

The Martin News

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July 6, 2020

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Richey Seaton to Retire from Georgia Cotton Commission Sills to Serve as Executive Director Taylor R. Sills, Georgia Cotton Commission

The Georgia Cotton Commission recently announced that Richey Seaton, the Commission's Executive Director, has decided to retire effective August 1, 2020. Taylor Sills will serve as Executive Director upon Seaton's retirement. Seaton has served in his role since 1994, and prior to that, worked for the Georgia Department of Agriculture as the Director of the Commodities Promotion Division. During Seaton's tenure, he was responsible to reestablishing the Commission's office and staff, and has ushered the organization's programs of research, promotion, and education to new heights as Georgia's cotton acreage has increased over the years. "Richey's 26 years of service to Georgia's cotton farmers and nearly 50 years of service to agriculture will not be forgotten. Through good times and bad, Richey's support for the cotton industry here in Georgia has been unwavering," said GCC Chairman Bart Davis, a cotton farmer from Colquitt County. He furthermore added, "Richey has been a mentor to many, and his influence has made an incredible impact on thousands of cotton farmers across the state. On behalf of Georgia's 3,500 cotton farmers, I want to publicly thank him for his service." "I look forward to continuing to work closely with Taylor as we build on the foundation that Richey has built and continue our tradition of service to cotton farmers," said Davis. The Georgia Cotton Commission is a producer-funded organization located in Perry, Georgia. The Commission began in 1965. Georgia cotton producers pay an assessment enabling the Commission to invest in programs of research, promotion, and education on behalf of all cotton producers of Georgia. For more information about the Georgia Cotton Commission please call (478) 988-4235 or on the web at www.georgiacottoncommission.org.

Jobless Rate Drops In Tift, State

As it did statewide, the unemployment rate dropped during May in Tift County. Tift's jobless rate was 6.1 percent in May; it was 8.8 percent in April and was 3.1 percent one year ago, according to the Ga. Department of Labor (DOL). "I think the drop in the unemployment rate indicates the strength of our workforce and our businesses, manufacturers and logistics companies. We've experienced steady growth over the last few years and our economic development activity has remained high, even during the pandemic," said Chris Beckham, vice president of the Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce. "We know some businesses have suffered over the last few months, but we've also gotten reports of a strong retail bounce-back in May. It's good news for Tift County, and we will continue to work to bring that rate down to the record levels we've had in the past year," Beckham said. In the Tiftarea, the jobless rate in May compared to April is:

Cook County – 5.1 percent, May; 7.8 percent, April Irwin County – 6.1 percent; 8.5 percent Worth County – 6.4 percent; 9 percent Berrien County – 6.6 percent; 13.6 percent Ben Hill County –6.9 percent; 10.9 percent Turner County –7.3 percent; 10.3 percent

In Georgia, May's unemployment rate of 9.7 percent was a decrease of 2.9 percent from April's 12.6 percent, the DOL reported. "I think we are going to continue to see big drops in the unemployment rate as Georgia continues to open back up," said Labor Commissioner Mark Butler. "We have to remember that the recent unemployment was not caused by an economic catalyst, but instead by a medical emergency. Those jobs are still out there for the most part." The number of employed across Georgia was up 144,877 over April, but down 480,592 compared to this time last year totaling 4,424,801. Georgia's labor force number of 4,900,139 reported for May was up 5,743 over April, but down 186,179 when compared to May 2019



Rotary Club Accepting Applications For ABAC Scholarships



It is time to apply for the Rotary Club of Tifton's Past District Governor Scholarships for freshmen at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. The Rotary Club plans to award \$1,000 scholarships to ABAC students in honor of the club's past Rotary District governors — Leon Benefield, David Bedell, Pete Donaldson and Lamar Branch. Criteria for the awards include past community service, economic need and academic scholarship. Applicants must submit an essay detailing how their educational goals match Rotary's commitment to "Service Above Self." The application deadline is July 15; applications may be obtained by contacting Scholarship Chairman Jeff Gibbs at jeffgibbs1206@gmail.com

Source: Tifton Grapevine



GEORGIA AGRICULTURE BINGO

Take a picture of you doing the activity then color in the box so you know you completed that activity. When you have BINGO (5 across, down or diagonally) you will receive a bookmark that will tell you how to enter to win a prize from Georgia Farm Bureau. Each BINGO is an additional entry!



