

Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, Nov. 23, 2023

145th year, 19th Issue — \$1

Keystone grad dies in plane crash

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
General manager

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — A 21-year-old Melrose man died when his Cherokee Piper 180 crashed in Paynes Prairie State Park, south of Gainesville, on Tuesday, Nov. 14. Adrien James Valentine had just purchased the aircraft two weeks prior and had taken off from Kissimmee Gateway Airport around 12:45 p.m. According to media reports, Valentine flew about 100 miles north toward Gainesville. At about 1:25 p.m., the

pilot flew 1,000 feet before climbing again to about 3,000 feet and turning west.

WUFT reported that at around 2 p.m., the plane rapidly made a series of sharp turns and climbed as high as 6,800 feet before crashing at about 300 mph.

The media outlet added that when the 2020 Keystone Heights High School graduate took off from Kissimmee, he was operating under visual flight rules. Shortly before his departure, an air traffic controller

warned him that Gainesville was under instrument flight rules due to bad weather.

The National Transportation Safety Board said Valentine reported a “flight control malfunction” shortly before the plane went down.

WUFT said it obtained a recording of Valentine’s calls to air traffic controllers. The Gainesville PBS affiliate reported that before losing communications, the 21-year-old asked air traffic controllers to tell his parents that he loved them.



Adrien Valentine



WORTH NOTING

DLP Bank to host bake sale and soup day for Starke Shop with a Cop

Starke’s DLP Bank (formerly Community State Bank) is hosting a bake sale and soup day to benefit Shop with a Cop on Friday, Dec. 1.

Baked goods will be available for a minimum donation of \$1 per item, while a bowl of soup, crackers and a drink are available for \$5.

Help support Starke Shop with a Cop

The Starke Shop with a Cop returns for its 19th year, with children from Bradford County’s public elementary schools getting the chance to shop at Starke’s Walmart on Dec. 18-19 with escorts from various law-enforcement agencies as well as the Florida Department of Corrections

Donations can be made in the form of cash or check in a sealed envelope at the front desk of the Starke Police Department. To mail a donation, please send to: Starke Police Department, Attn: Shop with a Cop, 830 Edwards Road, Starke, FL 32091. Please make checks out to Starke Police Department – Shop with a Cop.

Barry Warren, who organizes the event, is also available to collect your donation. He may be reached at 352-494-3326.

The deadline for donations is Dec. 8.

You may follow the Starke Shop with a Cop Facebook page for more announcements and updates.

Children who participate in Shop with a Cop are selected by teachers and guidance counselors, who identify students as having needs (financial, emotional or psychological), but who are still striving to do their best in the classroom and to be outstanding citizens.

Last year’s event consisted of 332 students.

Food distribution at True Vine

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Farm Share and True Vine Ministry will take Tuesday, Nov. 28, at 10 a.m. at True Vine Outreach Ministry in Starke.

Food boxes often include fresh produce, deli and bakery items, dairy and some meats. Inventory is subject to availability. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Community yard sale Dec. 2

The Bradford County Democrats are sponsoring a community yard sale on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. It will take place in the parking lot of the former Jay’s Mini Mart, 15043 U.S. 301 South in Starke.

If you would like to join in to sell your own extra items or crafts, call or text 904-612-3942. Space is \$15. Bring your own table.



Pictured are (front, l-r) Aiden Bell, Brooke Burgess, Mackenzie Ring, Matthew Ring, Jordon Clarke, (middle) Davien Presley, Chloe Harris, Jamaal Reynolds, Isabelle Kirsten, (back) Hunter Smith, Gavin Sparkman, Kamerohn Wilson, Stacey Parks, Carli Trent, Savannah Thompson and Cason Forbes.

UCHS JROTC Raider Team qualifies for state

The Union County High School JROTC Raider Team qualified for the JROTC State Raider Championship again this year.

The UCHS JROTC program hosted the Area One State Qualification Raider Meet on Saturday, and the UCHS team dominated the Male-Mix category, winning all five events and the overall Area One Male-Mix Championship.

The team is headed to compete in the 2023 State Raider Meet Championship at the University of South Florida campus on Dec. 2.

The team won the 5K Run event by more than six minutes and set a new record in the One-Rope Bridge event with a time of one minute and twenty-six seconds.

The UCHS JROTC Raider team finished as runners-up in the last two state championships.

Starke financial audit showing improvement

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

Overall, auditors found no deteriorating conditions as they examined Starke’s accounting for FY 2022, although city commissioners were warned about a “substantial issue” with the general fund.

Caleb Perla, a partner and Powell and Jones CPA, presented the report earlier this month. This is the first year the firm has audited the city of Starke, and the year in review was Fiscal Year 2022, which ended Sept. 30, 2022.

Perla provided an overview of the financial statements in the audit report, including the status of the city’s governmental funds.

The general fund’s ending fund balance, or net worth, at the end of

FY 2022 was around \$898,000, but only \$408,000 of that money was unassigned and available to cover monthly operating expenses. That amount would have covered slightly less than two months of expenditures, which is the minimum recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association.

“So, you’re actually just below that required or recommended minimum by the organization. So, just something to keep in mind there. You want to definitely try to increase that over time to make sure you have enough reserves to meet ongoing obligations,” Perla told the commission.

The general fund balance was down from \$1.36 in FY 2020 and \$1.15 million in FY 2021 — a downward

trend Perla also noted.

“Over time those fund balances have been dwindling, which is creating a potentially dangerous situation,” he said.

Spending from the general fund outpaced new revenue, resulting in a \$396,000 reduction in the fund balance. Ideally, Perla said, the city should be breaking even. Without a transfer of \$602,000 from the city’s utility enterprise fund, the general fund would have reflected a nearly \$1 million loss, he said.

“The general fund is running a large deficit this year. And it’s not just this year. It’s been doing that for several years, and it’s definitely a concerning situation,” he said.

Measuring operating income or loss

as a percentage of revenues, Perla noted a 24% loss.

“Just operating your general fund without extra investment is costing you 25 cents on the dollar, basically more than what you are making. So, for every dollar that comes in, you have to put an additional 25 cents to keep the thing going,” he said.

Keep in mind this is a historic look. A full year — FY 2023 — separates this report and the current fiscal year. For FY 2024, the commission has made targeted cuts in the general fund to liberate its reliance on utility fund transfers.

Starke’s other governmental fund is the transportation fund, which is

See AUDIT, page 3

Lake Butler names 3 finalists for city manager

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

LAKE BUTLER — The city of Lake Butler is still searching for candidates to fill the vacant city manager position. The position has been re-advertised, and a new selection of applicants, 20 in all, were read and discussed by commission members at a special meeting on Wed. Nov. 15, 2023. The commissioners had received the applications ahead of time, so they all had their picks and comments ready for discussion.

Commissioner Annette Redman started out the discussion by saying that she found, upon reading the first 15 applications to come in, that many had little or no city of county experience. She noticed that several were in medical fields, social work, were business owners and one was a former St. Lucie County Commissioner. Redman said only one applicant

really stood out to her as a candidate and that was Kimberly Hayes, who is currently employed as the Solid Waste Director (as well as running mosquito and animal control) for Union County. Vice-Mayor Melissa Hendrix agreed that Hayes was also the applicant who impressed her the most. She was also seen as a standout by Commissioner Rondoll Huggins and Mayor David Stegall.

Stegall said he thought that several of the applicants seemed more like they might be more qualified to apply for the city financial director position, which the commission will seek to fill once a manager is hired. Hendrix noted that “there is a world of difference between business finance and government finance” and urged caution in inferring competency in the latter from the experience listed on the applications. “We need someone who can handle budgeting and serve

as one of the checks and balances on the finance position.”

After the discussion of the applications, the question arose as to whether to hold another special meeting to discuss any applications received between the date of the meeting until the special meeting or rather to go ahead and hold a special meeting for the purpose of interviewing the three candidates agreed upon. The board voted unanimously to hold a special meeting on Thurs. Nov. 30 to conduct interviews with the three candidates picked and deal with other applications that might come in (no more as of press time) later if necessary. This decision is likely the result of what happened during the initial advertisement for applications earlier this year, where two of the three selected for interviews had already located other jobs in the interim between their application and

the scheduling of interviews.

The three applicants selected are Kimberly Hayes, Jennifer Johnson and Olajuwon White. The plan is to conduct three 30-minute interviews at the meeting. All of the commissioners have generated questions they wish to ask and City Attorney John Maines has cleared them with a human resources professional that sometimes assists the city to make sure the questions asked do not violate the civil and health confidentiality regulations currently required by the state and federal government. Whether or not the commission is prepared to hire someone after these interviews was not stated, but all of the commissioners have commented over the past three months that they want to find the right person for the job and hire them as a key part of assisting the board’s work to help the city recovers from the overspending seen last year.



SWAT gives youth tools to reduce Tobacco's influence, advocate for change

BY ELLA HEWETT
BMS SWAT Vice President

The need for youth to speak up and make their voices heard about the issues they care about is as important as ever, which is why one student-led organization

in Florida is leading the way in the fight against the tobacco industry and the addictive products that target youth.

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) is a statewide youth organization focused on

educating, empowering, and mobilizing Florida youth to revolt against and deglamorize Big Tobacco.

As a member of the Bradford SWAT chapter, I believe SWAT is an important cause more

youth should get involved in. Participating in antitobacco initiatives, SWAT has helped me build leadership skills, engage with my community and advocate for policy change. Despite significant progress over the years, tobacco and e-cigarette use is still prevalent, and the tobacco industry's antics must be stopped. SWAT is working to change the social norms associated with tobacco, including e-cigarettes.

SWAT has been educating and empowering youth and communities since 1998. SWAT has had several successful initiatives throughout the years. "Not a Replacement" was a statewide campaign where thousands of youth reminded tobacco companies that they are unique individuals with the



potential to make a positive impact on their community. "Not a Lab Rat" is the current statewide campaign that focuses on the truth behind e-cigarettes and how youth can stop the spread of misinformation.

Through such initiatives, SWAT continues to work toward changing the way people think about tobacco, making it less desirable, less acceptable and less accessible.

My reason for joining SWAT was clear: I joined SWAT because I know tobacco usage is dangerous and wanted to equip myself with the tools needed to educate myself and my peers. Being a member of Bradford Middle School SWAT has opened doors for me to advocate for policy change and make a positive impact in my community.

In our community, the Bradford County SWAT chapter helped make a difference by participating in local community events like the Bradford County Fair, recruiting new members through schoolwide events, and educating our peers and community about the dangers of tobacco use. Our SWAT chapter also advocated for local tobacco free parks and had a huge win with the passing of a local county ordinance, making all county parks tobacco-free.

We are grateful this Thanksgiving for God's many blessings.

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Report: Corrections health 'dire'

BY JAMES WILLIAMS
Special to the Telegraph

STARKE—It has been no secret that the Florida Legislature's go-to budget cut has traditionally been the state's corrections and prison system for decades. That turkey has now come home to roost.

State Senator Jennifer Bradley (R) is chair of the Appropriations Committee on Civil and Criminal Justice. The other eight members include Senators Baxley (R), Burgess (R), Hooper (R), Martin (R), Pizzo (D), Rouson (D), Torres (D) and Yarborough (R).

\$2.5 million study

Last Wednesday, the bipartisan committee's meeting covered the findings of a massive 2022-23, \$2.5 million "comprehensive prison modernization and staffing structure analysis" of Florida's Department of Corrections and its facilities.

The report might be called a facilities audit completed by international accounting and auditing firm KPMG. The firm has completed similar reports for other large states with failing corrections systems and has a team of experts who do just that.

It should come as no surprise in Clay, Bradford, and Union Counties that the news was not especially good. According to the FDC website, there were 82,124 inmates housed in the system in 2022. KPMG predicted the inmate population will rise from its current 85,000 to over 107,000 by 2042.

Inpatient medical needs will also rise due to an aging population and Florida's "tough on crime" sentencing mandates for longer prison stays. Florida's population growth, in general,

will play a role, including immigration. Substance abuse and mental health issues will increase.

Most facilities poor or 'no longer operational'

KPMG rated the department's facilities on a scale of one to five. A rating of one signified a like-new condition. Two represents assets showing minor wear in the first half of their expected lives but are still in good condition. Three indicated moderate wear within the second half of their expected lives and still functional. Four signifies "in poor condition, and five was "in failure condition" and no longer operational. Sixty percent of all square footage of DOC's aged facilities was rated four and five.

The study also projected costs to make the FDC's facilities functional to current standards over a 20-year planning horizon. Professional standards from the Building Owners and Managers Association and the Association of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers were used to forecast the costs.

The cost of replacing components with a four or five rating, end of life, and failure conditions was assumed to be the FDC's immediate capital needs.

Staff turnover exceeded 26%

Twenty percent of the department's facilities had significant vacancy rates, which has prompted FDC to close several inmate dorms over the last few years. The COVID

pandemic also hit FDC hard, and adjustments had to be made. The number of inmates has begun to climb again now that courts are back in session and playing catch up.

Staff turnover last year exceeded 26 percent, meaning the department must retrain one-quarter of its workforce yearly. Last year, high vacancy rates caused FDC to leave over 85,000 level-one shifts unfilled. The department needs 23 percent more correctional officers to cover existing posts. Recruitment is an issue due to workplace conditions and low pay.

Aging population = increased medical costs

Just as the general population in Florida is getting older, 29 percent of inmates in Florida's prisons are over 50. The proportion of inmates with routine health needs is declining, while the proportion of those requiring chronic care and intensive health services is rising.

The department now relies on short-term infirmary and community hospital beds, which come at increased cost and pose security risks. The inpatient housing deficit will grow to approximately 420 beds over the next 20 years.

The same will be valid for specialized housing for inpatient care: today, there are already 644 inmates who have advanced dementia, traumatic brain injury, or other complex health issues requiring specialized housing.

Is AC a luxury?

The total cost of supplying HVAC alone for existing



The report states most FDC facilities poor or 'no longer operational.' Image: KPMG

facilities is \$582 million. KPMG also figured out the cost of providing local area networks to improve communication and security systems, which means an additional \$94 million to connect all buildings inside prison fences. Major buildings outside the fences will require an additional 2.8 million feet of fiber, or approximately 530 miles of fiber, including fiber, to each site.

A wide area network will cost \$138 million over 20 years to provide one gigabyte of service to every site. Camera system modernization—a must—runs \$97 million.

Expensive? Yes. However, the network will provide increased security, communications, and safety to staff and inmates alike. There are other upsides to cabling all FDC facilities, such as remote inmate learning.

Staff turnover is only eight to 10 percent in newer facilities with air conditioning. However, several committee members—like senators and representatives

in Florida's past—began to suggest air conditioning—now considered a basic need industry-wide, —is an unnecessary luxury. Bradley said security staff believes AC keeps inmates calmer, which translates into a safer environment for inmates and employees alike and lowers job dissatisfaction and the department's high turnover rate.

Never mind that without climate control, Florida's temperatures may reach dangerous highs in years to come, with inevitable lawsuits from staff or former staff and inmates or surviving families when health emergencies arise.

Price tag: \$2 billion to \$6 billion

Sen. Hopper expressed concerns about court monitoring or Federal regulators intervening if the state took inadequate measures or no actions.

KPMG associate Bill Barry responded, "...we have

witnessed in other states like California, Texas, and Illinois --a trend of class action lawsuits... where there has been litigation that led to federal intervention either by court monitoring or court receivership. I think it's fair to say, and it is a well-known fact, that spending (in receivership) becomes a negotiation, with less discretion the state has in the way funds would be spent."

Florida must spend \$2.2 billion to retrofit, build, and staff FDC's immediate needs alone. The most basic of the three options calls for building three prisons and one or two hospitals to be operational by 2029 while closing four prisons that are difficult to staff and have high deferred maintenance costs.

