



### Tennis and golf teams end season play

The spring sports season is winding down at Lincoln County High School with both tennis and golf teams ending season play. Members of the golf team included (top photo, front row, l-r) Aiden Weir, Heath Creswell, Aubrey Flanigan, (back) Coach Donald Wheeler, Gavin Heitmann, Jack Antonakos, James Mattison, and Banks Boswell.

Members of the tennis team included (front row, l-r) Brynlee Bentley, Mykia Crawford, Caliyah Jones, Katherine McNeese, manager Brooklyn Seagraves, Kayden Stafford, (back) Coach Roy Johnson, Justin Zellers, Charlotte Hodnett, senior Kendrick Mansion, Elizabeth Ferguson, Donald Owens, senior Sydney Radford, Garrett Miller, and Coach Frankie Brown.

## Pop Warner takes lead in youth sports

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are matched by age, with strict mandatory equipment requirements. This reduces both the risk and reality of injuries, and it is the only youth football program that operates on local, regional, and national levels to make this a requirement.

In addition to its more stringent "return to play" concussion rules, Pop Warner took the lead in youth sports by creating a medical advisory board. The board was created to ensure Pop Warner remains proactive on all medical issues that affect youth sports, particularly football and cheerleading, with a primary focus on prevention and proper identification and treatment of concussions, hydration awareness, proper nutrition guidelines, and general health and safety issues.

Pop Warner also places value on safety issues that make a difference. Measures have been taken in football to reduce contact to 25 percent of practice time, to eliminate kick-offs for the youngest divisions, and to require that any player who suffers a suspected head injury receive medical clearance from a concussion specialist before returning to play.

In an attempt to remove "egos" and "star mentalities" from the get-go, Pop Warner recognizes team accomplishments, instead of individuals, eliminating personal tallies such as yards rushing per game or touchdowns, in order to build up children as a unit.

The Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. (PWLS) is also the only national youth sports organization in America that requires students to meet certain academic standards in order to participate. All participants must maintain a "C" average in order to play football or cheer with Pop Warner, and they are required to turn in their report cards to their coach, who will pass it on to

a scholastics coordinator with Pop Warner. There are no exceptions.

The organization has stated, "We believe that the standards we have set give these children a sense of responsibility and an appreciation for academics and athletics that will help them develop later on in life." In order to back this up, it has paired with organizations like the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) to produce its academic guidelines.

Furthermore, the "most academically accomplished" Pop Warner participants get a chance to apply for Academic All-American status. Children can make National First Team All-American, National Second Team All-American, or National Honorable Mention Scholar.

Not only are these high-quality requirements in place for all youth participants, but the same type of stipulation is mandated for all coaches and volunteers.

"The program requires that extensive background checks are conducted on the coaches and volunteers," Terry said. "Volunteers are also required to wear ID badges with their names and titles on them."

Coaches must take a day class, as well as pass a test, in order to be certified to instruct with Pop Warner. Regardless of the position a volunteer takes with Pop Warner, all volunteers must be CPR certified, a factor that has been praised by many local parents.

There is also a Tiny-Mite course that teaches adults how to interact with children and how to coach them.

For the smaller children, coaches are allowed to be on the actual playing field. This makes for closer supervision as they learn the rules and allows the coaches to monitor how they hit. This minimizes inju-

ries and hurt feelings as the players learn what is and what isn't okay.

"With Pop Warner, there are rules that you don't often see in a sports arena," Terry explained. "There are mandatory play rules which means each and every child gets a certain number of plays. No child is left out — every child gets a chance to play," he added.

Hailed for its highly professional atmosphere, many head coaches and NFL players found their start in Pop Warner. It's a program that has seen record numbers in participation since 2012, and many volunteers continue to be excited that the Lincoln County community has a chance to be involved in it.



TRAVIS REID

### Reid recognized by Lay Council at virtual gala

Travis Reid was honored as "Lay Leader of the Year" for the Georgia North Region by the Georgia North Region Lay Council. He was presented the award during a virtual gala "Spring Convocation" on Saturday, April 24. Reid was honored for his dedication, leadership, community service, and outreach ministries.

"Having very limited resources and services due to the pandemic, I was very surprised to be honored at such a time," Reid said. "I am praying for God to continue to bless me, to serve my community, and the churches of the Augusta-Sparta District. As Lay Leader I encourage, motivate, and direct lay people to support the 26 churches that range from Waynesboro to Sparta, Georgia is our District."

Reid is a native of Lincoln County and a very active member of Mulberry C.M.E. Church and has been a Lay Leader of the Augusta-Sparta District for over 10 years. This region includes areas such as Atlanta, Rome, Elberton, and Gainesville Districts of Christina Methodist Episcopal churches.

## College athletes can earn compensation for use of name, image, likeness in Ga.

By BEAU EVANS  
Capital Beat News

Governor Brian Kemp signed legislation last week allowing student athletes at Georgia colleges, universities, and technical colleges to receive compensation for the use of their name, image, and likeness.

The bill, sponsored by state Rep. Chuck Martin, R-Alpharetta, came as schools and the NCAA reckon with a growing push to permit certain kinds of financial benefits for college athletes who are often the focus of lucrative advertising campaigns and video games.

Kemp, a University of Georgia alumnus and advocate, said the new allowances on athlete compensation should help give the state a competitive edge in attracting talented players and students from within Georgia and beyond.