Bingo with our friends at the Georgia Farm Bureau is going on all summer long. When kids complete a "bingo" (vertical, horizontal, diagonal), they earn the chance to win a FREE age appropriate book from the Farm Bureau. More information can be found here https://www.gfb.org/ag-in-the-classroom/other_contests.cms.

Source: Margaret Jones Public Library



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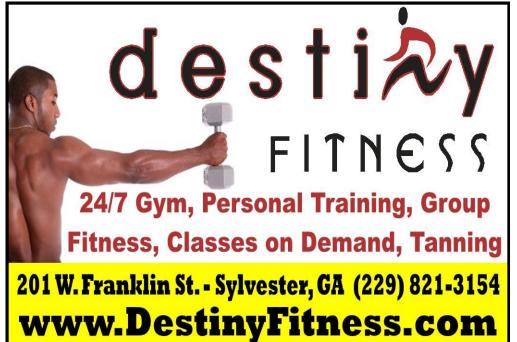
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Words from Lynn

I hope everyone had a great Fourth of July. My family and I did but we mainly stayed at the house. I don't do so well with wearing a mask so I social distance at home. I feel that we should wear masks and social distance so I stay away as much as possible. I feel that everyone has to take care of their own therefore make the decisions that best fit your family. Fourth of July was pleasant but I must say there were way more fireworks going off this year than I have heard in the past and much louder. My fur girl, Callie (20 pound Calico Cat) is usually not bothered by the noise but she was this year. She went under the bed and didn't come out for quite a long time. It truly sounded like a war zone!

It's hard to believe that it is July and school will be or should be starting soon. It's even hard for me to still believe that my 16 year old graduated two years early and will start college in August. He plans to study weather. He wants to be a storm chaser. Please do not think he got that desire from me because he wants to run to the storm and I run away from them fast and in a hurry! I am so very proud of him but we are starting a whole new journey in August so I will keep you up to date on how that it going.

I hope everyone enjoys the rest of July. I am surely going to along with staying busy with The Martin News, Premier Jewelry, Sunpro Solar and The Thaxton Turner. Work, work, work is the best thing to do to keep us all busy. Have a great week!

Community Comes Together To Provide Meals



The greater Tift County community came together to serve more than 2,000 meals to local youths while the Tift County Schools' Summer Feeding Program was paused this week as school offices were closed. The grassroots effort was organized by Priscilla Prince, her cousin Travis Williams, Steve Farley, Bryant Hill, Claire Moon and Pastor Cornelius Ponder. Williams, a Tifton native who now lives in Atlanta, called Thursday an "historical day in my hometown. ... Thank you God for mercy, grace and favor over all of our lives. Tift County community, we stepped up once again to feed over 1,250 youths today." Williams added that "over a two-day period, we fed over 2,100 youths." The school system's Summer

Feeding Program has been providing meals to children on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but all school programs were shut down his past week as the school system closed for a holiday week. That prompted several folks to organize an effort to ensure that kids still received meals. Several local businesses and individuals donated to the cause. The Peanut Butter & Jesus ministry lent the use of its vans. Locations were set up this past Tuesday and Thursday at Puckett Park and at Community Mortuary to distribute the meals. "Thanks for all the support," Williams said. "We appreciate every food donation from the local restaurants and businesses, and monetary donations from Tift County community, alumni, and all of our volunteers who helped out during our 'Feed the Community Rally'... What a blessing from God."



