

—POLK— TODAY



A YEAR IN REVIEW

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JAN
2023

Lane Slater took the top prize in the Polk School District Spelling Bee in late January.

JAN
2023

Gordy Foster enjoys his first time in a newly donated gait trainer dubbed "Gordy's Wheels" that will help him learn how to walk. Gordy suffers from a heart defect which has required two surgeries in his young life to repair, and another to come when he turns 3. Cedartown Home Depot and Cooper Medical Supply donated a gait trainer for him to use on Saturday, January 7, 2023.



Early year rainy weather after a late holiday freeze gave way to flooding in areas around Polk County to start off 2023.

FEB
2023

**Rockmart Cultural Arts Center honored
Rex Garner as the Artist of the Year**





County Commissioners were sought for help on a project to make the old Elm Street School into new housing for seniors and families with NWGA Housing.

February was also Dental Health Month, and students from the College & Career Academy helped students learn from others about their dental health.



**FEB
2023**



**MARCH
2023**

Cedartown hosted a film crew for a forthcoming movie "Six Triple Eight" as Main Street took on a 1940s feel for the Netflix feature written and directed by Tyler Perry.

MARCH 2023

A new Pizza Hut location was started in Rockmart during the month of March. It was completed before the fall and was up and running for customers as one of several new pizza restaurant locations to open in Rockmart over the past years. Dominos joined the scene in December. Pizza Hut was also one of several businesses to complete construction along the Nathan Dean Parkway corridor during the year.



WELSHFest returned to Rockmart for 2023. The event included a traditional tea ceremony, vendors and a Welsh Corgi dog show.

**APRIL
2023**

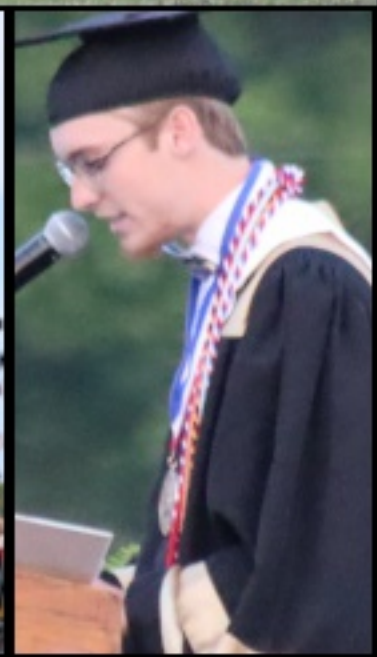
The Cedar Valley Arts Festival returned to Peek Park in Cedartown in late April. The annual fundraiser for the Junior Service League included the annual 5K Run, vendors, a Dog Show and much more.





**MAY
2023**

Graduation time returned at the end of May and the Class of 2023 at Rockmart and Cedartown High School walked across the stage just ahead of the Memorial Day holiday. Hundreds of students earned a diploma from the Polk School District from both schools, along with degrees and certificates from Georgia Highlands and Georgia Northwestern Technical College.



JUNE 2023

SUMMERTIME! The opening month of Summer saw the RCAC host performances for youth camps for "Aladdin Jr." and "Guys and Dolls." Also: Jason Walker sought help from the community to get a kidney (he had an operation in December,) One Door Polk hosted youth for a Summer Fun Day, the Polk Career Connect Program got their first graduates, and the Rehmen family began a new residential development.





The 2023 Cedartown Wheelchair 5K Road Race saw athletes return from around the globe to tackle one of three big races



**JULY
2023**



Nick Chubb brought his football camp back for Cedartown youth as the NFL running back provided kids the chance to learn from one of the best. Chubb later was injured on the field for the Browns against the Steelers early in the season.

The City of Rockmart's new playground structures went up during the spring and were ready this summer for kids to play on at the Nathan Dean Sports Complex.



AdventHealth Redmond brought back their primary care offices to Polk County. They held a grand opening event in July that saw many patients and staff getting the chance to mingle. City officials came out for the ribbon cutting event that also featured AdventHealth Redmond CEO Isaac Sendros. The office was shuttered for three years before returning under the new ownership at Redmond.



Youth Summerfest wrapped up their final year of their event at the Turner Street Center in early July. Joy Fredrick, longtime head organizer of the event, retired from leading the event for local students.

**JULY
2023**



**AUG
2023**

A project that began with a vision to provide a safe and accessible connection for the Pinhoti Trail was completed and officially opened by the County in August. The Potts Hollow Trailhead spearheaded by conservation groups and Commissioner Scotty Tillery gives trail users the chance to get on and off the trail system that runs from Alabama to Springer Mountain and the Appalachian Trail onward north. Polk County will be working toward saving more land around the trailhead.

A man who was shot in May during a domestic altercation was jailed by law enforcement by August after he recovered. Flint Dawson Warren was released after on a \$10,000 bond for multiple charges.



**AUG
2023**



A July trial ended with a guilty verdict for Ryan Dover, who was sentenced to the maximum five years he could receive for the hit-and-run death of Eric Keais on September 11, 2019. Dover attempted to argue that he was scared to pull over after immediately hitting Keais. Dover was sentenced in late August for the hit-and-run death, just weeks short of the fourth anniversary of the incident.

