

The Lincoln Journal



"To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

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American Legion Post 194 hosts several activities at the post including Taekwondo martial arts classes on Tuesday nights from 4-6 p.m. with instructors (standing, l-r) Salvador Rodriguez Sr., Salvador Rodriguez Jr., and Victoria Rodriguez; students participating are (seated, l-r) Madison Wood, Duey Holloway, Gunner Holloway, and Mason Wood.

American Legion Post 194 plans to expand its programs in 2021

The American Legion Post 194 has re-emerged with a new dedicated mission. While innovative thought on how to better serve today's veterans and active-duty military personnel is the primary focus, a new pro-community mantra is now being employed that seeks local participation and support.

As veteran support groups around the nation have closed doors – due much to attrition at the passing of many WWII- and Vietnam-era veterans – Lincoln County's Legion has set itself the goal to meet the needs specifically of those surviving veterans, along with active-duty military personnel and their families. As the entity opens its doors, much thought has gone into understanding who these men and women are and how they operate in today's society.

According to Legion Event Coordinator Al Ewing, a part of meeting those needs comes in the form of creative programming that is now being offered at American Legion Post 194. These events ultimately are an effort to make the space more community- and family-friendly in atmosphere – serving veterans and Lincoln County in all patriotism as is the mission of Legions across the United States.

Certain rehabilitation to the Legion grounds and facility are also ongoing.

"The American Legion is to support our veterans and our active duty military – we are pro all things America and pro patriotism," Ewing said. "Another part of our mis-

sion, however, is to get out there and promote those things. We want to promote those things to families and to the community."

From cards, pool, and darts to special classes that teach martial arts, dance, singing, drawing, and sewing, a whole slew of innovative activities is now either on the schedule or in the works for the Legion. The idea is to facilitate a genuine, positive place for socializing that builds up veterans and guests through this unique type of programming, according to Ewing.

Regular outings also take place with a group known as the "Sew and Sews," which focuses on quilting, embroidery, and sewing, along with the "Morning Glories," a women's walking and kayaking group, both of which are organized by Ewing's wife Linda Buesching.

While dinner and drinks are still served from the Legion's kitchen, bar, and "Cantina" Thursday-Saturday evenings, new editions like karaoke have also been added as a special activity.

"The era of being 'belly up to the bar' is gone," Ewing explained, detailing that the largest demographic of veterans alive today is slightly different from generations past. While others used to congregate at Legions in mission to support each other as in times of war, often talking of the "the good ol' days," today's veterans are slightly different.

"The new clients are transplants," Ewing said. "We have to innovate because we're dealing with people

who have seen a little bit of everything from their service and time spent around the world.

"They're a more leisurely client now, so we want country amenities like friendships, fellowship, and to even host in the town center patriotic events for the whole community," he added.

Often times, Ewing further elaborated, these veterans are alone, with grown up children, and are simply looking for support.

"We want to create a new 'good ol' days,'" Ewing added.

Furthermore, he explained that accepting the mission to serve veterans and those active in military comes with both a "spiritual and patriotic" mandate.

"We're a sanctuary here," he said. "When you come here leave your angst at the door, because we're trying to serve a greater good here."

What's more is that individuals in the community are also welcome to attend programming and events held at the Legion.

Those individuals would attend as "guests" of either an inviting veteran or a volunteer of the Legion, but are asked to share the idea of "sanctuary" and enjoy a good time of fellowship.

As mentioned, several events at Legion Post 194 are anticipated for the year 2021 that hope to include the community at large:

- The first spring and fall "Arts and Crafts Fairs"
- The first "All Media Fabric and Quilts Exhibition"
- "Eggravaganza: Adult and Children's Easter Egg Hunt"
- "Open Mic Blues Jams," held afternoons at the outdoor Legion Cantina
- The first "Community Talent Show"
- A community ice cream social
- Community flea markets
- Legion karaoke and county-western music nights.
- Blues and bluegrass concerts

Additionally, several joint ventures with Lincoln County associations and non-profits are also in the works, which include:

- "Legion Cup" golf cart races
- "Festival of Choirs"
- The Fourth of July "Kiddie Cappers Parade"

Volunteers are welcome for any and all functions at the Legion.

For more information, contact Ewing at 706-359-1572.

State, local agencies schedule closing in preparation of final DRIVES upgrade

The Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) and the Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) will soon complete a technology upgrade called Driver Record and Integrated Vehicle Enterprise System (DRIVES). The multi-year upgrade modernizes the current DDS driver's license system and the DOR tag and title system. The new system will offer more self-service options, improve customer service, and enhance data integrity.

In preparation for the launch the DDS, the DOR and the Lincoln County Tax Commissioner's office will have scheduled closings.

The DDS will be closed January 14-18. During the closing, customers will not be able to visit in person or utilize DDS online services or the DDS 2 Go mobile app.

DOR and county tag offices' motor vehicle operations will be closed January 13-18. During the closing, no walk-in, online services, or kiosk services will be available for customers.

Both agencies and the Lincoln County Tax Commissioner's Office will be operational on Tues-

day, January 19, and they ask for patience as team members adjust to the new system.

While the DOR and county tax commissioners have been utilizing DRIVES since the spring of 2019, the upgrade, done in tandem with the DDS system transition, will ensure each agency will have access to the most recent enhancements and features of the software.

The DRIVES system establishes a customer centric "Enterprise Solution" to support each agency, and the partners will maintain their individual roles as defined in state law. The DDS will continue to handle the state's driver's license and ID card issuance function by properly trained and certified driver examiners. Each county tax commissioner will continue their established mission including motor vehicle license plate and title administration.

Both agencies have encouraged those with January renewal dates to plan ahead and renew early.

