

2020 Miss Donalsonville Royal Court crowned

See page 16

2014, 2016 and 2019 recipient of the Georgia Press Association's Service to the Community Award

Donalsonville News



Thursday, June 25, 2020

Donalsonville, Georgia 39845

donalsonvillenews.com

Volume CIV, Number 21

SCHS in-person graduation is Friday night

Finally, and thankfully, in-person graduation time has almost arrived in Seminole County. The Seminole County Middle High School (SCMHS) in-person graduation commencement ceremony will take place this Friday, June 26th at 7:30 p.m. The event will be held at the SCMHS Jesse McLeod Gymnasium and the doors will open at 6 p.m.

This year, because of COVID-19 safety and social distancing restrictions, a number of new rules will apply and the in-person ceremony this Friday evening will be held with the following instructions and precautions.

Honor Graduates will not be able to sit on stage during the ceremony because there is not enough room, with over 40 Honor Graduates in a class of under 100 graduates.

Six tickets have been given to each Senior for distribution to their families. Only those members who have a ticket will be allowed to enter the gymnasium for the graduation ceremony.

Each member of the family will need to arrive at their designated time (see below). If everyone in that family with a ticket is not present at their allotted time, the family will have to wait until everyone arrives in order to enter the gym together.

Each family will have a designated seating area in the gym. The family will be ushered to their designated seating area once they have deposited their tickets at the door. A program for each ticket will be available at the

designated seats.

Seating arrangements will be determined by the Valedictorian who will blindly draw names from a hat. Once a name is drawn, the seating arrangements will begin on the "visitors" side closest to the stage and then fan around the gym to the "home" side seating section. Once seated, no one will be allowed to leave and reenter.

Seniors will need to arrive at 6:45 p.m. and

See GRADUATION on Page 9

FPCB establishes In This Together fund for Hospital

First Port City Bank in Donalsonville has generously created the "In This Together" fund in honor of Donalsonville Hospital's frontline healthcare workers' continued fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. With a founding contribution of \$1,000 by First Port City Bank, they will begin taking community contributions immediately to help grow the fund.

Nancy Jernigan, Executive Vice President/Chief Lending Officer at First Port City, said, "First Port City Bank was founded in 1974 by a group of local business people who believed that the owners of a financial institution should be made up of friends and neighbors within the community. Our community needs us more than ever and we are happy to create a way for people to give back and support the tireless efforts of healthcare workers."

Anyone can contribute to the fund by visiting the drive-thru or lobby at 201 S. Woolfork Avenue in Donalsonville, or by mailing a donation to First Port City Bank P. O. Box 1027, Attn "In This Together Fund". Any donation amount is welcome and will be used to sponsor meals for healthcare workers, supplement PPE costs, and continue to boost the morale of Donalsonville Hospital's employees.

James Moody, CFO of Donalsonville Hospital



Pictured above are Donalsonville Hospital Patient Liaison Heather Smith, Donalsonville Hospital CFO James Moody, FPCB Board member Bill Burke and FPCB Executive Vice President Nancy Jernigan

Moody said of the fund, "We are deeply grateful to First Port City for establishing the "In This Together" fund. The fight against COVID-19 is far from over and we want our employees to know they are valued and appreciated each

and every day. We hope our community will continue to contribute to the fund and help us do just that."

For more information please visit www.donalsonvillehospital.org

Public Library now offering curb side service

Seminole County Public Library, and all libraries in the Southwest Georgia Regional Library system began offering curb side service on Wednesday, June 24th. Because of COVID-19 precautions the library building will remain closed to the public for now; however, local residents may now request books, DVDs, and other materials and pick them up outside the library at an appointed time.

Library patrons may request materials and schedule a pickup appointment by calling the library, placing a hold on selections through your library PINES account, or by completing the online request form at swgrl.org/curbside.

The Seminole County Public Library, located at 103 West Fourth Street in Donalsonville, can be reached by calling (229) 524-2665. The library's curb side service hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

When you arrive at the library during the appointed time, you will call the library to the staff know you're ready for your items. A library staff member will then place your items on the table outside of the library entrance. Once the staff member is back inside the library, you may collect your items from the table. If you have any items to return, please place them in the book drop. If you need help picking which items to request, we are happy to provide suggestions over the phone or through email at librarian@swgrl.org.

