



# NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK!

## SCHOOL INFO & LEADERSHIP BIOS ON PAGES 4, 5, & 6!

*The Sweetest Strawberries this side of Heaven*

# Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, Jan. 30, 2025

146th year, 29th Issue — \$1



Royals  
walk at  
Hope  
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UCHS

Hope Christian Academy Homecoming Queen Alyssa Hunt and Homecoming King Aiden Wilson. (Picture by Chris Amis.)



2024-25 Miss Union County High School Aubrie Muse, daughter of Brad and Kristin Muse. For more from both schools, see inside.

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**WORTH NOTING**

### Veterans Service Office closed

The Bradford County Veterans Service Office will be closed from Jan. 27 – Feb. 3. The Union County Veterans Service Office will be closed on Jan. 29. For more information, please call Barbara Fischer at 904-263-0647.

### Garage sale at First Presbyterian

First Presbyterian Church of Starke (921 E. Call St.) will hold an indoor garage sale on Friday, Jan. 31, from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. and also on Saturday, Feb. 1, from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

### Calvary Quartet at Bradford Baptist

Bradford Baptist Church (1640 S. Water St.) welcomes The Calvary Quartet on Saturday, Feb. 1, at 6 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

The Calvary Quartet, which has been performing gospel music for churches, Christian schools and evangelistic campaigns since 1994, consists of Founder/Manager Terry Snow (lead vocals), Erik Foster (baritone), John Harrett (tenor), Alex Foster (bass) and Scott Apple (pianist).

For more information, please call Bradford Baptist Church Pastor Rick Jackson at 904-964-3708.

### Soil and water conservation board meets

The Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District will meet at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 4, at the Bradford County Extensions Office, 2266 N. Temple Ave. (U.S. 301) in Starke. Meetings are open to the public and can be attended in person or by Zoom. Contact Paul Still at 904-368-0291 or stillpe@aol.com for more information and the Zoom link.

## \$4 million nursing school agreement signed

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
mark@bctelegraph.com

Bradford School Board members approved a loan agreement early Monday morning that will fund the expansion of the nursing program at North Florida Technical College.

The partnership with Santa Fe College to bring a registered nursing program to the college was made possible by the \$4 million Florida Capital Funds Project Grant from the state Department of Commerce. The funds came to the state through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and will pay for program enhancements, allowing LPN students at NFTC to bridge into registered nursing right

here. Superintendent of Schools Will Hartley explained that it is essentially a technology grant that will also pay for renovations to the lab.

“Everything in there is going to be pretty awesome. It’s going to be state of the art stuff like mannequins and all kinds of really cool stuff. They’re even going to have one of the mannequins that can deliver a baby,” he said.

Nursing students will also receive remote instruction from Santa Fe College.

The nursing program is housed in the health science building at the corner of North Orange and West Weldon streets. Too new to be demolished

with the rest of the campus, it will be the only building to remain once the site is cleared to make way for a new junior high school, which will eventually be joined by a new senior high school. The building will also be given a facelift as part of the school construction project, Hartley said.

### Future of the college

According to the superintendent, the district is seeking guidance on how to incorporate North Florida Technical College with the plan for the junior/senior high school—whether it will be a school within a school or remain a separate, gated institute. He

said he and Operations Director Jeff Edison just met with the Department of Education in Tallahassee and things went well. They understood what the district is trying to do, he said.

Hartley said the only difference between the middle school and the technical college now is the fence that separates them. When new school construction is finally complete, there will be three campuses in one. The technical college could be fenced off, while the junior and senior high schools would be split by a shared administration building.

See GRANT, page 4

## Frost, freeze and emergency fostering

BY AMBER J. CRAFT  
Special to the Telegraph

Last week, Bradford County experienced freezing temperatures that hit in the mid-30s.

For local Floridians, that meant a quick pivot to bringing in house plants, dusting off winter coats from the closet, and trying to estimate whether traffic conditions would be hazardous enough to prevent traveling to school and work.

But for Bradford County Animal Services, that meant finding enough fosters to empty the shelter before the biting cold hit the concrete building, which would make conditions

unbearable for shelter animals.

BCAS used social media and existing contacts to get the word out that fosters were needed immediately. As a result, the community responded and delivered.

Four local fosters and one animal rescue were able to open their homes and board dogs and cats for the fast freeze that blew through the area.

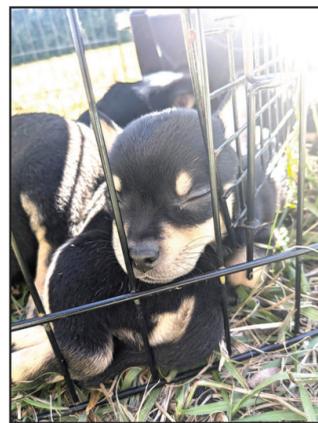
Foster requirements were simple—present a driver’s license and fill out a foster form.

“Finding Fosters was easy on my part, thanks to our silent helper, Tracy. I made a phone call to her the night before when I found out we needed to try and get them out, and she worked

her magic. I couldn’t have done it without her,” Christy Milligan, BCAS Animal Control Officer, stated. Tracy manages the Facebook page Friends of Bradford County Animal Services and Canine Rescue of Bradford County. She regularly posts the available dogs for foster and adoption at the Bradford County Animal Shelter.

“I was very thankful with us getting them all out due to the cold temperatures we were expected to get. It took some stress off knowing that the babies were not going to be in kennels and cold, although we do the best we can with heaters and blankets in their beds,” Milligan said.

See FOSTER, page 2



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# FOSTER

Continued from page 1

According to Milligan, there is a great need for ongoing foster families. Not only does it remove an animal from the shelter, but it can also give

the shelter an insight into the animal's personality so that they can provide more information to any potential adopters.

"If there is anybody in our community here in Bradford that is wanting to foster, or even if they're not in our community and want to reach out through a rescue to get these babies out of

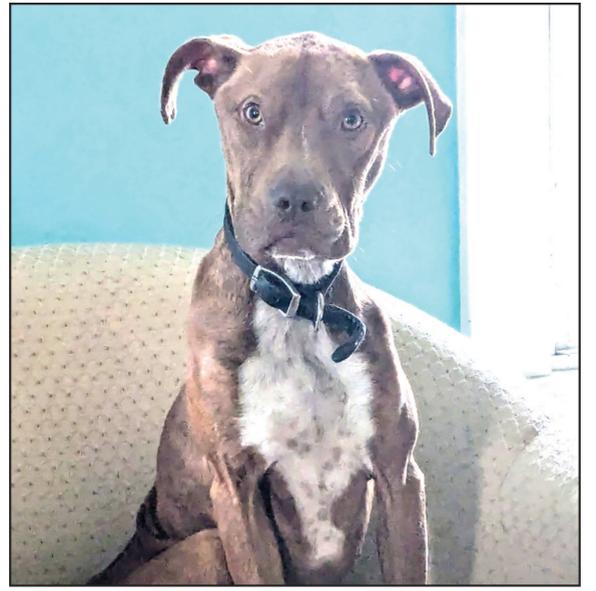
the facility, we greatly appreciate it," Milligan stated. "The good thing about fostering is even if it is for a couple of days, they get to be in a home setting. You get to find out if they're potty trained, or if you have cats in the home if they're good with cats."

Many fosters realize their foster is a good fit for their

family. However, even if the situation is temporary, a foster placement means the animal gets to decompress from the stress they're under by being kept in a shelter as well as whatever has happened to them before they wound up in the shelter. This results in the animal's nervous system calming down and allows the animal to behave normally as they would if they weren't under the constant stress and pressure of living at the shelter or in transition.

The animals who were fostered during the freeze will be returned to the shelter this week unless they find a foster, a forever home, or a rescue who will take them in.

BCAS has an ongoing partnership with the Bradford County Library's Read to Shelter Animals event held regularly every month. Community residents bring their children to the library to read to shelter



James Earl

animals — something that Milligan says both the kids and the animals really enjoy.

Adoption fees are waived during the event. For those who can't adopt, spending time with the shelter animals does help them decompress from their time at the shelter. For more information on Read to Shelter Animals, visit Bradford County Animal Services' page online.

For information on becoming a foster, a furever parent, or donating, contact BCAS at 904-964-9200.



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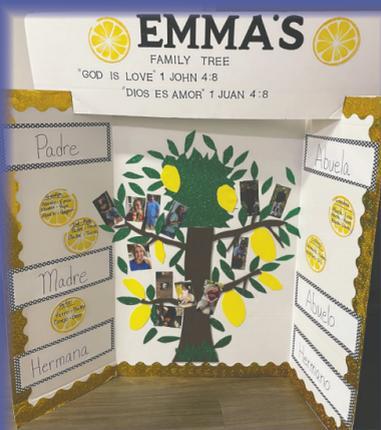
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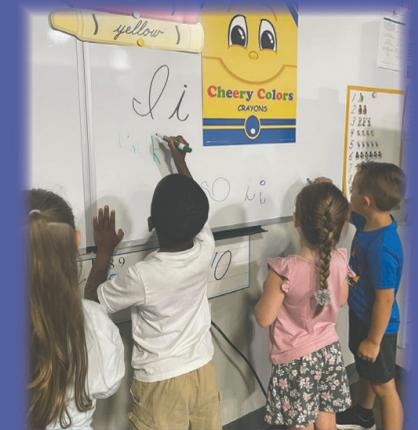
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# 12 Guys in Bow Ties & 12 Girls in Pearls lead by example

Each year, on the annual Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, a group of dedicated young leaders from Bradford County embarks on a mission to both honor Dr. King's legacy and make a tangible impact in the community.

Since 2018, the members of 12 Guys in Bow Ties & 12 Girls in Pearls (12G Mentoring) have been attending the Grand MLK Jr. Parade in Jacksonville. What sets this group apart isn't just their participation in the parade but their hands-on approach to giving back: they serve by cleaning up the very streets that host the parade.

"We don't just come to watch," says founder Edrick Hamilton. "We come to be a part of history and make a difference."

The group's day begins with an hour of enjoying the parade, as they spend time together as the "12G Family," reflecting on the significance of the day. However, their real work begins after that hour. Armed with buckets and gloves, the group steps into action. As the parade continues, they walk along the sidewalks, collecting candy wrappers, plastic, and other debris tossed by parade-goers. Their work doesn't go unnoticed.

"People watching the parade start to follow our lead," Hamilton said. "What's amazing is how others, both kids and adults, begin picking up trash too, just because our youth are showing the way."

This simple act of cleaning up doesn't just benefit the environment—it embodies the very principles Dr. King fought for: leadership, service and unity. "In those moments, no one's being judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character," Hamilton said. The youth are thanked by parade-goers and even other community members, who appreciate the positive example they're setting.

However, this year's plans faced an unexpected challenge. Due to the harsh weather conditions brought on by Winter Storm Enzo, the Jacksonville parade was canceled. With less than 12 hours to come up with a new plan, the group's mentors quickly coordinated an emergency response. The group



12 Guys with Bow Ties & 12 Girls with Pearls members Rylee Dixon, Addasyn Hall, Jaden Hendrieth and Zion Tyson with mentor Edrick Hamilton.

left Bradford County at 7:20 a.m. on Jan. 20 bound for Clermont, Florida, to participate in a different MLK Jr. parade.

The were in foreign territory and the environment was different, but that didn't matter. Hamilton walked along the parade route and talked with law enforcement before finalizing the plan of action to serve. Despite the shorter parade route and smaller crowd, the group's commitment to service didn't waver. "We made it on time, and we were ready to serve," Hamilton said. The members once again took to the streets, armed with their buckets and determination, cleaning up after the parade.

"There was a moment of serendipity," Hamilton recalled. "I was walking along the parade route when my cousin, who was participating in the parade, spotted me. Seeing her and getting a hug, that feeling of connection was amazing."

In Clermont, the group's actions raised eyebrows. Many parade-goers were surprised to

learn that the group's buckets weren't filled with candy but with trash. This parade was all work and no play. The members didn't get a chance to sit and watch the parade. The experience wasn't about watching the parade—it was about rolling up their sleeves and doing the work that needed to be done. Still, the mentors made sure the group got a chance to enjoy some of the parade candy before heading home.

After the parade cleanup, the group continued their efforts at the Clermont Waterfront Park, where the city had provided food, live entertainment and games for the community. Their efforts didn't go unnoticed, and the members were thanked by the local biker club who helped the city sponsor the community event at the park.

"Cold weather and distance didn't stop us," Hamilton said. "The work of 12G Mentoring is bigger than just one event. It's about instilling values of service and leadership in our youth."

Looking ahead, the group is already planning their next

community service events. On Feb. 12, they will pack food bags for the Hunger Backpack Program at the old Southside Elementary School. Additional service opportunities will include cleanups at local schools, a winter cleaning at Lawley Elementary School, a spring cleaning at Starke Elementary School, and community service projects at institutions like Santa Fe College and Jacksonville University.

"Whether it's in our backyard or hundreds of miles away, we're committed to making a difference, no matter the weather or the distance," Hamilton said.

With a deep commitment to service and an unwavering dedication to Dr. King's principles, the 12 Guys in Bow Ties & 12 Girls in Pearls continue to lead by example, showing that even small actions can have a big impact on their communities.



Edrick Hamilton and Sekennia Bell



Addasyn Hall



Jaden Hendrieth

For more information about Facebook @12GIBT12GIP, 12G Mentoring and upcoming service projects, follow them on

## Church of God food distributions

Starke Church of God by Faith and Farm Share's upcoming food distributions are Thursday, Feb. 6 and 20, from 10-11:30 a.m. This is a drive-thru distribution. The church is located at 730 Old Lawley Road in Starke. (Distribution times depend on delivery times.)

### IMPORTANT TAX FILING INFORMATION

The IRS announced it will begin accepting and processing tax returns on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025. The filing deadline to submit 2025 tax returns or an extension to file and pay tax owed is Tuesday, April 15, 2025, for most taxpayers.

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### AM I REALLY SAVED AND READY FOR HEAVEN?