The entire package over the 20 years was estimated at up to \$6 billion, depending on which of three options the report spelled out and which the legislature decides to choose.

AUDIT Continued from page 1

primarily funded by gas tax revenue and is restricted to expenditures on transportation infrastructure. There was a \$2.6 million fund balance at the end of FY 2022. Revenues were over expenditures by \$186,000 for the year, and the operating income as a percentage of revenues was 52%. By saving 52 cents on the dollar, Perla said the city is building up reserves for future capital improvements.

City's business was booming

Moving on to the city's proprietary fund — the utility enterprise fund — the fund is intended to fully operate from customer charges for water, sewer, electricity and gas, Perla said. The accounting is different for this business fund, measuring total assets and deferred outflows (\$32.5 million) to total liabilities and deferred inflows (\$4.98 million). The result is a net position of \$27.57 million. The city could have operated its utilities for nearly seven months without any additional revenue coming in.

"The proprietary funds are in a much better financial position," Perla said.

Unlike the general fund, the financial position of the utility fund has been improving. Since FY 2019, when the net position was \$20.8 million, the figure has grown by millions of dollars every year. Looking at revenue and expenditures for FY 2022, the city had \$13.98 million in utility revenue and just over \$12 million in expenses. After some nonoperating revenue and expenditures, capital grants of \$875,000 and that transfer of \$602,000 to the general fund, the utility fund had a \$2.58 million positive change in net position.

Pension liability continued to drop for the fourth time since FY 2019 to a low of \$1.19 million, down from more than \$4 million. The pensions for general employees and firefighters were 92% funded, while the pension for police exceeded 104%. These numbers fluctuate based on stock market investments, so it is likely the city will see the percentages drop when the FY 2023 audit report is issued, according to Perla.

Improvements over 2021

Auditors found three material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in FY 2022, which was down from nine findings the prior year. Auditors also made three recommendations, down from four for 2021. There were no comments about compliance in 2022.

Auditors also audited the use of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds and found the city in compliance.

One repeat material weakness was an incomplete schedule of expenditures of federal awards. Some grant amounts were excluded, which required a revision of the schedule. This was attributed to ineffective controls on the review of the schedule. They recommended city staff themselves with the requirements and perform a secondary review before submitting the schedule to auditors.

The city implemented new enterprise software in FY 2023 to assist with better financial reporting.

A second repeat material weakness involved tracking and review of capital assets. According to the report, "the listing of assets included several old assets that were no longer in service, dispositions of capital assets were not being properly documented, and there were numerous older assets that were fully depreciated which require review to determine whether they are still in service."

The new software will also assist with asset tracking. A policy adopted in 2021 set the path for more accurate reporting, according to the city. It began cleaning up old asset records in FY 2022 with a completion goal of FY 2023.

A new significant deficiency was noted because employee

retirement contributions were not properly coded in payroll software as pretax deductions. The city says this has been resolved and the deficiency should disappear in the 2023 audit report.

Auditors again recommended the city adopt a pooled cash system instead of writing all checks out of the utility fund and recording expenditures related to other funds separately. The city agrees but could not begin the process until the new enterprise software implementation was completed.

Auditors had to make an end-of-year adjustment because inventory was not being routinely reconciled to the accounting records. They recommended monthly reconciliations of the inventory and accounting software systems. The new software system is expected to fulfill this recommendation.

Finally, auditors recommended the city adopt a policy specifying what the unassigned balance of each fund should be to help monitor the sufficiency of these unassigned funds. This is the money not committed to any other purpose that the city can use for operations. A minimum of two months is recommended.

The city adopted a fund balance policy in 2021 that needed updates because it did not cover the general fund. While it didn't have a policy that covers every fund in place, budgetary changes made for FY 2023 and FY 2024 were meant to ensure adequate reserves in every fund, according to the city.

"We do a financial condition assessment which we determine that there were no deteriorating financial conditions, but I will note that condition assessment is looking at this the government as a whole, which is kind of in balance, but there is still substantial issue that needs to be looked at with the general fund," Perla said.

Substantial improvement

But Perla also said there was substantial improvement comparing the audit for FY 2022 to the year before. This being Powell and Jones first audit for Starke, he said they considered the city's history before taking the engagement.

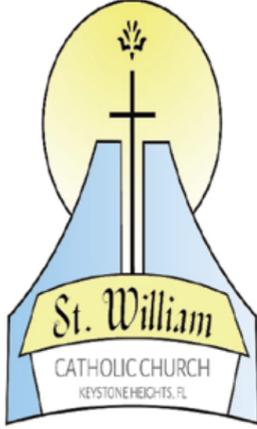
"We talked with city staff and

were impressed with the attitude and outlook towards those issues," Perla said, commending City Clerk Jimmy Crosby for selecting an "excellent" finance team that is both willing and able to take on the work.

"I believe that with their current level of effort and their trajectory, and where they're taking things, that all those issues are going to be resolved in the

next year or two," Perla said.

Crosby thanked Finance Director James Hughes, consultant Jim Farrell and senior accountant Latia Davis for all of their extra work. He also thanked commissioners for making tough decisions about the budget that will be reflected in future audits.



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Lawtey Elementary's Tyler Arthur with Principal Terri O'Quinn.



Starke Elementary's Logan Barber with Principal Raymond Schaefer.



Superintendent Will Hartley with Bradford Elementary's Blaine Smyth.



Superintendent Will Hartley with Bradford Elementary's Jensen Shuford.

Smarties with perfect scores applauded by school board

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

Several elementary students in Bradford County were recognized for their impressive performance on last school year's final assessments.

Grants and Resources Director Sherree Alvarez introduced each one during the Nov. 13 school board meeting.

Last year students were introduced to the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking exams, taken in three parts at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. The tests evaluate where student proficiency stands in August and learning gains throughout the year.

These five students scored in the top achievement level on a final assessment. In fact, they received perfect scores.

"This is an extraordinary achievement, and we're so proud of these young scholars," Alvarez said.

They are:

—Fourth-grader Tyler Arthur, who achieved a perfect score on mathematics at Lawtey Elementary School.

—Fourth-grader Tyler Barber, who achieved a perfect score on mathematics at Starke Elementary School.

—Fourth-grader Blaine Smyth, who achieved a perfect score on mathematics at Bradford Elementary School.

—Fifth-grader Jensen Shuford, who achieved a perfect score on mathematics at Bradford Elementary School.

—Fifth-grader Alexander Kaye, who achieved a perfect score on both mathematics and



Superintendent Will Hartley with Bradford Elementary's Alexander Kaye.

science at Bradford Elementary School.

"We're very proud of these youngsters. We're very proud of the teachers and parents that supported them," Alvarez said.

Aspiring leaders

Superintendent Will Hartley also recognized three employees who have completed NEFEC's Aspiring Leaders program — Karen Brugh, Tina Maxey and Audrey Murphy. Recommendations for the program come from principals and other administrators. The yearlong program helps them build upon the promise they have already shown as future leaders.

"I would just like to say how grateful we are that you're in our school district and can't wait to see your own professional growth in the years to come," Hartley said.

In other business:

— During reorganizing of the board, Candace Osteen was appointed board chair, and Lynn Melvin was appointed vice chair. Monthly meetings were set at 5 p.m. on the second Monday of the Month and 8:30 a.m. on the fourth Monday.

—The board and superintendent welcomed Shannon Rodriguez, previously assistant principal at Starke Elementary School, into her new role as district finance director.

—The board approved the certificate of final inspection for the new Bradford Elementary School Campus. The board also approved architect Paul Stressing submitting a tax exemption application for work on an energy efficient commercial building.

—Speaking of energy efficiency, the district is contracting with consultants at ABM for guaranteed energy savings. Their analysis of the district's energy usage and operations should result in moneysaving solutions for the district.

—MIS Director Michael Warren announced that in addition to the replacement of hundreds of Wi-Fi hotspots and the installation of new cameras, the district will soon have an updated website and app for communications.

—Food Service Director Blake Dicks announced that all of food service staff has been CPR certified.



Superintendent Will Hartley with Karen Brugh, Tina Maxey and Audrey Murphy.

Holiday activities abound in Bradford

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

Excitement for the Christmas season seems to begin earlier every year, and family get-togethers at Thanksgiving are a good time to begin planning holiday activities.

Here are just a few of the things already announced for Bradford County families to look forward to.

Shop Small Saturday

It's shopping season, but Saturday, Nov. 25, is a great time to come eat breakfast and lunch in local restaurant and support small businesses throughout the city of Starke. There will also be vendors on Call Street with Christmas gift options. Participating businesses will offer door prizes, plus you can visit Santa at Williams Jewelry and the Grinch at Nutrition Escape.

Christmas on Call Street

Christmas on Call Street kicks off with caroling and lighting

of the city Christmas Tree at the Downtown Square. That will take place Friday, Dec. 8, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Activities downtown on Saturday, including a car show from 2 to 5 p.m., lead up to the Starke Christmas parade at 6 p.m. Santa will arrive and meet children following the parade at the Downtown Square.

Downtown Grill's Breakfast with Santa takes place Sunday morning, Dec. 10. Reservations required.

Winter Carnival at the library

Bradford County Public Library's Christmas event last year was more successful than anticipated. This year plans are even bigger for Santa's Winter Wonderland Carnival on Thursday, Dec. 14. From 5 to 8 p.m., there will be games, train rides, a bounce house, face painting, prizes for children and adults, and more. Everything but the food is free.

And ensuring that this will be a white Christmas, the library is making this a foam party with the help of Foam Fantastic. Be sure to wear a bathing suit to take part

in the fun.

Schools have plans

Schools have also been announcing their Christmas events, including Brooker Community School, which has a Santa Breakfast planned on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 8–10 a.m.

Lawtey Elementary School, on the other hand, has Breakfast with the Grinch planned for 10 a.m. on Dec. 9. Have a sit-down feast with this favorite character. Tickets are on sale through Dec. 1 for \$7 per person. No ticket sales at the event.

Christmas in song

Lawtey's pre-K through sixth grade students will perform in a Christmas concert at the Bradford High School auditorium on Thursday, Dec. 7, at 6 p.m.

The Joyful Voices of Lawtey will present the annual Community Christmas Program on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4 p.m. at the Lawtey Church of God on U.S. 301. The public is invited to join and celebrate this holy season with community churches.

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Be on the lookout for the newly crowned seasonal royalty! Pictured (l-r) are Little Miss Winter Fest Josslyn Hipps, Winter Fest Princess Remi Hipps, Winter Fest Junior Princess Amelia Coiana and Winter Fest Queen Harli Mosley.

Lake Region

KH city manager's last day: Jan. 10

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
General manager

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — City Manager Lynn Rutkowski informed the city council in a Nov. 13 letter that her last day on the job will be Jan. 10.

Rutkowski, who has worked for the municipality for nine-and-a-half years, informed the council of her intention to resign in September, but all the members asked her to reconsider.

Council member Steve Hart said he would not have run for re-election if Rutkowski had not been in office when his last term was up. Hart has since announced he will not seek re-election in 2024.

Mayor Nina Rodenroth echoed Hart's sentiments, telling the manager she would not have run for city government had Rutkowski not managed the municipality's day-to-day operations.

The council took steps to persuade Rutkowski to stay on, including its attempts to fill the vacant position of city clerk and convert the position into an assistant city manager. Rutkowski held the clerk's position before she was appointed to the city's top staff job.

Rodenroth also wants to review and possibly update the city manager's job description and salary.



Lynn Rutkowski. Image: City of Keystone Heights

Camp Crystal Lake celebrates 75th anniversary

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
General manager

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — The Alachua County School District invited the public to celebrate the 75th anniversary of its student camp on the shores of Crystal Lake.

The Nov. 18 event was the first of two dates the district planned to offer archery, arts and crafts, hayrides, and a ropes course.

Although many school districts throughout the nation rent camp facilities, the Alachua district is one of the few that owns its camp.

The facility's former director, Scott Burton, told the Keystone Heights Rotary Club during a 2020 appearance that the district acquired the land for the camp under the guidance of Superintendent Howard W. Bishop in the 1940s.

"In 1947, Camp Crystal Lake was part of the Keystone Heights Air Base, which was owned by the United States Department of Defense after World War II," he said. "The War Assets Administration was given the authority to sell federal lands and property that were not essential to our nation's defense. Thus, in 1947, the 151 acres and 28 existing buildings that became Camp Crystal Lake were put on the market for \$17,500."

Burton said that at the same time, the Florida Legislature passed the Omnibus School Bill, which expanded the scope of public education beyond the Three R's and enabled school districts to spend state and local taxes on a wider variety of programs.

Burton said Bishop initially encountered two obstacles in acquiring the camp. The first was the purchase price. The second was the constitutionality of a school district owning property outside its jurisdiction.

Camp Crystal Lake is located across Airport Road from the Keystone Heights Airport. Its 151 acres are within Bradford County.

"Fortunately, the War Assets Administration was able to offer a 95% discount on the purchase price because of the future camp's status as a necessary adjunct to the educational program of Alachua County," Burton said. "This designation dropped the purchase price to less than \$1,000."

Burton said a court ruling was needed to overcome the second obstacle.

"In June of 1948, the Florida Supreme Court ruled in favor of Alachua County, and in the fall of 1948, Camp Crystal Lake became part of the public school system for less than \$1,000," he said. "The quote that came out of that Supreme Court trial was that education has no boundaries. That's kind of the phrase that we've used since then."

Throughout the school year, the camp receives students



Counselors help two girls at Camp Crystal Lake's archery range during the camp's 75th anniversary on Nov. 18. Photo: Dan Hildebran.

Council cool to museum shed idea

The Keystone Heights City Council expressed skepticism over its Heritage Commission's proposal for a museum housed in a portable shed.

Heritage Commission member Deirdre Murphy first proposed the idea to the commission in May, telling her colleagues that they could add features to a 12-by-24-foot shed for \$8,200

that could house the city's historic artifacts.

However, while all council members agreed on the merits of a city museum during an October city council workshop, only Steve Hart supported the shed idea. Chris Thompson said she favored incorporating the museum into a new city hall, eliminating the need for staffing the museum

and taking advantage of the foot traffic that normally occurs at the municipality's headquarters. Tony Brown brought up the issue of security, pointing out that portable sheds are easy to break into and that with the frequent incidences of vandalism at city parks, the museum's holdings could be susceptible to damage or theft.

Bradley bill to get lawyers for animals

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
General manager

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — Sen. Jennifer Bradley is making a second attempt to get animals legal representation in Florida courts.

The Fleming Island Republican filed a similar bill last year, but the measure failed to make it out of the Senate's Judiciary Committee. In 2022, Democratic Sen. Jason Pizzo filed a bill for

animal representation, but his proposal also got nowhere.

Bradley represents all of Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Gilchrist, and Union counties in the Senate and a portion of Alachua County.

The proposed law allows judges to appoint an animal advocate in cases where an animal's welfare or custody is being determined.

The advocate would monitor court proceedings, attend

hearings, and present information to the judge relevant to the case.

Under the bill, attorneys or law students could volunteer for the role.

This year, Bradley has filed an additional bill requiring research laboratories to offer animals no longer needed for research to provide the animals to a society or association to prevent animal cruelty. The bill also adds reporting requirements for the labs.

Popeye's reflects drive-thru trend

With a seating area around one-half the size of its comparable store in Starke, Keystone Heights's Popeye's Chicken is following a national trend emphasizing the drive-thru over dining in.

Industry experts said the COVID-19 Pandemic changed customer behavior at fast-food outlets, and that change appears to have stuck. A report from Technomic said drive-thru traffic at restaurants increased by 30%

from 2019 through 2022, and the number of people eating inside fast-food outlets fell by 47% during the first half of 2023 compared to 2019.

Companies are responding to the trend by opening drive-thru only outlets, led by coffee shops Scooter's, Dutch Bros., and Seven Brew. Established drive-thru only coffee shops like Ellianos are also expanding.

