

Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025

146th year, 21st Issue — \$1



Arriving before the parade to meet folks at the chamber of commerce, Santa and Mrs. Claus spent the afternoon and evening spreading Christmas cheer in Starke. Photo from City Clerk Chrissy Thompson. See more inside.

Starke announces major funding for water project

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Starke will receive more than \$23 million to fund major improvements to its water utility system.

City Manager Drew Mullins said federal and state disaster funds allocated to help communities recover from Hurricanes Helene and Milton and mitigate future disasters will allow the project to move forward. He believes it's the largest amount of money the city has been awarded at once.

Just a few months ago, Justin deMello, a vice president and professional engineer for Woodward and Curran, presented a Drinking Water Financial Improvement Plan for the commission to consider. The city's engineers were developing strategies to pay for it.

They also applied for wastewater and stormwater projects in addition to the drinking water project. DeMello told the commission the requests totaled more than \$100 million.

Often multiple funding sources are tapped, including loans, but Mullins noted that none of the funds from this grant will need to be repaid. City staff was credited with putting together a lot of information in a short amount of time to meet the application deadline.

Woodward and Curran presented drinking



water project alternatives in July 2023, and the commission chose partial improvements to both water treatment plants, a new elevated storage tank, and water main and distribution upgrades that include looping the system for improved water pressure.

In September, deMello said 90% of the project design had been completed.

With Woodward and Curran's assistance, the city has raised millions of dollars in revenue to tackle deferred maintenance and prepare the city's utilities for the future. Regular rate increases are also contributing to the city's ability to fund the system, and the commission is considering impact fees that would ensure developers are helping to pay for growth.



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WORTH NOTING

Early deadline

Because of a short production time due to the holidays, the deadline for the Dec. 25 edition will be Friday, Dec. 19, at 5 p.m.

Trim a mini-Christmas tree

Every year, the members of Alligator Creek Garden Club trim mini-Christmas trees to donate to nursing home residents and staff. We always have fun and find it rewarding to spread Christmas cheer to others.

Join them Thursday, Dec. 18, at 2 p.m. at the Bradford County Senior Center, located at 1805 N. Temple Ave. (U.S. 301 in front of the health department). Refreshments will be served. If you have a mini tree or tiny ornaments to donate, bring them with you. If not, just bring yourself and a friend.

For more information call Pat Caren at 352-339-3673.

UCHS Military Appreciation Night

Union County High School wrestling will observe Military Appreciation Night on Thursday, Dec. 18. All military veterans with ID may enter the gymnasium for free for the tri-county duals competition against Baker and Columbia counties, which begins at 5:30 p.m.

SES Christmas Concert

Students from pre-K through sixth grade will perform holiday music at Starke Elementary School on Thursday, Dec. 18, from 6-7:30 p.m.

Veterans breakfast

American Legion Post 56 will host its monthly breakfast on Saturday, Dec 20, at 8 a.m. All veterans and their families are invited to attend. The post location is 715 Edwards Road in Starke. For additional information, contact Al Hunter at 407-494-9694.

Mt. Zion A.M.E. hosts 'Colorama'

Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church invites the community to its special Colorama program on Sunday, Dec. 21, at 3 p.m.

The event seeks to create a beautiful "mosaic of faith and unity" by asking participating families, ministry groups and congregations to come dressed in one unifying color chosen from six options: yellow, purple, white, red, blue or green.

All are invited to join this colorful celebration of the diverse ways God moves in our lives. The church is located at 2229 Lake St. in Lawtey.

NTSB issues preliminary report on KH airport fatality

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

The National Transportation Safety Board said the pilot of an aerobatics plane that crashed on November 8 at the Keystone Heights Airport was attempting a controlled inverted spin when he lost control of his EA-330.

The federal agency said in a preliminary report that Warren Chillers flew from his hometown of St. Augustine to the Keystone Airport to practice for an upcoming aerobatics competition.

Once he landed at Keystone, the 46-year-old refueled and completed a laydown figure eight, then climbed to 3,500 feet.

Chillers then executed three additional maneuvers with no problems. However, when he attempted the upside-down spin, things began to go wrong.

The first step in the advanced maneuver is to invert the plane into an upside-down position. However, according to witnesses, the EA-330

continued to rotate after the cockpit oriented to the ground and continued to turn another 90 degrees. In addition, the plane's nose pointed down around 30 degrees.

One witness, who told investigators he watched the entire flight, said Chillers appeared to have gained control of the plane, but by then he had lost velocity and was too close to the ground to recover.

The plane hit the ground and burst into flames on impact, killing the St. Augustine resident.

Multi-Agency Dogfighting Investigation Results in 40+ Dogs Rescued

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Union County deputies served two search warrants on Tuesday, December 10 that resulted in the rescue of more than 40 dogs showing signs of mistreatment and suspected dogfighting abuse.

The Union/Bradford SWAT Team executed the warrants at properties on

Northwest 71st Run and West County Road 18 in Lake Butler as part of a multi-agency investigation involving the Union County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General, and Clay County Sheriff's Office.

The dogs were found in various states of neglect—covered in scars and living in filthy conditions. Investigators collected evidence consistent with dogfighting operations at both locations, including dog treadmills and what appeared to be a fighting pit.

"Their scars tell a heartbreaking story—the sadness and suffering these dogs have endured is unimaginable," said Kate MacFall, Florida state director for Humane World for Animals, which assisted with the rescue. "This is a complex, multi-agency collaboration and we are grateful for the Union County and Clay County Sheriff's Office for investigating and bringing justice to these animals."

The investigation spanned both Union and Clay



Drew Greer

Zaxby's opens in Keystone Heights

BY JENN SAMSEL AND DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Zaxby's franchisee BSBC opened its 13th location in Keystone Heights, marking the event with a ribbon-cutting on Monday, December 15.

That followed a friends-and-family soft opening the previous Saturday. BSBC is named after the franchisees's partners: Boris Ochsenius, Shaun Morris, Blake Fletcher and Cotton Fletcher.

Morris said the company chose Keystone Heights because of its small-town feel and great people.

He added that he and Ochsenius started at the bottom and rose through the ranks over 14 years.

"Boris and I both started in 2002 as kids, as cooks, worked our way up, and now we're franchisees," he said. "It's been pretty exciting over the last 20-something years."

Morris, who grew up in Gainesville, said his company opened its first Zaxby's in the Orlando suburb of Ocoee in 2016.

Since then, the company has launched seven more Orlando-area stores, three in the St. Petersburg area and one in Gainesville.

Morris said BSBC hired 60 employees for the 7455 State Road 21 location, bringing the franchisee's total headcount to 400.

Zaxby's, known for its chicken fingers, wings, salads, and sandwiches, is based in Georgia and is actively expanding. This particular site marks one of its first rural locations, with plans to open additional sites in northern Florida.

Franchisee Matt Karlton opened Starke's Zaxby's in October 2024. The Lake City resident rolled out his first Zaxby's in Live Oak in 2012 and added Clermont four years later.



(L-R) BSBC Partner Boris Ochsenius, Keystone Heights City Councilman Brandon Ludwig and BSBC Partner Shaun Morris.



Christmas Party at RJE

Concerned Citizens of Bradford County welcomes children ages 6 months to 14 years to its annual Christmas Party at the RJE gymnasium this Saturday, Dec. 20, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Children will receive free toys and refreshments, and there will also be drawings for bicycles. The gym is located at 1080 N. Pine Street in Starke. Children must be accompanied by an

adult.

Lawtey Christmas Parade

Lawtey's Christmas Parade will take place Saturday, Dec. 20, beginning at 10 a.m. Come enjoy the lineup of classic cars, church and community floats, horses, Santa and more. The parade travels from Lawtey Elementary School, east down Lake Street (C.R. 225) and turns around at

Walk by Faith Ministries.

Following the parade, there will be a gathering at the home of Ben and Emma Strong with free food and drinks while they last. For more information, contact Ben Strong at 904-782-3130 or Cynthia Ross at 904-782-3107.

Food distribution at True Vine

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Farm

Share and True Vine Ministry will take place Tuesday, Dec. 23, 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 change based on availability. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Collection site closings

Bradford County's solid waste collection sites will be closed

for Christmas Dec. 24-26. They will reopen Saturday, Dec. 27, at 10 a.m. New Year's closings are Dec. Jan. 1 and 2. They will reopen Saturday, Jan. 3, at 10 a.m.

Purchase pavers in Rosenberg Garden

The Woman's Club of Starke is honoring longtime member

Della Rosenberg and offering personalized brick pavers to be placed in the Rosenberg Garden. These pavers make meaningful gifts for weddings, anniversaries, Christmas and memorials.

For details, please contact Cleo Elder at 904-796-7427 or Charnelle Whittemore at 352-235-1825.



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Starke Branch - 2460 Commercial Dr.



Alex Markowitz, the general manager of the new Starke Papa John's, cuts the ribbon during a ceremony on Dec. 16. Also pictured in front are (l-r) Papa John's Tim Mosbach, Teresa Boyd, Starke City Commissioner Bob Milner, Starke City Clerk Chrissy Thompson, Nela Bond, Bajco Director of Operations Nick Arturo, Starke City Commissioner Janice Mortimer and Mayor Andy Redding.

'Better Ingredients. Better Pizza.' arrives in Starke

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Starke residents got a taste of something new this month when Papa John's Pizza opened its doors right in front of Walmart, and if the town's reaction to the franchise's parade entry was any indication, the community was more than ready.

"I couldn't believe the people. The way we were received in the Starke community was huge," said Nick Arturo, director of operations for Bajco Florida, the franchisee operating the new location. "Everybody was excited to see us. It was just absolutely amazing."

Arturo said the franchisee's entry in the Starke Christmas parade, which generated positive responses, wasn't a carefully planned marketing campaign. It was a last-minute decision that turned into one of Arturo's career highlights.

"We just, on the fly, decided that we were going to do it," Arturo explained. "With the grand opening scheduled for December 16 and the parade happening on December 13, the timing was perfect. They loaded up a trailer and truck with Christmas decorations and Papa John's gear and joined the festivities. Starke responded with enthusiasm."

The new Starke location is the 29th Papa John's for Bajco Florida in the northeast region, operating across Duval, Clay, St. John's, Nassau and Bradford counties. But Bajco Florida is just a piece of a much larger operation; franchise owner Nadeem Bajwa controls 275 Papa John's locations across multiple states.

Arturo said his company had been looking at Starke for some time but couldn't find the right

location until recently. "This community is amazing. I mean, you got plenty of people out here," Arturo said. "There's no reason for us not to be here. We just haven't found the right location until now. The building in front of Walmart had Papa John's written all over it."

The operations director said both he and Bajwa share similar origin stories; they each started as delivery drivers and worked their way through the ranks. Arturo climbed from driver to manager to area supervisor to multiunit leader before taking over operations for the Florida market.

"I started the same way he did," Arturo said of Bajwa, who now owns nearly 300 stores after starting behind the wheel of a delivery car.

When asked what distinguishes Papa John's from the dozens of other pizza retailers, Arturo responded with the franchisor's well-known tagline.

"We've got better ingredients," he proclaimed. "The ingredients are the highest quality of all the pizza chains, without a doubt. And the dough is just amazing."

The ribbon cutting featured music from the Bradford High School marching band, free pizza, a raffle for a year of free pizza, and free Papa John's swag, like pens and cup holders.

The new location employs about 20 people and offers both delivery and carryout service.

Pam Whittle, president of the North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce, said the Papa John's opening, in addition to other recent area new businesses like Snappy's Express Car Wash, Express Oil Change, Wawa, Holiday Inn Express and Affordable Pet Cremation of Florida, takes years to develop and requires work the public never sees.

"Supply chain issues, construction delays, permitting, financing, negotiations," she said. "Any one of a hundred things can push back an opening date or derail a project entirely. Economic development professionals work on projects for years, knowing full well that many will never reach the ribbon-cutting stage."

Lawtey citizens still want progress, rec wants participation

BY MELISSA PYLE AND
MARK J. CRAWFORD

Lawtey's final council meeting of 2025 was filled with topics about the past, present and future of the city, including road repairs and the potential for the city's recreation department.

At least three citizens discussed business that has yet to be addressed. Residents have consistently asked for follow-up information regarding the progress of certain items.

Resident John Mercier asked the council if they'd completed a review of the city charter or its policies and procedures. Councilwoman Amy Blom also expressed frustration with the lack of movement.

In November, Mercier asked about progress on the charter review, and city attorney Dan Sikes said health matters meant he didn't have time now. Instead of the attorney collaborating with a council member, however, Mercier wanted to see a committee that included members of the public. Sikes said too much input would complicate the process.

