

GORDON Gazette

Weekend, January 23, 2021

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Calhoun-Gordon County's #1 Source for News

Gordon County sees 271 new cases of COVID this week; GCS sees spike in active cases

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Numbers of COVID-19 cases continue to climb in Calhoun-Gordon County, with 271 new cases reported in the community since last Saturday.

At press time Saturday morning, Jan. 23, 2021, Gordon County has had 4,913 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic began – that's up 271 cases since the same time last week. COVID-19 related deaths now stand at 73, up 4 deaths from last week. The Department of Public Health also reports 7 additional

probable deaths from COVID. There have been 236 hospitalizations in Gordon County due to COVID-19 since March, up 9 hospitalizations since last week.

Both school systems reported their COVID cases on Friday afternoon, and while Calhoun City Schools saw a decline in cases, Gordon County Schools active cases grew by about 40 percent.

Gordon County Schools' reported a total of 43 active COVID-19 cases system-wide as of Friday, Jan. 22. There are a total of 18 staff members (up from 9 last week) and 25 students

(up from 17 last week) that are considered active cases of COVID-19 at the system.

The breakdown of current active COVID-19 cases at the school system is: 3 students at Ashworth Middle School, 6 students at Belwood Elementary, 1 student at Fairmount Elementary, 6 students at Gordon Central, 3 students at Red Bud Middle School, 3 students at Sonorville Elementary School, 1 student at Sonorville High School, 1 student at Tolbert Elementary and 1 student at Swain

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Defend the Voiceless sets 2021 goals to bring more attention to child trafficking, exploitation

Brandi Owczarz
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As Human Trafficking Prevention Month winds down, Defend the Voiceless, a local Christian non-profit in the fight to end child trafficking and exploitation, is beginning to experience substantial growth, and plans to make a huge difference in bringing awareness to the issue in 2021.

Toni Couch, Stephanie King and Ryan Tomlinson began Defend the Voiceless last year, with the hope of spreading awareness about child exploitation and human trafficking while also supporting the efforts of Operation Underground Railroad, or O.U.R., a non-profit started by Tim Ballard, a former Homeland

Security officer, that assists governments around the world in the rescue of human trafficking and sex trafficking victims.

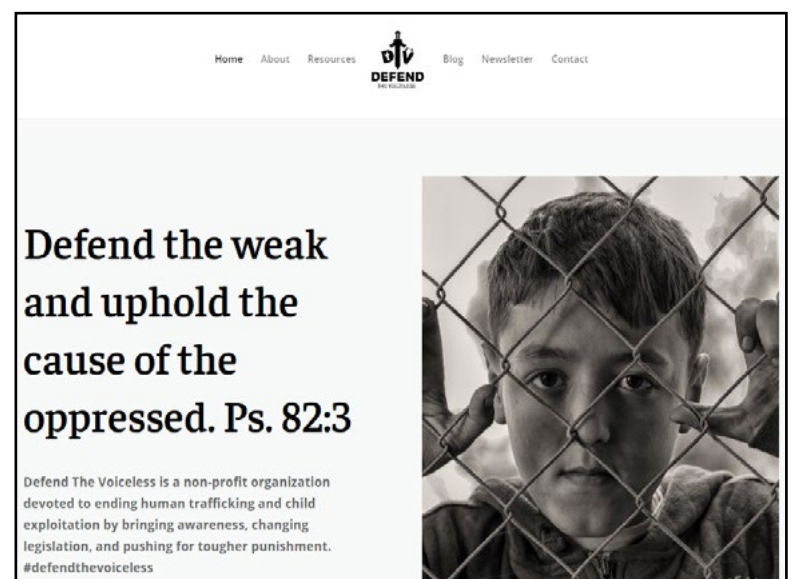
Both King and Couch have felt led to bring these issues to the surface while growing a grassroots movement here in Northwest Georgia and beyond. Their mission is to create the awareness for the people who are rescuing and assist them. With their yearning to spread their message across the United States, Couch said that the group wants to motivate other people to begin Defend the Voiceless chapters in their communities.

And 2021 is the year that the group hopes to accomplish this goal, beginning with establishing not just their

goals for the year, but setting up their Board of Directors.

Human Trafficking is the second fastest growing industry in the world behind the drug trade. According to statistics from Georgia Cares, which is a state initiative to help combat child trafficking, between 2003 and 2007, the underground sex industry in Atlanta grew from \$238 million to \$290 million; a 22 percent increase. On average, traffickers made \$32,833 a week in cash between 2005 and 2011 in the Atlanta area. In 2018, Georgia Cares served 789 youth in the State, a 32 percent increase over 2017, with the average age of a youth served by Georgia Cares being 14.8 years old.

With the number of child



trafficking victims climbing each year, Defend the Voiceless has set hefty goals for this year, beginning with change at the State capitol.

"This year we are working on changing legislation

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Hamilton Medical to offer Take It To Heart program.

EDUCATION 5A



Seth Kolterman wins Gordon County Schools' District Spelling Bee.

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 Twitter: @gazettegordon

CASA volunteers needed in Gordon County

Brandi Owczarz
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Are you an everyday hero? If so, Gordon County is in need of everyday heroes to become CASA volunteers.

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained volunteer in the community appointed by a judge to speak on behalf of children in foster care, representing the best interests of the child. Considered the "eyes and ears" of the juvenile court, CASA volunteers come from all walks of life.

"CASA volunteers not only talk with a (foster) child involved in a dependency case, but also with anyone else who may be able to provide information about the life and needs of the child they serve," said Amberle Dillard, Gordon County CASA Program Coordinator. "The CASA volunteer also works collaboratively with other local agencies to advocate for the needs of the child and family. A report written by the CASA volunteer is submitted to the court at the disposition hearing and subsequent reviews. The report contains the wishes of the child and the facts



that have been gathered. On the day of the hearing, the report is shared with the judge and attorneys involved in the case. The information provided in the report is very helpful and is used by the attorneys in their question of witnesses and by the judge in making his decision on what is in the best interest of the child."

CASA volunteers establish a one-on-one relationship with the child in foster care, gathers information about the child's situation and unique history, ensures the child has access to necessary services, attends juvenile court proceedings and

makes a recommendation to the judge about what's in the child's best interest.