Think Tifton

County Offers Plan But City Says It Changes Nothing City Of Tifton Proceeds To Take Over Some Services



Tift County has submitted another proposal to the City of Tifton for specified joint services, but the city said the plan doesn't "prevent a substantial increase in taxes for city residents." For a couple of years, the city and county have been attempting to reach agreement on a "Service Delivery Strategy." Every 10 years, the state requires local governments to adopt a joint plan to detail what services – such as fire, water, animal control, etc., – are provided and who provides them. At a special called meeting last Thursday night, the Tift County Commission voted to send the city a proposal that county commissioners said "does not sepa-

rate departments, does not degrade services, and does not increase taxes. However, it does serve to settle lawsuits, end service delivery disputes, and provide a pathway to bridging the gap that has existed between our governments for

far too long." In a written statement released Tuesday to the Tifton Grapevine, the City of Tifton said: "The county's 'new proposal' does not alter the City Council's decision not to contract with the county. The City Council's decision not to contract with the county is to prevent a substantial increase in taxes for city residents while at the same time providing a superior level of service to city residents." City officials have said the

county's proposals would necessitate City Council having to raise city taxes by up to 5 mills. Rather than do that, the city said it decided to handle its own recreation, tax collections, animal control, city elections, non-emergency 911 dispatching and the housing of city inmates – now overseen by the county. "Some on the City Council have said that certain county proposals would have required the city to raise its millage rate. That statement is true, but not the whole truth," county commissioners said in a open letter this week in the Tifton Grapevine. "What they failed to mention is the fact that there would have been a corresponding decrease in the county millage rate to those same citizens, thereby offsetting the increase and rendering it essentially moot," the county commissioners wrote. But at the City Council meeting on June 15, City Attorney Rob Wilmot said there is a question about whether city taxpayers will actually see their county taxes go down. Wilmot said that in 2018, the county agreed that it would stop charging city residents for county code enforcement since the city handles that itself. Wilmot said the countywide tax rate never was reduced. "Can I guarantee that the county is going to reduce their millage rate?" Wilmot asked. "... They didn't do it in this instance." In their open letter to the community this week, county commissioners said the City of Tifton "has rejected each and every offer put forth by the county without even once submitting a counterproposal for our consideration. Anyone who has been involved in trying to broker a deal of any kind knows that a onesided negotiation is really not a negotiation at all. "At a time when our nation is facing an unprecedented public health pandemic, global economic uncertainty, and social unrest the likes of which we haven't seen in decades, the issues keeping us apart on a local level seem insignificant at best, and inexcusable at worst. The time for action is now. It's time to come together. We've extended our hand and we ask the city to grasp it." In its statement Tuesday, the city said: "On May 15, the county submitted to the city what was captioned as the county's "Final Proposal." After consideration of the county's "Final Proposal," the city determined it would be in the best interest of city taxpayers not to continue contracting with the county for certain services. "...Based upon the county's "Final Proposal," the city adopted and sent to the county the required forms for these services to be submitted to the (state) Department of Community Affairs." The city said Tuesday that it is still awaiting the county's approval of the forms that detail the city taking over specified services. "Once the city has received from the county a response to the submitted forms, we will continue the process of having a Service Delivery Strategy developed and submitted to the Department of Community Affairs," the city said.





Chad Dunn, PharmD Rhonda Lane, CPhT Becky Hodge, CPhT

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Thank you for your loyalty. We appreciate

Mac & Cheese Please

July is when they celebrate Mac & Cheese Day. We celebrate it at our house often but this just gives us another reason to celebrate it! My favorite is mac and cheese shells. Larry's favorite is white cheddar mac and cheese with bacon. What is your favorite. I could truly just eat mac and cheese with nothing else and make a meal out of it. Could you? Do you have a certain restaurant that you like to eat Mac & Cheese?