"You got to be careful about that," he said. "You have to appoint somebody that doesn't have a specific agenda, but at the same time, is representative of the city. Who constitutes that? I don't know. I don't know enough citizens. I would leave that to the judgment of the mayor. If the mayor thinks he needs to do more, he can do more. There's nothing that sets forth the numbers. It's the discretion of the mayor. If you guys want me to do it, and with one or two citizens, that's fine. But the larger you make it, the harder it is to get this consensus."

Mercier pointed to the city of Starke, however, which took applications from interested citizens.

Returning to the December discussion, Vyunda Strong, recommended the council provide a "State of Lawtey"

report at the January meeting in which each item of concern is addressed along with what each council member has contributed to that outcome.

Present projects presented included the Florida Department of Transportation SCOP grant-funded Grove Street project. Grove is an evacuation route but currently holds water in heavy rains. The grant will provide much needed repairs and culverts. The bids were presented by Blom and members voted to approve the bid from Anderson Columbia for \$404,453.07.

Community involvement

Councilwoman Debra Norman, head of the Lawtey recreation department, shared her concerns for the lack of community engagement in events such as the Health and Wellness Hub. She said unless the community comes out, she isn't sure the monthly event will continue.

The recreation department has also been hosting movie nights, bingo, and a fall festival that included a chili cook-off. One resident spoke up and said the reason there's a lack of participation is because the marketing is "atrocious."

The department acknowledged the need to improve and took suggestions such as announcements at the school and better social media presence. Upcoming events will include the annual Lawtey Christmas Parade, and movie night on Dec. 20. Norman said there are flyers in the local stores and on the Facebook page.

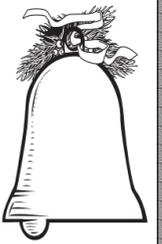
Citizens complained they had never seen them, saying people only know about something if they come into the city office to pay a water bill. Norman said the department is always looking for volunteers, but a resident said she volunteered to help, provided her information, but received no follow up.

Norman said if anyone wants to know anything they can come to the office.

The recreation department does have a vision for fun future events that get Lawtey citizens more involved and connected to one another. Events planned for next year, many of which include outdoor movie nights, prompted recreation board member Isaac Williams to request the council purchase a large inflatable movie screen that can be used for these events because currently they are using borrowed equipment. Council said they'd look for a suitable projection screen.

"His Gift"

In the pages of history there was a time,
The joy-bells in Heaven did ring out a chime
They tell of the One that came to earth,
The only one born of a virgin birth.
He came to earth His life to give,
He came to earth that we might live.
Thank you Lord for your wonderful GIFT.



— By Henry Hodges
Lawtey, FL



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As we continue exploring the goodness of God, I would like to go to the scriptures to emphasize this wonderful truth. We will begin with Psalm 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." David had a covenant with God. He knew that God had planned good things for him and the children of Israel. He was so convinced that he said, "I know what God has planned for me, goodness and mercy." He believed it so strongly that he implied he would not have to search it out but God would cause His goodness and mercy to follow him. Someone has said, "Well, that was David." Yes, it was David, even though chosen by God to be King he was an Old Testament saint. He wasn't born again. We have a New Covenant and it is better than the Covenant of King David. In Hebrews 8:6, the Bible says, "But now He (Jesus) has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises." Here we find that Jesus has provided the born-again saints of God with better. What does better mean? Not equal to or just as good as, but better means more excellent or effective type and quality. The reason I bring this up is to point out a great truth. If what we have under the New Covenant is better than what the Old Testament saints had, then should we not expect not only the blessings God gave them but more and better? When listening to some Christians talk it would appear that the devil is doing more in their lives than God is doing. They are talking about how tough it is and what they are going through and God help me hold on to the end. You can tell right away that they have very little revelation of God's goodness towards them. They forget that not only is God for them but He actually lives in them. According to the scriptures God has provided everything we will ever need to put us over in this life. He is a good, good Father and a good Father makes provision for His children.

2 Peter 1:2-4, "Grace and Peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us to glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Talk about the goodness and love of God! First, He not only provided us with His grace and peace but we find here that it can be multiplied. How can it be multiplied? "through the knowledge of Him".

Where do we receive this knowledge? Through knowing "these exceedingly great and precious promises" which we find in God's Word. Christians struggle in life because they do not understand the nature of God, the love of God and His goodness that He has made available in Christ. Christian, the child of God should be confident in God's love and goodness toward them. The reason so many Christians struggle in life is because they have a knowledge problem. They cannot discern between what the devil is doing and what God is doing. They have a knowledge problem because they have never removed their religious spectacles and searched out the scriptures for themselves to see what God has provided for them in Christ. Hosea 4:6 "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." If you want to find out what God is really like then you will need to search the scriptures. There is an old saying, "What you don't know won't hurt you." That is a lie. What you do not know is robbing you, it will keep you sick, it will destroy your life. Study the scriptures, for in them you will find the love and goodness of our great God. Until next week, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. Blessings! -Pastor Rick

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Grand Ole Opry performer bringing bluegrass Christmas to Brooker

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Kody Norris has played the Grand Ole Opry nine times in the last couple of years, and Sunday, he's bringing his blend of bluegrass and country music to a Christmas party in Brooker.

The Kody Norris Show will perform from 4 to 9 p.m. December 21 at Belle Oaks Barn, for what organizers are calling a big bluegrass Christmas party.

"It'll be Christmas music done in a bluegrass style," Norris said. "So, all the traditional Christmas favorites that everybody loves and recognizes, we will do those in a bluegrass style and hopefully in a manner that everybody can sing along."



Kody Norris and band members: (L-r) Josiah Tyree, Mary Rachel Nalley-Norris, Kody Norris and Charlie Lowman.

include traditional Christmas favorites along with some of the band's more popular bluegrass tunes.

across the world.

"In that time, we've been able to accomplish so many things that I'm so proud of, and probably one of those biggest accomplishments, I guess you would say, was finally making it to the Grand Ole Opry," he said. "In the last couple of years, we've performed on the Grand Ole Opry stage nine times."

Traditional Christmas dinner included

The evening will feature a traditional Christmas dinner with turkey, ham, and all the trimmings in what Norris called a beautifully decorated Christmas atmosphere.

"Just a good, down-home country Christmas with a nostalgic feel," he said. "And especially when you add in a traditional-type Christmas dinner and all the sights and smells and all the things that go along with that, I think it'll be a very, very unique experience."

Norris said the show will

From the East Tennessee mountains to the Opry

Norris hails from Mountain City in the extreme northeastern mountains of East Tennessee, where his family has lived for generations.

"I got started in bluegrass and country music very, very early on and around nine or 10 years old, started getting interested in it and started playing professionally in my teens," Norris said.

In 2026, he'll be celebrating 20 years with his band, traveling

Rhinestone suits and something for everyone

Norris said the audience can expect a well-rounded performance that includes the rhinestone suits of classic 1950s country music, brought into the modern era.

"We try to bring a well-crafted original performance, very well-rounded and a little bit of something for everybody," he said. "Things that the kids can relate to, mom and dad can relate to, grandma and grandpa can relate to."

The show includes both comedy and serious elements.

"We want to make everybody laugh, cry, and stomp their feet all in one well-rounded performance," Norris said.

More information about the event may be found at BluegrassChristmasParty.com.

Starke lights up Christmas parade



Victory Chapel turns a Christmas nightmare into a miracle.



This little angel had her wings flapping, bringing good news to all people, at the manger scene on the Rivers Flowing Church float.



Selfie with Commissioners Janice Mortimer, Diane Andrews and City Clerk Chrissy Thompson.



Lisa, David and Annette were like many paraders in Starke, they came dressed for the occasion in holiday flair. David said he looks forward to seeing Santa in the parade each year.



The 86th annual Bradford County Agricultural Fair is just around the corner.



Can't beat the deal at Crawford's Automotive.



Starke City Manager Drew Mullins. Photo from City Clerk Chrissy Thompson.

Yesterdays Festival at Gold Head

Gold Head Branch State Park Yesterdays Festival will be Saturday, Jan. 31, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with family fun for

everyone. There are hayrides, kids' games, hands-on activities, historic demonstrations, including cross-cut saw, real cannon fire, re-enactors, old tractors and live music. The event is free to the public, with the gate fee of \$5 per vehicle. For more information email Yesterdays@FriendsofGoldHead.org.

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2. Can you tell me what benefits from the Florida Air National Guard have helped you the most?

I would say that the education benefits have been the most helpful. Prior to enlisting I was having trouble finding somewhere I could study and get Certifications without spending vast amount of money. Since enlisting I've been able to take several classes and I am preparing to take multiple certifications and commence my first year on college.

3. Can you talk about some of the new skills you have learned in the Florida Air National Guard that have helped you in the civilian work force?

Thanks to the experiences that the Florida Air National Guard has granted me I've been able to learn a variety of new and useful skills. I was able to learn the networking and cyber security. These are skills I use daily especially in my pursuit of a carrier in the IT field. Another very important skill that we learn no matter what job you have is communication. This has been by far the most advantageous skill I've learned. Its helped me through all aspects of the work force.



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Lake Region

Keystone Heights Celebrates the Season at 54th Annual Christmas Parade

BY JENN SAMSEL
jenn@bctelegraph.com

The 54th Annual Keystone Heights Christmas Parade, hosted by the Lake Region Kiwanis of Keystone Heights and Melrose, took place on Saturday, December 13th. It was

a spectacular event. This year's theme, "Centennial Wonderland," featured 44 entries and had 12 winners. Each participant showcased their original and creative work. Categories of awards are as follows:
1st Place Judges' Choice -

New Grace Baptist Church
1st Place Best Business Entry - North Florida Christian Camp
1st Place Best Marching Unit - Keystone Heights Jr. High Marching Band
1st Place Most Original - Clay County 4-H / Southern Charms Rabbit 4-H Club

1st Place Closest to Theme - Keystone Heights Sports Association
1st Place Best Youth Entry - Keystone Heights Jr. High Cheerleaders
2nd Place Judges' Choice - Clay Electric
2nd Place Best Business Entry

- Stumphead Stump Grinding
2nd Place Best Marching Unit - Keystone Heights Jr. High J.R.O.T.C.
2nd Place Most Original - Cub Scout Pack 187
2nd Place Closest to Theme - Lake Hill Baptist Church
2nd Place Best Youth Entry -

Boys and Girls Club Keystone Heights
The parade concluded with Santa Claus riding the Fantastic Fire Brigade firetruck. Afterward, attendees enjoyed hot cocoa, cookies, and photos with Santa at Hatch Realty.



George Galeza & Sue Caspanello



Emmy, Hudson, Tyler, M'alice, Ali



Air Innovations



Ride it Right Christmas Story



Grovin Construction



Isabel Harvey



Samatha Key



Mini Pony

Bradford's future nursing school noted in statewide magazine

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Florida Trend magazine noted Santa Fe College's future Starke nursing school in the periodical's December issue.

The statewide publication highlighted the workforce development efforts of 21 of Florida's 28 state colleges.

"In early 2026, the College will cut the ribbon on a nurse training facility in Bradford County, in partnership with the Bradford County School District," the magazine said.

The story also highlighted Santa Fe's Ralph W. Cellon Institute for Skilled Trades and Advanced Manufacturing in Gainesville, the college's partnership with Alachua County



File photo: Santa Fe College President Paul Broadie II

Public Works for a diesel systems technician program, and the third year of SF's joint nurse training partnership with University of Florida Health that is helping to address nursing shortages.

"In collaboration with our business partners, and through the work of our outstanding faculty, we are able to impact the lives of our students and our

community," Dr. Paul Broadie II, Santa Fe College President, said. "We are focusing on educational opportunities for our students and the needs of our employers to build strong foundations right here in Alachua and Bradford counties."

The magazine claimed that the projects result in an estimated \$413 million in total economic impact on the regional economy, currently supporting about 4,866 jobs locally.

Future workforce development projects include an automotive technology training center at Santa Fe's Blount Center campus in downtown Gainesville. It is expected to open in Fall 2027. This 17,200-square-foot state-of-the-art training facility will increase program capacity and feature interactive classrooms and specialty teaching bays.

The college said these spaces will also be available to industry partners for community training. It is supported by an \$11.9 million state appropriation.

Audubon awarded for conservation project

BY CELINA ROHMAN
President, Santa Fe Audubon Society

Each year, Audubon Florida celebrates its 44 Chapters for their efforts to connect people to nature while protecting birds and the places they need. These awards remind us that conservation is not just about the birds; it's about people coming together to make a difference, one project, one partnership, one volunteer hour at a time.