I have found that many times when asking people if they are saved or born again, I usually get three common answers: Yes, no, or I hope so. Concerning the three most common answers, I personally believe "I hope so" is an indication of no salvation experience. Salvation is a faith experience and it is a gift received by grace through faith according to the Word of God. Upon further questioning, I find their "hope so" answer has no scriptural basis but salvation is what they want but have yet to receive. Many people believe they are saved because they're "good" people, they don't do what they would consider to be bad, wicked or evil so they consider themselves saved and heaven worthy based on some sort of merit system which they have established. This though is totally false and has no scriptural foundation. Today we use the word saved very loosely and have a vague sense of its actual meaning. When someone is "saved" that person is not only saved from something but also saved unto something. I don't have the time in this lesson but we'll visit this in more detail in the future. The Bible teaches us that when one is saved they are delivered from the eternal punishment of hell and they are also delivered from the wrath of God's future judgment upon humanity. When one is saved, that person has received eternal life and has been put into right fellowship with God by God Himself. I have found through the years that it's more effective to ask someone if they're "born-again" instead of asking them if they're saved. The response to are you or have you been "born-again" helps me to quickly locate their present spiritual condition and exposes their true knowledge and personal experience when it comes to salvation. Many times the person will say "what do you mean, born-again?" that's usually a sure sign that they're not. Some people will respond by saying,

"I think so" which means they are absolutely not born-again. So, let's go back to our lesson title: Am I Really Saved and Ready for Heaven? Now, let's go to God's Word and find out. In St. John 3:1-8 we find Jesus talking to a ruler of the Pharisees named Nicodemus. To paraphrase, Nicodemus acknowledges that Jesus is a teacher from God based on the many signs, wonders and miracles that he has either witnessed or heard about. Many people of our day when talking about Jesus Christ sound very similar to Nicodemus. They say things that are actually in line with the Bible, such as, "I believe Jesus died on the cross", "I believe Jesus is the Son of God", "I believe God raised Jesus from the dead" and "yes, I believe Jesus is coming back one day." All these statements are Biblically true but just believing these absolute Biblical truths by no means ensures that you are "saved" and "ready for heaven." What was the response of Jesus to Nicodemus after Nicodemus had acknowledged "You are a Teacher from God?" In verse 3 Jesus responded by saying, "Most assuredly I say unto you, unless one is "born-again", he/she cannot see the Kingdom of God." Then Jesus repeated this statement once again to drive home this Biblical truth, if you want to see the Kingdom of God "You must be born-again" So, what does it mean to be "born-again"? Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature or new creation, old things have passed away; behold all things have become new." This is the birth or new birth that Jesus was talking about during His conversation with Nicodemus. Paul shows us it's not a physical birth but a spiritual birth. It has nothing to do with your physical body or mind but the recreation of the human spirit which in fact is separated and alienated from God until one is born-again. This goes to show us that scripturally speaking, even though God is the creator of every human being He is not the Father of every human and everyone is not in God's family. You must be born into it or "Born-Again."

Pastor Rick Norman

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# New fire station opening with ceremony Friday

Fire assessment workshops begin next week

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
mark@bctelegraph.com

The living quarters for Bradford County firefighters at Station 10 are complete and a ceremony will be held at 4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 31 to celebrate.

The ribbon cutting will take place nearly a year after breaking ground thanks to the financial donation from Vincent Esson and the Keystone Heights RV resort, which fully funded the project.

Station 10 on County Road 21B in Speedville was completed and dedicated to former tax collector, the late Teila Norman Pearson, in 2019. Pearson founded a satellite office for the county at the Santa Fe College Watson Center. That office was moved into Station 10, which was built on land donated by the college.

Since the dedication, the satellite office has been up and running, but the lack of a separate living quarters has prevented a full-time fire rescue team from being stationed there.

Fire Chief Ben Carter explained that the firefighters from the Theresa station will be relocated to Speedville, while

the EMS crew will remain in Theresa. No additional staffing will be required to operate both stations and spreading those resources will provide better coverage to the area, he said. Many employees are dual certified in fighting fires and emergency medical services. A fire truck has the same life-saving equipment available as an ambulance, lacking only the ability to transport patients, he said. Likewise, a dual certified paramedic in Theresa can hop into a fire truck if needed.

"You know, some people have questioned, 'Why are there two fire stations five miles apart from each other?' But that is the national standard. The NFPA recommends that there's a fire station every five miles," Carter said. While that is not achievable for a small county like Bradford, in this one case, it has happened. "It's been kind of a blessing in disguise that we're able to now get a little bit closer to that national standard, at least in that area," he said.

Getting Station 10 built and in operation has been important to Commissioner Danny Riddick, but with public workshops on a proposed fire assessment on property owners beginning next month, Riddick recently said the county may need to close some

stations.

"We're going to, I hope, have some very good discussions about our fire department because I know who's going to take the heat on the assessments," he said during a Jan. 7 meeting, pointing out there would now be two stations in his district. "We really need to look at closing some of these stations. We when we're going into this, before we really get into assessments, we need to see which stations we need open and close the other ones."

Riddick said he had already been talking to Theresa citizens about it as well as Carter and County Manager Scott Komegay.

"You can be talking to them on your own, but we're going to catch the heat on this assessment, so we need to get it together, know exactly which ones we need open and why, and what we're going to do to improve them," he said.

Carter was cautious about closing any existing station, saying that in addition to the lost coverage, home insurance ratings would be affected.

"So, I think the downside of closing the stations greatly outweigh the benefit that would be gained from the financial savings," he said. The cost of a station comes down to a monthly utility bill, according to Carter.

Personnel are the expensive part. "Is that saving \$500 a month on utilities worth having people who are in a five-mile radius around that station, their insurance rates either double or they get dropped all together?" he asked.

Then there is the station yet to be built. Just as Speedville was a priority for Riddick, getting a station in Brooker is a priority for Commissioner Diane Andrews now. Brooker is working to get the remaining funds through the state to build it, after which it will be up to the county to staff it, perhaps by splitting another crew as with Speedville and Theresa.

The nearest station to Brooker is Sampson City, which is also getting updated living quarters, because of a legislative allocation Sheriff Gordon Smith had originally obtained to make the Heilbronn Springs station livable. The county then got permission to use that funding, nearly \$800,000, to build living quarters at Sampson City and Theresa. The rising cost of construction, however, means that only Sampson City will get the new quarters.

The other active station is in Lawtey, while Heilbronn remains unoccupied, although Riddick did openly question if the crew should be moved. He said he wanted to come to the workshops



## Saving shed saved house

Bradford County Fire Rescue responded to a shed fire on Jan. 24 at the 16000 block of Northeast 19th Avenue. The fire was spreading to a nearby home, but firefighters prevented further spread. No injuries were reported.

prepared with maps and call logs to help commissioners make decisions.

Three fire assessments workshops for commissioners and the public have been scheduled:

- Feb. 4 at 10:30 a.m.
- March 18 at 5:30 p.m.
- May 6 at 10:30 a.m.

Each of these dates is on a Tuesday and before the final public hearings, which would take place on May 15 and June 17 if the commission moves forward with the assessment.

## GRANT

Continued from page 1

Decisions about college leadership will also be made later. Hartley said Brad Bishop resigned to pursue opportunities in Clay County, and so his second in command, Keith Kirby, will continue overseeing the college for the remainder of the year. Administration at the middle school will assist when needed.

"Last year, we kind of learned a lot down there because we were short an ag teacher, and Mr. Kirby actually taught ag all year. So, you had 'two administrators'

on campus, but you really didn't. And so right now, instead of hiring another [administrator] that eventually, when you have a consolidation of campuses, we may have to get rid of, it's better to find out if we can make it with just one and go from there," he said.

If it goes well, they will continue with a single administrator at NFTC next year.

### New school pitch

The application for the junior/senior high has been submitted. Hartley said FDOE has 90 days to send a committee. He will

present the plan, illustrating the need and explaining how the new combined campus will address multiple problems, and the committee members will be able to see the schools for themselves. Then they will provide an unofficial answer before they leave.

So far, Bradford is the only school district coming forward with a project, and the deadline is this week. If this district is the only one in line, Hartley believe that will be a good sign. It could also mean the committee will arrive even sooner and let the district know whether it should move forward with a presentation

in Tallahassee this summer or wait until next year.

### Truck driving grant

Hartley said the district has also completed a grant application to construct its new truck driving school on land purchased by North Florida Land Trust northeast of Lawtey. Depending on the amount of the award, the Florida Job Growth Grant could cover most of the cost to construct classrooms, truck bays and a paved track.

Hartley said the land as well as the school's trucks and equipment will be used to match

the grant funds. In the future, the program could be expanded to include instruction in heavy equipment operation.

After discovering they couldn't renew the lease for the school on Camp Blanding property, the military approached NFLT to help find a nearby location for the school. The 230-acre property near Camp Blanding is close to NFLT conservation lands and was bought from Rayonier Inc. for over \$1.8 million using funds from the Camp Blanding Army Compatible Use Buffer program. NFLT has been purchasing land within the buffer for conservation purposes and

to prevent development near the base.

### Senior luncheon with heart

Concerned Citizens of Bradford County's Senior Citizen Luncheon will celebrate American Heart Month. Come together to share ideas, foster connections and strengthen community bonds. The luncheon will be held at the RJE Community Health and Wellness Resource Hub on Wednesday, Feb. 12, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The hub is located at 1080 Pine St. in Starke.

Special advertising section - Private school profiles

## Light Christian Academy

*Ye are the light of the world*



Light Christian Academy

"Ye are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

-Matthew 5:14-16



Cherith Bass,  
Supervisor

### In harmony with parents

Light Christian Academy believes that the purpose of Christian education is to assist parents as they fulfill their Biblical calling to diligently teach God's commandments to their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). The ultimate responsibility for Christian education belongs to the parents, but Christian educators work in harmony with the home and the church to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6). To that end, Light Christian Academy strives to provide a nurturing, educational environment that is Christ-centered.

### Christ-centered

First, the school is to be spiritually Christ-centered. Our mission is to help each child cultivate a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. We hold the Bible to be God's Word and believe that the Scriptures provide guidance and instruction in righteousness (Psalm 119:9). Daily Bible instruction and regular Scripture memorization are integral parts of the student's spiritual development.

Second, the school is to be intellectually Christ-centered. Light Christian Academy recognizes that each student is unique, created by God with specific talents and gifts—the school endeavors to provide a strong foundation of knowledge that will prepare students for the future. Students are trained to think and express themselves carefully and critically so that they may "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 1:3).

Third, the school is to be socially Christ-centered. We seek to instruct children in godly and moral conduct to help them become wise and mature adults. This instruction is accomplished through an attitude that all things are to be done to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). The Christian school setting provides opportunities for students to grow socially and physically through educational trips, community projects, activities, and physical fitness programs.

475 SW 3rd Street  
Lake Butler, FL 32054  
(386) 291-3100  
admin@mylcac.com

Special advertising section - Private school profiles

## Providence Christian Academy

*God's Word, God's World, God's Work*



Patricia Kirkland, Principal

Patricia Kirkland is a founding member and second principal of Providence Christian Academy, following Whit Weatherford. She is a 25 year education veteran, having spent 10 in administration. She herself is a life long resident of Bradford county, and has invested her career in the educational advancement of Bradford County children. She has been married to Timothy Kirkland for 22 years. She began her journey as a "mother to many" when she opened Gracefully Growing Day Care, and operated it for 6 years before retiring to begin her journey as a "mother to many" on the home-front. This season of motherhood began with one daughter and blossomed with the blessing of adoption and addition of a family of 7 siblings and 4 stepchildren were added to create one home full of hope and love. She returned to education in the capacity of a 504/IEP coordinator and student mentor/instructor.

When she isn't in the office or classroom, she enjoys boating, touring with her husband on their motorcycle, traveling to new places, and spending abundant time with her family -both biological and ones found along the way.

Her opinion on the school and staff is met with passion and love. There is nothing more Mrs. Kirkland loves about this school than the feeling of family. The students and staff are family - to, with, and for - each other. "We are a tribe here. It's a place where everyone has a place, they're welcome, and their whole person - mind, emotion, spirit, everything - is nurtured and loved. We all find belonging here. This is home."

17356 US Route 301, Starke, Florida 32091  
office@providencewarriors.org  
(904) 454 - 1274 Office/Main  
(904) 454 - 1275 Fax

# Over \$4,000 earned during Empty Bowls event

BY JENN SAMSEL  
Special to the Monitor

The 7th Annual Empty Bowls Event occurred on Tuesday, January 14, at the Keystone Heights Woman's Club.

Lake Area Ministries hosted this event to benefit the food pantry. It made a remarkable comeback last year after being on hold for a few years due to COVID-19.

## What are Empty Bowls?

Karen Lake, President of Lake Region Kiwanis said, "It's a model based on a simple meal of soup, bread, and crackers like a hungry



person might experience in a soup kitchen. The added benefit is that patrons select an empty, handmade bowl to symbolize hunger in our community to take home with them."

This year, the Woman's Club, Mission of the Dirt Road, the Crafters at Keystone Global Methodist Church, and the Kiwanis Club collaborated to create several handcrafted food bowls.

Each of these bowls serves the community, particularly neighborhoods experiencing

Lake Area Ministries Director Tanya Dennis addresses the crowd at the organization's Empty Bowls Event.

food insecurity.

The event featured an assortment of beautifully crafted bowls, various delicious soups, bread, and five delightful cakes for a silent auction.

Thanks to generous donations, there were no expenses related to the fundraiser, allowing organizers to raise \$4,890 for Lake Area Ministries.

"A heartfelt thank you to the community for all your support. Without your help, we couldn't feed over 19,000 people each year.," said Tanya Dennis, Lake Area Ministries Director.



Lake Region Kiwanis President Karen Lake (right) helps a patron with bread during Lake Area Ministries's Empty Bowls event.

# Lecturer recounts Melrose women debaters

BY JENN SAMSEL  
Special to the Monitor

On Sunday, January 26, Historic Melrose, Inc. hosted Dr. Cynthia Patterson from the University of South Florida in St. Petersburg, who spoke at the Homemakers Club about the history of the Melrose Ladies Literary and Debating Society.

Dr. Patterson discussed in great detail the accomplishments of these women during the decade from 1890 to 1899.