### Executive order eases restriction on Ga. truckers

Normal restrictions on commercial trucks in Georgia are being waived under an executive order Gov. Brian Kemp has issued in response to the shutdown of the Colonial Pipeline.

The Alpharetta-based company that supplies nearly half of the gasoline consumed on the East Coast reported a ransomware attack last Friday that forced a shutdown of a 5,500-mile pipeline running from Texas to New Jersey. The FBI blamed the attack on DarkSide, a group of hackers believed to operate out of Russia or Eastern Europe.

To help relieve gasoline shortages brought on by the shutdown, Kemp issued an executive order Monday, May 10 suspending federal regulations governing the number of hours commercial truck drivers can operate and waiving normal weight, height and length limits on trucks subject to state "oversize" permits.

The order also suspends the collection of gasoline and diesel fuel taxes during the emergency and prohibits price gouging.

Georgia governors have issued similar executive orders during other disruptions in fuel supplies, usually following hurricanes or other natural disasters that affect refineries or pipelines.

The shutdown of the Colonial pipeline is expected to send pump prices higher and force refiners to cut production because they can't transport the fuel.

Kemp urged motorists not to panic.

"There is no need to rush to the gas station to fill up every tank you have and hoard gas," he said. "With the measures we have taken today, I am hopeful we can get more supply to stations and get through to this weekend when we hope Colonial will return to normal."

Colonial officials say they are working on "substantially restoring operational service" by the end of this week.

Kemp's executive order is due to expire at 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

"I believe it sets Georgia on the path to accomplish something that quite honestly should have been done a long time ago," Kemp said during a bill-signing ceremony at UGA Thursday, May 6.

"Thanks to [the bill], student athletes from across the country will have Georgia on their mind when they're looking for a campus and a university that can give them a world-class education but also the chance to compete at the highest levels of college athletics."

Under the bill, college athletes in Georgia will be required to take five hours of a financial literacy and life skills workshop to ready them for the added burdens of receiving compensation for sports performance.

Schools will also have the ability to require that student athletes pool their earnings in an escrow account, from which they cannot withdraw funds until at least one year after they graduate or leave school.

Additionally, the bill bars schools from offering cash or other incentives to high-school recruits and

requires sports agents seeking to represent college athletes to obtain the same type of license needed to represent professional athletes.

The new pay rules take effect on July 1 and will remain in place until either mid-2025 or until Congress passes federal legislation allowing for nationwide college-athlete compensation. Several bills have already been introduced in Congress on athlete pay.

So far, the NCAA has largely resisted moves to permit compensation for student athletes, prompting several lawsuits challenging the organization's authority to block student athletes from being paid despite also profiting from their skills.

The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments March 31 in a landmark case from California brought by former West Virginia running back Shawne Alston, who sued the NCAA and several college leagues in 2014 for not allowing compensation to pay for costs beyond what his scholarship covered. The court has not yet issued a ruling in the case.

## Georgia Department of Labor shifting focus to employment

By Dave Williams  
Capital News Beat Service

With first-time unemployment claims continuing to fall and more, and more businesses reopening, the Georgia Department of Labor is shifting its focus to helping companies fill job openings.

Jobless Georgians filed 25,429 initial unemployment claims last week, down 3,335 from the previous week, the labor department reported Thursday.

As those claims decline, more business owners are coming to the labor department for help finding applicants for open positions, Georgia Commissioner of Labor Mark Butler said.

"Our mission is to not only bridge the pay gap for those who are temporarily unemployed, but to also provide reemployment support for those who are looking to reenter the workforce filling the critical vacancies we are seeing in every industry," Butler said.

"I hear every day from employers who have been forced to reduce business hours, refuse large

deliveries and turn down economic opportunities due to the simple fact that they did not have the staff to support them."

Since the coronavirus pandemic first hit Georgia in mid-March of last year, the labor department has paid out more than \$21.2 billion in state and federal unemployment benefits. The agency has processed more than 4.7 million first-time jobless claims during that period, more than during the nine years prior to the pandemic.

Last week, the job sector accounting for the most claims was accommodation and food services with 6,224 claims. The administrative and support services sector was next with 2,083, followed by manufacturing with 1,755.

The labor department has more than 240,000 job listings posted on its EmployGeorgia website, the highest the agency has ever recorded.

Claimants using the site can receive support to upload up to five searchable resumes, job search assistance, career counseling, skills testing, job fair information, and job training services.

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## DPH reports on COVID-19 cases

The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lincoln County was reported at 515 with twenty-four reported fatalities as of the 3 p.m. posting by the Georgia Department of Public Health on Monday, May 10.

Neighboring Wilkes County lists 670 cases and twenty-one deaths, McDuffie County reports 1695 cases and 41 deaths, Columbia lists 11,094 cases and 161 deaths, and Richmond County reports 20,099 cases and 418 deaths.

Also reported as of 3 p.m. Monday, 876,146 Georgians had tested positive for COVID-19. Of those pa-

tients, 61,126 were hospitalized, and 17,421 deaths have been reported.

To register for the vaccine in Lincoln County, go online to [ecphd.com](http://ecphd.com) [East Central Public Health District] to register. The online system gives people the opportunity to see where appointments are available around them so they can choose their preferred travel options. It also provides for email or text confirmations and reminders. There is no waiting for a callback - pre-screening, date and time are all handled online.

For those without internet access or who are just no computer-savvy, call 706-721-5800.