

## Multiple COVID-19 restrictions to end on Thursday, April 8

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp signed executive orders last Wednesday that roll back many of the COVID-19 restrictions that have been in place statewide for months.

The Governor's order will eliminate bans on gatherings and shelter-in-place requirements. This order goes into effect today, Thursday, April 8, and lasts through April 30. It also reduces the remaining distance requirements

that restaurants, bars, movie theaters, and fitness classes have been using to space out their patrons.

The Governor's office said the order also removes the ability of law enforcement to close establishments for not complying with executive order provisions. The order also extends Georgia's public health state of emergency through the end of April and will allow state agency employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine without hav-

ing to use sick or annual leave to do so.

The news comes the same week Kemp decided to self-quarantine after being exposed to COVID-19. His office said on Monday the Governor was believed to be exposed to a person with the Coro-

navirus while touring tornado damage in Newnan, Georgia on Saturday. Kemp tested negative for COVID-19, after taking a rapid-response antigen test Monday morning.

A day before the Newnan tour, on Friday, Kemp did receive the single shot Johnson & Johnson COVID vaccine at the Ware County Health Department in Waycross, Georgia. However, as with the other vaccines, health experts

say full inoculation against the virus isn't complete until roughly two weeks after receiving the full dose.

It's been more than a year since Kemp first announced the public health emergency.

Now with the vaccine rollout in the state well underway - and available to all Georgians 16 and older - officials are hoping to see a decline in cases, deaths, and hospitalizations linked to the virus.

## RURAL Zone meeting set for April 13th

With the clock ticking on its five-year only designation, the Donalsonville-Seminole County Chamber of Commerce is hosting a RURAL Zone discussion meeting on Tuesday, April 13 at 6 p.m. in the Beall Center on Cherry Street in downtown Donalsonville.

As reported last Fall, the City of Donalsonville has been designated for five years as a RURAL Zone. With that designation, the Revitalizing Underdeveloped Rural Areas Legislation (RURAL) now provides tax credits to individuals creating jobs and making qualifying investments within the historic downtown RURAL Zone area of the City of Donalsonville.

The meeting will explain the benefits of the RURAL Zone designation in detail and provide information on developing strategies and financial resources available to property owners and others interested in downtown investments.

The RURAL Zone program includes the following Georgia state income tax incentives which are utilized for job-creation activities, investment in downtown properties, and renovation of properties: A Job Tax Credit equivalent to \$2,000 per new full-time equivalent job per year for up to five years; an Investment Credit equivalent to 25% of the purchase price of a property within the designated Rural Zone (not to exceed \$125,000); and a Rehabilitation Credit equivalent to 30% of the qualified rehabilitation costs of a building located within a designated Rural Zone (not to exceed \$150,000).

For additional information about the meeting or the RURAL Zone designation contact Sarah Avery at 229-524-2588.

## COVID-19 positive case increase slows

**Schedule your vaccination at the Seminole County Health Department by calling 229-352-6567 or by visiting myvaccinegeorgia.com**

It has been a little over one year since the first positive COVID-19 case was reported in Seminole County and only a few weeks later that the first two deaths were reported. The first positive test result was discovered March 25, 2020 and reported in the March 26, 2020 issue of the *Donalsonville News*, just days after

state and local governing officials had declared a joint state of emergency connected to COVID-19.

As the graphic accompanying this article shows, since March of 2020, the number of local positive cases reported fell below double digits only twice in March and June of 2020. Ten of the

months reported double digit increases, and two months, August 2020 and January 2021, reported triple digit increases.

Thankfully, with the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccine, the wearing of masks and social distancing efforts, the positive case daily increase has lessened

➡ See **COVID-19** on Page 2A



## SCES to perform Disney's Frozen JR. April 23, 24 and 25

Seminole County Elementary School (SCES) students are preparing to warm your hearts with their upcoming production of Disney's *Frozen JR.*

Tickets are now on sale in Seminole County Elementary School's front office for four performances scheduled for Friday, April 23 at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, April 24 at 2:30 p.m., and Sunday, April 25 at 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

All performances will be held in the Seminole County Elementary School auditorium, and there will be limited seating due to COVID-19 safety guidelines. Tickets for adults are \$10.00 and tickets for kids 12 and under are \$5.00. Guests are encouraged to come in costume!

You'll love this fanciful and heartwarming stage adaptation of Disney's *Frozen JR.*, the top-grossing animated film of all time! Join Anna, Elsa, and all of your favor-

➡ See **FROZEN** on Page 10A

## Seminole County Republican Party to hold Caucus and County Convention April 17

### Drive for Delegates set for Saturday, April 10th

A drive for delegates will be held at the Donalsonville Country Club Saturday, April 10 at 10 a.m.

This event will be the first official meeting as an organized Republican Party for the State of Georgia in Seminole County. Anyone who is interested in becoming a member is invited to attend and to discuss the responsibilities of a delegate and the upcoming convention on April 17.

After the meeting a friendly long drive competition will be held, so dress accordingly.

On Saturday, April 17 at 9:00 a.m., the Seminole County Republican Party will convene Precinct Caucuses to elect Delegates and Alternate Delegates to the Seminole County Republican Party Convention. The County Convention will convene at 10:00 a.m. on April 17 at the same location for the purpose of electing county party officers and Delegates and Alternates to the Congressional District Convention and the State Convention. Additionally, the Convention will conduct all other business as necessary.

Both the Precinct Caucuses and the County Convention will be held at the Lions Hall, 100 South Wiley Avenue, Donalsonville, Georgia.

All Seminole County residents who are legally registered to vote and believe in the principles of the Republican Party are urged to participate in this process. Delegates and Alternates will be required to pay a fee of \$30, which is to cover the cost of the

County Convention.

The 2nd Congressional District Convention will convene on Saturday, May 15 at 10 a.m. in Tifton, Georgia in a place to be determined. The District Convention will be electing officers for the District and State Committee members for the next biennial. Delegates and Alternates will be required to pay a fee, which is yet to be determined, to cover the cost of the Convention.

The Georgia Republican Party State Convention will convene at 2 p.m. on Friday, June 4, in a location to be determined and will elect state party officers for the next biennial, in addition to conducting all other business. Delegates and Alternates will be required to pay a fee, which is to cover the cost of the Convention.

For further information contact Bryan Wells, Chairman of the Seminole County Republican Party, at [seminolecountygagop@gmail.com](mailto:seminolecountygagop@gmail.com)

## BetterWay to host community planning meeting April 29

The Donalsonville-Seminole County BetterWay Initiative is hosting a community betterment planning meeting on Thursday, April 29. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. and will be held at the Beall Center next door to the *Donalsonville News* on Cherry Street in downtown Donalsonville.

The meeting is open to any person in the community who wishes to take an active role in helping to plan for and shape the future of Seminole County.

The purpose of the meeting is to gather all groups in the community currently working

on betterment projects in the same room at the same time and have a detailed discussion about what the community needs, current projects in development, and ideas yet to be developed.

For the meeting to be effective representatives from the following groups, organizations and individuals need to be in attendance: city and county governments, local businesses and industry, the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Development Authority, the Industrial Development Authority, the school system, and any other group or individual willing to join the discussion team.

The goal of the meeting is to determine the top community betterment projects that need to be planned and implemented, to develop a five year plan of work and action, and to assign action committees to begin and manage each project.

If you are interested in helping to make our community an even better place to live, work, visit, and raise a family, then you need to attend this meeting. For additional information contact David Maxwell, chairman of the BetterWay Initiative at 229-524-2343 or email him at [david@donalsonvilnews.com](mailto:david@donalsonvilnews.com)

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