Taco Bell is experimenting with drive-thru only sites. Chick-

fil-A plans to open a two-story, four-lane drive-thru in Atlanta that uses conveyor belts to deliver food to drivers and can handle 75 cars simultaneously. A recent New York Times story said Popeye's Chicken officials are reacting to the trend by cutting the size of their dining areas.

Companies are also developing artificial intelligence applications that can take orders in either English or Spanish.

Gold Head Park improvements proposed

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
General manager

Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park officials held a public meeting at the Keystone Beach Pavilion on October 18 to get feedback on proposed upgrades to the 2,400-acre landscape of sandhills, scrub, ravines, marshes, and lakes.

Officials said they hoped to reconfigure the facility's entrance

and move the administration building away from the entrance on State Road 21. They also proposed to eliminate parking at the branch overlook and develop a walking path parallel to Park Drive, starting near the area of Devil's Washbasin, for guests to walk to the overlook area. This would allow the park to build ADA-compliant access to the overlook.

Additional projects include replacing the recreation hall near Lake Johnson with a larger facility and eliminating the boat ramp at Big Lake Johnson, which is no longer in use. Officials also want to upgrade utilities at the Sandhill and Turkey Lake campgrounds and move the Lakeview Campground amphitheater to the Lake Johnson Day Use Area.



Chip Ware

Ware wins award

Former Clay County and Melrose firefighter Chip Ware was recognized as the State Fire Inspector of the Year during the 75th annual Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association conference in Gainesville.

Ware also served as the fire

coordinator in Bradford County. He now works for Alachua County Fire Rescue.

Shortage hard on bus drivers

Two Clay County Public Schools bus drivers described the hardships they and their colleagues endure, including abuse from parents and increased workloads due to a driver shortage.

During their November meeting, bus driver Carol Green told school board members that the last school year was a "nightmare" for the district's transportation workers, and she sees this year heading in the same direction.

"We were humiliated on social media and verbally abused at bus (stops)," the employee with 26 years of service said, "but we still had to smile."

Green said that so far this school year, 30 drivers have quit. She also noted that the district has yet to discuss pay raises for bus operators and that in the past, some drivers have been rewarded

with significant pay increases while others have gotten as little as 5 cents-an-hour raises.

Another driver, Kristen Taylor, told the board she has been driving for nine years and that even with adding field trips, spraying busses during the pandemic, and working summers cleaning busses, she has to rely on food assistance from the government.

Taylor also said the district offered a \$500 incentive program for workers to recruit drivers. She said she recruited a friend and that the friend recruited another person.

"I never got the bonus check," she said. "Nor did my friend and I never got a callback."

Taylor said she heard from a reliable source that the program was never funded.

Superintendent David Broskie acknowledged the driver's complaints and said the district is addressing them.

"We hear you," he said, adding that the next bargaining session with the bus drivers' union was scheduled for the Monday following the school board meeting.

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UNION COUNTY

Farm-City event unites producers with consumers

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

LAKE BUTLER — The Union County UF IFAS Extension office, in conjunction with Union County 4-H, the Union County Board of County Commissioners and the Florida Farm Bureau, hosted the annual Farm-City Week luncheon at the Union County Agricultural Education Building on Thursday, Nov. 16.

The day began with a visit to the education center by about 220 third graders from Lake Butler Elementary School, who participated in several fun learning activities and games at ten learning stations in the facilities arena area. The luncheon began at noon, after the kids had boarded their buses and headed back to finish their school day. About 80 people gathered for the lunch celebrating the day set aside to bring together consumers (the city) with the people who produce the food they eat (the farm). The idea is to foster understanding between the two groups in the interest of communication and cooperation.

Agriculture in baseball

Attendees were welcomed to the event by Union County Extension Director Jim DeValerio and Union County 4-H Agent Meagan Daniel. Union County 4-H's took over the early phase of the program, with Gabe McNeal offering the invocation and blessing, Reed McNeal and Ava McNeal leading the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge and Nomi Croft singing the National Anthem. 4-H'r Raylan Dyal then gave a presentation on "Agriculture in Baseball." She told the audience that the baseball itself was made entirely out of agricultural products.

"From the outside to the center you have leather, cotton, wool, rubber and cork," Dyal said. "Without agricultural products, we would not have a baseball because they are made from



Raylan Dyal as she talks about Agriculture in Baseball.

cattle, sheep, plants and trees. Even the batting gloves are made out of sheepskin."

Organic more expensive

After Dyal completed her interesting and sometimes humorous presentation, Lake Butler Middle School FFA member Jamie Lynn Courson gave a presentation comparing organic and non-organic farming. She said that organic farm products contained no antibiotics and were more expensive to produce and, hence, had a smaller customer base. She noted that this increased expense was passed on to the consumer,

with organically grown products usually being more expensive.

20% of Florida farms are in Suwannee Valley

DeValerio then introduced the guest speaker for the event, Bob Hochmuth, who is the regional specialized agent and assistant center director of North Florida REC-Suwannee Valley, a 400-acre research and education center near Live Oak. He said the main focus of the research and area of main concern at the center was vegetable crops, specifically focused on water and nutritional management. He then talked about the Suwannee River



Laura Crews (right) and her daughter, Hannah staffed the Union County Farm Bureau table at the Farm-City event. Laura is the Union County Farm Bureau secretary.



Jim DeValerio, Union County Extension director.



Farm-City luncheon guest speaker, Bob Hochmuth.

Region in the state, of which Union County is a part.

"Almost 20% of all farms in the entire state of Florida are in this region and it is one of the last areas of contiguous agriculture activity. We think of it as the "last stand" before entering urbanization," Hochmuth said. "North Florida is predicted to intensify agriculture more than anywhere in the state over the next 25 years. This region has more freshwater springs than anywhere else in the world."

Hochmuth went on to talk about the use of nitrogen-based fertilizer in an area so rich in water and that IFAS was

working to determine the precise amount needed for growth here, eliminating the issue of run-off of excess fertilizer into waterways and wetlands, a threat to these resources. He told the audience that the ideal amount of fertilizer for Union County is 184 Lb. per acre.

The program held the crowd's attention, and some seemed disappointed when it was done. Hochmuth stayed on hand for a time to answer questions.

Thanks for help

The Union County 4-H kids did a marvelous job helping keep

track of the third graders, helping cook, serve, and clean-up. Event organizers would like to thank the Union County Farm Bureau, Six Petals Flower Co., North Florida Custom Meats, NAPA Auto Parts and Jason Stalnaker for their support and assistance in making the event a success.

And speaking of 4-H, they have one of their biggest annual events coming up next month – the Christmas in Florida Union County 4-H Holiday Bake-Off 2023, to be held at the agricultural education center on Dec. 4, 2023.

Entries can be in any of six categories, with only one entry per person per category. The categories are: cakes, cupcakes, candies, cookies, brownies and gingerbread houses. Entries must include a list of ingredients. The awards in each category will be blue, red or white. Products will be judged on appearance, taste and display – with additional points to be earned for entries incorporating the Christmas in Florida theme.

On Mon., Dec. 4, the entries must be dropped off at the Ag Education Building (Extension Office) between 7-9 a.m. The awards will be presented at 6 p.m.

According to Daniel, "the purpose of the Holiday Bake-Off is to encourage adults and youth to work together on a project. Work should be done by the youth with supervision and directions from an adult. Mixes and pre-cooked items may be used in the finished product. Entries should be festively themed in appearance. No live plant material may be used (such as poinsettia, boxwood, holly, etc.) or the entry will be disqualified."

Union County is gearing up for the holiday season and the youth are no exception – if the entries in this contest are as good as they were last year the event's judges may be finding themselves letting their belts out a notch or two before they have finished their work.

Union's largest employers and taxpayers

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

LAKE BUTLER — Have you ever wondered about who the principal employers and taxpayers in the county are? The names are familiar to all, but few know who's who and how they rank in the numbers.

Thanks to the work of Clerk of Court Kellie Hendricks Rhoades and her staff, there is a simple way to obtain this information – in a document produced annually, this year called the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The report has a wealth of knowledge about not only the county government and its finances but also a clearly presented snapshot of the demographics of the county and

its population. The figures given are for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2022, but still give a clear idea of who provides most of the jobs in Union County.

The employers in the county are all business enterprises and most are a part of the county's governmental bodies or locally owned businesses. The Top Ten are: Department of Corrections – RMC (812 employees), Department of Corrections – UCI (565), Centurion – RMC (197), Union County School Board (385), Pritchett Trucking (295), West Frasier (140), Union County Government (140), Centurion UCT (65), Lake Butler Hospital (103) and PRIDE Enterprises (170). These employers have a total of 2,872 employees, in a county with an

estimated workforce of only 3,944.

As to who pays the most in ad valorem (property) taxes, the big spender is Florida Power and Light, a utility company who paid owns property with a taxable value of \$31,706,441. Weyerhaeuser Company, an agricultural enterprise, has property with a taxable value of \$14,247,595. Another utility, Clay Electric Co-op, owns property with a taxable value of \$12,598,382, while West Fraser Southeast, Inc. owns land valued at \$5,663,017. Roberts Site Development, a real estate and development company, holds land valued at \$3,190,990, while Windstream Florida, Inc., another utility company, owns \$3,167,408 worth of Union

County property. CVS, a retail business, holds property valued at \$1,960,243. Lake Butler LLC, classified as industrial, has property valued at \$1,828,058. The other retail business on the list, Medlink Management Services, has property valued at \$1,623,888. Last on the list is another utility, Florida Gas Transmission Co., with property valued at \$1,299,079.

The above property owners have land with a total taxable value of \$77,285,098 and account for 24.74% of the percent of the total taxable value of property in the county.

Good information such as this helps people be aware of what is happening in their county and where it is happening.

No pigs or peacocks allowed in new Union County neighborhood

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
General manager

PVFLLP, LLC has platted a 19-lot subdivision north of County Road 125 and east of State Road 121 in the northeastern corner of Union County.

The limited liability company, which, according to county records, is managed by Atlantic Land & Lakes Management LLC in Sarasota, divided the 192-plus acres into lots of around 10 acres each.

The single-family home subdivision, named Pineview

Ranch, is bordered by Northeast 260th Loop to the north, Northeast 269th Lane to the northeast and east, and Northeast 271st Avenue to the southwest, all county-maintained graded roads.

PVFLLP, LLC also recorded restrictive covenants for the subdivision, prohibiting further subdividing of the lots, mobile homes, mineral development, junk cars, scrap, trash, pigs, and peacocks.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TIMES/TELEGRAPH/MONITOR

Dear Editor:

Have you ever thought about how you could provide a positive impact on your child's education? Simply by bringing in items off of your classroom wish list or volunteering to read a story to their class. This is an important aspect of a child's early years of development called *parent involvement*.

- Parent involvement helps extend teaching outside the classroom, creates a more positive experience for children, and helps children perform better when they are in school.
- Parents who are in tune with what is happening in their child's classroom are able to establish a strong connection between what is learned at school and what takes place in the home. Building this bridge is a key component of a child's development and supporting further learning for their future.
- Parent involvement can be so much fun, such as attending your child's fall festival, Valentine's Day party, or a fundraiser to support a great cause.

These are all great examples of coming in and get involved with your child and their school. While being an involved parent, you are not only building that special bond with your child but also extending the experiences to the child's future and learning experiences.

Kim Bailey

Little Rainbow's Learning Center
Lake Butler



255 Southeast 6th Avenue
Lake Butler, FL 32054
(386) 496-8278
Owner/Director: Kim Bailey
LittleRainbowsLearningCenter.com

Information about traffic at Bradford Elementary School

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

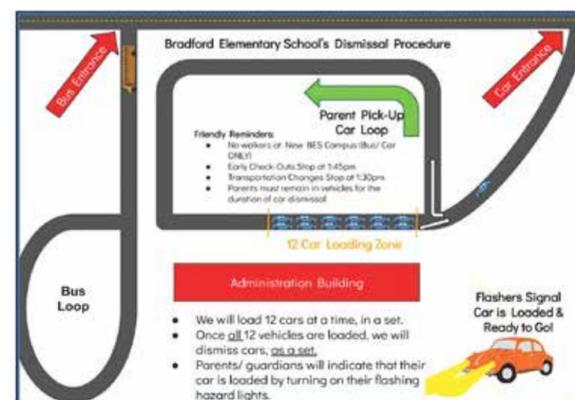
The long-awaited day is just around the corner. Bradford Elementary School's new campus will finally be open Nov. 27.

Many have been working extra hours to make everything ready. Students, teachers and employees will finally reap the rewards of all that work on Monday.

While there will certainly be a lot of excitement, there has also been concern about the changing traffic patterns and keeping everyone safe.

Southeast 144th Street will experience an unprecedented amount of travel, and the intersection at State Road 100 has been a particular concern.

Ahead of time, Bradford Elementary School released



Information sent home to parents shared information about dismissal procedures.

information about the traffic at the school.

There are two separate entrances: one for the bus loop

where bus riders will be loaded and unloaded, and one for the car

See BES, page 7

Letters

Opposing land swap

Dear Editor:
My name is Albert Mize, I attempted to talk with Starke city commissioners, concerning the retention of the Veterans Memorial Park as it currently stands on Nov. 7, 2023, at the city commissioners meeting. After three minutes I was told "politely" that my three minutes, were up and to wrap it up. I was the only guest/person requesting an opportunity to talk on that night. As I quickly wrapped up my comments and, prior to sitting down, I told the city board of commissioners that I would provide my comments to them in writing. Accordingly, these are my comments:

Engraved in the granite monument within the Bradford County Veterans Memorial Park, on Call Street, Starke, Florida: DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO SERVED AND TO THOSE WHO DIED WHILE SERVING." Dated May 30, 1985.

The city of Starke commissioners have "tentatively approved" the swap of the Veterans Memorial Park for a small piece of property that is not buildable without a formal vote by the commissioners. How can that be? I thought that Bradford County was a "political sub-division" of the state and is bound by the Sunshine rules.

The purpose of the swap of land will allow the construction of rent-to-own modular apartments and/or condominiums on what is now the Memorial Park property.

I have been told by a veteran and member of the American Legion on Edwards Road in Starke that the veterans are opposed to the swap, but that they were told by city officials that the city owned the property and could do whatever it wanted with the property.

It appears that the city does not support the request of the veterans to preserve the existing park. I want to retain the existing memorial park. I'm not opposed to expansion and/or improvements to the park. I'm concerned that major cities across our great country are becoming "woke" and are removing historical markers and undermining our history and the so many veterans who gave their lives for our country. I never thought it would happen to Starke.

Historic Call Street in downtown Starke is considered Main Street for the city of Starke. The current Veterans Memorial Park has beautiful, mature trees and park benches that front on Call Street. To move the memorial park monuments to the back of the properties adjoining the overpass project shows little regard for our veterans and is paramount to telling our veterans to be quiet and go stand in the corner.

The state has done a beautiful job with the construction of the railroad overpass. This is a great improvement to the downtown area. It is my understanding that the excess property bought by the state for the right of way for the overpass is being provided to the city of Starke.

The city is not desperate and not destitute! We don't have to give up a Bradford County-dedicated memorial park in order to attract builders to Starke and Bradford County. People from other states are fleeing to Florida. We need to continue to build a faith-based community that supports not only our veterans, but also supports our police department, our sheriff's office and all first responders of Bradford County.

Disinformation:
I was told by a city commissioner that our memorial park was 10 feet onto private property.

I was further told that the size of the property that the city was gaining from the contractor was much larger than we were giving up.

So, as many have done, I walked the properties and talked with state contractors on site. There were no boundary markers separating the memorial park from the contractors' property and no boundary markers separating or identifying what properties were being provided to the city of Starke by the state.

