

Herald-Citizen

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 | COOKEVILLE, TENNESSEE

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Aphena renovating chocolate plant



An architect's rendering of the renovated Russell Stover factory for Aphena.

BY LINDSAY PRIDE
HERALD-CITIZEN

Aphena Pharma Solutions, LLC will invest \$27 million to renovate the old Russell Stover plant in Cookeville and hire about 200 new workers over the next five years. J&S Construction is already renovating the 500,000-square-foot building on Chocolate Drive.

"It'll start coming together in the next six to eight weeks," Aphena CEO Shawn Reilley said. Aphena Pharma makes packaging for the pharmaceutical and medical device industries and employs about 350 people in Cookeville, where it was founded in 2003. "Our typical client base are the bigger nutritional companies, all the way to big pharmaceutical

companies," said Eric Allen, EVP of Sales. Allen said the company will keep its 80,000-square-foot Fisk Road presence but will consolidate a warehouse in Algood and another building on Browns Mill Road. The company also has a 26-acre campus in eastern Maryland, but

SEE APHENA, PAGE A2

Delaneys No. 83 for Habitat

BY PAIGE STANAGE
HERALD-CITIZEN

The Delaney family received the keys to their new home Monday during an Upper Cumberland Habitat for Humanity home dedication ceremony.

The family includes husband and wife, Lewis and Amanda, and their sons, Troy, Sage and Zayne.

Their house is the 83rd home that's been built by the UCHF, and is the first on Jake Hoot Drive.

"I just want to say thank you all for everything," said Amanda. "It's just been a dream come true. My mom doesn't even own her own home and I'm about to have my own house. It's amazing."

"I tell everyone about this program." Lewis and Amanda have been married for more than four years. Since the birth of Troy, their oldest son, the family has lived in eight different



Lewis, Amanda, Troy, Sage and Zayne are excited about moving into their Upper Cumberland Habitat for Humanity home on Jake Hoot Drive.

PAIGE STANAGE | HERALD-CITIZEN

SEE HABITAT, PAGE A2

Friday deadline for school decision

BY JIM HERRIN
HERALD-CITIZEN

An announcement at the top of the Putnam County School System's webpage makes it clear: "September 18, 2020, (at 4:00 PM CST) is the deadline to finalize your choice about remote learning."

Putnam County families have until then to decide whether they are going to finish out the school year by remote learning or by attending classes in person.

The original Return To School Plan had allowed parents to change their minds every nine weeks, but officials reconsidered that option once classes resumed.

Students and their families must now either "commit to the traditional learning environment at the student's school" or "commit to the remote learning environment" ... "for the remainder of the year."

SEE DEADLINE, PAGE A2

Cedar Avenue work begins

BY LINDSAY PRIDE
HERALD-CITIZEN

Improvements to Cedar Avenue between 2nd and 7th streets began Tuesday.

"We're trying to do as much as we can from 4th to 7th then we'll move down, instead of trying to tear up the whole road at one time," Cookeville Public Works Director Greg Brown

said. The project is a CityScape project that includes curb and gutter, new sidewalks, placing utilities underground, replacing the storm sewer, paving and decorative lighting.

City public works employees will be performing the work, and the city's paving contractor will complete the paving.

The project was financed through a \$462,000 general obligation bond fund, according to city finance director Brenda Imel.

An anticipated completion date hasn't been announced.

"It depends on what else comes up and the weather," Brown said. "If something bad hap-

SEE CEDAR, PAGE A2



A Cookeville Public Works employee cautions drivers to slow down on Cedar Avenue Tuesday morning as a CityScape improvement project begins.

PAIGE STANAGE | HERALD-CITIZEN



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931-526-9715
Come on in:
1300 Neal St, Cookeville TN 38501
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Herald-Citizen

FALL HOME

Coming Wednesday, September 30th

Fall is just around the corner, and there are many projects around the house that need to get done before cooler weather arrives in the Upper Cumberland. This special edition will have lots of home improvement ideas and advertising from local merchants that will be distributed to nearly 20,000 readers!

ADVERTISERS: Don't miss out on this opportunity! Deadline is Friday, Sept. 25th at Noon Call 931-526-9715 to speak to one of our marketing consultants.

