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PUBLIC SAFETY

Phone issues continue for 911

Madison County 911 Director Brenan Baird has been working for weeks with phone companies to try and clear up problems with poor reception on landline calls to the county 911 center.

The problems remain, but Baird said there is a temporary fix with cellular routers.

“In summation here’s where we are: Our 911 lines are routed through our backup cellular router numbers,” wrote Baird in an email explaining the situation. “The 911 calls are

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TAXES

County receives GRP tax check

Madison County has received its 2019 property tax payment from Georgia Renewable Power (GRP), which opened a plant in Colbert in 2019.

“They paid in full,” said tax commissioner Lamar Dalton. “We were closed Tuesday, so it didn’t get processed until Thursday.”

The tax bill was for \$1,658,709. That money will be divided between the county government, school system and industrial authority for use in their 2020 budgets.

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MAILING LABEL



Red Raiders, coach receive MainStreet All-Area honors

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Two arrested on drug charges on Clements Rd.

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REVIEW

2019 in the rearview

A look back at the year in Madison County news

There was no shortage of news in Madison County over the final 12 months of the decade.

Here’s a look back at some of the local stories in 2019:

JANUARY

•The Journal featured Toni Goodson, Comer, whose personal mission is to send a stuffed animal to every child in the foster care system from Madison, Elbert and Oglethorpe counties.

•The Journal featured Jennifer “Jenni” Barwell, a Madison County mom, who has experienced many days in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit with her children and now offers support to NICU moms.

•A body was discovered Jan. 8 in a wooded area near Jot Em Down Road and Bishop Carey Road, not far from the house of William “Kris” Avera, 39, who had been missing since Dec. 11.

•Patricia Mahoney was picked to replace Derek Doster on the Madison County Industrial Development and Building Authority.

•County commissioners approved pay increases for 28 employees. This action was included in the 2019 budget — with \$120,000 set aside to address salary improvements. The group heard later from other employees who wondered why more workers weren’t afforded a bump in pay.

•A 20-year old Loganville man was transported to Piedmont Athens Regional after his 2005 green Ford Mustang failed to negotiate the roundabout at Madison County’s historic courthouse in Danielsville and jumped the curbing striking a tree and barely missing the Crawford W. Long statue, while destroying a stone bench and damaging the grass and roadway.

•State Representative Tom McCall was sworn into office from a hospital room following open heart surgery.

•The Madison County Library hosted a “Georgia Artists With DisAbilities” exhibit.

•Danielsville Mayor Todd Higdon announced that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has agreed to revise its proposed bridge replacement on Hwy. 29 South at the South Fork of the Broad River to include a temporary bridge/



The first day of school in 2019 was also the opening of Madison County’s new Early Learning Center for pre-schoolers. Pictured (L-R) are Cora Rhinehart, Mari Lynn Appling, ELC director Michele Barrett, Khloe Conley and Sarah Speir.

onsite detour that will allow traffic to continue to flow through Danielsville during construction.

•Amy Duncan, who has served as a Madison County 9-1-1 dispatcher for 15 years, took a wrong number at her house, but she recognized the woman was in distress and got her the help she needed.

•Pastor Terry Willoughby talked to a crowded Tabors Chapel sanctuary during the annual Madison County Pastors and Layman’s Fellowship celebration of the life of Martin Luther King Jr.

•Harlan Page Brown was sentenced by Judge Chris Phelps in Madison County Superior Court to serve 30 years, with the first 15 years to be served in confinement, for trafficking methamphetamine.

•Madison County Assistant Superintendent Bonnie Knight announced that she would leave her position June 30 to work with Foothills Education Charter High School

•The school board agreed to house all Pre-K classes together in a new Early Learning Center in 2019-2020 in Danielsville.

•Michael Baker was unanimously approved by county commissioners as a new member of the county board of assessors.

FEBRUARY

Neese-Sanford Volunteer Fire Department told the BOC about plans for a new fire station that they would

pay for themselves, but they asked the county government to guarantee the loan for the facility so that banks would be on board with the project.

•Journal founder Frank Gillispie passed away at 78. In 1986, he pushed for a traffic light at the precarious spot in southern Madison County, embarking on a journalistic trek that would affect many lives.

•County commissioner Lee Allen again proposed that county voters get an opportunity to decide if they want Sunday alcohol sales in Madison County.

•The Madison County Board of Education held a day-long planning session with other local leaders.

•Ila Elementary School held a night “Under the Stars” pageant Feb. 12 for its special education students to show off their skills.

•It was standing room only at the board of education meeting as parents gathered for an informational meeting on the school system’s new Early Learning Center (ELC) for preschool students slated to open with the new school term in August.

•Joseph Christopher Cofer, 28, Hoschton, died in a single-vehicle accident in Madison County south of Danielsville.

•County commissioners voted 3-2 to put a Sunday sales referendum on a November ballot.

•Michael Paul Estes, 42, Hull, was charged with five



Jubilee Partners co-founder Don Mosley stands next to a sign showing where the nearly 4,000 refugees taken in by Jubilee, including those from Cuba, Asia, Central America and Burma. Jubilee Partners celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2019.

counts of aggravated child molestation, four counts of aggravated sodomy, three counts of incest, one count of rape and one count of aggravated sexual battery.

MARCH

•Retiring Madison County 9-1-1 center pioneers David Camp and Ricky Hix were honored with plaques at a county commissioners’ meeting for leading the county’s emergency communications for over two decades.

•Renee Bonner tried to kill her elderly mother by pumping her full of morphine and other painkillers in June 2017. That’s what Judge Jeff Malcom ruled, finding the 65-year-old Madison County resident Bonner guilty of attempted murder and

neglect to a disabled person. •Madison County High School senior Madison Carley Lovelace and her English teacher, Dallas Cowne, were recognized as the school’s “Star Student” and “Star Teacher.”

•Danielsville officials dealt with multiple complaints from Sherwood Subdivision residents about road issues within the development due to heavy rains.

•Madison County sophomore Kayla McPherson was named the Gatorade “Georgia Basketball Player of the Year” for 2018-19.

•Madison County government officials assessed their own cyber security after the Jackson County government

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