So, I went to the city of Starke building/permit department and requested a site plan. There was not

a site plan, a plat or a survey of the projects. So, I discussed the same topic with the city manager. He had not been given any surveys or site plans pertaining to the swap of properties. I asked the city manager how much bigger the property was that the city was gaining as compared to the size of the memorial park property being given up by the city. He replied: about 1,000 square feet. In my opinion that is not significant as there are over 43,000 square feet in an acre. So, the city has turned their backs on our veterans for 1,000 square feet of property.

Ironically, at the Nov. 7, 2023 city commissioners meeting, City Commissioner Shannon Smith tasked the city manager with flagging the properties so he could tell what the city was swapping. He further stated that he previously tasked the city manager to do the same.

This is a difficult task as there were not any surveys at the time of the meeting.

More concerning is that our city commissioners have a tentative agreement for the swap decimating a Veterans Memorial Park without knowing what is being traded.

As a business owner, in downtown Starke, I'm not opposed to improvements in the city. The state overpass project will bring improvements to the city and a new look! Although the overpass project is not completed, it appears that Water Street, that ran between the downtown square and the veterans park has been terminated; thus, possibly bringing the two properties closer together. It also appears that St. Claire has been extended past Call Street to Highway 100. I believe that the property for the expansion of St. Clair Street was purchased by the state from the same developer desiring to build these apartments/condominiums. I'm not sure of the amount that was paid to the developer.

I do not believe that we should build on properties adjoining the town square or memorial park or "west" of the new expansion of St. Claire Street. I believe that it is in the best interest of the city to purchase this property between the veterans park and the property being granted to the city by the state.

My Story:
I have owned the two-story building at the corner of Call and Thompson streets since January 1997. Over 25 years. My wife has owned and operated Scarlett's Southern Accents. The building was built prior to 1885 and is one of the oldest buildings in the city. Ironically, the original use of the building was to house the National Guard upstairs and a stable downstairs with a buggy works in the rear of the building.

I volunteered and served in the United States Marine Corps from October 1967 thru mid-August 1971. During 1969, I volunteered for orders to Vietnam as a radar tech on the F-4J Phantom Jet. I was routed to the First Marine Air Wing in Iwakuni, Japan. I returned home in August of 1971. During September 1971, my F-4J Phantom Jet Squadron returned to Vietnam.

Upon returning back to the USA, Treasure Island, San Francisco after my second tour in the South Pacific with the First Marine Air Wing in August 1971 to be processed out of the Marine Corps, we were told by the sergeant in charge that we were at liberty to go anywhere in San Francisco and that:

1. We should not wear our Marine Corp uniforms in downtown San Francisco.

2. If we got into any fights that we would be sent to the brig and not discharged.

While visiting Chinatown in San Francisco I was met by war protesters. For the first time, I experienced and saw real resentment and anger toward our military veterans. It was easy to distinguish veterans from the long-haired protesters. The protesters would circle one or two of the veterans and shout, curse and spit on them. It was like they (dope-smoking, hippy protesters) knew that we couldn't fight back. I regretted the actions of the protesters, but have never regretted my years in the USMC.

As a sergeant in our United States Marine Corps, I was not allowed to wear my uniform in a major city in our United States or protect

the honor of the Marine Corps. It's hard to express my feelings after returning home. It was a sad, empty, and hollow feeling. Our culture had taught me to be a proud American and to serve my country. If we lose sight of our culture and how we got to be this great nation, we will lose the America that we love.

Meeting with Starke American Legion members on Tuesday Nov. 14, 2023:

American Legion Veterans appear to be between a rock and a hard spot. They want to retain the memorial park on Call Street, but need room for expansion. They would like to install approximately five additional monuments in recognition of veterans who were in wars and military conflicts following Vietnam.

American Legion veterans have not been provided site plans or surveys of the current memorial park or the property being provided by the Florida Department of Transportation.

I asked for a show of hands on whether I should continue with my letter and almost all attendees supported the information presented to them.

What I wasn't expecting was comments pertaining to the ownership of the memorial park. Apparently, the American Legion owned the property, or at least a portion of the property. Some remember swapping a portion of their property with the city that allowed the park to have more footage on Call Street. It was not clear to the Legion members when the city took control of the memorial park. It was asked during the meeting where the warranty deed was.

Members at the meeting were concerned that a portion of the veterans park may be on the developer's property. Apparently, the city sold the properties just south of the memorial park to the developer years ago without verification of property lines or location of the park. My takeaway was we need surveys, warranty deeds and all documents pertaining to the sale of city properties to this developer. We need to table this transaction until all facts are made available to citizens of Starke and Bradford County.

According to the internet; over 58,000 military service members died during the Vietnam War. The average age was between 17 and 20. Some of my high school friends and military comrades never celebrated their 21st birthday.

These young men and women gave their lives in a war to protect our way of life and our Constitution of the United States, which gives us freedom of speech, the right to own property, and which allowed protesters the right to protest the Vietnam War. These two amendments to the Constitution go hand in hand. We can't have one without the other. Ironically, freedom of speech is what allowed protesters the ability to protest against the Vietnam War and our returning veterans.

The Veterans Memorial Park was dedicated to our veterans by Bradford County, not to the city of Starke. I believe that when the park was dedicated to the veterans, it became the property of the veterans! Under the United States Constitution, veterans should have the right to defend a memorial park dedicated to veterans. If we can't trust the city of Starke commissioners to be the caretakers of our memorial park, maybe we should elect more patriotic representatives.

Veterans and every elected official in the city of Starke and/or Bradford County should stand together and oppose the destruction and desecration of our Veterans Memorial Park. I'm requesting that all elected officials in Bradford County and the city of Starke come to the podium at the next city commissioners meeting and state: "Stop the swap; buy the land for our veterans."

Currently, all of the military services within the Department of Defense are having difficulty meeting recruitment goals; even my Marine Corps. I can recall a time when Vietnam veterans were not appreciated, not welcomed home and protested against. WE must protect our culture and not return to those days. WE must support our Constitution, our laws, our law enforcement, our first responders and our military. If we lose our culture as

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

Audrey Marlene Clemons, 37, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 15 for driving with a suspended or revoked license and an out-of-county warrant.

Adam Noah Glover, 18, of Hampton was arrested by Lawtey Police on November 11 for driving with a suspended or revoked license and resisting an officer.

Mikari Deon Harrison, 26, of Wildwood was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 17 for a probation violation.

Yvone Carroll Land, 63, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 13 for possession of a controlled substance without a prescription, possession of drug equipment, and possession of marijuana.

Hannah Elizabeth Lane, 29, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 14 for battery.

David Scott Murphy, 61, of Middleburg was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 16 for DUI.

Derek Byron Nicholls, 22, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 16 for a probation violation.

Steven Michael Pope, 32, of

Glen St. Mary was arrested by Starke Police on November 17 for an out-of-county warrant.

Toddreke Jamal Reed, 26, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 12 for aggravated assault and resisting an officer.

Kadedra Takamya Rhines, 27, of Starke was arrested by Starke Police on November 17 for battery and criminal mischief with property damage.

Tyler Shane Robertson, 27, of Lake City was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 15 for aggravated stalking and intimidation.

Nicholas Dakota Spangler, 27, of Crawfordville was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 11 for aggravated battery.

Edwin Glen Vickery, 38, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 12 for withholding support.

Latoya Denise Walker, 37, of Orlando was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 13 for failure to appear.

Lester Wanniss Walker, 49, of Lawtey was arrested by Bradford deputies on November 13 for withholding support.

Jonathan Park Walter, 58, of Starke was arrested by Starke Police on November 17 for being an out-of-state fugitive.

Union

Jerome Hadley Addison, 55, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on November 19 for battery.

Clint Felton Andrews, 32, of Raiford was arrested by Union deputies on November 14 for possession of marijuana, possession of drug equipment, and possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

David Joseph Bridgman, 46, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on November 17 for a probation violation.

Richard J Brown, 35, was arrested by Union deputies on November 15 for battery and resisting an officer.

Deborah Marie Karr, 22, of Raiford was arrested by Union deputies on November 14 for fraud-impersonation.

Anthony J. Henderson, 46, was arrested by Union deputies on November 15 for trafficking in drugs and smuggling contraband into a prison.

Santos Cruz, 52, was arrested by Union deputies on November 15 for homicide, destroying evidence and smuggling contraband into a prison.

Richard J Brown, 35, was arrested by Union deputies on November 15 for battery.

Clay

Alton Rabon Gue, 59, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on November 13 for disorderly intoxication.

Clinton Russell Helmer, 39, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on November 11 for disorderly conduct.

Jonathan Rivera Pacheco, 43, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on November 14 for burglary, molesting a vending machine, grand theft, and felony criminal mischief.

Shonda Janine Riley, 48, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on November 14 for trespassing.

David Burton Saunders, 37, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on November 12 for failure to register a vehicle.

Kevin Warren Webb, 55, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on November 14 for trafficking in Fentanyl, possession of a controlled substance, possession of cocaine, possession of drug equipment and driving with a suspended or revoked license.

we know it, we will lose our United States of America!!

I'm asking for every elected official in Bradford County and the city of Starke to appear at the Dec. 5 city commissioners meeting and go on the record at that meeting on their stance for retention of the memorial park. This request includes Sheriff Gordon Smith, Chief of Police, Jeff Johnson and all county commissioners. This park was dedicated to our veterans by Bradford County!

The more I learn about the swap the more the deal stinks! I will not support any elected official in Bradford County or the city of Starke who doesn't support our veterans and their desires to protect their memorial park. Further, I would like all city of Starke elected officials and all city employees and officials, including the city attorney who have advised the city commissioners to sign a financial disclosure statement, under the penalty of law, that they and/or their family members are not receiving any benefit from the swap of the properties or the development of the newly proposed memorial park.

The city of Starke, had a special commissioners meeting on Oct. 31, 2023, to discuss the purchases of properties for the city. If we have funds for the purchase of other properties, why can't we purchase the small piece of property between the existing park and the Department of Transportation-donated property. The developer is a businessman, and I don't believe he has an emotional

attachment to that particular piece of property. Let's stop the SWAP and purchase the property for our veterans and for the future growth of Starke.

Remember: The Veterans Memorial Park was: "DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO SERVED AND TO THOSE WHO DIED WHILE SERVING" by Bradford County on May 30, 1985, not to the city of Starke.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my letter to the mayor of Starke. The next city commissioners meeting is currently scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 5, 2023. Please attend and support our veterans and retention of our memorial park. Please come to the podium and speak!

Respectfully,
Albert Mize

Grateful for farm-city collaboration

Dear Editor:
Thanksgiving season is a time when many Americans gather with their families and reflect upon many blessings. One of those blessings is a nutritious and diverse food supply produced by our farmers and ranchers. We also benefit from other agricultural products that provide clothing, housing, medicines, fuel and other products we use on a daily basis. These basic necessities are available to us because of a broad

partnership of farmers, ranchers, processors, brokers, truckers, shippers, scientists, wholesalers and retailers. Our collaborative partnerships help maintain our standard of living. In appreciation of our farm-city partnerships, the President of the United States annually proclaims the week leading up to Thanksgiving Day as National Farm-City Week. Florida agriculture, natural resource and food industries employ more than two million individuals and annually contributes \$149 billion to Florida's economy. Union County produces millions of dollars in agricultural products annually. (More County agricultural stats here. Get them at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/index.php#full_report and <https://ifas.ufl.edu/extension-economic-contribution-reports/>) We encourage our fellow citizens to pause for a moment this holiday season and consider the many diverse and healthy foods available to us. Neither the farm nor the city can exist in isolation. Our interdependence creates jobs, markets and relationships that build our economy and support our collective security. As we celebrate Thanksgiving, let us remember the farm-city relationships that have allowed us to create an outstanding quality of life for all Floridians. Please join us in celebrating Farm-City Week, Nov. 15-22, as we give thanks for all that we enjoy.

Laura Crews
Union County Farm Bureau

BES Continued from page 6

loop where parents will pick up and drop off students.

These are the only options for student arrival and dismissal. Walking to and from the school is not permitted.

Drivers arriving at student dismissal will travel around the loop and be stacked in 12-car loading zone in front of the administration building. Each set of cars will be held until all cars

are loaded.

Parents/guardians must remain in their vehicles at this time. Drivers will notify school staff that they are loaded and ready to go by turning on their flashing lights. Once all cars in the set are loaded, they will be released together.

Both caution and patience are urged to make this exciting experience a safe one as well. Cooperation will make the process smooth and faster for everyone.

Joyful Voices Christmas Program

The Joyful Voices of Lawtey will present the annual Community Christmas Program on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4 p.m. at the Lawtey Church of God on U.S. 301. The public is invited to join and celebrate this holy season with community churches.



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NFTC has 1 of Florida's top LPN programs

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

North Florida Technical College nursing instructors Lynn Dickinson and Becky McCord demand excellence from their

students, and that's what they're getting. The proof is in student performance on the state's licensure exam and recognition for NFTC as one of the top practical-nursing schools in the state.

"We're pretty excited about what we do here and how we push ourselves and push our students," said Dickinson, who is the primary classroom instructor.

The school had two practical-nursing classes experience a 100-percent pass rate from students taking what is known as the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination). The school's most recent nursing-assistant class also experienced a 100-percent pass rate on the state exam for that profession.

Such success has led to the school's practical-nursing program being ranked as the sixth-best program in the state by NursingProcess.org. Florida has a total of 160 such programs.

"We knew that we had a great program, but to be recognized like that? We were pretty excited," Dickinson said. "Sixth best in the state — right here in Starke."

The NFTC program ranks behind New Port Richey's Pasco-Hernando State College, Cape Coral Technical College, Davie's McFatter Technical College, Ocala's Marion Technical College and St. Augustine's First Coast Technical College.

Rounding out the top 10 are Jacksonville's Jersey College, St. Petersburg's Galen College of Nursing, West Palm Beach's Academy for Nursing and Health Occupations and Lakeland's Triviss Technical College.

High expectations, high-quality nurses

"I've seen my fair share of terrible nurses," said McCord, who is the nursing program manager. "It is my hope to replace terrible nurses with awesome nurses."

She and Dickinson go about that by demanding excellence from their students. For example, assignments turned in late aren't accepted. As Dickson said, "In the clinical setting, giving a medication late is not acceptable."

"If they compromise on a policy or don't turn something in right or have a substandard performance on a test, then



North Florida Technical College nursing instructors Becky McCord (left) and Lynn Dickinson are pictured in one of the four study rooms they created. Photo by Cliff Smelley.



Rodney Huggins, a registered nurse who's a part-time instructor in the nursing program, talks to students during one of their labs. Also pictured is a high-fidelity mannequin that allows students to take vital signs. Photo provided by Lynn Dickinson.



Students (l-r) Daycha Johnson, Jay Adams and Tee Brown are pictured in one of their lab sessions. Photo provided by Lynn Dickinson.



Student Tamekea Blackmon sits at a desk in one of the study rooms. She drives from Gainesville to be in the full-time LPN program. Photo by Cliff Smelley.

they're going to jeopardize patient care," Dickinson said. "We will not allow it. We demand that they be basically almost perfect because that's what they need to be. Patients' lives are at stake in the real world."

The clinical sites students work at have copies of the program's policies-and-procedures manual. "They let us know if there's any deviation," Dickinson said.

Those clinical sites seem to be impressed with the NFTC students. Dickinson said many of those facilities offer students jobs before they graduate.

CareerOneSource projected that 41,780 would be employed as practical nurses in Florida in 2020. The projection for 2030 is 46,530.

According to the U.S. Bureau

of Labor Statistics, the average salary for practical nurses in Florida is \$25.86 per hour or \$53,780 per year.

In other words, Dickinson, who has a master's degree, and McCord, who has a bachelor's degree, are seeing their students earn diplomas and go on to make more money than they do as teachers.

"That's OK. This is what we signed up to do," Dickinson said. "We're not in it for the money."