This year, the state organization awarded the Santa Fe Audubon Society with the 2025 Outstanding Small Chapter Conservation Project for its efforts to provide safe nesting cavities and a productive environment along Clay Electric and FP&L land easements in

Etoniah State Park for Kestrels to live, reproduce, and fledge their young.

Since this project's inception, it has experienced significant success with the fledging of over 100 new Kestrels. The Lake Region group was the first Chapter to partner with the Avian Research and Conservation Institute, working closely with Dr Ken Meyer.

Kestrels are banded, and some are fitted with 3-gram GPS transmitters to capture and analyze valuable scientific data on flight distances and patterns. Kestrel nest boxes are set 10 feet above the ground on articulating poles, which makes it safer for caretakers and less disruptive to nests during maintenance and egg and chick counting.

"Santa Fe Audubon Society continues to raise the bar for what any-sized chapter can do," said Audubon's Chapter Conservation Manager Kristin Kosik. "They are making significant strides toward their expansion and community education, all while offering an

incredible variety of programs and field trips that bring people together for the appreciation and protection of birds and the places birds need."

Santa Fe Audubon's Mission is to educate people of all ages in the value and necessity of environmental stewardship through conservation actions, personal example, partnerships, and opportunities to experience the natural world. The chapter serves Putnam, Bradford, western Clay, and eastern Alachua counties.

Santa Fe Audubon strives to offer recreational, educational, and conservation activities that reflect the values embodied in that way of life.

Its website is santafeaudubon.org. The chapter also has an Instagram presence, @santafeaudubon. The group also offers opportunities for interns and students in Audubon, Florida's Conservation Leadership Initiative, to gain hands-on field experience.

Heritage Commission preps for Christmas wreaths, other projects

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Members of the Keystone Heights Heritage Commission discussed plans for their upcoming Christmas wreath project and their effort to catalog historic artifacts during their November 18 meeting.

Chair Deirdre Murphy led the discussion about the commission's annual wreath project, in which the city advisory panel loans Christmas wreaths to downtown businesses.

Murphy said she and her colleagues would also launch their inventory project on January 17, in which the commission will record and organize historical artifacts from Keystone Heights. She added that members will be keeping an eye out for

artifacts that can be used during upcoming commission events, such as the pop-up museum and the observance of the city's role in the Chautauqua movement in the 1920s.

"We're just trying to make a dent in the inventory that we have and we're going to tag it, label it, and then anything at that time that we know we will need for our Chautauqua event and the pop-up museum, we're going to tag it so that it'll be easy to identify in May when we go to take things over to the pavilion," she said.

Murphy also updated other commission members on a state historical marker describing the city's founding and early years. She said no progress was made in November, but she expected the project to move forward in December.

Lastly, commissioners briefly talked about the upcoming Yesterday's Festival at the Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park in January.

That event, held on January 25 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., will showcase vintage steam engines and tractors, cast iron cooking, and historic reenactments.



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UNION COUNTY

Photos from Lake Butler's Christmas Parade



(L-R) Amber Bigelow and Joy Coxson.



Riding on the Union County 4-H float are (l-r) Tinley Denuzio, Trinitie Mccall, and Ava Jefferson.



Charley Box, Miss Bradford-Union Strawberry Shortcake, 2025.



Riding for Rylander's Garden and Grains, seated (l-r) Bailey Cason, Cooper Gemelli and Caleb Griffis. Standing (l-r) Charlotte Gemelli, Robbie Cason and Joshua Griffis.



Escorting a veterans' float are Union County High School JROTC members (l-r) Cadet Staff Sergeant Jordan Burgess, Cadet Private First Class Jace Harper, and Cadet First Lieutenant Phoenix Forbes.



Riding for Dirty South Soda Co.: (l-r) Sharon Manning, Michael Manning, Alishia Redding, business owner Ciara Jenkins with daughter Huntleigh, and Hunter Jenkins.



Katie Weeken and Melvena Webb.



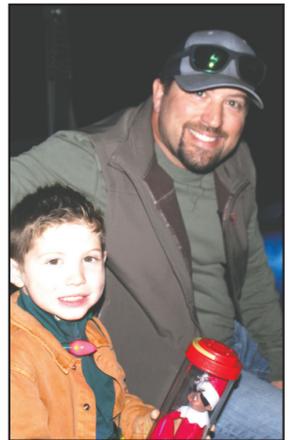
Miss Union County High School, Aubrie Muse, 2025.



Union County High School trombone players, (front row, l-r) Matthew Ring, Chace Varnes and Alice Jones



Walking for Lake Butler Hospital are (l-r) Director of Public Relations Reid Carswell, Chief Support Services Officer Nicole Horne, Chief Clinical Services Officer Cynthia Coulter, and Parade Elf and Official Holiday Helper Veda Carswell.



(L-r) Davis Kaines and Aaron Kaines riding for Glo's Slim Solutions.



(L-r) Rhett Williams and Blaine Williams.



(L-r) Jill Townsend, Hampton Lawrence, and Sawyer Lawrence.



Tigerettes Delani Harden, Brie Elixson, Miley Wilson



Lake Butler City Council member Joe Stephenson and his wife, Bonita.

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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

John Lee Brown, 46, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 10 for a conditional release violation.

Larry Moses Crawford, 46, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 10 for a probation violation.

Todd Jerome Frazier, 58, of Gainesville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 9 for an out-of-county warrant and failure to appear.

Avery A Hawthorne, 30, of Orlando, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 8 for battery and resisting an officer.

Thomas O Marshall, 47, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 10 for possession of drugs and possession of drug equipment.

Brittney Christine McIntosh, 35, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 9 for a probation violation and failure to appear.

Darryl Irvin McKeiver, 44, of Middleburg, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 12 for fraud.

Charlie Michael Mosley, 36, of Lawtey, was arrested by Lawtey police on December 12 for a moving traffic violation.

Jonathan Gregory Norman, 32, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 10 for possession of drugs and vehicle theft.

Justin Philip Oneill, 42, of Callahan, was arrested by Lawtey police on December 11 for a moving traffic violation.

Austen Trey Padgett, 26, of Sanderson, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 11 for criminal mischief.

Daniel Joseph Raye, 38, of Cross City, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 8 for possession of drugs and smuggling contraband into prison.

William Trevor Sheering, 24, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 10 for an out-of-county warrant.

Ashley Elizabeth Williams, 40, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on December 9 for a conditional release violation.

Union

Drew Geer, 40, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on December 10 for possession of a weapon or ammunition by a convicted felon and possession of marijuana over 20 grams.

Isaiah Emmanuel Hargrett Jr., 32, of Raiford, was arrested by Union deputies on December 8 for smuggling contraband into prison and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

Faith Temple Holmes, 19, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on December 9 for failure to appear.

Eric Scott Knight, 37, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on December 10 for a probation violation.

Dwayne Mobley, 43, of Raiford, was arrested by Union deputies on December 9 for smuggling contraband into prison.

James David Montgomery III, 42, of Holly Hill, was arrested by Union deputies on December 9 for smuggling contraband into prison.

Christain Allen Richards, 28, of Gainesville, was arrested by Union deputies on December 14

for disturbing the peace.

Matthew Terrell Rowe, 34, of Raiford, was arrested by Union deputies on December 8 for resisting an officer with violence and battery on a detention facility employee.

Clay

Christopher Daniel Ables, 28, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 6 for simple battery.

Gary Edward Boyd, 45, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 9 for a probation violation.

Steven Christopher Brightwell, 32, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 12 for simple battery.

Anthony Keith Crosby, 42, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 10 for possession of a controlled substance and possession of a weapon or ammunition by a convicted felon.

Duane Carl Damon, 52, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 12 for possession of a controlled substance.

Stephen Jonathan Daniell, 41, of Starke, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 11 for possession of a weapon or ammunition by a convicted felon.

Lanorris Bernard Jackson, 51, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 9 for failure to register as a sex offender.

Jessica Lee Martin, 40, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 9 for unauthorized use of 911 services.

Emily Katherine Siegrist, 33, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 12 for aggravated battery with a deadly weapon.

Christian Vargas, 32, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on December 10 for contractor payment violation.

Keystone Elementary student places in Founders Week Art Contest

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Second-grader Layla Church from Keystone Heights Elementary was one of seven students recognized during the December 11 Clay County school board meeting for her artwork during the district's Founders' Week Art Contest. Church's winning entry featured the U.S. Capitol building in Washington.

The annual art competition asked students to explore historic locations that shaped America's founding.

Mary Owen, social studies curriculum specialist, explained the idea behind the district's annual Founders Week celebration in September.

"Founders Week in Clay County District Schools combines celebrations of both Constitution Day and Freedom Week, which recognizes the Declaration of Independence," Owen said. "Throughout this week, teachers and students engage in age-appropriate lessons focused on analyzing primary source documents that form the bedrock of American government, such as the Constitution and the Declaration."

This year's theme: Patriotic Places

Owen said this year's theme challenged students to explore and reflect on historic locations that forged the country's founding.

"Through district-created lessons, students explored key locations in Washington, DC, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York City," she said. "Some of these locations included Independence Hall, Fort Ticonderoga, and the Old State House, places where the flame of Liberty was first ignited."

She added that students were encouraged to express their understanding through art.

"The Founders Week Art Contest challenged them to think creatively about how these historic sites continue to inspire a deep love for our country and the liberties that we cherish," Owen said.

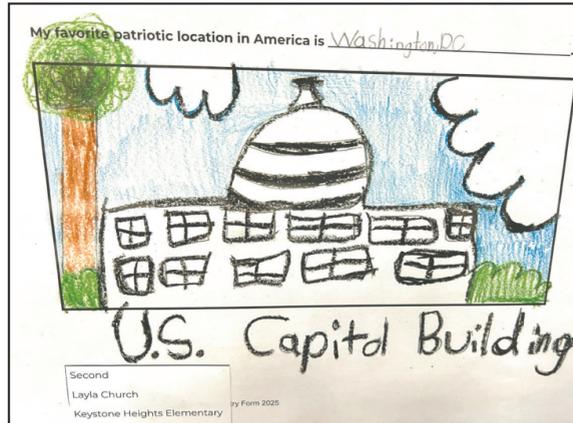
The curriculum specialist said the seven winners demonstrated remarkable skills and provided fresh perspectives on the historical locations.

"Their artwork reminds us that these locations stand as monuments to our enduring freedom," she said.

The winning artwork was displayed on screen during the presentation and will remain in the case along the back wall in the school board meeting room through January.



(L-R) Clay County Public Schools Superintendent David Broskie, Nataly Munoz, Hunter Haas, Layla Church, Lilliana Powe and Mary Owen.



Layla Church's winning entry featured the U.S. Capitol building in Washington.

K-2 winners chose favorite locations

Younger students were asked to identify their favorite patriotic location in America.

Kindergartner Savannah Whitaker from Spring Park Elementary chose the Washington Monument as her favorite. She was unable to attend the board meeting because she was participating in Spring Park's winter recital.

First-grader Lilliana Powe from Wilkinson Elementary selected the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC, as her favorite patriotic location.

Older students explained importance

Third through fifth grade students were asked to reflect on what the most patriotic location in America is and explain why.

Third-grader Zuri Watson-Cameron from Patterson Elementary pinpointed Philadelphia as the most important patriotic location.

"The most important patriotic location in America is Philadelphia because it was the

birthplace of America. That is also where the Liberty Bell is a very important artifact," Zuri said, according to Owen.

The contest resulted in a tie for fourth grade.

Annabelle McGregor from Shadow Lawn Elementary chose Washington, DC, saying it's where "laws and rules are made there to protect the people of America." Owen said McGregor was feeling under the weather and watched the meeting from home.

Hunter Haas from Patterson Elementary also selected Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

"Philadelphia is where the founding fathers wrote the Constitution," Hunter said in his entry.

Fifth-grader Nataly Munoz from S. Bryan Jennings Elementary chose Boston for its role in the American Revolution.

"The most important patriotic location in America is Boston because it's famous for its role in the American Revolution and on the Freedom Trail. You can see places like the Old State House," Natalie said.

Owen congratulated all the winners and asked them to stay for a group photo with Superintendent David Broskie. Jenn Samsel provided reporting for this story.

Union County approves FPL batteries at existing solar site

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Union County commissioners unanimously approved a Florida Power & Light application to add a battery energy storage system to the company's existing solar facility southeast of Lake Butler. The project could potentially double the ad valorem tax revenue FPL currently pays on the 74.5-megawatt solar site that's been operating since December 2020.

"In 2024 alone, we paid \$287,000 to the county," said Caleb Goertzen, an associate project manager with FPL. "This battery energy storage system would maximize the use of the property, and also it's the most cost-effective solution in making the grid more reliable and increasing safety output for our customers."

