



GENEVA COUNTY REAPER



VOLUME 121 NUMBER 9 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020 20 PAGES • 2 SECTIONS 75 CENTS

Primary Election, Tuesday, March 3

EVERY VOTE COUNTS

See ELECTION story page 3A

Monthly food bank coming to Geneva County

NELSON E GOMEZ JR
Staff Writer

The Geneva County Commission meeting started off with a request from Robert Michaels, coordinator of the newly established Geneva County Food Bank. Michaels requested the commission to approve using the Geneva County Farm Center as a location once a month to facilitate the food bank for the County.

Michaels stated, "Sixty-five percent of the people in Geneva County that need this help is senior citizens. They have to chose between food and medicine. About two to three hours a month is all we are asking for to distribute this food." He added, "The USDA has an allotment for every county in Alabama, and Geneva County is not getting any of it."

Michaels says an active food bank in the county is a much needed program. "I get emotional a lot of times when I see people starving. I have opened refrigerator doors with nothing but a bottle of water in there. And I'll tell you it breaks your heart to see people in Geneva County starving and there's no call for it when we have the resources to take care of that."

Commissioners unanimously approved the usage of the Farm Center for the food bank. Michaels will work directly with Geneva's Auburn Extension office to coordinate scheduling to not conflict with the new farmers mar-

ket opening at the Farm Center.

Commissioners went on to hear from Lori Wilcoxon, Coordinator for Geneva, Henry, and Houston County's 2020 Census. Wilcoxon introduced her "LEAD" team members to the commission which consists of Kelli Dillard, Realtor and Hartford Chamber of Commerce President, Jessica Simmons with Purpose and Promise Ministry and Gloria Marks with the Geneva County Extension Office. The Geneva County LEAD members will assist Wilcoxon with the 2020 Census awareness campaign by reaching out to local businesses, churches, civic groups, schools and residents and promoting the importance of the Census.

Wilcoxon also expressed the importance of the Census stating, "We could lose a congressional seat, and for every person that lives in this state that does not do their Census, we lose \$1,600 in Federal funds. \$1,600 per person, per year, for the next 10 years." She added, "Some of our Federal programs that are benefiting from this are Medicaid, Medicare, healthy lunches, WIC, and Headstart. There's not a person in this community that does not benefit from federal dollars and being a small rural community you know we need all of the federal dollars we can get."

Starting March 12, the Census can be taken

online, on your phone or by paper. Every person that resides in Geneva County is urged to take the Census and be counted for your community, for Alabama, and for future funding.

Commissioners went on to hear from John Hilyer, Project Manager of Bear Brothers Inc. out of Montgomery. Bear Brothers is the company hired to oversee the new jail construction. Hilyer was asked to attend the meeting to give an update on status and also an explanation for the continued delays in the construction of the jail.

Hilyer says rain days over the last year as well as one of his contractors walking off the job for 60 days is mostly to blame. Hilyer stated, "Weather has been a significant challenge. After January 10 of last year up until last week, we have experienced 126 days of rain on the job site. Of those 126 days, 91 days we would deem significant rainfall with over a tenth of an inch or more. So, we are losing a third of our days in rain so that's challenging."

Hilyer also attributed a significant delay to one of the sub-contractors they hired walking off the job last summer. Hilyer stated, "They really hurt us. They cost us 60 days on the construction schedule. They were to arrive in mid-July, they showed up the first of August and worked two days then left. It took a quite of bit of work to get them back

on-site."

Hilyer says the reason the sub-contractor left the job-site was due to the complex job in building a jail and they went on to easier jobs to work first.

Commissioners were not happy with that report and asked Hilyer if he has contacted the contracting company (Coreslab) about liquidated damages. He has not.

Commissioner Sandy Hammer stated, "We were supposed to be in that facility in four hundred and fifty days. We've got right at \$1,500 a day in liquidated damages against Bear. I think you need to go back to those people and talk to them about liquidated damages."

Hilyer stated if liquidated damages were asked of Bear, Inc., they would in-turn pursue the individual contractors that attributed to the delays.

Hammer stated, "I would suggest talking to those people because we are probably going to assess some liquidated damages. That impacts us, it impacts our sales tax that we would have drawn off of that."

Hilyer stated he has not paid Coreslab any of the money due to them yet and will be contacting them in regards to reducing their charges due to the delays. Hilyer stated he's estimating the completion of the jail to be the end of May and says the jail will be to a point that rain won't affect construction in the next few weeks.



Vandals hit Citizens Park in downtown Geneva sometime last Thursday night. White paint was splatter over the park's tables and chairs and surrounding ground, additionally garbage and debris were left behind. There has been controversy regarding whether the park should be locked overnight. The park is owned by the Geneva Historical Society and is often leased out to individuals for events.



This past Thursday Worshipful Master Robbie Wehunt of Chancellor Masonic Lodge 664 along with Worthy Patron Paul Rodgers of Chancellor Wilkes 571 of the Eastern Star, present Jo Ellen Simmons, Coffee Springs Senior Citizens Director with a check for 1000.00. The money will go towards a new ice machine for the Senior Center. Mrs. Simmons advised the old ice machine, which was previously donated, has broken down beyond repair. Pictured back row: Barbara Shirah, Ernestine Nelson, P.L. Nelson, Brent Underwood, Worthy Patron Rodgers and Jerry Miller. Front: Director Simmons with Worshipful Master Wehunt.

Correction:
The local farmer supporting Trump reported in the Reaper last week is Dan Fain, not Don.

We not only bring you the best news coverage in the area, we also provide the best commercial printing services in the area!

PUJOL
PRINTING & PUBLISHING
Your Hometown Printing & Publishing Company

See Us For....
LETTERHEADS • ENVELOPES
BUSINESS CARDS • STATIONERY
CARBONLESS FORMS • INVOICES
TICKETS • FLYERS
NEWSLETTERS • BROCHURES
and more!

Also A Large Selection of Office Supplies!

Lots of things have changed in our business over the years, but old-fashioned customer service is not one of them.