What they're in it for is to have a greater impact than they could working as nurses. Dickinson said she and McCord could work at a healthcare facility and care for maybe 6-10 patients a day, but by teaching students, they are helping to care for an even greater number of patients.

"I can make the biggest impact this way," McCord said.

Dickinson said, "We need people in the workforce. We can effect more change by educating the masses and putting them out there. In effect, instead of taking care of 10 patients a day at a facility, we're taking care of thousands a day."

Number of students is up at NFTC

McCord goes to nursing conferences every year and hears how enrollment is down at various schools' nursing programs. She saw the enrollment in her own program decline last year.

This year, though, NFTC has a total of 26 students in its two practical-nursing classes. McCord said she had the chairman of a program at a college ask her how NFTC was drawing a number of students that other programs weren't.

One reason is word of mouth, McCord said. Students are graduating from the NFTC program and telling friends about their positive experiences.

"I have a student who's coming all the way from Interlachen because her friend just graduated from our program," McCord said. "I have some coming from Hawthorne because their friend just graduated from here."

This year's classes also consist of students from Gainesville, Cross City, Trenton and the southside of Jacksonville.

Tamekea Blackmon, a student in the full-time practical-nursing program, drives from Gainesville.

"I heard good things about the program in Starke," said Blackmon, whose sister, Quanesia Debose, is a student in the part-time practical-nursing program.

Dickinson said, "I think the word of mouth is very powerful. We are becoming a very reputable nursing school."

Another reason that could be positively impacting enrollment is that students are more than just bodies occupying seats in a classroom.

"We get to know them more than at bigger colleges," McCord said. "For example, we know when our students are having hardships. We know when they are going through rough patches in their lives."



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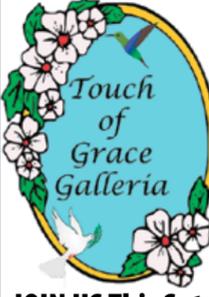
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Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

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Obituaries

Beverly Creighton

Beverly Cruise Creighton, 81, of Lawtey, died Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2023, in Starke. She was preceded in death by her parents; daughter, Paula Ralston; and one brother.

Survivors are her husband, Paul Creighton; children, Diane (Rick) Hart, Michael (Lola) Creighton, Connie (Raymond) Williams, Christine Taylor, John (Joy) Creighton, Stephanie (Gilbert) Barrett; two brothers; four sisters; and extended family and friends.

A Celebration of Life was held Saturday, Nov. 18, at Highland First Baptist Church. Interment was Monday, Nov. 20, at Lawtey Cemetery.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke. 904-964-5757.



Barbara Krauszer

Ms. Barbara Jean Krauszer, 63, of Florahome passed away Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2023, at Roberts Care Center in Palatka. She was born July 25, 1960, in Rochester, New York to the late Robert O. and Patricia (Youngman) Simmons. She was a homemaker, plant nursery worker, and attended United Methodist Church in Florahome. She enjoyed gardening, boating, fishing, going to yard sales, and collecting Santa figurines. But, most of all, she loved being with her family, especially her grandchildren.

Survivors are her children, Scott Krauszer of Florahome, Jessica Krauszer of Melrose, Joseph Krauszer of Florahome, and Steven Krauszer of Interlachen; brother, Robert (Michelle) Simmons Jr. of Rochester, New York; and sister, Lori (Scott) Needham of Bloomfield, New York; along with her fiancé, John Barfield of Florahome. She was lovingly called "Mimi" by her grandchildren, Kaylee, Ryan, Alyssa, Hunter, Ambrielle, Kholson, and Creed.

The viewing will be held Friday, Nov. 24, from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. at Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home. Funeral services will be Saturday, Nov. 25, at 11 a.m. at the Florahome United Methodist Church with Pastor Beth Boyd officiating. Interment will follow at Paran Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in memory to the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida at wildlifeflorida.org.

Arrangements are by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 340 E. Walker Drive, Keystone Heights 32656. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com PAID OBITUARY



Betty Zipperer

Mrs. Betty Carolyn Zipperer, 88, of Keystone Heights, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023, at Haven Hospice Custead Care Center in Orange Park. She was born July 19, 1935, in Ft. White to Charlie and Bertha (Scroggins) Vaughn. Her career began working for BellSouth as a switchboard operator before becoming employed with St. Vincent's Hospital, where she worked until her retirement many years later. She was a member of Freedom Baptist Church and a former member of Lake Hill Baptist Church. She loved plants and, before her health declined, she enjoyed crocheting. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 44 years, Joseph Lee Zipperer.

Her survivors are three daughters, Cindy Schmeck and Marilyn (Michael) Waters, all of Keystone Heights, and Debbie Sheldon of Deland. Also left behind are siblings, Kenneth Hollingsworth and Clara Mae Patterson, both of High Springs and Sandra Douglas of Lake City; five grandchildren; and seven-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Nov. 21, at Lake Hill Baptist Church with Pastor Will Smith officiating. Interment followed at Gadara Cemetery.

Arrangements are by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 340 E. Walker Drive, Keystone Heights 32656. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com PAID OBITUARY

Marshall Deremer

Marshall "Marty" G. Deremer 76, of Keystone Heights passed away suddenly at his home Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, surrounded by his daughter and his companion dog, Bear. He was born Aug. 2, 1947, in Ridgeley, West Virginia to Edwin and Mary (Smith) Deremer-Kirk. He grew up in Ridgeley, and Cumberland Maryland. He proudly served in the United States Army. He owned and operated Deremer's Auto Sales and Service in Keystone Heights for many years before moving his car business to Cumberland, Maryland, where he continued till retiring in 2015. Once retired, he moved back to his home in Keystone Heights. He was a member of American Legion Post #136 in Ridgeley West Virginia and Post #202 and the Amvets Post #86 of Keystone Heights, and The Ridgeley VFW Post #6452. He enjoyed gambling and singing. You could always find him singing his favorite Alan Jackson song, "Farewell Party," on Friday nights at the Ridgeley American Legion. He loved buying, selling and trading cars, but he had a deep love for Cadillacs. Among his enjoyments, he loved bowling and hanging out with all of his bowling friends. He was an avid Baltimore Orioles fan, never missing a game if they were aired in Florida. He loved his little companion dog, Bear, very much. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two siblings, Harry Deremer and Bobby Deremer; and by his only son, Kevin Deremer.

Surviving are three daughters, Lisa (Trey) Isgette, Felicia (Donnie) Cornwell and Martia Deremer, all of Florida; his brother, Edwin Deremer of Maryland; and daughter-in-law, Chrissy Deremer of Virginia. He also leaves behind grandchildren who who called him "Pappy," granddaughters, Kiester Deremer, Starla Day, Paisley Deremer and grandson, Kevin Deremer.

Arrangements are by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 340 E. Walker Drive, Keystone Heights 32656. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com PAID OBITUARY



Charles Slade

Charles "C.W." Slade, 87, of Hampton passed away Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023, at Haven Hospice E.T. York Care Center in Gainesville. He was born Jan. 16, 1936, in Bradford County to the late Lester and Lula (McKinney) Slade. He was a construction superintendent and farmer for 50-plus years before retiring; he also taught masonry at the Department of Corrections for 10 years. He was a Baptist and a member of the Church of Hampton. In his spare time, he loved being outdoors and fishing. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, J. L. "Buck" Slade.

He leaves behind his loving wife of 64 years, Joyce "Brenda" (Lott) Slade. He was also father to many nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were held Saturday, Nov. 18, with Mr. Donnie Lott officiating. Interment was at Santa Fe Cemetery.

Arrangements are under the care of Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 620 E. Nona St., Starke, 32091. 904-964-6200. www.jonesgallagherfh.com PAID OBITUARY



Adrien Valentine

Mr. Adrien James Valentine, 21, of Melrose passed away Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2023, doing what he loved to do, flying a plane. He was born Feb. 22, 2002, in Gainesville to Russell and Kathleen (Marshall) Valentine. He graduated in 2020 from Keystone Heights High School where he played basketball and tennis. He had worked for the Gainesville Regional Airport as a lineman. He grew up in and was a parishioner of St. William Catholic Church. He had a love for history and lived by quotes from Alexander the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte. He was also a collector of pocket watches and old clocks. He was talented in so many areas, music being just one of them; he played the guitar and the piano, which he played by ear. He was an Eagle Scout and completed his Eagle Scout Project for Gold Head State Park in Keystone. He loved flying, sky diving, and gaming, and touched many lives all over the world. He was always waiting for the next step in his life, which was to become a commercial pilot.

He leaves behind his parents, Russell and Kathleen Valentine; a sister, Kasey Valentine; maternal grandparents, David and Kathleen Marshall; paternal grandmother, Marylyn Valentine, all of Melrose; along with his aunt, Rhonda Harper; and her daughters, Dakota Harper and Alyssa Harper, all of Keystone Heights; Uncle Scott and Aunt Ann Knowles and their children, Kendall and Collin Knowles, all of Orlando. Also left behind are a host of additional aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends that will miss him dearly.

Funeral Mass was held Monday, Nov. 20, at St. William Catholic Church with Father Mike Williams presiding.

Arrangements were by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 340 E. Walker Drive, Keystone Heights 32656. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com PAID OBITUARY



Stephen Hendricks

Stephen "Bryan" Hendricks, 97, of Lake Butler, passed away Friday, Nov. 17, 2023, at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Lake City. Bryan, the sixth of 12 children, was born to Butler and Ollie Hendricks on Aug. 6, 1926, at the family home in Lake Butler. He left high school at the age of 17 to enlist in the United States Navy during World War II. He served on the USS Skagit, a cargo ship that transported troops and supplies. On Sept. 2, 1945, his ship cruised into Tokyo Bay. There, they sailed past the battleship USS Missouri at the exact time President Truman was signing the peace treaty, ending the war. After serving two more years, he was honorably discharged in September 1947. He returned home and graduated with the Union County Class of 1947. He began working for the Atlantic Coastline Railroad in December 1947, traveling around the state working in freight and ticketing. In the spring of 1951, he met a city girl, Jeanette Ryals, from High Springs. They were married Nov. 18, 1951, then moved to Largo for a short period. In a short time, they had three children: Stephen (1953), Linda (1954) and Joe (1956). When they returned to Lake Butler, he went to work for Florida Hydrocarbons (the gas plant) as the office manager. He and Jeanette purchased 80 acres in Union County, where he began farming. In 1971, he began farming full time, growing row crops, strawberries, and tobacco. He raised cattle and managed an egg-production operation. He spent the rest of his life on his farm, and until just a few years ago, he grew a garden every spring and fall. He grew enough to feed his family, put some up, and still had enough to give away to friends. At about the age of 94, he decided he needed help and began supervising Phillip in tending the garden. He enjoyed fishing in the pond with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He spent many hours riding his Gator around the fields so he could tell Joe and Tanner what to do and how to do it. His passion and priority was his faith. He loved the Lord, and he was a student of the Bible, always seeking to learn more and serve his Lord and Savior. He treasured every opportunity to discuss the Word with anyone. He played a key role in the unity of the Midway and Danville churches to establish the Lake Butler Church of Christ. He served as an elder for 35 years from 1969 to 2004. He was a Bible class teacher and church treasurer for many years. He was committed to his Lord and always encouraged his children and grands to prioritize their faith and live a life of service to God. He also loved Union County and served in several roles of leadership in our community. He was a committee member for the Farm Service Agency. He also served as a member of the Union County Farm Bureau board of directors and the Elzey Chapel Cemetery Association. He was determined to instill a strong work ethic in his children. There was no tolerance of idleness or slacking. There were always chores and jobs with a high expectation for compliance and quality work. He placed a high emphasis on education and was very proud of the academic accomplishments of his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Many times, he and Jeanette hosted multiple nieces and nephews in their home for summer break. The kids spent time with "Uncle Bryan and Aunt Nett," learning to work on the farm, but more importantly, building each of their own special relationships. He spoke for years with pride of teaching many picky eaters to enjoy eating their vegetables, fresh from the garden they had tended. He acknowledged the problem that Elzey Chapel Cemetery, where most Hendricks are buried, was running out of space. He took a great interest in finding a place large enough to be the final resting place for the very large, and still growing, Hendricks family. He was instrumental in the work of establishing the Hendricks Family Cemetery on the land once farmed by his father, which remains in the family. The project was completed in 2019, and he will be the first interment. He was preceded in death by his parents, Butler and Ollie Hendricks; sisters, Marie (Elijah) Brooks and Evelyn (Edison) Paulk; brothers, John (Eloise and Strick), James (Adolyen), Drew (Josie), Joe (Elaine), Harold (Martha) and Herman Hendricks.

Survivors are his wife of 72 years, Jeannette Ryals Hendricks; three children, Stephen (JoAnn), Linda (Phillip) Johns, Joe (Debbie) Hendricks; seven grandchildren, Stephanie (Danny) Christmas, Blake Dicks, Jason (Angie) Hendricks, Jodi (Jeff) England, Kellie (Jessie) Rhoades, Stacie (Richard) Cason and Brad (Sarai) Dicks; 20 great-grandchildren, Macy, Evan, and Molly Christmas, Seth (Haley), Gage, and Jordan Hendricks, Ella, Grant, Jesse, and Kenna Dicks, Lexi England, Tanner, Judd and Tripp Connell, Andie Jo Rhoades, Landon, Clayton, Allie, Alston and Aubrie Cason; brothers, David (Ann), Vernon (Janet), Donald (Lois) Hendricks; sister-in-law, Pam Hendricks; and a multitude of nieces and nephews that he loved dearly.

The family received friends for a visitation at Archer-Milton Funeral Home on Monday, Nov. 20. A funeral service was held at Lake Butler Church of Christ on Tuesday, Nov. 21. He was laid to rest immediately following the service at Hendricks Family Cemetery with military honors.

Arrangements were under the care and direction of Archer-Milton Funeral Home. 386-496-2008 www.archerfuneralhome.com PAID OBITUARY



LPN Continued from page 8

Anytime a student wants to talk to McCord or Dickinson, the instructors are there for them.

"We're always basically on call for them," Dickinson said.

McCord said, "Our students call us after hours. We don't have just office hours. We'll take those calls on Saturdays and Sundays. It doesn't matter. We're always available to them."

Yet the instructors wanted to do even more for their students. They created four study rooms with various types of furniture so that students can sit at a desk or study while lounging on a couch or a beanbag chair.

Two of the rooms are themed: one features a safari motif and the other that of a mountain lodge.

McCord said, "It makes them feel like they're at their home."

Blackmon likes the safari-themed room the most and said her preference is to sit at a desk. She said her sister, though, is a beanbag-chair person.

"The small study rooms are amazing," Blackmon said.

Dickinson said, "There are studies that show if you put a kid in a different environment for learning, often it will increase their engagement, and they feel more comfortable than in a classic classroom."

The instructors also created a kind of mini-dining hall, which includes a refrigerator and several microwave ovens.

"They love it," Dickinson said. "Some actually choose this to study in."

Donations helped the instructors furnish the study rooms and dining area, but they also dipped into their own pockets to make it happen.

"We'll do what we need to do for these people," Dickinson said. "We're going to do it. It's going to happen."

It would be hard for Dickinson and McCord to not go above and beyond for their students. They look at it as their duty.

"We're nurses," Dickinson said. "We love people. We care about people."

NFTC nursing info

North Florida Technical College offers full-time and part-time practical nursing programs. The full-time program is 10.5 months in duration (8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays and 7 a.m.-5 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays), while the part-time program is 18 months in duration (7 a.m.-5 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Besides Dickinson and McCord, the program utilizes five part-time registered nurses for supervision of clinical activities and to instruct skills in simulation labs.

Local health departments, long-term care facilities and University of Florida physician clinics serve as clinical-rotation sites.

New this year has been the opportunity for students to work alongside nurses in Bradford County schools.