At this time, there are 150 children in foster care in Gordon County, but in recent months, that number has been as high as 200. That's why it is so important to have enough trained CASA volunteers to be able to provide the service for each child in care.

During a CASA Volunteer Open House in 2020, current volunteers were on hand to give their experience serving with CASA. All of the volunteers stressed the main goal of CASA: helping children find permanency.

"We are the voice for that child," said one volunteer. "A lot of these children have never had permanency, and their lives have never had stability. We are there to be a voice for the child, to get the child's wishes, talk with others involved and report our findings to the court."

Dillard expressed that CASA volunteers are needed at this time in Gordon County. No experience is necessary to become a volunteer, but need to have good communication skills, the ability to work with others and a sincere desire to advocate on behalf of the best interest of children.

Prospective volunteers must be 21 years of age, must complete an interview, application and background screening, which involves fingerprinting, successfully complete training sessions, be available to attend all court hearings and commit for at least one year or until the case is resolved.

Dillard is accepting applications at this time from potential volunteers. Anyone interested in being a CASA volunteer can email Dillard for more information or to obtain/turn in an application at casa@gordongazettega.com. For more questions, Dillard can be reached at 706-629-4561, Ext. 6.

Second Front

Hamilton to offer Take it to Heart program

HAMILTON MEDICAL CENTER

Hamilton Medical Center (HMC) will offer its next Take it to Heart Program on Tuesday, Feb. 16 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 20 at scheduled times. The program includes a free cardiac risk assessment and information to help you prevent future heart problems.

“By knowing your risk, you can take steps to avoid heart disease,” said Stephen Rohn, MD, pictured, cardiologist at Hamilton Physician Group – Cardiology.

Take it to Heart is a two-part program. The first part consists of an

educational virtual zoom webinar, presented by Rohn. His presentation includes education on causes, risk and genetic factors, diet, exercise, symptoms, treatments and medications.

The second part, held at Hamilton Diagnostics Center, is a cardiac risk assessment including blood pressure, calcium scoring, lab work (total cholesterol and HDL), height, weight and a series of questions.

This program is free and open to anyone who has not participated in Take it to Heart in the last five years, is not currently being treated by a cardiologist, has

not had stents put in, and has at least two of the following risk factors: Family history of heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, history of smoking and being overweight.

A physician’s order for the cardiac scoring is required. Please have your physician send the order to Hamilton Diagnostics Center on or before Feb. 16 in order to receive a free CT scan. If you do not have a primary care provider, please call 706-272-6114. Fasting for lab assessment is required.

If you would like to attend this event and



need assistance with interpretation services and/or auxiliary aids, please indicate when registering.

To register or for more information, call 706-272-6114. Space has been limited more than usual due to COVID safety precautions.

Increased risk for heart disease

- Family history of heart disease
- Smoking
- High blood cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Poor response to stress
- Drinking too much alcohol

Braves mourn Hank: ‘Absolutely devastated’

By Mark Bowman

ATLANTA -- As Brian Jordan discussed Hank Aaron’s passing on Friday, he expressed the sentiments of the countless individuals who recognized the greatness of the iconic baseball player throughout his celebrated life.

“I lost a hero,” Jordan said. “As a Black boy growing up and loving the game of baseball, Hank Aaron was that guy. He was a huge reason I selected the Atlanta Braves when I was a free agent. Yeah, it’s a great organization. But it was an opportunity for me to meet my hero.”

One of the sports world’s greatest heroes was lost when Aaron passed away while sleeping Friday in Atlanta. It’s been nearly 50 years since he last played a game for the Braves. But he has continued to have an impact on the organization, which will be forever thankful for his immeasurable contributions.

“He basically is the Braves,” club president and CEO Derek Schiller said. “We are who we are because of Hank Aaron. I know there are a lot of guys who have worn the uniform, but none like Hank.”

Schiller and team chairman Terry McGuirk spoke to Aaron last week and were looking forward to meeting with him again soon.

“We are absolutely devastated by the passing of our beloved Hank,” McGuirk said in a statement. “He was a beacon for our organization first as a player, then with player development, and always with our community efforts. His incredible talent and resolve helped him achieve the highest accomplishments, yet he never lost his humble nature. Henry Louis Aaron wasn’t just our icon, but one across Major League

Baseball and around the world. His success on the diamond was matched only by his business accomplishments off the field and capped by his extraordinary philanthropic efforts.”

Though a fractured hip slowed him over the past few years, Aaron would still make frequent trips to the ballpark to work out or just talk with club officials. He was at Truist Park last month, when Freddie Freeman won the Hank Aaron Award.

“Even when he wasn’t here physically, he was with us all the time,” Schiller said. “When we went to the postseason this year, he was calling all the time asking about how things were going and how we were looking. He told me he watched every game on TV. He knew everything going on about the team.”

Aaron played for the Braves from 1954-74, then spent the final two years of his legendary career with the Milwaukee Brewers. After retiring, he spent 13 years as Atlanta’s vice president of player development. It was in this role that he decided Brian Snitker was better suited to serve as coach than as a backup Minor League catcher.

“I wouldn’t be sitting here on this call if it wasn’t for Hank Aaron,” Snitker said. “He’s the reason I’m here. I’ve said many times, I’ve been blessed to be around Hall of Famers throughout my career, none more important to my career, my family and my life than Hank Aaron.”

Along with getting his first coaching job with the Braves in 1980, Snitker also gained what became an incredible friendship. He remained in close contact with Aaron over the past four decades and was hoping the legendary slugger would come to Spring Training to hang out with the players over the next few years.

“I hate that for [the players],” Snitker said. “They’re not going to get to experience Hank Aaron, the epitome of grace and professionalism.”

