington.org**, or may apply in person at Covington City Hall, 2194 Emory Street, Covington, Georgia 30014. This position will remain open **until 4:00pm on Monday February 27, 2023**. The City of Covington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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FESTIVAL:

Continued from A1

American Studies professor Dr. Daniel Black will speak on “The Will to Thrive: Black People’s Invisible Power.”

11:30 a.m. — “African American Males: Journey to Greatness.” A roundtable discussion with panelists Marcello Banes, Newton County Commission Chairman; Dr. Jessie Aldoph, Perimeter College associate professor of English; Dr. Ervin China, Perimeter College assistant professor of mathematics; Enrique Denson, Georgia State alumni and Tyrone Oliver, commissioner for the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. The program will be moderated by Scott Ross, Perimeter College assistant business professor.

1 p.m. — Patrick Rodriguez, Georgia State’s Prison Education project interim director, will speak on “Re-imagining Success—The State Way.”

6 p.m. — “An Evening Community Chat with Dr. Anyee’ Payne of Perimeter College’s Center for Community Outreach and Research (CORE) pro-

gram about the book, “The Black Family’s Guide to College Admissions.” A question-and-answer session about college admissions will follow.

On Wednesday, Feb. 22:

10 a.m. — Robert Faulkner, Cinelease Studios operations coordinator, will speak about college-to-career opportunities in film.

11:30 a.m. — The annual “Poetry and Prose in the Pines” features Spoken Word poet Journee with Honors College student Collin Alexander and faculty with poetry and prose readings and musical performances

1 p.m.—The annual Daffodil Scholarship presentation and campus history walk presented by former college administrator Dr. Sallie Paschal.

6 p.m. — “Evening at Perimeter” featuring the premiere of a student film by Codie Harbin

For more information, please contact Daffodil Festival chairs Sarah Harrell, sharrell@gsu.edu or Tami Thomas, thomas151@gsu.edu.

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REGIONAL REPORT

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

Mother says students who bullied son back at Loganville High

A Walton County mother claimed unsafe conditions at Loganville High School after saying students who assaulted her son last year were back in classes this semester.

Angel Smith spoke before the Walton County Board of Education recently at its monthly meeting to express concern about letting the students who reportedly attacked her son back on campus.

"Why are these students allowed back at school?" Smith said. "School must be a place where students feel safe and respected. How is Loganville High School supposed to be safe?"

The Loganville Police Department investigated two alleged bullying incidents in April and ultimately arrested four students, ranging 14 to 17, on a range of felony and misdemeanor charges including false imprisonment, simple battery and reckless conduct.

The victim, a 15-year-old ninth grader at LHS, claimed he was in the theater dressing room when two older students forced him into a bathroom and held him there for a prolonged period of time, allegedly spraying him with a cleaning chemical when he tried to escape. A second incident of a similar nature included two more students and the victim reportedly claimed he was subjected to harassing comments of a homophobic nature.

Smith said these students should have faced more serious consequences than to allow them back in school.

"Kids that want to come to this school system from another system cannot have felony charges, but these students are allowed back?" Smith said.

"These students were wanted to do these acts to my son. Who says they could not do this to another? They are capable of hurting others."

Due to the students being minors, the school system was not able to release the specifics of their discipline record, or what

legal consequences they faced in juvenile court, but the Walton County Public Schools office issued a statement on the matter.

"Four students involved in an incident at Loganville High School in April 2022 were disciplined in accordance with the Walton County School District Student Code of Conduct and faced legal consequences for their involvement," the statement read.

"Due to federal privacy laws, the Walton County School District cannot share specific details about the incident or comment on student discipline records. We take student and staff safety seriously and are committed to providing safe and orderly learning environments for all."

Smith's son is now being home-schooled and he is not at LHS with the students in question, but Smith said she is not satisfied with the current situation.

"They should not be back at school," Smith said.

—The Walton Tribune

Sports betting bill introduced in Georgia House

Legislation introduced into the Georgia House of Representatives Monday marks the latest effort to legalize sports betting in Georgia.

House Bill 380, sponsored by state Rep. Marcus Wiedower, R-Watkinsville, is being supported by the Metro Atlanta Chamber.

"This legislation would legalize responsible sports betting in Georgia and generate additional revenue for education under the Georgia Lottery," said Marshall Guest, the chamber's senior vice president of public policy and public affairs.

"We look forward to working with Gov. Brian Kemp, Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, House Speaker Jon Burns, and the Georgia General Assembly to secure this huge win for education investment in our state."

Like sports betting legislation floated in past years in the General Assembly, Wiedower's bill calls for sports

betting to be overseen by the Georgia Lottery Corp.

Unlike previous sports betting bills, the new measure would allow for two types of sports betting licenses. It calls for awarding up to 16 Type 1 licenses to companies that would provide online sports betting services.

A second variety of licenses — known as Type 2 — would go to brick-and-mortar businesses in Georgia that would offer in-person sports betting. Sports betting legislation in past years has been limited strictly to online betting.

Licensees would pay 15% of their adjusted gross incomes to the state in the form of a "privilege tax" that would be set aside to help fund education in Georgia.

The bill sets out penalties for violators and includes provisions requiring companies involved in sports betting to offer programs to help problem gamblers.

Meanwhile, a second sports betting bill introduced into the Georgia Senate earlier this month is scheduled to be heard Tuesday in the Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee.

The metro chamber's endorsement of the House bill comes after a coalition of Atlanta's professional sports teams — the Braves, Falcons, Hawks, and Atlanta United — led the fight to legalize sports betting in Georgia during the last two years.

—Capitol Beat News

Walton school board member resigns due to prolonged illness

Diane Turner, the District 3 member of the Walton County Board of Education, resigned this month from the board due to prolonged illness.

Turner is currently battling a chronic condition and chose to resign as she will be missing meetings and unable to fulfill all her board duties consistently in the coming months.

Turner served 10 years

on the board, elected to the board in 2012 after a career in education with the Walton County School District before that, and her fellow board member said she would be missed.

"I'm really going to miss her," Coleman Landers, chairman of the WCBOE, said. "As a board member, she brought a joy that cannot be matched along with a number of years with the system."

—The Walton Tribune

'Tripledeemic' on decline in Georgia

Georgia's "tripledeemic" — the simultaneous outbreaks of flu, COVID, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) — is on the decline, state epidemiologist Cherie Drenzek said Wednesday.

The flu season started early and peaked in October both nationally and in Georgia, Drenzek told members of the Georgia Board of Public Health during its first meeting since November. Hospitalizations are down by about 60% since last week in metro Atlanta, the sole region where DPH tracks the data.

Despite the decline in the amount of flu activity, severe outcomes including death are higher nationally than in past years. So far this flu season, 97 children have died from the flu nationwide, including six just this past week. Drenzek said older adults and young children are the most likely to experience severe outcomes such as hospitalization and death.

The pattern for RSV, which typically causes cold-like symptoms but can be serious in young children, has been similar to the pattern for flu. The RSV season began early and peaked in October, Drenzek said.

There is also good news when it comes to COVID-19. The level of hospitalizations for elderly Georgians is about one-fifth of what it was at this time last year, Drenzek said. Deaths have also decreased.

The decline in severe outcomes indicates COVID vaccines and

boosters are working, Drenzek said. Though the risk has decreased, many are still vulnerable to COVID, with

more than 3,000 people still dying of COVID each week in the United States.

—Capitol Beat News

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- In person: Stop by 1166 Usher St. NW in downtown Covington
- Email: news@covnews.com

OPINIONS

The Covington News

Sen. Brian Strickland guest editorial

Reforms may end barriers to employment

Nearly 83% of Georgia prisoners will eventually be released back into the community. Despite ample evidence that access to gainful employment is critical to reentry, individuals with criminal records face high barriers to finding a job. Georgia lawmakers now have an opportunity to help returning citizens remain productive members of society by eliminating unnecessary regulatory hurdles.



From a policy perspective, reforms that reduce barriers to employment for individuals with criminal backgrounds should be considered “low-hanging fruit” in the effort to reduce mass incarceration and the high rate of recidivism. One such barrier, occupational licensing, is particularly ripe for reform.

An occupational license is essentially a government-issued stamp of approval to enter into certain regulated occupations. In the 1950s, just five percent of workers required a license to do their job. Today, nearly one in seven workers in Georgia hold an occupational license. Georgia has licensing requirements for over 40 occupations including barbers, nurses, make-up artists, athletic trainers, and construction contractors.

Opening up employment opportunities to individuals with criminal backgrounds could help alleviate ongoing labor shortages in the construction and healthcare industries. Many of Georgia’s most in-demand trade workers — such as plumbers, electricians, and general contractors — require a license. The State also places restrictions on who can work in licensed long-term care facilities.

Of course, there are some offenses that should preclude someone from getting a license — especially for occupations related to their record. For instance, someone who has been convicted of elder abuse should not be able to work with vulnerable populations.

But licensing boards lack consistent guidance for evaluating whether an applicant’s criminal background is related to the occupation. Likewise, prospective workers lack adequate information to determine if their background will result in their application being denied. Establishing clearer eligibility guidelines would help reduce this uncertainty. Georgia could join Florida, Texas, and North Carolina in requiring licensing boards to post information on their

See STRICKLAND, A5

Rob Rogers cartoonist



Gene Lyons national columnist

Sanders’ ‘rebuttal’ had nothing to do with Biden’s address

If history is any guide, Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders’ bizarre “rebuttal” to a presidential speech she hadn’t heard will be the high point of her political career. (Her address was pre-recorded.) Contrary to many, including Sanders herself, voters in this state have little enthusiasm for living in a fundamentalist theocracy. They know these Bible-beaters all too well.



Sanders came off as a self-intoxicated fanatic, like a second-string preacher at the kind of suburban fundamentalist church that has auditorium seating and multiple video screens. Her eyes had that familiar gleam; everybody who disagrees with her is “of the devil.”

For as long as I’ve lived in Arkansas — that is, since Gov. Dale Bumpers liberated the state from the segregationist Orval Faubus in the early ‘70s — right-wing theocrats have made most of the noise in statewide politics but lost most of the elections. That would include Sanders’ father, Mike Huckabee, an affable Baptist preacher who plays bass guitar in a band that performs Rolling Stones covers.

The elder Huckabee campaigned and governed as a relative moderate. His 1997 speech commemorating the 40th anniversary of Little Rock Central High School’s integration through the good offices of the 101st Airborne put even President Bill Clinton in the shade. Later on, he became a TV miracle cure peddler and hard-core Trumper after learning where the money is.

Oddly, Sarah Sanders’ rebuttal to Biden’s State of the Union never mentioned her personal benefactor, Donald Trump. Instead, as Trump supporters bitterly observed, it was all Ron DeSantis-style culture war pronouncements.

