

# Waycross Journal-Herald

\$1 

'South Georgia's Greatest Newspaper'

PO Box 219 • Waycross, GA 31502 • 912-590-6268 • facebook.com/wjhnews/



Vol. 103, Edition 37

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

2 sections, 26 pages

## Gunfire mars memorial; 3 wounded

By MYRA THRIFT  
Staff Writer

While family and friends were gathered in Garlington Park Saturday, September 11, for a balloon release memorial for a person who had died, someone fired gunshots at the group, striking three people and wound-

ing them, one of them seriously, said Capt. Greg Young, director of the Waycross Police Department's Criminal Investigations Section.

The three victims were transported by ambulance to Memorial Satilla Health Waycross. One was stable with slight injuries to his

neck and shoulders and two had more serious injuries, said Young. One of the victims was taken into surgery here at Memorial Satilla Health and the third victim was transferred by medical helicopter to UF Health Jacksonville with "more serious" injuries.

Officers were dispatched to

Garlington Park about 4:30 p.m., Saturday in reference to shots fired. When officers arrived, they began collecting information on the incident that occurred about 4:25 p.m.

"There were no deaths associated with the shooting," said Young. "The witnesses said the

shots came from near a wooded area around George Street."

Anyone who has information on this incident is encouraged to call the Waycross Police Department detectives unit at (912) 287-2929.

"We're still looking at leads in the case," said Young.

### Election panel has no action on challenge to candidate

By RICK NOLTE  
Staff Writer

The Ware County Board of Elections and Registration took no action Friday, September 10, on a residency challenge involving a candidate in the race for the seat in District 3 on the Waycross City Commission.

Katrena Felder, a candidate for the post, filed the challenge with the board against Akeem Clayton. The two, along with Dr. Earl Martin, have qualified to seek the seat.

Felder contended in her challenge that Clayton was not a resident of the district based on a letter sent by the city to candidates seeking posts in the municipal election, Supervisor of Elections Carlos Nelson said. That letter, Nelson stated, indicated candidates must be residents of the district for 12 months prior to the election, which this year is Tuesday, November 2.

He said, however, the time frame in the letter contradicted the city charter, which sets candidate residency for elective offices at the time of qualification. The qualification period for the election ended Friday, August 20.

Both Felder and Clayton presented their sides of the issue during the special called meeting of the five-person board at the elections office. In raising the challenge, Felder cited the fact Clayton did not meet the requirement stipulated in the letter from the city and used past voting records that placed his residency in Atlanta, Nelson said.

Waycross attorney Huey Spearman, who represented Clayton, said regardless of the language in the city's letter, his client met the residency requirement set forth in the charter. Past voting records had no bearing on residency (see VOTE, Page 8A)



Members of the Brantley County High School JROTC presented the colors during Saturday morning's 9-11 ceremony at Hoboken City Hall.

Photo By RICK HEAD



Georgia House District 178 Representative Steven Meeks was in Washington on September 11, 2001.

Photo By RICK HEAD

### Brantley representative recalls 9-11 at ceremony

By RICK HEAD  
Publisher

HOBOKEN — The retirement of the badge worn by the late Sgt. Danny Norris highlighted a Saturday morning ceremony remembering 9-11 at Hoboken City Hall.

Sgt. Norris died September 6, 2020 at Landmark Hospital in Savannah nearly two months after suffering a brain aneurysm in late July.

Representative Steven Meeks of Georgia House of Representatives for District 178 that includes Brantley County, presented Norris's wife, Heather, and daughter,

Kayla Nance, the official resolution of badge No. 902 being retired by the State House of Representatives back on March 31, 2021.

"It is my pleasure to present to Mrs. Wendy and the family a resolution honoring the life and memory of Sgt. Danny Norris to retire his badge No. 902," said Rep. Meeks. "His service to this community has not gone unnoticed or unrecognized. I didn't know Sgt. Norris personally, but the love of this community and the love he had of this community was (see 9-11, Page 8A)

### 'Train wreck' fuels Hice's Secretary of State bid

By RICK NOLTE  
Staff Writer

As a four-term U.S. Congressman, Jody Hice knows a political disaster when he sees one.

