

# GORDON Gazette

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Weekend, December 19, 2020

www.gordongazettega.com

Volume 3, No.21

Calhoun-Gordon County's #1 Source for News

## Almost 3,500 cast ballots in Gordon County during first week of early voting for runoff election

**Brandi Owczarz**  
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Several thousand turned out this week to vote early in the runoff election that will decide two senate races and the Public Service Commissioner race.

According to Gordon County Board of

Elections Chairperson Shea Hicks, there were 3,493 people to vote early at the local elections office this week as of 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18. Hicks said that out of 4,005 absentee ballots her office has mailed out, they have received back 2,237.

Early voting will

take place through Friday, Dec. 31 at the Gordon County Board of Elections and Voter Registration Office, located at 101 South Piedmont Street in downtown Calhoun. Early voting takes place each day from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

There will be no

Saturday voting offered this early voting cycle, and the election office will be closed for Christmas on Thursday and Friday, Dec. 24-25.

“We would like to encourage voters to cast their ballot early and we

See **RUNOFF**, page 7A



## Body found at DG off Curtis Parkway identified

**Brandi Owczarz**  
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Authorities have identified the man who was found dead behind Dollar General off of Curtis Parkway early Thursday. According to Gordon County Deputy Coroner Jonathan Pressley, the man has been identified as 49-year-old Troy Jefferson of Calhoun, who was listed as homeless.

According to the incident report, an



Photo: BRANDI OWCZARZ/Staff

See **JEFFERSON**, page 7A

## CPD investigating burglary at Nike Factory Store

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The Calhoun Police Department is investigating a burglary that occurred at Nike Factory Store, located at 455 Belwood Road, Suite 2 in Calhoun.

According to the incident report, in the early morning hours of Friday, Dec. 18, an officer was on patrol at the Calhoun Outlet Center, and as he drove through the parking lot



Photo: BRANDI OWCZARZ/Staff

See **NIKE**, page 7A

## Sheriff retires veteran K9, appoints new K9

**GCSO**

Gordon County Sheriff Mitch Ralston announced that today marked the last day of service for GCSO veteran K9 'EROS', a specially trained canine asset at the Sheriff's Office. EROS served for 5 years on patrol with his handler Deputy F.D. (Dale) Pullen. In honor of his service,

EROS was the recipient of the Sheriff's Drug Enforcement Award, an official commendation which reads in part that among EROS' accomplishments was "being an ambassador of good will" at public K9 demonstrations and schools, and being responsible for hundreds

See **K9**, page 7A



(Left Photo) Deputy Dale Pullen (kneeling) EROS, Sergeant Jarod Powell...



(Right Photo) Deputy Pullen, CZEK, and Sergeant Powell

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**HEALTH 5A**



GEORGIA HEALTH NEWS: As COVID hits record numbers, state extends hospital staffing contract.

**EDUCATION 6A**



Calhoun City Schools names Class of 2025 REACH Scholars.

## While COVID numbers continue to climb in community, deaths remain at 55 for second straight week; State tops 500,000 cases

**Brandi Owczarz**  
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It's hopeful the Christmas break will provide a relief at the local school systems as COVID-19 cases continued to rise this week throughout the community, especially at Gordon County Schools.

Both school systems reported their COVID numbers Friday afternoon. Gordon County Schools' number of active COVID-19 cases grew to 54 this week, up from 14 active cases last week. There are currently a total of 23 staff members and 31 students 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, 2 students at Fairmount Elementary, 3 students at Gordon Central, 7 students at Red Bud Elementary, 2 students at Red Bud

Middle, 6 students at Sonorville Elementary, 7 students at Sonorville High and 1 student at Tolbert Elementary.

Among staff at the school system, there are 2 staff members at Ashworth Middle, 1 at Belwood, 1 at Fairmount Elementary, 1 at Gordon Central, 8 at Red Bud Elementary, 2 at Red Bud Middle, 7 at Sonorville Elementary and 1 at Sonorville High with an active case of COVID.

Additional measures to fight the spread of the virus at Gordon County Schools were implemented in October, including switching both county high schools to a hybrid attendance schedule, where part of the students at each high school attended school in person for a week while the other half attended online, reducing the amount of people in the schools at any particular time. The hybrid schedule was only a temporary measure; however, and the students at both high school resumed a



normal schedule after Thanksgiving break.

Due to the uptick in COVID numbers this week, the County school system shut the schools down early for the holiday break; most students last day at school was Tuesday.

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.gbe.org/domain/5112>

Calhoun City Schools' new cases of COVID-19 this week decreased to 17 cases system-wide, down 3 new cases from last week. There were 10 new cases among students (1 at Calhoun Primary, 2 at Calhoun Elementary, 1 at

Calhoun Middle and 6 at Calhoun High School).

There were 7 new cases among staff members at Calhoun City Schools reported this week (4 at Calhoun Primary, 1 at Calhoun High and 2 at Central Office, which was a central office staff member and a transportation staff member).