What did they expect? As White House press secretary, Sanders told the national press that she’d gotten scores of congratulatory calls from FBI agents celebrating President Trump’s firing of FBI Director James Comey. Asked under oath by independent counsel Robert Mueller, she admitted those calls were imaginary. “A slip of the tongue,” she called it.

You can’t count on loyalty from a person like that.

Rebutting Biden, who spoke mostly about jobs, economic growth, Social Security and Medicare, Sanders accused him of surrendering his presidency to a “woke mob that can’t even tell you what a woman is.”

Do what?

“Most Americans simply want to live their lives in freedom and peace,” Sanders said, “but we are under attack in a left-wing culture war we didn’t start and never wanted to fight. Every day, we are told we must partake in their rituals, salute their flags, and worship their false idols, all while big government colludes with Big Tech to strip away the most American thing there is -- your freedom of speech. That’s not normal. It’s crazy, and it’s wrong.”

Which flags and false idols would those be? I wonder. She never did say. Preaching to the converted, she apparently didn’t think she needed to.

Flags with big red Razorback Hogs are popular here on game days, along with bronze statues of rampant swine. How about them Hogs? as we say.

Otherwise, I have no earthly idea. You?

In almost the next breath, our champion of free speech boasted about issuing executive orders forbidding the teaching of “CRT” in the state of Arkansas and banning the word “Latinx” from public documents. For the initiated -- that is, dedicated Fox News fans -- the acronym refers to critical race theory, a professorial approach to understanding slavery and racial segregation.

Most Americans likely had no idea what she was on about.

Never mind that there’s no evidence of CRT being taught in Arkansas schools. How banning it comports with protecting First Amendment freedoms, Sanders didn’t say. As I have commented previously, she’s the kind of ideologue who invokes “the word ‘freedom’ to mean people who disagree with her need to shut up, or else.”

How, then, to deal with Arkansas’ complicated racial history: slavery, Civil War, Jim Crow, lynchings and massacres? Would it be permissible for a teacher to explain the complex legacy of Sanders’ own alma mater, Little Rock Central

See LYONS, A5

Dick Yarbrough columnist

We, the unwashed, get hosed again

I am struggling to come up with just the right word to describe the trip two lame-duck politicians and their posse took to Europe this past November on your and my dime (aka, taxpayers.) Boondoggle, which is defined as “an activity that is wasteful or pointless but gives the appearance of having value,” is about the best I can do at the moment. But “arrogant” and “insensitive” wouldn’t be far behind.



It seems that before leaving office, Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan, who chose not to run for reelection, and Sen. Butch Miller, R-Gainesville, president pro tem of the state Senate, who ran to replace Duncan and lost, decided they needed to go on a weeklong economic development trip to Germany and the United Kingdom as part of a special Senate Committee on Economic Development and International Relations.

The committee, by the way, was created at the end of the 2022 legislative session under the watchful eye of -- guess who? -- outgoing Sen. Miller. Knock me over with a feather.

The entourage included 14 people: Duncan, Miller and state Senators Sheikh Rahman, D-Lawrenceville; Emanuel Jones, D-Ellenwood; Sonya Halpern, D-Atlanta; and Clint Dixon, R-Buford, as well as the state senate’s PR guy and two members of Duncan’s security detail. (Why does Duncan need a security detail when most people in Georgia couldn’t tell you who the Lt. Governor is and likely nobody in Germany or Great Britain would know or care?)

I am sure all the Brits and Germans they met were polite and accommodating but were no doubt aware that these two guys have zero power now. They couldn’t pass gas.

Some of you may recall the Thanksgiving turkey of a trip the late Speaker David Ralston made in 2010 to Germany and the Netherlands with his family and his chief of staff and spouse, courtesy of a Washington-based lobbying firm to talk at highspeed rail service between Chattanooga and Atlanta. Why you had to go to Europe over the Thanksgiving holiday to talk about running a train from Chattanooga to Atlanta was never explained to me satisfactorily. What I did understand was that boondoggle cost We the Unwashed \$17,000.

The more things change, the more they remain the same. A boondoggle is

still a boondoggle. Only, in the case of this particular boondoggle, we don’t know what it cost us. That is because our intrepid public servants and their bureaucratic minions under the Gold Dome won’t tell us.

The Atlanta newspaper found out about the trip and asked how much it had cost. Although the paper estimates the cost to taxpayers to underwrite the boondoggle as being in the “tens of thousands of dollars,” the General Assembly’s legislative counsel, Rick Ruskell, told the paper to go suck an egg. “The Georgia General Assembly and its members, staffs, committees and offices are not subject to Georgia’s open records laws,” he wrote. So there.

It seems that the people who pass our laws feel no need to abide by them. Legislators will tell you that conversations with constituents should remain private. I have no problem with that. But when a gaggle of politicians and their PR flack and security detail bop off to Europe on a meaningless sightseeing trip, you and I have every right to know how much it cost us. It is, after all, our tax dollars.

There may be a light at the end of the tunnel. The Atlanta newspaper reports that in a rare moment of bipartisanship, current Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, Senate President Pro Tem John Kennedy, D-Macon, and Senate Minority Caucus Chairwoman Elena Parent, D-Atlanta, are wondering aloud themselves about the trip and say they plan to look into the matter as to why and how much.

Lt. Gov. Jones and Sen. Kennedy issued a joint statement, saying, “We are taking this issue very seriously and our offices will investigate this process and ensure more transparency for hardworking Georgians.” Sen. Parent said, “There should be a level of transparency and accountability to the public.”

Talk is cheap (certainly cheaper than the boondoggle.) Let’s see what if anything comes of this. I’m sure former Lt. Gov. Duncan and former state Sen. Miller are losing no sleep over it. They got their free trip in, thanks to us, and feel no obligation to tell us what their excursion cost taxpayers. The only thing we know for sure from this unwarranted boondoggle is that once again We the Unwashed got hosed by our intrepid public servants. So, what’s new?

You can reach Dick Yarbrough at dick@dickyarbrough.com; at P.O. Box 725373, Atlanta, GA 31139 or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/dickyarb

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Georgia General Assembly

Religious freedom debate resurfaces in Legislature

By **DAVE WILLIAMS**
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA — A fight over religious freedom legislation that roiled the General Assembly seven years ago is back before Georgia lawmakers.

State Sen. Ed Setzler introduced a bill Wednesday protecting the right of Georgians to “free exercise of religion” from intrusion by the state or local governments.

“Every Georgian should be free to

exercise their religious faith,” Setzler, R-Acworth, said during a news conference at the state Capitol. “Without a state RFRA (Religious Freedom Restoration Act), Georgians do not have protection for religious expression.”

Congress passed a bipartisan federal RFRA law back in 1993. But the U.S. Supreme Court ruled four years later that the protections the law provided extended only to intrusions by the federal government, not by states or local

governments. The Republican-controlled General Assembly passed a Georgia RFRA bill in 2016. But then-GOP Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed the measure after a storm of protest from civil rights groups that it threatened the rights of LGBTQ+ Georgians.

Under Senate Bill 180, the state and local governments would not be permitted to “substantially burden” an individual’s free exercise of religion unless the government could demon-

strate it had a “compelling governmental interest” in doing so and that it was using the “least restrictive means” of intrusion. Frontline Policy Action, a Georgia-based Christian organization, endorsed Setzler’s bill.

“This legislation doesn’t determine outcomes in the courtroom but simply provides a balancing test to weigh important, competing interests and give religious freedom a fair hearing,” said Cole Muzio, the group’s president.

COURT:

Continued from A1

Morgan counties.

If denied, it could lead to state residents being able to challenge incentives that the state and local governments in Georgia have used to recruit employers for years.

The three-judge Appeals Court panel Wednesday, Feb. 15, heard arguments from both sides on Morgan County Superior Court Judge Brenda Trammell’s September 2022 ruling that the JDA did not “establish” that bonds key to the Rivian electric vehicle factory project “are sound, feasible and reasonable” because of the company’s financial losses in recent years.

The JDA of Jasper, Morgan, Newton and Walton Counties was asking Trammell for approval to issue bonds totaling up to \$15 billion — the possible future value of the project — in a bond for title deal.

The JDA bought Stanton Springs North in 2021 and completed purchase of the remainder of the site in August — making the land exempt from property taxes because it is owned by a governmental entity. After the state announced Rivian had selected the Stanton Springs North site, the JDA approved a long-term lease of the property and a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement with the company.

The PILOT allows the company

to pay about \$300 million over 25 years to Newton and three other counties and their school systems over 25 years — given as an incentive to locate in Georgia because it was less than what the company would normally pay in property taxes.

JDA officials contend the Rivian lease is a usufruct — a legal term for leased property over which the tenant has little control and is not subject to property taxes. The Morgan County Board of Tax Assessors agreed with that in mid-2022. Opponents said the lease deal should be legally classified as an “estate” in which the tenant has more control of the property and is subject to taxes. Bond for title and usufructs give local and state governments legal ways to avoid the state constitution’s prohibition on gratuities that bars a government from giving something to a company without receiving something of equal value.

In her ruling, Trammell agreed the site was subject to taxation and said the JDA had not properly vetted the company’s financial situation in recent years before saying the bonds were “sound.” The company has lost billions in recent years as it ramps up production to compete with Tesla and major automakers. The Authority paid Plateau Excavation \$48 million to grade the land in late 2022 for Rivian’s production facility.

On Wednesday, attorneys for the JDA and state government cited a 1985 case and argued that economic viability of a project is not within the scope of the court. It cannot “second-guess” policy decisions of public entities that found a public interest would be served, they argued.

Atlanta attorney John Christy, who represents a group opposing the Rivian project, said an agency determining a project is feasible and a judge approving it is not the correct standard to follow.

He said a court’s job in validating bonds is determining a project’s feasibility and reasonableness based on the evidence presented. Christy added that a case cited by state and JDA attorneys to support their argument does not prevent a court from evaluating a project.

The bond validation case was the latest legal impediment opponents had been able to place before the Rivian project. Some Morgan County residents and property owners filed lawsuits in late January seeking to require developers to be subject to local zoning codes and land disturbance permits. They had filed the same lawsuits in 2022 but withdrew them following a judge’s refusal to issue a stop-work order against the grading work on the site.

STRICKLAND:

Continued from A4

websites about how applicants’ criminal backgrounds are evaluated.

A few Georgia licensing boards have a pre-qualification processes that allows applicants to receive a determination as to whether their criminal history is disqualifying before investing in training and education. This practice should be expanded to every licensing board in the state and pre-qualification decisions should be binding as long as

the applicant does not engage in any further criminal behavior.

When licensing boards do deny an applicant based on their criminal background, they should be required to provide a written explanation for their decision. Thirty-one other states already require licensing board to provide written explanations for denials. Applicants should also be able appeal denials through an administrative appeals process that doesn’t require a lawyer.

