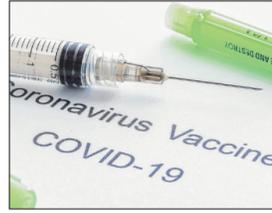




ETSU BASKETBALL

Right at home

Egyptian standout fits in on court while adjusting to life in the US. B1



COVID-19 VACCINES

More teens may soon be able to get boosters. B5

Johnson City Press

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022 | \$1.00

COVID sidelines JCMC cardiovascular staff

From staff reports

Ballad Health on Monday reported that a "significant majority" of its cardiovascular surgery department staff at Johnson City Medical Center have tested positive for COVID-19, which will keep them out of work until they are cleared to return. As a result, patients requiring emergent procedures will be transferred to either Holston Valley Medical Center in Kingsport or Bristol Regional Medical Center following a consultation with their surgeon and



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medical team. Those people currently hospitalized at JCMC will continue to be cared for in Johnson City, unless surgery is needed. In a memo to staff, the hospital system said it expects these changes to remain in place for five to 10 days.

"This action is being taken

See STAFF, Page A2

Ballad seeks relief from vaccine mandate

By Jonathan Roberts
PRESS STAFF WRITER
jroberts@johnsoncitypress.com

Ballad Health CEO Alan Levine sent a letter on behalf of the hospital system Monday to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services asking that the federal agency consider either allowing hospitals in areas with significant staffing shortages be exempt from the federal

COVID-19 vaccine mandate for healthcare workers, or delay its implementation to give facilities more time to convince staff to voluntarily take the vaccine.

"CMS should consider



Levine

permitting hospitals in health professional shortage areas to seek waivers from the mandate if they can demonstrate difficulties with retention of staff," the letter said. "Those parts of the country which already suffer from shortages, and which are disadvantaged in terms of recruitment and retention, need to first do no harm in terms of staffing avail-

See MANDATE, Page A2

Heavy snow brings outages

700 outages reported in Washington Co.; Elizabethton, Carter Co. have few problems

By Jonathan Roberts
PRESS STAFF WRITER
jroberts@johnsoncitypress.com

Heavy snowfall knocked out power for several hundred people across Washington County on Monday, with BrightRidge reporting more than 700 outages — the majority of which were reported in the southern end of the county.

While most outages were concentrated in areas like Lamar, Cherokee and Jonesborough, many were also reported in Austin Springs, Boones Creek and Johnson City. Washington County Sheriff Keith Sexton said in a press release that roads in the southern part of the county were hazardous, and urged people to stay home until conditions improved.

Much of Northeast Tennessee was under a winter storm warning since late Sunday night as snow storms moved into the area with the potential to dump as much as half a foot of snow in some areas. The warning expired at 10 a.m. Monday.

Although several inches of snow fell over Carter County and Elizabethton, there were few serious problems caused by the storm.

The Carter County Highway Department and Elizabethton Street and Sanitation Department worked to clear the streets and roads. The Highway Department said the streets even at the highest elevations were in good condition during the afternoon.

The Elizabethton Electric Department reported that there were only a few scattered outages on Monday and that the biggest outage happened before the storm. A tree fell across the power lines in Long Hollow while the storm was still producing rain, sometime after 4 a.m. The tree caused several residences to lose electrical service for a while but Marketing and Industrial

See SNOW, Page A2



While winter's first snowfall may have produced power outages and poor road conditions on Monday, it also provided a chance for many in the area to get out and enjoy the white stuff. While snow totals varied across the region, on average, the National Weather Service in Morristown estimated Washington County received 1.9 inches of snow, with about 1.5 inches falling in Johnson City. Here are some images captured by Johnson City Press readers from Monday's snowfall.

— Jonathan Roberts, Press Staff Writer

CONTRIBUTED
Left, Son and Mailu Wilson show off Emily the snowgirl.

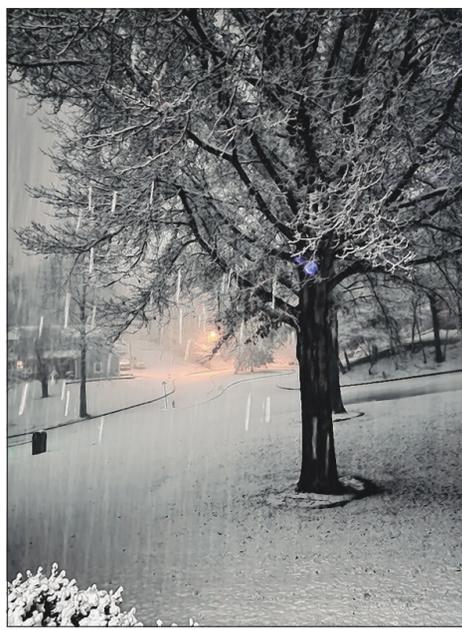


Michael Lambros of Johnson City submitted this photos of a child enjoying "his first real snow."



Cormac Bohannon of Johnson City enjoys the snow in a photo submitted by Joy Bohannon.

First snow of '22



Autumn Hancock photographed the snow falling in the Sherwood Forest neighborhood of Johnson City.



CONTRIBUTED
Katie Mays captured this snow scene in Unicoi.



CONTRIBUTED
Children got a chance to enjoy the winter's first snowfall. Anna Hackler submitted this photo taken in Elizabethton.

'Suspicious' death under investigation

Woman found dead in barn on Conklin Road

By Becky Campbell
PRESS SENIOR REPORTER
bcampbell@johnsoncitypress.com

A Jonesborough woman was found dead inside a barn on her property over the weekend, and the death is being investigated as suspicious, according to a press release from the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

Eula Miles, 73, was found around 1 p.m. Saturday, Sheriff Keith Sexton said in the press release.

Deputies and emergency medical personnel responded to a residence on Conklin Road about an unattended death. When investigators found Miles inside the empty barn, "suspicious

See DEATH, Page A2

Dixie Barbeque owner Howell dies at age 72

By Robert Houk
PRESS SENIOR REPORTER
rhouk@johnsoncitypress.com



Howell

sailing, died on Dec. 30 at the age of 72.

A longtime resident of Piney Flats, Howell was the owner of Dixie Barbeque in Johnson City, which was a favorite hangout for fans of barbecue and local political gossip.

See HOWELL, Page A2



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WEATHER A3

High Low
45 26
Sunny today; partly cloudy tonight

DEATHS A6

Alan Howell
Pauline Juanita Peterson
ELIZABETHTON
Edna LaFollette Fair

ERWIN
Nina Dale Masters Crain
Jo Sherwood

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