See **COVID**, page 7A

# Second Front

## Mohawk honors veterans through Wreaths Across America Day participation

CONTRIBUTED

While many holiday traditions look different this year, Mohawk Industries is helping to ensure that one important tradition remains the same.

Mohawk drivers are among hundreds of across the country that are collectively delivering more than one million wreaths to decorate veterans' graves for the holiday season at approximately 1,200 cemeteries across the United States. This year, Mohawk

drivers transported two truckloads of wreaths from Wreaths Across America's headquarters in Columbia Falls, Maine, to cemeteries in Texas and Tennessee for National Wreaths Across America Day on Saturday, Dec. 19.

One in five Mohawk truck drivers is a veteran, and the company is proud of their service and the contributions they make to the business every single day.

Over-the-road drivers Jamie Calvert and Lester Moore teamed up to transport one of the

loads. Calvert himself is a U.S. Army veteran.

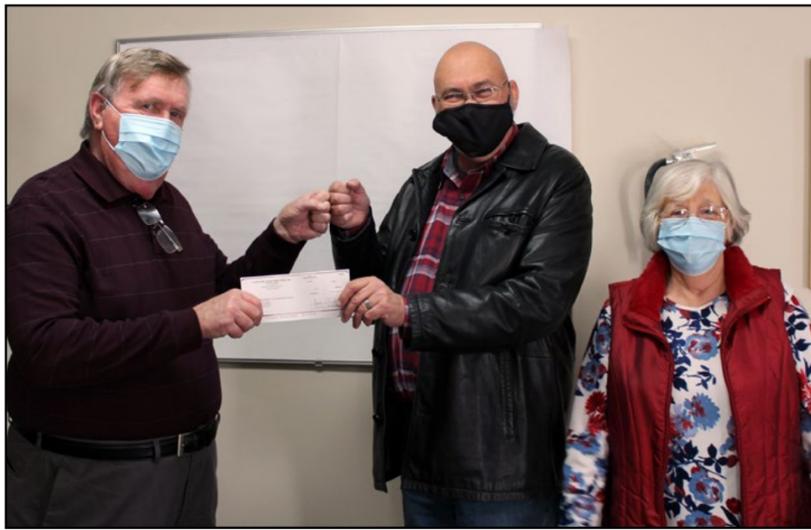
"I am one of the lucky ones that made it home, so it means a lot to me to be able to do this for the ones that were not so lucky," said Calvert.

OTR team drivers Ron and Leah Eppich transported the second load. The Eppichs are a Gold-Star family, a designation for those who have lost a family member in service to their country. The Eppichs are long-term

See MOHAWK, page 7A



## Annual Gordon County Hunger Walk raises close to \$3k for local food pantries



TOP LEFT: Baptist Memorial Association Blewer Food Bank Doug Ledford, Jody Bryson, and Ann Dooley; TOP RIGHT: St Clement's Catholic Church St. Vincent de Paul's Food Pantry Richard McDade, Jody Bryson; LEFT: Calhoun Seventh Day Adventist Church God's Pantry Jody Bryson and Glenda Thomas; BOTTOM LEFT: Voluntary Action Center Food Pantry Carissa Stone, Jody Bryson.



CONTRIBUTED

The 11th Annual Gordon County Hunger Walk was a huge success for those in need of help from our area food banks! Raising \$2,800 was a little less than last year but organizers were happy with what was raised as this is 2020 and with all that goes with that.

The money that was raised will be divided among the Blewer Food Pantry (Gordon County Memorial Baptist Association), God's Pantry (Seventh-day Adventist

Church), St. Vincent de Paul (St. Clements Catholic Church) and to the Voluntary Action Center Food Program.

Each one of these food pantries received \$700.

Prior to the walk, these businesses and groups made donations: Pete's Music City, Red Bud Liquor, Prater Ford, Crowley Drugs, Dave Burton Catering, The Velo Vineyard, Cherokee Cycles, Reeves Baptist Church, Calhoun First UMC, New Echota UMC, and Advent Hospital.

A sincere thank you goes out to the community

for their support of the Gordon Hunger Walk, sponsored by the Gordon County Christian Ministerial Alliance.

Anyone else wishing to contribute to this worthy cause may send a check. Please make your check out to the Gordon County Christian Ministerial Alliance and put "Gordon County Hunger Walk" on the memo line. Please mail the check to Calhoun First United Methodist Church, in care of Jody Bryson at 205 East Line Street, Calhoun, GA, 30701.

