

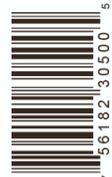
The Catoosa County News

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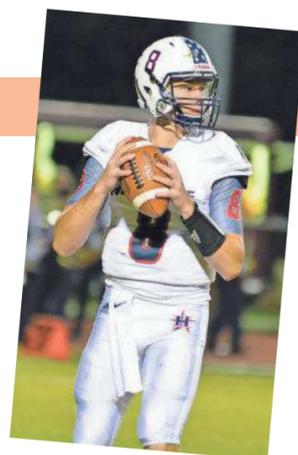
Fort Oglethorpe seniors take a three-hour tour

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Heritage passing game lights up Southeast

Sports, page B1



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Literacy group honors contributors, volunteers, 2 GED grads

By Tamara Wolk
Correspondent

On Tuesday, Oct. 17, Catoosa Citizens for Literacy held a luncheon to honor those who help meet the needs of GED students and others working to increase their literacy or achieve an academic goal.

"This work is a collaborative effort," said Shirley Smith, executive director of the Catoosa County Learning Center. "It's all of these people working together that makes our success possible."

The list of people and groups that support the Learning Center is long and impressive, but the highlight of

the celebration luncheon was hearing the stories of two GED students who won \$500 scholarships toward their future college education.

Mary Armour was awarded the Roger and Kay Bowman Scholarship to help toward her goal of becoming a first-grade teacher.

In an essay read aloud at the

luncheon, Armour shared how she dropped out of school in the 11th grade because she didn't have enough credits to graduate.

"If only I knew the things I know now," she wrote, "I would have worked harder to finish."

See LITERACY, A6

For the latest on local news, visit catoosawalkernews.com.



The Catoosa County News

Hundreds explore at Catoosa expo

By Dee D. Decker
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Eighty Catoosa County businesses — from nursing homes and restaurants to emergency care clinics and family crisis organizations — filled The Colonnade in Ringgold Thursday, Oct. 18, showcasing their businesses and services.

Hundreds of visitors milled through the displays sampling food and picking up information on the businesses and services offered within the county.

The Catoosa County Chamber of Commerce hosted the Showcase Catoosa Business Expo, which was sponsored by the city of Fort Oglethorpe, Capital Bank, National Healthcare of Fort Oglethorpe, and MedSTAT.

See EXPO, A6

Ex-attorney gets probation, mental treatment after 2016 crime spree

By Adam Cook
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A former attorney was sentenced to 20 years probation and mental health treatment last week after being found guilty of breaking into an elderly Catoosa County couple's home in 2016.

On Friday, Oct. 12, 31-year-old Matthew Jack Fitzharris faced sentencing in Catoosa County Superior Court following a bench trial presided over by Ralph Van Pelt Jr.



Matthew Jack Fitzharris

Fitzharris was found to be guilty by way of mentally ill on two counts of aggravated assault, two counts of entering an automobile, terroristic threats and acts, and second-degree criminal damage to property.

On July 13, 2016, Fitzharris was arrested after an elderly couple claimed he forced his way into their home through a carport door and then threatened to kill them.

See SENTENCED, A6



Catoosa County residents can vote early at the Westside precinct on Lakeview Drive or in Ringgold at the Freedom Center on Evitt Street. / Adam Cook

Early voting heavy

In first four days, more than 3,000 ballots cast

By Adam Cook
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The first week of early voting has been a busy one in Catoosa County, as officials say the number of people casting early ballots is reminiscent of the last presidential election.

Early voting opened Monday, Oct. 15, and will continue for two more weeks leading up to the Nov. 6 general election.

As of 11 a.m. Friday, Oct. 19, nearly 3,500 residents had been to the polls.

Catoosa County Elections Director Tonya Moore says the two precincts accepting early ballots have been extremely busy.

"The numbers are great so far," Moore said. "As of the end of day four (Thursday), we had a total of 3,194 ballots from the two precincts. It's been very busy."

Moore said that as of 11:15 a.m. an additional 269 residents had voted at the Ringgold and Westside precincts Friday morning, Oct. 19.

Friday morning's ballots bring the total to 3,663, which is 8.6 percent of the county's 40,225 active voters.

After the first day of early voting on Monday (Oct. 15), the vote tally stood at 812, followed by 740 votes Tuesday (Oct. 16), 848 Wednesday (Oct. 17), and 794 on Thursday (Oct. 18).

Moore said the high volume of

voters is similar to how early voting usually goes when there's a presidential race.

"We did 17,161 in person during early voting for the last presidential," Moore said. "We're trending for 16,800 in our early voting this time. If we have a busy third week like we normally do, we might pass the early voting turnout numbers from our last presidential election."

The three-week window for early voting will close Friday, Nov. 2.

Until then, Catoosa County residents can vote either at Ringgold's Freedom Center on Evitt Street next to Catoosa County Fire and Rescue, or at the Westside Precinct on Lakeview Drive next to Westside Elementary School.

Polls are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with lunch closures from noon to 1 p.m.

Also, early voting will be available Saturday, Oct. 27, from 9 a.m. to 4

p.m. and Thursday, Nov. 1, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

On Election Day, Nov. 6, polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Although residents can vote at Ringgold or Westside during early voting, they'll need to go to their designated precinct on Election Day.

There are no local contested races to be decided on the ballot, but voters still have plenty to consider this election season as they vote for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, and other offices.

What to bring to the polls

Voters are required to present an acceptable ID at the poll.

This may be a valid state or federal government issued photo ID, including a free ID Card issued by your county registrar's office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS); a Georgia driver's license, even if expired; a valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, Georgia, or any county, municipality, board, authority or other entity of this state; a valid United States passport ID; a valid U.S. military photo ID; or a valid tribal photo ID.

"A lot of people think they need to bring their precinct card to vote, they don't ... they just need their government issued ID," Moore said.



A 'Night to Honor Israel' is set for Thursday, Nov. 1, at 7 p.m. at the Colonnade, 264 Catoosa Circle, in Ringgold. Story on page A3.



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