Things to Know About Bell Pepper

This is more like one of those "did you know moments"? I was recently looking at a Pampered Chef book on a Facebook Pampered Chef Party and saw this life hack that we all need to know but I surely did not know this. I bet my grandmother did but I did not. Want to know what it is? Sure thing. Before buying a bell pepper, flip it over. The ones with four bumps are females. These are full of seeds but sweeter and better for eating raw. The ones with three bumps are male which are better for cooking. Now when you are shopping for the perfect bell pepper, decide if you plan to eat it raw or cooked. I will definitely watch for this now because I absolutely love bell peppers and I love them raw, just wash them, slice them and eat them up! The Martin News hopes everyone is enjoying the Summer and enjoying your fresh fruits and vegetables that Summer has to offer.

Paint night with Allison Kilcrease is back at The Margaret Jones Public Library! They were celebrating our freedom to create and make new friends at the library. Make plans to join them.

Check in with the library for the schedule.





Proud Sponsor of This Weeks' SCHOOL SNAPSHOTS!

Staying Safe in the Heat this Summer

With this South Georgia humidity and heat, you can never get too much education on this topic! Extreme heat is defined as summertime temperatures that are much hotter and/or humid than average. Because some places are hotter than others, this depends on what's considered average for a particular location at that time of year. Humid and muggy conditions can make it seem hotter than it really is. Heat-related illnesses, like heat exhaustion or heat stroke, happen when the body is not able to properly cool itself. While the body normally cools itself by sweating, during extreme heat, this might not be enough. In these cases, a person's body temperature rises faster than it can cool itself down. This can cause damage to the brain and other vital organs. Some factors that might increase your risk of developing a heat-related illness include: High levels of humidity, Obesity, Fever, Dehydration, Prescription drug use, Heart disease, Mental illness, Poor circulation, Sunburn and Alcohol use. Older adults, the very young, and people with mental illness and chronic diseases are at highest risk. However, even young and healthy people can be affected if they participate in strenuous physical activities during hot weather. Summertime activity, whether on the playing field or the construction site, must be balanced with actions that help the body cool itself to prevent heat-related illness. Use this website to learn more on how to stay safe in the heat this summer, including how to prevent, recognize, and cope with heat-related illness. Stay safe this hot summer.



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Please donate your gently used items A M E

Have unwanted furniture in good condition? Call <u>272.6200</u> for how-to donate

Interested in volunteering for this event, contact Shelly at 272.6200

Come shop with us on August 8th and spread the word!

ThAnK yOu FoR yOuR sUpPoRt!

South GeorgiaLEADS Opens Recruitment for Fifth Year

June 15, 2020 – South GeorgiaLEADS opens recruitment for the 2020-2021 cohort of its 21-county leadership development initiative. Dedicated to investing in the communities of South Georgia and strengthening the leadership capacity of the region, South GeorgiaLEADS (SGL) seeks participants from diverse perspectives and backgrounds who share a common vision of improving the economic vitality of the region. Supported by strong corporate sponsors—Georgia Power Company as the sustaining sponsor and Electric Cities of Georgia as the presenting sponsor—South GeorgiaLEADS links business and civic leaders, educators, non-profit professionals, elected and public officials, and other interested participants to the region's economic development agenda and efforts. Facilitated by faculty from the University of Georgia's J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, the program ties the challenges and opportunities that are unique to South Georgia with leadership training, giving program participants greater insight on the skills needed to engage on issues and find meaningful solutions. South GeorgiaLEADS Chair Barbara Grogan shares her enthusiasm for this year's program. "SGL has seen great success since we launched in 2016, continuing to grow, evolve, and meet the needs of the region in a timely fashion. SGL presents a unique opportunity for our region to work collectively and in unison, with the shared goal of a sustainable and prosperous region. SGL members represent those who are engaged, committed and willing to step up to the plate for our region, and we invite anyone interested to join our efforts." As the largest regional leadership program in the State, South Georgia continues to raise the bar for leadership, economic development and civic engagement for existing leaders. SGL is an eight-month leadership experience for leaders throughout South Georgia, designed to facilitate awareness of issues that are essential to the future success of the region by giving participants the necessary skills and training needed to effectively lead South Georgia in the 21st Century economy. Visits to new communities, focused on issues of regional importance and growth challenges across the region, this year's SGL class will visit communities throughout the region, as well as attend the Georgia Chamber's Rural Prosperity Summit in Tifton. With applications currently available to anyone who may be interested, the program will start in August 2020 and run through March 2021. Emphasizing regional priorities throughout the program, each session directly links leadership skills training to issues of critical importance to South Georgia:

Regional Identity & Influence

Includes creating a regional brand and identity for South Georgia that is recognized internally as well as externally, enhancing both perception and influence of the region across the State.