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- SHAKER TABLE OPERATOR:** \$10+ day shift, heavy lifter preferred, will wear hearing protection, run table for shaking product into packing slots-checking defects
- PACKERS:** \$10/HR day shift, packing, must be able to lift up to 20#- will be packing products.
- COATER:** 1st shift M-T 7am to 5pm and F 7am to 3pm - coater operator and asst. operator. Pay is \$11 No exp. \$14 exp.-will send profiles to client-8 openings-will bring in slowly as training
- QUALITY CONTROL:** \$TBA, day shift, will need to show excellent work history in quality control/testing of product, recording data in computer-client needs resumes to review-will interview
- 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
- CSR** -entering orders taken via phone, updating order information, checking inventory, etc. Paying temp is about \$11-\$12/hr - Monday - Friday. For now, the hours will be 9:00 - 5:00 when training, but will be adjusted 8:30 - 5:00.
- Rubber-** Interviews required-7p-7am Monday - Friday some Saturdays -\$11.50 HL (Trimmer)
- Bruno** - Interviews required -7p -5:30am Monday - Friday some Saturdays-\$11.5
- Flocking** - Interviews required -7p-5:30am Monday - Friday some Saturdays-\$11
- Packaging-** No Interviews needed -5pm-5am Monday - Friday \$11

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# Obituaries

## December 19, 2020

### Denver Boling

Bro. Denver Boling, 80, of Fairmount, died Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020. He was born on Sept. 28, 1940 to the late Hugh and Louise Boling.

Bro. Denver Boling was a beloved minister for many years and a member of Concord Baptist Church. He was also a highly skilled carpenter.

Bro. Denver Boling is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Vera Ann Boling; children, Lena Carver (Anthony) and Connie Wofford (Lamar); siblings, Allen Boling (Sheila), Thomas Boling (Pat) and Mary Wilkins (Hugh); grandchildren, Annette Cannady (Blake), Ben Carver, Jacob Carver, Rob Wofford (Allie), Ethan Wofford (Brittany) and Aspen Wofford; great-grandchildren, Zane, Emilee, Denver Cash, Zac, Vera, Ellie, Gracynn, Thea, Mabel and Nora.

The family will receive friends on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020 from 9:30 a.m. until the celebration of life service at 11 a.m. at Concord Baptist Church with Bro. Chandler Boling and Bro. Randy Sutherland officiating. Burial will follow in Concord Baptist Church Cemetery. His grandsons and great-grandsons will serve as pallbearers.

The Brannon family and staff are honored to serve the family of Bro. Denver Boling.



### Mildred Hendrix

Mildred Lorraine Brown Hendrix passed away in Atlanta on Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020, following an extended illness. She was born on Nov. 7, 1924, in Conasauga, Tenn. to the late Robert Daniel Brown and Mattie Sue Staten Brown. She is preceded in death by her husband of 47 years, Walter N. Hendrix; her parents; brothers, Edward Lamar Brown, Thomas Lee Brown (infant), Arnold Gerald Brown; and sister, Louise Brown Causby.

She is survived by her son, Newt Hendrix (Kathy) of Dallas, Ga.; daughter, Sue Hendrix of Decatur; grandchildren, Jennifer Hendrix, Brian Lee Hendrix (Megan); two great-grandsons; sister, Lois Brown Thompson; brother, Roland D. Brown (Peggy); numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Mildred was a graduate of Red Bud High School (Class of 1942) and as a young lady, she was very active in sports, especially softball and basketball. During World War II, she was employed as a shipbuilder for J. A. Jones Construction Co. in Brunswick, Ga. She relocated to Atlanta and enjoyed employment with Rich's Department Store in the late 1940s. For most of her adult life, she was a homemaker to her family and engaged within her community.

As a member of the Baptist faith, she leaves behind a legacy of love, strength, and care for her immediate family, as well as her extended family.

A Graveside Service was held on Friday, Dec. 18, 2020, at 2 p.m. at Oakland Cemetery in SE Atlanta, with Dr. Brian E. Clark and Rev. David Williamson officiating. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association by clicking <https://www.alz.org> or the American Cancer Society at <https://www.cancer.org/>.

There was a private visitation for the family at the funeral home on Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020.

A word of appreciation is extended to Morning Pointe of Calhoun and The Madeline of Decatur, health care facilities where Mrs. Hendrix resided in the last years of her life.

Max Brannon and Sons Funeral Home in Calhoun, GA is in charge of arrangements.



A Graveside Service was held on Friday, Dec. 18 at 1 p.m. at Fain Cemetery with Reverend Greg Free officiating.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Vera may be made to the Parkinson's Foundation at Attn: Donor Services, 200 SE 1st Street, Suite 800, Miami, FL 33131 or [www.parkinson.org](http://www.parkinson.org)

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.

You may leave the family online condolences at [www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com](http://www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com)

Thomas Funeral Home has proudly been entrusted with the care of Vera Lou Burns Heramb.

**Thomas**  
Funeral Home

### Glenn MacKenzie

Mr. Glenn Alexander MacKenzie, 61, of Henderson, Tenn., passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020, at Jackson Madison Hospital after several weeks of declining health.