According to the USF associate professor of English, the women wrote articles and letters, read to one another, and found ways to continue reading. Many of these women were empowering figures who were unafraid to challenge the boundaries that were often seen as forbidden at the time.

"I know a lot about the Ladies Club between 1890 and 1899 because I spent days and days at the University of Florida, which holds their manuscripts, taking thousands of photos and then transcribing them and so on, and this is based on an article I

published five years ago or so in the Florida Historical Quarterly," she said.

Patterson continued, "So they engaged with many of the age's leading social and political issues. Their literary practices of reading, writing, and debating proved inextricably bound up with their consumption of this progressive literature that they were reading during this decade, the decade of the 1890s."

Dr. Patterson's speech was quite eventful and eye-opening. She encouraged everyone to visit USF to learn more about the women in its historical section.

Sara Hebert, the Historic Melrose, Inc. secretary, said the literary and debating society formed the basis of today's Melrose Woman's Club, which meets in the same building on Pine Street."

## History

The Melrose Homemakers Club building, built in 1886, was originally the Vogelbach Drug

Store. The Vogelbach brothers operated a physician's office and pharmacy there, followed by the McRae Family. Beginning in 1952, the building housed the Homemakers Club, which was acquired by Historic Melrose, Inc., as its headquarters in 2002.

Historic Melrose, Inc. was formed in 1985 by a group of local citizens led by Roy Hunt and Felicity Trueblood, who were concerned about the historical preservation of Melrose.

The organization's first major task was to conduct an architectural and historic survey of the town after receiving a grant from the Florida Division of Historical Resources to prepare a nomination packet for the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Melrose has continued to promote historic preservation through the years, managing several properties, including the Banana Grist Mill property, St. John the Fisherman Cemetery in Earleton, the Homemakers Club, and the Daurer History

Center, through an over 20-year partnership with Putnam County Parks and Recreation.

Hebert said, "We enjoy member field trips to historically significant sites and museums throughout Florida and host events such as historical lectures and celebrations. Additionally, we are in the process of archiving the vast Daurer collection of documents and images of life in Melrose since the late 1800s."

"Historic Melrose, Inc. remains an active group, and we are humbled by all memberships, donations, and dedicated volunteers," Hebert continued. "Thanks to our members' support, we can continue our mission of promoting the preservation of historical and cultural aspects of the Lake Region."

The Daurer History Center at Heritage Park in Melrose is open monthly during the First Friday Art Walk.

"We hope to host another Bellamy Road Show again this year, but the most exciting event for this year is our triennial



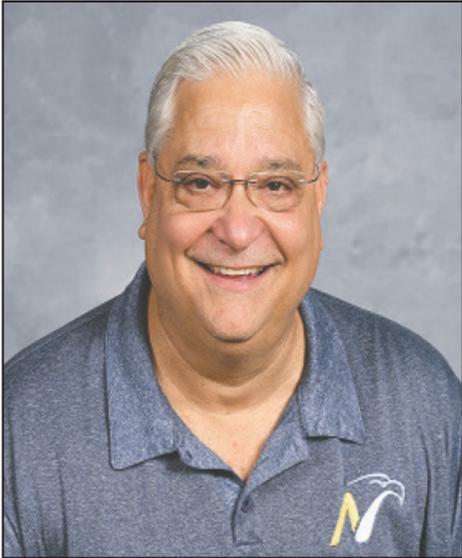
Historic Melrose, Inc. Vice President James Peffley presents Dr. Cynthia Patterson a copy of "Melrose, Florida: An Illustrated History" by Rosemary Daurer and Kevin McCarthy.

Historic Melrose, Inc. does via Christmas Home Tour, December 14, 2025," Hebert said. Facebook or its website, www.historicmelroseinc.org. You can keep up with all that

Special advertising section - Private school profiles

## Northside Christian Academy

Love God, Love Church, Love Others



**Rick Price, Principal**

Mr. Price is currently the Principal of Northside Christian Academy, Starke, Florida. As Principal, he is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. Ultimately, he is the key spiritual, academic and financial leader of the school, shaping and nurturing of all students, the faculty and staff, the administrative team and the entire school community.

Mr. Price hales from Louisville, Kentucky. At the age of 6 years old, he accepted the Lord as his Savior. He is married to his wife Joan and they have served together for 30 years. He has two daughters, Makayla and Britney. Makayla is a Senior at NCA and Britney is married to Dusty Cella. They have three boys, Avery, Hayden and Noah. Mr. Price's mother Marilyn also lives with Mr. Price and his family.

After High School, he entered active duty with the Air Force on April 3, 1984. He served his final assignment as the Command Chief Master Sergeant, 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base, Japan. He served as the senior enlisted advisor to the 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base installation commander overseeing 14,500 personnel. He was responsible for the health, welfare and morale of the enlisted force of two fighter squadrons, and 35 support agencies. Mr. Price also served overseas in Alaska, Iceland and Germany. His deployments include Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Operation JOINT FORGE, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina; and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Al Udeid, Air Base, Qatar.

7415 NW County Rd 225, Starke, FL  
904-966-0444  
secretary@northsidebaptistonline.com

Special advertising section - Private school profiles

## Rainbow Learning Academy

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."



**Rainbow Learning Academy**



**Chloe Bailey, Principal**

Rainbow Learning Academy was founded in 2024 by two dedicated educators, Chloe Bailey and Kim Bailey. Motivated by their deep faith, they have created an educational environment where Christ is the cornerstone.

### Mission

Rainbow Learning Academy's mission is to nurture the hearts and minds of the children in its community. It provides a holistic education that integrates academic excellence with spiritual growth. By fostering a strong sense of values and a supportive, faith-centered atmosphere, the school aims to empower students to excel in their studies, personal development, and moral character.

### Curriculum

Rainbow Learning Academy employs a Christian-based curriculum known as A Beka. The classes follow this curriculum, enabling your child to build upon their learning experiences as they advance through our academy. This age-appropriate curriculum offers hands-on learning opportunities that encourage each child's development. In addition to academic education, the program fosters social, emotional, and physical growth. A typical day at the academy includes learning Bible verses, problem-solving, reading, writing, rhyming, singing, storytelling, and a strong emphasis on literacy.

The academy's teachers hold at least a Bachelor's Degree, and most possess three or more years of K-12 teaching experience, along with special skills, knowledge, or expertise in K-12 instruction.

(386) 496-8278 | Kim@LittleRainbowsLearningCenter.com  
255 Southeast 6th Avenue, Lake Butler, FL 32054

## Aubrie Muse wins Miss Union County High title

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

A Union County High School senior dual enrolled at Florida Gateway College claimed the 2024-2025 Miss Union County High School title after highlighting a World War II-era icon that symbolized the emerging role of women in the workforce.

Aubrie Muse donned the blue jumpsuit and red polka dot scarf made famous in the 1942 "We Can Do It!" poster that symbolized women's role in manufacturing during the war.

During the pageant's theme-wear competition, the 17-year-old struck the famous pose of Rosie the Riveter pulling up a shirt sleeve and flexing a bicep. Co-host Mia Kent said Muse wanted to honor the famous icon who empowered women to be strong and confident and to enter the workforce while the nation's men were away fighting the war.

Aubrie Muse is the daughter of Brad and Kristin Muse. In addition to winning the overall title, Muse took awards for the best GPA, Best Opening Number Presentation, and Best Interview.

The 17-year-old is a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Theater Club, Performing Arts Club, and Cheer. She is also a member of Theta Kappa International Honor Society and plans to major in business and minor in graphic design at the University of Florida.

Muse also won the awards for Best Opening Number Presentation, Best Interview, and the Highest GPA.

During the talent competition, she danced to the song "The Truth" by Megan Woods.

Her onstage question asked about her involvement with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"I wanted to spread God's love to everyone," she said, "including all of my fellow classmates."

Also competing were Isabelle Kirsten, Ava Westmoreland, Chloe Harris, and Zoe Elixson.



First runner-up Zoe Elixson also won the People's Choice Award, the Director's Award, the award for Best On-Stage Question, the Best Evening Gown Award, the Best Theme Wear Award, the Best Talent Award, and the Most Photogenic Award.

### 'It's okay to be yourself'

The first runner-up was Zoe Elixson, who also won the People's Choice Award, the Director's Award, the award for Best On-Stage Question, the Best Evening Gown Award, the Best Talent Award, and the Most Photogenic Award.

Elixson is a 17-year-old senior, the daughter of Justin and Leyla Elixson. She is a member of FCA, SWAT, Beta Club, the cheer team, and the golf Team. She plans to attend college to study Musical Theater and Dance and pursue a career in the Performing Arts.

During the onstage question



In the onstage question segment of the show, Kara Masnard (right), Miss Union County High School for 1997, asked Ava Westmoreland about the most challenging aspect of showing in FFA.



Chloe Harris played "Colors of the Wind" from the movie "Pocahontas" on the Glockenspiel.

segment of the pageant, Elixson was asked how the Miss Union County High competition helped her to lead by example.

"By showing me that it's okay to be yourself on stage,"

she answered, comparing the experience to her theater background. "I'm used to playing a character or being someone that I'm not, and I think that this experience has really helped me to be myself on stage, and I think that's helped me grow in my confidence as well."

Elixson danced to a violin cover of the song "Die with a Smile" by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga in the talent competition.

Her theme wear highlighted the 1920s.

### Miss Congeniality

Isabelle Kirsten won Miss Congeniality.

Kirsten is a 16-year-old junior, the daughter of Julie and Jonny Kirsten. She is a member of JROTC, FFA, and the track and field team. Thanks to her JROTC experience, she plans to enlist in the Army National Guard as an E3 after high school. She also plans to attend Santa Fe College and take ROTC courses at the University of Florida.

For her onstage question, Kirsten was asked why she decided to enlist in the National Guard.

"By joining the JROTC program," she responded, "they provided me resources and showed me how many benefits it would be for me to enlist, and it's really inspired me."

The 16-year-old's talent was singing "Fly Me to the Moon" by

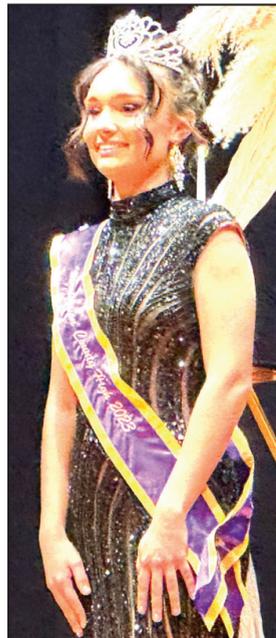


During the pageant's theme-wear competition, Aubrie Muse struck the famous pose of Rosie the Riveter pulling up a shirt sleeve and flexing a bicep.



Isabelle Kirsten won Miss Congeniality.

Frank Sinatra and Count Basie. Kirsten highlighted the 1920s in the theme wear competition.



Cailynn Boggs, Miss Union County High School for 2023-2024, gave out the awards and took her final walk as the reigning Miss Union County High.

### Pig escaped during FFA show

Westmoreland is an 18-year-old senior. She is the daughter of Forrest and Sara Westmoreland. She is a member of FFA and the varsity cheer team. She plans to attend Santa Fe College to study Ultrasound Technology.

In the onstage question segment of the show, Kara Masnard, Miss Union County High School for 1997, asked Westmoreland about the most challenging aspect of showing in FFA.

The 18-year-old said getting her pig used to the whip was the most challenging part of showing.

"Funny story," she added, "Actually, my pig got out into the bleachers during one of my shows, and it was very chaotic, but that is the most challenging part of showing in FFA."

During the talent competition, Westmoreland sang "I Am Not Alone" by Kari Jobe.

Westmoreland's theme wear featured the 1950s.

### Played the Glockenspiel

Harris is the 16-year-old daughter of Rebecca Harris and Timothy Allen and Donnie and Sarah Harris. She is a member of JROTC, where she's also a member of the Raiders team, the military police, air rifle team, drill team JLab and honor guard. She's also a member of FCA and Junior Friends of the Library.

Harris plans to complete her AA before she graduates high school. Upon graduation, she plans to become an esthetician so she can work while attending Florida Gateway to begin her dermatology study.

Masnard asked Harris if she could travel to any country, which country she would pick, and why.

"It would be anywhere with another culture that I could experience and anywhere that I could help," she said.

For her talent, Harris played "Colors of the Wind" from the movie "Pocahontas" on the Glockenspiel.

Harris chose the 1980s for her theme wear.

Harris, Kirsten, Muse, and Elixson tied for the Teacher Recommendation Award.

### Farewell walk

Cailynn Boggs, Miss Union County High School for 2023-2024, gave out the awards and took her final walk as the reigning Miss Union County High. In her farewell address, Boggs thanked her family and supporters over the last year and offered advice to her successor.

"Always remember to lead with grace," Boggs said. "God is your Number 1 supporter and will guide you through your time. This year will move so fast that you won't even realize it happened until it's over. Be kind. Be involved, but you must be yourself."

Special advertising section - Private school profiles

## Brooker Community School

A free and public charter school



**Dr. Thomas Lashley, Principal**

Thomas Lashley is a lifelong educator with over 30 years of experience. A dedicated husband and father of six, he brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to the field. Holding a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy from Florida State University, a master's degree from Valdosta State University, and a bachelor's in pre-med from Berry College, Thomas possesses a strong academic foundation.

As a published author in various formats, including novels, magazines, and original research from his doctoral work, he is a skilled communicator and a valuable contributor to the education discourse.

Dr. Lashley's career highlights include serving as Superintendent of Schools in both Montana and Florida, as well as the Florida Department of Education's Regional Turnaround Director. He has also held leadership positions as a high school and elementary principal, both in public and charter schools, and as a Curriculum Director for public schools.

A born-again Christian, Thomas finds joy in helping children and advancing the education field. In his free time, he enjoys writing, reading, hunting, fishing, cooking, and traveling.

18551 Charlotte Ave  
Brooker, FL 32622  
thomas.lashley@brookercs.org  
352-485-1545

## Union commissioners complete meeting as winter storm closes in

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

No members of the public spoke, commissioners tabled several items to their next meeting, one commissioner spoke about the need to ratify land use regulations, and the sheriff updated commissioners on preparations for possible snow during the Union County Commission's January 21 meeting.