Construction planned for 2026

The project is located south of State Road 100 and west of County Road 237. If all goes to plan, Goertzen said construction would begin in August 2026 with an 11-month construction window, putting the system in service by July 2027.

The battery storage system would sit on a three-to-five-acre pad surrounded by fencing and include battery containers and inverters similar to those used on solar sites to convert DC energy to AC energy.

FPL's design exceeds minimum setback requirements, with a 100-foot setback from property lines compared to the 40-foot standard and maintains a 35-foot setback from all wetland vegetation. The Florida

Department of Environmental Protection approved the project's environmental resource permit in late November.

20-year lifespan, remote monitoring

The batteries are assembled in multiple levels, starting with individual battery cells that make up battery modules, which go into racks, and then multiple racks into containers. Each container has advanced technology to ensure the modules and cells operate within their functional limits. The batteries themselves have an expected lifespan of 20 years.

"We're a leader in this industry with one of the largest fleets of battery energy storage systems in the nation," Goertzen said. "We didn't just start this yesterday."

FPL started with pilot projects in 2018 and developed the Manatee battery energy storage system in 2021, which was one of the largest in the world at the time. The company has since developed around a gigawatt of utility-scale battery systems and currently has another gigawatt under construction.

The batteries are monitored 24/7 by FPL's renewable operations control center, which can remotely shut off batteries and contact fire departments if issues arise.

Traffic, safety concerns addressed

Chairman Channing Dobbs raised concerns about traffic on County Road 237, the access point for the facility.



Caleb Goertzen, an associate project manager with FPL, explains to Union County commissioners the utility's plan to build battery storage units at its existing solar site.

"I know we've had some calls and some concerns with the solar we already have there, people using the county road coming in," Dobbs said.

Dobbs asked Goertzen if the utility could change its access to the facility from the county grade to State Road 100.

However, Clerk of Courts Kellie Hendricks Rhoades, who lives on County Road 237, said she'd rather FPL continue using the existing entrance.

"I would rather them access where they already are. We already have traffic concerns with folks coming onto 237 off of 100," Rhoades said. "As a citizen, I've had no complaints. I've seen no issues. I see cars there a lot, so I know that they're working, but it's not causing a traffic problem."

Commissioner Donna Jackson said she's received concerns from area residents about the shoulder

at FPL's access on County Road 237 becoming degraded.

"FPL has assured me that they will look into it and will do whatever is necessary," Jackson said. "I would like to work with them on strengthening that access road, maybe even trying to pave a little bit of it or something up to the shoulder just simply so that we're not creating a traffic situation."

Goertzen explained that recent traffic was from contractors doing remediation work on connectors between solar panels, work that's been completed for about a month.

"With these sites, we only have a single engineer, and most of the time, they're working remotely. So, there should be very limited traffic when it comes to both the solar and the battery energy storage system," he said.

The project manager added that during construction, FPL

will repair any road damage.

Fire safety protocols in place

Commissioner Mac Johns asked about training for the county's fire and EMS departments.

"We're a small county, which means a small fire department, a small rescue department," he told Goertzen. "You said you were going to help with the training. I'm sure these guys don't know how to put out battery fires of that magnitude. Are you going to assist with training and even financially assist with that training?"

"For sure, yes," Goertzen responded. "We will definitely be taking on all of that."

He explained that with battery fires, the priority is maintaining a perimeter rather than putting water directly on the batteries.

Russ WADE

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A career of helping get kids to school and back home

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round, round and round.

Bradford County's school bus wheels will still go round and round after the Christmas/New Year's break, but the school district's transportation department will look different with Director Louette Smith's retirement.

Smith, whose last day will be Friday, Dec. 19, has worked for the Bradford district for almost 40 years. She began as a substitute bus driver in the last 1980s and became a full-time driver before eventually moving into the administrative roles of assistant director and director.

It's difficult for Smith to give you exact dates on when she filled each role. She said, "I just moved from one to the other and kept going. My whole career has been in transportation."

She laughed and said she'd been around "forever." Why not make it forever, though, when you find something you love doing? As Smith put it, driving



Louette Smith, who began as a substitute bus driver and eventually became transportation director, is retiring from the Bradford County School District. Her plans are to spend more time with family, ride horses and tend to her farm.

and working with school buses made her feel right at home. She said she spent a lot of time on buses as a student-athlete. Plus, there's the fact that her mother, Carroll "Johnnie" Johns was a school bus driver.

It may seem like Smith followed in her mother's footsteps, but it was really

another person who gets the credit for her start driving a bus — Willie Williams, who was Smith's driver when she was a child.

"We were out picking peas at my mama's," Smith remembered. "She said, 'You need to come be my sub bus driver.'"

Learning to drive a bus wasn't

that difficult for Smith, who grew up on a farm and was involved with horses.

"I've pulled horse trailers and drove big trucks my whole life," she said. "I learned how to pull a horse trailer at 16."

She felt comfortable behind the wheel and was certainly comfortable working in Bradford

County.

"I've lived here my whole life," Smith said. "I know everybody practically."

Moving parts, kids

It would seem that Smith was destined to fill the transportation director's role eventually because of the knowledge she obtained.

"I trained like five administrators above me," she said. "I would train them to do the job."

That job requires coordinating many things.

"I got to where I knew the routes, the buses, the bus drivers and where everybody was and everything," Smith said. "That's always challenging — just all the moving parts."

Smith didn't have to move into administration to get a lot on her plate. That comes with driving a bus as well.

"We usually get 60 (children), and we get to see them in a little mirror," Smith said. "We have to watch the traffic and everything else. It's a hard job. A very stressful job."

Smith said when she was a

driver, she would always stand and greet the children as they got on the bus. She'd tell them to have a good day as they got off.

"I always tried to stay positive with them," she said.

If any children were "acting up," Smith said she'd have them sit at the front of the bus. They'd remain there for a day or two and then get to go back to wherever they wanted to sit. Smith said whatever they had done was forgotten.

"They're kids," she said. "They're going to mess up."

The safety of kids is a driver's utmost concern.

"Most of the bus drivers are not here because they're getting a whole lot of money," Smith said. "They're doing it for the love of the children."

A big part of keeping children safe is the driver being able to concentrate. Think of it as a parent telling children in the backseat to be quiet during a road trip. It's the same thing in a bus, except the bus is a much larger vehicle filled with a lot more children.

See SMITH, page 9

Smith had stellar track career at Bradford High School

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Many people know Louette Smith and her career with the Bradford County School District's transportation department, but some will also remember that she had a standout track-and-field career at Bradford High School.

Smith, who also played basketball, qualified for state each of her four years of high school. She credited her love of running to an active childhood in which she was always outside with her siblings and cousins.

"We lived in the country, so

we were always running and playing and doing," Smith said. "We were never in the house. I loved it."

She remembers running for Coach Jim Lewis at Southside Elementary School and competing in physical-fitness challenges. Smith laughed about the time she did 150 sit-ups before Lewis told her to finally stop.

During her freshman year at BHS in 1978-79, Smith broke the school record in the 440-yard dash multiple times, including at that season's district meet. She ran a second-place time of 62.4

seconds.

Smith also helped the mile-medley relay team to a second-place finish at the district meet and was part of the third-place mile relay team. Cindy Griffith, Judy Hankerson and Kim Slocum were also on the mile-medley team, while Griffith, Hankerson and Valery Chandler joined Smith in the mile relay.

At the region meet, Smith broke her school record in the 440 with a fourth-place time of 61.87, which qualified her for state. The mile-medley team also earned a state berth with a third-place finish.

Smith placed sixth in the 440 at state.

In 1979-80, Smith continued to improve her times in the 440. She placed first with a time of 60.1 at the district meet, which also included her being a part of the winning mile-medley team and the third-place mile relay team.

Smith set the new school mark in the 440 at the regional meet with a second-place time of 59.9.

That year's state meet saw Smith place third with a time of 60.47, which placed her ahead of

See TRACK, page 10



Louette Smith (center) received the BHS girls track and field Most Outstanding Runner Award as a sophomore in 1980. She's pictured with Jennifer Nix (far left), the Coaches Award winner, and Marian Puttman, who earned the Most Outstanding Field Events Award.

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Obituaries

Edwin L. Crews



Edwin L. Crews, 81, of Lake Butler went to be with the Lord Friday, Dec. 12, 2025, at North Florida Regional Medical Center. Born in Raiford on Jan. 6, 1944, to the late James and Noreen Dukes Crews, Edwin embraced life with a strong work ethic and an infectious spirit that touched everyone around him. For over 30 years, he dedicated his work to the University of Florida Horticulture Department. His love for growing vegetables and sugar cane was no mere pastime, but a passion. His annual sugar cane grind was where friends and family gathered to share laughter and enjoy the fruits of his labor. He was the kind of man who could light up a room with his outgoing nature and quick wit. He had a gift for delivering one-liners that would leave you in stitches, and his humor never failed to brighten the heaviest of days. Every moment he was able to hunt and fish gave him great pleasure. He loved the Lord and was a longtime member and deacon of Hauge Baptist Church. When his health began to decline, he attended Canvas Church with his family where his spirit of serving never wavered. Family meant everything to Edwin. He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Noreen Dukes Crews; and his siblings, Elaine Lewis and Colen Crews.

He took tremendous pride in his children, Lucinda Ann Crews, Mark (Rebecca) Crews, Kim (Billy) Hart, Wes Ogden, Hazen (Marfa) Ogden, and Connie (Clark) Gladden. They were the apples of his eye, and the love he held for them was matched only by the love he had for the ones who called him "Granddaddy," Bailey, Alaina, Amelia, Maverick, Cassie (Chase), Billy (Megan), Sam, Camille, Wyatt, Josue, Jason, Isaiah, Russell, Colt, Gunner, and Caroline. He also became great-grandfather to little Bodi, whom he had anxiously awaited his arrival. He also leaves behind his sisters, Sharon (Phillip) Berry and Ethelia (Joseph) Perry; along with a host of nieces and nephews, who shared in his laughter and love.

Family and friends are invited to gather in his honor at Archer-Milton Funeral Home in Lake Butler. Visitation will take place on Thursday, Dec. 18, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m., followed by a funeral service on Friday, Dec. 19, starting at 11 a.m. He will be laid to rest immediately following the service at Fort Call Cemetery.

Archer-Milton Funeral Home is honored to serve the Crews family during this time. 386-496-2008 www.archerfuneralhome.com

PAID OBITUARY

John McSpadden Jr.



John Richard McSpadden Jr., 72 of Lake Butler passed away Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025, at Orlando Regional Medical Center, following an extended illness. Born Feb. 11, 1953, in Vidon, Texas, his journey through life was marked by a quiet strength and a deep commitment to his family. A proud graduate of Union County High School Class of 1972, where he made his mark as a football player, he carried that team spirit throughout his life. Retiring in 2015 from the Florida Department of Corrections as a lieutenant, he demonstrated a steadfast commitment to public service. In addition to his career in corrections, he was the entrepreneur behind Blue Ridge Pest Control and Blue Ridge Paintball. His personality was reflective of the quiet type, someone who valued meaningful conversations with family and friends. His relaxed demeanor was a source of comfort for those around him, bringing a sense of calm that was deeply cherished. In his leisure time, he found enjoyment in a variety of interests; fishing in the early morning light, passionately cheering for the Florida Gators, engaging in friendly card games where he proved to be quite the strategist, and tending to his beehives. But perhaps the most fulfilling of all his interests was building. Whether crafting a sturdy house or a simple table, each project was a testament to his hands-on talent and ingenuity, filling him with happiness.

He leaves behind a loving family who will forever carry his memory in their hearts. He was the devoted husband of 20 years to Juanita McSpadden. His legacy continues through his children, John R. (Sigrid) McSpadden III, Fatima (Boyd) Ammons, Gordon McSpadden (Laura Ragucci), and Scott (Catherine) McSpadden. He embraced those who came into his life as stepchildren as well, including Melissa (Chris) Shough and Robert (Jennifer) Betancourt; and his grandchildren, Hayden, Brody, James, Allissia (Alexander), Hunter, Jaly (Ki), Skylar, Arianna, Aiden, Alexis, Brittany, Brannon, Sophia, and Reagan, all of whom were blessed to know his guiding presence. Along with his two great-granddaughters, Annabella and Lillie. He is also survived by siblings, Faith Harvey, Hope Kendrick, and Marcus McSpadden.

He was predeceased by his parents, John Sr. and Leona Clemons McSpadden; stepson, Billy Ray Sanford; grandson, Thorne McSpadden; as well as his siblings, Richard McSpadden and Patricia Rios.