Mr. MacKenzie was born in Tampa, Fla. on Feb. 4, 1959, son of the late Colin MacKenzie and Helen Newton MacKenzie. He graduated from Dunedin High School. His father was in the Air Force and his mother was church secretary at First Christian Church Dunedin, Fla. He had one younger sister and one older brother. We met in Thomasville, Ga. and were married at Cornerstone Christian Church. Glenn was a Christian man and loved the Lord. He attended the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bethel Springs.

He was very patient, laid back, caring person. His trade was a machinist, tool maker for 36 years. He was looking forward to retiring this February and doing all the things he loved. He was especially looking forward to rebuilding his "59" Pan head. He had collected many boxed cars models, and was in the process of rebuilding a milling machine. We spent hours in his shop building things together and I will sorely miss him. He was my love, my friend, and my life.

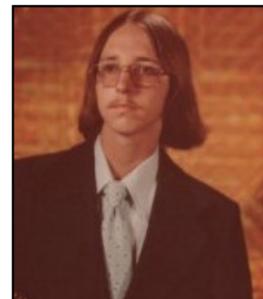
Survivors include his wife of 34 years, Patricia Ann Stevenson MacKenzie; daughter, Cassandra (Patrick) Andrews; sons, Randolph (Terah) Parker and Christopher (Thelma) Parker; brother, Colin (Debbie) MacKenzie; grandchildren, Madyson, Savannah, Ashtyn, Piper, Paisley, Alyssa, Lily, Caiden, Aiden, Aeson, Nevaeh, Lazarus and Edith; cousins, Adrienne, Aaron, and Frank; uncle and aunt, Frank and Carole Newton and aunt, Frances Gick.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020, at 10 a.m. in the chapel of Max Brannon and Sons Funeral Home with Pastor Frank Sierra officiating. Interment will follow at Haven of Rest Memorial Park Cemetery. The family will receive friends at the funeral home between the hours of 9 – 10 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020.

COVID 19 precautions will be taken and a mask is required while inside the funeral home and social distancing protocols are to be followed.

Online condolences may be expressed and the guestbook signed at [www.maxbrannonandsons.com](http://www.maxbrannonandsons.com).

The Brannon family and staff are honored to serve the family of Glenn Alexander MacKenzie.



### Charles Gentry

Charles Lynn Gentry, age 63 of Rome, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020 at Floyd Medical Center in Rome.

Charles was born on April 5, 1957 in Gordon County, son of the late Charles McClellan Gentry and Shirley Marie Poarch Gentry. In addition to his parents, Charles was also preceded in death by: his grandparents, Clell and Nola Gentry and Rubin and Ovalee Poarch; and sister-in-law, Mary Gentry.

Charles was a lifetime resident of Gordon County, attended Red Bud High School, and was employed by Gentry Pools. In his spare time, he enjoyed cutting hay with his uncle and watching wrestling with his grandpa. Charles loved his family and friends.

Charles is survived by: two brothers, Nevin Kale Gentry and Tony Lamar Gentry and his wife Toni Renee Gentry; two special nephews, Brandon Gentry and Nevin Gentry, Jr.; and three special nieces, Tonya Gentry, Anna Monteith, and Angel Gentry. Several additional nieces and nephews also survive.

Funeral Services will be conducted on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020 at 1 p.m. from the Chapel of Thomas Funeral Home with Reverend Shane Parrott officiating. Interment will follow in Crane Eater Cemetery.

Pallbearers serving are: Chuck Poarch, Brandon Gentry, Wylie Leonard, Joey Gentry, Jason Gentry, Gabe Freeman, Paul Macy, Shaun Holbrook, and Nevin Gentry, Jr.

The family received friends on Friday, Dec. 18, 2020 from 6 – 8 p.m. at Thomas Funeral Home.

In addition to flowers, donations can be made to the Heritage Baptist Church building fund or to the Crane Eater Cemetery maintenance fund.

You may leave the family online condolences at [www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com](http://www.thomasfuneralhomecalhoun.com)

Thomas Funeral Home has proudly been entrusted with the care of Charles Lynn Gentry.

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### Vera Heramb

Vera Lou Burns Heramb, age 89, of Calhoun, passed away on Monday, Dec. 14, 2020 at Gordon Health & Rehabilitation.

Vera was born on July 3, 1931 in Resaca, daughter of the late Thomas Alfred Burns and Ethel Harrell Burns. In addition to her parents, Vera was also preceded in death by: a son, Gene Heramb; three sisters, Faye Franks, Euna Gilbert and Agnes Timms; two brothers, Ray Burns and Marvin Burns; and her former husband, Roy Heramb. Prior to retirement, Vera was employed by Coronet Industries.

Vera is survived by: her son, David Heramb and his wife Nelda; two daughters, Karen McCartney and her husband Bryan and Kathy Mudge and her husband Jeffrey; four grandchildren, Amber Hensley, Angela Shoemaker, Zachary Mudge, and Conner McCartney; two great-grandchildren, Darien Hensley and Daxton Stanley; and a great-great-grandchild, Zayden Hensley. Several special nieces and nephews also survive.



