

GORDON Gazette

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Calhoun-Gordon County's #1 Source for News

Kemp orders schools closed until April 24

GORDON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

On Thursday, March 26, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp issued an order that closed all schools in the state until April 24 in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Both Calhoun City Schools

and Gordon County Schools are complying with the order and have released statements concerning online learning, food programs and senior activities.

"Governor Kemp made an official announcement today regarding an extension of school closures for all districts across the state," said Calhoun City

Schools in a statement. "Calhoun City Schools will remain closed through Friday, April 24, 2020. Teachers will continue to make contact with students with revised schedules and expectations. No

See **SCHOOLS**, page 7A



Importance of 911 screening questions highlighted after five firefighters with CFD have to self quarantine

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Public safety officials are asking residents of Calhoun-Gordon County that if calling E-911 during a medical emergency, to be honest when answering the specific screening questions that are now asked for medical calls during the COVID-19 outbreak.

While the screening questions have been in place for several weeks, a recent incident shows the importance of answering the screening questions accurately after five firefighters with Calhoun Fire Department were placed in quarantine for a week after the possibility of potential COVID-19 exposure.

According to Calhoun Fire Assistant Chief Terry Mills, the five quarantined ran a non-suspected "negative screen" cardiac call recently, performing CPR and working on a patient. The next day, at the

request of the local medical director and other public health officials, the CFD was requested to put the five firefighters who responded to the call in quarantine.

Three of the firefighters self-isolated at their home, while the other two firefighters chose to use the City's isolation facility set up for public safety use a few weeks ago.

Thankfully, due to a change in guidelines, the five firefighters were permitted to leave quarantine a week later. None of the five firefighters ever showed symptoms and the guidelines state that if a person quarantined shows no signs or symptoms for 72 hours, or if they show no signs or symptoms for seven days without a fever for 72 hours, they can leave quarantine.

Gordon County E-911 Director Debbie Vance said that incidents like this can be prevented if people who call the 911 Center for medical calls will accurately answer

their screening questions for a medical call.

"Any medical call; a broken bone, a cardiac situation, or any sick call, we ask the caller if the patient has a cough or is running a fever," said Vance. "Then we ask if anyone in the household is running a fever or has a cough. If the answer is 'no' to both questions, then we give it out to our first responders as a negative screen. If the answer to either question is a 'yes,' then we give our first responders the notification that it's a positive screen, and we let the responders know whether it's the patient that's a positive screen or someone in the residence."

Vance then described what steps are taken once first responders show up to a medical call that's been identified as a positive screen.

"If it's a sick call, we will ask if the patient is capable of stepping outside of the residence and meeting the

paramedics, where they will be escorted to the ambulance. If the patient is too weak, then one person from the EMS unit will go inside in full PPE (personal protective equipment) and will assess the patient and ask them if they are able to walk to the ambulance with help," said Vance. "If the EMS person is told the patient can't walk to the ambulance, the EMS personnel will go back outside, get another person in full PPE from the unit, and re-enter with a stretcher."

Vance said that the information provided from callers is crucial in protecting first responders.

"If it's a situation where we can get information from the patient, then we are going to take every precaution that we can for the first responders," said Vance, noting that if it's a cardiac situation where CPR has already begun in the residence, first responders will go in and take over to perform CPR. "If we feel it's



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

a positive screen, then we're possibly exposing our first responders. So we're going to take every precaution that we can. We are trying, by screening to the best of our ability, to eliminate (the risk to our first responders) as much as possible."

It's also important for the public to know that anyone who calls for medical help, whether a negative or positive screen is determined, will receive medical help.

"I just want to reiterate,

if someone calls us for medical help, we're going to get you help, regardless of whether it's a positive or negative screen," said Vance. "But help us to help you by telling us the truth when you're screened. If our entire responder force gets quarantined, then who's going to help? We're going to get the public the help they need as quickly as possible, but we just ask that they help us in responding accurately to the screening questions."

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City to temporarily close Calhoun Recycling Center amid COVID-19 concerns.

EDUCATION 4A



Missing their students, Tolbert Elementary School holds Teacher Parade.

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Rep. Barton showing no signs of COVID-19 in self-isolation

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State Rep. Matt Barton (R-Calhoun, District 5) has been in self-isolation at his home since he and his colleagues at the State Legislature were encouraged to self-isolate after a state senator who participated in a vote on Monday, March 16 tested positive for the coronavirus.

State Sen. Brandon Beach (R) received a test on Saturday, March 14, according to published reports, after experiencing a cough and mild fever, but felt healthy enough to participate in the Monday, March 16 special legislative session that was used to give Georgia Governor Brian Kemp new authorities to respond to the coronavirus outbreak after a State of Emergency was declared in the state. On Wednesday, March 18, Beach disclosed his COVID-19 test had come back positive, prompting calls for all 236 lawmakers to quarantine themselves until the end of March. The request was also sent to Senate and House staff.

"The Speaker of the House (David Ralston) and the Commissioner of Public Health (Dr. Kathleen Toomey) asked all the Representatives and Senators who were at the special session on Monday, March 16, to quarantine until March 30," said Barton. "I feel great. I haven't had any symptoms. I've been working out while at home, and keeping up with the latest updates from the State."

Barton doesn't expect he has the illness even though since Beach, four other state Senators and at least one Representative, Rep. Matthew Gambill (R-Cartersville, District 15) have tested positive for COVID-19.

