

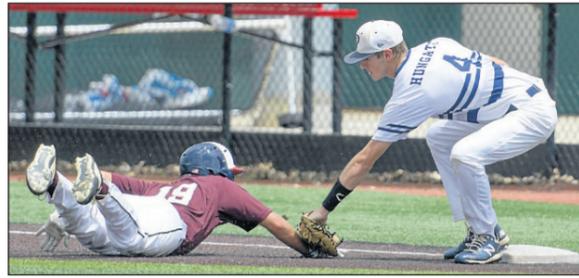
**REGION
CARNIVAL**

Owner responds to questions about event's safety » **A3**



**SPORTS
'RAMPAGE'**

Vikings advance to ETHSBL World Series next week » **B1**



BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

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Sullivan schools to start online

BY LEIF GREISS
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Sullivan County Schools will start classes for the 2020-21 school year on Aug. 5, but they will be online only through Aug. 14, school officials said in a Friday news release.

The decision to conduct the first week-and-a-half of classes is in response to the number of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 residents over the past 14-day pe-

riod, which exceeds an average of 10 new cases per day. Under the reopening plan developed by the three school districts in Sullivan County, if the average new cases per 100,000 for the last 14 days exceed 10, schools should consider holding all classes remotely.

"These are extraordinary and unprecedented times," Sullivan Director of Schools David Cox said. "Our priorities are for the safety and well-being of our students and

staff, while meeting the learning needs of all of our students."

Rebecca Craddock, communications coordinator for Bristol Tennessee City Schools, said that as of Friday afternoon, the city school system had no plans to hold all of its classes online when it begins the new school year.

In Sullivan County, Cox said that school leaders want to get students back into classrooms as soon as it is safe to do so. School system ad-

ministration will continue to meet with the Sullivan County Health Department every Thursday and provide new updates for the following week by 10 the next morning, the release states.

Michael Hughes, chairman of the Sullivan County Board of Education, said he thinks being cautious and watching the case numbers to make sure they have declined before they send kids to school is prudent.

"Everyone is so worried about making the wrong decision," Hughes said.

The school system will reach out to parents to arrange for the pick-up of devices and materials prior to the first day of school. Students enrolled in the Sullivan County Virtual Learning Academy will also begin on Aug. 5.

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Casino voting to begin Sept. 18

BY DAVID MCGEE
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Va. — Bristol, Virginia voters can begin casting ballots on the proposed Hard Rock Bristol casino in just 55 days.

The general election is Nov. 3, but a new Virginia law permits "no excuse absentee voting" by mail and in-person early voting starting Sept. 18. This coincides with another law allowing casinos by referendum in five financially challenged cities, including Bristol. Their convergence represents the culmination of more than two years of efforts to legalize gaming in Virginia.

Circuit Judge Sage B. Johnson signed an order July 17 directing that the casino question be placed on the city's general election ballot. That is the city's final step in this process, City Manager Randy Eads said Friday.

"Now it will go to the voters, who can begin voting in mid-September," Eads said.

Only registered city voters will be allowed to vote on the casino question.

The question will read: "Shall casino gaming be permitted at

See **CASINO**, Page A9

OFFICE WORK



ANDRE TEAGUE/BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Workers tear down the original office and ticket building at Bristol Motor Speedway on Wednesday. It was originally built in 1961 when the track opened but was damaged by a spring flood. It most recently housed the offices of the Bristol chapter of Speedway Children's Charities.

Extra unemployment aid expires as virus threatening new states

BY GEOFF MULVIHILL, JUSTIN PRITCHARD and DAVE KOLPACK
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — As public health officials warned Friday that the coronavirus posed new risks to parts of the Midwest and South, enhanced federal payments that helped avert financial ruin for millions of unemployed Americans were set to expire —

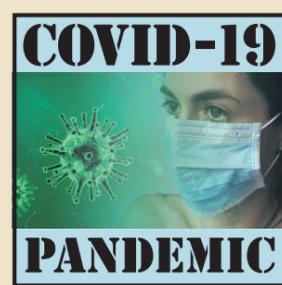
leaving threadbare safety nets offered by individual states to catch them.

Since early in the pandemic, the federal government has added \$600 to the weekly unemployment checks that states send. That increase ends this week, and with Congress still haggling over next steps, most states will not be able to offer nearly as much.

The extra federal aid helped keep Wally Wendt and his family afloat.

Wendt, 54, of Everett, Washington, was laid off from the fitness company where he worked for 31 years. The extra federal benefits helped him pay a loan to put a new roof on his house that he

See **VIRUS**, Page A9



LOCATION	#CASES	#DEATHS
Worldwide	15,600,000+	638,000+
United States	4,100,000+	145,000+
Virginia	82,364	2,067
Tennessee	89,078	938

SOURCES: Johns Hopkins, Virginia and Tennessee Departments of Health, AP

Judge blocks sweeping anti-abortion law in Tenn.

BY KIMBERLEE KRUESI
The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee will not be allowed to enforce one of the strictest abortion bans in the country as a legal battle over the measure's constitution-

ality moves through court, a federal judge ruled Friday.

U.S. District Judge William Campbell had already issued a temporary restraining order against the law just hours after Republican Gov. Bill Lee signed

off on it earlier this month. Campbell doubled down on blocking the law from being implemented Friday, arguing the plaintiffs had a strong likelihood of proving sections of the anti-abortion law were illegal.

"This Court leaves debate about Roe, Casey and their progeny to the learned jurists on the Supreme Court, legal scholars, legislators and the public — a debate

See **ABORTION**, Page A9

Thank you, Arch Snyder, for subscribing to the Bristol Herald Courier.

86/66
Weather » A10



INSIDE: CLASSIFIED B8-10 | COMICS B6 | DEATHS A4-5 | OPINION A8 | SCOREBOARD B2 | TELEVISION B7

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