

Bradford County Telegraph

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Thursday, February 16, 2023

144th year, 25th Issue — \$1

Morning fire destroys apartments in Starke

An early morning fire caused significant damage to a Starke apartment building Tuesday morning, but fortunately no one was injured.

At 6:25 a.m. Feb. 14, firefighters from Starke and Bradford County were alerted to a fire in a two-story apartment building after the 911 communications center received a call for help. Starke Engine 1 arrived moments later to heavy fire coming from the attic and roof of the structure. Starke police officers, arriving just ahead of Engine 1, assisted two occupants from the building.

Firefighters made an aggressive attack on the fire, but the building construction complicated matters. "The fire was contained to the attic," said Fire Chief Gary Wise. "The tongue and groove construction in the ceilings made this fire a difficult one to fight. Our crews did a great job controlling it."

Additional crews from Bradford County Fire Rescue as well as a ladder

truck from Clay County Fire Rescue worked through the day to extinguish remaining hot spots and thoroughly check the building for any signs of embers or pockets of fire.

The original call to 911 was from a resident who heard noises in the attic and thought someone may have been on the roof. After 911 dispatchers asked more questions, they determined the building was on fire.

The home, built in 1930, was constructed with hardwoods and that created issues for firefighters. Getting water into the attic was difficult initially and required extensive efforts. "I can't say enough about these guys," said Chief Wise. "This was a difficult blaze, but they made a great stop."

The fire is under investigation and no damage estimate was immediately available.

Prepared by Michael Heeder, city of Starke. Photo courtesy of Bradford County Fire Rescue/Gigi Woods.



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WORTH NOTING

Bradford Co. district spelling bee to be held on Feb. 16

Bradford County Schools' district-wide spelling bee will be held Thursday, Feb. 16, at 6 p.m. in the Bradford High School auditorium. Admission is free.

The event will consist of 12 participants (the top-three finishers at the school-level spelling bees):

—Lawtey Elementary: Anniston Merrell (winner), Dawson Sullivan (runner-up), Kingsley Hendricks (third place).

—Southside Elementary: Danielle McClenaghan (winner), Brayden Hart (runner-up), Trevor Holland (third place).

—Starke Elementary: Amelia Cooper (winner), Robert Dalager (runner-up), Virginia Hancock (third place).

—Bradford Middle: Jade Brown (winner), Bradylyn Johnson (runner-up), Nicholas Salazar (third place).

James Gallion (Lawtey), Sebastian Patterson (Southside) and Callan Phillips (Starke) are alternates, who'll fill in if someone from their respective schools is unable to participate.

Two food distributions announced

Two communitywide food distributions hosted by Feeding Northeast Florida and True Vine Ministry will take place next week. The first distribution is Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 9 a.m. at the Bradford County Fairgrounds. The second distribution is Thursday, Feb. 23, at 9 a.m. at the Philadelphia Baptist Church in Lawtey.

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

Bradford wants to consider mining regulations in its own

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

STARKE — Bradford County commissioners rejected assistance from Alachua County in revisiting its land development regulations for mining.

At the same time an application to mine phosphate in Bradford County was being submitted in 2016, opponents pleaded with the commission to enact a moratorium until the perceived inadequacies of the regulations on mining could be addressed.

Union County commissioners did halt any applications until it revised its land development regulations. The mining company sued, and while that played out, the application in Bradford

moved no closer to a hearing.

Now, both applications have been withdrawn, but those interested in protecting natural resources in and downstream from Bradford County are no less adamant that Bradford join Union in enacting tougher regulations.

Following news of the application's withdrawal in Bradford County, Alachua County commissioners voted to write Bradford and offer support in drafting and adopting "more resource protective regulations."

"Union County accepted a similar request from Alachua County a few years ago, and we provided data and analysis, drafting and other technical assistance related to the adoption of land development regulations and comprehensive plan policies in Union County designed to protect our shared

water resources from the detrimental effects of mining and other uses," Alachua County Chair Anna Prizzia wrote in a Jan. 31 letter to Bradford County.

Commissioner Chris Dougherty said the concept of "home rule" means that Tallahassee — to a certain extent — stays out of Bradford County's business, and he felt the same should apply to Alachua County.

"I think that we should very respectfully just decline their offer and move forward, working with the planning council, but also making decisions on our own," Dougherty said.

Commissioner Danny Riddick said he had already been in contact with Scott Koons at the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

who indicated there would be no problem amending the regulations. The planning council also assisted in the Union County revisions.

While there was some question at the end of last year if Bradford was going to move forward the planning council or shop elsewhere for those services, the commission approved an extension of its agreement with the planning council in January for \$23,500.

The offer from Alachua shows that there are still observers outside of Bradford County interested in how this plays out who will likely hold the planning council responsible for fulfilling it regional mission.



Pictured above is the middle school parliamentary procedure and opening and closing ceremonies teams with their first place ribbons. The team members include Kendyl Brannen, Bayley Staier, Mia Kent, Sierra Mohl, Hayden Robinson, Camryn Tempest, Brady Tetstone, Cane Reddish, Saige Waters, Cali Tomlinson, Jamie Lynn Courson, Paislee Stalnaker, Brylee Elixson, Gracelynn McGee and Eleanora Boccaneli.



Pictured above is the high school parliamentary procedure team and the prepared public speaker, Kindall Johnson, with their first place ribbons. Front row (l-r): Reagan Robinson, Ella Dicks, Cailynn Boggs, Kindall Johnson, Abigail Williams and Macie Wilson. Back row (l-r): Perry Johnson, Nolan Beighsley, Joseph Harris, Kutter Durrance and Tanner Connell.