"We're allowing them the opportunity to have pediatric experience, which is very cool," Dickinson said.

The program features two nursing-skills labs with mannequins. A high-fidelity mannequin is used for nursing-skills checkoffs and vital-signs checkoffs.

Various numbers associated with blood pressure, pulse rate and respiration rate can be programmed into the mannequin by McCord. Students should come up with those numbers



Some of this year's nursing students include (l-r) Lyka Fuentes, Johniya Henderson, Samantha Renard, Macy Laamore and Caitlyn Beckham. The program has 26 students in all. Photo provided by Lynn Dickinson.

when they check the mannequin's vital signs.

High-fidelity mannequin aside, the NFTC program doesn't have, in Dickinson's words, the "flashiest equipment." However, the program produces successful students, and that's the bottom line.

"Clearly, the latest-and-greatest and most-expensive buildings and equipment are not the key to the success of nursing education,"

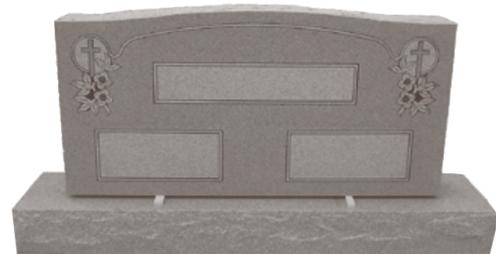
Dickinson said.

McCord said, "Building relationships is (the key) — being available for your students and not making them feel like a number." "That's what we can do here," Dickinson said.

For more information on the NFTC practical-nursing program, visit the school at 609 N. Orange St., call 904-966-6764 or visit NFTC.edu.

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Legal Notices

Legals for the week of Nov. 23, 2023

BRADFORD

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA

CASE NO: 04-2023-CP-035
PROBATE DIVISION
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF:
THOMAS W. BARKER,
DECEASED.

FORMAL NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The administration of the estate of THOMAS W. BARKER deceased, whose date of death was November 22, 2022, is pending in the Circuit Court For Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 4824 North West 179th Street, Starke, FL 32091, to-wit: Parcel Number: 02229-0-00600 (7928) HX HB

A parcel of land lying in the SE 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 17, Township 6 South, Range 22 East Bradford County, Florida, and being more particularly described as follows:

Commence at the intersection of the Westerly boundary of the right of way of State Road 16 and the Northerly boundary of the right of way of a county road and run thence West along said Northerly boundary a distance of 501.26 feet to a point, said point being 911.2 feet Easterly of the SW corner of said SE 1/4 of NW 1/4; run thence North a distance of 456.04 feet to a point; run thence North 89 deg 58 min 30 sec West a distance of 250 feet to an iron stake for point of beginning. From point of beginning thus described continue West a distance of 110 feet to an iron stake; run thence North 175 feet to an iron stake; run thence South 89 deg 58 min 30 sec East 110 feet to an iron stake; run thence South 175 feet to the Point of Beginning.

SUBJECT TO taxes for the year 1987 and all subsequent years, easements, restrictions and covenants of record if any.

The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below:

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is September 14, 2023.

Virginia Anderson
Personal Representative
CHARLES DANIEL SIKES
817 W. MacMahon Street
Starke, Florida 32091

Email: dan.sikes30@gmail.com
(904) 964-2020
Florida Bar No: 0886858
Attorney for Petitioner

9/14 12tchg 11/30-BCT

NOTICE OF SALE
T & M Towing gives notice of lien and intent to sell these vehicles on November 30th, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at T & M Storage yard located at 3687 Ambient Air Rd., Starke, FL 32091. T & M Towing reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids. 2020 Honda M.C.

Vin #MLHJC7519L5204449
11/16 2tchg 11/23-BCT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE
To satisfy the owner's storage lien, KO Storage LLC will sell at public lien sale on December 13, 2023. The personal property in the below-listed units, which may include but are not limited to: Household goods, boxes/totes/bags, clothing, bedding, tools and toys. The public sale of

per are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777, the toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275. For further information call Florida Commission on Human Relations, Lisa

per are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777, the toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275. For further information call Florida Commission on Human Relations, Lisa

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these items will begin at 10AM on December 06, 2023 and end at 10AM on December 13, 2023. The public sale will take place on www.storage-treasures.com.

KO Storage of Starke - S Walnut St, 1650 South Walnut Street, Starke FL 32091. (952) 314-7121

Time: 10:00AM CST
A03, Griffin, Rebecca, A05, Lindsey, Tony, A24, Williamson, Jessica, A39, Webb, Thomas, A75, Griffin, Rebecca, B13, Sofield, Ashley, B37, Flanders, Harvey, B62, Hendricks, Diane, B73, Pruitt, Yolanda

Public sale terms, rules, and regulations will be made available on www.storage-treasures.com. All sales are subject to cancellation. We reserve the right to refuse any bid. Payment must be by credit/debit card, we do not accept checks or cash. Buyers must secure the units with their own personal locks. To claim tax-exempt status, original RESALE certificates for each space purchased is required. By KO Storage LLC, 10301 Wayzata Blvd, Minnetonka, MN 55305. (952)-314-7121.

11/16 2tchg 11/23-BCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
File No. 04-2023-CP-105
Division

IN RE: ESTATE OF
SANDRA MEJIAS MARTINEZ A/K/A
SANDRA MEJIAS
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The administration of the estate of Sandra Mejias Martinez a/k/a Sandra Mejias, deceased, whose date of death was June 3, 2023, is pending in the Circuit Court for Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 945 N Temple Ave., Starke, Florida 32091. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is November 16, 2023.

Attorney for Personal Representative:
LAW OFFICE OF
KNELLINGER & ASSOCIATES
Richard M. Knellinger, for the Firm
Florida Bar Number: 181826

2815 NW 13th Street, Suite 305
Gainesville, FL 32609-2865
Telephone: (352) 373-3334
Fax: (352) 376-1214

Personal Representative:
E-Mail: rick@knellingerlaw.com
carin@knellingerlaw.com
Jennifer L. Reyes
139 Lexington Ave Ext
Rincon, GA 31326

11/16 2tchg 11/23 BCT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:
301 Legacy Auto LLC gives notice that on 11/15/2023 at 09:00 AM the following vehicle(s) may be sold by public sale at 13168 US HWY 301 S., Starke, FL 32091 to satisfy the lien for the amount owed on each vehicle for any recovery, towing, or storage services charges and administrative fees allowed.

2014 MERC
VIN # WDDGJ4HB9EG246753
This notification is published in BRADFORD COUNTY TELEGRAPH on 11/16/2023

11/23 1tchg-BCT

COMMISSION MEETING
THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners will have

a board meeting on December 5, 2023 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. Said meeting location is secured - no firearms or weapons are permitted.

11/23 1tchg-BCT

Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in the 100-Year Floodplain and Wetland
Date of Publication: **November 23, 2023**
Name of Responsible Entity: **City of Starke**
Address: **209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091**
Phone: **(904) 964-5027**
To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the City of Starke has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection to determine the potential affect that the activity in the floodplain and/or wetland will have on the environment. The activity is funded by the Federal Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Florida Department of Commerce Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The proposed activity is the replacement of deteriorated water mains with safer more durable PVC water mains within the City of Starke, which is the County seat of Bradford County, Florida. The project will also involve installing/replacing fire hydrants in the same area that is served by the replaced water mains. The proposed water line replacement and fire hydrant activities (Addressed Need) will take place in Service Area #1 which includes the Old Lawley Road and E. Brownlee Street area. The replaced water line will extend from Oak Street along Brownlee Road in an eastward direction for 1240 LF to Old Lawley Road. From there the line will extend northward for 1275 LF along Old Lawley Road to Crum Street. The fire hydrants will be located on the replaced water lines and at street intersections within the service area. The proposed locations are: (Oak Steet/North Street; Pine Street/Florella Street; Keller Street/North Street; Old Lawley Road/Crosby Street; Keller Street/Brownlee Street; Pine Street/Brownlee Street; Oak Street/Crosby Street). The area of benefit for these improvements is bounded by Oak Street to the west, Old Lawley Road to the east, Pecan Tree Apartments to the south and North Street and Crum Street to the north. A portion of this area is located in the 100-year flood zone. After the water line and fire hydrant activities are completed, and if funds are available the City will use grant funds to install up to 54 water meters in Service Area 1. Also, the City will install one fire hydrant at the intersection of Crum Street and Old Lawley Road, which is Service Area #2 and is also in the floodplain. The construction activities will impact approximately .01 acres of flood prone area. The replaced water lines will be located 3 to 5 feet underground in the public right of way next to existing streets that are already in the floodplain, and thus are expected to have little if any impact on existing drainage patterns.

The City of Starke has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values:

The do nothing alternative was considered, but this was not a feasible alternative because it would allow the water lines to continue to be a potential health hazard due to their deteriorated status. Also, relocating the water lines outside the floodplain is not feasible because then the lines would not be able to serve the existing houses that are also in the floodplain. For these reasons, it has been determined that no practicable alternative other than to proceed with the work is available.

The proposed water line replacement activities will have no significant impact on the environment because erosion control measures will be used during construction to control stormwater runoff. In addition,

when construction is complete, the water lines will be buried 3 to 5 feet underground and thus will have no impact on flood and drainage conditions. Also, the proposed improvements will conform to applicable state and local floodplain/wetland protection procedures. The proposed improvements will include the installation, replacement, repair, and/or rehabilitation of City water lines and fire hydrants that are already located in the floodplain/wetland. Failure to provide the planned improvements would result in the continuation of the deteriorated water lines in the project area.

The City of Starke has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain/wetland and has determined that it has no practicable alternative due to the scope of the project. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988 and/or 11990, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains/wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains/wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains/wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Additional agencies involved in this project include the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Written comments may be mailed to Scott Roberts, Mayor, C/O Russell A. Mullins, City Manager, at 209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, FL 32091, or delivered to the Starke City Hall which is located at the same address on or before December 5, 2023. Comments may also be submitted by email to: dmullins@cityofstarke.org. Additional information may be obtained by contacting: Russell A. Mullins, City Manager at (904) 964-5027. A more detailed description of the project and the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA) flood maps are available for citizen review by contacting the local government.

Scott Roberts, Mayor and Environmental Certifying Official
11/23 1tchg-BCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No 2023-CP-115
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
ELAINE D. HAILE,
DECEASED.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The formal administration of the estate of ELAINE D. HAILE, who died on November 28, 2022, is pending in the Circuit Court of Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is the Clerk of the Circuit Court, 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091. The names and addresses of the PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE and attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the DECEDENT and other persons having claims or demands against the DECEDENT'S estate on whom a copy of this NOTICE is required to be served must file their claims with this COURT WITHIN THE LATER OF THREE (3) MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the DECEDENT and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

In Re: The Estate of
WILLIAM C. AHRANO, I
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The administration of the Estate of WILLIAM C. AHRANO, deceased, whose date of death was October 19, 2022, and whose last four digits of his social security number are 1109, is pending in the Circuit Court for Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091. The names and addresses of the personal representative and personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with the court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

The date of first publication of this notice is November 16, 2023.

Attorney for Personal Representative:
LAW OFFICE OF
KNELLINGER & ASSOCIATES
Richard M. Knellinger, for the Firm
Florida Bar Number: 181826

2815 NW 13th Street, Suite 305
Gainesville, FL 32609-2865
Telephone: (352) 373-3334
Fax: (352) 376-1214

Personal Representative:
E-Mail: rick@knellingerlaw.com
carin@knellingerlaw.com
Jennifer L. Reyes
139 Lexington Ave Ext
Rincon, GA 31326

11/23 1tchg-BCT

Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in the 100-Year Floodplain and Wetland

Date of Publication: **November 23, 2023**
Name of Responsible Entity: **City of Starke**
Address: **209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091**
Phone: **(904) 964-5027**
To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the City of Starke has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection to determine the potential affect that the activity in the floodplain and/or wetland will have on the environment. The activity is funded by the Federal Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Florida Department of Commerce Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The proposed activity is the replacement of deteriorated water mains with safer more durable PVC water mains within the City of Starke, which is the County seat of Bradford County, Florida. The project will also involve installing/replacing fire hydrants in the same area that is served by the replaced water mains. The proposed water line replacement and fire hydrant activities (Addressed Need) will take place in Service Area #1 which includes the Old Lawley Road and E. Brownlee Street area. The replaced water line will extend from Oak Street along Brownlee Road in an eastward direction for 1240 LF to Old Lawley Road. From there the line will extend northward for 1275 LF along Old Lawley Road to Crum Street. The fire hydrants will be located on the replaced water lines and at street intersections within the service area. The proposed locations are: (Oak Steet/North Street; Pine Street/Florella Street; Keller Street/North Street; Old Lawley Road/Crosby Street; Keller Street/Brownlee Street; Pine Street/Brownlee Street; Oak Street/Crosby Street). The area of benefit for these improvements is bounded by Oak Street to the west, Old Lawley Road to the east, Pecan Tree Apartments to the south and North Street and Crum Street to the north. A portion of this area is located in the 100-year flood zone. After the water line and fire hydrant activities are completed, and if funds are available the City will use grant funds to install up to 54 water meters in Service Area 1. Also, the City will install one fire hydrant at the intersection of Crum Street and Old Lawley Road, which is Service Area #2 and is also in the floodplain. The construction activities will impact approximately .01 acres of flood prone area. The replaced water lines will be located 3 to 5 feet underground in the public right of way next to existing streets that are already in the floodplain, and thus are expected to have little if any impact on existing drainage patterns.

The City of Starke has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values:

The do nothing alternative was considered, but this was not a feasible alternative because it would allow the water lines to continue to be a potential health hazard due to their deteriorated status. Also, relocating the water lines outside the floodplain is not feasible because then the lines would not be able to serve the existing houses that are also in the floodplain. For these reasons, it has been determined that no practicable alternative other than to proceed with the work is available.

The proposed water line replacement activities will have no significant impact on the environment because erosion control measures will be used during construction to control stormwater runoff. In addition,

when construction is complete, the water lines will be buried 3 to 5 feet underground and thus will have no impact on flood and drainage conditions. Also, the proposed improvements will conform to applicable state and local floodplain/wetland protection procedures. The proposed improvements will include the installation, replacement, repair, and/or rehabilitation of City water lines and fire hydrants that are already located in the floodplain/wetland. Failure to provide the planned improvements would result in the continuation of the deteriorated water lines in the project area.

The City of Starke has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain/wetland and has determined that it has no practicable alternative due to the scope of the project. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988 and/or 11990, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains/wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains/wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains/wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Additional agencies involved in this project include the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Written comments may be mailed to Scott Roberts, Mayor, C/O Russell A. Mullins, City Manager, at 209 N. Thompson Street, Starke, FL 32091, or delivered to the Starke City Hall which is located at the same address on or before December 5, 2023. Comments may also be submitted by email to: dmullins@cityofstarke.org. Additional information may be obtained by contacting: Russell A. Mullins, City Manager at (904) 964-5027. A more detailed description of the project and the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA) flood maps are available for citizen review by contacting the local government.

Scott Roberts, Mayor and Environmental Certifying Official
11/23 1tchg-BCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No 2023-CP-115
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
ELAINE D. HAILE,
DECEASED.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The formal administration of the estate of ELAINE D. HAILE, who died on November 28, 2022

Tornadoes outscore Rams 14-0 in 2nd half, win 28-7

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford High School gave up its first touchdown in five games, but that would be all visiting Eastside would get as the Tornadoes defeated the Rams 28-7 in a Region 2-2S semifinal game on Nov. 17.

Jeremiah McKenzie had two touchdown runs as part of a second half in which the Tornadoes (12-0) held Eastside (8-4) to no points and just 33 yards. Bradford, which led by just one score at halftime, now advances to the Region 2 championship game for the second year in a row. Bradford will host Baker County — the same opponent it faced in the title game last year — on Friday, Nov. 24, at 7:30 p.m.