## 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](http://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](mailto: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.

**-Community volunteers are needed at Countryside Hospice Care**, where the mission is to promote comfort and dignity at the end of life. The agency covers 26 Northwest Georgia counties between three offices in LaFayette, Rome, and Newnan. If you would like to participate in this rewarding program, call 706-638-7651 or 1-800-660-7381.

**-Discovering Hope, an autism support group for Northwest Georgia**, meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Friendship Baptist Church, Rocky Face. For more information, call Connie Post at 706-673-7765 or [www.discoveringhope.us](http://www.discoveringhope.us).

**-Caring Connection is a telephone support group especially** for caregivers of loved ones with Alzheimer's who cannot leave their homes because of care responsibilities. This support group is as close as the phone. Call 706-275-0819 or 1-800-272-3900 and ask to be enrolled in Caring Connection.

**-Grief Recovery Group for those who have lost loved ones** and friends, receive support and guidance with the Four Tasks of Grieving. Cost is Free. Second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. at Harris Radiation Therapy Center at Gordon Hospital. For more information or to RSVP, please call 706.879.5850.

**-The Compassionate Friends of Dalton and N.W. Georgia** is part of a worldwide effort that has helped many families cope with the loss of a child and to honor our children's memory. The Compassionate Friends meets on the third Thursday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. at Evangelical Methodist Church (in the "Gathering Place" building), 1035 Abutment Road, Dalton (on the hill behind the old Lowe's off Walnut Avenue). For more information, call Dawn at 706-277-3312 or 706-264-4458 or e-mail [dawnsisson@msn.com](mailto:dawnsisson@msn.com).

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# GEORGIA HEALTH NEWS: As COVID hits records, state extends hospital staffing contract

**ANDY MILLER,**  
Georgia Health News

A Jackson Healthcare unit can get up to \$68 million more to supply nurses and other health care workers to help hospitals and nursing homes deal with the COVID surge, under a state contract extension.

The Alpharetta-based company received a no-bid contract early in the pandemic for staffing. That original contract could extend to \$250 million by the end of this year.

With the extension, the total that the Jackson Healthcare unit can receive could exceed \$300 million.

The new agreement would extend the contract till March 6.

The firm, whose political connections have led to some criticism of the contract, has worked with more than 50 Georgia hospitals to help augment their workforces.

“Today I can tell you the state has done everything in its power to support our hospitals on this front,” Gov. Brian Kemp said Thursday, the AJC reported. The governor said he struck a deal with legislative leaders on the staffing funding.

Shane Jackson, president of Jackson Healthcare, said in a statement Friday that “we are proud to work with the state in assisting our great health care providers throughout Georgia care for patients during this incredibly

trying time.”

Meanwhile, as distribution of COVID-19 vaccines continues, Georgia keeps setting records for new cases and hospitalizations.

Thursday’s newly reported infections topped 8,000 (including positives from antigen tests), a new daily record. And Friday, still another record was set, at 8,491 new cases.

The number of Georgians hospitalized for COVID has surged, too, setting records Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, to now reach 3,280.

Hospitals across the state have begun vaccinating their front-line workers.

Georgia, though, was among several states to report Thursday that their expected allotments of Pfizer vaccines for the coming weeks have been cut significantly.

Meanwhile, the post-Thanksgiving surge in COVID cases is hitting hospitals hard.

COVID Exit Strategy categorizes Georgia’s ICU bed capacity as “severely constrained” at 89 percent full – among the highest percentages in the nation.

Wellstar Health System said Thursday that four of its hospitals are at 120 percent of capacity or more, “meaning our facilities are tapping other areas of hospitals to accommodate higher ICU patient volume.” Those hospitals are Wellstar



Paulding Hospital, Wellstar Douglas Hospital, Wellstar Cobb Hospital and Wellstar Kennestone Hospital

“To accommodate surges in patient volume, we have defined a best-practices plan to convert various areas of our hospitals and facilities as warranted, including the beds in our emergency departments, our post-anesthesia care units, and immediate care units, and to redeploy doctors and nurses to meet demand,” the Marietta-based system said in a statement. “This plan allows us to rapidly increase our ICU capacity when needed.”

Gainesville-based Northeast Georgia Health System was treating 272 COVID-19 patients as of Friday. The total set a new record, after a previous peak of 265 patients Monday. The health system has rolled out cots into an overflow space that opened this

week, the Gainesville Times reported.

Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany is also seeing COVID case increases.

“Even with the end of the pandemic in sight, some of the worst weeks

could be yet to come,” said Scott Steiner, Phoebe Putney Health System CEO. “We had 10 COVID-19 admissions in Albany Wednesday, the first double-digit day since July 27. As we wait for widespread

immunity to take hold [through vaccines], we must remain as vigilant as ever.”

