

Commencement exercises will celebrate 66 seniors

Lincoln County High School will celebrate the 66 graduating seniors of the class of 2021 with commencement exercises this Friday, June 4, beginning at 8 p.m. on Buddy Bufford.

Valedictorian Julianne Mattison, along with Salutatorian Jordyn Deason will deliver addresses on behalf of their fellow classmates.

Honor graduates for the Class of 2021 are Gianna Anderson, Rhiana Aycock, Robert Bradley, Chloe Cliatt, Aubree Comtois, Anna Cox, Jordyn Deason, Alexandria Gilpin, Trontaisha Hawes, Beatrice Jackson, Rachel Jordan, Jenna Kinzle, Ethan Leclerc, Julianne Mattison, Shamayah Lockhart, Lydia Partridge, Sydney Radford, Sasha Sullivan, Rhiana Aycock, Crystal Treadwell, Benjamin Wade, Madi-

son Welch, and I'lyiah White.

Honor Ushers will be Brynlee Bentley, Madison Bufford, Aaron Clegg, Aubren Floyd, Annaleigh Griffith, Gavin Heitmann, Charlotte Hodnett, Mikenzie Norman, and Emily Starbuck.

On Friday, June 4, Senior Class President Jordan Norman will give the welcoming statements. LCHS Principal Dr. Chris Wolski will announce graduating seniors, while Superintendent Dr. Samuel Light will award the diplomas.

Music for the occasion will be provided by the Senior Ensemble, which will perform "I Lived" by OneRepublic.

In the event of rain, graduation exercises will be held Saturday, June 5, at 10 AM.

Baccalaureate services were held

on Sunday, May 30, in the LCHS auditorium. The seniors also had their annual Senior Breakfast on Tuesday, June 1.

Mattison is the daughter of Jim and Janice Mattison and the granddaughter of Jane Mattison and the late Butch Mattison; and Rose Mock and the late Colen Floyd of Pembroke, Georgia. She is the sister of the late Cole Mattison.

During her four years at LCHS, she has been a member of the Senior Beta Club and will graduate with highest honors.

Mattison decided early to focus on her college education while in high school. She began taking dual enrollment classes during her freshman year and will soon be graduating from high school classified as a junior in college.

In addition to focusing on her dual enrollment coursework, Mattison is employed at a medical spa in the Augusta area. This opportunity has allowed her to gain experience and feel confident in her decision to pursue a higher education in the medical field. Her desire is to continue studying at Augusta University while pursuing a medical degree.

She has recently been awarded the Cole "Baby" Mattison Aviation Scholarship and is working toward her private pilot's license.

In her spare time, Mattison enjoys spending time with her family, three dogs, and friends, whether it be at the lake, the farm, or anywhere in between.



JULIANNE MATTISON
Valedictorian



JORDYN DEASON
Salutatorian

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"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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All 23 spillway gates at J. Strom Thurmond Dam were opened Wednesday, June 2, as a required safety test and to mark National Dam Safety Day which was May 31.

Corps officials open dam spillway gates for safety checks on Thurmond, Hartwell

Dam safety officials from the Savannah District, U.S Army Corps of Engineers are testing the spillway gates at two hydropower dams on the Savannah River this week.

On Wednesday, June 2, teams tested all the spillway gates at the J. Strom Thurmond Dam north of Augusta, Georgia, at 1 p.m. The test lasted approximately 45 minutes

and all gates were opened during most of the test about one foot.

On Thursday, June 3, beginning at 9:30 a.m., teams will conduct a similar test on the spillway gates at the Hartwell Dam near Hartwell, Georgia, and Anderson, South Carolina. This test will last approximately 30 minutes.

The public may attend the test but

must stay out of the water downstream of the dams due to strong currents and heavy turbulence. Based on past tests, crowds are expected. Social precautions should be taken. Drones are not allowed near or above the dams, including in adjoining parks.

For the test at Hartwell Dam, visitors may park at Big Oaks Recreation Area in Georgia and walk the paved trail to near the dam. Visitors may also park at the S.C. Dam Viewing Area or Overlook Area on the South Carolina side and walk the paved trail to the dam. Visitors may also observe the test from designated areas below the dam on the Georgia side.

The Georgia River Recreation Area and below dam fishing pier will be closed during the test due to high water. Corps park rangers will be available to direct parking along the access road to the Hartwell Power Plant and local authorities will enforce the "no parking and no stopping" laws on state highways and bridges.

"We chose these specific dates to mark National Dam Safety Awareness Day, May 31," Lucia Newberry, Dam and Levee Safety Program Manager for the Savannah District, said. "These required safety tests ensure the gates will function properly in the event high water events require an emergency release for safety."