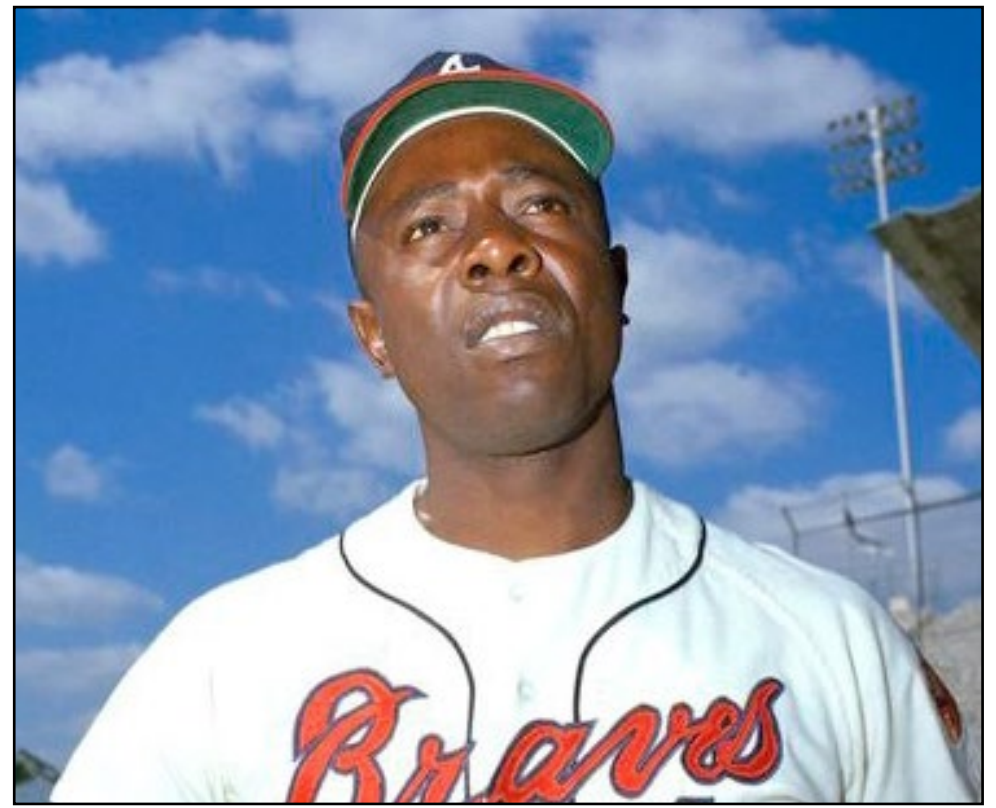
Aaron did briefly visit the team’s Spring Training facility, which officially opened in North Port, Fla., last year. His presence for the unveiling of Hank Aaron Way was celebrated by the Braves players who appreciated being in the presence of one of the game’s greatest legends.

“He was so gracious and cordial,” said former Braves star and Hall of Famer Chipper Jones. “He gave everybody their time that day. He didn’t come around very often. But when he did, he was all-in. You could tell he was really genuine, that he really wanted to help the players and give of his time. There aren’t too many like that anymore.”

“All the interactions I had with him through the years, I’ve treasured every single one of them. This guy, when he walked in a room, had this aura about him. He was at constant peace. He probably had every right to be militant, angry and leery of everyone he came in contact with, but he never was.”

Aaron was the target of taunts, hate mail and death threats as he grew closer to breaking Babe Ruth’s home run record. But he continued to play and remain composed through that moment on April 8, 1974, when he hit his record-breaking 715th homer at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium.

“Jackie Robinson kind of set the stage, but Hank took it to another level,” Jones said. “You’re talking about a Black man in that day and age, elevating himself to the best in the game and embarking on a journey that would take him to the top of the home run list and passing Babe Ruth, it really is amazing. He was a beautiful human.”





WE'VE GOT JOBS!

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

MATERIAL HANDLER -No Interviews needed -Hours: 5am -3:30pm Monday – Friday / 5am -1:30pm Saturday.

PRODUCTION WORKERS: \$12/hr 7am to 4:30pm, heavy lifting is required from time to time- needed for production line work.

HR ADMIN ASSIST: do not have pay rate set yet. entry level HR with some experience. Or some moderate experience like 1-5 years in an HR role or related but preferably that has HR experience.

SERGER: \$9/hr, 1st shift, must have skills on sewer/serger

TIRE HANDLER: \$11 & UP BASED ON JOB/SHIFT-12hr swing shift days—7am-7:30pm, 2nd & 3rd—Tire Handlers 3pm-11:30pm/ 11:00pm-7:30am

CALL CENTER: \$11/HR M-TH. 8am to 5pm, consistently calling potential clients and setting appointments for sales rep to visit, coordinate the travel plans/times/dates with sales rep. Must have a “go-getter” personality-client wants to interview them Thursday next week.

INDUSTRIAL BINDING: (sewing machine) candidates that have sewing machine experience we will pay them \$14.25 per hour. They must have previous sewing experience. 2nd shift-and work Monday – Thursday 5pm to 3:30am

GENERAL LABOR: \$10/hr, 12 hour shift- 7p to 7a, 7 days a week right now, lots of over time, bilingual/Spanish is a must! Heavy lifters needed for cutting, sealing boxes, packing, and able to work with variety of people.

513 Lovers Lane Road S.E., Calhoun, GA
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The Gordon Gazette proudly introduces

HERITAGE 2021

Celebrating the past, present and future of Gordon County



This special, online publication of the Gordon Gazette will be FREE for all to enjoy beginning Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021

Obituaries

January 23, 2021

Ottis Adams

Mr. Ottis Wesley Adams, age 84, passed away peacefully at his home Monday, Jan. 18, 2021, surrounded by the ones he loved.

Mr. Adams was born in Kingston, Ga. on Dec. 6, 1936, son of the late Timothy Wesley Adams and Dorothy Carolina McGuire Adams. Mr. Adams was a member of the Adairsville Baptist Church. He was also a veteran of the United States National Guard and member of the Adairsville American Legion Post 245. Mr. Adams was a former councilman for the City of Adairsville and retired from Huntsmen Chemical. His happiest time was being on his tractor working his family farm. He was a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, and friend. He was preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by the loving wife of 63 years, Carol Thornbrough Adams; children, Deborah and Brian Thomas, Thornton Adams, and John Adams; granddaughter, Lauren and Thomas Maddox.

Funeral service was held Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021, at 2 p.m. from the chapel of Barton Funeral Home with Reverends Eric Sorrell and Michael Hunt officiating. Interment followed in Eastview Cemetery, Adairsville. The family received friends Thursday from 1 – 2 p.m. at Barton Funeral Home.