While accountability is essential, limiting employment opportunities for people with criminal backgrounds is counterproductive. Research on crime indicates that stable employment is a key element of effective reintegration. We should strive to empower all Georgians to earn a living and remain productive members of society.

District 17 State Sen. Brian Strickland, R-McDonough, co-wrote this guest

column with Vittorio Nastasi. Strickland’s district includes part of Newton County.

LYONS:

Continued from A4

by playing a video of her father’s excellent speech? Or President Clinton’s?

Or would those constitute CRT?

How about Martin Luther King’s “I have a dream” speech, a masterpiece of American oratory as significant as Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address?

More than a bit smugly, Gov.

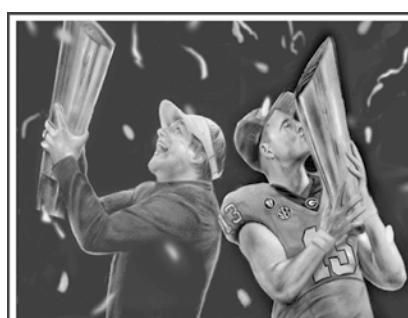
Sanders added that “the dividing line in America is no longer between right or left — the choice is between normal and crazy.”

Within 24 hours of Biden’s State of the Union and Sanders’ prefabricated rejoinder, the Arkansas legislature got busy passing legislation to free up \$60

million in federal American Rescue Plan funds as a lifeline to struggling rural hospitals in jeopardy of closure. Almost needless to say, it was a Biden White House initiative. The Arkansas vote was 95-1.

I’m confident of two things: Sanders will sign the bill, and she won’t thank President Biden. Normal politics, Arkansas style.

Arkansas Times columnist Gene Lyons is a National Magazine Award winner and co-author of “The Hunting of the President” (St. Martin’s Press, 2000). You can email Lyons at eugenelyons2@yahoo.com.



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Sports Betting in Georgia

Betting backers pushing end run around state constitution

By **DAVE WILLIAMS**
Capitol Beat News Service

ATLANTA – Legislative supporters of legalizing sports betting in Georgia are trying something different this year.

To avoid amending the pesky state Constitution,

which requires a two-thirds vote of the Georgia House and Senate, lawmakers in both chambers are pushing bills that would allow online sports betting by statute. Adding sports betting to Georgia law without a constitutional change would need only a simple majority vote in the House and Senate.

But skeptics are warning that doing an end run around the Georgia Constitution runs the risk of lawsuits tying up the state in court and needlessly delaying sports betting from taking effect.

Lawmakers backing the statute route are armed with a new legal opinion from former Georgia Chief Justice Harold Melton asserting that a constitutional amendment is unnecessary. In a 10-page memorandum requested by the Metro Atlanta Chamber – a key

supporter of bringing sports betting to Georgia – Melton contends that sports betting can be classified as a form of lottery, already legal in Georgia under the 1992 constitutional amendment that created the Georgia Lottery.

Melton cites a Georgia Court of Appeals ruling that declared three ingredients – prize, chance, and consideration – are legally required to constitute a lottery.

“Bettors pay a fee (the consideration) to enter the betting scheme with the hope of winning money (the prize),” he wrote.

Melton continued that establishing the element of “chance” may be a “closer question” than the prize or consideration. Nonetheless, he concludes that chance is present in sports betting.

“Although a bettor may exercise some skill in picking a particular

team or athlete as the winner, the actual determination of a winner is entirely dependent on the ultimate performance of the teams or player,” he wrote.

A bill before the state Senate goes further by calling for legalizing not only sports betting in Georgia by statute but also horse racing. It does so by allowing only “fixed-odds” betting on horses rather than pari-mutuel betting, which is specifically prohibited by the Georgia Constitution along with casino gambling.

“This bill has no pari-mutuel betting and no casinos,” said Sen. Billy Hickman, R-Statesboro, the chief sponsor of Senate Bill 57.

But former U.S. Rep. John Barrow of Athens, who is a lawyer, called attempts to justify legalizing sports betting in Georgia without a constitutional amendment “legalistic ho-

cus-pocus.”

In an opinion piece published by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Barrow wrote that betting on sports cannot be classified as a form of “lottery” but does fit the definition of “pari-mutuel,” and thus would require a constitutional amendment.

“‘Pari-mutuel’ is the word that has always been applied to gambling on the outcome of some other contest – a race, a fight, a game, whatever,” he wrote. “Unlike a lottery, it depends on such things as the skill or strength of the contestants, and on the skill of the gambler in evaluating the contestants. This is the very essence of sports betting.”

Beyond the legal dispute over whether sports betting can happen in Georgia without a constitutional change is the practical consideration.

See **BETTING, A7**

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CITY:

Continued from A1

whose bid is selected agree to comply with a long-recognized 60-decibel limit.

Council members' actions Monday stem in part from complaints about heavy bass noises emitted from a multi-act, reggae and pop music festival in September. Council later voted to halt Sunday concerts and car shows at Legion Field.

Concert promoter Michael D. Jamison then told members Feb. 6 that noise restrictions in a rental contract for the venue prevented him from producing a show planned to coincide with the Juneteenth holiday in June.

He asked council members to relax some of the noise restrictions because his performers had complained they could not properly perform their music.

However, Councilmembers Susie Keck and Fleeta Baggett told Jamison the noise level could not be increased because Legion Field is near a residential area. The council has required that all concerts comply with a 60-decibel limit on sound from the venue since the renovation of the decades-old facility was completed in 2016.

City Attorney Frank Turner told council members Monday that someone other than Jamison involved with producing the Juneteenth concert had alleged the city was racially bi-

ased against a minority-owned sound provider who disagreed with the noise level requirement.

City officials had suggested to the promoters that they hire a sound provider who had been able to comply with the required level at the venue in the past — but it was not minority owned, Turner said.

Community Development director Ken Malcolin asked the council to hire a sound provider who would install devices that measure bass and voice levels — along with other parts of sound — measured from the Legion Field property line.

All promoters then would be required to comply with the noise limits the city's provider placed on the show — similar to a method used at other small venues in Metro Atlanta, officials said at the meeting.

On the second vote, a majority of council members seemed ready to limit outdoor events immediately to nonprofits and “community partners” like the Arts Association — which sponsors an annual concert series at Legion Field.

However, Turner said the council needed to set a date to remove the appearance the vote was being taken to target specific promoters.

Turner also warned that anyone could form a nonprofit spe-

cifically to produce a concert.

Councilmember Kenneth Morgan said the council needed to discuss making changes to prevent the council from possibly seeing the need to reverse the decision later if there are problems with implementing it.

“We need to come together as a council, have a work session (and) really vet through this thing,” Morgan said.

Councilmember Fleeta Baggett said she did not believe any changes should be made to accommodate any promoters' calls for a higher sound level because of its proximity to a residential area.

“It is not Chastain,” she said, in reference to the amphitheater that hosts major national touring acts in the middle of Chastain Park in Atlanta. “(Legion Field) is a park that happens to have a stage,” Baggett said.

The vote was 3-2 to limit the use of Legion Field's outside public events to the city's “community partners,” nonprofit 501(C)3 agencies and Georgia nonprofit corporations beginning July 1, 2023. East Ward members Baggett, Keck and Don Floyd voted for it while West Ward members Kenneth Morgan and Charika Davis voted against it. Anthony Henderson was absent.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday, Feb. 18

• Newton County African American History Parade, 10 a.m., from Legion Field to Covington Square. Those wanting to register a group or groups to participate can email Ann Marks Bargie of the Newton County Historical Committee on Black Heritage Preservation at newtonhistoricalcommittee@gmail.com for an entry form. For more information, call 770-315-8949, 678-485-7540, 770-865-4973 or 404-861-0707.

• A Free Tree Giveaway for Oxford homeowners hosted by the Oxford Trees, Parks and Recreation Board is set for Asbury Street park from 10 a.m. to noon. The board will be giving different species of native, three-gallon containerized trees. Tree planting instructions will be provided with each tree while supplies last, and there will also be a planting demonstration at the event. To reserve a tree, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/oxfordfreetree>.

Thursday, Feb. 23

• Covington Lions Club Chili Supper and Fundraiser, 5-7 p.m., Lions clubhouse in Academy Springs Park, 3120 Conyers St. All you can eat homemade chili, hot dogs for the kids, crackers, tea and coffee. Adults \$7 and children \$5. All profits from this event goes directly back into the

community to help those in need.

Friday, Feb. 24

• Open house and ribbon cutting for U.S. Rep. Mike Collins' new district office, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., 100 Court St., Monroe. Collins invites constituents to stop by his district office to meet with him and members of his staff. The district includes north, east and south Newton County. For more information, call (770) 207-1776.

Thursday, March 9

• Newton Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner, 5-8 p.m., Oxford College Student Center, 801 Emory St., Oxford. Advance registration required. For more information and registration, email sdavis@newtonchamber.com.

Friday, March 24-

Sunday, March 26

• “Spongebob-The Musical,” March 24-25 at 7 p.m., March 26 at 3 p.m., Porter Performing Arts Center, 140 Ram Drive. For more information, visit <https://newtoncountyarts.vbotickets.com/events>.

Notice

• Registration is open for all summer day camp sessions at the Covington Family YMCA. Space is available on a first come, first-serve basis and registration can be completed online or in-person. The Covington Family YMCA is at 2140 Newton Drive. For more information, call 770-787-3908.

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

Crime

Social Circle woman charged with setting home on fire

STAFF REPORT
news@covnews.com

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga. — A Social Circle woman has been charged with First Degree Arson after allegedly setting fire to her own home in January. Insurance and Safety Fire Com-

missioner John F. King said Adrianna Cody, 36, was charged after the incident at a home on Sweet Gum Street. King said he Social Circle Fire Department and Police Department asked his office to investigate a residential structure fire on Sweet Gum Street at

approximately 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 25. “When the fire department arrived, they quickly extinguished several small fires inside the residence,” King said. “Examination of the scene found four separate, intentionally set fires located throughout the home. It was

determined that Ms. Cody, who was occupying the residence at the time, was directly involved with the fires.” Cody has since been taken into custody by the Social Circle Police Department on unrelated charges, King said

Social Circle City Schools

Board member resigns for health reasons

By STEPHEN MILLIGAN
The Walton Tribune

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga. — Michael O’Conor, the District 1 board member for the Social Circle Board of Education, his resignation this month due to illness. O’Conor, who was elected to the board in 2019 and is in the final year of his first term, is currently battling a form of cancer and said he chose to resign as he is still working to battle his illness and is worried missing meeting and other obligations mean he cannot work to his full potential on behalf of his constituents and the students of Social Circle City Schools. “It is with deep sadness that



Michael O’Conor

I inform you of my resignation from my position as District 1 Representative on the SCCS BOE,” O’Conor said in a prepared statement. “As you may already know, my health has been in a state of decline since March of last year. I was unable to attend the June conference and a couple of meetings due to illness. Because of this, I feel that it is in the best interest of both myself and SCCS if I step down from the board.” O’Conor said he was proud to have served on the board and hoped he had been able to do what he could to make Social Circle a better system for students. “It has been an absolute pleasure to work alongside the dedicated men and women of our Social Circle City Schools,” O’Conor said. “I have greatly

enjoyed the experience of serving on the school board during my term and am thankful for your help and kindness along the way. I am honored to have worked in the capacity of improving our schools and its functions for our children and grandchildren.” As O’Conor had less than a year left in his term, the SCBOE will appoint a new member to finish out the remaining portion of the time before the regular election for the seat is held in November to find a new member for a four-year term. The board is currently taking applications for the position online at <https://forms.gle/rZEAM9DftmSEP8xj9>. They will interview finalists and select a new board member to serve until Dec. 31 in the coming month.