“Not many people get to play for a 13th time,” Bradford Head Coach Jamie Rodgers said. “I’m just proud of them. We get to play for one more week at least.”

The team is eyeing a lot more than just one more week, though. “It’s another accomplishment, another step closer to the goal,” quarterback Dae’Jon Shanks said. “We’re trying to get that (state-championship) ring this year.”

Bradford, the number-one seed in the region and the number-two seed in all of Class 2S, won its previous four games by scores of 42-0, 42-0, 35-3 and 42-0. The Tornadoes expect to dominate opponents in such fashion, so while they were happy their season is still alive, there was also some disappointment.

“We never did play our game tonight, and it showed,” linebacker/tight end Chason Clark said. “We can’t play like that against Baker. I have confidence we’re going to come out how we need to. We have no other option.”



Jeremiah McKenzie carries the ball in the second half.

Rodgers admitted it’s unrealistic to expect wins like 42-0 to keep happening as you progress in the postseason. He said things aren’t always going to go your way, such as when his team found itself in a tie game in the second quarter and leading by seven points at the half.

“You can’t make a deep playoff run without some adversity,” Rodgers said, adding, “Tonight was our adversity. I’m very proud of what our guys did.”

Eastside, the region’s fourth seed, won the coin toss and elected to receive the kickoff and go against Bradford’s stingy defense. Three straight runs by Joshua Benjamin did net almost 10 yards, leaving the Rams facing a fourth-and-inches at their own 49. Eastside elected to go for it, but Benjamin was tackled for no gain by Jyquez Cason.

A 15-yard reception by Clark gave Bradford a first down at the Eastside 25. Shanks later found Chalil Cummings in the end zone for a 24-yard touchdown to cap what was a six-play drive. Declan Hense kicked the extra point, making the score 7-0 with 7:31 to play in the first quarter.

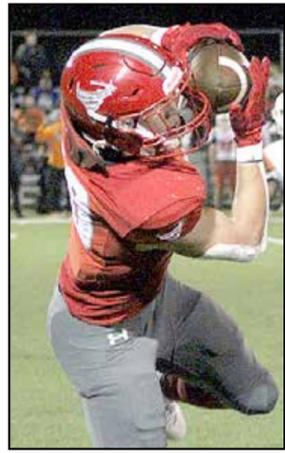
The Rams quickly put themselves in scoring position on the following series as Adrian Curtis completed a 54-yard pass to Chris Bishop to the Bradford 15-yard line. Two plays later, Torin Brazell sacked Curtis for a 6-yard loss. After an incomplete pass, Eastside went for it on fourth-and-15, with Brazell getting another sack — this time for an 8-yard loss.

When Eastside’s offense took the field again, the drive began with Brazell again making a big play as he tackled Benjamin for a

4-yard loss. The Rams failed to get a first down and punted, but Bradford muffed the punt, with Eastside recovering at its own 48 for a fresh set of downs.

The Rams’ Corvin Byrd ripped off a 7-yard run. A roughing-the-passer penalty on the next play resulted in a first down at the Bradford 30. Clark had a tackle for a loss of 4 yards that helped force Eastside into a third-and-14 play. Clark then tackled Curtis for no gain. The Rams went for it on fourth down, with Bishop catching a 23-yard pass to the 11. Bishop later added consecutive catches for 5 and 6 yards, with the second scoring a touchdown at the 8:55 mark of the second quarter. Elijah Dressel kicked the extra point to tie the score at 7-7.

Bradford retook the lead approximately three minutes later, driving 56 yards on eight plays. Three straight carries by Brian Clifflin gained a total of 17 yards, while a 12-yard run by Cason gave the Tornadoes a first down at the Eastside 27. The Tornadoes then got runs of 10 yards by Shanks, 4 yards by Clifflin and 6 yards by Cason,



Chason Clark catches a pass in the first quarter.

setting up Shanks’ 7-yard touchdown pass to Cummings. Hense added the PAT for a 14-7 lead.

Cummings finished with five catches for 56 yards.

A penalty on the Tornadoes for interference on a fair catch had the Rams starting their next drive at the Bradford 45. Benjamin

was tackled for no gain by Jordan Daniels on the first play, but two plays later, on third-and-20, Benjamin got loose for a 32-yard gain to the 23. A penalty and a 3-yard sack by Duke Lewis later had Eastside looking at a third-and-18 play. Devon McBride held Curtis to a 5-yard gain, but Curtis came back on fourth down and scrambled for 15 yards and a first down at the 11-yard line. The Rams then fumbled, with Trente Jenkins recovering for the Tornadoes.

Bradford threatened to score before halftime. Shanks, who was 8 of 9 for 115 yards, completed passes of 30 yards to Elijah Kellum, 14 yards to Cason and 10-yards to Cummings to help the Tornadoes drive to the Eastside 24 with less than 20 seconds on the clock. Time expired as Shanks ran for an 11-yard gain after being chased out of the pocket.

The Tornadoes were on the move to start the second half. Shanks and McKenzie had runs of 9 and 16 yards, respectively,

See BHS, page 13

Elijah Kellum (left) catches a pass in front of Eastside’s Brandon Perry for a 30-yard gain. He was one of four receivers quarterback Dae’Jon Shanks connected with. Shanks was 8 of 9 for 115 yards. Photos by Cliff Smelley.



Bradford will host Baker County for the Region 2-2S title

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

For the second straight year, the Bradford High School football gets to play longtime rival Baker County two times, and just like last year, that second meeting will occur in the Region 2-2S championship game.

The Tornadoes (12-0) host the Wildcats (8-3) on Friday, Nov. 24, at 7:30 p.m. Baker, the third seed in the region, is coming off a 32-14 win over second seed

Yulee in the semifinals. Bradford, the region’s top seed, opened the regular season with a home game against Baker, defeating the Wildcats 12-0.

Last year, the Tornadoes had a 21-0 regular-season win over Baker and a 28-17 win in the Region 2 title game.

This will be the third time the Tornadoes and Wildcats have squared off against each other in the postseason. The teams also played in 2001, with Bradford

winning 30-14 in the region semifinals.

This is Baker’s eighth straight year in the playoffs and the 19th time the Wildcats have qualified overall. The Wildcats, who’ve now won at least two playoff games the last four years, have a postseason record of 20-18.

Prior to 2017, Baker had advanced past the second round six times in 12 playoff appearances. The Wildcats, with current Bradford Head

Coach Jamie Rodgers as their head coach, finished as the state runner-up in 2017, winning four games before losing 44-15 to American Heritage in the Class 5A final.

The Wildcats won three games in 2021 to reach the 5A state semifinals before losing 54-21 to Miami Central.

This year, the Wildcats played three teams besides Bradford who finished the regular season with winning records, losing

to two: Glynn Academy of Brunswick, Georgia, by a score of 27-20 and Class 4S Viera by a score of 28-6. The one win came against Yulee by a score of 32-14 before Baker eventually played the Hornets again in last week’s playoff game.

Baker is on a seven-game winning streak in which it has scored an average of 31 points per game, while allowing an average of 12.

Overall, the Wildcats are

averaging 23 points per game, while opponents are averaging 14.

Bradford, which has won 12 games for the second straight year (tying a school record), is scoring an average of 33 points per game, while opponents are averaging four points.

If the Tornadoes win, they’ll host Bishop Verot, Booker, Florida High or Pensacola Catholic in a Friday, Dec. 1, state semifinal.

Legal Notices

Legals for the week of Nov. 23, 2023

BRADFORD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING A VARIANCE AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE BRADFORD COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS BY THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, pursuant to the Bradford County Land Development Regulations, as amended, hereinafter referred to as the Land Development Regulations, objections, recommendations and comments concerning a special exception, as described below, will be heard by the Board of Adjustment of Bradford County, Florida, at a public hearing on December 5th, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, in the County Commission Meeting Room, North Wing, County Courthouse located at 945 N. Temple Avenue in Starke, Florida.

V 23-05, an application by James Devalerio, to request a Variance be granted as provided for in Section 4.5. Agricultural, Section 4.5.7 Minimum Yard setbacks from a required 25' to a requested 10' along the Southerly line at the property being described as follows:
p/o the NW1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NE1/4 of Section 10, Township 7 South, Range 21 East, Bradford County, Fla. and being Bradford County Parcel Number 00861-0-01200.
The public hearing may be continued

to one or more future dates. Any interested party shall be advised that the date, time and place of any continuation of the public hearing shall be announced during the public hearing and that no further notice concerning the matter will be published, unless said continuation exceeds six calendar weeks from the date of the above referenced public hearing. Aforementioned public hearing, all interested parties may appear to be heard with respect to the appeal.
Copies of the material are available for public inspection at the Office of the Director of Zoning, Planning, and Building, County Courthouse located at 945 North Temple Avenue, North Wing, Starke, Florida, during regular business hours.
All persons are advised that if they decide to appeal any decision made at the above referenced public hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.
11/23 1tchg-BCT

UNION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
CIRCUIT CIVIL DIVISION
CASE NO.: 21000046CAAXMX
NEWREZ LLC D/B/A SHELLPOINT MORTGAGE SERVICING
Plaintiff(s),
Vs.
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS, BENEFICIARIES, DEVISEES, GRANTEES, ASSIGNEES, LIENORS, CREDITORS, TRUSTEES AND ALL OTHERS WHO MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST IN THE ESTATE OF NATHANIEL B. HARRIS DECEASED; REGINA MERRICKS, THE UNKNOWN PERSONS IN POSSESSION OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY
Defendant(s).
NOTICE OF ACTION
TO: THE UNKNOWN HEIRS, BENEFICIARIES, DEVISEES, GRANTEES, ASSIGNEES, LIENORS, CREDITORS, TRUSTEES AND ALL OTHERS WHO MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST IN THE ESTATE OF NATHANIEL B. HARRIS DECEASED
Last known address: Unknown
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a civil action has been filed against you in the Circuit Court of Union County, Florida, to replevin certain personal property described as follows:
1999 Fleetwood, 30x76 Waverly Crest, Mobile Home Serial Number(s): FLFLW70A26362WC21 and FLFLW70B26362WC21.
Property address: 11162 Southwest 42nd Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054
You are required to file a written response with the Court and serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Padgett Law Group, whose address is 6267 Old Water Oak Road, Suite 203, Tallahassee, FL 32312, at least thirty (30) days from the date of first publication, 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 demanded in

the complaint.
DATED this the 13th day of November, 2023.
Clerk of the Circuit Court
AS Clerk of the Court
BY: Crystal Norman
Deputy Clerk
11/16 4tchg 12/7-UCT

SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE
The City of Lake Butler City Commission will hold a **SPECIAL MEETING** on Thursday, November 30, 2023, at 4:00pm at the City Commission Chambers located at 200 SW 1st Street Lake Butler, FL 32054. A special meeting will be held to interview 3 board-selected applicants for the position of city manager. NOTE: The City Commission will have the ability to appoint a city manager at this special meeting if they choose to do so.
11/23 1tchg-UCT

NEW RIVER BOARD MEETING
The New River Community Health Center Board of Directors will meet Thursday, November 30, 2023 at the Bradford County Health Department, 1801 North Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091 from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm.
11/231tchg-UCT

PUBLIC NOTICE
RULE NAME:
8.04*, Emergency Drills
3.06*+, Safe and Secure Schools
PURPOSE AND EFFECT: To update Board Policies
SUMMARY: To update Board Policies
AUTHORITY: Florida Statutes
LAW IMPLEMENTED:
ECONOMIC IMPACT: None

Policies can be viewed in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 55 SW Sixth Street, Lake Butler, Florida between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.
IF A HEARING IS REQUESTED WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THE POLICY POSTING LOCATED AT UNION. K12.FL.US THIS PUBLICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 120.54 FLORIDA STATUTES, IT WILL BE HELD ON DECEMBER 12, 2023, IN THE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING ROOM, A COMPLETE TEXT OF THIS PROPOSED RULE MAY BE VIEWED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, 55 S.W. 6TH STREET, LAKE BUTLER, FLORIDA.
11/23 1tchg-UCT

2023-2024 Union County School Board Board Workshop and Meeting Dates
December 12, 2023
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
January 16, 2024 (Third Tuesday)
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
February 13, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
March 12, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
April 9, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
April 23, 2024
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
May 14, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.

May 28, 2024
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
June 11, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
June 25, 2024
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
July 16, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
July 30, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
August 13, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
August 27, 2024
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
September 10, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
September 24, 2024
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
October 8, 2024
Board Workshop 5:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
November 19, 2024
Board Meeting 6:00 p.m.
(Reorganization)
11/23 1tchg-UCT

Union County School Board
November 17, 2023
This is to inform the public that the School Board Members and Superintendent of Union County School District will be attending the Annual Ethics Training located at 55 S.W. 6th Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054, from 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. on December 12, 2023.
For further information contact: Kelly Holmes, Executive Secretary, 352 448-5054
11/23 1tchg-UCT

Bradford County Telegraph
USPS 062-700
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131 West Call Street • Starke, Florida 32091
Phone: 964-6305 • P.O. Drawer A • Starke, FL 32091
John Miller, Publisher
Editor: Mark J. Crawford
Sports Editor: Cliff Smelley
Advertising: John R. Tillman
Typesetting: Mary Goodge
Advertising & Newspaper Prod: C. Hurston
Bookkeeping & Classified Adverts: Heather Wheeler
Bookkeeping Asst: Mary Goodge
Front office Asst:

Subscription Rate in Trade Area
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\$26.00 six months
Outside Trade Area:
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USPS 114-170
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Phone: (904)964-6305 • Fax: (904)964-8628
John Miller, Publisher
Editor: Dan Hildebran
Sports Editor: Cliff Smelley
Advertising: John R. Tillman
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Advertising & Newspaper Prod: C. Hurston
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Bookkeeping Asst: Mary Goodge
Front office Asst:

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Outside Trade Area:
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\$26.00 six months

UNION COUNTY TIMES
USPS 648-200
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131 W. Call Street • Starke, FL 32091
uctimeseditor@gmail.com
904-964-6305 • fax 904-964-8628
John Miller, Publisher
Editor: Mark J. Crawford
Advertising: John R. Tillman
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Strong defense leads Tigers to 17-10 win over Indians

BY ANTONIO HENDERSON
Special to the Telegraph-Times-Monitor

Trenton Klein threw two touchdown passes, while the defense forced three turnovers and came up with a couple of fourth-down stops in the second half as the Union County High School football team defeated host Fort White 17-10 in a Nov. 17 Region 3-1R semifinal game.

Klein's 45-yard touchdown pass to Ibn Williams in the third quarter proved to be the difference. The Tigers (8-3), who are the third seed in the region, now travel to play top seed Madison County (8-1) for the Region 3 championship on Friday, Nov. 24, at 7:30 p.m.

Second seed Fort White (9-2) got off to a fast start, with Dakota Fisher gaining 24 yards on his first carry. Quarterback Jayden Jackson ran for 4 yards before being tackled by the Tigers' Jacob Jenkins. Fort White then called on Fisher again, which resulted in a 6-yard run. It was later second-and-15 when Jackson called his own number, but he was held to just 3 yards after being brought down by Erich Seager and Bryan Tyson. Union then brought the pressure on third down, with Jimmy Cox

making a tackle for a loss of 2 yards. Holstein Frazier lined up for a field-goal attempt on fourth down, which was no good.

The Tigers started off with their bread and butter on offense — their run game. Klein called his own number for a 9-yard gain, followed by Bobo Woodall carrying for 2 yards and a first down. Thomas Williams had carries of 15 yards and 1 yard, but Union couldn't get anything going on its next few plays and punted.