Barton said that since Gambill wasn't feeling well on Friday, March



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

State Representative Matt Barton (R-Calhoun, District 5) has been in self isolation at his home since last week, after a state senator tested positive for COVID-19.

13, that he missed the special session on Monday, March 16.

While he is not experiencing symptoms, Barton is taking the self-quarantine seriously and hasn't left his home. He's appreciated those who have reached out to him during this time.

"I've had a lot of people to check on me," said Barton. "I just want everyone to know I'm fine, and I'm not sick."

Barton said that he's keeping up-to-date with the evolving news and guidelines coming from the Department of Public Health, the CDD and the Governor's office concerning COVID-19, making sure that both City

See **BARTON**, page 8A

Local industry responds to COVID-19

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Several industries in Calhoun-Gordon County have released statements after at least one employee at each business has tested positive for COVID-19.

On Friday, March 13, Brumlow Mills, a supplier and producer of area and accent rugs, announced one of their employees had tested positive for the coronavirus.

"This afternoon, March 13, 2020, we were notified that a Brumlow Mills employee tested positive for COVID-19 and is currently undergoing medical treatment," the company said in a statement. "This employee had earlier tested positive for the flu virus and has not been on the premises for eight days. Two additional employees who worked in the immediate proximity of this employee have been notified by the Georgia Department of Public Health and will self-quarantine for 14 days."

Brumlow Mills announced at that time steps they were taking to prevent an outbreak at their facility.

"As we understand the severity of this virus, we have been extremely proactive in mitigating the risks posed by COVID-19," said the company. "We have followed CDC guidelines and have already consulted with professional industrial hygienists, as well as medical professionals. We are in close contact with health agencies for information and guidance. We are continuing to communicate to our employees the importance of preventative measures such as frequent hand washing and rigorous cleaning processes. Our thoughts and prayers are with those affected and we are ever hopeful that everyone impacted has a speedy recovery."

On Wednesday, March 25, Engineered Floors announced they had three total employees test positive for COVID-19; two from the tufting department in their Calhoun plant and one at their SAM facility.

"Engineered Floors is aware that three employees

See **INDUSTRY**, page 8A

Second Front

City of Calhoun temporarily closing recycling facility

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The City of Calhoun released a statement on Friday, March 27 concerning the temporary closure of the Calhoun Recycling Center on Pine Street due to COVID-19 concerns. The closure begins this Monday, March 30.

has come to the difficult decision to temporarily close the Calhoun Recycling Center effective Monday, March 30, 2020. To help prevent the community spread of COVID-19, and for the safety of our recycling attendants, we feel this action is now necessary. The DPH numbers released today show

have increased from 9 to 12. Rome-Floyd recycling has already closed and Cartersville recycling operations will also close starting Monday. We are hopeful we will be able to reopen as soon as it is deemed safe for the public and our workers. Thank you for your understanding.”

Both the City of Calhoun and Gordon

County approved a joint resolution on Monday night declaring a State of Emergency for Calhoun-Gordon County, shutting the dining rooms of restaurants and playgrounds and equipment at the recreation departments and putting restrictions on service businesses.

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Gordon County Social Services Network works toward ministering to the community

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The Gordon County Social Services Network is looking to minister to the needs of Gordon County residents. In an effort to effectively serve our community in the wake of the COVID 19 pandemic, a group of not-for-profit organizations are joining together to provide assistance to families that have been affected financially by the current situation. To most efficiently serve those needing assistance, documentation of need will be required.

Every effort will be made to assist those needing food and other resources. To inquire about financial assistance please visit www.voluntaryactioncenter.org and click on the What We Do



Tab. The “Financial Assistance Request Form” is located under Emergency Financial Assistance. Those seeking assistance should complete all fields and attach all required documentation. You can also access the form by clicking on this link: <https://fs30.formsite.com/Handup631/ae7630h5cd/>

index.html.

The GCSSN is made up of the Belmont Baptist Church, Calhoun First Baptist Church, Crane Eater Community Church, Good Samaritan Ministries, St. Vincent de Paul, Trinity Baptist Church, United Way of Gordon County, and Voluntary Action Center.

Gordon County residents have 24/7 access to Coronavirus information through AdventHealth



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Residents of Gordon County can now use a free hotline provided by AdventHealth to ask questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) and speak with a nurse as appropriate.

The AdventHealth Coronavirus Information Line, 877-VIRUSHQ, (877-847-8747) is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It serves as a one-stop-shop to connect people with resources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and their state’s Department of Health.

While the phone line is not intended to replace a physician-patient relationship, nurses can answer general medical questions and will refer the caller to the appropriate next steps, such as connecting them to a nurse, AdventHealth eCare or other health care provider.

AdventHealth is hopeful this service will also offload non-clinical call volumes from health care offices, helping providers in the community by freeing up their staff to focus on those who need the most immediate, critical care.

The initial launch of the AdventHealth Coronavirus Information Line was piloted in Florida and has now expanded to serve consumers across the health system’s nationwide footprint.

“It is important that our community is educated and prepared to help mitigate the spread of this virus,” said Karen Steely, interim president and chief operating officer of AdventHealth Gordon. “We want to provide an easily accessible resource to our community by answering common questions and easing any fear or confusion people may be experiencing.”

AdventHealth has also launched an informational resource site, <https://www.adventhealth.com/coronavirus-resource-hub>, where consumers can get answers to top coronavirus (COVID-19) questions, such as:

- Am I at risk?
- What should I know if I am pregnant?
- How can I protect myself from this and other viruses, like the flu?