Marc Griffiths: Imagination Island virtual program

You may now watch "Imagination Island," a virtual show that will spark your imagination, led by inspirational ventriloquist Marc Griffiths, on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SouthwestGaLibrary/> or find the Youtube link!

This show is pre-recorded, and you may view it through July 7th.

Summer Reading Program Online

The Summer Reading Program at the Southwest Georgia Regional Library has begun online! The program is for all ages, including adults, and our library will be doing reading logs online through Beanstack. You can register now on the Beanstack app on your device or on the website at swgrl.beanstack.org. For each log you complete, you get a prize and an entry for the final prize drawing. All reading logs are due no later than July 10. Learn more about how to get started at swgrl.org/summer.

Hopes for Seminole County fireworks extinguished

The Fourth of July will happen as it does every year, but Independence Day will have to come and go without its usual fanfare in Seminole County at Seminole State Park. Park officials confirmed a Fourth of July fireworks display will not be held this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Any hope the special pyrotechnic illuminations salute to the nation's birthday would remain on

track was already in jeopardy before the pandemic because of a lack of funding for the event. The current COVID-19 health crisis and its social distancing and public health emergency precautions was the deciding factor in cancelling the event.

The COVID-19 pandemic has canceled, postponed or altered so many activities, but it has not cancelled all outdoor activities available

at the State Park. 28 campsites, 14 cottages, four picnic shelters, one walking trail, the beach and the park's day-use area are available for use as long as visitors follow current COVID-19 safety guidelines. Boat rentals are not available and the mini golf course, playground and fishing pier are closed.

All park service rental business is being handled via phone, by calling 229-861-3137.

Georgia Legislature passes hate crimes bill

The Georgia Legislature on Tuesday afternoon passed a hate crimes bill that will now head to the desk of Governor Brian Kemp. If signed into law, Georgia would no longer be among four states without hate crime legislation on its books.

Advocates and lawmakers renewed their push to pass the bill after the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old black man pursued by two white men and shot dead while jogging through a Brunswick neighborhood on February 23.

The bill, HB426, passed the state Senate by a 47-6 vote and the state house 127-38. Kemp's office said in a statement released to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution that he would sign the bill pending legal review.

Allison Padilla-Goodman, vice president of the southern division for the Anti-Defamation League, which has pushed for a hate crime law in the state for decades, told CBS News she is

"thrilled" with the bill's passage.

"Both chambers, both sides of the aisle, are standing up to bias and bias-motivated crimes and saying they want to protect their citizens," Padilla-Goodman said.

South Carolina, Wyoming and Arkansas also remain without hate crime laws.

Some advocates including the ADL also include Indiana on the list, calling a law passed in that state last year "problematically

broad."

Ahmaud Arbery's killing, captured on a disturbing video, drew a national outcry. The two suspects, Gregory McMichael, 64, and his son Travis, 34, told police they thought Arbery was a burglary suspect. Two and a half months passed before they were charged with murder. An investigator later testified that Travis McMichael was heard using a racial slur as Arbery lay dying.

Republican Senator Bill Cowart called the bill's passage a



Georgia DPH asks residents to 'Answer the Call' in new COVID-19 contact tracing video

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) has released a new video explaining the state's COVID-19 contact tracing efforts, asking residents to 'answer the call' if DPH reaches out. The YouTube video, *How Contact Tracing Works in Georgia* can be found at <https://youtu.be/8LANQADjaEY>

This video is part of a larger campaign rolling out across the state promoting the Healthy Georgia Collaborative, DPH's expanded contact tracing program to combat the spread of COVID-19.



Contact tracing is an important public health tool used to monitor the spread of infection and identify outbreaks of COVID-19 before they become widespread community transmission.

Since May, the Healthy Georgia Collaborative has deployed about 1,300 contact tracers and case investigators statewide to interview individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19, and then alert, quarantine and test contacts who may have been exposed. To date, 16,590 cases have been interviewed and 40,082 contacts identified.

"For contact tracing to be successful, education is critical," said DPH Commissioner Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H. "We need residents

See COVID-19 on Page 8

SEMINOLE COUNTY NEWS
Seminole County!

One Section
50 Cents



Lifestyles	4	Lake & Farm	10
Editorials	5	Looking Back	11
Church News	7	Classifieds	12
Obituaries	8	Public Notices	13