Sign the guestbook and leave online condolences at www.BartonFuneralHome.net

R. Dudley Barton & Son Funeral Home, Adairsville, is in charge of arrangements for Mr. Ottis Wesley Adams.

Barton Funeral Home

Barrera Beltran

Mr. Barrera Rosenberg Beltran, age 56, of Calhoun, departed this life Sunday, Jan. 17, 2021 at AdventHealth Gordon.

Graveside service was held Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021 at 3 p.m. from Ponders Colonial Hills Memorial Park Cemetery.

Due to the National health crisis and the Covid-19 virus, masks must be worn properly at all times and social distancing must be observed when visiting the funeral home.

Condolences may be expressed to the family at www.pondersfuneralhome.com.

Arrangements by, Ponders Calhoun Chapel 675 Jolly Rd Calhoun GA 30701

www.selectedindependentfuneralhomes.org and www.ogr.org



Randy Gilbert

Randy Lynn Gilbert, age 44, of Calhoun, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021 at his home following an extended illness.

Randy was born Feb. 25, 1976 in Whitfield County, son of the late Roger Bruce Gilbert and Joann Holden Pitts. In addition to his parents, Randy was also preceded in death by his step-mother, Brenda Gilbert. Randy loved to smoke meat or BBQ, the outdoors, fishing, and especially spending time with his family.

Randy is survived by: two sons, Robert Gilbert and his wife Jordon and Dustin Gilbert and his wife Breanna; daughter, Haven Gilbert and her wife Mysty; step-father, Ronny Pitts; grandson, Preston Hinkle; four brothers, Timmie Holden, Roger Gilbert, Jimmy Gilbert, and Gary Gilbert; two sisters, Pamela Hogston and her husband Richard, and Ann Robinson; and several nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Due to the ongoing national health crisis, face coverings must be properly worn by all those who plan to attend. Social distancing guidelines must be followed at all times while attending the service.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, Jan. 24 from 1 p.m. until the funeral hour at 3 p.m. at

Thomas Funeral Home.

Funeral Services will be conducted on Sunday, Jan. 24 at 3 p.m. from the Chapel of Thomas Funeral Home with Reverend Tommy Phillips officiating. Interment will follow in Sugar Valley Baptist Church Cemetery.

Pallbearers serving include: Allen Byars, Timmie Holden, Richard Hogston, Jim Stevens, Chris Summers, and Dennis Nesbitt.

In lieu of flowers, the family request that memorial contributions be made to Thomas Funeral Home towards final expenses.

You may leave the family online condolences at www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com

Thomas Funeral Home has proudly been entrusted with the care of Randy Lynn Gilbert.



Gene Kostreba

Mr. Eugene Allen "Gene" Kostreba, 66, of Calhoun, passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2020 at AdventHealth Gordon.

Gene was born in Manhattan, N.Y. on July 15, 1954, son of the late Diane Ramie Kostreba. He was a veteran of the United States Air Force having served from March 1, 1973 until July 31, 1977, was a member of the American Legion Post 245, Adairsville, and a member of Trinity Baptist Church.

Gene moved to Calhoun in 1994 and was employed by Harbison Walker Corporation and prior to his recent retirement, he was the Southeast Regional Vice President of Liberty Tires.

Survivors include his daughters, Lelok Bessada and her husband Daniel and Anna Kostreba; son, Kris Kostreba; grandchildren, Madeline Bessada, Jake Bessada and Zalie Kostreba; brother, Tony Kostreba along with other relatives.

A memorial service to celebrate the life of Gene Kostreba will be conducted Saturday, Jan. 23, 2020 at 1 p.m. from Trinity Baptist Church with Pastor Jerry Adair officiating. Military honors will be accorded by the United States Air Force Honor Guard.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be given in Gene's memory to the Adairsville Post 245 of the American Legion, 100 Legion Street, Adairsville, Georgia 30103.

Online condolences may be expressed and the guest book signed at www.maxbrannonandsons.com.

For those who plan to attend the service, face masks are required and social distancing guidelines are to be followed.

The Brannon family and Staff are honored to serve the family of Eugene Allen "Gene" Kostreba.



Roy Schand

Roy L. Schand, age 90, of Calhoun, passed away on Friday, Jan. 22, 2021 at his residence.

Roy was born on April 6, 1930 in Cleveland, Ohio, son of the late Louis Schanda and Anna Lustig Schanda. After retiring at age 53, Roy began writing an autobiography about his many adventures and exciting life. The book was published by his grandson, Chad, grandson, Garyn, is waiting for the movie debut. The title of the book is "Almost Over" and can be found at our public library.

Roy is survived by his wife, Patricia Schand of Calhoun; son, Craig Schand of Chattanooga, Tenn.; two daughters, Caryn Sims and her husband Joel of Calhoun, and Beth Brown of Fort Pierce, Fla.; six grandchildren, Garyn Sims and his wife Brooke, Chad Sims and his partner Angel, SFC Justin Schand and his wife Allen, Courtney Schand, Ashley Sanchez, and Lindsey Brown; and seven great-grandchildren, Lona Sims, Luke Sims, Mariella Sanchez, Ethan Schand, Colton Schand, Stryder Schand, and Arianna Marcelino.

No memorial service will be held.

You may leave the family online condolences at www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com

Thomas Funeral Home has proudly been entrusted with the care of Roy L. Schand.



Joyce Smith

A memorial service to celebrate the life of Joyce Ann (Casey) Smith will be held Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 4:00 PM from Riverview Baptist Church with Rev. Josh Pilgrim and Rev. Jamey Hunt officiating. Music will be arranged by Jacin Burns and her granddaughters.

The family will receive friends at Riverview Baptist Church on Sunday, January 24th between the hours of 2:00 and 4:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be given in Joyce's memory to Riverview Baptist Church Building Fund, Post Office Box 2327, Calhoun, Georgia 30703.

For those attending the visitation and/or service, masks are recommended and social distancing guidelines will be observed.

Online condolences may be expressed and the guest book signed at www.maxbrannonandsons.com. A complete obituary will follow at a later time.