COVID-19 update and statement on businesses remaining open from director of DPH Northwest District

Dr. Gary Voccio, Health Director
Georgia Department of Public Health,
Northwest Georgia District

ROME, GA: This is a difficult, uncertain, and frightening time. Our job now, everyone’s job, is to bear what we’re all feeling and take appropriate action to help protect our families and loved ones, ourselves, our communities, and, for many of us, our employees. Many of our Northwest Georgia workplaces, some with large numbers of employees, have had COVID-19 cases.

We are experiencing community spread of COVID-19 in Northwest Georgia and expect it to continue for the foreseeable future. Our ten-county Northwest Health District is home to about six percent of Georgia’s population but currently has about nine percent of the total state COVID-19 cases. We expect to see more COVID-19 cases and, sadly, more deaths.

So far, our cases are mostly in five counties: Bartow, Floyd, Gordon, Paulding, and Polk. Many of those cases are related to one group gathering. Three of our counties, Dade, Haralson, and Walker have no confirmed cases so far, but that may change. You can find a Georgia COVID-19 case summary by county of residence, updated twice daily, here: <https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report>

Businesses and employers can help prevent and slow the community spread of COVID-19 and lower its impact in their workplace. All employers must take measures to reduce transmission among employees, maintain healthy business operations, and maintain a healthy work environment. Current, detailed CDC guidance to help employers do so may be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

All businesses, regardless of size, must encourage and permit their employees to work from home

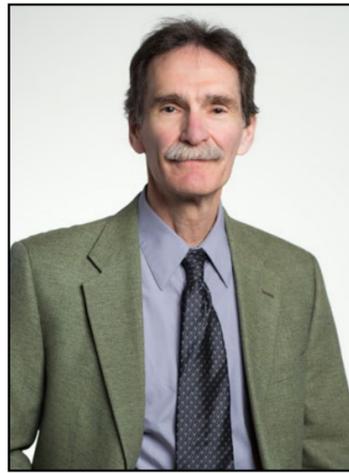
as much as possible. Non-retail businesses such as manufacturers and construction companies must ensure their employees maintain social-distancing measures.

We acknowledge and appreciate that many businesses are already following these CDC guidelines. We thank our local county chambers of commerce for promoting and encouraging their members to follow them.

Any business, regardless of number of employees, that cannot meet these guidelines must seriously weigh the prudence of remaining open against the potential health risk not only to employees but also to the community. I understand the serious consequences of closing a business of any size and cannot make that decision for any employer.

If your business remains open, you:

- Must:
 - Know where to find local information on COVID-19 and local trends of COVID-19 cases.
 - Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if staff become symptomatic at the worksite.
 - Review, update, or develop workplace plans to include:
 - » Liberal leave and telework policies
 - » Consider 7-day leave policies for people with COVID-19 symptoms
 - » Consider alternate team approaches for work schedules.
 - Encourage employees to stay home and notify workplace administrators when sick (workplaces should provide non-punitive sick leave options to allow staff to stay home when ill).
 - Encourage personal protective measures among staff (e.g., stay home when sick, handwashing, respiratory etiquette).
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.
 - Ensure hand hygiene supplies are readily available in building.
- Should:



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Dr. Gary Voccio, Health Director of the Georgia Department of Health, Northwest Georgia District.

- Encourage staff to telework (when feasible), particularly individuals at increased risk of severe illness.
- Implement social distancing measures:
 - » Increasing physical space between workers at the worksite
 - » Staggering work schedules
- Decreasing social contacts in the workplace (e.g., limit in-person meetings, meeting for lunch in a break room, etc.)
- Limit large work-related gatherings (e.g., staff meetings, after-work functions).
- Limit non-essential work travel.
- Consider regular health checks (e.g., temperature and respiratory symptom screening) of staff and visitors entering buildings (if feasible).
- Could:
 - Implement extended telework arrangements (when feasible).
 - Ensure flexible leave policies for staff who need to stay home due to school/childcare dismissals.
 - Cancel non-essential work travel.
 - Cancel work-sponsored conferences, tradeshows, etc.

Food City Starbucks offers free drinks to first responders

CONTRIBUTED

Food City Starbucks Cafes are proud to join the Starbucks sponsored First Responders appreciation initiative. We invite all First Responders to stop by any Food City Starbucks Café to enjoy a FREE Tall (12 oz.) Brewed Coffee, Iced Coffee, or Iced Coffee with Milk in appreciation for their valued service to our community.



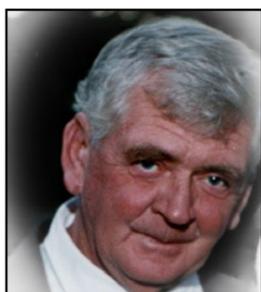
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Obituaries

March 28, 2020

Paul Cass

Mr. Paul Byron Cass, 76, of Ranger, died Wednesday, March 25, 2020, at AdventHealth Gordon following a brief illness.



Mr. Cass was born in Columbus, Ga. on Sept. 15, 1943, son of the late John and Bessie Pearl Dennis Cass. During his working career, Paul owned and operated Services Stations, was an STP Dealer and a proud sponsor of NASCAR great, Richard Petty, later moving to Calhoun, he was employed at Defoor Tire and Knights Chevron. Prior to retirement, he was a self-employed Contractor in the construction industry. He loved his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, he adored his family and his favorite past time was spending time and building memories with them. He was the happiest when he was outside, working, doing something for his family, and helping others. He will be missed by his many friends.