*Andy Miller is CEO and editor of Georgia Health News.*

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# CCCA Student of the Week Spotlight for Dec. 14 - 18, 2020

CONTRIBUTED

Calhoun High School 12th grader, Yolanie Cott-Skerrett, is the Calhoun College and Career Academy (CCCA) Student of the Week for December 14 - December 18, 2020. Yolanie is an excellent student in the Certified Nursing Assistant program through Chattahoochee Technical College. Yolanie's CNA Teacher, Mrs. Lisha Nichelson nominated Yolanie stating, "Yolanie takes the CNA course very seriously. She puts forth much effort to study and works hard to improve her skills."

Yolanie always goes above and beyond to improve her knowledge and skills without being asked. She is an active member of HOSA. Yolanie has

worked hard this year to help HOSA become more successful. She is a leader among her peers and serves as an example for others with her dedication, motivation and positivity.

Yolanie chose the CNA program at the Calhoun College and Career Academy because she is interested in learning and receiving as much experience as she can in the medical field. Yolanie considers herself kind of shy and hoped the CNA courses would give her the skills needed to help her work better with others.

Yolanie has learned that the CNA courses at the Calhoun College and Career Academy through dual enrollment with Chattahoochee Technical College have enriched her interest to pursue a career in the medical field. She plans to

attend Dalton State College in fall 2021 to pursue a degree. Yolanie also shows a lot of interest in radiology as well as nursing. She knows that her career will be medical related thanks to the CCCA.

When asked about her thoughts on the Certified Nursing Assistant program, Yolanie states, "You do not actually know until you try. You must put yourself out there. I never would have guessed I would be taking CNA courses, but now I can't imagine taking anything else during my high school career. This class really opened my eyes and gave me insight and the direction I needed to choose my career pathway in college."

Congratulations to Yolanie Cott-Skerrett, CCCA Student of the Week for December 14 - December 18, 2020!



# CCS Names the Class of 2025 REACH Scholars

CONTRIBUTED

The goal of Governor Nathan Deal's Complete College Georgia initiative is to graduate an additional 250,000 college students by 2020 with relevant postsecondary degrees for an ever-changing workforce. One of the programs created to help achieve that goal is Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH).

From the Alabama border to the Atlantic Ocean inside the Peach State, there are academically promising students who strive to be the first in their family to attend college. REACH encourages both students and the community to shed their preconceived notions and ensure those dreams become reality. Deal launched this initiative state-wide as a "strategic investment in our students and our state." Through college scholarships and academic and community

support provided by the REACH program, more students can attain postsecondary credentials and be workforce ready.

REACH Scholars are required to sign a contract vowing to maintain good behavior, keep a cumulative grade point average above 2.5, meet with their REACH mentor at least twice a month and, along with their parents' guidance, focus on achieving both a high school diploma and college degree.

Starr Mathews, the Calhoun Rotary Club, Georgia United Credit Union, Calhoun City Schools' faculty and staff and the Calhoun High School student body have all pledged their support of the REACH Scholars Program. "We are blessed to have these partnerships to ensure that all of our students have the opportunity to be successful," stated Dr. Michele Taylor, Calhoun City Schools'

Superintendent.

The Class of 2025 REACH Scholars were named during the December Board of Education Meeting on December 14, 2020. Chairman Eddie Reeves welcomed guests to the event. Chief Academic Officer, Mrs. Kelli Kendrick, led the presentation of scholarships and sought commitments from the students, parents and community members. The Class of 2025 REACH Scholars named Sheyla Herrera-Monroy and Anthony Velazquez, who had the opportunity to sign their commitment contracts.

Class of 2025 REACH Scholars: Sheyla Herrera-Monroy and Anthony Velazquez

Class of 2024 REACH Scholars: Lesly Chavez and Julissa Bahena

Class of 2023 REACH Scholars: Samantha Ramirez and Debany Rosillo-Olmedo



Superintendent, Dr. Michele Taylor; Board Secretary and Rotarian, Mr. David Scoggins; REACH Scholar, Sheyla Herrera-Monroy; REACH Scholar, Anthony Velazquez; Board Chairman and Starr Mathews representative, Eddie Reeves and Georgia United Credit Union representative, Harrison Stafford. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Class of 2022 REACH Scholars: Chris Canchola and Alexis Baggett

Class of 2021 REACH Scholars: Freddy Mena Bravo and Chantel Johnson

Class of 2020 REACH Scholars: Jennifer Guzman

Class of 2019 REACH Scholars: Josue Buendia

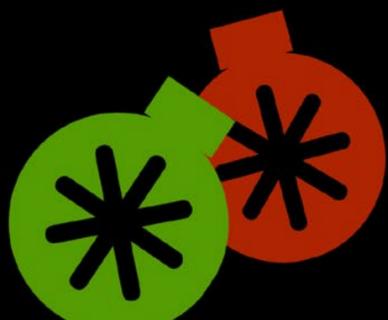
and Ariana Guzman Cantellano

Freddy Mena Bravo and Chantel Johnson will graduate this spring as the third cohort to be awarded a full scholarship to college.