The Brannon family and staff are honored to serve the family of Joyce Ann (Casey) Smith of Calhoun.



William Thomas

William Calvin Thomas, 89, of the Plainville Community, died Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021. He was born on Nov. 10, 1931 to the late William Burgess Thomas and Arvie Velma Mincey Thomas. He was preceded in death by his wife in 2019, Shirley Ann Thomas; brothers, Allan Thomas and Wayne Thomas; sisters, Doris Sewell, Margie Peppers, Virginia Rogers, Clara Nell Shaw, and Linda Hunt.

He was a member of Northwood Baptist Church where he served as a deacon. He had also served as a deacon at Curryville Baptist and Fellowship Baptist Church for a combined total of 52 years. Calvin retired from Carriage Carpet after 25 years of service. He was a singer with the Thomas Family for almost 40 years. He was an avid fisherman, loving camping and canning.

He is survived by his children, Michael (Sue) Thomas, Ronnie (Darlene) Thomas, Lamar (Kathy) Thomas, Wanda (Jeff) Rollins, James D. Thomas, Lisa Cross, Billy (Mandy) Thomas, and Jennifer Bidy; brothers, Larry Thomas, Jimmy (Marie) Thomas, and Paul Thomas; sisters, Judy (Ron) Turner, Gail (James) Wilson, and Barbara Ann Paris; nineteen grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren; several nieces, nephews, and other relatives also survive.

The family will receive friends on January 22, 2021 from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM at Max Brannon and Sons Funeral Home.

The funeral service will be Saturday, Jan. 23, 2021 at 3 p.m. from the Chapel of Max Brannon and Sons Funeral Home with Rev. Kevin Thomas, Rev. Tim Brown, and Rev. Adam Thomas. Burial will follow in Gordon Memorial Gardens with Tim Stover conducting the graveside service. Pallbearers are, Kevin Thomas, Dylan Thomas, Logan Thomas, Landon Thomas, Daniel Thomas, Jeremy Leight, and Greg Muse. Honorary pallbearers are, Chandler Thomas, Cameron Thomas, Zeke Thomas, Carter Thomas, Jordan Green, Zack Selman, Jeffery Ross, and Keith Sims.

To leave condolences and sign the online guest book please go to, www.maxbrannonandsons.com

The Brannon family and staff are honored to serve the family of Calvin Thomas.



www.gordongazettega.com

Help for the Hurting

-The Life Choice Hospice Bereavement Support Group will be meeting the 2nd Tuesday of each month. The support group is open to anyone in the community who would like to attend. The office and support group are located at 189 Professional Court, Suite 300, Calhoun. For Information, contact Jennifer at 706-602-9001.

-The Northwest Georgia Parkinson Disease Association, Inc., is offering a monthly support group for persons living with Parkinson Disease, their caregivers, family and friends. The support group will meet at Gordon Hospital; Conference Room A. For any questions about the support group and future meetings, call James Trussell at 706-235- 3164 or 706-346-5678.

-Families Anonymous is a 12-step program, for those concerned about drug abuse and behavior problems of a relative or friend. Completely anonymous, non professional, and non religious. No dues, no fees. Not connected with any hospital or agency. Located

on Red Bud Road in plaza below Fitness First, next to Calhoun Counseling Center (Dr. Bledsoe's office). Meeting every Thursday 7 - 8 p.m. Call 770-548-7849 for more information.

-Bondage Breakers- Breaking the chains of addiction one soul at a time. Every Thursday night at 7 p.m. at Crane Eater Community Church, located at 3168 Red Bud Rd Calhoun, GA 30701.

-The Georgia Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association is sponsoring a monthly support group at Morning Pointe Assisted Living, 660 Jolly Road, on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. For more information or directions, call Mary Braden at 770-548-4683 or Karen Parrott at 706-346-5220. For more information about dementia and Alzheimer's disease, call 800-272-3900 or visit www.alz.org/georgia.

-Special Care Plus, a free one-on-one consultation program, offers education and information to primary

caregivers of persons with dementia. Any primary caregiver who is caring for a loved one with dementia in the home is eligible to receive this program. To learn more about the Special Care Plus program, call 800-272-3900.

-Want to make a difference in the community? Tapestry Hospice is seeking volunteers to provide companionship to our patients, read books, make crafts, garden, light house cleaning, administrative work, etc. If you're interested contact Megan at megan.guthrie@tapestryhospice.com

-The Alzheimer's Association's Caring Closet was created to help offset the high cost of incontinent products and give the families support they often desperately need. If you would like to visit the nearest Closet, call the chapter office to receive a flier with locations and hours. Morning Pointe in Calhoun has a Caring Closet; call Mary Braden at 706-629-0777.

Education

Singing voice of Simba from Disney's 'The Lion King' joins GHC business speaker series

GEORGIA HIGHLANDS COLLEGE

Georgia Highlands College's School of Business and Professional Studies will continue its virtual Entrepreneur Speaker Series this spring, kicking off Feb. 17 with actor and singer Jason Weaver, whose credits include the 1991 TV miniseries "The Jackson's: An American Dream," and providing the singing voice of Simba in the 1994 film "The Lion King."

The series, which is free and open to the public, will also feature CEO, speaker and author Casandra Austin-McDonald, as well as writer, entrepreneur and creator J. Carter, whose most recent endeavor is the free streaming TV platform Freeli TV.

The Entrepreneur Speaker Series will connect successful

entrepreneurs with students and the community to share stories and advice in a virtual format.

The series will run virtually from 12PM to 1PM on Feb. 17, March 17 and April 14. Participants can register through ess.highlands.edu or see more information and details about the speakers.

"Last semester's Entrepreneur Speaker Series was very well received, and we are excited to offer this series again," event moderator and Assistant Professor of Business Administration Shanika Wright-Turner said. "This semester you can expect entrepreneurs with fresh perspectives and those that talk about taking risks and bringing new ideas to life. We hope you ascertain what inspires, motivates, challenges and ultimately

helps entrepreneurs succeed in the world today."

Carter, who will be speaking on April 14, said he felt he had a responsibility to engage with students and help them learn about his path toward success. Carter's newest project, Freeli TV, is the world's first free linear streaming app offering multiple channels dedicated to Black Culture through tv series, music videos, movies, sports and more.