Survivors include his wife, Cora Gibson Cass to whom he was married for 57 years; daughters Susan (Marvin) Young of Sugar Valley, Wanda Coffee of Dawnville, Ga., and Andrea (Larry) Johnson of Ranger; son, Paul Cass Jr. of Austin, Texas. Grandchildren; Jessica, Melissa, and Billy Cass, Cory and Matthew Young, Alex and Eric Coffee, Zac and Tara Sims, Josh Johnson and Carrie Adcock, great-grandchildren and other relatives survive.

Due to federal, state and local guidelines being followed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be no public visitation or formal funeral service. A private graveside service will be held at Fairview Church of God Cemetery with Rev. Johnny Parker and Rev. Terry Jones officiating.

Due to friends and some family members not being able to show your concern and sympathy, you can visit the funeral home website www.maxbrannonandsons.com and leave condolences and sign the guest register or you can call the funeral home at 706-629-4508 and we will be honored to sign the family register for you.

The Brannon family and staff are honored to serve the Cass family.



Manuel Morales

Manuel David Morales, age 71, of Calhoun, went to sleep in Jesus Monday, March 23, 2020 at Erlanger Hospital.

Manuel was born on March 6, 1949, to the late Manuel Morales and Esther Marroquin in Guatemala City, Guatemala. He later immigrated from Guatemala in 1969. Manuel married Rosa Nelly Gudiel and lived in Boston for 50 years. He retired from Medical Instrument Research Associates in October 2019, and moved to Calhoun in November. He was an active member and leader in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Manuel lived a very active lifestyle, running in the Boston Marathon and being an avid bicyclist. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather. He was deeply spiritual and will be missed by many. We are comforted to know that he is sleeping in Jesus, and we will see him again on

resurrection morning.

He is survived by his loving wife, Rosa Nelly Morales; three daughters, Melissa Krause and her husband Nathan, Sallie Bellino and her husband Sergio, Amy Gomez and her husband Jose; sister, Alma Divas; seven grandchildren, Daniel Krause, Hannah Krause, Andrea Bellino, Diego Bellino, Sabrina Gomez, Natalie Gomez, and Gabriela Gomez.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date. You may leave the family online condolences at www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com

Thomas Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements for Manuel David Morales.



Janice Mullins

Janice Gale Mullins, age 63, of Hiram, passed away on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at WellStar Tranquility Cobb Hospice, after a courageous battle with cancer surrounded by her loving family.

Janice was born on Dec. 19, 1956 in Dalton, to the late John Everett and Shirley Cheatham.

Janice is survived by: her son, Greg Nicholson and his fiancé, Jessica Vest; son and daughter-in-law, Jeff and Jennifer Nicholson; daughter, Crystal Nicholson and her boyfriend, Harlan Reeve; adopted son, Donovan Rampley; seven granddaughters, Amanda Patterson, Hailey Vaughn, Kailyn Nicholson, Maeli Nicholson, Abby Mulkey, Addisyn Mulkey, and Autumn Reeve; five grandsons, Gage Nicholson, Hayden Vaughn, Lincoln Mulkey, Michael Vest, and Ian Vest; sister, Cindy McGill and family; brother, Wesley Everett and family; her life partner, Timmy Mullins.

Due to recent concerns over COVID-19, the family will have a private graveside ceremony at Fairview Church Cemetery in Ranger.

Pallbearers serving include: Gage Nicholson, Hayden Vaughn, Donovan Rampley, Robbie Seidler, SR, Robbie Seidler, JR, and Rudy Voyles. Honorary Pallbearer, Lincoln Mulkey.

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

Thomas Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements for Janice Gale Mullins.



Bobby Reeves

Robert "Bobby" Shane Reeves of Calhoun, GA passed away on March 22, 2020. Born in Tampa, Fla. on Jan. 25, 1964, Bobby was married for more than 19 years to Joy Mashak Reeves with whom he had two amazing children, Ella and Evan. Bobby was also an owner of RRR Transportation in Calhoun for 31 years.



Bobby was a man of God, loving husband, adored father, faithful son and loyal brother. He loved Georgia

and Calhoun football, fishing, baseball, and did everything with his wife and kids. They enjoyed family time at his favorite happy place, the ocean. He was a generous man who devoted his life to taking care of his family, his friends, and others who were in need. 1 Corinthians 13:8 tells us "All the special gifts and powers from God will someday come to an end, but love goes on forever." Bobby is the epitome of this verse; his sweet smile and beautiful eyes will be forever in our hearts.

Bobby is survived by his loving family, wife of 19 years, Joy Mashak Reeves; daughter Ella Joy Reeves; son Evan Shane Reeves; parents; Bobby G. and Judy Reeves; brother; William "Billy" Reeves; mother-in-law; Tonda Cooper; father and mother-in-law; Bill Mashak and his wife Sandy; brother(s)-in-law; Jason Mashak and his wife Mirka, Jeremy Cooper, and Tom Thornton; sister in law; Leslie Clark and her husband Mike; grandmothers in law; Charlene Hammond, and Kathy McIntyre; nephews and nieces; Kim Medlin and her husband Jeff and her daughter Layla Reeves, Jarrett Reeves and his wife Jennifer and their kids Jackson and Julie, Koen Reeves, Zoe and Chloe Nacin Mashak, Ethan and Isabella Cooper, Ivy Thornton, Brandon and Blake Schadler, and Lindsay and Logan Clark; and many more loving aunts, uncles, cousins, and special friends.