Chair Channing Dobbs gavelled the meeting to a close less than 30 minutes after the opening prayer and pledge.

Although a proposed ordinance to prohibit smoking in county parks was on the agenda, no one from the Union County High School's Students Working Against Tobacco was present, so consideration of the ordinance

was tabled. The high school group had been the force behind the proposed smoking ban.

Commissioners approved a right-of-way easement with Clay Electric Cooperative. The easement would allow the utility to replace an existing line with a new one near State Road 121 in the area of the Department of Corrections Reception and Medical Center.

The co-op's engineering department characterized the line replacement as an improvement in service.

Commissioners also approved members for a committee to review requests for proposals for Phase 2 of the public works complex.

The committee members are Tim Allen, Pam Woodington, McKayla Clemons, and Joyce Thompson. Two contractors

have submitted proposals, and the committee will review them.

Sheriff Brad Whitehead briefed commissioners on his office's preparation for the incoming storm. He stressed the importance of staying off the roads.

Lastly, Commissioner Mac Johns stressed the importance of commissioners completing needed work on the county's land development regulations and rules for RV parks.

"I've talked about us kicking cans down the road in previous meetings," Johns told his colleagues. "Here it is. We've ain't even touching the can this month, so it's going to be another month before we need to really seriously start thinking—each one of us start thinking about how we can do something."

# Hope Christian holds homecoming



Seventh-grade representatives Marley Bradshaw and Malachi Veith (Photos by Chris Amis.)



Eighth-grade representatives Allyssa Wilson and Maddox Womble



Freshman representatives Lesly Salvidez and Lucas Grider



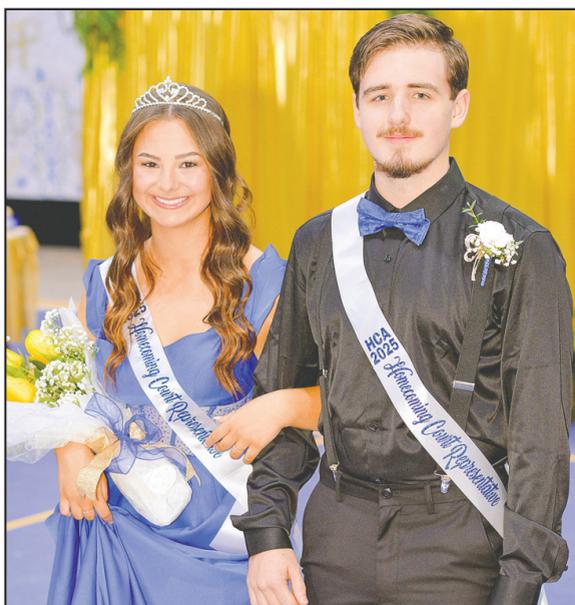
Sophomore representatives Joanne Abbott and Caden Hartzog.



Junior representatives Mackenzie McRaney and Blayne Wilkinson



Homecoming Court members Annalei Brown and Luke Drew



Homecoming Court members Becka McGee and Gunner Lofton



Key Club reps Natalie Lowe and Noah Gaffney



National Honor Society representatives Lacey Depoe and Benjamin Whalen



Student Government representatives Autumn Hunt and Landen Perry

## 2025 Tree Giveaway

Shade on a sunny day. Lower energy bills. Bird and even butterfly visitors. These might not all come to mind when you hear the word "tree," but with proper selection and placement trees can provide a host of benefits and even increase property value.

If you are interested in the benefits of trees but unsure where to start, help is available. To learn more about the benefits of trees, get a free slash pine and info on tree planting, or just have fun with family activities then come on out for the 2025 Tree Giveaway for Bradford County!

Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District, UF/IFAS Extension Bradford County and the Alligator Creek Garden Club are hosting this afternoon of learning and fun on Wednesday, Feb. 19, from 2-6 p.m. at the UF/IFAS Extension Office, 2266 North Temple Avenue in Starke. For more info, call 904-966-6224.

# KEYSTONE YOUTH SOCCER

COACHES & VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED! COACHES & VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED!

**SPRING Season Registration • AGES 4-18**

**TO REGISTER:** SIGN UP by **FEBRUARY 19, 2025**  
THE FEE is **\$80. Sign up online.**

Supplied uniform will be jersey, shorts & socks.

Register & Pay online at [www.KeystoneYouthSoccer.com](http://www.KeystoneYouthSoccer.com) OR

Trevor Waters Realty, Inc  
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For more information call:

Trevor Waters at **352-246-7776**

Registration forms on website [www.keystoneyouthsoccer.com](http://www.keystoneyouthsoccer.com)



# Crime

## Recent arrests in Bradford, Union and Clay

The following individuals were arrested recently by local law enforcement officers in Bradford, Union or Clay (Keystone Heights-area) counties. All defendants are considered innocent until convicted in a court or until pleading guilty or no contest. Information in this report is from law enforcement agencies and court documents, which are public records.

### Bradford

Timothy Bass, 40, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 21 for resisting an officer.

Jason Borgner, 45, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 19 for DUI.

Amber Bruce, 41, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 19 for failure to appear.

Zachary Free, 36, of Palatka, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 18 for an out-of-county warrant.

Katrell Hubbard, 28, of Lake City, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for a probation violation.

Arthur Lang, 46, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for an out-of-county warrant and failure to appear.

Brandon Locklear, 35, of Lake City, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for battery.

Brittany McIntosh, 34, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 19 for DUI.

Dain Mitchell, 34, was arrested by Lawtey police on January 19 for resisting an officer and misuse of 911 system.

Joseph Mitchell, 56, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 22 for larceny and trespassing.

Anthony Pellechio, 25, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for sexual assault.

Karen Pusey, 52, of Covington, Georgia, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 19 for larceny.

James Reynolds, 50, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for an out-of-county warrant.

Jeffrey Sipprell, 36, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for a probation violation.

Gerald Smith, 63, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 24 for battery.

David Stephens, 26, of Lithonia, Georgia, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 18 for a probation violation.

Damien Walter, 21, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 18 for DUI.

Andre Watson, 32, of Apopka, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 24 for smuggling contraband into a prison.

Joshua Watts, 37, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 23 for an

out-of-county warrant.

Eric Williams, 37, of Orange Park, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 19 for an out-of-county warrant and withholding support.

Trent Yanes, 24, of Orange Park, was arrested by Bradford deputies on January 24 for aggravated assault and resisting an officer.

### Union

Rishard Brown, 36, of Raiford, was arrested by Union deputies on January 27 for arson, battery, and smuggling contraband into a prison.

John-Layton Angus-Daniel May, 24, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on January 25 for a probation violation.

Thomas Ortega, 38, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on January 23 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Michael Plemmons, 39, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on January 26 for improper exhibit of a firearm and disorderly intoxication.

Vincent Robinson, 39, a Department of Corrections inmate, was arrested by Union deputies on January 27 for committing a sex act in the presence of a correctional facility employee.

### Clay

Robert Wahl, 22, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on January 21 for possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

## Horse club asks county about land

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
mark@bctelegraph.com

Bradford Riding Club members are petitioning the county commission for space to rebuild what they lost when they were "kicked out" of the fairgrounds.

That's what Nikki Carlton told the commission Jan. 16, that the club "completely got kicked out" when the fair association decided to demolish the horse arena as part of the plan to rebuild the fairgrounds.

"We were told it was supposed to be temporary, and then they basically told us we had couple days to take pictures for sentimental [reasons] and that was it," she said.

According to the fair association's Bob Milner at the time, the 50-year-old arena was showing its age and was only used by a few people. The association needed the land as a borrow pit to help elevate the midway to withstand heavy rain. The Riding Club disagreed with that assessment and remains upset that they have no facility in Bradford County for their activities, which center around youth.

Carlton said they heard land had been donated to the county, so they wanted to know if the county would donate land to them or allow them to use county property to build an arena for the children.

"I was riding up at Bradford since I was five years old, and I still have continued riding since I was five. Both my children ... have been there since they were born, but they have been riding since they've been old enough to ride," she said.

Carlton said they now must travel to other counties to ride and cannot make their own schedules. She said if

the county could provide the land, then the club could look for grants to build an arena for riding, rodeos and more.

"We are hoping maybe we can get a club back together in Bradford, so that we can allow the kids to have somewhere that's family oriented and safe for them to go, because that's what we were all about, was the family and having family fun," she said.

Louette Smith is another member who had been riding at the former arena since childhood. She said her grandfather was one of the club's founders. As a member of the Bradford Mounted Posse, she said she spoke to a girl during a recent parade who had ridden her horse uptown just to participate. The girl told her she had been riding in Lake Butler, but her family could no longer afford it.

Those are the kids the riding club used to be able to help. They and many more are missing out, she said. It was free to come and watch, and people did, she said. They would get interested and there would be extra horses for kids to learn riding.

"Some kids that come up there had never been able to even see any horses," she said.

Others joined them in speaking about the history and service of the riding club, including Kimberly Reinhard.

"It was a family. We treated each other like that," she said. "If something happened to one of us, we were all involved, and we need that in this community. And one thing that has not been brought up is the revenue that riding club brought people in when we have NBHA shows or frolics. We did benefits for the Boys Ranch that came. They

used to get a really good check from us because we had those big events, and we were able to help them. Bradford County was able to help them in that way. We're not raising that money anymore for the Boys Ranch, and we're not having the events that are bringing people from other counties and people from this county together, that will leave and stop by somewhere to eat or stop somewhere and get some shopping done that they need to. That's revenue for Bradford County, and I know that's part of the bottom line when it comes down to these decisions, so I just want to make sure that I added that in."

Commission Chairman Danny Riddick committed to investigate what the county could do to assist the club.

Afterward, there was a question about what land club members were talking about. Smith was later able to clarify she had heard about additional acreage behind the Douglas Building, the former state surplus property site on U.S. 301. Bradford County, through the work of Manager Scott Komegay and others, was able to acquire the property from the state. The building was to be leased to MHD Rockland, but that arrangement fell through. Subsequent attempts to find a tenant have not succeeded.

The parcel is nearly 31 acres, only a portion of which is occupied by 104,000 square-foot warehouse. Smith also mentioned land at the Keystone Height Airport available for lease. She said they are not concerned about the location so much as finding land in the county to build their club back again.

## The worst thing you can say to a person with dementia

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

The program manager for Alzheimer's Association's Central and North Florida Chapter told a Lake Region civic group that the worst thing you can say to a person with dementia is to ask the person to come out of their reality.

Donna Lee spoke to the Keystone Heights Rotary Club about her organization's services, including a 1-800 hotline, caregiver support, and training for first responders to deal with people with cognitive decline.

Lee said that many times, the adult children of dementia patients are the caregivers for the patient and that when the patient talks like they are living years or decades ago, family members erroneously try to correct the patient.

She said that one example is a father with dementia who asks where his deceased wife is during the Thanksgiving family gathering.

"When he asks about his wife, who passed away six years ago, they say, 'I'm sorry, Dad. She passed away,'" Lee said. "Now he has to relive that tragedy again."

Lee said if her father had Alzheimer's or dementia and asked where his deceased wife was, Lee would tell him, "She's not here right now."

"I'm not lying to him," the program manager added. "She's not here right now, but I'm also



**Donna Lee spoke to the Keystone Heights Rotary Club about her organization's services, including a 1-800 hotline, caregiver support, and training for first responders to deal with people with cognitive decline.**

not traumatizing him."

Lee also recounted some advice she gave to the wife of a retired traveling salesman experiencing cognitive decline.

The spouse told Lee that even though her husband had been retired for two decades, he expected a packed suitcase and airline tickets by the front door when he woke up in the morning.

"Now, even though he's been retired for 20 years," Lee said, recalling the situation, "he wakes up, he's still looking for a suitcase and plane tickets, so when it's not there, he's angry, starts throwing things and fighting with her because he thinks he's living 20 years prior, still working."

Lee said she advised the wife to pack a suitcase and leave it by the front door. The program manager then found a website where she could print authentic-

looking plane tickets that the spouse could put on top of the luggage.

"Three days later, she calls me back and says, you just solved our whole problem," recalled Lee. "She said, I took those tickets and put them on top of that suitcase. I put in shoes, a change of clothes, and toiletries, things he would recognize if he opened the suitcase. Put it by the door, put the plane tickets on top."

Lee added that, according to the wife, her husband woke up, went to the front door, picked up the fake tickets, put them back on the suitcase, and asked, "What's for breakfast?"

"She said, 'This is the first morning in, like, five years I have not woke up to a fight.'"

## Life insurance rep addresses Rotary

Former Keystone Heights Mayor Lyndel M. Hale addressed the Keystone Heights Rotary Club on Wednesday, December 18, at the Montgomery Center.

Hale, who represents Modern Woodmen, talked about the importance of life insurance.

"My dad was in the insurance business," he told the civic group. "I learned from an early age what it meant for a man to take care of his family. And what I do is help people build, protect, and preserve their assets for retirement."

Hale reviewed his career path, which included a stint at Banker's Life and Casualty before joining his father in the family business. He added that now, his wife and daughter operate an insurance



**Rotary Assistant Governor Jim Troiano talked to the group about news from District 6970.**

agency in Middleburg.

The representative also emphasized the importance of getting the details right when obtaining life insurance, recounting a difficulty his family endured because one policy on the life of a partner in a family business did not pay out. The insurance company's refusal to honor the policy prevented the execution of a buy-sell agreement, pitting family members against one another and throwing the company's disposition into litigation.

"Because of that, the last five years of (my father's) life were very hard, very stressful," Hale said. "And I think it put him in an early grave. So, I have this passion to tell everybody about that so they don't have to go through that. It'll be easier the more prepared you are."

## Assistant Governor provides update

Rotary Assistant Governor Jim Troiano also talked to the group. Troiano said District 6970 had just elected Ed Lombard as its district governor for the 2024-2025 year.

"He joined Rotary of West Jacksonville in 2011, and he was the club president in 2017-2018," Troiano said of the future leader, who will take office in July 2025. "He's also served as a District 6970 assistant area governor, treasurer, and sergeant at arms."