Georgia General Assembly

New amusement machine bill filed

By DAVE WILLIAMS
Capitol Beat News Services

ATLANTA — A state lawmaker is renewing a bipartisan push to reform Georgia’s coin-operated amusement machines (COAM) industry. House Bill 353, sponsored by Georgia Rep. Alan Powell, would award non-cash redemption gift cards to winners that could be redeemed anywhere in the state for

any legal product. Under current law, COAM winners can redeem their prizes only for merchandise sold in the store where the machine they played is located. With taxes from the popular COAM machines already making up the Georgia Lottery Corp.’s fastest growing source of revenue for education, gift cards would generate even more tax funds for HOPE scholarships and the

state’s pre-kindergarten program, Powell, R-Hartwell, told members of the House Higher Education Committee Thursday. “You will see the proceeds explode,” he said. “It will bring in more money to the lottery.” After Thursday’s hearing, Powell’s bill was transferred from the Higher Education Committee to the House Regulated Industries Committee, which he chairs.

BETTING:

Continued from A6

ation that going the statute route would leave out casinos. Recent polling of likely Georgia voters found stronger support for bringing casino gambling to Georgia than sports betting. A demographic breakdown of polling results also showed that while sports betting is popular among younger voters and Black men, casinos are more appealing to older voters and Black women. “A bet’s a bet, but your grandma wants to enjoy some newfound freedom differently than your nephew,” said Dan McLagan, spokesman

for All in Georgia, a casino industry group. “Let’s not throw grandma from the fun train.” McLagan also argued that resort casinos would generate significantly more economic impact in Georgia than online sports betting, which lacks a brick-and-mortar presence and, thus, would create few jobs. Georgia lawmakers will have plenty of options to pick from when it comes to legalizing gambling during this year’s legislative session. Thus far, two constitutional amendments have been introduced – one

in the House and one in the Senate – while two more bills would

bring gambling to the Peach State without a constitutional change.

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EDUCATION

The Covington News

Advanced Placement program

All NCSS high schools named AP Honor Schools

STAFF REPORT
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — All three Newton County School System high schools — Alcovy, Eastside and Newton — were recently named 2023 Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Schools by Georgia School Superintendent Richard Woods. All three schools were rec-



Richard Woods

ognized as AP STEM schools this year. In addition, Eastside and Newton were named AP Expansion Schools and Newton High School was also named a 2023 AP Humanities School. 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, AP Computer Science Principles). AP Humanities schools are schools with at least five students testing in each of the following AP Categories — one ELA course, two history/social science courses, one fine arts course and one world language course. And AP Expansion Schools are schools with 25% growth in AP student participation from May 2021 to May 2022 and a minimum of 25 students testing in May 2020. “Congratulations to Alcovy, Eastside, and Newton

for being named AP Honor Schools,” said Samantha Fuhrey, superintendent of Newton County 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.” “The number of AP Honor Schools increased by more than 14%, which serves as a testament to our commitment to expand opportunities for Georgia students, including in advanced and accelerated coursework,” Woods said. Advanced Placement (AP) classes and exams are administered by the College Board, which also administers the SAT.

Georgia Piedmont Technical College

Spring enrollment up 10%

STAFF REPORT
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Despite its Newton and Rockdale campuses showing a slight decrease, Georgia Piedmont Technical College is boasting a major growth in its overall enrollment for the second consecutive semester. Reports from the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) show Georgia Piedmont with overall enrollment at 2,526 — an increase of nearly 10% compared to the start of spring semester 2022 at its five locations in Covington, Conyers, Clarkston, Decatur and Lithonia. However, Newton’s campus enrollment for the spring semester stood at 359 and Rockdale’s count was 333 for a combined total of 692 — down 55 students

from 747 students in spring 2022. The two counties make up 30% of the college’s overall enrollment. Georgia Piedmont President Tavaréz Holston said, “Our growth is reflective of what’s happening in our local job markets.” “Employers are actively looking for people with technical skills that are best acquired by attending a technical college like GPTC. Technical education yields an exponential return on investment for our state,” Holston said. Another large part of the credit for the enrollment hike goes to more than 800 high school students in DeKalb, Rockdale and Newton counties who are taking advantage of Georgia’s dual enrollment opportunity offered through GPTC, officials said.

Georgia Regional Academic Bowl



Special | Newton County School System
Members of the Eastside Academic Team pose with Coach Eric Adams, including Colin McGowan, Simon Reid, Breanna Epps, Daniel Bartello, Aaron Mull, Katie Bryan, Alexander Amerson, Jessica Wilson, Jonathan Crawford and Trevor Hay.

Eastside Academic Team to compete for state title

STAFF REPORT
news@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Eastside High School’s Academic Team will compete for the Georgia Regional Academic Bowl (GRAB) State Championship after its third-place win in the varsity competition at the Griffin RESA Regional Academic Bowl. The team will compete for the state title Feb. 25 at Apalachee High School in Winder for the second year in a row. Members of the Eastside Academic Team include Colin McGowan, Simon Reid, Breanna Epps, Daniel Bartello, Aaron Mull, Katie Bryan, Alexander Amerson, Jessica Wilson, Jonathan Crawford and Trevor Hay. High school teams from Butts, Fayette, Henry, Lamar, Newton, Pike, Spalding and Upson counties competed at the regional event for bragging rights — and the chance to take part in the state competition. All varsity and junior varsity teams finishing first, second, or third earned a chance to represent the Griffin RESA region at the GRAB Academic Bowl. The Regional Academic Bowl competition featured five rounds from September through January that were

taken by teams asynchronously — not at the same time. Teams had to answer 100 questions in 60 minutes during the round window each month. Ten players could have competed at a time. Teams were ranked by how many questions they answered correctly. A cumulative ranking was maintained throughout the competition. Eric Adams, Academic Team coach for Eastside High, said, “Although we prefer the more traditional style of quiz bowl with buzzers and facing off against one opponent at a time, we participate in the Griffin RESA in the hopes that we finish in the top four and thereby qualify for the GRAB State Championship tournament, where teams qualify from several RESAs tournaments across the state. The GRAB state championship is formatted in the traditional quiz bowl competition style,” he said. The Newton College & Career Academy (NCCA) team just missed out on the state competition with its fourth place finish in the junior varsity part of the competition. NCCA team members included Jackson Allred, Francisco Alvarado, Nevaeh Craven and Gauresh Vittal.

ed·u·ca·tion

(ějē-kā'shən) *n.*

1. The act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life.

At Snapping Shoals EMC, we're always looking for ways to define our role in the communities we serve. To that end, we aim at giving more meaning to education by offering Bright Ideas grants to teachers with innovative ideas, shaping young lives with scholarships and building brighter futures for all students through Operation Round Up. Please visit us at www.ssemc.com or call us at 770-786-3484.



From left, District 113 State Rep. Sharon Henderson presents the Outstanding Georgia Citizen Award and a Resolution to Newton County Schools Superintendent Samantha Fuhrey. Fuhrey ‘provides excellent leadership, innumerable time and energy in the development and maintenance for our students’ academic success. As an educational professional, she is highlighted throughout Georgia and the United States. She is the first woman to hold the title as superintendent in Newton County in over 150 years. It is fitting and proper that her extraordinary accomplishments be highlighted,’ Henderson said.

Special | Sharon Henderson



SPORTS

The Covington News

Prep Athletics

“THE VOICE”

Dolan’s journey as PA announcer



Phillip B. Hubbard | The News

Bill Dolan announces a home basketball game for the Social Circle Redskins during the 2022-23 regular season. He announced two days worth of region tournament games this week, too.

By PHILLIP B. HUBBARD
phubbard@covnews.com

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga. — Long before Bill Dolan was announcing home basketball games for Social Circle, he was a high school student just like the athletes he announces about. From his high school days to present day — and after 500-plus games announced — Dolan has adopted some unique ways of announcing.

For instance, whenever a player for the Redskins is fouled and goes to the free throw line, Dolan announces, “Player X is ssshhhhooottting two.”

All of the fans seemingly quiet as a result. Though effective, it’s just part of Dolan’s act.

“As somebody once said, ‘The whole world is a stage,’” Dolan said. “My goal is to entertain when I announce. I’ve tried to come up with my own specific style for doing it. But I’m always open. If I hear something somewhere, ‘Man, that sounds good. I think I’ll use that, too.’”

Dolan has other unique ways of announcing certain calls. Whenever a player has a traveling violation, he says, “Violation, violation, that’s a traveling violation.” There is also Dolan announcing an offensive foul for which he says, “That’s a

foul of Player X...and that foul was offensive.”

It’s hard to believe that Dolan once cringed at what is now what he considers his “trademark” free throw call.

“I actually heard an announcer somewhere do that,” Dolan said. “And, at first, I didn’t like it. But then I tried it and I said, ‘That works pretty good.’”

Dolan’s High School/College Influence

To this day, Dolan credits his high school days at St. Vincent High School in Missouri for his announcing abilities now.

Not only did he play football, basketball, baseball and soccer while attending, but he also acted in some plays.

Participating in both arenas has helped him become a PA announcer.

“I had previously done some acting and plays in high school and college,” Dolan said. “Speaking in front of people was never a big issue.”

Dolan went on to serve four years in the U.S. Army. He was part of the 82nd Airborne Division where he made 101 parachute jumps. He also

See VOICE, B6

Prep Recruiting



Phillip B. Hubbard | The News

Murphy O'Brien was all smiles as he celebrated his scholarship signing on Tuesday afternoon inside Eastside High School's auditorium.

O'Brien to continue swimming career at Piedmont

By PHILLIP B. HUBBARD
phubbard@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — Inside Eastside High School’s auditorium was a special ceremony dedicated to celebrate Murphy O’Brien. He signed a scholarship Tuesday afternoon that will allow him to continue his swimming career at Piedmont College.