"I'm a big believer that when you give back, you get even more in return," Carter said, "so it's always been a mission of mine to help folks along their way just like I was helped along my way. When I was presented with an opportunity to be a part of this series, it was a no-brainer. I'd be disrespecting the folks who poured their knowledge and wisdom



into me when I was a college student if I didn't do the same."

Carter added that participation in the Entrepreneurial Speaker Series is a valuable experience for the speakers as well.

"By letting students and viewers know about our newest venture, I hope to inspire them and offer them a blueprint for success," Carter said. "In turn, speaking to young and talented people has a tendency to reenergize

and inspire me to do more and be more." Visit ess.highlands.edu for more information and to register for any speaker event in this series.

GNTC Foundation welcomes two members to Board of Trustees

GNTC

As the Georgia Northwestern Technical College (GNTC) Foundation moves into a new year, it is adding two new members to the Foundation Board of Trustees.

Dr. Craig McDaniel, mayor of the City of Rome and former GNTC president, was elected to the board along with Phillip Burkhalter, owner of Phillip Burkhalter Builders. Scott Tucker of Floyd County nominated both men and the Foundation Board of Trustees voted unanimously to add them to the board.

"We are delighted to welcome Dr. McDaniel and Mr. Burkhalter as trustees," said GNTC President Dr. Heidi Popham. "Their experience and expertise will be tremendous assets to the GNTC Foundation, and we are grateful that they have agreed to serve, especially during a time of such momentum for the foundation."

Burkhalter is a builder, developer and commercial contractor. A member of the Rome Home Builders Association for 31 years, he has served on the board for 26 years and has been president of the organization five times. The Rome business owner is also an active member of the Exchange Club of Rome, the Floyd County Board of Adjustments and serves on the Rome Christmas Parade Committee.

McDaniel is a commercial real estate agent with Toles, Temple and Wright, Inc. in Rome. He served as President of Georgia Northwestern Technical College from 1998 to 2013. McDaniel received his doctoral degree from the University of Georgia, master's degree from Georgia State University and bachelor's degree in Business Management from Carson Newman

College.

He is a member of the Greater Rome Board of Realtors, Georgia Association of Realtors and the National Association of Realtors. McDaniel is in his fifth year as a Rome City Commissioner and was elected mayor in January of 2021 by his fellow commissioners.

Other members of the GNTC Foundation Board of Trustees include Valerie Brown, Whitfield County; Linda Case (vice chair), Dade County; Jay LeGrande, Polk County; Gary McConnell, Chattooga County; Sherrie Patterson (chair), Murray County; Damon Raines, Walker County; Becky Redd, Gordon County; Mitch Sanford, Whitfield County; Wil Stiles, Catoosa County; Jay Still, Whitfield County; Scott Tucker, Floyd County; Carolyn Walker, Walker County; and Doris White, Walker County.

Georgia Northwestern Technical College provides quality workforce education to the citizens of Northwest Georgia. Students have the opportunity to earn an associate degree, diploma, or a certificate in business, health, industrial, or public service career paths. This past year, 12,454 people benefited from GNTC's credit and noncredit programs. With an annual credit enrollment of 7,730 students, GNTC is the largest college in Northwest Georgia. GNTC has an additional enrollment of 4,724 people through adult education, continuing education, business and industry training, and Georgia Quick Start. For more information about GNTC, visit us at www.GNTC.edu. GNTC is a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia and an Equal Opportunity Institution.

Pictured, left to right: Phillip Burkhalter and Dr. Craig McDaniel.



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Seth Kolterman wins Gordon County Schools' District Spelling Bee; moves on to region

On Thursday, Jan. 21, the Spelling Bee winners from the individual schools at Gordon County Schools came together to compete in the Gordon County Schools' District Spelling Bee.

GCS proud of all the school winners and are honored to announce the district winner. Seth Kolterman from Ashworth Middle School won the district bee and will go on to represent Gordon County Schools in region competition.

Matthew Zander from Belwood Elementary School came in second and will be the alternate competitor.

RIGHT: Mrs. Sket Angland, principal at Ashworth Middle School, and Dr. Kimberly Fraker, superintendent, are pictured with BELOW: Pictured L-R are school winners Lucca McDougle, Fairmount Elementary, Isabella Miettunen, Swain Elementary, Cam Mader, Red Bud Elementary, Dennis Holt, Sonorville Elementary, Matthew Zander, Belwood Elementary, Seth Kolterman, Ashworth Middle, Aundrey Hamilton, Red Bud Middle, and Bentley Hayes, Tolbert Elementary.



Calhoun High School

AP

Student of the week

John Barnes

Nominated by: Dr. Cherri Rains

"John diligently works to complete projects and is always willing to go above and beyond to expand his learning and stay on track.

John is always willing to try new things and help others. He is a joy to have in class."



Calhoun High School

AP

Student of the week

Molly Gilmer

Nominated by: Mrs. Prater

"Molly is very thorough on assignments and consistently works to stay ahead. She does not procrastinate and isn't afraid to ask questions."



Congratulations to Gordon County College & Career Academy student Connor Quarles on passing the Solidworks Certification test. Solidworks is a professional 3D modeling / CAD software used in engineering design careers. This certification is proof to a prospective employer that a student has the skills required to operate the software proficiently.

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GEORGIA HEALTH NEWS: How do the elderly who are homebound get COVID shots?

ANDY MILLER, Georgia Health News

For Georgia seniors, the COVID vaccine rollout has been rocky at best.

Yet an increasing number of people 65 and older living in the community and in long-term care facilities now are receiving COVID-19 vaccinations.

But what about the elderly who are homebound? Right now, Georgia public health officials are wrestling with that issue.

Many elderly people are unable to travel by car to a facility where they can be vaccinated. Others might be able to go if a ride were available, but they live alone and have no family members to help them.

"I think it's an unmet need in our community and our state," Dorothy Davis, president and CEO of Visiting Nurse Health System/Hospice Atlanta, an Atlanta-based home health provider, told GHN this week. "It's not just a Georgia

problem." NextAvenue.org reported this month that about 1.9 million adults over 65 are mostly homebound, and that 5.3 million have health conditions that make leaving home difficult. There's no national plan for getting COVID-19 vaccines delivered to older homebound adults, the article said.