Troiano added that North Jacksonville's Dale Moe will succeed Micky Ulmer, who hails from the Amelia Island Sunrise Club, as District Governor in July 2025. Bo Norton of the Orange



**Keystone Heights Rotary Club member Ginger Lee with her guest speaker Lyndel Hale.**

Park Club will lead the district from 2026 to 2027, followed by Lombard.

Troiano also reminded the group that in December, Rotary is emphasizing disease prevention and treatment, one of its seven service areas. The others are peacebuilding and conflict resolution, water, sanitation, and hygiene, maternal and child health, basic education and literacy, community economic development, and the environment.

"Disease results in misery, pain, and poverty for millions of people worldwide," he said. "We know that there are millions of people without health insurance and people that can't afford it or don't have access to good quality healthcare."

The assistant governor added that Rotarians have set up clinics, blood donation centers, and training facilities to advance the group's disease prevention and treatment mission.

"We design and build infrastructure," he said. "We encourage doctors and patients and governments to work together. Our members combat diseases like malaria, HIV aids, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, and diabetes."

Troiano reminded the group of Rotary International's polio vaccine program, which is on the cusp of eradicating the disease.

"Disease prevention is about more than just healthcare," he

said. "It's about education. It's about empowerment, whether it's funding vaccines, providing clean water to help prevent disease or offering medical training in underserved areas. Our collective efforts help save lives and provide dignity."

## Players, sponsors needed for golf tourney

Madison Street Student Ministry is planning golf tournament Saturday, Feb. 15. Enjoy the challenging Quail Heights Country Club golf course in Lake City and support the students of Madison Street Baptist Church as they head to camp this summer. Registration for the four-person team scramble begins at 7:30 a.m. and the tournament begins at 8:30. Lunch and prizes are at 1:30 p.m. Registration is \$300 per team of four (\$75 per person), which includes fees, carts and lunch. Team and tournament sponsorships are appreciated. For more information, please call 904-964-7557.



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# Bradford will have 2 fairs in '25 in transition to fall-only event

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

The Bradford Agricultural Fair will take place in March, which isn't anything out of the ordinary. What is, though, is the fact it'll be a shorter fair and one of two fairs that will be held in 2025 as part of a transition to a fall-only fair.

The first fair, scheduled for March 6-9, will feature midway rides/entertainment and the animal shows and auction. Buildings 1 and 2 won't be open, which will move the main entrance to the double gates between the two buildings. Building 3, which will be

accessed off the midway only, will be open and will be utilized by UF/IFAS Bradford County Extension and 4-H.

There will be no Home Division and Arts and Crafts exhibits as no one has stepped forward to be the superintendent of those areas.

In October, another fair will be held, which will include exhibit booths set up in Buildings 1 and 2, which will be open as usual. It won't feature the animal shows and auction, though there is a possibility of having an open show for youth to exhibit their animals.

Fair Board President Bob Milner described this year as

a work in progress, but the definitive goal is to move to a fall-only fair starting in 2026.

Milner said many people over the years have requested a fall fair. The spark, though, that ignited the move came from Deggeller Attractions, which has been providing the midway. Deggeller gave notification only a few months ago that it wouldn't provide a midway for a spring fair. Milner said the company cited its schedule and the fact it didn't make enough money in the spring as its reasons.

"They begged for a fall fair," Milner said. "They said it'd be much better."

The notification left the

Bradford fair in a bit of a lurch as 4-H and FFA youth have been raising animals in preparation for a spring fair.

"We went ahead with the spring fair so we can do the animals," said Milner, adding that the animal breeders need enough time to transition to a fall event.

With no midway in March, the fair reached out to Harland Entertainment, its previous provider. The number of rides (including a 100-foot-tall Ferris wheel) may or may not be the same as the fair has had the last couple of years, Milner said, adding, "Our fairgoers won't — I hope — notice much difference."

Fairgoers should notice a difference in the midway in October, though.

"We will have more rides and larger rides in the fall," Milner said. "Harland has promised us that."

Milner did say that the future regarding the animal shows and auction being a part of the fall fair is unknown at this point. He said the steer and swine associations may still need to hold their events in March next year and that it's possible that those events will continue to take place in March. If they do, they will be events separate from the fair. The midway and exhibits will completely move to the fall

after this year.

"We'll just have to see going forward," Milner said.

One thing for fairgoers to note is that the midway provider utilizes a cashless-only system, utilizing credit/debit cards and smartphone apps. Armbands for rides are a thing of the past.

Fair Manager Dale Woodruff said a definitive procedure isn't in place yet to replace advance sales of physical armbands. That will be announced at a later date.

The fair still accepts cash for the entrance fee, though Woodruff said that may be phased out in the next couple of

See FAIR, page 16

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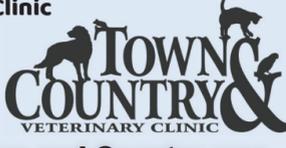
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# Looking back: Starke's centennial

*Editor's note: Information for this story was taken from the Telegraph's Centennial Issue, which was published July 26, 1979, and the 60 Years of History (1940-1990s) special, that was published in March 2000.*

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

With the impending centennial celebration of the city of Keystone Heights in 2025, the Telegraph-Times-Monitor looks at how the city of Starke celebrated its centennial in 1957.

Garfield, the famed cat of comics, often like to express his disdain for something by saying it was a "big, fat, hairy deal." Well, you could describe Starke's six-day centennial celebration in May as a "big, hairy deal," as men were encouraged to grow

facial hair from Feb. 25 until midnight of May 11. The intent, as a city of Starke proclamation put it, was to provide a "suitable commemoration of our pioneer forefathers of a century past."

Most men could probably grow a full beard in less time that it took to read the wordy proclamation, which stated that those "who have attained at least a semblance of the dignity of manhood" shall "wear either a beard, goatee, chin-whiskers, Van Dyke, mutton chops, mustache and/or (Heaven forbid) 'Elvis Presley' sideburns or any other acceptable facial hirsute growth of such length and full luxuriance as to be readily discernable at the distance of one city block."

According to the proclamation, these "worthy men" would be known as "The Brothers of the



**Beard-competition winners (clockwise from top left): S.R. Hicks (bushiest), Ewell Lawson (blackest), Jimmy Sullivan (reddest), J.E. Sherwood (fanciest), Carr Colley (whitest) and James Watson (ugliest).**

Brush."

A "police force" known as "Ye Keystone Kops" was created to report men not growing out their facial hair to "Ye Kangaroo Kourt," which would mete out "such humiliation and punishment as seen proper."

Another city proclamation was later presented to address women, who had "heretofore enjoyed absolute freedom from any mandatory restraint" and subjected men to "scorn and ridicule" for their facial hair. Women, "in memory of their pioneer great-grandmothers of yore," were instructed to "refrain from appearing in public or on the streets and highways of our century old city while wearing lipstick, rouge, eye shadow, foundation, cream, powder, mascara, nail polish, tinted or bleached hairdos, perfume or jewelry (either singly or in matched combinations) without first obtaining the official cosmetic permit issued by the Sisters of the Swish, a duly constituted subsidiary of our Grand Centennial Celebration."

The "official cosmetic permit" was described as a "handsome cameo pin and choker" that would allow "the wearer to use the above-mentioned feminine

blandishments without fear of reprisals."

Again, there were consequences to not going along with the spirit of the centennial celebration, as women would have to answer to "Ye Female Keystone Kops" and "Ye Awful Judges of Ye Kangaroo Kourt."

## Centennial festivities

The centennial celebration was planned for May 6-11. Various events were planned, but one of the main features was a "centurama" that told the story of Starke since the arrival of the first railroad. The event, which was held at the Bradford High School stadium, was advertised as having a cast of 300 in "special costumes" and "a glittering fireworks display that will surpass anything seen in this area before." Narration was provided by Nina Andrews, Del Colley, H.B. Ingram and Rev. Don Kokomoor.

Admission for adults was \$1.50, with children being admitted for 75 cents. Reserved seats were \$2. Each day of the celebration had a theme, with the first day being called "Governor's and Statesman's Day." It began with a "colorful parade down Call Street. High-stepping school bands from Starke, Lake Butler and Green Cove Springs set the pace."

Florida Gov. LeRoy Collins, donned in frock tail and top hat, rode in a horse-drawn carriage in the parade, which also featured Florida Sen. Charley Johns and Bradford Rep. and Speaker of the House Doyle Conner in vintage cars. Starke Mayor W.T. "Billy" Jackson was described as being there "with bells."

The parade consisted of the various modes of transportation in the last 100 years.

"Beautiful girls in formal gowns contrasted with clowns and elephants."

Starke residents were treated to free pizzas at Sorrento's

Restaurant, while a dinner honoring the governor was held at Camp Blanding's officers club.

That first night's centurama was followed by the governor crowning Sylvia Paulk as Centennial Queen.

"Humor was added when the crown was misplaced, and the governor had to give an impromptu speech until the lost crown was recovered."

Six Centennial Princesses were chosen for the queen's court: Patsy Dixon, Frances Landrum, Mary Agnes Matthews, Alice Newman, Betty Ann Simmons and Shi Ann Smith.

The queen received a trip for two to Havana, Cuba, while the six runners-up received savings bonds ranging in value from \$25 to \$100.

Closing the pageant was "the explosion of a simulated atomic bomb and a fireworks display."

A queen's ball and street dance were held at the USO.

May 7 was known as "Veterans and Armed-Forces Day." It consisted of an open house at the National Guard armory that featured a helicopter, Nike-guided missile, a tank and an anti-aircraft gun. Children (after school, of course), were treated to rides in a 4-and-8 locomotive by members of American Legion Post 56.

"Youth and School Day" on May 8 offered games and contests at the BHS stadium.

Tours were part of "Agricultural and Industry Day" on May 9, while "Good Neighbor and County Day" on May 10 featured a late-afternoon parade.

The celebration came to a "rousing close" on "Old-Timers and Homecoming Day" on May 11.

"Most observers declared the Saturday crowds the largest ever seen in Starke."

Out-of-town visitors were greeted by "centennial belles" at the Woman's Club, where they received refreshments and centennial souvenirs.

A fashion show was hosted by the Sisters of the Swish. Men, women and children modeled clothing from throughout the past century.

Rain, "which dampened the lovely formal gowns worn by Centennial Queen Sylvia Paulk and her court," began falling before the event's final parade, but "let up just in time to prevent wholesale drenching."

The parade included "several new attractions," including motorcycle police from Jacksonville, an elephant from Florida's Reptile Land and Renee Beheler, a clown from Ringling Brothers Circus.

A fiddling contest was held on the courthouse grounds until rain forced the contest inside. The high point of the contest, as it was described, was the entrance of 94-year-old E.B. "Uncle Dock" Andreu, a Bradford County native who lived in Lake City.

The Telegraph reported that it seemed as if Lake Butler's Earl



**Sally Tyson and Laura Mosley had seen a good portion of Starke's first 100 years, but they still enjoyed getting into the act.**



**Sylvia Paulk is crowned as Centennial Queen by Gov. LeRoy Collins.**

Hollingsworth, "who brought forth spontaneous outbursts of applause and foot stomping with his forceful and rhythmic style," was set to win the contest. That was until the "old master," Uncle Dock, was introduced by his nephew, Lex Green.

"Even though I haven't been feeling well lately, I'm going to try and play at least one number for my old friends of Bradford County," Uncle Dock told the crowd.

Uncle Dock, who said he had been fiddling since he was 7, played "with a calm assurance in spite of his advanced years" and "had the crowd pulling for him from the start." He played "Soldier's Joy" and, based on applause, earned the contest's top prize.

The celebration moved to the BHS football stadium, where the beard-judging contest was held. Awards went to J.E. Sherwood (fanciest), S.R. Hicks (bushiest), Ewell Lawson (blackest), Carr Colley (whitest), Jimmy Sullivan (reddest) and James Watson (ugliest).

A beard-shaving contest followed, with Merrill Edwards declared the winner, followed by runner-up S.R. Hicks and third-place finisher Bobby Lewis.

The celebration concluded with the final performance of the centurama, fireworks and a dance at the USO.



**ABOVE: Waiting to go on stage for the costume competition are (l-r) Adolph Gay, James C. Hobbs, Ewell Lawson, James Lewis and Jim Chasteen. LEFT: "Uncle Dock" Andreu (left), accompanied by Red Hollingsworth, won the fiddling contest.**



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Akireon Boykin (right) grapples with an opponent from Interlachen. He'd eventually win by a pin.

## UCHS wrestling team wins home tri-match

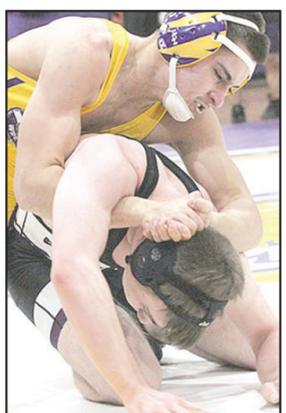
BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School hosted Gainesville and Interlachen for a wrestling match on Jan. 23, with the Tigers defeating both teams.

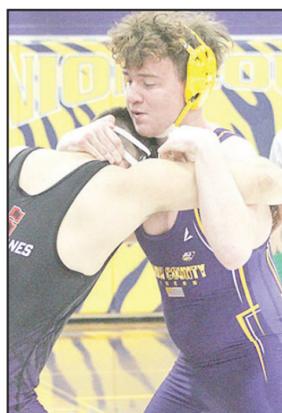
The match opened with Interlachen defeating Gainesville 53-30.

Union then took on Interlachen. After forfeiting two weight

See WRESTLE, page 16



Hunter Cruz (top) wrestles against an opponent from Gainesville, getting the pin early in the second period.



Preston Griffin (right) wraps up his opponent in what would be a quick win against Gainesville.



Carsen Thomas (right) wrestles his way to a second-period pin against Interlachen.

# BMS is SMAC tournament runner-up

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Three individuals won their weight classes, while another five were runners-up in their weight classes as the Bradford Middle School wrestling team took the second-place team trophy at the Suwannee Middle Athletic Conference tournament, which was held Jan. 25 in Lake Butler.