"Today is an exciting day to recognize these two who have worked so hard to maintain

good grades, attendance and a demonstrated commitment to college readiness. We look forward to their future success," stated Dr. Taylor. Calhoun City Schools congratulates each of these scholars and pledges to support them on their journey to college and careers.

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# RUNOFF

From page 1A

would like to encourage voters to wear a mask when coming to vote in person,” said Hicks. The date for the runoff election is Tuesday, Jan. 5.

The three runoff races include incumbent senator David Perdue (Republican) facing Democrat challenger Jon Ossoff; a special election of incumbent senator Kelly Loeffler (Republican), who was appointed to fill the unexpired term of former senator Johnny Isakson, who is facing Democrat challenger Raphael Warnock; and incumbent Public Service Commissioner Lauren Bubba McDonald, Jr. (Republican), facing Democrat challenger Daniel Blackman.

For more information on the runoff election, visit <https://www.mvp.sos.ga.gov/>

# K9

From page 1A

of searches for drugs and subsequent arrests, as well as many successful ‘tracks’ resulting in the arrests of many fugitives and location of lost/missing persons.

As EROS enjoys a well deserved retirement, Sheriff Ralston appointed GCSO’s newest addition, K9, CZEK. After weeks of intensive training at his home kennel, where he was taught to search both for illegal drugs/narcotics and persons, CZEK was familiarized with his new handler Deputy Pullen in Pennsylvania this week. CZEK is a Dutch Shepherd, a breed renowned for its abilities in law enforcement work. CZEK will be on patrol this afternoon.

The GCSO K9 program is funded by asset forfeitures from illegal drug cases.

# MOHAWK

From page 2A

personal volunteers for Wreaths Across America, and they were drivers for Mohawk’s first year of participation in 2019. Other Mohawk drivers involved in the project were Sunnyvale, Texas, drivers Jose Andrade and Stanley Clay, who brought the wreaths into the Dallas Fort Worth National Veterans’ Cemetery and Calhoun-based local driver Bobby Winters, who brought the wreaths into the Knoxville State Veterans Cemetery and Oakridge Memorial Gardens in Tennessee.

“The Mohawk Transportation team is proud to sponsor Wreaths Across America again this year and we are committed to continuing our support for the years to come,” said Jeff Wachtel, vice president of transportation. “As these trailers travel our American highways and interstates, it is our hope that they encourage conversation among adults and children about the sacrifices our veterans have made.”

The specially-wrapped trailers were designed for the occasion by Mohawk Flooring North America’s Marketing Creative Operations team, explained Sr. HR Director Micah Riggle who has championed the Company’s involvement in Wreaths Across America.

“There was a great deal of excitement around this project our first year, and we are experiencing that same level of enthusiasm this year. It’s inspiring to see our team members in Transportation and across Mohawk working together to make sure everything is in perfect order,” Riggle said. “When I see the Mohawk trucks and wrapped trailers roll in under police escort, the gravity of what we are doing really hits me. I encourage everyone to go to [WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://WreathsAcrossAmerica.org) to better understand why we are supporting this project.”

In addition to employing many veterans across the country, Mohawk has been a leading supporter of Building for America’s Bravest, providing flooring for new homes for the nation’s most seriously wounded veterans.

Wreaths Across America is a national nonprofit organization founded in 2007 to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992. They coordinate the annual transport, delivery and placement of more than two million wreaths on the graves of U.S. veterans around the world.

About Mohawk

Mohawk Industries is a leading global flooring manufacturer that creates products to enhance residential and commercial spaces around the world. Mohawk’s vertically integrated manufacturing and distribution processes provide competitive advantages in the production of carpet, rugs, ceramic tile, laminate, wood, stone and vinyl flooring. Our industry-leading innovation has yielded products and technologies that differentiate our brands in the marketplace and satisfy all remodeling and new construction requirements. Our brands are among the most recognized in the industry and include Mohawk, American Olean, Daltille, Durkan, Eliane, Feltex, Godfrey Hirst, IVC, Karastan, Marazzi, Pergo, Quick-Step and Unilin. During the past decade, Mohawk has transformed its business from an American carpet manufacturer into the world’s largest flooring company with operations in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Europe, India, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Russia and the United States.

To stay up to date on the latest community news, follow the Gordon Gazette on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

# JEFFERSON

From page 1A

officer was dispatched to Dollar General, located at 1284 Curtis Parkway, just before 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 17 in reference to a man lying behind the store. Dispatch advised the officer that the person who called in the report thought the man was deceased. The caller told the officer he found Jefferson around 8:38 a.m.

When the officer arrived on scene, he spoke with the caller, who said that he was leaving Home Depot when he spotted the man. He stopped his truck and got out to check on Jefferson, at which point he noticed Jefferson was not breathing.