Workforce Development

Includes the strategic alignment of public and private sectors—business, industry, and educational partners—to address key work-force development needs and challenges; and to increase the economic viability of South Georgia.

Collective Visioning & Planning

Includes developing leaders who understand the changing South Georgia economy and culture; and recognize why it is essential to both think and act within a global context, working collaboratively to ensure the region's success.

The purpose of South GeorgiaLEADS is to develop informed, aware, and educated leaders to promote and grow South Georgia by:

Increasing awareness of assets and resources;

Creating a shared sense of regional pride and ownership in both action and solutions;

Strengthening partnerships and alliances; and

Enhancing political influence and acuity to support the needs and opportunities of South Georgia.

Tuition is \$1,250 per participant, with a limited number of scholarships available. For more information about South GeorgiaLEADS, please visit their website at https://locatesouthgeorgia.com/leadership-development/. Interested applicants may also contact South GeorgiaLEADS Chair Barbara Grogan at 229.921.1457; or bgrogan@selectmoultrie.com. Application materials may also be found online at https://locatesouthgeorgia.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SGL_Application_Paper-Application-2020-2021.docx. Applications are due on Friday, July 10, by the close of business. Interested candidates may also contact their local economic development team—Chambers of Commerce and Development Authorities—for further information.

Past Worth County Graduates of the Leads Class

2016-2017 Class Kim Gilman - Phoebe Worth Medical Center Karen M. Rackley - Sylvester-Worth County Chamber Karen Willis - Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer

2019-2020 Class Karen Singletary - City of Sylvester Main Street Lisa Dylinski - Sylvester-Worth County Family Connections

Source: Sylvester - Worth County Chamber of Commerce

State COVID-19 Cases Set Record Amid Calls To Re-Close Bars, Nightclubs



COVID-19 cases rose by nearly 3,500 in Georgia on Thursday, setting a new daily record and punctuating calls by state healthcare professionals to re-close bars and nightclubs. The Ga. Department of Public Health (DPH) confirmed 87,709 cases Thursday, an increase of 3,472 since Wednesday. The state also reported a toal 2,849 deaths from the virus. Tift County had 767 cases as of Thursday afternoon with 26 deaths, the DPH reported. Also Thursday, more than 1,400 healthcare workers sent an open letter to Gov. Brian P. Kemp, telling him that Georgia is "simply not prepared" for the surge in coronavirus cases. "We are also

seeing a very troubling increase in hospitalizations that, if continuing, will overwhelm our health care infrastructure, not only in metro Atlanta but also in rural Georgia," the letter reads. The letter calls for a return to some restrictions, such as re-closing bars and nightclubs, prohibiting indoor gatherings of more than 25 people – including churches – and implementing a statewide mask requirement. "We have an epidemic that's getting out of control in Georgia," Dr. Melanie Thompson, an Atlanta physician and HIV expert who signed the letter, told Georgia Health News. The governor has been visiting cities around the state this week to encourage residents to wear face masks and to maintain social distancing, especially during the Independence Day holiday weekend. "We are not out of the woods yet," Kemp said Thursday in Brunswick. "We cannot grow complacent and weary." "Scattered, smothered, and (faces) covered" – Wearing Waffle House masks, Gov. Brian Kemp and Georgia Public Health Commissioner Dr. Kathleen Toomey are seen on their state tour this week urging Georgians to "mask up."