Fort White's Fisher was still hot running the ball, picking up 8 yards. He was then held to a 2-yard gain by Jenkins, but the Indians were rewarded with 15 more yards on a personal-foul facemask. A penalty on the Indians had them facing first-and-20, but they picked up 10 yards on a Garrett Brady reception. Jenkins came up with a 10-yard sack on the next play, making it third-and-long. Fort White's Jackson then fumbled the snap, recovering for an 11-yard loss. The Indians punted.

Union's offense faced third-and-15 on its next series, but a 21-yard run by Woodall, who finished with 27 yards on just three carries, gave the Tigers a first down. Klein then dropped back, saw Gavin Jenkins one-on-

one against a smaller defender and threw a jump ball that Jenkins came down with for a 46-yard gain. Facemask and roughing-the-passer penalties added yardage and had the Tigers set up with first-and-goal. Back-to-back runs by Williams and Klein resulted in a total of 5 yards. A holding penalty then backed Union up, while a sack by the Indians' Maliki Clark forced the Tigers to send Jonathan Edwards onto the field for a 35-yard field-goal attempt, which was good with 10:23 on the clock in the second quarter.

The Indians gave the ball to Najeeb Smith for back-to-back runs for a total gain of 14 yards. Jackson then called his own number for an 18-yard gain. After Smith was tackled for no gain, Fisher came up with three runs for a total gain of 11 yards. The Tigers' Tyson made a tackle for a loss of 2 yards, but Fort White then dialed up a pass play on which Brady had a catch across the middle for a 25-yard touchdown. The extra point was good, putting the Indians up 7-3 with 6:58 to play in the second quarter.

Fort White tried to get its passing game going the next time it had the ball, but Jenkins came up with an interception that had Union starting an offensive drive at the Indians' 40-yard line with 4:05 until halftime.

Jenkins, who caught two passes for 65 yards, took a screen pass from Klein and gained 19 yards. Klein, who rushed for 53 yards on 12 carries, picked up 10 more yards on a run. Williams was then stopped for no gain, followed by an incomplete pass as Klein tried to hook up with Blake McCoy on an out route. On third-and-10, a double pass play was called, with Jenkins finding a wide-open Tyson for a 9-yard touchdown with 2:42 remaining until the half. Edwards added the PAT for a 10-7 Tigers lead.

The Indians' next offensive series began with Klein making a tackle for no gain, but Jackson

would then gain 6 yards on a run before completing a pass on a curl route to Tafari Moore for a 28-yard gain. Jenkins, who had been coming up with plays all night for the Union defense, made a tackle for no gain. A 4-yard run and a 3-yard loss on a pass play had Fort White facing fourth-and-9. The Indians went for it, with the Tigers' John Nichols breaking up a pass.

Klein completed a 16-yard pass to McCoy. He then tried to go deep to Jenkins, who came down with an injury. It took him a while to catch his break, but he ended up walking off the field on his own to the applause from both teams and their fans.

Tyson, on an out route, caught a 7-yard pass and was able to get out of bounds to stop the clock with two seconds before halftime. Edwards attempted a field goal that had the distance, but missed by a few inches.

The Tigers came out in the second half and were able to pick up a first down on a Klein run, but a missed communication on a handoff led to a fumble that was recovered by the Indians.

Fort White's Fisher had runs of 6 and 2 yards. Jackson dropped back to pass before pulling the ball down on running. He was blown up on a huge hit by Nichols, which sent him spinning in the air on what was a 4-yard gain.

A 10-yard run by Fisher would set up a first-and-goal opportunity. After an illegal-procedure penalty, Jenkins made a tackle for a loss of 2 yards. Smith gained 8 yards on a screen pass to set up third down at the 1-yard line. Union's Anthony Holmes made a tackle to keep the Indians out of the end zone. Fort White, which was inches from the goal line, was called for a false start on fourth down. The Indians sent the kicking team onto the field. A successful field goal tied the score at 10-10 with 6:13 to play in the third quarter.

The Tigers' offense responded with Williams picking up 15 yards, followed by Drew Simmons (four carries for 24 yards) adding another 15-yard gain. A couple of runs by Klein after an incomplete pass set up fourth-and-1. Williams, who had 59 yards on 13 carries, fought for 3 yards, breaking multiple tackles to get the first down. Consecutive holding penalties eventually forced the Tigers to punt.

Seager fought through the Fort White offensive line to make a tackle for a loss of 4 yards. Dayquan Diston then picked off a Jackson pass.

Union's offense then struck



Gavin Jenkins (right) comes down with a catch despite having his facemask grabbed by Fort White's Gavin Heaton. Photos by 1stWayShots.



Thomas Williams (left) carries the ball for a 15-yard gain.



Trenton Klein follows his blocker for a first-down run.

quickly, with Klein dropping back and throwing a 45-yard touchdown bomb to Ibn Williams, who just checked into the game. Edwards' extra point was good, making the score 17-10 with 58 seconds left in the third quarter.

The next offensive series for each team ended in a punt. Then, with 6:57 to play, Fort White's Jackson completed a 40-yard pass to Smith. It was back to the ground game, with Fisher gaining 18 yards, but a holding penalty backed the Indians up for first-and-20. Jackson went back to Smith for a 5-yard catch. Two plays later, on third-and-15, Jackson threw a deep pass intended for Smith, but it was picked off in the end zone by McCoy, who took it out to the Tigers' 16-yard line with 5:29 remaining.

After a Union punt, Fort White was moving again. Jackson threw a screen pass to Smith for a 10-yard gain. Fisher then took a handoff for a 29-yard gain. After an 8-yard gain by Smith, the Tigers' Jenkins made a tackle that held the Indians to a 1-yard gain.

On third-and-1, Jackson threw an incomplete pass. He then kept the ball on fourth down, but Union's Ashton Newsom made a great open-field tackle to hold Fort White 1 yard shy of the first down with 1:30 to play.

The Tigers ran the ball on three straight plays, but had no luck getting a first down. Their punt attempt on fourth down was blocked.

With 18 seconds left, the Tigers brought pressure, with Thomas Williams forcing an incomplete pass on first down. Williams brought pressure again on second down, forcing Jackson to throw another incompletion. Jackson left the game after taking a big hit from Williams. The Indians' backup quarterback spiked the ball on third down. Jackson re-entered the game for a fourth-down play with 2.7 seconds on the clock. The quarterback's pass was dropped.

Klein led the Union defense with nine tackles, while Jenkins and Brycen Boney each had eight. Seager and Tyson each had seven tackles, while Thomas Williams made six.

Union to play number-one seed Madison for region title

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Union County High School's football team has made it to the region finals for the fourth straight year and will travel to play Madison County for this year's Region 3-1R championship on Friday, Nov. 24, at 7:30 p.m.

Madison (8-1) is the top seed

in the region. After a first-round bye, the Cowboys defeated fourth seed Lafayette 60-7 in last week's semifinal round.

This will be the sixth time the third seed Tigers (8-3) and Madison will meet each other in the postseason. Union's 27-16 win in last year's Region 3 semifinals broke a four-game

playoff losing streak to the Cowboys. Madison defeated the Tigers 65-12 in the 2015 region semifinals, 50-6 in the 2017 region semifinals, 49-0 in the 2019 region finals and 18-7 in the 2020 region finals.

Madison, which is in the playoffs for the 10th straight year, has a postseason record of 68-19. The Cowboys have qualified for the playoffs every year but one since making their first-ever appearance in 1995.

The Cowboys won four straight state championships from 2018 through 2021. They also won state titles in 2001 and 2007 and have been the state runner-up five times.

Madison played only four schools that finished the regular season with winning records. The Cowboys defeated Class 2S Suwannee 38-13, Fitzgerald (Georgia) 30-16 and Lafayette this past week, while losing to Class 2S Florida High 35-23.

The Cowboys, who are on a six-game winning streak, are scoring an average of 37 points per game, while opponents are scoring an average of 13 points.

Union, which is on a five-game winning streak, are scoring an average of 36 points per game, while opponents are averaging 11 points.

If the Tigers win, they'll travel to play Bozeman, Hawthorne, Holmes County or Williston in the Friday, Dec. 1, state semifinals.

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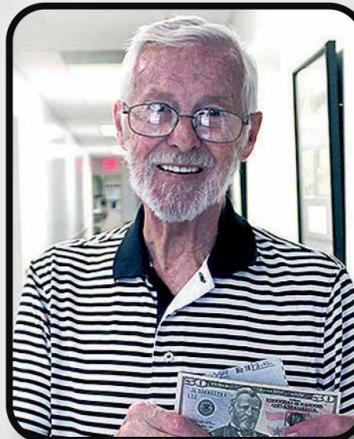
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Football Contest



This Weeks Winner: Armstrong missed 2 won with tiebreaker Congratulations!

BHS girls basketball team opens with win over Creekside

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford High School got two field goals from Khamyra Hankerson in the fourth quarter, which also included a 5-of-6 performance at the foul line by Jada Hankerson, as the Tornadoes defeated Class 7A Creekside 39-35 on Nov. 20 to open the regular season in girls basketball.

The Tornadoes, who play in Class 3A, got off to a fast start, building a 6-2 lead. Ar'Nayshia Griffin scored off a rebound putback and added another basket in transition after her own defensive rebound. Ajjiah Jackson added two free throws for the early four-point lead.

Stonay Shine later knocked down a three-pointer to put the Tornadoes ahead 9-4.

Bradford still clung to a lead entering the second quarter, but the team was hurting itself

with poor shooting, making less than 15 percent of its field-goal attempts in the first half.

The Tornadoes missed their first seven shot attempts of the second quarter. Creekside cashed in, taking its first lead when Chloe Poppinga scored off an offensive rebound, putting the Knights up 10-9. Bradford quickly retook the lead, with Khamyra Hankerson scoring off a Griffin assist, but the Knights got consecutive baskets off steals by Maddie Rolander and Randi Reider to go up 14-11.

Jade Spivey had consecutive baskets to give Creekside an 18-11 lead, but the Tornadoes got a strong effort from Griffin in closing out the half with five straight points. After making two free throws, Griffin scored off a steal, drawing a foul in the process. She made the awarded free throw to send Bradford into halftime trailing 18-16.

Two baskets by Jackson helped the Tornadoes keep it a two-point game early in the third quarter. Bradford would tie the score twice on baskets by Jada Hankerson and Khamyra Hankerson, but Spivey's layup off a Rolander steal sent the Knights into the fourth quarter leading 26-24.

Bradford missed its first three shot attempts to start the fourth before Jada Hankerson drew a foul on a drive to the basket. She made both free throws to tie it at 26-26. Hankerson later came up with a steal and drove to the basket again. She missed the shot, but Griffin was there to grab the rebound and put it in. Griffin was fouled on the play and made the ensuing free throw to put the Tornadoes ahead 29-26.

The Knights later evened the score at 31-31 on a basket and free throw by Spivey. Another free throw by Brie McCoy put Creekside ahead by one, but it would be the Knights' last lead.

A free throw by Destiny Crum gave Bradford the lead for good at 34-33. Creekside then turned the ball over with 1:45 to play. Khamyra Hankerson would sink



Khamyra Hankerson (right) puts up a shot against Creekside's Brie McCoy. Photos by Cliff Smelley.



Khamyra Hankerson (right) puts up a shot against Creekside's Brie McCoy. Photos by Cliff Smelley.

a jumper with 1:12 to play to make it a 36-33 game.

Jada Hankerson added two free throws with 29.8 seconds remaining. Khamyra Hankerson then forced a turnover, which led to a free throw by Crum for the Tornadoes' final point.

Griffin led Bradford with 12 points, while Khamyra

Hankerson had eight. Jackson and Jada Hankerson each had seven points, while Shine and Crum finished with three and two, respectively.

Bradford returns to action with a home game against Class 4A Keystone Heights on Tuesday, Nov. 28, at 7 p.m.



Ar'Nayshia Griffin (right) goes hard to the basket against Creekside's Chloe Poppinga.



Tyler Griffin ran at the Nov. 17 Class 2A cross-country finals, making him the first from Keystone to compete at the state level since 2018. File photo by Cliff Smelley.

18:32.

Ranson Everglades' David Serra won the race with a time of 15:19. Serra was one of four who ran less than 16 minutes.

This marked the first time Keystone was represented at state since 2019, when girls runner Camryn Williams qualified. Griffin became the first boys runner to qualify since Alex Guy in 2018.

KHHS boys soccer team off to 2-0 start

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School got two goals each from Luke Brunt and Aaron Wiley in defeating host Branford 7-0 in a Nov. 17 boys soccer match.

Bryce Huntley, A.J. Nilsen and Sammy Wachu each had one goal as the Indians improved to 2-0.

Wiley led the team in assists with two, while Brunt, Liam Callahan and Noah Jamamillo each had one.

Goalies Tomas Harrigan and Ray Paddock made one and two saves, respectively.

Keystone opened the season with a 5-1 road win against Palatka on Nov. 14, getting three goals from Wiley.

Brunt and Huntley each had one goal, with Brunt also recording two assists.

Wachu and Jacob Stahman each had one assist.

Harrigan made four saves.

The Indians host Newberry on Monday, Nov. 27, at 7 p.m. They then travel to play Interlachen on Tuesday, Nov. 28, at 7 p.m.

KHHS' Griffin concludes his season at state

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School's Tyler Griffin competed at the Florida High School Athletic Association Cross-Country Finals on Nov. 17 in Tallahassee, finishing 141st in the Class 2A boys race.

Griffin, who was one of 240 runners, crossed the line in

BHS

Continued from page 11

for first downs, while an 8-yard reception by Cummings led to another first down at the Eastside 28. Bradford would later line up to go for it on fourth-and-2 and get penalized for illegal procedure. On fourth-and-7, Clifflin was tackled for a 2-yards loss by the Rams' Demarco Daniels.

On the first play following the turnover on downs, Eastside was penalized for illegal procedure. Brazell then sacked Curtis for an 8-yard loss. Two plays later, Lewis recovered a fumble, setting the Bradford offense up at the Eastside 12.

Runs of 3 and 7 yards by Clifflin, who finished with 46 yards on 13 carries, set up McKenzie's 1-yard touchdown run over center for a 20-7 lead with 4:23 to play in the third quarter. Eastside blocked the PAT.

Cummings came up with the Bradford defense's third turnover when he intercepted a pass early

in the fourth quarter.

The Tornadoes then put the final score on the board. Shanks, who rushed for 83 yards on 13 carries, had the big play of the drive, running for a 35-yard gain to the Eastside 18. A 14-yard run by Branden Williams moved Bradford to the 4. McKenzie, who rushed for 60 yards on eight carries, eventually scored on a 1-yard run with 3:52 to play. Shanks completed a pass to Clark on the two-point conversion for the 28-7 final.

Brazell had a sack on the Rams' final possession, which also included Clark and McKenzie combining for another sack.

The Tornadoes made 16 tackles for a loss or no gain.

Eastside, which gained 17 yards rushing and 166 yards overall, ran 21 second- and third-down plays. On all but one, the Rams needed to gain more than 5 yards to pick up a first down.

"We talked about that all week," Rodgers said. "If we could get them behind the chains, we thought we could pressure them. We had some packages tonight where we dropped eight

(into coverage). We hadn't shown a lot of that. We didn't play it to perfection, but it kind of threw them off a little bit on their deep passing game. I was pleased."

The offense, which finished with 343 yards, has averaged four touchdowns per game the last five weeks.

"They have improved so much," Shanks said of the offense, while Clark said, "They've definitely grown a whole lot. They've grown by the day."

Thanks to the win over Eastside, the Tornadoes have another game day as they seek to win their second straight Region 2 championship and trip to the state semifinals. The opportunity comes against longtime rival Baker County (8-3).

"It's going to be a good environment," Shanks said, adding, "It's good to put the pads on another week."

Clark said, "We're excited. It's going to be a good one. We've got to make sure we practice hard and really focus on trying to play better."

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