Bobby is preceded in death by brother Alan Reeves and his wife Janet Reeves, grandparents Irene and John Geresy, and Olen and Mary Reeves.

Due to restrictions imposed by the outbreak of Covid-19, a private graveside ceremony will be held at Chandler Cemetery. Pallbearers include Evan Reeves, Tim Spano, Rodney Franklin, Malcolm Barfield, Scott Dorsey, Dan Taylor, and Paul Schaller. Honorary Pallbearers include, Billy Reeves, Jeremy Cooper, Bill Mashak, Tom Thornton, Jeffery Putnam, Chad Bramblett, Rick Brown, Tommy Palmer, Bill Gallman, Jarrett Reeves, and Allen Cooper. Because Bobby was loved and respected by so many who may be unable to attend the graveside service, a Celebration of Life for him will be held at a date to be announced when possible. The family looks forward to seeing friends honor Bobby's life at that time.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Bobby's memory to Ella and Evan's College Fund.



Sammy Watkins

Mr. Sammy Ellis Watkins, 69, of the New Town Community, Calhoun, died Monday, March 23, 2020, in Redmond Regional Medical Center following complications from a stroke.

He was born on April 27, 1950 in Gordon County to the late Melvin Watkins and Anna Nicholson.

He is survived by his wife of 16 years, Evon Dorothy O'dell; son and daughter-in-law, Jeremy and Jeannie Watkins; daughter and son-in-law, Carrie and Daniel Garvey; grandchildren, Tanner Gallman and Adysen Garvey; brother, Denny Watkins; other relatives also survive.

He was a member of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. To honor Mr. Sammy's wishes his body was cremated. To sign the online guest book, go to www.maxbrannonandsons.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.



VOTE
KEN PADGETT
CORONER

TIME
FOR
CHANGE

My goal is to bring the Coroner's Office into the 21st Century. The County has plans to build a new morgue and coroner's office, and I want to elevate the office to better serve Gordon County.

- Only candidate that has been a certified EMT, Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer
- More than 28 years in law enforcement with the Calhoun Police Department and GCSO
 - Has worked numerous death investigations, including murders and child death
 - Strong working relationship with all departments in Gordon County government
 - Ready to hit the ground running for Gordon County

Visit me on Facebook at 'Padgett for Coroner'

Paid Political Advertisement

Tolbert Elementary holds Teacher Parade

Staff Reports

It was a social media post that inspired Tolbert Elementary Exceptional Student Services and Tolbert PR/Social Media Coordinator Joey Marycz to organize a Teacher Parade for the students of the school.

"Scrolling through Facebook one night, missing my students, I noticed other school systems doing a parade to see their students," said Marycz. "I said 'why not; let's act on this.' The next morning I conducted a virtual meeting with the TES staff via Microsoft Teams and the outcome was remarkable."

The teachers, all

missing the students they haven't seen in two weeks due to schools closing because of the COVID-19 outbreak, came together and held the parade on Wednesday, March 25. Dozens of participants made posters, got in their vehicles, and rode the bus routes of the school to see their students.

"Werodethrough many of the neighborhoods and streets where our students live. It was just to say, 'We miss you!' We loved seeing our students smiling faces!" said Marycz.

Marycz enlisted the help of the following staff to pull off the parade:

Principal Sket Angland offered general support; Assistant Principal Holly Sisson

supported by obtaining the students' bus routes; teacher Sabrina Tucker heped plan the routes and let the parade with her husband, Ray; and Matt Wiley and Megan Wiley made a special Tolbert video.

"Tolbert teachers went by to see smiling faces of their students this afternoon," said kindergarten teacher Maci Mills. "I'm so glad I was able to see some of my littles! Their smiles made my day! I can't wait to be back in my classroom. Hopefully not too much longer."

"Today was the best," said third grade teacher Marie Taylor. "I can't wait to get to see and talk to my kids again. It was so much fun to gather with a great group

of people and laugh and wave at everyone. Oh, and blow our horns."

"Participating in this made my heart feel good!" said TES Literacy Coach Stacy Calvert. "I miss our school children and their parents. Thanks to all who set this up for us to do."

Parents of Tolbert students were impressed at the gesture by the teachers.

"I'm blown away at these teachers," said parent Hannah Young. "They have went above and beyond to make sure their kids see them and still feel the love from them. This was so special to watch. Thank you Tolbert Elementary School!"



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

ABOVE: A line of cars await the Teacher Parade. LEFT: Organizer Joey Marycz. BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Teacher Maci Mills; A student and her mom waving at the teachers; Tiffany and Greg Hubbard. BOTTOMW ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: A sign on the parade route made for teh teachers; A student is excited to see her teachers; Teacher Marie Taylor.



COVID-19 infections spread in Georgia's correctional facilities

By Max Blau for Georgia Health News

Corrections officials are struggling to combat the rising spread of COVID-19 in prisons and jails throughout the state. The disease has led to one death, and more than two dozen other people are either known to be infected or showing potential symptoms.

Georgia Health News has learned that three people at the federal penitentiary in southeast Atlanta have tested positive for COVID-19, according to the Georgia Department of Public Health. Two are inmates, and one is a staff member.