Georgia's 10th District representative says even a novice political observer would recognize one in the office of the Georgia Secretary of State.

"We have a train wreck in the Secretary of State's office right now," said Hice, who's seeking remedy that as a Republican candidate for the post currently held by Brad Raffensperger. "At the epicenter of that problem is election integrity. It has to be corrected. The people of this state need confidence that their votes count and the

people who violate the (voting) laws will be prosecuted."

Hice was in Waycross last week for a luncheon speech in his campaign to unseat Raffensperger in the Republican Primary in May. David Belle Isle also is seeking the party's nomination for a spot on the ballot in the General Election in November.

(See HICE, page 8A)



Hice

### 'Okefenokee Joe,' around since WWII, dies in swamp

Special to the WJH

A massive alligator that scientists believe was around during World War II has died.

Georgia's Coastal Ecology Lab announced the gator, called "Okefenokee Joe," passed away from old age.

"Joe" was 11 feet, 6 inches long and weighed more than 400 pounds. According to the lab, he

was the "dominant male alligator" of the Okefenokee Swamp Park for a very long time.

The lab had been watching his movement since June 2020. The group says it got his last GPS transmission back on July 20 and thought his satellite tag fell off.

The tracking device was found after several weeks and the lab confirmed his death. They say he died

in a remote and secluded place in the park.

"We're so grateful to have known him, for his contribution to science and the further understanding and preservation of his species," the lab said in a Facebook post.

The group said in a Facebook comment that, though it's difficult to properly age an alligator, they

gauged Joe was very old based on size and body condition.

One of the oldest recorded alligator lives was that of Saturn, an American alligator who was born in 1936 in Mississippi and spent nearly a decade in Germany before spending the majority of its life at the Moscow Zoo, where it died at the age of 83 or 84 on May 22, 2020.

**Index**

- Law Enforcement.....2A
- Obituaries.....3-5A
- Religion/Family...6A
- Sports.....1-3B
- Comics.....4B
- Legals.....5-8B
- Classifieds.....7B

YOUR NAME COULD BE HERE

## Area COVID-19 by the numbers

Ware County			Pierce County			Brantley County		
Date	Cases/Deaths	Last Year	Date	Cases/Deaths	Last Year	Date	Cases/Deaths	Last Year
9/6/21	4,137 / 174	1,376 / 47	9/6/21	1,950 / 60	538 / 14	9/6/21	1,752 / 48	317 / 8
9/7/21	4,164 / 175	1,378 / NC	9/7/21	1,965 / NC	539 / NC	9/7/21	1,767 / 49	NC
9/8/21	4,185 / NC	1,384 / NC	9/8/21	1,982 / 61	540 / NC	9/8/21	1,772 / 50	319 / NC
9/9/21	4,201 / 177	1,389 / 49	9/9/21	2,000 / NC	543 / NC	9/9/21	1,779 / NC	321 / NC
9/10/21	4,218 / NC	1,394 / NC	9/10/21	2,016 / 63	544 / NC	9/10/21	1,791 / 51	NC
9/11/21	4,225 / 178	1,405 / NC	9/11/21	2,021 / 64	552 / NC	9/11/21	1,797 / NC	NC
9/12/21	4,248 / NC	NA / NA	9/12/21	2,030 / NC	NA / NA	9/12/21	1,803 / NC	NA

Note: Chart shows the number of positive cases (first number) and deaths from the coronavirus since the GPH began tracking the spread in March, 2020. NC: No change in data. NA: No data available.

If you develop these Emergency warning signs, seek medical attention immediately. Note: This list is not all-inclusive, and individuals should consult a medical professional for any severe or concerning symptoms.

