Meeks Park opens county playground to delight of children, parents alike

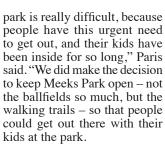
By Jarrett Whitener North Georgia News Staff Writer

To the delight of Union County's families and children, and in accordance with state guidelines, Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris opened the Meeks Park playground equipment at the beginning of June.

"We kind of did a soft opening of everything without making a public announcement," Paris said. "We didn't want it to go from not being used at all to everybody coming. We are following the governor's guidelines, and once he said we could open playgrounds, then we had to figure out a way to open them.'

Meeks Park was not closed though the shelterin-place order but remained open for people to exercise so long as they maintained social distancing.

"Every decision with that



"We just felt like that was important to keep open the whole time, but now, we are through to this part, and the state is opening things up. We tried to go with the state guidelines when opening things

"We opened the pickleball courts, tennis courts, basketball and skateboard park, although we put signs on most of those limiting the amount of people, and they still have the 6-foot social distancing. Obviously, with the kids on the playground, it is next to impossible.

Regardless of the soft



Families tired of being cooped up at home have been overjoyed in recent weeks with the reopening of the playground areas at Meeks Park.

opening, families have taken

"I am just happy to get the kids out of the house," parent Jennifer Blake said at the park last Thursday. "It is getting hot outside, and they need to be active and burn off this energy they have built up from being stuck inside all day.

"I'm not that worried about the virus; I think parents are responsible enough to know when not to bring their kids to the park. And they say that kids are less likely to get the virus, so I feel safe bringing mine here as long as it isn't too crowded.'

The pool and splashpad areas of Meeks Park remain closed for the time being as the county continues its cautious approach to COVID-19.

'We are staying away

from opening ours until we see if anybody else opens theirs," Paris said. "We know that if we are the only pool opened, then all the surrounding counties will be flooding over to here.

"It is something we hope to get back open, but with county receives additional people and kids out in the pool, everybody gets water in surrounding areas.

their throats and are constantly clearing their throats and spitting water, and it is just a nervous thing.'

More information on the pool and splashpad reopening will become available as the feedback from the state and

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and/or Political Body (i.e. person field of candidates. Libertarian Party) candidates qualify for the November election via petition nomination or write-in candidacy later this summer, the currently unchallenged party nominees will be sworn into office in

For Georgia House of Representatives District 8. Stan Gunter defeated Steve Townsend to clench the Republican nomination. Districtwide, Gunter received 65.29 percent of the vote with 9,917 votes to Townsend's

of White County, and Gunter won Union with 72.44 percent of the vote to Townsend's 27.56 percent.

Dave Cooper ran unopposed for the District 8 seat on the Democratic ticket, and he will square off against Gunter in the Nov. 3 election.

For 51st District State Senator, Republican Incumbent Steve Gooch qualified unopposed, and challenger June Krise, who also qualified unopposed, in the November election.

For U.S. Representative in the 117th Congress from the 9th Congressional District of Georgia, Matt Gurtler led with 21.31 percent of the vote in the Republican race, followed closely by Andrew Clyde with 18.62 percent in the nine-

In Union County, Gurtler won majority support with 52.9 percent of voters and 3,306 votes.

Gurtler and Clyde are headed for an Aug. 11 Republican Party Primary Runoff Election to decide which candidate will move on to the Nov. 3 General

According to state law, a candidate may only be nominated for or elected to incumbents Charlie Bethel public office after receiving a and Sarah Hawkins Warren majority of the vote, or at least 50 percent plus 1 vote. District 8 consists of If no one receives a majority Towns, Union and Rabun vote, the top two vote getters counties, as well as a portion must square off in a runoff Coomer, Sara Doyle, Elizabeth election

On the Democratic ticket, Brooke Siskin and Devin Pandy are headed for a runoff as well. Siskin received 41.48 percent of the Parks ran unopposed for districtwide vote to Pandy's 32.88 percent.

For U.S. Senate, Incumbent David A. Perdue qualified unopposed and will be the Republican nominee in the Republican nomination November.

Democratic challenger he will face Democratic Jon Ossoff fended off six competitors to win his party's nomination for the Senate race, and he will be headed for their respective parties at for a General Election contest election time. with Perdue.

Incumbent Jason Shaw and Democrat Robert G. Bryant face off in the November this week's newspaper.

General Election.

Also for Public Service Commissioner, Republican Incumbent Lauren Bubba McDonald Jr. qualified unopposed. Daniel Blackman defeated John Noel to earn the Democratic nomination, and he will face McDonald Jr. in November.

On the Nonpartisan General Election Ballot, two Georgia Supreme Court seats were up for election, and both

defeated their opponents. For Court of Appeals Judge, Incumbents Trenton "Trent" Brown III, Christian Dallas Gobeil, David Todd Markle and Carla McMillian all ran unopposed and are set

to be sworn in. Incumbent Joy R. Judge, Superior Court of the Enotah Judicial Circuit, and she is set to be sworn in

Donald J. Trump won in Georgia for the Presidential Preference Primary, and Joe Biden won on the Democratic side - both were the only candidates still in the race

For coverage of For Public Service Republican and Democratic Commissioner, Republican Party Questions, as well as precinct-level results for all 11 Union County polling places, qualified unopposed and will see full election results inside

Workman and Harris Awarded Rotary Scholarships

The Rotary club of Union County is proud to announce that Jordan Workman and Isabella Harris, recent graduates of Union County High School, have received college scholarships from

Rotary.
"The UCHS Interact Club, sponsored by the Union County Rotary Club," says Melissa Bridges, the Assistant Principal/Media Specialist for the Middle School/ High School, "is happy to congratulate not one but two winners of this year's District 6910 scholarships -- Isabella Harris and Jordan Workman. They have put in many hours of community service as they exhibit the club motto, 'service above self'. '

Isabella is headed to Georgia State University to pursue a major in business management. GSU plans to resume classes on campus in the Fall. Bella has a competitive nature and always strives for excellence; she has a love for anything aquatic and is always intrigued by learning new things. Bella says, "I would like to thank Rotary



for giving me the opportunity to better myself so one day I can pay forward all the blessings I have received in my

Jordan will be attending University College Cork in Ireland to obtain a law degree and plans to become a practicing attorney. Classes there will be held in person next several months, the Roand she will be living on campus. Last year, Jordan was part of a Rotary Youth Exchange Program in Italy. Her hobbies include painting and drawing, and she enjoys



Jordan Workman

snow skiing and knee boarding. Her favorite quote is by Vivian Greene: "life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain."

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about Rotary, it has never been easier. For the tary Club of Union County is meeting on-line via Zoom every other Thursday at Noon. For an invitation to a meeting contact Harvey at (706) 379-