Twenty people incarcerated at two medium-security state prisons – Lee State Prison in Leesburg and Phillips State Prison in Buford – have tested positive for the positive or displayed symptoms of COVID-19.

One man from Lee State Prison, who had been hospitalized for more than a week, died

Thursday at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in nearby Albany. The man has since been identified as Anthony Cheek, 49. He was one of the 64 people statewide who had died from the virus as of noon Friday.

“He had two more years and he was going to come home. He was looking forward to it,” his mother, Joyce Cheek, told the Atlanta Journal Constitution. “He was gonna be a diesel auto mechanic.”

The coronavirus diagnoses are happening inside facilities that face a unique problem in the effort to contain COVID-19.

Jails and prisons not only keep people in close quarters—at a time when social distancing is being recommended to reduce the spread of infection—but they also house some of the nation’s sickest and most vulnerable individuals. While some officials from California to South Carolina have taken proactive measures to protect people behind bars, including

releasing some inmates early, other states like Georgia have only taken limited steps, including eliminating medical co-pays and restricting visitors, according to the Prison Policy Institute, a nonprofit research group.

In addition to Cheek, five more inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 at Lee State Prison, according to the Georgia Department of Corrections. Another person has been hospitalized and is awaiting tests results.

Beyond that, 13 more people incarcerated at Lee State Prison are in medical isolation at the prison for “exhibiting flu-like symptoms.” Only two of those people have been tested for COVID-19, and the results are pending.

Four employees at Lee State Prison have also tested positive for COVID-19, according to the Department of Corrections.

Corrections officials have just confirmed the first verified coronavirus case at Phillips State Prison. The person who

has tested positive is “asymptomatic” and is being housed in medical isolation at the prison.

A corrections spokesperson said in a statement that people at both prisons “continue to have access to medical care, showers, meals and hygiene-related products,” and that staff are screening inmates for additional symptoms.

One person incarcerated at Phillips State Prison, who asked to be anonymous due to fear of retribution, told GHN on Friday that healthy inmates had been sent to bunk down in the prison gym, where there is limited access to showers or phones. A corrections spokesperson did not immediately respond to questions about that claim.

Relatives of some state prisoners submitted questions for Thursday night’s televised town hall meeting held by Gov. Brian Kemp, but those questions were not asked by the moderators.

State Sen. Jen Jordan, a Democrat who represents a portion of Atlanta and

its northwestern suburbs, told GHN that she has concerns about the state response to COVID-19.

“It’s terrifying,” she said. “You have a population in close proximity to each other, and you have a highly contagious virus we know is more contagious than the flu. What is the plan here? Is the Georgia Department of Corrections following proper practices in quarantining and isolating people who have tested positive?”

Lauren Bricks, co-founder of Ipsum Diagnostics, told GHN that her Sandy Springs-based company would soon process swabs for people tested inside some state prisons. The company will help increase the state prison system’s testing capacity, she said.

“You don’t have the luxury to [widely] isolate people in prisons due to COVID-19,” Bricks said. “You have to think about the employees who are exposed like a front-line worker at a hospital.”

At the local level,

some jail inmates – including at least five at the Fulton County Jail – have tested positive for COVID-19. Some sheriffs have begun releasing people early from their jails, while others have not.

At the Hall County Jail, spokesperson Derreck Booth told GHN that the sheriff’s office has released about 200 people, some ahead of schedule in an effort to create more social distancing inside the facility.

“While the effort helps prevent the spread of the virus to jail and court personnel, it’s also out of concern for the health of inmates who must remain in custody,” he said.

Max Blau is an Atlanta-based journalist who writes narrative and investigative stories, which have recently appeared in Atlanta magazine, The New York Times, and The Washington Post.

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SCHOOLS

From page 1A

assignments will be given the week of spring break. We anticipate that the Governor will reassess the situation before the end of April to determine if additional time is needed beyond this date. Additionally, all field trips scheduled for the remainder of the school year have been cancelled. Details on refunds will be made available to families as soon as they are determined. School-sponsored events will be postponed or cancelled for the duration of the closures.

Information Regarding Student Meal Services:

Meal pick-up and delivery services have been revised to limit exposure and contact with groups of more than 10 people. We will continue to follow the CDC's guidance to protect our students, staff and families. Meals will be delivered and available at feeding sites on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, students will receive hot meals along with bagged lunches for the following days. On Thursdays, students will receive 2 breakfast meals and 2 lunch meals to ensure they have meals for Friday. Our goal is to limit exposure, but also make sure we are meeting the nutritional needs of our students. Thank you for your assistance during this health crisis. Please click on the following link to view approximate bus arrival times for the school closure meal delivery times https://docs.google.com/.../1CDZCDB4wL0X1FIH72Y2kQw_Fsg.../edit... If you would prefer to pick up a lunch or breakfast, you may do so by visiting Calhoun Elementary School between the hours of 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Someone will be stationed behind the school where carpool pickup/drop off is located. Additional Meal Pick-Up Locations include Belmont Baptist Church (275 West Belmont Drive) and The Voluntary Action Center (343 S. Wall Street) at the

same times of 11:00-1:00 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Note that these locations are in addition to the pick-up location at Calhoun Elementary School and bus routes. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Information Regarding Senior Activities and Graduation:

Due to the recommendation of the Center for Disease Control and government officials to limit public gatherings over the course of the next 8 weeks, Calhoun City Schools has cancelled all field trips and postponed many spring events for the remainder of the school year. Many have asked how this will impact the graduating class of 2020. Currently, the senior prom slated to be held in Chattanooga on April 25, 2020, will not be held on this date. School officials are currently working on a contingency plan should we be able to hold a prom at a later date and time. The Senior Grad Bash trip to Orlando slated for April 17-20 and the Six Flags trip on May 1 for seniors will not take place on those dates and we are currently working with the tour groups to determine next steps regarding refunds and rescheduling. Graduation is and always has been an important symbolic ceremony to recognize the academic success of our students. The Calhoun City Schools' Board of Education is committed to recognizing the Class of 2020. We remain hopeful that Graduation can be held as originally scheduled. If necessary, we will postpone the ceremony until it is safe for our students, staff and community to participate. We are heartbroken for our seniors and all students impacted by this pandemic and will continue to explore all options available to us as we move forward. While we are disappointed, we want to be responsible and safe. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Gordon County Schools also released information pertaining to the extension of school closures.

"Following Governor Kemp's announcement today that schools across Georgia will remain closed through April 24, 2020, Gordon County Schools has made the

following decisions to ensure we are acting in the best interest of our students and families:

-Schools will remain closed through April 24. Students would return to school on April 27.

-Both Gordon Central High School and Sonoraville High School will postpone proms. A new date will be announced at a later time.

-Gordon County Schools will continue to offer our meal program to include 5 lunches and 5 breakfasts each week. However, after Spring Break there will be some modifications that will allow us to limit person-to-person contact. More details will be announced next week.

-At-home and online work will be extended through the duration of the closure. As a reminder, the preference is that all students receive this work online; however, schools will continue to provide work for students who do not have reliable Internet at home.

"Gordon County Schools continues to be grateful to our community for the support of our schools throughout this constantly evolving situation. We applaud our families for the job they are doing in assisting our students with at-home learning and our teachers for doing a tremendous job of continuing to provide learning opportunities for their students. Our maintenance staff is working hard to ensure buildings are safe and ready for our students to return, and our nutrition and transportation staffs are working with our numerous employee volunteers each day to ensure our students are fed. We are also thankful for our technology for keeping our online learning platforms up and running and providing technical support, while our administrators and support staff have been working tirelessly to ensure everyone's needs are met.

"We miss our students, and we cannot wait to welcome them all back to school when this crisis has passed. Until then, thank you all for your patience and support. We will get through this together!"

Students throughout Calhoun-Gordon County have completed two full weeks of online learning at home due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Church Calendar

ONGOING

-Philadelphia Christian School is located off Highway 41 between Calhoun and Adairsville. 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 Relevel 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 Church of Christ, located at 265 South Avenue in Fairmount, Ga. Minister Bobby Gayton. Everyone is invited to visit and worship with us. Sunday morning Services at 11 a.m.; Bible study at 10 a.m.; Wednesday Bible study at 6 p.m.

-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.

-Faith Deliverance Church & Outreach Ministry Welcomes

Everyone to an Anointed Church Service at 1320 Dawnville Road in Dalton every Sunday at 6 p.m. and Thursday at 7 p.m. Pastor and Evangelist Evelyn Adams, also an Anointed Gospel Singing. Come expecting Jesus to move for you. Miracles, Healing, Deliverance, Salvation. For more information or directions, call Minister Evelyn Adams (706) 671-7988

-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.

CEF Good News Clubs 5K



5K FEES

\$15 students ages 6-18
 \$20 before April 3
 (guaranteed t-shirt)
 \$25 between April 3 - May 1
 \$30 Race Day

REGISTRATION / LOCATION

Race day check-in and registration begin at 7:00 am at the black and gold pavilion and playground.

May 2, 2020

8:30 AM

Calhoun City Recreation Department

*****CEF of NWGA is monitoring the COVID-19 situation. Should the Good News 5K be postponed, an announcement will be made toward the end of April.*****

You may register and pay online at

www.cefofnwga.com



For more information contact Tundra Taylor 770-548-8068 or Daniel Worley 770-881-0103

SES TOME Club takes first place win

CONTRIBUTED

Sonoraville's TOME club may not have been able to attend the reading club's wrap-up conference in March as planned due to COVID19, but the news of a first place win might help raise their spirits. Between October and January of this current school year, 4th and 5th graders in Club TOME at SES raised money and collected book donations to send to the Philippines. SES students met the 2nd graders in Mrs. Cabay's 2nd grade class at Quezon Elementary virtually with the help of one of the club advisors, Kraig Weikum. Students were moved after learning the class did not have the same resources kids in America have. No school library, no classroom books. The team created a service project newsletter detailing their plan of action and the results. The newsletter was then submitted for TOME's Service Project Newsletter competition. Winners were to be announced at the March 24th conference at the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

UNG Gainesville campus. Instead, word came via e-mail that the team had placed first in the annual competition. Students had a special surprise on top of the win. State book award nominated author, John David Anderson, sent them a video congratulating them on their win and reminding them to continue to look for ways to make an impact on the world around them. Club

advisors, August Davis, Beth Mitchell, Julie Mullinax, along with Mr. Weikum agreed that the students have made a difference for the kids at Quezon. Students who contributed to the newsletter: Peyton Angel, Raylin Ewell, Megyn Rampy, Tristan Reed, Madelyn Scroggs, Jenica Weaver. Students that participated in Service

Project: Peyton Angel, Raylin Ewell, Megyn Rampy, Tristan Reed, Madelyn Scroggs, Jenica Weaver, Bailey Williams, Callie Long, Chloe Duncan, Franck Ochoa, Jenica Glosson, Jose Manuel Lara-Olmedo, Lakelin Hall, Leonardo Parra-Torres, Maddi Daniel, McKenna Beason, Rayne Gibson, Samantha Coggins, Scarlett Spruell, Sebastian Rubio, Sophia Coiner

WISH GRANTED

Imagine you are a student in the Philippines without any books available in your classroom, but you want to read. When Sonoraville Elementary School's Club Tome first heard about a 2nd grade class at Quezon Elementary School and how they had no school library or classroom books, the club decided to make a difference. Tome students first met Mrs. Cabay's class of 40 students in October 2019. That's when they decided to collect donated books and send them to her class.