Family, friends, teammates and coaches were in attendance for the momentous occasion.

“Honestly, I’m relieved,” O’Brien said. “I’ve been worried about where I was going to end up next year. Knowing that I’m going to Piedmont and it’s official, I’m really relieved that is where I’m ending up.”

O’Brien’s coach and, coincidentally, his mom DeAnna O’Brien took time at the beginning of the ceremony to share O’Brien’s career highlights.

His most recent accomplishment came this season

See O'BRIEN, B6

Prep Basketball

Area teams’ 2022-23 seasons come to a close in region tournaments



File | The News

Nick Durham (2) takes the ball towards the paint on the fastbreak during the opening quarter of Alcovy’s loss to the Bulldogs on Jan. 27 at home.

By PHILLIP B. HUBBARD
phubbard@covnews.com

COVINGTON, Ga. — After a 2022-23 local basketball scene that was constantly making noise, four of the eight area teams saw their seasons end this week.

Eastside Girls of Region 8-AAAAA

A promising season came to an abrupt end this week for the Eastside girls basketball team. In the quarter finals of the Region 8-AAAAA tournament, the Lady Eagles lost to Heritage 40-33 at Winder-Barrow High School.

It was Eastside’s second consecutive loss to Heritage after defeating the Lady Patriots 65-62 in overtime on Dec. 13.

But the Lady Eagles still had a rebound year following a down year for the program.

They finished 13-11 overall with a 6-6 regular season region record. Eastside entered the region tournament as the No. 4 seed, as a result.

A season ago, the Lady Eagles finished at 6-16 with a sixth place 4-10 Region 8-AAAAA record.

Eastside picked up a few key wins, too, this year.

The Lady Eagles won both games over in-county rival Newton as well as earning the season sweep of Social Circle. They also ended the regular season on a

six-game winning streak, which included a 17-point comeback over Jefferson, a one-point victory at Flowery Branch and a 40-point triumph against Winder-Barrow.

This go round, Eastside was led by a wide array of individuals who spanned classes.

Sophomore Jailyn Williams led the team with 10.8 points. Freshman Donee Morain had a team-high 4.8 rebound per game average with junior Kaliel Kracht coming in a close second at 4.2.

So, despite losing five seniors — Mehkyla White, Jasmine Featherstone, Tylah Sellars, Nadia Hills and Leila Powell — the Lady Eagles expect to return eight underclassmen.

But the Lady Eagles’ fans will have to wait until next season to see what the young talent produces on the court moving forward.

Newton Girls of Region 4-AAAAAAA

The Newton girls basketball team had a sizable down year compared to the program’s recent standards. The Lady Rams finished at 3-22 overall with a 0-10 record in Region 4-AAAAAAA.

Newton’s season concluded on Tuesday afternoon in the region tournament — hosted at Newton High — when the Lady Rams lost to Grayson 62-23.

Nevertheless, Newton had some

close calls along the way.

In eight of the team’s 22 defeats, the Lady Rams lost by 10 or fewer points, one of which was a 41-33 loss to South Gwinnett on Jan. 6.

That was Newton’s closest loss to a region opponent as well.

The Lady Rams’ had three wins on the year, too. They won over Cedar Grove on Dec. 17 45-20, earned a 59-42 victory against McDonough on Dec. 27 as well as a 40-26 victory over Community Christian on Dec. 29.

One of the silver linings for this year’s team, however, is the amount of young talent that developed this season.

Newton will only graduate two seniors — Derrinique White and Kourtney Sherrod — and will expect 11 players to be back next year.

Of those 11, two players led the team in a few categories.

First, freshman Zoey Jackson averaged a team-high 10 points and 2.7 steals per game. She also recorded the highest field goal percentage (38%) and three-point shooting percentage (26%).

Sophomore Alissa Sandifer led the team in her own way. She averaged the most assists (2.1) and blocks (0.6) per game. She

See CLOSE, B6

LEGALS:

Continued from B3

ATTORNEY'S FEES having been given).

YOUR MORTGAGE servicer can be contacted at 800-603-0836 - Loss Mitigation Dept., or by writing to SN Servicing Corporation (Servicer), 3223 Fifth Street, Eureka, CA 95501, to discuss possible alternatives to avoid foreclosure.

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

TO THE best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party in possession of the property is Vincent Clemons; Carolyn Clemons; or tenant(s); and said property is more commonly known as **540 Oak Hill Road, Covington, GA 30016**.

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

U.S. BANK Trust National Association, as Trustee of Cabana Series III Trust as Attorney in Fact for Vincent Clemons and Carolyn Clemons.

QUINN LEGAL, P.A.
19321 US Hwy 19 N, Suite 512
CLEARWATER, FL 33764
PHONE: (727) 474-9603
ESERVICE@QUINNLEGAL.COM
BY: /S/ Erin M. Rose
Quinn
Erin M. Rose Quinn, Esq.
GEORGIA BAR Number 547833

PUBLIC NOTICE #500232
2/5,12,19,26

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE UNDER POWER NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

UNDER AND by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by **John H. Anderson, Jr.** to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as grantee, as nominee for Real Estate Mortgage Network, Inc., dated November 5, 2009, and recorded in Deed Book 27771, Page 94, Newton County, Georgia Records, subsequently modified by a Loan Modification Agreement recorded January 21, 2020 in Book 3951, Page 355 in the amount of Sixty-Four Thousand Three Hundred Forty-Six and 46/100 (\$64,346.46) Newton County, Georgia Records, as last transferred to Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, d/b/a Christiana Trust, not individually but as trustee for Pretium Mortgage Acquisition Trust by assignment recorded on January 25, 2019 in Book 3796 Page 255 in the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court of Newton County, Georgia Records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of Fifty-Six Thousand and 0/100 dollars (\$56,000.00), with interest thereon as set forth therein, there will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the courthouse door of Newton County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale on March 7, 2023, the following described property:

ALL THAT tract or parcel of land, with house and all other improvements located thereon, lying and being in Land Lot 121 of the 10th District of Newton County, Georgia, being Lot 79 of Buck Creek Subdivision as shown on plat of Buck Creek Subdivision, as same is recorded in Plat Book 21, page 188, Newton County, Georgia Records. The description of said property has contained on said plat is hereby incorporated herein and made an essential part hereof by reference.

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

THE ENTITY having full authority to negotiate, amend or modify all terms of the loan (although not required by law to do so) is: Selene Finance LLC they can be contacted at (877) 735-3637 for Loss Mitigation Dept., or by writing to 3501 Olympus Boulevard, 5th Floor, Suite 500, Coppell, Texas 75019, to discuss possible alternatives to avoid foreclosure.

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

TO THE best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party in possession of the property is Pamela Marie Anderson Mayo or tenant(s); and said property is more commonly known as **30 Buckeye Circle, Covington, GA 30016**.

THE SALE will be conducted subject to (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code (2) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the security deed and (3) any right of redemption or other lien not extinguished by foreclosure.

WILMINGTON SAVINGS Fund Society, FSB, d/b/a Christiana Trust, not individually but as trustee for Pretium Mortgage Acquisition Trust as Attorney in Fact for John H. Anderson, Jr.

BROCK & Scott, PLLC
4360 CHAMBLEE Dunwoody Road
SUITE 310
ATLANTA, GA 30341
404-789-2661
B&S FILE no.: 19-01551

PUBLIC NOTICE #500218
2/5,12,19,26

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER GEORGIA, NEWTON COUNTY

UNDER AND by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by **Nancy N Christian** to Academy Mortgage Corporation, dated July 7, 2014, recorded in Deed Book 3246, Page 410, Newton County, Georgia Records, as last transferred to Georgia Housing and Finance Authority by assignment recorded in Deed Book 3246, Page 427, Newton County, Georgia Records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of NINETY-EIGHT THOUSAND NINETY AND 0/100 DOLLARS (\$98,090.00), with interest thereon as set forth therein, there will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the courthouse door of Newton County, Georgia, or at such place as may be lawfully designated as an alternative, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in March, 2023, the following described property:

SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF

THE DEBT secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due because of, among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Security Deed. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law, including attorney's fees (notice pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 13-1-11 having been given).

SAID PROPERTY will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), the right of redemption of any taxing authority, any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and any matters of record including, but not limited to, those superior to the Security Deed first set out above. Said property will be sold on an "as-is" basis without any representation, warranty or recourse against the above-named or the undersigned.

GEORGIA HOUSING and Finance Authority is the holder of the Security Deed to the property in accordance with OCGA § 44-14-162.2.

THE ENTITY that has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor is: State Home Mortgage, 60 Executive Park South, Atlanta, GA 30333, 404-679-4908/-3133. Note, however, that such entity is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the loan.

TO THE best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party in possession of the property is Nancy N Christian or a tenant or tenants and said property is more commonly known as **40 Aiken Court, Covington, Georgia 30016**. Should a conflict arise between the property address and the legal description the legal description will control.

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

GEORGIA HOUSING and Finance Authority
AS ATTORNEY in Fact for **NANCY N Christian**
MCCALLA RAYMER Leibert Pierce, LLC

1544 OLD Alabama Road
ROSSELL, GA 30076
WWW.FORECLOSUREHOTLINE.NET

EXHIBIT "A"
ALL THAT tract or parcel of land, with house and all other improvements located thereon, lying and being in Land Lots 127 & 128 of the 9th Land District of Newton County, Georgia, being shown as Lot 15 of Cotton Field Subdivision as shown on Plat of Survey prepared by Mark D. Patrick, Georgia R.L.S. No. 2791, said plat being recorded in Plat Book 36, pages 253-258, Newton County, Georgia Records. The description of said property as contained on said plat is hereby incorporated herein and made an essential part hereof by reference.

MR/MEH 3/7/23
OUR FILE no. 22-10257GA - FT 17

PUBLIC NOTICE #500169
2/5,12,19,26

STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF NEWTON NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER IN DEED TO SECURE DEBT

UNDER AND BY VIRTUE of that Power of Sale contained in a certain Deed to Secure Debt from **CRYSTAL LEEANN HARMON** in favor of **RAY W. HILL** dated July 26, 2018 and recorded at Deed Book 3729, pages 503-508, Public Records, Newton County, Georgia, the undersigned, **RAY W. HILL**, as Attorney in Fact for **CRYSTAL LEEANN HARMON**, will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the Courthouse door in Newton County, Georgia, during the legal hours of sale, on the first (1st) Tuesday in March, 2023, namely March 7, 2023, the following described property to-wit:

ALL THAT TRACT or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 135 of the 9th Land District of Newton County, Georgia and being shown as 0.81 acres off Georgia Highway 36 on that Plat of Survey prepared by Ray Hill by Patrick & Associates, Inc., and certified by Louie D. Patrick, Georgia Registered Land Surveyor No. 1757, said plat being dated September 3, 1998 and recorded at Plat Book 32, page 90, Public Records of Newton County, Georgia and said plat by reference thereto being incorporated herein and made apart hereof for a more particular description of the captioned property.