"We are excited for this upgrade which will enable us to provide the best customer service possible whether in person or online once

the upgrade is complete. I encourage customers whose driver's license and/or ID is scheduled to expire during the month of January 2021 to renew their credential prior to the scheduled closings," DDS Commissioner Spencer R. Moore said.

Another important DRIVES benefit will be enhanced security features which will help deter fraud and identity theft. Once the transition is complete, customers will be prompted to reestablish their existing DDS online account for security purposes.

According to DOR Commissioner David Curry, "The Department of Revenue and tag offices in all 159 counties have been using the system since May of 2019, and we look forward to the realization of this long-term vision with our partners at DDS. Like Commissioner Moore, I encourage all customers with vehicle registrations expiring in January to complete their renewals before January 13."

For more information, visit the agencies' websites via Georgia.gov.



Several roads in Lincoln County had to be closed due to a heavy rain event on Tuesday, July 9, including Georgia Highway 220 West at Dozier Branch after it crested its banks and spilled over the bridge.

Journal recaps last six months of 2020

July 2 - Federal charges filed against 38 in 2019 cockfighting tournament...Seamless Summer Option will offer free breakfast and lunch to students...Journal announces an early deadline for holiday closing...COVID-19 cases climb to 36...Dr. Wolski assumes duties as new principal at LCHS...Ice cream social will kick off Post 194's activities for July...Fireworks are prohibited on Corps lands, water...Chamber announces 2020 winners of Business, Non-Profit of the Year...Shepard blood drive to be held at Lincoln Baptist on July 11.

July 9 - Light reminds incoming juniors of new vaccination requirements...COVID-19 testing will continue at health department...Absentee ballot applications being accepted for runoff election to be held on August 11...Al Herdon names Wesley Cooke as college scholarship winner...Sheriff's Office recognized with Humane Law Enforcement award...Hickory Knob hosts ribbon cutting for Smithsonian's Water/Ways exhibit...Shepard blood drive to be held at Lincoln Baptist Church on July 11.

July 16 - Commencement ceremony celebrates 87 seniors...Council restructures based rates for water and sewer customers...County engages consulting firm to help with water, sewer project...Search continues for Joseph Tolbert as seen July 10...DPH reports second fatality as COVID-19 cases rise to 69...Early voting gets underway July 20 for runoff election at Lincoln Center...Citizen share

the 'gift of life' at blood drive Saturday...Residents attend Bible reading at courthouse.

July 23 - BOE delays school opening until August 10...Parents have until 5 p.m. today to select back-to-school option...Dukes excited about return to alma mater...In-person services canceled due to COVID-19 exposure...NEOWISE offers once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sky watchers in July...BoC approves surface paving of three dirt roads in county.

July 30 - District releases safety protocols to mitigate impact of COVID-19...Home destroyed by fire...Chomskis returns to his roots; excited to build-up all programs...DPH reports third fatality as COVID-19 numbers rise...City announces special election for Post 5 seat...Volunteers needed for upcoming Golden Harvest delivery...Seniors recognized for academic achievements during graduation...Free drive through testing available at health department...Norman, Elam receive scholarship award.

August 6 - BOE delays school openings amid rise in COVID-19 cases...School system welcomes new teachers...County approves SPLOST referendum will appear on the ballot in November...Voters head to the polls Tuesday to cast ballot in runoff elections...Family violence and battery charges top list of arrests by Sheriff's Office...Red Devil fans asked to volunteer Saturday for old gym clean up...DPH reports fourth fatality as COVID-19 numbers rise...Public library is back - open

for business...Soccer registration will run August 8-17 at recreation department.

August 13 - City to put SPLOST on ballot, hears concerns from resident...Volunteers show up to restore pride in Thomas Bunch Fieldhouse, gym...School district releases guidelines to qualify for free, reduced meals...Reese claims win in District 1 race...Health dept. provides free testing; COVID-19 numbers climb to 150...Broom offers safety tips to deal with recent high heat indexes...LC Paws awarded grant funds to assist with spaying/neutering...City announces special election for Post 5 seat.

August 20 - School bell rings for in-class, virtual students...BOE hears request to name LCHS track field after Ellis...County approves splash pad opening, urges residents to complete Census...Public meeting set to discuss expansion of county water service...DPH reports fifth fatality as COVID-19 numbers rise...Daniel offers advice to parents, tips on preparing kids for 'new normal.'

August 27 - Pioneer Day festivities postponed due to volunteer safety, COVID-19...Three candidates qualify for Post 5 in council election...Drive-through food distribution today at recreation complex...Young to speak at History in the Park on 'The Georgia Gold Rush of 1829'...Lively issues report on recent incidents...Reserved seat tickets available for football season now

Total COVID-19 cases now 346

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lincoln County increased to 346 with nine reported fatalities as of the 3 p.m. posting by the Georgia Department of Public Health on Monday, January 4.

Neighboring Wilkes County lists 465 cases and eight deaths, McDuffie County reports 1022 cases and 23 deaths, Columbia lists 7535 cases and 86 deaths, and Richmond County reports 13,155 cases and 219 deaths.

Also reported as of 3 p.m. Monday, 591,106 Georgians had tested positive for COVID-19. Of those patients, 42,595 were hospitalized, and 9,900 deaths have been reported.

The drive-through COVID-19 testing has been discontinued at the Lincoln County Health Department.

Lincoln County Health Department Nurse Manager Hilary Daniels stated that drive-through testing continues at the Wilkes County Health Department from 9-11 a.m. every Wednesday.

Those wishing to make an appointment online should visit covid19.dph.ga.gov and following the online instructions. Results are faster and can be received via email.

Free COVID-19 testing appointments can also be made by calling 706-721-5800.

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