State Sen. Gail Davenport, a Jonesboro Democrat, questioned Georgia's Public Health commissioner at a legislative hearing this week about elderly residents living in their homes who are unable to get a shot.

The commissioner, Dr. Kathleen Toomey, replied that the state is working on plans to collaborate with home health agencies to have them vaccinate the homebound elderly. "I know it's on people's minds," Toomey told legislators.

"There are frail elderly who live at home," she said. "It would be next to impossible for them

to travel to a vaccination site, let alone stand in line at a mass vaccination event."

But before vaccine can be brought into homes, regulatory and logistical barriers must be resolved, said Davis of Visiting Nurse, which works with about 6,000 patients. These patients include people with disabilities who get services through Medicaid waivers.

"We have truly bedbound patients," Davis said. "We work with physicians doing house calls."

One major concern is vaccines' vulnerability to room temperatures, which can cause them to lose their efficacy. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines need to be stored cold and used fairly quickly once the vials are opened.

"The home health nurse has to be affiliated with a vaccine provider to even have access to vaccine," said Public Health spokeswoman Nancy Nydam. "Then there is the handling



of the vaccine – temperature control – the vaccine has to be used within six hours once the vial is punctured; vials have either five or ten doses depending on manufacturer. It's not a vaccine that is easily administered or transported one dose at a time."

For homebound people who can be transported, it's likely that their relatives or other caregivers will need to find a way to get them to vaccine centers, said Dr. Steven Albert, professor and chair of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate

School of Public Health's department of behavioral and community health sciences, according to NextAvenue.org.

"It is a very confusing picture right now," Albert said. "It's easy to get vaccines to nursing homes. But for every one person in a nursing home, there are probably five people in their homes with equal levels of disability who rely on a combination of family and community-based services."

Kathy Floyd, executive director of the Georgia Council on Aging, said Wednesday that the situation with

homebound patients must be worked out.

"With seniors in facilities getting vaccines and the mobile 65-plus population targeting county health departments and private vaccination sites, homebound seniors are left out of the equation," Floyd said. "Vaccinating them is not an easy task, but one that Georgia needs to address, especially in rural areas."

Davis added, "We need a plan in Georgia. I think we have seniors who are really struggling."

Highland Rivers Foundation supports recovery



Melanie Dallas CEO - Highland Rivers

It is very likely than everyone reading this has benefitted in some way from the work of a charitable foundation. There are thousands of charitable foundations in the U.S. that support a variety of causes – children's health, research, job training and education, among others. Some are large, privately endowed foundations, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, while others are smaller, locally-focused and raise funds from the public and often other foundations.

Sometimes, foundations benefit individuals in ways they are unaware of. For example, a local community foundation might provide funding for the development of a new public park, local arts programs, and more recently, funding to support communities in responding to COVID-19. Most public universities have foundations that provide scholarships for students. But regardless of its purpose, a charitable foundation helps people.

In late 2018, Highland Rivers Health created a charitable foundation to support the work of our agency. The official name is the Community Recovery Partnership, Inc., but it is known simply as the Highland Rivers Foundation. The foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3, which means donations are tax-deductible (and while Highland Rivers Health itself is non-profit and tax-exempt organization,

it is not recognized as a charitable entity).

What's most important to know is that the Highland Rivers Foundation helps Highland Rivers Health go above and beyond, supporting activities that can enhance our programs and the experiences of individuals receiving services, but which our agency might not have the funds for (as nearly 90 cents of every dollar we earn goes directly into services). So I wanted to share some of the benefits the Highland Rivers Foundation has been able to provide for our agency because of the generosity of community members and other donors.

A gift from the Community Foundation of Northwest Georgia has allowed Highland Rivers Health to replace the mattresses and bedding for all 74 beds in our three crisis stabilization units, in Dalton, Rome and Cedartown.

A gift from the

SmileUp! Foundation in Woodstock was earmarked specifically to help with the co-pays for children and families in Cherokee County.

Earlier this month, the foundation received a gift that will help Highland Rivers Health purchase a generator in a facility that serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Another donor donated a hospital bed for a medically fragile individual with IDD.

The Georgia Council on Substance Abuse provided grants in both 2019 and 2020 to support Operation Gratitude, a Highland Rivers event specifically for veterans. Several other organizations also made in-kind donations to support the event.

A gift from a local family paid for the renovation and installation of new play structures and surface for the playground

at Highland Rivers Women's Outreach residential program in Rome, where women can bring their young children while in treatment.

Several individuals and organizations also made donations to the Highland Rivers Foundation to provide holiday gifts for women in the Women's Outreach program, as well as for individuals in peer support programs and the Assertive Community Treatment program.

This is just partial list that highlights some of the donations – both monetary and in-kind – received by the Highland Rivers Foundation over the past couple years. While some of the donations were very specific and others were used across several programs, every donation ultimately fulfilled the same purpose: supporting individuals during their recovery journey, both directly and indirectly. Finally, given the

difficult challenges faced by many people in our communities due to COVID-19, I want to emphasize that this is not a solicitation of donations for our foundation. However, I do want people to know that if you are ever looking for a way to support individuals in recovery, and in a way that can have a very direct benefit, please consider a gift to the Highland Rivers Foundation. Lean more at <http://highlandriversfoundation.org>.

Melanie Dallas is a licensed professional counselor and CEO of Highland Rivers Health, which provides treatment and recovery services for individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities in a 12-county region of northwest Georgia that includes Bartow, Cherokee, Floyd, Fannin, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk and Whitfield counties.

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COVID From page 1A

Elementary.
Among staff with current active cases of COVID, Gordon County Schools reported 1 staff member at Ashworth Middle, 3 at Belwood Elementary, 3 at Gordon Central, 3 at Red Bud Middle, 1 at Sonoraville Elementary, 1 at Tolbert Elementary and 6 at Swain Elementary.

In mid-October 2020, when GCS put their high school students on a hybrid schedule due to active COVID cases, there were 26 active cases within the school system at that time.