A visitation to honor him was held at Lake Butler Church of Christ in Lake Butler on Tuesday, Dec. 9, followed by a funeral service with Brother Brian Reagan officiating. John was laid to rest immediately following the service at Douglas Cemetery.

Archer-Milton Funeral home is honored to serve the McSpadden family during this time. 386-496-2008 www.archerfuneralhome.com

PAID OBITUARY

SMITH

Continued from page 8

"You have to yell," Smith said. "There are 60 kids on the bus. The ones in the back are talking. If you talk in a normal voice, they're not going to hear you."

Smith said there have been instances where a child in the front of a bus thought a driver was specifically yelling at him or her. The child will go home and tell the parents. Sometimes, that would result in parents calling the transportation department.

"I'll have parents call me saying, 'They were yelling at my kids,'" Smith said, adding, "I have to explain that to parents all the time. You know, it's really not your child. We're just trying to get the bus to calm down and to reach the kids in the back."

All it takes is having to take your eyes off the road for one second to find yourself in a situation that you don't have enough time to react to, such as a vehicle that has pulled out right in front of the bus.

"It's scary, and people just don't care," Smith said. "They're always in a hurry."

Smith said she quit driving a motorcycle because she's been to too many accidents where people

have driven their vehicles up under a bus, only to claim they didn't see it.

"If they can't see that big, yellow bus with flashing lights, they sure can't see my motorcycle," Smith said.

As you would imagine, a school district's transportation director never wants to get the call that a bus has been involved in an accident. Another dreaded call is that a student has turned up missing.

"I go in panic mode," Smith said of hearing a child is unaccounted for. "I've actually been home and gotten a phone call and turned around and came all the way back up here to pull video tapes off of buses to see if (the child) got off at a certain stop."

Fortunately, a missing child is oftentimes at the school.

"A lot of times it's a club that they do once a month and the parent will forget that their kid stayed after," Smith said.

Farm and family

Smith has been experiencing a full-circle moment leading up to her retirement, saying, "I've been driving again for about a month or two months now because one of our drivers is sick. I've

Peggy Smith



Margaret (Peggy) Ann Smith, 69, of Starke passed away Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025, at UF Health Shands Hospital in Gainesville. She was born Jan. 9, 1956, in Saint Paul, Minnesota to her loving parents, William R. Paul and Nancy Cicala Paul. She grew up in Saint Paul and attended Washington High School, proudly graduating with the Class of 1974. She carried a creative and spirited personality throughout her life. She enjoyed arts and crafts, cooking, fishing, collecting owls, slot machines, visiting the Hard Rock in Tampa, long walks, tanning on the beach, and living life to the fullest. She adored her Doxies, Lucy and Sofia, and cherished spending time watching movies with her daughter Bobbie. She lived her life with warmth, adventure, and joy, and she will be remembered for the love she shared with all who knew her. She was preceded in death by her parents, William R. Paul and Nancy Cicala Paul; sister, Linda Eiden; and grandson, Paolo Rocco.

She is survived by her loving husband, Robert Smith of Starke; children, Bobbie Jo Smith of Starke, Nancy Hellend of St. Cloud, Minnesota, Brandon Burandt of Burnsville, Minnesota, and Rachel (Dillon) Engelhart of Burnsville, Minnesota; her brothers, William (Sheila) Paul of Minnesota, and Dan (Dawn) Joyce of Forest Lake, Minnesota; numerous grandchildren; one great-grandson; along with many extended family members and friends.

A mass will be held Thursday, Dec. 18, at 11 a.m. at St. Edward Catholic Church, with Father Andy Mitera as celebrant. The family will receive friends Thursday, Dec. 18, from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. at the church. Interment will follow at Jacksonville National Cemetery at 2 p.m.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit www.ferreirafuneralservices.com to sign the family guest book.

PAID OBITUARY

Joni Telli



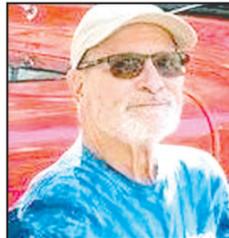
Joni Leigh Telli, 55, of Starke passed away Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025. She was born Sept. 12, 1970, in Jacksonville to her loving parents, Jerry and Brenda Telli. She moved to Starke nine years ago and quickly became a cherished part of her community. She was a woman with a gentle soul and a beautiful creative spirit. She found joy in artwork, cherished quiet moments reading her favorite books, and loved nothing more than spending time with her grandsons, who were the light of her life. She was an animal lover at heart and never hesitated to help any animal in need, showing compassion in ways both seen and unseen. Family was everything to Joni. Whether she was sharing laughter, offering comfort, or simply being present, she poured love into every moment. Her kindness, warmth, and selflessness touched the lives of all who knew her, and her memory will continue to live on in the hearts of those she loved.

She is survived by her devoted parents, Jerry and Brenda Telli; her loving daughter, Erika Telli of Jacksonville; her sister, Wendy (Eric) Matthews; and her precious grandsons, Kaleb Sanders and Theodore Sanders. She also leaves behind extended family members, friends, and many whose lives were made brighter by her gentle presence. We love you so much and miss you dearly. XOXO, forever.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit www.ferreirafuneralservices.com to sign the family guest book.

PAID OBITUARY

Mike Starling



Mr. David "Mike" Starling, 69, of Keystone Heights passed away Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025, at Haven Hospice in Gainesville. He was born Feb. 9, 1956, in Jacksonville to Jack and Vera (Bernardi) Starling. David made a successful career as a realtor in the real estate industry, where he touched the lives of many. Prior to being a successful real estate agent, he had his own business for 25 years. He was of the Catholic faith. Outside of work, he had a zest for life. Whether it was water skiing or pulling his grandkids and the neighborhood kids on the tube. He loved riding his grandkids on the jet ski and four-wheeler. His grandkids were his pride and joy. He also enjoyed riding his Jeep, attending car shows, fixing things around the house, hunting, or racing go-karts. He embraced every moment and shared his passions with family and friends. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his siblings, Sharon Starling, and Roger Starling.

David is survived by his loving and devoted significant other of 40 years, Ruby Carreras of Keystone Heights; sons, David Starling Jr. of Jacksonville and Billy (Crystal) Carreras of Trenton; daughter, Christy (Jeff) Applear; sister, Robin Carter of Vidalia, Georgia; brother, Robert (Caroline) Starling of York, South Carolina; aunt, Deloris Jonjoek from Jacksonville, and many cousins, nieces and nephews. He was a devoted family man, known affectionately as "Pops" to his grandchildren, Caleb, Emily, and Gabe.

The family will gather to honor him with a memorial Mass, on Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, at 11 a.m., which will take place at St. William Catholic Church.

PAID OBITUARY

Gail Thomas

Gail Boatwright Thomas, 77, of Starke passed away Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025, after an extended illness. She was born in Palm Beach County, Nov. 23, 1948, to the late Clinton Boatwright and Thelma Williams Boatwright. She was raised in Palm Beach County and relocated to Bradford County in her youth. While attending Bradford High School, she met her best friend and forever companion, Tommy Allen Thomas. Not long after, they were happily married Feb. 14, 1970, and were blessed with 50 amazing years of marriage and three precious children. She had a successful career as a dental assistant at Dr. Harry Gruen's office, but her most cherished role was being a homemaker. Her greatest joy in life was being a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother. She adored every moment spent with her family and dedicated her life to caring for them. In her younger years, Gail greatly enjoyed hunting and fishing alongside Tommy, developing impressive skill in the sport. She was always talented with her hands and found joy in arranging flowers, creating wreaths, and making new crafts. Decorating her home and filling it with beauty brought her great happiness. She was also a woman of deep faith, depending daily on her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She enjoyed attending and worshiping with her church family at Madison Street Baptist Church, where she was a longtime member. More than anything, she loved making everlasting memories with those she loved. She was such a treasure and will be deeply missed by all who knew her. She was preceded in death by her parents; loving husband, Tommy Thomas; brothers, Wayne and Terry Boatwright; and sisters, June Dicandio and Joann Eaves.

She is survived by her children, Julie (Jason) Schmit of Amery, Wisconsin, Traci (Andy) Johns of Keystone Heights, David Dutch Thomas of Starke; 9 grandchildren, Cheyenne, Wyatt, Tyler, Noah, Sarah, Elizabeth, Elijah, Gabriela, and Lucas; brother-in-law, Leon Dicandio; sister-in-law, who she loved as a sister, Linda (Richard) Robinson; along with numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

A graveside Celebration of Life was on Tuesday, Dec. 16, at Old Providence Cemetery in Lake Butler with Brother Charles Warren officiating. Interment followed at Old Providence Cemetery. The family received friends an hour prior to service at the cemetery.

Arrangements were under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit www.ferreirafuneralservices.com to sign the family guest book.

PAID OBITUARY

John W. Walker

John Wayne Walker died Monday, Dec. 8, 2025. He was preceded in death by his parents, John Henry Walker and Esther (English) Walker Sanders; and stepfather, Horace Sanders.

Survivors are his sons, John Walker II and Richard Walker; daughter, Christina (Scott) Wells; sister, JoAnn (Ed) Wall; brothers, Michael (Christine) Sanders and William (Deena) Sanders; and extended family.

Funeral services were held at DeWitt C. Jones Chapel of Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home Monday, Dec. 15. Interment will be private at a later date.

Arrangements are by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home of Starke 904-964-6200 www.jonesgallagherfh.com.

LaVonne Wilkison



Mrs. LaVonne Kay Wilkison, born April 7, 1942, in Wayne, Nebraska to the late Harry M. and Lola Faye (Peck) Bressler, passed away peacefully Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025, at Haven Hospice E.T. York Care Center in Gainesville. She was a beloved daughter, sister, and mother, leaving behind cherished memories and a legacy of love. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband Jerry C. Wilkison Sr.; and her son Jerry Wilkison, Jr.

She is survived by her daughter, June "Michelle" (Eric) Starling of Starke; son, Robert Lewis (Renee) Wilkison (Renee) of Raiford; and grandson, Jerry (Jen) Wilkison III. She was lovingly called "Granny Wilkison" by her 10 additional grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. LaVonne's family was everything to her, and she often shared her warmth and spirit with them. She was of the Baptist faith and a dedicated secretary at Lil Champ convenience store. She brought a smile to the faces of the customers and colleagues she worked with. Her love for birdwatching and her cherished cats filled her days with joy and peace.

At her request there will not be any services. Arrangements are by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home of Starke 904-964-6200 www.jonesgallagherfh.com.

PAID OBITUARY

Curtis A. "Lex" Sanders Attorney at Law



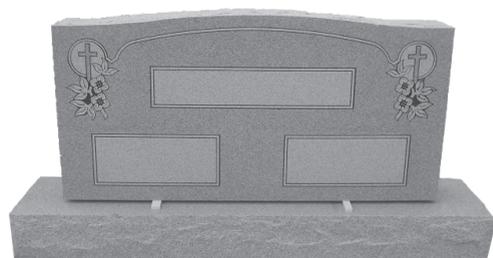
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Former UCHS head coach now at Dixie

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Andrew Thomas, the former Union County High School head football coach who was fired in May, is the new head coach at Cross City's Dixie County High School.

Thomas graduated from Dixie in 1995. It was one of the schools at which he served as an assistant coach before landing his first head coaching job at Trenton High School.

Dixie is coming off a 1-9 season — its third losing season in the past five years.

If someone can get the Bears on the right track consistently, it would be Thomas, based on his resume. He has a career record of 132-37 in 14 seasons, with Union winning at least eight games in

each of his five seasons there.

Thomas won two state championships during his five years at Trenton, compiling a 60-6 record. Trenton won 13 postseason games under Thomas after having just 10 all time prior to his arrival.

After two-year stints as the head coach at T.R. Miller High School (Brewton, Alabama) and Ocala's Trinity Catholic in which he went 13-8 and 13-9, respectively, Thomas was hired at Union.

The Tigers won 77 percent of their games during Thomas' five seasons, going 46-14. Union had a postseason record of 10-5 under Thomas, advancing to at least the regional finals every season.

Thomas guided the Tigers to a 10-2 record and a state semifinal appearance in his final season.



Andrew Thomas

Union Superintendent of Schools Mike Ripplinger announced the firing of Thomas in a media statement that read: "In the best interest of the Union County High School football program — both in the immediate and long-term future — the decision was made to part ways with Head Coach Andrew Thomas. Union County is appreciative of the success Coach Thomas had during his tenure, and may he continue to have a successful career."

TRACK

Continued from page 8

North Marion's Laura Johnson, who beat her at the regional meet.