SAID PROPERTY being known as **14652 Highway 36, Covington, Georgia** in accordance with the present system of numbering properties in Newton County, Georgia.

ALSO CONVEYED hereby is the right of ingress and egress across that 12-foot strip as shown on the

plat of said property.

TAX MAP and Parcel No.: 0090000000009000

THE DEED to Secure Debt herein foreclosed securing a Purchase Money Promissory Note dated July 26, 2018, in the original, principal amount of \$75,000.00. The debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt being in default by, among other possible events of default, failure to pay said indebtedness as the same fell due, and the debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt and evidenced by said Note has been and is hereby declared due and payable in full because of said default. This sale will be made for the purpose of paying the remaining principal indebtedness and accrued interest as accelerated. The proceeds thereof will be applied to the payment of said indebtedness and all charges and expenses in connection with said foreclosure in accordance with the terms of said Deed to Secure Debt and the balance, if any, will be applied as provided by law.

SAID PROPERTY will be sold as the property of **CRYSTAL LEEANN HARMON**, subject to any outstanding and unpaid real estate taxes (ad valorem taxes) or assessments, street improvements, easements, restrictive covenants, and any and all other assessments appearing of record, if any.

NOTICE HAS been given in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 44-14-162.2.

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

THE UNDERSIGNED will execute a Deed Under Power of Sale to the Purchaser at sale as attorney-in-fact for **CRYSTAL LEEANN HARMON**, as provided in the Deed to Secure Debt herein foreclosed, and Georgia Law.

THE PROPERTY is or may be in the possession of **CRYSTAL LEEANN HARMON**, successors or tenants.

THE DEED to Secure Debt herein foreclosed is a purchase money deed to secure debt securing a purchase money promissory note.

RAY W. HILL is the person who has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor. His address is 1201 Newton Road, Madison, Georgia 30650 and his telephone number is 404-520-7048. In addition, he can provide a current payoff amount for a day certain at any time.

RAY W. HILL as Attorney-in-Fact for **CRYSTAL LEEANN HARMON**
BY: **DAVID A. Henderson***
Attorney at Law

6169 ADAMS Street, NE
Covington, Georgia 30014
(770) 787-2946

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

PUBLIC NOTICE #500211
2/5,12,19,26

STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF NEWTON NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER

PURSUANT to the power of sale contained in the Security Deed executed by **JUANITA HARRIS** to MORTGAGE ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION SYSTEMS, INC. AS NOMINEE FOR HOME AMERICA MORTGAGE, INC. in the original principal amount of \$143,497.00 dated August 19, 2005 and recorded in Deed Book 1994, Page 99, Newton County records, said Security Deed being last transferred to **SELENE FINANCE LP** in Deed Book 4456, Page 527, Newton County records, the undersigned will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash, before the Courthouse door in said County, or at such other place as lawfully designated, within the legal hours of sale, on March 07, 2023, the property in said Security Deed and described as follows:

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN LAND LOT 90 OF THE 10TH DISTRICT, NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA, BEING LOT 103, OAK HILL, PHASE 3, AS PER PLAT RECORDED AT PLAT BOOK 41, PAGES 229 THROUGH 231, NEWTON COUNTY RECORDS, TO WHICH REFERENCE IS MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCORPORATING THE SAME AS A PART HEREOF.

SAID PROPERTY being known as: **20 WILD CAT WAY COVINGTON, GA 30016**

TO THE best of the undersigned's knowledge, the party or parties in possession of said property is/are **JUANITA HARRIS** or tenant(s).

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

SAID PROPERTY will be sold subject to the following: (1) any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, whether or not yet due and payable); (2) the right of redemption of any taxing authority; (3) any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property; and (4) any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and matters of record superior to the Security Deed first set out above.

SAID SALE will be conducted subject to the following: (1) confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code; and (2) final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed.

THE NAME, address, and telephone number of the individual or entity who has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage is as follows:

SELENE FINANCE LP
3501 OLYMPUS Boulevard, 5th Floor, Suite 500
DALLAS, TX 75019
877-768-3759

NOTE THAT pursuant to O.C.G.A.

§ 44-14-162.2, the above individual or entity is not required by law to negotiate, amend, or modify the terms of the mortgage.

THIS LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED MAY BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

SELENE FINANCE LP, AS ATTORNEY-IN-FACT for JUANITA HARRIS ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC 10700 ABBOTT'S Bridge Road SUITE 170 DULUTH, GA 30097 PHONE: 470.321.7112 FIRM FILE No. 22-061088 - DaG

PUBLIC NOTICE #500126
1/22-2/5,12,19,26

STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF NEWTON

UNDER AND by virtue of the power of sale contained in Security Deed and Agreement from **Matt Burley** to Newton Federal Bank, said Security Deed and Agreement dated December 13, 2013, filed for record and recorded December 16, 2013 in Deed Book 3194, Page(s) 407-419, as modified by a Loan Modification Agreement, dated June 24, 2016, filed for record July 6, 2016 in Deed Book 3454, Page(s) 3-5, Newton County, Georgia records; securing a note from Matt Burley to Newton Federal Bank, in the principal amount of \$42,000.00, will be sold by the undersigned in front of the Courthouse door in Newton County, Georgia, on the first Tuesday in March, 2023 during the legal hours of sale, to the highest bidder for cash, the following described property, to wit:

ALL THAT tract or parcel of land lying and being in Newton County, Georgia, and being a part of the Tenth Land district and being a part of Land Lot 93, and being more particularly described as Tract One containing 1.54 acres in accordance with a survey dated June 1, 1993, prepared by Louis D. Patrick, GA. R.L.S. No. 1757, for Thomas M. Moss and said survey is recorded in Newton County, Plat Book 27, Page 32, and said survey is incorporated herein and made a part hereof by reference thereto.

THE DEBT secured by said Deed to Secure Debt has been and is hereby declared due and payable because of failure to comply with certain terms and conditions in said Deed to Secure Debt. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying said indebtedness including all accrued and unpaid interest thereon, and attorney fees and all expenses of said sale, and the remainder, if any, shall be applied as provided by law.

TO THE best of the undersigned's knowledge and belief the property is in the possession of Matt Burley, and said property will be sold as the property of Matt Burley. Notice of the initiation of proceedings to exercise the said power of sale and to collect attorney fees as provided in said note has been given to Matt Burley, as provided by law in Section 44-14-162.2 and Section 13-1-11, respectively, Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

THIS 31ST day of January, 2023.

NEWTON FEDERAL BANK, AS ATTORNEY-IN-FACT FOR MATT BURLEY STRICKLAND & Strickland, LLP P.O. BOX 70 COVINGTON, GA 30015-0070 770-786-5460 PHONE 770-786-5499 FAX

PUBLIC NOTICE #500215
2/5,12,19,26

Juvenile Court

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF BALDWIN COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE INTEREST OF:
*
L.M.
*
NO. 005-22-237
DOB: 12/03/19
SEX: MALE
*
CHILD UNDER the Age of 18 Years

NOTICE OF SUMMONS

TO: MATTHEW GABRIEL, any unknown, unnamed biological fathers, and any other persons claiming to have a parental interest in the minor child named above born to Sydney McCrary, born on the date listed above.

YOU ARE hereby notified that a Petition to Terminate Parental Rights was filed in this Court on December 1, 2022 requesting that your parental rights be terminated and that the minor child be permanently placed in the care, custody, and control of the Georgia Department of Human Services, acting through the Baldwin County Department of Family and Children Services, and that by reason of Order dated January 5, 2023, you are hereby commanded and required to file with the Clerk of said Court, and serve upon Amy. M. Michaud, Special Assistant Attorney General, counsel for the Baldwin County Department of Family and Children Services, whose address is P.O. Box 8494, Atlanta, Georgia, 31106, an answer to said Petition within thirty (30) days following the last publication of this notice. You may obtain a copy of said Petition from the Baldwin County Juvenile Court Clerk.

YOU ARE hereby notified that a final hearing, with regard to the above-styled action, will come before the Court on the 2nd day of February, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in the Juvenile Courtroom at the Baldwin County Courthouse, Milledgeville, Georgia.

GEORGIA LAW provides that you can permanently lose your rights as a parent.

THIS SUMMONS requires you to be present at a formal hearing in the Juvenile Court.

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

IF THE court at trial finds the facts set out in the petition to terminate parental rights are true and that termination of your rights will serve the best interest of your child, then

the court can enter a judgment ending your rights to your child.

IF A judgment terminates your parental rights, you will no longer have rights to your child. This means that you will not have the right to visit, contact, or have custody of your child or make decisions affecting your child's

EARNING OR property. **EVEN IF** your rights are terminated: (1) **YOU** will still be responsible for providing financial support (child support payments) for your child's care unless and until your child is adopted.

THIS IS a very serious matter. **THE CHILD** or other parties involved may be represented by a lawyer at all stages of these proceedings.

IF YOU want a lawyer, you may choose and hire your own lawyer. If you want to hire a lawyer, please contact your lawyer immediately.

IF YOU want a lawyer, but are not able to hire a lawyer without undue financial hardship, you may ask for a lawyer to be appointed to represent you. The Court would inquire into your financial circumstances and if the Court finds you to be financially unable to hire a lawyer, then a lawyer will be appointed to represent you.

IF YOU want a lawyer appointed to represent you, you must let the Court or the officer of this Court handling this case know that you want a lawyer immediately.

THE PARTY notified hereby is entitled to legal counsel in the proceedings, and the Court will appoint legal counsel if any party should be unable, without undue hardship, to employ counsel.

WHETHER OR not you hire an attorney, you have the right to attend the Hearing on your case, to call witnesses on your behalf, and to question those witnesses brought against you.

YOU ARE further notified that a party to this proceeding who is the biological father but not the legal father loses all rights to the child and will not be entitled to object to the termination of his rights to the child unless, within thirty (30) days of receipt of such notice, you file a petition to legitimate the child pursuant to Code Section 19-7-22 and file a notice of the filing of the petition to legitimate with the court in which the action under this Code Section is pending.

IF YOU have any questions about this notice, you may call the telephone number of the clerk's office, which is (478) 445-4007.

WITNESS, THE Honorable Kelli C. Rutherford, Judge of said Juvenile Court.

THIS 5TH day of January, 2023.