Aragon's former Mayor Debbie Pittman made a fateful decision in August when after deciding not to seek a new term, she abruptly shifted course and also decided not to finish her term in office. Pittman had told Polk Today that she planned to serve until December, but ultimately changed her mind and turned in her resignation in August. Judd Fee became the head of the city as the Pro Tem, and later won the seat outright in the November election by a slim margin in a low turnout vote.



SEPT
2023





It was a September to remember in Polk County as the Exchange Club hosted the annual Polk County Fair at the beginning of the month, while by the end a variety of positive conclusions made the news.

Thousands took part this year in the Polk County Fair, raising money for the Exchange Club which then makes donations to organizations in need throughout the community. This year also saw a fully completed Polk Today booth.

Additional good news came when several openings too place in Polk. That included the newest restaurant addition to Cedartown with the completion of Jack's on North Main Street. They weren't the only newbies to join the Cedartown market this year. Taco Man moved indoors, Ellianos completed their new coffee shop, Sugarless Sweets moved down Main Street to a smaller location, and Chick-fil-A opened a new location across from Walmart.

Over in Aragon, the Rehmen family were back at it with their latest ribbon cutting ceremony. They opened new apartment units at New Prospect Place within the city limits, their second development in Aragon completed in recent years. Work continued on their new Cedartown multi-unit development, with the City Commission hearing requests for some changes due to the layout and inclusion of a smaller lot on College Dr.

A visit from the Mobilize Recovery tour to Mosaic Place also happened during the month of September. Georgia's recovery bus made a stop in Cedartown at one of many of the recovery programs available statewide. Around Northwest Georgia, there were also stops made at Cartersville, Douglasville, Hiram and Rome. Lydia Goodson (who was program manager for Mosaic Place with Highland Rivers Health and now works for the Sheriffs office in a new program) was one of several speakers to take part in the event at Mosaic Place in Cedartown during National Recovery Month. Mosaic Place this year celebrated their seventh anniversary in October.



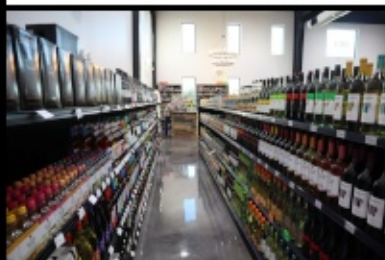
**SEPT
2023**

Five years after the shooting death of Det. Kristen Hearne, her widow Matthew Hearne was in trouble with the law. Hearne was booked after he impersonated a Buchanan Police Official while harassing his ex.



One of Polk County's own made a stop into see the folks back home. Gretchen Corbin spoke to the Polk County Historical Society in late October about the history of the Georgia Lottery and how it has benefitted thousands of students over the past decades.

Mavis Tire Company wrapped up their first Polk County store in October and began operations at month's end. The Cedartown location was joined by another in Rockmart at the tail end of November.



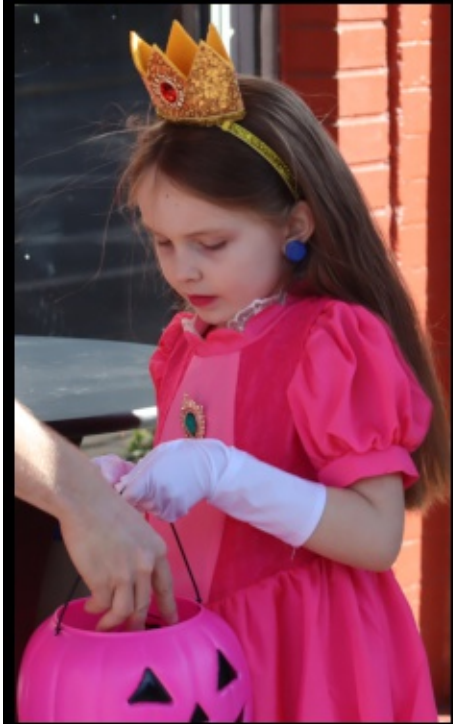
On the Rocks opened their doors as the second liquor store within the City of Rockmart during the month. Rock Market Beverage opened its doors in August as the first package store after voters approved sales in 2021.

Dalton Dover was back in town to play a show for the return of Homespun to downtown Rockmart at the beginning of the month.



**OCT
2023**

OCT 2023



Family of Crystal Vincent, former 911 Director, came to the November County Commission meeting to receive a proclamation honoring her passing in January.

**NOV
2023**



November brought with it the annual food drives for Thanksgiving. This year PSD doubled its goal of 25,000 pounds of food and brought in more than 55,000 lbs. Along with positive results for donations for Thanksgiving, PSD also made progress in the new Fine Arts facility at Rockmart High School. Following the holiday, the 2023 Silver Comet Festival organized by Rotarians was held in downtown Rockmart. Thousands were raised and given back to several organizations in the community via the Duck Race.





A history-making month for Polk! Thousands attended the C&B Construction Christmas Party at RHS. Cedartown's Game Day Cheer Squad won a state title, Rockmart football took it to three overtimes for a state title and fell just short, and Rockmart Mayor Sherman Ross won re-election. Andrew Carter, a two-term City Commission and voice on WGAA, finished his term in office.

**DEC
2023**