The Tornadoes had a team score of 175, which left them training champion Lake City, which had a score of 275. Bradford finished ahead of Lake Butler (147.5), Suwannee (118.5), Palatka (84) and Interlachen (67).

Demetrius Hunter (95-pound

class, Mason Lowe (150) and Kaison Pierce (190) all recorded pins in the semifinals. In the championship matches, Hunter pinned Palatka's Willie Gilyard, Lowe pinned Lake Butler's Isaiah Cepeda and Pierce pinned Suwannee's Colton Shelton.

Bradford's five second-place wrestlers were Avery Gardner (80), Julius Givings (113), Nathaniel Givings (120), Colton Rowe (126) and Jaland Carey (157). All but Nathaniel Givings pinned their opponents in the semifinals, while Givings advanced to the finals by forfeit. The championship-match results were: Gardner pinned by Lake City's Caden Kinghorn, Julius Givings pinned by Suwannee's



Kaison Pierce (top) was one of three Bradford wrestlers to win a weight class at the SMAC tournament.

Hunter Griffin, Nathaniel Conner Faircloth (85) and Givings loss by technical fall to Lake City's Jackson Coates, Rowe pinned by Lake City's Bryson Dunlap and Carey pinned by Lake City's Gerald Collins. Stanley Varnum (138) earned third-place finishes, while Drake Culverson (132), Colt Harden (215) and Jacoby Pernell (285) all placed fourth.

## LBMS wrestles way to 3rd place in SMAC

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Lake Butler Middle School had two first-place finishers and four runners-up in placing third as a team at the Suwannee Middle Athletic Conference wrestling tournament, which was held Jan. 25 in Lake Butler.

Lake City won the championship with 275 points, while Bradford was the runner-up with 175 points. Lake Butler had 147.5 points to finish ahead of Suwannee (118.5), Palatka (84) and Interlachen (67).

The Tigers' Gage Seay was the only wrestler in the 75-pound class, which resulted in an automatic championship. Kyson Waters' 85-pound class had only three wrestlers, so Waters was automatically placed in the championship match, awaiting the winner between Bradford's Conner Faircloth and Lake City's Isaiah Wiley. Wiley advanced and then defeated Waters.

Winston Sparkman (90-pound class), Isaiah Cepeda (150), Rainee Johnson (175) and James Crew (215) all placed second in

their respective classes.

Sparkman and Johnson wrestled in classes that had only two wrestlers, so their only action was in their championship matches. Sparkman was pinned by Lake City's Xzavier Claridy, while Johnson was pinned by Lake City's Jamarion West.

Cepeda recorded a pin in the semifinal round of his class before getting pinned by Bradford's Mason Lowe in the championship match.

Crew also had a semifinal-round pin before getting pinned

in the finals by Interlachen's Ayden Green.

Five wrestlers earned third-place finishes: Carter Rogers (80), Madison Strickland (95), Mia Gaskin (120), Landon Douglas (126) and Phillip Watts (285).

Placing fourth were Mason Vandervort (100), Bristol Geist (106), Troy Alexander (144) and Rylan Franzluebbbers (157), while Benjamin Russell (113), Chloe Foreman (132) and Easton Tetstone (138) finished in fifth place.

## Lions get 2 hoops wins on homecoming

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Hope Christian Academy's homecoming festivities included the boys and girls basketball teams both defeating Gainesville Christian Community on Jan. 25.

The boys team won 48-30 to move its record to 9-6. It was the Lions' fifth straight win.

Caden Hartzog and Walker Munroe each scored 14 points, with the Lions also getting solid efforts from Mason Masciocchi and Joelle Smith. Masciocchi had six points, seven rebounds and three steals, while Smith had five points, five rebounds and four steals.

The Lions, who played Westwood Christian and First Assembly Christian this past Monday and Tuesday, will travel to play Valdosta, Georgia's Open Bible Christian on Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m. Hope travels to play Keystone Heights High School on Friday, Jan. 31, at 7:30 p.m. before hosting Hart 2 Hart Academy on Thursday, Feb. 6, at 6 p.m.

Hope picked up its second win of the girls season (and second straight) by defeating Gainesville Christian Community 31-17. Addyson Wilson had 15 points



ABOVE LEFT: Joelle Smith (center) goes up for a scoring opportunity in Hope's homecoming win over Gainesville Christian Community. ABOVE RIGHT: Mackenzie McRaney (right) handles the ball in the Lions' homecoming game against Gainesville Christian Community. Photos by Chris Amis.



and six steals.

The Lions also got six points each from Aubriana Clark and

Autumn Hunt and two points each from Alyssa Hunt and Natalie Lowe.

Hope plays prior to each of the boys games versus Open Bible and Keystone at 6 p.m.

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# Obituaries

## Sarah Addison

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Sarah Louvenia Addison, who departed this life peacefully on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025, at the age of 85. Born Nov. 8, 1939, in Lawley, she lived a rich and fulfilling life, ultimately residing in Keystone Heights. A devoted homemaker, she dedicated her life to nurturing her family and creating a warm, loving environment in her home. She was a passionate gardener, finding solace and joy in tending to her plants. In her leisure time, she enjoyed solving puzzles and expressing her creativity through artwork, activities that brought happiness to her daily life. She was preceded in death by her parents, Sidney Starling, Mable Starling; and brother, Louie Starling.

She is survived by her beloved husband of 66 years, Richard Addison; daughter, Sharon Roark; son, Raymond Addison; cherished grandsons, Byron and Darren Roark; great-grandchild, Odin Valor Roark; and her brother, Lamar Starling. Her kindness, warmth, and unwavering love will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

A graveside service was held to honor her life on Monday, Jan. 27, at Keystone Heights Cemetery, located at 7304 State Road 100, Keystone Heights. Friends and family were invited to come together to celebrate her life and share their memories during this poignant moment. Sarah Louvenia Addison's legacy of love and resilience will live on in the hearts of all those she touched.

Arrangements were by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home of Keystone Heights 352-473-3176 www.jonesgallagherfh.com.



PAID OBITUARY

## Phyllis Davis

Phyllis Davis, 77, of Gainesville, passed away Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025, at her home peacefully. Born March 27, 1947, in Randolph, Mississippi, she was the daughter of the late Windham and Kathleen McGreger. She was preceded in death by her loving husband of 60 years, Wendell Davis, who she longed to be back with. In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by her brothers, Ralph McGreger and Gary McGreger.

She is survived by her children Donald (Vella) Davis, Sherry (Larry) Turbyfield, Marty (Kim) Davis, Melissa (Gary) McDonald; grandchildren, Kathy (Patrick) Martin, Kimberly (Caleb) Williams, Jessica Smiley, Justin (Lindsay) Davis, Elizabeth (Michael) Cabrera, Hannah McDonald, Grace McDonald, and Nehemiah McDonald; great-grandchildren, Brayden, Austin, Tyson, Branson, Cameron, Jackson, Justus, Jillian, Lucy, Weston, Elijah, Levi; her brother, Terry (Teresa) McGreger; her sister, Karen (Wayne) Bush; along with many nieces and nephews.

She loved her family dearly and loved being able to spend time with them. When she was able, she loved gardening, sewing, baking, and watching old western and cooking shows. She loved her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, with all her heart. She was a member of Bible Baptist Church in Starke. She loved her pastor and his wife, Brother Roger Worten and Sister Cathy, and her church family very much. She was loved by so many and will be missed greatly.



PAID OBITUARY

## J.E. Mott

Joseph Eddy (J.E.) Mott, 78, passed away Friday, Dec. 27, 2024, at E.T. York Haven Hospice after a lengthy illness. He was born Oct. 25, 1946, in Brooker to Howard and Jeanette Mott. He graduated from Bradford High School in 1964. After graduation, he joined the United States Navy and deployed on the USS America (CVA/CV-66) on her maiden voyage to the Mediterranean in 1965. After four years in the Navy, he returned to Brooker and worked for the University of Florida at J. Hillis Miller Health Science Center as a biomedical technician. In 1973, he was hired by the Bradford County School System. He went on to become the Director of Maintenance and Facilities for the Bradford County School System, retiring in 2008 after 35 years. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends as well as RV'ing and traveling the country, kayaking and riding his electric bike on Florida's rails to trails until health issues forced him to give up his favorite activities. He was preceded in death by his parents; and brothers, Milton, Kenneth and Hal Mott.

He is survived by his wife of nearly 20 Years, Renae Mott of Brooker; sons, Duane (Rhonda) Mott of Brooker, Ryan (Samantha) Mott of Waunakee, Wisconsin, and Dustin (Debra) Mott (Debra) of Brooker; daughter, Lindsay Mott of Lake Butler; sisters, Anita Andrews of Brooker and Janice Jackson of Lake City; and his grandchildren, Ashton, Jayson, Zane, Kaelyn and Adalyn.

A celebration of life took place Saturday, Jan. 25, at Brooker Baptist Church. Mr. Mott requested that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Florida Sheriff Boys Ranch in Live Oak Florida (youthranches.org) or E.T. York Haven Hospice (havenhospice.com/donate)

His cremation was under the care and direction of Archer-Milton Funeral Home. 386-496-2008 www.archerfuneralhome.com

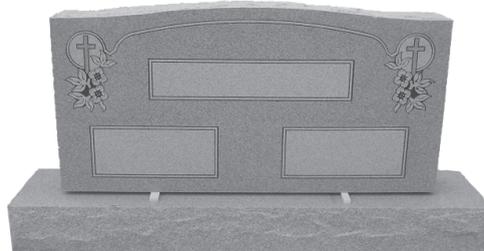


PAID OBITUARY

If you have an In Memory or Card of Thanks you'd like to publish, please email to [socials@bctelegraph.com](mailto:socials@bctelegraph.com) or call 904-964-6305.

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# Legal Notices

Legals for the week of Jan. 30, 2025

## BRADFORD

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION CASE NO. 24000272CAAXMX PENNY MAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC, Plaintiff, VS. ELIZABETH MARIE COODY, et al., Defendant,

NOTICE OF ACTION To the following Defendant(s): ANY AND ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING BY, THROUGH, UNDER, AND AGAINST ESTATE OF GAYLA MARIE TAYLOR, WHETHER SAID UNKNOWN PARTIES MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST AS SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEEES, OR OTHER CLAIMANTS (RESIDENCE UNKNOWN) YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for Foreclosure of Mortgage on the following described property: LOT 7 AND NORTHERLY 1/2 OF LOT 6, BLOCK 27, LIVINGSTON, TRUBY AND COMPANY'S ADDITION TO STARKE, IN SECTION 28, TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 22 EAST, AS PER THE PLAT RECORDED IN DEED BOOK J, PAGE 232, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA.

has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to, on McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLP, Sara Collins, Attorney for Plaintiff, whose address is 225 East Robinson Street, Suite 155, Orlando, FL 32801 on or before, a date which is within thirty (30) days after the first publication of this Notice in and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either before service on Plaintiff's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demand in the complaint. WITNESS my hand and seal of this Court this 15th day of January, 2025. DENNY THOMPSON CLERK OF COURT OF BRADFORD COUNTY, By: KANETRA JENKINS As Deputy Clerk Publish In: Bradford County Telegraph Submitted by: MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLP 225 East Robinson Street, Suite 155, Orlando, FL 32801 Phone: (407) 674-1850 Email: [AccountsPayable@mccalla.com](mailto:AccountsPayable@mccalla.com) 24-10244FL

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY GENERAL JURISDICTION DIVISION CASE NO. 24000272CAAXMX PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC, Plaintiff, vs. ELIZABETH MARIE COODY, et al., Defendant.

AFFIDAVIT OF CONSTRUCTIVE SERVICE UNKNOWN HEIRS & BENEFICIARIES (STATE OF FLORIDA) COUNTY OF ORANGE) Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared, Sara Collins, Esquire, who, first being duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. Affiant is an attorney for Plaintiff in this action and is attempting to effectuate service of process by publication to enforce a legal or equitable lien or claim to title or interest in real property within the jurisdiction of the court. §49.01 1(1), Fla. Stat. (2011).

2. Plaintiff has discerned that Defendant/Borrower, GAYLA MARIE TAYLOR, is deceased. The Death Certificate was recorded on 10/11/2024 in Official Records Book 2115 at Page 3. A copy of the Death Certificate is attached hereto.

3. Affiant believes that there are persons who are or may be interested in the subject matter of this action, whose names, after diligent search and inquiry, are unknown to affiant. Said unknown parties may claim an interest as heirs, devisees, grantees, assignees, lienors, creditors, trustees or other claimants, by, through, under, or against Defendant(s)/Borrower(s),

or each of them, who are dead or not known to be dead or alive.

4. Affiant has made a diligent search and inquiry to discover the name(s) and residence(s) of, ANY AND ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING BY, THROUGH, UNDER, AND AGAINST ESTATE OF GAYLA MARIE TAYLOR, WHETHER SAID UNKNOWN PARTIES MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST AS SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEEES, OR OTHER CLAIMANTS in this action.

5. Affiant has attempted to locate Probate documents in Public Records. However, the names and residences of Defendants remain unknown.

6. Personal service of process cannot be had and constructive service of process by publication is necessary to effectuate service pursuant to Section 49.021(1), Florida Statutes. FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

VERIFICATION Under the penalties of perjury, and pursuant to Fla. Stat. 92.525(1)(b) and (2), I declared that I have read the foregoing affidavit, and the facts stated in it are true on this 8th day of January, 2025.

BY: Sara Collins, Esq. McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLP Attorney for Plaintiff 225 East Robinson Street, Suite 155 Orlando, FL 32801 Phone: (407) 674-1850 Fax: (321) 248-0420 Email: [MRService@mccalla.com](mailto:MRService@mccalla.com) Fla. Bar No.: 53992

1/30 2tchg 1/30-BCT

COMMISSION MEETING THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners will have a board meeting on February 4, 2025, at 9:30 AM inside the county commission meeting room, located in the north wing section of the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple, Avenue, Starke, FL. A copy of the meeting agenda may be obtained from the Bradford County website: [www.bradfordcountyfl.gov](http://www.bradfordcountyfl.gov). Said meeting location is secured – no firearms or weapons are permitted.