Another witness on the scene said he passed by the Dollar General and thought he observed someone lying behind the store. He parked beside the field where Jefferson was found and saw that Jefferson has passed away. The witness noted that he found Jefferson’s “homeless camp” behind one of the air conditioning units where there was Listerine and clothing.

The weather at the time Jefferson was found was approximately 36 degrees and cloudy. The report noted that when Jefferson was located, it was lightly snowing.

According to Pressley, Jefferson is believed to have succumbed to natural causes; no foul play is expected.

# COVID

From page 1A

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.

Numbers of new positive COVID in Gordon County are up again, with more than 200 new cases reported over the last week, according to cases the Georgia Department of Health.

At press time Saturday morning, Dec. 19, Gordon County has had 3,654 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic began – that’s up 236 cases since the same time last week. COVID-19 related deaths remain at 55 this week...the second week in a row, and DPH also continues to report 5 additional probable deaths from COVID. There have been 191 hospitalizations in Gordon County due to COVID-19 since March, up 11 hospitalizations since last week.

Public Safety Officials as the public to remember to continue to wash hands often, cover your cough and practice social distancing.

Georgia has now hit the 500,000 COVID-19 case mark. Since the pandemic began in March, Georgia has had 500,265 COVID-19 cases, with 9,396 deaths and 39,064 hospitalizations due to the virus.

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

# NIKE

From page 1A

noticed the right front door of the Nike Factory Store was broken out. There was a large amount of glass on the concrete in front of the store, and also inside the store. The officer observed a pair of socks still in their packaging lying on the concrete in front of the store, and a hanger from clothing hanging on the door handle. The officer then drove to the back of the building to see if anyone was still nearby, and when he did not locate anyone, he notified dispatch to his location and what had occurred, and had a key holder for the store notified.

Once another officer arrived on scene to assist, the front door was unlocked and the officers entered. Dispatch advised the officers that the alarm company for the store stated an alarm was activated at 12:35 a.m. in the interior of the building, but the key holder had advised them to ignore the alarm.

The key holder arrived on scene around 4 a.m. He looked around the store and could see where certain clothing items were missing. He then went to the back office where he was able to pull up the in-store camera footage.

The footage shows that at around 12:35 a.m., what appeared to be three black males entered the store by smashing out the glass with a large rock. The rock was located inside the store. The three suspects entered the store, one behind the other by ducking down and going in through the lower half of the front door. Two of the men go to the right once inside the store; the other one goes to the left. All come back out with their arms full of clothing items, and one goes back inside for a second arm load, according to the report. They then get into their car and leave. The report states it took about 15 seconds for the three to grab the clothing and leave. The clothing was a mixture of sweat shirts, sweat pants and adult and children’s hoodies. The key holder estimated the value of the clothing taken to be between \$1,500 and \$2,000 dollars.

The footage shows the suspects’ car arrive and circle the store a couple of times before stopping. The car’s make and model cannot be determined due to the glare on the glass in front of the store. It appears to be a mid-sized passenger sedan, dark in color, possibly along the lines of a Ford Fusion. It did have distinctive alloy wheels on it that are clearly seen in the video footage.

The three suspects were dressed as follows: a blue winter puffy jacket with hood and blue sleep type pants with black shoes; gray jacket with orange shirt underneath, tan pants and tan shoes; and gray jacket with yellow shirt underneath, tan pants, yellow socks and tan shoes. The suspect with the orange shirt appeared to have dreadlocks that were put up in a cloth. That suspect appeared to be the driver of the car.

The key holder told police that there were no alarm sensors on the front door so there was no alarm for glass breaking; he dismissed the earlier alarm call as a rodent in the store tripping the alarm.

Just before noon on Friday, a glass company was on scene repairing the front door.

Anyone with any information on the burglary is asked to call CPD at 706-629-1234.

**See news happening?**  
Call 770-547-1044 or email [staff@gordongazettega.com](mailto:staff@gordongazettega.com)

# 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 Relevelate 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.

**Tallatoona Community Action Partnership**  
**LIHEAP Heating Assistance**

**Beginning November 2, 2020 at 8:30am, Tallatoona will begin accepting appointments for the LIHEAP Heating Assistance Program for senior households 65 years of age and older.**

**Beginning December 1, 2020 at 8:30am, the general public may begin scheduling appointments.**

**Appointments are provided on a first-come, first-serve basis. To receive assistance applicants must qualify based on the FY 2021 annual income guidelines. For more information visit [www.tallatoonacap.org](http://www.tallatoonacap.org).**

**SCHEDULE ONLINE: WWW.TALLATOONACAP.ORG**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Due to health and safety concerns related to COVID-19, all Tallatoona offices are closed to the public. Appointments will be completed remotely by telephone. All required documents will be accepted via fax, mail, or quick drop off at local county offices. Please DO NOT send documents prior to your appointment.

**SCHEDULE BY PHONE: 770-817-4666, Option 2 or 770-773-7730, Option 2 (toll free for 706 area codes)**

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