Gordon County Schools' reporting is slightly different than the City school system. Gordon County Schools' weekly numbers, reported each Friday afternoon, show the new cases of COVID-19 for the week, plus any previous cases that are still active. You can find those numbers on their website at <https://www.gcbe.org/domain/5112>

Calhoun City Schools' reported new cases of COVID-19 this week dropped to 16 new cases, down 8 from last week. There were 13 new cases among students (2 at Calhoun Primary, 1 at Calhoun Elementary, 2 at Calhoun Middle and 8 at Calhoun High School), and 3 new cases among staff members (1 at CES, 1 at CHS and 1 at the Central Office).

Calhoun City Schools post the new case numbers each Friday afternoon, and includes the previous week's numbers separately on their website at <https://www.calhounschools.org/summer-resources/ccsd-covid-19-case-status-reportnew-page>

Both school systems have adopted strict cleaning procedures and are following the health and safety guidelines set forth by the CDC concerning social distancing.

Students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 at either school system cannot return to school until they meet the Department of Public Health's Return to School Guidance After COVID-19 Illness or Exposure.

The COVID-19 statistics for Gordon's neighboring counties since the beginning of the pandemic as of Saturday morning are:

-Bartow County...8,384 cases, 145 deaths, 10 probable deaths and 551 hospitalizations;

-Floyd County... 8,161 cases, 129 deaths, 22 probable deaths and 631 hospitalizations;

-Whitfield County...12,998 cases, 156 deaths, 7 probable deaths and 625 hospitalizations.

The State of Georgia now topped 700,000 cases, and as of Saturday morning report 707,750 cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic began, with 11,670 deaths, 1,390 probable deaths and 47,950 hospitalizations.

Gordon County EMA Director Courtney Taylor reminds the public to continue to wash hands often, cover your cough and practice social distancing.

For further information and numbers such as demographics for Georgia and totals all counties please visit: <https://dph.georgia.gov/>

VOICELESS From page 1A

and getting tougher punishment for these crimes," said King. "We (also) want to become advocates for these children and, when no one is at a parole hearing on their behalf, we will be there."

To bring more awareness to the issue in Northwest Georgia, King said that Defend the Voiceless also has plans for parent/child training.

"We are also working on starting free classes for parents and children to educate them in what to

look for, what not to do and the dangers of different (phone) apps, among other things," said King.

Fundraising is another goal for the group.

"We will also continue to raise money for the organizations that rescue these children, provide housing for the survivors and provide immediate needs when they are rescued," said King. "We will be having two to three events per year to raise money for this cause, and will soon have a way to donate on our website at www.defendthevoiceless.org.

The website, which offers information about Defend the Voiceless, resource information and a blog, also now has a signup page for the Defend the

Voiceless newsletter.

"The newsletter will keep our subscribers up to date on what is going on, what events are coming up and what organizations have benefited from the donations," said King. "We are also starting a YouTube channel and will have one episode per month, with a different speaker each time. Some episodes will include the story of a survivor; other episodes will be a question and answer format."

For more information on Defend the Voiceless, visit their website at www.defendthevoiceless.org

Church Calendar

ONGOING

-Philadelphia Christian School is located off Highway 41 between Calhoun and Adairville. The school offers 4-year-old kindergarten through 12th grade, using the A-Beka curriculum. To find out more about the school, call the office at 706-625-3233.

-Faith Deliverance Ministry and Outreach will be taking donations of clothes, shoes, also all house hold items to help needy families. Call Minister Evelyn Adams at 706-671-7988.

-Celebrate Recovery, a faith based 12-step program, meets every

Tuesday at 6 p.m. at Relevate Church in Ranger off 411. Call Nicole for information: 706-979-4713/706-290-8028.

-East Calhoun Church of God, at 401 Peters Street, gives out groceries and clothing through the "Feed the Needy" ministry each Saturday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The church hosts a miracle healing service every first Friday at 7 p.m. For more information, contact "Feed the Needy" ministry director Florence Jones at 706-409-1981. Senior pastor is Keith Reid.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Fairmount United Methodist Church-Loving One Another To Christ. Sunday School at 10 a.m.; Worship Service at 11 a.m. Children's Church provided. New Minister now Leading. New programs and community outreach coming soon.

-Pastor Terry Reisner invites everyone to the Vision Pentecostal Ministry located at 401 South Wall Street in Calhoun. Come hear the truth of God's Word Sundays at 11 a.m.

--Pine Chapel United Methodist Church, located at 2232 Pine Chapel Road in Resaca, "A place to begin, belong and become." Sunday

School, 10:15 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m. Pastor Louise W. Elmore.

-Resaca Assembly of God, located at 904 Resaca Lafayette Rd NW, would like to welcome everyone to please come and join in worship and meet our Pastor Steve Burns and his lovely wife Cathy. Sunday school at 10 a.m., worship service on Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Everyone is invited.

-Calhoun First United Methodist Church Sunday Worship times: 9:00 a.m., traditional worship; 10 a.m., Sunday school; 11 a.m., contemporary service (in the CAC). Calhoun First UMC is located at 205 East Line Street in downtown

Calhoun.

-First Presbyterian Church, located at 829 Red Bud Road N.E. in Calhoun. Pastor David McDonald invites you to join us on Sunday for Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., Worship Service at 11 a.m., and Bible Study Class Tuesday 10 a.m.

-Oakman Baptist Church located at 397 Oakman Rd. Oakman, Georgia, has Sunday school at 10 a.m. Covered dish dinner every third Sunday following worship. Everyone is invited!

-Damascus Baptist Church, located on North Highway 41 in Calhoun, Sunday School at 10 a.m. Sunday worship at 11 a.m.

and Sunday night at 6 p.m.

-Old Sugar Valley United Methodist Church located at 2659 Old Rome Dalton Road in Calhoun has Breakfast Social at 9:30 am every Sunday. The church history is colorful, dating back to the Civil War, small cozy country church nothing fancy! Come join us!

-Faith Deliverance Ministry and Outreach with Evelyn M. Adams, Minister has been ordained as a Minister of the Gospel since 1972. Call anytime to come minister to your church of place or event at 706-337-3241. 24-hour prayer line at 706-671-7988. Send all prayer requests to P.O Box 394, Fairmount GA, 30139.



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