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Address:
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Cookeville, TN 38501

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2729
Cookeville TN 38502

Phone: 931-526-9715
Fax: 931-526-1209

News
editor@herald-citizen.com
Sports
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The Herald-Citizen is published Wednesday, Friday and weekends (Saturday) and delivered by the United States Postal Service.

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Print - Outside 385 Zip in TN

3 months — \$49
6 months — \$85
1 year — \$143

Mail: Outside Tennessee

3 months — \$82
6 months — \$132
1 year — \$220

Herald-Citizen

USPS 313-680
ISSN 8750-5541

The Herald-Citizen is published Wednesday, Friday and weekends (Saturday) except New Year's Day, Independence Day and Christmas Day by Cookeville Newspapers, Inc., at 1300 Neal St., P.O. Box 2729, Cookeville, TN 38502. Periodicals postage paid at Cookeville TN. **POSTMASTER:** send address changes to Herald-Citizen, P.O. Box 2729, Cookeville TN 38502.

The Herald-Citizen is a member of the Tennessee Press Association and the Associated Press. The Associated Press is entitled exclusively to use for publication news printed in the Herald-Citizen.



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LINDSAY PRIDE | HERALD-CITIZEN

Aphenia Pharma Solutions, LLC will invest \$27 million to renovate the old Russell Stover plant in Cookeville and hire about 200 new workers over the next five years.

APHENA: Expansion adds 200 workers

FROM PAGE A1

Allen said the majority of employees are based in Cookeville.

"We're expanding that operation as well," he said. "It's only focused on liquids."

Aphenia was known as PrePak in Cookeville before it and other companies were acquired by a private equity firm in New York and rebranded to Aphenia in 2010.

Aphenia is on track to move into the newly renovated building in January, but production will begin there as soon as November.

"This new facility will make Aphenia a top contender in the pharmaceutical contract service space, starting with over 14,000 pallets of cold chain storage capacity," Allen said. "Being able to offer turnkey packaging and distribution services for biologic products, plus expanding the current operations with

newly innovated bottling and packaging lines, will continue to attract key pharmaceutical customers to the Middle Tennessee area."

The Russell Stover plant opened in 1975 and employed about 900 people before 2006, when company officials announced plans to cease production.

"We're in the pharmaceutical space," Allen said. "It's not about cheap labor. It's about quality, compliance."

"Being in the healthcare space, Aphenia does government contracts," Allen said. "It's a little bit recession proof, between our government contracts we support and the general vitamin sector."

"We've got a really good city work force. We are also centrally located in the U.S. It's a great distribution point. We can reach 75 percent of U.S. population in a day's drive."



PAIGE STANAGE | HERALD-CITIZEN

Zayne Delaney holds the keys to his new home on Jake Hoot Drive.

HABITAT: Delaneys make #83

FROM PAGE A1

places.

"One thing I love about our house is that it's in the West End neighborhood," Amanda said. "There's all kinds of kids here for my boys to be friends with. We never had that before."

The Delaneys' home is sponsored by Hoot fans, Trinity Assembly of Algood, Collegeside Church of Christ, First United Methodist Church, Central City Church and Covenant Church.

Hoot presented the keys to the Delaneys.

"It's nice to see so many people come together to do good," Hoot said. "People have said thank you to me, but it wasn't really anything I did. It was something that Habitat let us be a part of. Thank you so much to all who helped make this happen."

The UCHF is a non-profit organization that's been in the community for 25 years. To donate, visit <http://www.uchabitat.org/#/>.

UCDD urges passage of flood legislation

BY JIM HERRIN
HERALD-CITIZEN

The Upper Cumberland Development District is joining groups across the country, including 16 in Tennessee, calling on congressional leadership to act on legislation that would create a federal flood risk disclosure requirement to protect families, renters and homebuyers.

"This will be a valuable safeguard for home buyers across the Upper Cumberland," said UCDD Executive Director Mark Farley. "For a small investment in time our citizens can know that they are making a sound decision when purchasing a home."

Current federal policy requires lenders — and not sellers — to notify borrowers only if they are required to have flood insurance.