1/30 1tchg-BCT

FIRE ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners will hold a workshop to discuss a proposed Fire Assessment on February 4, 2025, at 10:30 AM, or immediately following the regular BOCC meeting, inside the county commission meeting room, located in the north wing section of the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple, Avenue, Starke, FL. A copy of the meeting agenda may be obtained from the Bradford County website: [www.bradfordcountyfl.gov](http://www.bradfordcountyfl.gov). Said meeting location is secured – no firearms or weapons are permitted.

1/30 1tchg-BCT

REQUEST FOR SEALED BIDS The City of Starke City Commission will receive sealed bids from any qualified person, company or corporation interested in providing **Asbestos Inspection Services and/or Lead Based Paint inspections services** for the RJE Gymnasium which is an 8,700 Square foot Gymnasium located at 1080 Pine Street, Starke, Florida 32091. Vendors may submit proposals for one or both services.

Requests for bid packages can be obtained from the City of Starke, 209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091 or by sending a request by email to [smann@cityofstarke.org](mailto:smann@cityofstarke.org) or by contacting Stephanie Mann at (904) 612-5874. Also, questions concerning this request for sealed bids should be sent to [andyeaston2@msn.com](mailto:andyeaston2@msn.com).

A walk-through of the RJE Gymnasium at 1080 Pine Street, Starke, Florida 32091 will be held to allow potential bidders to view the building's interior. The walk-through will be held at 1:00 pm on **Tuesday, February 11, 2025**. The last day for questions is **Thursday, February 13, 2025**.

Bids will be received until **Wednesday, February 26, 2025 @ 2:00 pm (EST)**, and will be opened and read aloud on **Wednesday, February 26, 2025 @ 2:15 pm (EST)** at the City of Starke Commission Chambers at 209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, Florida

32091. Please submit 3 copies of your bid by mail or hand delivery to the City of Starke, Attn: Stephanie Mann, 209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091. The City reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals and to waive any technicalities or irregularities therein.

MBE/WBE firms are encouraged to submit proposals.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/FAIR HOUSING/HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE JURISDICTION.

1/30 1tchg-BCT

REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Bradford County S.H.I.P. Program will receive sealed bids until 2:30 p.m. February 17, 2025 at the Bradford County Office of the County Clerk located at 945 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091 for the following:

Renovation of residence located at: 17843 NW 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Starke, FL A mandatory walk through is a prerequisite to a valid bid. All interested bidders will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, February 7, 2025 at the Community Development Office located at 925-E North Temple Avenue in Starke, Florida. If you plan to submit a bid, a representative of your firm must attend the "walk through" of the unit to become familiar with the property and the scope of work to be completed.

No contractors shall visit the subject property for any reason without first making arrangements with the County and owner.

All contractors must have proof of Residential or General Contractor's License, proof of Liability Insurance, proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance (or Exemption Card), a statement of non-discrimination, and at least two references from previously completed jobs.

Bids will be opened at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, February 17, 2025 or as soon thereafter as possible in the presence of the Clerk or his designee, Community Development staff, and all interested persons in the Bradford County Board of County Commission Meeting Room.

The opened bids will be read into public record and preserved in the custody of the Community Development Department.

Bids will not be valid unless received by the bid deadline and in a sealed envelope marked, "Sealed Bid, S.H.I.P." and received by 2:30 p.m., February 17, 2025. Questions to be submitted in writing to the Community Development office at [kelly\\_canady@bradfordcountyfl.gov](mailto:kelly_canady@bradfordcountyfl.gov) or Fax (904) 966-6384 no later than 3:00 p.m. Friday, February 14, 2025.

The County reserves the right to reject all bids when in its best judgment they are too high or when it is determined to be in the best interest of the County that the bids be re-advertised.

Pursuant to Section 255.0991, Florida Statutes, Bradford County **WILL NOT** offer a local preference for this project.

It is the policy of the County to promote equal opportunity to obtain adequate housing by all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, handicap, or national origin.

1/30 1tchg-BCT

FICTITIOUS NAME Notice Is Herby Given that Warren Averett Staffing and Recruiting, LLC, 2500 Action Rd, Birmingham, AL 35243, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of Warren Averett Executive Search and Recruiting, with its principal place of business in the State of Florida in the County of Bradford, intends to file an Application for Registration of Fictitious Name with the Florida Department of State.

1/30 1tchg-BCT

## UNION

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (the Department) has received a Notice of Inactive status from FloridaCommerce declaring the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District inactive under Chapter 189, Florida Statutes. The Department has found that the Union Soil and Water Conservation District was not in compliance with the audit and financial reporting requirements in Chapter 189, Florida Statutes, and proposes a certification determining that the continued operation of the District is not administratively practicable and feasible under the provisions of the Chapter. The territory included in the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District is the same as the jurisdictional boundaries of Union County, Florida. This Notice shall be published once a week for two weeks. Any comments or objections to the proposed certification, or any claims against the assets of the District,

must be filed with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Agency Clerk, 600 South Calhoun Street, Holland Building, Suite 254, Tallahassee, FL 32399; or by email at [AgencyClerk@fdacs.gov](mailto:AgencyClerk@fdacs.gov) not later than 60 days after the date of last publication.

1/23 2tchg 1/30-UCT

City of Lake Butler Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Engineering Services, Florida Boating Improvement Program

The City of Lake Butler is seeking to enter into an engineering services contract with a stateregistered engineer for a grant funded boat ramp improvement project. **Scope of Work** – The project is being funded by a Florida Boating Improvement Program grant (Grant #24073). The engineering services contract will include the design, permitting, testing surveying, Geotech, and preparation of biddable plans and specifications for improvements to the boat ramp at Lakeside Park. **Evaluative Criteria:** Please address the following evaluative criteria in your response to this RFQ: 1. Experience: provide a description of your engineering experience to include a list of past local government clients and the types of projects that were completed for them. 2. Capacity to perform the requested services: provide the resumes of the staff that will or may be assigned to this project. 3. Ability to perform the requested services: describe the proposed tasks for this project that will be initiated to address the scope of work. Also, include a copy of your current certificate of insurance for professional liability.

**Ranking Criteria** The statements of qualifications that are received will be ranked according to the following criteria: 1. Engineering experience: 60 points; 2. Capacity to perform the requested services: 25 points; 3. Ability to perform the requested services: 15 points; Total Points: 100. For this RFQ, the highest ranked respondent will be recommended for contract award, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. **Deadline for Submission** The deadline for submitting proposals has been extended to **2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2025** at the following address: Lake Butler City Hall (Attention: City Manager), 200 SW 1st Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054. Please limit your submittal to 35 pages or less and submit six copies of your statement of qualifications and write "Sealed statement of qualifications for FBIP engineering services" on the outside of the envelope. Also, please note that this notice constitutes the entire RFQ for this project (there is no need to request an RFQ document because this notice is the RFQ). The engineering services contract will be subject to grant award and release of funds by the funding agency. In accordance with Chapter 287.133(2) (a), Florida Statutes, a person or affiliate who has been placed on the convicted vendor list following a conviction for a public entity crime may not submit a proposal. MBE/WBE firms are encouraged to submit proposals.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION 1/30 1tchg-UCT

Request for Proposals The City of Lake Butler, Florida, is requesting proposals from qualified individuals or firms to provide grant administration services for a Florida Boating Improvement Program grant that has been awarded to the city (Grant #24073). The grant will be used to improve the boat ramp at Lakeside Park. Please submit 6 copies of a proposal for grant administration services. The proposal should be unbound, paper clipped or stapled only and should not exceed 10 pages. The proposal should provide a description of your organization and staff, grant management experience, familiarity or ability to become familiar with local conditions, areas of expertise and proposed approach and fee. **Deadline for Submission** The deadline for submitting proposals has been extended to **2:00 p.m. on March 12, 2025** at the following address: Lake Butler City Hall (Attention: City Manager), 200 SW 1st Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054. Please indicate on the outside of the envelope: "Sealed Proposal for Grant Administration Services – Lake Butler Florida Boating Improvement Program Project".

1/30 1tchg-UCT

PUBLIC AUCTION An auction pursuant to statute #713.78 to be held February 8th at 10:00am at 6841 Apache Jct, Keystone Heights, FL 32656: 2021 Chrysler Pacifica Vin #2C4RC1BG3MR527900 1/30 1tchg-LRM

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## Bradford boys beat Class 5A Ridgeview

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Jordan Cason posted a double-double, while Maliki Cobarris poured in 25 points as the Bradford High School boys basketball team defeated Class 5A Ridgeview 59-51 on Jan. 23 in Orange Park.

The Class 3A Tornadoes (12-3) got 11 points and 14 rebounds from Cason as well as 10 points and five steals from Jy'Quez Cason.

K.J. Taylor and Steven Carter scored six and five points, respectively, while Kyren Green added two points.

Bradford, which played Trenton on Jan. 25 and Newberry on Jan. 27 will host Palatka on Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m. The Tornadoes then close the regular season with a home game against Class 5A Belleview on Friday, Jan. 31, at 7:30 p.m.

## BHS girls fall again to Panthers

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

The Bradford High School girls basketball team suffered another loss to District 3-3A opponent Newberry, with the host Panthers defeating the Tornadoes 65-52 on Jan. 27.

It was the second straight loss for the Tornadoes, who were coming off a 54-31 loss to host Trenton on Jan. 25.

Against Newberry, Bradford got 20 points from Ar'Nayshia Griffin and 16 points from Nichelle Brown. Ky'lee Johnson added six points, while he Tornadoes also got four points each from Wynter Barrington and Cherish Bing and two points from Nyasia Lopey.

Barrington led the team in rebounds with nine and blocked shots with three.

Griffin had team highs in steals with four and assists with four.

Bradford (13-6) played Williston this past Tuesday.

## Chandler, Jenkins lead Tigers in win over Baker

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School got 15 and 14 points from Tyrese Chandler and Gavin Jenkins, respectively, in a 65-47 win over visiting Baker County on Jan. 25.

Jenkins and Chandler also dished out four and three assists, respectively, while Jenkins also added three steals and seven rebounds in the third straight win for the Tigers.

Adrian Manns blocked seven shots.

Union (11-3) entered the game off a 74-55 win over visiting Interlachen on Jan. 24. Jenkins had 21 points, nine steals and three assists, while Chandler poured in 16 points.

Adrian Manns, who had eight points, led the team in assists with eight, while Isaiah Folaji had four.

Manns grabbed six rebounds and blocked three shots, while

Jeppson Dang was second behind Jenkins in steals with four.

The Tigers played Middleburg and Baker County this past Monday and Tuesday and will host Hamilton County on Friday, Jan. 31, at 7:30 p.m.

## KHHS girls eliminated in district tourney

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School was the number-one seed in the District 4-3A girls soccer tournament, but the Indians, after a first-round bye, lost 2-1 to fifth seed Eastside on Jan. 27 in Keystone.

The Indians, based on Florida High School Athletic Association/Max Preps power rankings, most likely needed to win the district tournament in order to participate in the regional playoffs.

Regional playoff at-large berths will be announced following the completion of district tournaments.

Eastside will play second

seed Santa Fe for the District 4 championship on Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m.

## Hubbard has 16-16 double-double in KH girls win over Duval Charter

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Daisy Hubbard scored 16 points and grabbed 16 rebounds in a 44-14 win for the Keystone Heights High School girls basketball team on Jan. 15 at Duval Charter.

McKinlee Kirkland scored 13 points, while Kadence Massey had eight points, nine rebounds, eight of the team's 11 assists, three steals and one block.

Melissa Williams added two points, while Alexandria Papaioannou had one point.

It was the fourth win of the season for the Indians, who then lost 41-30 to visiting Baldwin on Jan. 17.

Keystone got solid efforts

from Massey and Riley Shuford, with each scoring eight points. Massey added eight rebounds, three assists and three blocks, while Shuford also had four rebounds, four steals and two blocks.

The Indians end the regular season with a home game against Hope Christian Academy on Friday, Jan. 31, at 6 p.m.

## KHHS boys played in Jan. 28 District 4-3A soccer semis

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School played in the semifinals of the District 4-3A this past Tuesday after deadline. If the Indians won that match against third seed Eastside, they'll play top seed Santa Fe or fifth seed Palatka for the championship on Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m. at Santa Fe High School in Alachua.

The Indians (11-5-3) are the tournament's second seed.



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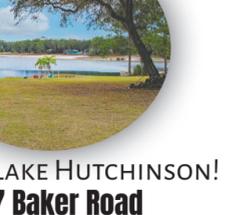


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# KHHS wins both district titles for 3rd straight year

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

KHHS.

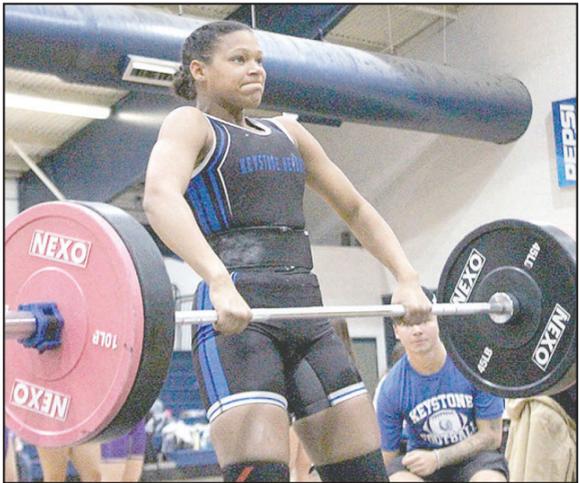
Keystone Heights High School captured both the Olympic and traditional team championship trophies for the third straight year, earning 13 individual titles as well at the District 6-1A girls weightlifting meet on Jan. 24 at

The Indians had a team score of 93 in the Olympic event, winning eight of the 10 weight classes to finish ahead of Baldwin (56), Fort White (20), St. Johns Country Day (14) and Bishop Snyder (10).

Cadie Bowles, Ashlyn Brown, Paige Harrington and Ava



Keystone Heights High School won both the district Olympic and traditional team championships for the third year in a row. The Indians qualified 14 individuals in each of the Olympic and traditional events at the Feb. 1 Region 2-1A finals.