Runners from Naples and Quincy Shanks placed ahead of Smith with times of 56.6 and 58.58.

Smith won her second straight district championship in the 440 as a junior in 1980-81, running a school-record time of 59.2. She also teamed up with Pam Hawkins, Yvonne Sanders and Sheila Searcy to win the mile-medley championship, tying the school record of 4:10.

At the regional meet, Smith ran a third-place time of 59.3 in the 440, while the mile-medley team placed second with a new school-record time of 4:07.9.

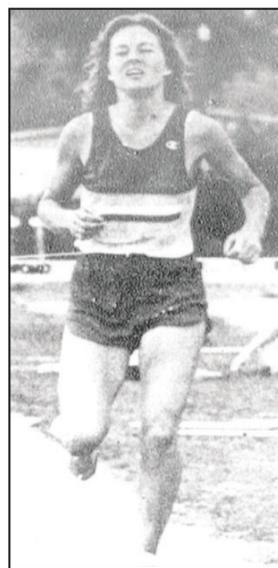
Smith again broke her own school record in the 440 with a fourth-place time of 59.3 at the

state finals. The mile-medley team, which placed seventh, also recorded a school-best time of 4:06.9.

As a senior in 1981-82, Smith ran the 880 instead of the 440. She placed second in the event at the district meet with a time of 2:35.9. She teamed up with Pam Boswell, Karen Kimutis and Francine Long for a second-place finish in the 440 relay with a time of 53.8 and joined Boswell, Alesia Sheffield and Michelle Stillwell on the mile relay team, which was second with a time of 4:26.7.

Smith also competed in the long jump at the district meet, placing sixth with a distance of 14 feet, 11 inches.

Her ticket to state was punched for the fourth straight year when Smith placed third in the 880 at the regional meet. She'd go on to run an eighth-place time of 2:27 at state.



Louette Smith qualified for the state track and field finals all four years at Bradford High School.

Legal Notices

Legals for the week of Dec. 18, 2025

BRADFORD

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 8TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO. 04-2025-DP-000006
IN THE INTEREST OF:
A.L.B. DOB: 4/8/2017,
B.B. DOB: 3/8/2020,
MINOR CHILDREN

NOTICE OF ACTION
TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

TO: Alyssa Barr, address unknown
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families, has filed a Petition to terminate your parental rights and permanently commit the following children for adoption: **A.L.B. born on 4/8/2017 and B.B. born on 3/8/2020.** You are hereby **commanded** to appear on **Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 1:30 PM** before the General Magistrate Bridget Baker at the Bradford Courthouse, 945 North Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091, for an **ADVISORY HEARING**. FAILURE TO PERSONALLY APPEAR AT THIS ADVISORY HEARING CONSTITUTES CONSENT TO THE TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS OF THESE CHILDREN. IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR ON THE DATE AND TIME SPECIFIED, YOU MAY LOSE ALL LEGAL RIGHTS AS A PARENT TO THE CHILDREN NAMED IN THIS NOTICE.

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator, 201 E. University Avenue, Room 414A, Gainesville, FL 32601 at (352) 337-6237, at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

WITNESS, my hand as Clerk of said Court and the Seal thereof, this 1st day of December, 2025.
Denny Thompson, Clerk of Court
By: Ramona Jefferson
As Deputy Clerk

12/11 4tchg 01/01/26- BCT

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

CASE NO.: 04-2025-CA-326
JOHN M. MILLER as TRUSTEE of the REVOCABLE TRUST OF JOHN M. MILLER, U/A/D 7/16/1980, Plaintiff,

VS.
CONSTANCE HURSTON & CYNTHIA S. BROWN, Defendants.

NOTICE OF ACTION
(Publish in Bradford County Telegraph)

TO: Constance Hurston
Last Known Residence: 409 Lakeshore Drive, Starke, Florida 32091

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action to foreclose a mortgage on the following property in BRADFORD County, Florida: Bradford County Parcel ID Number: 00804-0-03600 Lot 36 of LAKEWOOD UNIT NO. 1 according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 3, Page 58 of the public records of Bradford County, Florida. Has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Charles Daniel Sikes, P.A., Plaintiff's Attorney, at 817 MacMahon Street, Starke, Florida 32091, within (30) days of the first date of 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 or petition.
DATED December 9, 2025
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
BY: KANETRA JENKINS
Deputy Clerk

12/11 4tchg 1/1/26-BCT

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

CASE NO.: 04-2025-CA-435
THE BRADFORD COUNTY TELEGRAPH, INC., Plaintiff,

VS.
GGG INNOVATIVE SERVICES, LLC Defendant.

NOTICE OF ACTION

(Publish in Bradford County Telegraph)

TO: SMD BILLING MANAGEMENT, LLC., as registered agent for GGG INNOVATIVE SERVICE, LLC. Last Known Residence: 320-A South Walnut Street, Starke, FL 32091
YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action to foreclose a mortgage on the following property in BRADFORD County, Florida: Bradford County Parcel ID Number: 03142-0-00000

A Parcel of land and lying partly in Block 30 of the Original Town of Starke as per Plat recorded in Deed Book N, Page 759 of the Public Records of Bradford County, Florida and partly in the Southeast 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 28, Township 6 South, Range 22 East of said County, said Parcel bring more particularly described as follows: Commence at an iron pipe located at the Northeast corner of said Block 30 and run South 17 degrees 20 minutes and 18 seconds West, along the Easterly boundary thereof and the Westerly boundary of the Right-of-Way of Thompson Street, 124.22 feet to a set 1/2 inch Iron Rod (LB4012) for the Point of Beginning. From the Point of Beginning thus described continue South 17 degrees 20 minutes and 18 seconds West, along said Westerly boundary 154.85 feet to a found 1/2 inch Rebar (Welch & Assoc.); thence North 71 degrees 56 minutes 19 seconds West, 104.51 feet to a found 1/2 inch Iron Rod (Welch & Assoc.); thence North 72 degrees 24 minutes 34 seconds West, 31.63 feet to a found 1 inch Iron Pipe (NO ID); thence North 70 degrees 25 minutes and 24 seconds West, 72.56 feet to a found 1/2 inch Iron Pipe (NO ID) located on the Easterly boundary of the Right-of-Way of Walnut Street (60foot R/W); thence North 16 degrees 36 minutes and 18 seconds East, along said Easterly boundary 271.21 feet to a found 1/2 inch Iron Rod (NO ID) located at an intersection with the Southerly boundary of the Right-of-Way of South Street (60 foot R/W) and the Northerly boundary of said Block 30; thence South 73 degrees 37 minutes and 52 seconds East, along said Northerly & Southerly boundaries 76.17 feet to a found 1/2 inch Iron Rod (#5098); thence South 16 degrees 44 minutes and 25 seconds West, 124.09 feet to a set 1/2 Iron Rod (LB4012); thence South 73 degrees 34 minutes and 50 seconds East, 134.67 feet to the Point of Beginning.

Has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Charles Daniel Sikes, P.A., Plaintiff's Attorney, at 817 MacMahon Street, Starke, Florida 32091, within (30) days of the first date of 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 or petition.
DATED: December 9, 2025
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
BY: KANETRA JENKINS
DEPUTY CLERK

12/11 4tchg 1/1/26-BCT

CALL FOR BID

The Town of Brooker is in the process of accepting bids for the sale of the Old Fire Station and property, located at 11770 Pine Street, Brooker, FL. There are two buildings located on this

Property. One block building, 50' X 35', and one metal carport building, 22' X 24'. The Town is setting a minimum reserve amount of \$25,000.00. The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids. Bids are due at the Town Hall on or before Monday, February 9th by 1:00p.m. Bids will be opened at the regular monthly council meeting on February 10th. Award of bid 60 days to close. Please contact the Town Hall if you are interested in seeing the inside of the buildings.
12/18 1tchg-BCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO: 2019-DR-631
Division:

BRANDON LEE, Petitioner and ASHLYN WALL Respondent.

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR MODIFICATION OF PARENTING PLAN

TO: ASHLYN WALL, 1854 SR 230 EAST, STARKE, FL 32091
YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for MODIFICATION OF PARENTING PLAN has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on BRANDON LEE, whose address is 5494 HAMPTON VILLAS DRIVE, HAMPTON, FL 32044 on or before January 8th, 2026 and file the original with the clerk of this Court at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091 before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. **If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.**

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents upon request. You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Designation of Current Mailing and E-Mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed or e-mailed to the addresses on record at the clerk's office.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.
Dated: December 15, 2025
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
BY: KANETRA JENKINS
Deputy Clerk

12/18 4tchg 1/8/26-BCT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

To satisfy the owner's storage lien, KO Storage LLC will sell at public lien sale on January 19, 2026. 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 these items will begin at 10AM on January 12, 2026 and end at 12PM on January 19, 2026. 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)-491-6837 Time: 12:00PM CST
A41, James, Jeanette, A49, Sellers, Brittany, B04, Atkinson, Jeffery, B30, Stack, Jack, B72, Sanders, Gerard
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)-491-6837.
12/18 2tchg 12/25-BCT

UNION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
File No. 63-2025-CP-21
Division Probate

IN RE: ESTATE OF JOHN C. HOWARD Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of John C. Howard, deceased, whose date of death was August 22, 2024, is pending in the Circuit Court for Union County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 55 West Main St, Lake Butler, FL 32054. 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 the 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.

The personal representative has no duty to discover whether any property held at the time of the decedent's death by the decedent or the decedent's surviving spouse is property to which the Florida Uniform Disposition of Community Property Rights at Death Act as described in ss. 732.216-732.228, applies, or may apply, unless a written demand is made by a creditor as specified under s. 732.2211, Florida Statutes.

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 December 11, 2025.

Melanie Howard, Personal Representative, 10453 Southwest 67 U, Lake Butler, FL 32054

/s/Nathan Hall
J.M. Williams Attorneys & Counselors at Law
Attorney for Personal Representative
Email Addresses: Mail@williamspra.org
Florida Bar No. 93757
141 North 5th Street
Macclenny, FL 32063
Telephone: (904) 259-3005

12/11 2tchg 12/18-UCT

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
IN THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
FILE NO.:

632025CP000037CPAXMX
IN RE: ESTATE OF MICHAEL LABEL BOLAND Deceased.

The administration of the estate of MICHAEL LABEL BOLAND, deceased, whose date of death was May 23, 2024, is pending in the Circuit Court for Union County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 55 W Main St #1654, Lake Butler, FL 32054. 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 December 11, 2025.
Personal Representative
Alexandria Elizabeth Crawford-Boland
38 Laurel Ridge Break
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
Attorney for Personal Representative
David M. Deutsch, Esq.
Florida Bar Number: 1000339
THE DEUTSCH LAW FIRM PLLC
433 Plaza Real, Suite 275
Boca Raton, FL 33432
Telephone: (561) 200-6554
Fax: (561) 200-6554
E-Mail: david@deutschpc.com
Secondary E-Mail: service@deutschpc.com

12/11 2tchg 12/18-UCT

IN THE CIRCUIT CIVIL COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA, IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY
Case No. 63-2024-CA-000098
CIVIL DIVISION

CARDINAL FINANCIAL COMPANY, LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
Plaintiff,

vs.