While the releases give a spectacular view, the actual effect of the releases on reservoir levels is minimal. The reservoirs undergoing the tests are currently above full summer levels.



Field Day fun held at LCES

Anna Gilchrist is putting the "hula" in that hoop during Lincoln County Elementary School's annual Field Day on Friday, June 28.

Commissioners give thumbs-up on purchase of fire/rescue truck

Lincoln County commissioners voted to purchase a new fully equipped firetruck for \$364,200 at a called meeting May 25 and authorized Office of Emergency Services Director Casey Broom to make the purchase.

The E-ONE 1500 GPM top-mount rescue pumper with 1000-gallon booster tank mounted on a 2021 two-door International MV607 cab and chassis will replace Engine One. According to Broom, the National Fire Protection Agency recommends that the maximum life span of an active fire truck is 20 years.

"Engine One is 21-years old," he said. "We have rebuilt the pump multiple times, half the gauges don't work, and it has become unsafe to operate. We have done everything we can to keep it in operation, but it has reached the end of its life-span," he added.

Broom did however recommend that Engine One, since it is fully equipped, be kept on as back-up in case the need arises. "I don't expect any complications with the new fire truck, but as we are right now, when Engine One goes down for service, we don't have anything to take its place," he said. Engine One currently serves as a fire truck and also as the primary rescue and extrication vehicle for the county.

"We have got the means right now to pay for it," Chairman Walker Norman pointed out. "If we wait two, three, or four years, we may have to raise taxes to do it. Also, if we order the truck by tomorrow, we can expect delivery by August. If we wait, it would be 12-18 month."

The price tag for the new fire truck, fully equipped, includes new air packs and tanks. According to Finance Director Ernie Doss, the

county can apply for a United State Department of Agriculture Facilities Grant/Loan which would pay for either a quarter or a third of the purchase price. The balance would be made over time or can be paid off early with funds on hand.

On that same note the Chairman informed commissioners that sometime in the next 6-12 months, if monies are available, he would like to see Engine One fully staffed.

"If someone is breaking into your house or shooting at you, you can call the Sheriff's Office 24-hours a day. If you're having a heart attack, your blood pressure is too high, or you're having a baby, you can call for an ambulance 24-hours a day. If your house catches on fire you have a completely different situation. We are not completing the public safety picture," Norman said.

"Currently OES EMTs and paramedics are responsible for Engine One which responds to 90-95 percent of the calls that come in. I'd like the commissioners to start thinking about staffing Engine One in the future," Norman said. Doss informed commissioners that a bank account has been set up for the first installment of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds received by the county in the amount of \$769,280.50.

Doss also provided a summary of the use of funds which includes:

- Support of public health expenditures, for example funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral health-care, and certain public health, and safety staff.

- Addressing negative economic impacts cause by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and other public sectors.

- Replacing lost public sector revenue, using the funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic.

- Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have and will bear the greatest health risks because of the service in critical infrastructure sectors.

- Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.

Doss also provided a schedule of the public hearings prior to the approval of the Fiscal Year 2022 temporary budgets for the Lincoln County General Fund and the Miscellaneous Funds.

Copies of the proposed temporary budgets are available for public inspection in the Finance Department, during normal business hours, at the Lincoln County courthouse.

A public hearing to receive comments on the proposed temporary budgets will be held at 10 a.m., Thursday, June 10, in the commissioners' conference room.

A called meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be held at 4 p.m. on Thursday, June 17, to consider the adoption of the proposed FY 2022 temporary budgets. The called meeting will be held in the Lincoln County courtroom.

The temporary budget is a duplicate of the FY 2020 budget and will be used until the millage rate is set.

In other business, commissioners approved the renewal of the

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Georgia Power volunteers continue to make improvements to nature trail

The Thomson Citizens of Georgia Power volunteers (l-r) Randy Vernon, Barry Allen, Mark Goldman, Paul Vaught, Mil Hamrick, Denise Hamrick, Carla Cole, Tommy Cole, Linda Vernon, Robyn Stewart, Elsie Ferguson, Marcus Ferguson, David Kelly, and (not pictured) Matthew Goldman have been busy working on the nature trail located behind the Lincoln County Agricultural Center. Over the past few weeks volunteers have sprayed the trail to help manage weed pressure, mowed, and trimmed back encroaching branches and limbs along with spreading 30 tons of mulch at the entrance, classroom, and surrounding trails. The group has also built benches, picnic tables, and placed all the furniture along the trail. The natural trail is open to the public daily from sunrise to sunset.