



Above left, Seminole County Sheriff Heath Elliott presents Seminole County Deputy Garrett Wooten the Purple Heart; above right, Sheriff Elliott congratulates retirees Chief Deputy Melvin Henry and Detention Officer Annie Pollard



Deputy Garrett Wooten awarded Purple Heart by Sheriff Elliott

Retirees Chief Deputy Melvin Henry, Detention Officer Annie Pollard, Probation Officer Carl Scott also honored

At an appreciation banquet held on March 30th for Seminole County Sheriff officers, staff and employees, Seminole County Sheriff Heath Elliott presented Seminole County Deputy Garrett Wooten with a Purple Heart. Wooten was presented the medal for injuries received from shots fired by Troy

and Brad Phillips through the windshield of his patrol car on February 27th. Deputy Wooten received medical attention and was released shortly thereafter. He returned to work the following week.

Retired Chief Deputy Melvin Henry and Retired Detention Officer Annie Pollard were also recognized for their years with Seminole County Sheriff's Office, their guidance and leadership of fellow officers, and their service to the community.

Annie Pollard retired in November after 32 years of employment with the Sheriff's Office. Melvin Henry retired in February

after serving for 30 years.

Although he was unable to attend the banquet, Retired Probation Officer Carl Scott who had retired earlier in 2020, was recognized for his 28 years of service to Seminole County.

Online vaccine registration now available southwest district wide

Southwest Health District 8-2 announces that appointments for vaccines in all 14 counties can now be made online through the Georgia Department of Public Health's (DPH) vaccine scheduling system called Vaccine Registration and Administration Solution (VRAS) system.

Those who qualify for vaccines can now schedule appointments for any of Southwest Public Health's counties by clicking on the link at southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org or by visiting <https://gta-vras.powerappsportals.us/>.

VRAS, like the system used to schedule COVID-19 testing, allows users to search for the closest vaccine appointment, based on the user's ZIP Code and availability. DPH plans to add a Spanish registration option to VRAS later this month.

In addition to the online option, COVID-19 vaccine appointments can still be made by phone. Contact your local health department or the call center for scheduling at 229-352-6567.

Georgia lawmakers choose permanent daylight saving time

The General Assembly decided Wednesday to leave the standard versus daylight saving time debate up to Congress.

On the final day of this year's legislative session, the state Senate voted 45-6 to put Georgia on daylight saving time permanently. But under federal law, that change can take place only if Congress makes daylight time permanent nationwide.

The Senate, which passed legislation in February to put Georgia on standard time all year long, voted instead on Wednesday to side with the Georgia House of Representatives, which favored year-round daylight time.

The one point of agreement between the two chambers throughout the 2021 General Assembly session was that Georgia should stop switching back and forth between standard and daylight time twice a year.

Sen. Ben Watson, R-Savannah, and Rep. Wes Cantrell, R-Woodstock, who sponsored two competing versions of the bill, cited a number of studies to their legislative colleagues describing disruptions to sleep patterns and more serious health issues that increase in frequency following time changes, particularly the yearly "swing forward" shift from standard to daylight time.

However, Georgians will continue switching back and forth under the bill that gained final passage Wednesday, unless and until Congress takes action. The legislation now heads to Gov. Brian Kemp for his signature.



COVID-19 positive case increase slows

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considerably since January.

With all Georgia residents sixteen and older now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, the Georgia Department of Health's Vaccine Dashboard reported on Wednesday morning, April 7, that the Seminole County Health Department has now administered 3,368 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to Seminole County residents - administering dose one to 1,940 residents and dose two to 1,517.

As of presstime on Wednesday, April 7 seven new positive COVID-19 cases have been reported in Seminole County by the Georgia Department of Public Health in the past seven days. Ten new cases have been reported locally so far in the month of April. Since the pandemic began in March of 2020, Seminole County has been recorded with 735 positive cases, seventeen of which, sadly, have resulted in Coronavirus related deaths.

As of Wednesday, April 7 since March of 2020, there have been 857,307 cases of COVID-19 statewide - and 16,533 deaths reported to state health officials. Since this time last week, 6,001 new cases have been reported and the state's COVID-19 related death total increased 228.

Those numbers are based on positive results from a Molecular Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test and represent confirmed cases only. Only molecular test results, reported through multiple sources, are used by the Georgia Department of Health in identifying confirmed cases.

Molecular polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and antigen tests are used to diagnose COVID-19, meaning that they look to see if someone is currently infected with COVID-19. Each test looks for something different to determine if someone is infected. A molecular (PCR) test looks for the virus's genetic material. An antigen test is a rapid test that looks for specific proteins on the surface of the virus. The nose swab PCR test for COVID-19 is the most accurate and reliable test.

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