Tome students with Smencil cart



Mrs. Cabay's 2nd grade class

Overseas shipping costs are very high. The students in Tome decided to sell Smencils to raise money to help pay for the shipping cost. They achieved their goal by selling 500 Smencils from December through January and making a profit of \$215.

They also collected and sorted 331 donated books from October through January. The value of these books totaled \$466.49. This amount was calculated using Goodwill's tax guide.

At the end of January, Tome author John David Anderson came to Sonoraville Elementary for an author visit and placed two signed copies of his book, "Granted", in the box before it was sealed and shipped to the Philippines. You can view more pictures of the team's 12 hours of work over four months by scanning the QR code.



BARTON

From page 1A

of Calhoun and Gordon County are aware of the constant changes. "The new directives that came out on Wednesday, I made sure to send over to both the County and City to keep them informed," said Barton. "And when I found out on Thursday that Governor Kemp

closed the schools through April 24, I made sure the superintendents had the information as soon as possible so they could plan and organize." Barton said that he feels the precautions being put in place at the federal, state and local level will protect citizens. "(The goal is) to protect business," said Barton. "I think the precautions that have been put in place will help us rebound faster. Hopefully, this is temporary." Barton suggests the best thing the public can do is

follow the directions of local emergency procedures put in place and to follow the CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of the virus, including washing your hands often, avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth, avoid close contact with people who are sick, putting distance between yourself and other people if you have to be in public and stay at home if you are showing symptoms. "If we work together and follow the procedures in place, even if it's a little uncomfortable and inconvenient, we can beat this," said Barton.

INDUSTRY

From page 1A

have tested positive for or been diagnosed with COVID-19," said the company in a statement. "These employees worked at Engineered Floor's Calhoun and SAM facilities. Our best wishes go out to these employees for a full and rapid recovery. In response, Engineered Floors is following the guidance from the CDC as well as other federal and state agencies, including closure of the operations, sanitization and cleaning of affected areas, and notifications to employees. We will continue take all necessary steps to reduce the risk of infection among all of our employees. These steps have included encouraging ill employees to stay home, increasing the frequency of cleaning and sanitation of facilities, canceling large meetings and staff travel, increasing the use of teleworking among staff, and encouraging distancing and other preventive measures." The company released their proactive plan in place to tackle any outbreak.

"Over the past weeks, Engineered Floors has implemented preventative and mitigation measures across the entire company and will continue to follow the recommendations from federal and state agencies to protect the health and safety of all employees," the statement continued. "Our company continues to follow CDC guidelines related to COVID-19, including guidelines related to educating employees related to COVID-19. Engineered Floors has also established a 24/7 employee hotline to provide assistance and information to employees. The health and safety of our employees is a top priority for the Company. Company leadership is closely monitoring the situation in all operations in order to assess and respond quickly as events connected to COVID-19 affect Engineered Floors and our employees." On Friday, March 27, LG Hausys announced one of their employees had tested positive for the virus. "An employee at one of the LG Hausys America's GA Plants, in Gordon County, has tested positive for COVID-19. The affected employee, who has not been at work since Monday, March 23, notified company officials of the positive test result on Thursday, March 26. Our thoughts are with that employee for a fast recovery," said

the company. LG Hausys also explained the steps they took after being notified. "Once the notice was issued, LG Hausys America's pre-existing protocol was immediately implemented by the Pandemic Advisory Committee and Upper Management. All production lines were stopped, and a licensed contractor was scheduled to disinfect all plants and perform deep cleaning. Production is scheduled to resume on Monday, March 30. Employees that have been in direct contact with the affected employee have been identified and necessary precautions will be taken. The health and well-being of the LG Hausys America employees continues to be the top priority. Once production resumes, LG Hausys America will continue to take measures to ensure employee safety, to include daily health checks, continuous cleaning, work from home initiatives, and strict social distancing practices as issued in accordance with Pandemic Response Plan." At press time early Saturday morning, there are 2,198 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Georgia, with a state death total of 65. Gordon County has 12 cases and one death associated with the virus.

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- Client Job Site Evaluations & Tours
- Facility First Day Check Ins
- Safety Program and Testing
- Workers Compensation Coverage
- 24/7 Emergency On Call
- 24/7 Emergency

SCREENING PRACTICES

- Face to Face Interviews of Applicants
- OSHA Compliant Safety Orientation
- E-Verify
- GCIC and National Background Checks

TESTING

- Competency Testing
- MS Excel, MS Word and MS Testing
- Basic Reading/Writing
- Customized Client Specific Testing
- 5 Panel Swab *Optional



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Family Medicine

Jennifer Smith, FNP-C
Family Medicine

Justin Hare, DO
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