PATSY JO ADDISON BROOKER / A/K/A
PATSY ADDISON BROOKER A/K/A
PATSY ADDISONBROOKER A/K/A
PATSY A. BROOKER A/K/A PATSY
BROOKER A/K/A PATSY ADDISON,
DONALD K. BROOKER, SR. A/K/A
DONALD BROOKER, CURTIS
LEROY.
ADDISON AND UNKNOWN
TENANTS/OWNERS,
Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Final Judgment of Foreclosure for Plaintiff entered in this cause on April 28, 2025, in the Circuit Court of Union County, Florida, Regina H. Parrish, Clerk of the Circuit Court, will sell the property situated in Union County, Florida described as:

THE LAND REFERRED TO HEREIN BELOW IS SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF UNION, STATE OF FLORIDA, AND IS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

A PARCEL OF LAND CONTAINING A TOTAL AREA OF 2.0 ACRES MORE OR LESS BEING SITUATE IN SECTION 17 TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH RANGE 20 EAST UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA AND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:
COMMENCE AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SAID SECTION 17 AND RUN SOUTH 85 DEGREES 54 MINUTES 05 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 17 A DISTANCE OF 2219.01

FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 04 DEGREES 05 MINUTES 55 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 732.01 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED

PARCEL OF LAND; THENCE RUN NORTH 78 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 00

SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 135.46 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 89 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 15 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 167.68 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 29 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 37 SECONDS EAST A OF DISTANCE OF 108.38 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 04 DEGREES 57 MINUTES 33 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 36.65 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 30 DEGREES 10 MINUTES 19 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 125.87 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 59 DEGREES 18 MINUTES 37 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 163.88 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 86 DEGREES 06 MINUTES 32 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 89.36 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 11 DEGREES 58 MINUTES 00 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 308.08 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. SUBJECT TO AND TOGETHER WITH A 20 FOOT EASEMENT FOR INGRESS, EGRESS AND UTILITIES BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCE AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SAID SECTION 17 AND RUN SOUTH 85 DEGREES 54 MINUTES 05 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 17 A DISTANCE OF 2219.01 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 04 DEGREES 05 MINUTES 55 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 732.01 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 78 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 00 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 41.26 FEET TO THE POINT OR PLACE OF BEGINNING OF THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED 20 FOOT EASEMENT; THENCE CONTINUE RUNNING NORTH 78 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 00 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 32.63 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 64 DEGREES 09 MINUTES 58 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 67.69 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 72 DEGREES 10 MINUTES 41 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 157.20 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 80 DEGREES 30 MINUTES 10 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 73.43 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 76 DEGREES 40 MINUTES 02 SECONDS EAST A DISTANCE OF 302.94 FEET TO THE INTERSECTION WIT WITH THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF COUNTY ROAD NUMBER S-238 (80 FEET RIGHT OF WAY); THENCE RUN SOUTH 00 DEGREES 54 MINUTES 39 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE, A DISTANCE OF 20.63 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 76 DEGREES 40 MINUTES 02 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 301.90 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 80 DEGREES 30 MINUTES 10 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 78.92 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 72 DEGREES 10 MINUTES 41 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 160.10 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 64 DEGREES 09 MINUTES 58 SECONDS WEST A DISTANCE OF 94.84 FEET TO THE POINT OR PLACE OF BEGINNING. I and commonly known as: 17886 NE 124TH PL, LAKE BUTLER, FL 32054; including the building, appurtenances, and fixtures located therein, at public sale, to the highest and best bidder, for cash, in the front lobby of the courthouse, 55 West Main Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054, on JANUARY 22, 2026 at 11:00 A.M.

Any persons claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the lis pendens must file a claim before the clerk reports the surplus as unclaimed. Dated this 9th day of December, 2025.

Clerk of the Circuit Court
Kellie Hendricks Rhoades
BY: K.Riggs
Deputy Clerk

12/18 2tchg 12/25-UCT

Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700

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John Miller, Publisher



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Starke Kiwanians learn about BC's new beekeepers club

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

As Kiwanis Club of Starke members were eating lunch at their meeting on Dec. 9, they were reminded to be thankful for the work of bees.

Guest speaker Bobby Carter presented a program on the Bradford County Beekeepers Association, which was formalized on Aug. 26.

"When we think of bees, they sting you, and they're the bad guys, but they're really good," Carter said. "One in every three mouthfuls you eat today had to do with a bee. Bees are very important to us."

Carter is one of 19 registered beekeepers in Bradford. He had been paying for pollination services to bring bees to his farm, but decided it'd be more economical to keep his own bees.

"We've had bees for about three years now," he said, adding, "I got bees, but I didn't know anything about bees."

The idea for having a local beekeepers association sprung from discussions Carter had with several others.

"On May 1, 2025, we had an interest meeting," Carter said. "About 20 people were in attendance."

Carter said two more meetings were held, with the second resulting in the official formation of the Bradford County Beekeepers Association. Meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of every month at the UF/IFAS Extension Bradford County office at 6:30 p.m.

"We're looking for new members," Carter said. "I think we're around 22 to 25 members right now. Our arms are open. We want as many as we can."

That includes anybody. "You don't have to have bees to be a member of the club," Carter said. "We welcome anybody. In fact, if you have an inkling of an idea that you're interested in bees, I recommend you join the bee club. You'll get lost of information."

Membership is \$20 per year. The Bradford County

Beekeepers Association can be found on Facebook and at bradfordbeekeepers.com.

The club's focus right now is providing information to beekeepers and those who may want to be beekeepers, but Carter said it may evolve into more of a civic group like Kiwanis in which it participates in community events and perhaps partners with Kiwanis or other groups.

"We'll see," Carter said. "If you all have got something you think would benefit us and benefit you, reach out to us."

Beekeepers are required by law to be registered, Carter said, adding, "Florida has the toughest beekeeping laws in the country and the toughest honey regulations in the country. The other 49 states are considering adopting Florida's laws."

A Kiwanis member asked Carter if most of the Bradford County Beekeepers Association members sold honey. Carter said no and that he himself is only in his first year of selling honey. He planted a couple of acres of clover, saying the most sought-after honey is clover honey.

"The one good thing about the clover is there's no need to spray pesticide on it," Carter said.

Carter said people think honey is where the money is in beekeeping, but he said the better money maker is selling established hives and queen bees.

"You get \$25 to \$50 per queen," he said. "If you can raise \$300 or \$400 a week, you can be rolling in money. Santa Fe Farms out in Alachua — they probably do \$1,000 a week."

Besides selling honey, Carter said he has also begun selling honey infused lotion. Using the lotion himself has helped him with a skin condition.

"I have rosacea on my face. I have a prescription I started buying and putting on it. It didn't do anything for it. I started using this," Carter said, holding up a container of his honey lotion. "It's clearing it up."

"Honey has a natural antibiotic in it. I think that has a lot to do with it."

Kiwanis members had the

opportunity to try the lotion as Carter continued to talk about bees. He said the University of Florida has a "great bee lab" and that the lab will be setting up pollen collectors on his farm to determine what flowers and trees his bees are actually visiting.

"The lab also has a tracker. It's hard to believe that," Carter said. "They have a tracker they put on the bee. The bee goes out and comes back in. (The tracker) identifies every site he went to — every tree or bush that he went to."

If you'd like to find out more about the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab, visit entnemdept.ufl.edu/honey-bee. The lab, located at 1881 Natural Area Drive, Building 964, in Gainesville, hosts public tours the first Wednesday of each month at 3:45 p.m.

Carter provided Kiwanis members several handouts with information compiled by UF and its Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. One listed "interesting facts about bees," such as one third of the plants eaten by humans are dependent to some extent on bee pollination; a worker bee can visit as many as 5,000 flowers per day; the number of beekeepers in Florida rose from approximately 600 in 2006 to more than 5,000 in 2019; a bee will produce one eighth of a teaspoon of honey in its lifetime; and the number of beekeepers in Florida rose from approximately 600 in 2006 to more than 5,000 in 2019.

One of the handouts listed the economic contributions of the Florida beekeeping industry in 2020. Florida beekeepers produced more than 15 million pounds of honey, 300,000 pounds of beeswax, more than 350,000 queens and 300,000 colonies (used for crop pollination within and outside of Florida). Florida beekeeping operations produced \$93.36 million in sales revenues in 2020, with \$51.63 million coming from goods produced and services provided in Florida and \$42.01 million from goods and services provided in other states.



Bobby Carter (right) speaks to the Kiwanis Club of Starke about the Bradford County Beekeepers Association, which was created approximately four months ago. The association, which meets monthly, welcomes any who are interested in joining, whether they keep bees or not.

Shining Stars of the Week!

Recognizing the following outstanding students for their amazing character and academic achievements!



Elijah Lindsey,
4th Grade
Lawtey Elementary
Elijah Lindsey is always respectful of others and is a friend to everyone. He works hard in class to do his best work and is always willing to help others when called upon.



Grayson Touchstone
6th Grade
Light House Christian
Grayson Touchstone has attended Light Christian Academy for several years. Over the years, he has progressed in all subjects, and he continues to show academic growth every single day. He is a good example to those around him, and he is a good friend to everyone. We are excited to see what happens in his life, and we are glad he is a part of LCA!



Layla Moring
1st Grade
Hope Christian Academy
Layla is our shining star, she is kind thoughtful and a wonderful listener!



Audrina Johnson
6th Grade
Bradford Elementary
Audrina Johnson was picked as our Shining Star because she is always willing to help others and is always trying her absolute best! She is a great example for her 6th grade peers and others on campus.



Emory Bailey, Audrey Clyatt, and Julianna Bias
Kindergarten
Rainbow Learning Academy
Emory Bailey, Audrey Clyatt, and Julianna Bias were outstanding examples in Kindergarten this week! They showed great leadership, kindness, and what it truly means to be a good friend. We are so proud of them!

Bradford boys open season with 77-47 win over Palatka

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Steven Carter knocked down five of his six three-point attempts, while Kemontae Nixon was one point and two rebounds shy of a double-double in the Bradford High School boys basketball team's 77-47 win at Palatka to open the season.

Carter made a three-pointer to give the Tornados a 15-13 lead in the first quarter. Bradford would never trail again, with Carter shooting another trey later in the quarter to make the score

24-13. The sophomore finished with 23 points.

Maliki Cobarris, who was 6 of 6 from the foul line, scored 15 points. He also had six assists and six rebounds.

Jy'Quez Cason also scored in double figures with 10 points.

Nixon, Jordan Cason and Keith Taylor scored nine points each. Nixon had eight rebounds, while Cason and Taylor grabbed six and five, respectively. Cason and Nixon each blocked two shots, with Cason also coming

away with six steals. Dylan Ruise scored two points, while Breion Johnson had five rebounds.

Bradford played Eastside this past Tuesday and will host Fort White on Thursday, Dec. 18, at 7:30 p.m., following a junior varsity game at 6 p.m.

The Tornados host Union County on Friday, Dec. 19. The JV team will play at 4:30 p.m., while the varsity team will play at 7:30 p.m. The Bradford varsity girls team will play at 6 p.m.

Thank you... to our sponsors!

Classified Ads - 904-964-6305



Where one call does it all!



Class Ads for week Dec 18 2025

40 Notices

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Gator great visits Keystone's First Baptist

Bradford and Keystone Heights high school basketball players and coaches attended a Dec. 7 event at Keystone's First Baptist Church that featured former University of Florida basketball player Patric Young. Young, who played for the Gators from 2010-11 through 2013-14, preached during the morning service and then joined youth for lunch and a Q-and-A session. Paralyzed from the waist down after being involved in a single-vehicle accident, Young is the founder of the Patric Young Foundation, which provides financial, emotional and physical support in helping those with life-altering injuries reclaim their lives. Pictured are: (front, l-r) Casey Grice, Fletcher Grice, Will Begue, Young, Cade Begue, Colton Murray, A'drionna Hankerson, Nyasia Lopey, Jessica Carter, Kamari Haygood, (back, l-r) Byron Conant, Daphne Grice, Braylon Cooper, Cooper Grice, Reagan Vinson, Kadence Massey, Riley Shuford, Jaleigha Bolden, Jamie Lopey (behind Bolden), Kaiya Thompson, Wynter Barrington (behind Thompson), Steven Cartrer, Jordan Cason, Maliki Cobarris, Bryson Hill, Dylan Lewis, Larry Ardley, Aiden Jackson, Keith Taylor, Tarrin Jackson and Bryston Williams.



Gino Addison (second from right) is pictured with brothers Ne-o (far left) and Iyen (second from left) and Middleburg Head Coach Ryan Wolfe.

Starke's Addison to play football at North Carolina Central

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Starke's Gino Addison signed a letter of intent to play football at North Carolina Central University during a ceremony on Early Signing Day (Dec. 3) at Middleburg High School, where he played his senior season, and then participated in a ceremony at Starke's Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church on Dec. 7.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," Addison said. It's amazing knowing that all of your hard work paid off. You finally made it. You made it one step closer to the goal."

The 5-11, 195-pound running back is coming off a season in which he rushed for 1,113 yards and 18 touchdowns on 156 carries. As a junior at Bradford High School, he had 800-plus yards and 10 touchdowns on approximately 120 carries.

Addison, who averaged 7 yards per carry in each of the last two seasons, said, "I think I'm a great improviser. I've got great vision and great balance."

As he prepares to transition to playing at the collegiate level, he said, "One thing I'm looking at improving is my speed."

Middleburg Head Coach

Ryan Wolfe, who attended the ceremony at the Starke church, said he owed thanks to those who played a part in making Addison into the player and person he is today.

"I only got to coach him for one year, but whoever had him for the first 16, 17 years of his life did a great job. I haven't coached that many people who are that driven," Wolfe said, adding, "I haven't come across that many athletes who are as driven as him. If I had a bunch of Ginos, we'd probably still be playing. He is everything that a coach wants, everything that a parent wants and everything that a teacher wants."

The coach's sentiments echoed those of Rodney Mosley Sr., who knows Addison well from coaching in the Bradford County Cowboys youth football organization.