/S/ MITCH Longino

Clerk, Juvenile Court
BALDWIN COUNTY, Georgia

PUBLIC NOTICE #500270
2/19,26-3/5

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF NEWTON COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE INTEREST OF:
H.M. SEX: FEMALE
DOB: 09/09/2009 Case#: 107-21J-0490

MINOR CHILD Under 18 Years of Age

SUMMONS

TO: DEBBIE Muskelly and John Does, parent(s) of said minor child born to Debbie Muskelly on the above-listed date.

YOU ARE hereby notified that on September 6, 2022, a Petition for Private Dependency was filed in this Court requesting that the minor child be placed in the care, custody and control of Tanikka Bradley. The petition alleges dependency based as defined in O.C.G.A. 15-11-2 (22). You are hereby commanded and required to appear before the court on the 18th day of April, 2023 at 1:00 p.m., to answer the allegations of the petition alleging dependency.

A COPY of said Petition for Dependency can be obtained from the Clerk of the Newton County Juvenile Court, at the Judge Horace J. Johnson Jr. Judicial Center, 1132 Usher Street, Covington, GA 30014.

READ CAREFULLY

THIS SUMMONS requires you to be present at a formal hearing in the Juvenile Court.

THE CHILD or other parties involved may be represented by a lawyer at all stages of these proceedings. If you want a lawyer, you may choose to hire your own lawyer. If you want a lawyer but are not able to hire a lawyer without undue financial hardship, you may ask for a lawyer to be appointed to represent you. The Court would inquire into your financial circumstances and if the Court finds you to be financially unable to hire a lawyer, then a lawyer will be appointed to represent you. If you want a lawyer appointed to represent you, you must let the Court or the officer of the Court handling this case know that you want a lawyer immediately.

WITNESS THE Honorable Hillary W. Edgar, Associate Judge of said Court.

THIS THE 13TH day of February, 2023.

PUBLIC NOTICE #500263
2/19,26

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF ROCKDALE COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE INTEREST OF:
K.N. SEX: Male D O B : 10/03/2015 Case #107-23J-0105
MINOR CHILD Under 18 Years of Age

SUMMONS NOTICE TO INTERESTED PARTIES OF PETITION FOR PERMANENT GUARDIANSHIP

TO: ANGELICA NOLLEY, MOTHER; DONALD MANNING, PUTATIVE/BIOLOGICAL FATHER; JOHN DOE, AND ANY

OTHER PERSON(S) CLAIMING TO HAVE A PARENTAL INTEREST IN THE ABOVE-CAPTIONED CHILD

YOU ARE hereby notified that a Petition for Permanent Guardianship was filed in the Juvenile Court of Newton County by the Georgia Department of Human Services, by and through its agent Newton County Department of Family and Children Services (hereinafter referred to as the "Department") regarding the child named above born to Angelica Nolley on the date above-listed.

A COPY of the Petition for Permanent Guardianship in reference to the above-named child may be obtained from the Clerk's office located at the Newton County Judicial Center, during business hours. The Department has nominated Shakanna Dyer to be appointed as the permanent guardian of the child, K.N., pursuant to O.C.G.A. §15-11-240. The Department is also seeking to have Shakanna Dyer granted with additional powers set forth in O.C.G.A. §29-2-22(b) for the child, K.N.

IF YOU have any objection to either the establishment of a permanent guardianship, or to the selection of the Petitioner as permanent guardian, or both, you must file a written objection setting forth the grounds of any such objection with this Court within ten (10) days of the date you are personally served; or within fourteen (14) days of the date that notice was mailed to you; or within ten (10) days following the date of the second publication of this citation. All pleadings must be signed before a notary public or the Clerk of this Court. A hearing on this Petition shall be held in the Juvenile Court of Newton County located at the Judge Horace J. Johnson, Jr. Judicial Center, 1132 Usher Street, N.W., Covington, Georgia 30014

LEGALS:

Continued from B4

**NEWTON COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**

IN RE the Name Change of:
**GABRIELLE WYATT
PETITIONER,**

**CIVIL ACTION NUMBER
2023-CV-144-3**

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

NOTICE IS hereby given that **GABRIELLE JEAN-ANN WYATT** filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on JAN 20 2023 to change the name from **GABRIELLE JEAN-ANN WYATT** to **GABRIELLE JEAN-ANN FOX**. Notice is hereby given pursuant to law to any interested or affected party to appear in said Court and to file objections to such name change. Objections must be filed with said Court within 30 days of the filing of said petition.

THIS 20TH day of JANUARY 2023

**GABRIELLE WYATT
6142 FOREST DR S.E.
COVINGTON GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500207
2/5,12,19,26**

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

IN RE the Name Change of:
**JACQUELINE ELIZABETH
CLAXTON
PETITIONER,**

**CIVIL ACTION NUMBER
2023-CV-314-3**

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

NOTICE IS hereby given that **JACQUELINE ELIZABETH CLAXTON** filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on FEBRUARY 8 2023 to change the name from **JACQUELINE ELIZABETH CLAXTON** to **JACQUELINE CLAXTON ADOMA**. Notice is hereby given pursuant to law to any interested or affected party to appear in said Court and to

file objections to such name change. Objections must be filed with said Court within 30 days of the filing of said petition.

THIS 8TH day of FEBRUARY 2023

**JACQUELINE ELIZABETH
CLAXTON
80 SISKEN COVE
COVINGTON, GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500265
2/19,26-3/5,12**

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

IN RE the Name Change of:
**LUSENITT JEAN
PETITIONER,**

**CIVIL ACTION NUMBER
2023-CV-331-1**

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

NOTICE IS hereby given that **LUSENITT JEAN** filed a petition in the Newton County Superior Court on FEBRUARY 9 2023 to change the name from **LUSENITT JEAN** to **SARAH JEAN**. Notice is hereby given pursuant to law to any interested or affected party to appear in said Court and to file objections to such name change. Objections must be filed with said Court within 30 days of the filing of said petition.

THIS 9TH day of FEBRUARY 2023

**LUSENITT JEAN
MAGNOIA HEIGHTS CIR
APT 511 COVINGTON GA 30014**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500266
2/19,26-3/5,12**

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

IN RE the Name Change of:
**JARRED ANTHONY Johnson
PETITIONER.**

**CIVIL ACTION Case Number
2023-CV-248-2**

NOTICE OF PETITION TO

CHANGE NAME OF ADULT

JARRED ANTHONY Johnson filed a petition in the Superior Court of Newton County on February 1, 2023, to change the name from **Jarred Anthony Johnson** to **Jarred Anthony Tucker**. Any interested party has the right to appear in this case and file objections within 30 days after the Petition was filed.
DATE 01/27/23

**NAME: JARRED Anthony Johnson
ADDRESS: 80 Pebble Lane
COVINGTON, GA 30016**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500234
2/12,19,26-3/5**

Public Notice

**NOTICE OF INTENTION
TO INTRODUCE LOCAL
LEGISLATION**

PURSUANT TO Article III, § V, Paragraph IX of the Constitution of the State of Georgia and O.C.G.A. § 28-1-14, notice is hereby given that there will be introduced at the Regular 2023 Session of the General Assembly of Georgia local legislation providing the revision of the voting district boundaries of the City of Social Circle; to provide for any and all matters relative to the foregoing; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

THE CITY of Social Circle

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500284
2/19**

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that there will be heard before a Judge of the Superior Court of Newton County, Georgia, on the 27th day of February 2023, at 9:30 o'clock a.m. at the Newton County Courthouse in Covington Georgia, the case of the State of Georgia v. Newton County, Georgia, Civil Action File No. 2023-

cv-342-2
PENDING IN said Court, the same being a proceeding to confirm and validate \$24,900,000 in aggregate principal amount of general obligation debt proposed to be issued by Newton County and the security therefor (including the sales and use tax).
ANY CITIZEN of the State of Georgia residing in Newton County, or any other person wherever residing, who has a right to object, may intervene and become a party to this proceeding.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500267
2/19**

Public Sales Auctions

EXTRA SPACE Storage will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated: 6177 Jackson Hwy Covington, GA 30014 on 03/06/2023 @ 11:00AM

**VICKIE HARDGE
F01
CHAIRS, COUCH,** Bags, Totes, Bedroom Suit, Home Decor and Furniture
**GAIL HOBBS
G01
BAGS, CLOTHES,** Shoes, Totes, Stereo and Speaker
**MALCOLM JENKINS
H29
TV, BOXES,** Totes, Car Seat, Lawn Mower, Weed eater, Yard Rake
**SUMMER BURROUGHS
I11
MATTRESS, TV,** Boxes, Clothes, Totes, Toys, Lamps, Computer Monitor, Keyboard, Baby Bouncer, Baby Items, Headboard Omari Williams
**O23
MATTRESS, DRYER,** Microwave, TV's, Washer, Bags, Bicycle, Totes, Toys, Wall Art, Vacuum Cleaner, Casio Keyboard, Drum Set, Computer Monitor, Portable a/c unit, Wooden Baby Crib, Fan, Electric Scooter.
THE AUCTION will be listed and advertised on www.storagetreasures.com. Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility

in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property.

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500236
2/19,16**

NOTICE OF Public Sale of Personal Property: Notice is hereby given that Covington Stor-It, located at 8165 Washington St SW, Covington, GA 30014; intends to sell the personal property according to the Georgia Self Storage Act, 10-4-210 through 10-4-215 to satisfy the owner's lien. All bids will be accepted online through www.storageauctions.com. The auction will end on or after 9 March 2023, 10 AM. Covington Stor-It reserves the right to withdraw units from such a sale and reject any bid. Terms of sale are cash or money order only.

STEPHANIE CRAWFORD, Unit 091 appears to contain; Bedframe, mattress, clothing, bins, boxes, dresser, pots and pans.

SHANE HUFF, Unit 159 appears to contain; Ladder, totes, furniture, boxes, tools, and a tire.

BERNICE BAKER, Unit 180 appears to contain; Recliner, furniture, trunk, wheelchair, air mattress, totes, and a lamp.

TYLAN BAGBY, Unit 192l appears to contain; Shoes, clothing, recliner, car seat, and a bedframe.

SHAKINA MCCALL, Unit 215 appears to contain; chairs, car seat, toys, misc. furniture, and a stroller.

CELINE ANDREWS, Unit 475 appears to contain; dresser, totes, bags, Christmas décor, and clothing.

TARVARUS HUSTON, Unit 403 appears to contain shelving, table, paint, dresser, exercise equipment, wood panels, and red columns.

CAMILLA OGLES, Unit 307 appears to contain dressers/ armoire, chairs, tables, TV stands,

plastic containers, and misc. items.