Chloe Still won the Olympic and traditional championships in the 139 class. She had the best clean and jerk in her class by 25 points and finished as the top pound-for-pound traditional lifter.

Herman, Kaylee Park, Alyssa Sanford, Chloe Still and Morgan Wilson earned automatic berths in the Region 2 meet by winning their classes. Six lifters earned at-large bids to the region meet based on their totals at the district meet: Jaden Fernandez, Natalie Layfield, Aubre Miller, Lily Mitchell, Kaiya Thompson and London Williams.

Keystone claimed the

traditional championship with 72 points. Union County was the runner-up with 39 points, followed by Bradford (37), Baldwin (32), Fort White (29) and Bishop Snyder (8).

Bowles, Herman, Mitchell, Park and Still were individual champions, while the following received at-large region berths: Brown, Harrington, Miller, Sanford, Thompson, Williams,

Wilson, Makenzi Brinson and Raegan Lee.

The Region 2 meet is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 1, at Chiefland Middle-High School. Lifting will begin at 10 a.m.

## Olympic

Brown and Still were the second- and third-best pound-for-pound lifters in the Olympic

event, with Brown winning the 154-pound class with a 260-pound total (125 snatch, 135 clean and jerk) and Still winning the 139 class with a 245 total (90, 155). Still had successful lifts on all three of her snatch attempts and all three of her clean-and-jerk attempts.

Other individual-

See DISTRICT, page 15



Alexia Cyr, who's looking to make a return trip to the state finals, placed second in the 139 class.

# UCHS is District 6-1A runner-up

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School had two individual champions and a total of eight who'll advance to regionals in capturing the District 6-1A runner-up girls weightlifting traditional trophy on Jan. 24 in Keystone Heights.

The Tigers had a team score of 39, edging out Bradford by two points for the second-place spot behind Keystone, which had 72 points.

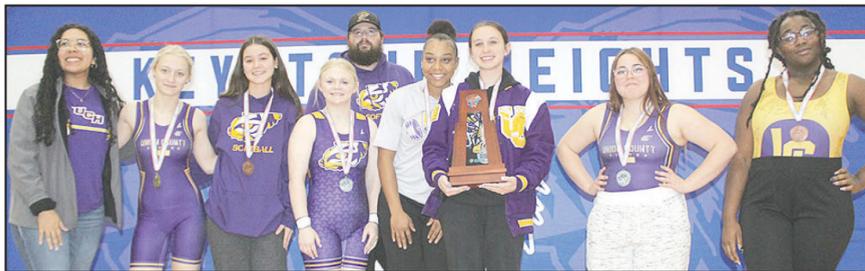
Baldwin was fourth with 32 points, followed by Fort White (29) and Bishop Snyder (8).

Riley Gibson and Taley Smith won their weight classes to earn automatic bids to the Region 2 meet, which will be held Saturday, Feb. 1, at Chiefland Middle-High School at 10 a.m. Gibson had a 245-pound total (115 clean and jerk, 130 bench press) to place first in the 119-pound class, while Smith, who was successful on all of her lift attempts, had a 300 total (140, 160) to top the 169 class.

Both lifters took first ahead of teammates. Holly Halfacre was the 119 runner-up with a 210 total (115, 95), while Briena Haight was the 169 runner-up with a 285 total (130, 155).

Haight and Halfacre both earned at-large Region 2 berths based on their district totals, as did Union lifters Allaya Blocker, Alexia Cyr, Emma Handley and Gracie Manning.

Cyr was the runner-up in the



Union County was the District 6-1A traditional runner-up, getting individual championships from Riley Gibson (second from left) and Taley Smith (fifth from left).

139 class with a 280 total (130, 150), while third-place finishes were earned by Handley with a 205 total (110, 95) in the 129 class and Blocker with a 260 total (120, 140) in the unlimited class.

Manning placed fifth in the 154 class with a 205 total (105, 100).

Courtney Manning also competed for the Tigers, finishing seventh in the 154 class with a 190 total (95, 100).

## Rural state event

Cyr and Gibson made it to the podium at the inaugural Rural Classification State Championship Invitational, which was held Jan. 11 at Wewahitchka High School.

Gibson placed second, while Cyr placed third at the event, which was created by Gulf County Schools Athletic



Riley Gibson, who was a state qualifier last season, had the best bench press by 30 pounds in winning the 119 class. She was one of only two lifters in her class to bench press at least 100 (she did 130).

Director/Wewahitchka Coach Bobby Johns. Association that other sports besides football deserve to have a Rural Classification. the Florida High School Athletic



Taley Smith lifted her way to the championship in the 169 class.



Brandy Hall lifted her way to the runner-up spot in the 129 class.

# BHS qualifies 8 lifters for Region 2-1A competition

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School had eight Region 2-1A qualifiers, including four who were runners-up in their weight classes at the Jan. 24 District 6 girls weightlifting meet in Keystone Heights.

The Tornados, who competed in the traditional event only, had 37 points, which left them trailing runner-up Union County by just two points.

Keystone won the championship with 72 points, while Bradford finished ahead of Baldwin (32), Fort White (29) and Bishop Snyder (8).

Finishing as individual runners-up for Bradford were Kilee Lemire with a 185-pound total (90 clean and jerk, 95 bench press) in the 110-pound class, Brandy Hall with a 210 total (105, 105) in the 129 class, Destiny Randolph with a 230 total (115, 115) in the 199 class and Timya Ray with a 300 total (150, 150) in the unlimited class.

They will compete as at-large qualifiers with four of their teammates at the Region 2 meet, which will be held Saturday, Feb. 1, at Chiefland Middle-High School at 10 a.m.

Also qualifying for regionals were Kelsie Cochran with a



Timya Ray was the runner-up in the unlimited class with a 300 total.

third-place total of 245 (115, 130) in the 183 class, Hailey Redding with a fourth-place total of 205 (110, 95) in the 129 class, Blakeleigh Smith with a fourth-place total of 210 (100, 110) in the 139 class and Mallory Frazier with a fifth-place total of 195 (105, 90) in the 139 class.

Bradford had three others competing, with Emmalynn Crawford placing fourth in the 199 class with a 195 total (95, 100), Kadynce Brown placing sixth in the 119 class with a 175 total (75, 100) and Ireland Box placing sixth in the 154 class with a 195 total (95, 100).

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Paige Harrington competes in the snatch en route to winning the Olympic championship in the 183 class. It was her third straight district title.

## DISTRICT

Continued from page 14

championship totals were Bowles with a 180 total (75, 105) in the 110 class, Sanford with a 195 total (85, 110) in the 119 class, Park with a 205 total (85, 120) in the 129 class, Wilson with a 230 total (95, 135) in the 169 class,

Harrington with a 225 total (100, 125) in the 183 class and Herman with a 250 total (100, 150) in the unlimited class.

It was the third straight year Harrington won an Olympic district title.

Five lifters were runners-up in their classes: Williams with a 115 total (50, 65) in the 101 class, Layfield with a 195 total (80,

115) in the 129 class, Thompson with a 190 total (80, 110) in the 139 class, Mitchell with a 210 total (85, 125) in the 183 class and Jade Stacey with a 155 total (70, 85) in the 199 class.

Layfield, like Still, had successful lifts on all of her snatch and clean-and-jerk attempts.

Earning third-place finishes were Miller with a 160 total (65, 95) in the 110 class, Fernandez with a 170 total (70, 100) in the 119 class and Lee with a 200 total (180, 120) in the 169 class.

## Traditional

Four Keystone lifters finished the evening with two district championships each, winning their weight classes in both Olympic and traditional. Their traditional results were Bowles with a 205 total (105 clean and jerk, 100 bench press), Park with a 230 total (120, 110), Still with a 310 total (155, 155) and Herman with a 305 total (150, 155).

Still, won the traditional district championship last year, was the top pound-for-pound traditional lifter.

The Indians also got a win from Mitchell, who had a 255 total (125, 130).

Brown was the runner-up in her class with a 265 total (135, 130).

Six lifters earned third-place finishes: Williams with a 130 total (65, 65), Miller with a 175 total (95, 80), Sanford with a 205 total (110, 95), Thompson with a 225 total (110, 115), Brinson with a 250 total (120, 130) in the 154 class and Wilson with a 270 total (135, 135).

Harrington placed fourth with a 245 total (125, 120), while fifth-place finishes were earned by Fernandez with a 180 total (100, 80) and Lee with a 245 total (120, 125).

Stacey was sixth with a 185 total (85, 100).



Chloe Still is attempting to earn her second straight trip to the state finals.



ABOVE LEFT: Ashlyn Brown feels good about her snatch attempt, which helped her win the Olympic title in the 154 class. She had the best snatch in her class by 25 points and was the meet's second-best pound-for-pound Olympic lifter. ABOVE RIGHT: Cadie Bowles, who was close to qualifying for state last season in both Olympic and traditional, won both championships in the 110 class.

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## FAIR

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years. Though Building 1 will be closed in March, the Starke Auxiliary Group can still use the kitchen if it plans to sell food at that event. Fair Board President Bob Milner said an area behind the kitchen and on the midway would be created for customers.

If the Starke Kiwanis and Rotary clubs plan to set up their food wagons in March, they will be moved from their usual spots between Buildings 1 and 2 since that's where the main entrance will be. They will be re-located somewhere on the midway that will hopefully be advantageous for them. "We want every food vendor to get as much business as they

can," Milner said. The March fair won't feature musical performances, but Milner said, "We hope to have entertainment and concerts in the fall." The Bradford Agricultural Fair has its end goal in mind. It's just that things will be a little different and unusual in 2025. "It is a transition year," Woodruff said.

## WRESTLE

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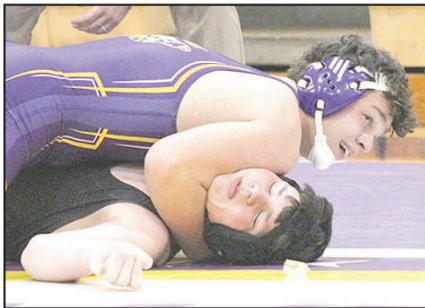
classes, the Tigers won eight straight head-to-head matches, which were then followed by two straight forfeit wins. All of those head-to-head matches were wins by pins: Hunter Cruz in 1:03, Akireon Boykin in 1:20, Wyatt Elixson in 58 seconds, Carsen Thomas in 3:20, C.J. Ivey in 2:11, Matthew Rogers in 3:59, Mason Fassett in 3:32 and Breydan Peugh in 18 seconds. Interlachen then forfeited two classes, which put Union ahead 48-24. The Rams did earn one head-to-head win, but the Tigers' Gavin Sparkman closed out the match by pinning his opponent in 44 seconds for a 54-30 win. The Tigers the faced Gainesville, winning 42-30. Union got wins from Cruz, who pinned his opponent in 2:39, and Preston Griffin, who pinned his opponent in 31 seconds, but three head-to-head wins by Gainesville and the forfeiture of



**ABOVE: Gavin Sparkman (right) gets a pin against Interlachen in 44 seconds. RIGHT: Wyatt Elixson (right) takes down his opponent en route to a first-period pin against Interlachen.**



classes by both teams had the match tied at 30-30. A forfeit by Gainesville put the Tigers up 36-30. It then came down to one head-to-head match, which Union's Sparkman won by pinning his opponent in 20 seconds.



**ABOVE LEFT: Mason Fassett (top) gets a second-period pin against Interlachen. ABOVE RIGHT: C.J. Ivey (right) wrestles against an opponent from Interlachen. He'd win with a second-period pin.**



**Northside Christian Academy**  
"For Knowledge, and for Kingdom"



Homecoming Queen & King  
Makayla Price & Waylen Kahakua



Honor Roll



NCA Varsity Cross Country Team

Thank you for considering Northside Christian Academy as your school — we'd be so glad to make you part of our family. To those who have already chosen Northside, we're so happy you are already part of our Eagle family!

We are a mission of Northside Baptist Church where we:

- Love God, Love the Church and Love Others.

NCA offers numerous tuition scholarships that include:

- Step Up For Students
- McKay
- Family Empowerment
- Gardener



NCA is here for all of your child's educational needs starting early with our pre-school which accepts infants through 4 year old VPK. The academy is Kindergarten through 12th grade. We offer all required academic courses, elective courses and a sports program where we participate in the SECC (Southeastern Christian Conference).

Re-enrollment begins 2-1-25; open enrollment begins 3-24-25. For more information or to schedule a tour of the school please call the front office at 904-964-7124 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The pre-school can be reached at 904-966-0444.

We are committed to serving alongside your family to meet your child's educational needs — and we look forward to serving our current Eagle families and adding new Eagle families to our nest.



**Rick Price**  
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# PROVIDENCE

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



(904) 454 - 1274 **K - 12 School**

GOD'S WORD. GOD'S WORLD. GOD'S WORK.

## PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

is a small, independent, private Christian school making big impacts in Bradford County. This growing school comes from very humble origins – starting with 29 students in 3 rooms separated with room dividers. PCA has been located on three different campuses, with each year challenging and strengthening their resolve and belonging in the community. Now, after only 5 years of operations, their current location on north Highway 301 is their forever-home with plans for campus expansion this (2025) summer after only 2 years of occupancy.

PCA invites families to experience how good different can be. Field classes, labs, outdoor learning, off-site service projects, STEM/STEAM days devoted to hands-on learning and participation, and student involvement and inclusion in activities are only the beginning of what makes Providence Christian Academy unique among North-Central Florida schools. Teachers, staff, and parents share and foster the bond of this learning community. Families and staff share the academic responsibility to build collaborative, creative, and intellectual learners. PCA works diligently at creating opportunities for families to come together and engage with students in their academic careers. Every student at PCA is treated with individual respect and wholeness of person and character. The greatest purpose this staff has in the endeavor of the school is to see Christ formed in their own lives and in the lives of their students.

PCA will provide families in Bradford County with an exceptional academic experience and will be respected for their commitment to academic integrity, adherence to its foundational Christian principles, and commitment to the educational needs and potential of each student who attends.

**904-454-1274**  
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