"I never really had to push him," Mosley said. "He's always been kind of self-motivated."

Addison wasn't seriously considering any other colleges, saying he loves the atmosphere and culture at North Carolina Central. In other words, the

See ADDISON, page 13

KHHS boys get 3-2 soccer win

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Kipton Spence completed a success come-from-behind victory, scoring the goal that proved to be the difference in the Keystone Heights High School boys soccer team's 3-2 win over host Bell on Dec. 12.

The Indians, who trailed 2-1 in the second half, also got one goal each from Noah Jaramillo and Ryder Thomas. Trenton Noble and Tyler Sapp each had an assist.

Keystone went 1-1 in its previous two matches, beginning with an 8-0 win at Trenton on Dec. 9. Spence scored three goals, while Noble and Thomas each scored two. A.J. Nilsen had one goal.

Five players had one assist

each: Spence, Thomas, Nathan Benson, Tucker Price and Landon Spence.

On Dec. 10, Keystone lost 4-1 to visiting Fernandina Beach. Sammy Wachua scored the lone goal off a Nate Bardier assist.

The Indians will host Middleburg on Thursday, Dec. 18, at 7:20 p.m., following a junior varsity match at 5:30 p.m.

Union County wrestling to host Military Appreciation Night Dec. 18

Union County High School's wrestling team will host Military Appreciation Night for the Tri-County Duals, which will take place Thursday, Dec. 18, at 5:30 p.m. All veterans and current

military will gain free admission with ID.

The Tri-County Duals will also consist of Baker County and Columbia.

KHHS falls big to Palatka in boys hoops

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School is still looking for its second win in boys basketball after a 63-17 District 3-3A loss to host Palatka on Dec. 12.

Dereon Tochtermann scored 10 points and grabbed seven rebounds, while Baylor Ford scored three points and blocked two shots.

Destin Harnage and Parker Pescara each had two points, while Luke Bacorn had five rebounds.

On Dec. 2, the Indians (1-7) lost 74-48 to visiting Duval Charter, getting 14 points, eight rebounds, four assists and two blocked shots from Cooper Barry.

Harnage and Will Begue scored 10 and eight points, respectively, while Keystone also got six points from Donald Hill, five points from Ford, three points from Bacorn and two points from Brandon McClure.

Bacorn and Hill grabbed nine and five rebounds, respectively. Hill also blocked two shots.

The Indians traveled to play Baldwin on Dec. 5, losing 64-39.

Barry led the team with 12 points, while Keystone also got six points each from Begue and Tochtermann, five points from Bacorn, four points from Rylan Bell, two points each from Hill and Pescara and one point each from Ford and Harnage.

Bacorn pulled down nine

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Wynter Barrington works her way to the basket in the second half of the Tornados' win over Palatka.

BHS girls defeat Palatka 44-29 for 2nd straight victory

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

After losing its second straight game by double digits (67-45 to Newberry on Dec. 10), the Bradford High School girls basketball team reeled off two straight wins, with the latest coming by a score of 44-29 against visiting Palatka on Dec. 15.

Bradford (4-3) got nine points from Ar'Nayshia Griffin in the first quarter. Her three-pointer put the Tornados up 11-8.

Kah'myra Hankerson scored off a Griffin inbounds pass to give Bradford a 14-8 lead early in the second quarter. A rebound putback by Griffin made the score 16-8.

The Tornados struggled from the field in the second quarter, making 2 of 17 field-goal attempts. That allowed the Panthers (2-5) to whittle away at Bradford's lead. Palatka's Jhane Fountain scored off a turnover to make it a 17-14 game. Charnelle Cue had the chance to send the Panthers into the half trailing by just one point, but she missed two free-throw attempts with four seconds on the clock.

Bradford's shooting woes carried over into the third quarter as the Tornados missed their first five field-goal attempts before Wynter Barrington scored off an offensive rebound.

It was a big quarter for Barrington. She gave Bradford its next point, making one free throw, and then converted a layup attempt off a Griffin pass, putting the Tornados ahead 22-18. Barrington later scored off a rebound putback as she had seven of Bradford's nine points in the quarter.

The Tornados opened the fourth quarter with a 9-1 run that began with a Cayson Hampton basket. Griffin and Hankerson each drove into the lane for scores, while Riley Shuford sank a three-pointer to put Bradford up 35-25.

Bradford outscored the Panthers 18-5 in the final quarter.

Griffin finished with 19 points, while Barrington and Hankerson had seven and six, respectively. The Tornados also got three points each from Shuford and Nyasia Lopey and two points each from Hampton, Ky'lee Johnson and Mia Olesen.

Rebound leaders were Griffin with 18, Barrington with 13, Johnson with seven and Lopey

with five.

The Tornados entered the game off a 42-35 win over host Baker County on Dec. 12.

Bradford trailed 26-16 at the half, but outscored the Wildcats 17-5 in the third quarter. Three-pointers by Griffin and Hampton helped the Tornados pull to within four points. Lopey made one free throw and then hit a pull-up three-pointer after her own steal to tie the score at 28-28.

Barrington scored off a Hampton assist to give Bradford a 30-28 lead — a lead the Tornados wouldn't relinquish.

Griffin had nine second-half points and finished with 12. Barrington and Lopey each had eight, while Bradford also got four points each from Hampton, Johnson and Shuford and two points from Kailyn Teal.

Barrington grabbed a team-high 16 rebounds, while Griffin and Lopey had seven and five, respectively.

Griffin led the team in assists with four.

Bradford will host Fort White on Thursday, Dec. 18, at 6 p.m., following a junior varsity boys game at 4:30 p.m. and preceding a varsity boys game at 7:30 p.m. The Tornados host Bishop Snyder on Saturday, Dec. 20, at 4 p.m.

The Tornados will play in a tournament at Orange Park High School on Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 22-23. The schedule hadn't been completed by the Telegraph-Times-Monitor deadline.



Ar'Nayshia Griffin (left) goes up for a basket against Palatka.

UCHS boys still unbeaten after win over Branford

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Visiting Branford whittled a 17-point deficit down to five, but the Union County High School boys basketball team maintained its lead to remain undefeated, getting 23 points from Jaylen Pierre in a 67-59 win on Dec. 13.

A basket by Branford's Arkayvion Jones made it a 62-57 game with less than 40 seconds to play. In the final 22 seconds, Pierre went 3 of 4 from the foul line and scored off a turnover to help the Tigers improve to 4-0 on the season.

The Buccaneers (1-3) took an early 9-3 lead before Union scored seven straight points, getting a three-pointer from Garrison Smith and two baskets from Tyrese Chandler.

A drive to the basket by Pierre tied the score at 14-14 early in the second quarter. R.J. Odom Jr. then scored to give the Tigers the lead for good.

Odom's basket was the start of a 17-6 run. After Smith made two free throws, Pierre dribbled the length of the court and scored to put the Tigers up 20-14. Smith hit a jumper in the lane before Branford's Anthony Washington sank a three-point shot. Pierre answered with a three-pointer of his own and then scored of an Adrian Manns steal to give Union a 10-point lead. Pierre and Smith each had a 1-of-2 trip at the foul line, while Odom scored on a drive to the basket, putting the Tigers ahead 31-20.

Pierre had 14 points in the second quarter as Union took a 36-27 lead into the half.

The Tigers scored the first eight points of the third quarter. Montrell Woods got a basket following a turnover, while Chandler scored off a Pierre assist. Odom sank two free throws before Pierre added a basket to make the score 44-27.

Bradford started the second half 0-of-6 from the field before Anthony Bailey made a three-point shot.

Chandler, who scored six points in the third quarter, began the fourth quarter with a basket on which he was fouled. He made the awarded free throw to put the Tigers up 54-37.

The Bucs scored six straight points to cut Union's lead to 11, but the Tigers then got consecutive baskets from Jackson Andersen-Davis and Pierre.

Bradford went on a 9-1 run that included three-pointers by Washington and Braden Strait. A Washington layup made the score 59-52 before the Tigers' Smith knocked down a three-point shot with 1:23 remaining.

The Bucs turned the ball over with 1:07 left, but a missed shot by Union was rebounded by Branford's Bailey, who would then knock down a three-point shot on the offensive end. Washington came away with a backcourt steal and was fouled on a shot attempt with 42 seconds on the clock. He missed both free

throws but the Bucs rebounded the second miss, which led to Jones' basket, making it a five-point game.

Pierre made two free-throw attempts with 22 seconds left. He then scored on a layup after the Tigers forced a turnover.

Jones made Branford's last basket with eight seconds remaining. The Bucs then fouled Pierre, who made 1 of 2 free-throw attempts with two seconds remaining for the game's final point.

Smith and Chandler finished with 16 and 13 points for the Tigers, who also got eight points from Odom, three points from Woods and two points each from Andersen-Davis and Manns.

Manns led the team in rebounds with nine, while Chandler grabbed six. Andersen-



Garrison Smith (far left) and Jackson Andersen-Davis (center) apply defensive pressure against Branford's Anthony Bailey.

Davis and Woods each had five out seven and six assists, rebounds.

Odom and Pierre dished

See UCHS, page 14

ADDISON

Continued from page 12

Durham school will feel like home.

Well, it won't feel like home in one way. This past Monday, for example, the high and low temperatures in Durham were 40 and 22 degrees, with snow showers at night.

"Weather is one of the biggest things," Addison said when asked what he'll have to adjust to.

Addison is ready to face the weather and any other challenges he'll face because he has a family and community behind.

More importantly, he has a reliance upon God.

"I wouldn't be here without Him," Addison said. "It's as simple as that."

God was mentioned by almost everyone who spoke at the Dec. 7 ceremony.

Addison's brother Iyen, a standout running back himself at Bradford High School, where he's a junior, said God had a purpose for his brother's life — a purpose that Gino stuck to. Iyen said at each level of football, coaches tried to get Gino to play another position, such as linebacker or tight end.

"They tried to take him off of what God had given him," Iyen



Gino Addison (center) is pictured with his parents, Louis Parks and Latasha Addison.

said. "He was on His path. They said, 'Gino, you can't do that. Gino, you can't do this. You're too big to do this and that.' They doubted him, but God is a miracle worker."

Gino Addison's mother, Latasha Addison, encouraged her son to continue to put his faith in God during the next phase of his life's journey, saying, "Remember to put God first, and He will do the rest."

Grandmother Valara Petteway talked of how God has used Addison to show others that with God, anything is possible. With an eye toward the young people in attendance, Petteway said, "Let this be a lesson to you

— that you can do anything. As Iyen said, God has a place for (Gino). Nobody can put him in a different position."

Mosley told Addison, "Keep pushing. God's got you in this position for a reason. Keep Him first. There's nothing but success with Him."

Addison said putting God first and believing in himself got him to this moment, but he still finds it kind of hard to believe that he is getting the chance to play at the next level.

"It truly hasn't sunk in yet," Addison said. "It's a feeling like no other. I don't know how to describe it."



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UCHS

Continued from page 13

respectively. Smith had five steals to go along with three assists. Union entered the game off a 72-55 win over visiting Fort White on Dec. 12. The Tigers got off to a fast start against a team that was a Rural Class state semifinalist last season, scoring 22 points to the Indians' five. Union led by 22 points at the half. Chandler was on fire from the field, making 11 of 15 field-goal attempts to finish with 30 points. The Tigers also got 12 points from Smith, nine points from Pierre, six points each from Odom and Erick Lasseter, five points from Manns and four points from Woods. Manns blocked five shots and grabbed 15 rebounds, while Chandler, Lasseter, Odom and Pierre each had five rebounds. Smith led the team in assists with eight, while Odom



Adrian Manns pulls down a rebound for Union.

and Pierre had six and four, respectively.

The Tigers played Dixie County this past Monday and will travel to Starke to play Bradford on Friday, Dec. 19, at 7:30 p.m., following a junior varsity game at 6 p.m.

KHHS

Continued from page 12

rebounds, while Barry and Hill each had seven. Ford, who had six rebounds, led Keystone in steals with three. Barry and Tochterman scored 17 and 14 points, respectively, in a 73-62 loss to visiting West Nassau on Dec. 10. Ford scored 12 points, while the Indians also got nine points from Bacorn, four points from Harnage and three points each from Hill and McClure. Bacorn led the team in rebounds with nine, while Barry and Tochterman each had seven. Harnage grabbed five rebounds. Barry and Tochterman blocked three and two shots, respectively. Ford led Keystone in steals with four. Keystone will host Chieffland on Friday, Dec. 19, at 7:30 p.m. That game follows a junior varsity girls game at 3:30 p.m., a JV boys game at 4:30 p.m. and a varsity girls game at 6 p.m.

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