RONALD BLANCHARD, Unit 458 appears to contain TV, microwave, computer equipment, nightstands, tables, vacuum, DVD player, and misc. items

**PUBLIC NOTICE 500261
2/19,26**

NOTICE OF SALE

NORTON'S E-Z Storage will hold a public sale to enforce a lien imposed on said property, as described below, pursuant to the Georgia Self Storage Facility Act, Georgia Code 10-4-213 at Norton's E-Z Storage 7101 Turner Lake Circle, Covington, GA (770) 784-9110 on Wednesday, March 2023 at 10:00 A.M. Said property will be sold without warranties as to condition or workability. Management reserves the right to refuse any bid or withdraw any unit from the sale. Units scheduled to be sold: (3 l) Nakita Davenport, (42) Dustin Peck, (55) Betty Smith, (64) Willie Jam1on, (77) Amanda Whitaker, (98) Jerriica Colyer, (130) Hasan Dornbayci, (132) Tessa
NEWSOM, (150) Alejandro, (172) Crystal Brown, (190) Emma Smith

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500260
2/19,26**

THE FOLLOWING vehicle to be sold in auction on 2/19/2023 at 2:00 AM at Aikens Diesel 41 Hwy 212 Covington, Ga. 30016

**2015 FORD F450
1FT8W4DT3FEC11685**

**PUBLIC NOTICE #500238
2/12,19**



Subscribe to The Covington News — considered the best newspaper of its size in the state of Georgia — for as little as \$5 a month. When you subscribe, you get issues of the newspaper delivered straight to your door twice per week, which includes our Entertainment Extra that's filled with local TV listings, puzzles, games and more, and you get full access to all online content through your favorite web browser or via the Covington News app. In addition, subscribers get copies of our award-winning magazines, including but not limited to Newcomers Guide, Football Preview and Visions, at no additional cost.

1 Year \$60 • 6 Months \$30



File | The News

Zoey Jackson (11) tries to score against Eastside during a regular season home game in the 2022-23 season.



File | The News

Jallyn Williams (1) drives toward the basket to score against Jefferson during a home game on Jan. 27.



File | The News

Senior T'Erica Smith is met with a Lady Bulldogs defender on the perimeter during the final quarter of Alcovy's loss.

CLOSE

Continued from B1

did that while registering a 70% free throw percentage, which was the highest for the Lady Rams.

With the amount of returning production alongside a new head coach in Jawan Bailey, the Lady Rams seemed destined for a turnaround in the coming years.

Alcovy Boys of Region 3-AAAAAA
Alcovy boys basketball's postseason run was short lived as the Tigers suffered a 54-50 defeat against the Rockdale County Bulldogs. As a result, Alcovy was eliminated from the Region 3-AAAAAA tournament and did not qualify for the playoffs.

The Tigers end the 2022-23 season 9-17 overall with a 6-8 record in their region slate, which placed them No. 4 in the standings.

Alcovy defeated region opponents Rockdale County in the first matchup,

swept Forest Park, beat Morrow, Lovejoy and Mundy's Mill.

Other notable wins include a 68-55 win over Social Circle at home on Dec. 20, a 92-67 win against Lamar County on Dec. 30 and a seven-point win at Glenns Hill New Year's Eve.

One of the main reasons for a brighter future with Tigers basketball is the young core that is expected to return.

Only two seniors — Kendarrius Spear and Isaiah Wooden — will graduate from the program. However, sophomore Nick Durham is expected to return next year for his junior season. Then, there's the two freshmen Alcovy's coaching staff has been high on before this season commenced — Andre Jernigan and Jakori Pinelle.

All of the players will expectedly return to help continue the Tigers program push to the state playoffs.

Alcovy Girls of Region 3-AAAAAA

The Lady Tigers' season conclusion was in the first round of the Region 3-AAAAAA tournament against Rockdale County. Alcovy lost 81-30 on Saturday, Feb. 11.

Its final record was 13-12 overall with a fifth place 5-10 record in region play.

Alcovy's leading scorer was junior Luv Llewellyn averaging 9.7 points along with a team-high 9.3 rebounds per game. Senior Tajah Jackson averaged the most assists with 2.5 while sophomore Janae Hutcherson led the Lady Tigers with 2.6 steals per game.

Eight seniors will graduate from the program but there are six underclassmen expected to return next season to help contribute to the Lady Tigers' program moving forward.

O'BRIEN

Continued from B1

when O'Brien qualified for five state qualifications: 100 freestyle, 200 freestyle, 200 individual medley, 100 backstroke and 100 breaststroke.

Per the Georgia High School Association rules, each swimmer can only compete in two individual events at the state swim and dive competitions. O'Brien selected the 200 freestyle and 100 breaststroke.

O'Brien made it to the finals in the 200 freestyle and finished with a 19th ranking in the state for the division 4-5A.

But now, O'Brien sets his sights on Piedmont.

"When I went there, the coach was a lot like the coach I've been swimming with for nine years now," O'Brien said. "He has kind of the same attitude and he's going to push you as far as you want to be pushed. And that's what I need."

Murphy won't be the first O'Brien to step foot on Piedmont's campus in Demorest, Georgia. His older brother signed a national letter of intent to compete with the college's swim team.

O'Brien wants to surpass his brother, though.

"Me and him always pushed each other in practice," O'Brien said. "We were always saying, 'Hey, I bet I'll do this if you do that.' We were always back-and-forth being competitive. It's nice knowing that I can go in his footsteps and build my own path at Piedmont."

Tuesday's ceremony didn't come without a little reflection by the senior swimmer. O'Brien recognized his friends and teammates who he will miss along with teachers and other Eastside faculty.

And, even though that's the case, he plans to carry some of the knowledge he's obtained the past four years with him to this next phase in his career.

"There's no holding back and it's all or nothing," O'Brien said. "There are no redos in swimming. It's that one and you're done that day."

DOLAN

Continued from B1

finished his Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Fayetteville State University — the university had a campus on Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

Afterward, Dolan earned his master's degree in Public Administration from Troy State University in Alabama.

Connection to Newton County

Dolan worked for nearly 20 years with the city of Covington, mostly with the police department. Sometime during his tenure, he went to the local radio station to cut a series of commercials for the police department.

One session was enough for the station to offer Dolan a position.

"They really liked me," Dolan said. "They asked me if I wanted to work part time with them, which I did. I did the morning drive show for a while when I was working second shift for the police department."

Dolan eventually got his own show on Saturday mornings called, "The Saturday Morning Super Trivia Spectacular." He also hosted a charity fundraiser live on the air one year, too.

On Friday nights, Dolan would do play-by-play for Newton High School football and, when Eastside opened in 1994, he did the same for the Eagles.

From 1994-1997, Dolan's broadcast partner was Kevin Holden — current sports director at CBS 58 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Holden remembers his time with Dolan, a time when cassette tapes were the popular thing, fondly.

"Bill brought such an infectious energy to the broadcasts from day one. The chemistry between us was instant," Holden said. "Bill is a dream for sports fans in Covington — a man with passion for local sports, and for broadcasting, who's got deep roots in the

community. He has become friends with players, parents and administrators through the years, and those bonds have only grown stronger over time."

Then, a television station owned by the city of Covington had a channel, "Catch 22 Sports." On that channel, Dolan called play-by-play for the station's "Game of the Week."

Newton Basketball

Dolan got his start being a public address announcer with the Newton County Recreation Department. He announced the Dixie Boys World Series.

In 2005, former Newton Rams' head boys basketball coach, Rick Rasmussen was hired and was in need of an announcer for home games.

For two years, Dolan announced the games before resigning from the City of Covington.

Then, in 2007, Dolan became a teacher at Newton High as well as an assistant basketball coach.

"During home games, I wouldn't sit on the bench," Dolan said. "I would still announce the games, but maintain the staff and talk to coach Ras throughout the game."

A game in the 2010 post-season brought about Dolan's favorite game.

The Rams faced Groves High School in the Elite Eight and went into the fourth quarter trailing by 10. Their tallest player was 6-foot-3 while Groves' frontline had 6-foot-6, 6-foot-8 and 6-foot-9 players.

Down the stretch, there was a moment that Dolan has never forgotten.

"When [Groves] went up, our center went up and got a hand on the ball and tipped it out to our best player at the time, Derrick Henry," Dolan recalled. "He dribbled the length of the court with two

guys in his face, stopped at the top of the key and drained a three-pointer to send us to the Final Four."

He retired from teaching and coaching 10 years later, but maintained his role as PA announcer. That was until he got a special request in 2019 from Rasmussen.

"When coach Ras left Newton to go to North Oconee, he was like, 'You got to go with me, coach.' Since I had been doing his games since his first day as head coach, I said, 'Sure, I'll go.'"

Announcing Social Circle basketball games

But Dolan didn't completely leave the area from announcing games. Now, he occupies the PA announcer's chair at Social Circle High School's basketball games.

The wheels were turning a few years before Dolan retired from Newton High.

Taylor Jackson — the Redskins' current head coach — was an assistant coach on Rasmussen's staff along with Dolan. They also shared a hallway as their classrooms were across from each other.

Through that connection, Dolan began announcing Social Circle home basketball games on what he thought to be a temporary basis.

"When [coach Jackson] went to Social Circle, the first year or two I would just come to do one game. Then last year after I did one game, he was like, 'Can you do more games?'" Dolan said. "I looked at the schedule and figured out which days North Oconee didn't have a game, I would do a Social Circle game."

Dolan has become a fan favorite, according to Jackson.

"Every single person in this gym asks me, 'Is coach Dolan coming tonight?'" Jackson said. "He gets the fans riled up. Just that booming voice to

get our fans going and gets us going. He makes it part of the event and makes it a party."

Nickname transcends sports

In addition to Newton and Social Circle basketball, Dolan has done a wide array of sporting events throughout the area.

He's been the PA announcer for Newton football and baseball, Newton County Recreation Department's Dixie Boys World Series, cheerleading competition and "Super Bowl" games at Sharp Stadium.

One sport Dolan called gave him a deeper appreciation for holding the microphone — Bull Riding.

"It was different and fun," Dolan said. "I was always thinking, 'I'm sure glad I'm on this side of the fence.'"

Outside of sports, Dolan used to announce Newton High's graduation ceremony from his first year of teaching until last year.

Throughout all of his announcing gigs, one thing has remained consistent — Dolan's voice and style with whatever event he calls. Dolan's flare has caused fans to figuratively turn around in their seats at games.

"Somewhere along the line, someone dubbed me with a nickname, 'The Voice.'" Dolan said. "And that has followed me ever since then."

"The Voice" will be heard throughout the Region 5A-Division I basketball tournament hosted by the Redskins this week. Games will be played on Tuesday and Friday.

It's important for Dolan to commit to being there simply because he's heard how different the atmosphere is without an announcer.

"It is so antiseptic without the announcer," Dolan said. "All you hear is the 'squeak, squeak squeak...bounce, bounce, bounce.' And it's boring without a voice saying what's going on."