Supporters of the legislation say recent tools have made flood risk data more available. They argue that the lack of standard disclosure laws and access creates misunderstanding and gaps in consumer awareness.

"Just looking at the topography of the region indicates that most communities have problem areas of flooding," Farley said. "As I understand the legislation, this will add a reporting requirement to the homeowner when selling the property to disclose whether it sits within a flood plain or not."

He said the "main goal is for property owners to be better equipped to make a decision and to inform the citizens of possible insurance needs."

"While most homeowners understand these issues, my main concern would be young families making their first home purchase," Farley said.

A press release notes that disclosure laws already exist as a standard practice for property when it comes to lead paint and suggests that flood risk should be no different. The lack of standard information, proponents say, "perpetuates confusion and creates significant financial damage for homebuyers caught unaware of their true flood risk."

For families living in 100-year floodplain, the likelihood of a flood occurring during the lifetime of a 30-year mortgage are roughly one in four. The problem is exacerbated for homebuyers and renters that may live outside mapped risk zones and may never be aware of their risk or past flooding on the property. In addition to UCDD, the legislation is being supported by the Chattanooga Audubon Society; First Tennessee Development District; Greater Nashville Regional Council; Green Spaces Chattanooga; Harpeth Conservancy; North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy; Richland Creek Watershed Alliance; Socially Equal Energy Efficient Development; Statewide Organizing for Community Empowerment (SOCM); Tennessee Clean Water Network; Tennessee Conservation Voters; Tennessee Environmental Council; Tennessee Renewable Energy Economic Development Council; The National Stormwater Center; and the Wolf River Conservancy.

Woman charged with elder abuse

BY PAIGE STANAGE
HERALD-CITIZEN

A Cookeville woman is charged with neglecting a vulnerable adult after a Cookeville Police Department investigation.

Lisa Gay Gott, 55, of West 4th Street, is accused of leaving a 68-year-old male confined to a wheelchair in an apartment that hadn't had running water nor a functioning toilet "for several years," according to the arrest warrant.

The victim was Gott's relative, said Cookeville Police Capt. Bobby Anderson.

"The affiant (Officer Conor Sparkman) also observed an infestation of bugs and a

hole in the floor," according to the warrant. "There has been no air conditioning or heating and the refrigeration and stove did not work."

The victim was reportedly taken to the emergency room where a chronic wound on his tailbone was discovered, as well as a case of dermatitis and multiple bug bites on his body.

The victim's lower body was covered in feces, according to the warrant.

Gott is charged with neglect of an elderly or vulnerable adult; bond is \$3,500.

She is scheduled to appear 9 a.m. Oct. 26 in the Putnam County General Sessions Court.

DEADLINE: Decision Friday

FROM PAGE A1

Except, maybe not.

"The school board has consistently stated they would review this commitment if there are significant changes in our community or to the Return to School Plan," said Director of Schools Corby King in an email to parents. "Depending on the status of COVID in our community in December, the board may open a window for families to review their decision and possibly make changes before the beginning of the spring semester."

School officials have said that approximately 2,300 students have chosen to learn from home rather than in a classroom.

CEDAR: Work beginning

FROM PAGE A1

pens somewhere else.

"Getting into fall, it's a possibility we could get nearly done with the 4th and 7th part, then have to pick it back up in the spring," Brown said.

The city has coordinated with Cookeville Regional Medical Center and Putnam Ambulance Service on the project since Cedar Avenue is an ambulance route to the hospital.

"We're letting them know when we'll have street complete closures," Brown said. "Right now, we're just doing lane closures."

WEATHER

Wednesday

A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms after 2 p.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 81.

Wednesday Night

A 20% chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 65.

Thursday

A 40% chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 78.

Thursday Night

Mostly cloudy, with a low around 60.

Friday

A 20% chance of showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 73.

Friday Night

Partly cloudy, with a low around 52.

Saturday

Mostly sunny, with a high near 73.

Saturday Night

Mostly clear, with a low around 51.

Almanac

Wednesday is the 260th day of the year, with 106 remaining. The sun sets at 6:46 p.m. and will rise at 6:27 a.m. Thursday. The moon is a waning crescent with 1% of the visible disc illuminated.