Lake Butler FFA wins at district competition

The Lake Butler FFA Chapter traveled to New Oak Grove Baptist Church on Jan. 31, to compete at the district level. The chapter wiped the board clean, with every team placing first in their event. The middle school chapter competed in both parliamentary procedure and opening and closing ceremonies. The high school chapter also had a parliamentary procedure team, as well as a prepared public speaker. These four teams will continue working over the spring semester to prepare for the FFA state convention in June.



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SRWMD hosting meetings to discuss updated flood risk maps

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

STARKE — Troy Roberts with the Suwannee River Water Management District told county commissioners Feb. 7 that FEMA has worked with the district to revise flood risk maps that will be open for public input next week.

The maps are also used to educate current and future property owners with information on their flood risk.

Some areas within the Santa Fe River Basin have been revised in recent years, while others have gone untouched for more than a decade. There are several reasons for revisiting the maps on a regular basis, he said.

"Sometimes technology is upgraded. It lets us have a better

look at the land and what that looks like and how potential floods impact residents and people who own certain lands. Other times it's development. Obviously, more development can create issues for flooding as well," he said.

These reviews result in changes to flood zones that may make some happy and others not so much, Roberts said.

"Some people here are going to be very happy, because they'll find that they have been in a flood zone for the past 10, 15, 20 years. These new maps are going to come out, and they will no longer be in a flood zone. Conversely, there are people who are currently not in flood zones that due to upgrades and, again, these new maps will find they are in flood zones," he said.

The purpose of the upcoming meetings is to accept public feedback.

"There are some people that can come to us and say, 'Hey, I don't think I'm in a flood zone. I've been here for 60 years, and I've never seen any flooding.' That gives us a reason to go back and look at it and potentially make a change to their location," Roberts said.

Reviewing your property

You can review the status of your property and any proposed changes by following these steps.

1. Visit www.SRWMDFloodReport.com/Virtual.
2. Scroll to the SRWMD Flood Report tab.

3. Select the Santa Fe Watershed (ARCGIS), and search for your property address.

4. Ensure the "Changes Since Last Effective" layer is turned on for your specific county to see projected changes. Areas in red are new additions into a flood zone; areas in green have been removed from a flood zone.

If you see there is a proposed change to your property, you are encouraged to attend any of the three upcoming meetings. (See below.)

More on the meetings

Local property owners are

encouraged to take part in the development of preliminary flood risk maps for the Santa Fe Watershed at a series of meetings this month.

Representatives from the Suwannee River Water Management District and Federal Emergency Management Agency will be available to discuss the ongoing development of flood risk maps for the region. Residents who live in certain areas of Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Gilchrist, Suwannee and Union counties could be impacted by updated flood maps.

Feedback received during the meeting will be taken into consideration for the development of the preliminary maps, which are expected to be available to review later this year.

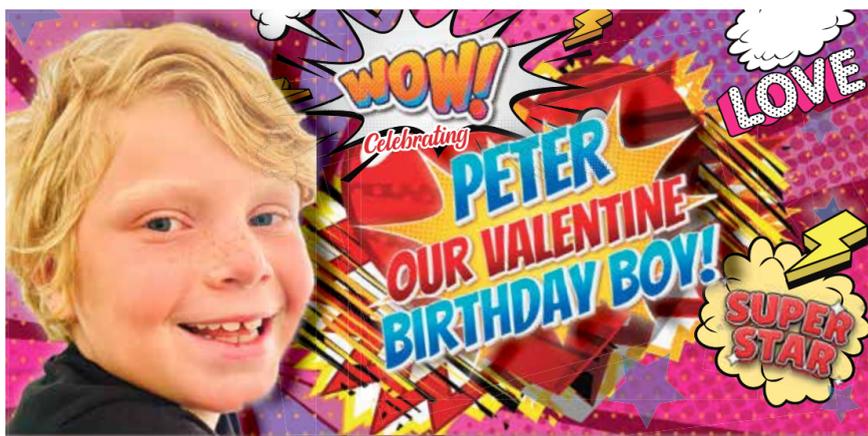
Three public meetings have been scheduled for residents to provide feedback.

Feb. 21 — Bradford County Courthouse in Starke — 5 to 8 p.m.

Feb. 22 — James A. Lewis Commission Chambers in Alachua — 5 to 8 p.m.

Feb. 23 — Westside Community Center in Lake City — 5 to 8 p.m.

For those who cannot attend in-person, you can submit feedback up to 30 days following the meetings to Leroy. Marshall@srwmd.org, Kristen. Martinenza@fema.dhs.gov, emmanuel.caraballoramos@fema.dhs.gov and brad.heilwagen@wsp.com.



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Conservation board joining flood map discussion

The Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 4:30 p.m. at the extension office. After a 15-minute meeting the BSWCD meeting

will move to the County Commission Chambers at the courthouse to participate as a board in the Suwannee River Water Management District Flood Risk Assessment Study presentation and discussion.

Contact Paul Still at stillpe@aol.com or 904 368-0291 for more information.

Guitarist Peter Fletcher performs

For those of us who love to listen to talented musicians, the event happening on Monday, Feb. 27, at Bradford County Public Library will be music to your soul. This is one of those times when you can close your eyes and allow the sounds to lift your spirit or sit wide-eyed, transfixed on the magical movements bringing the melody to life. Be sure to mark your calendars, the not-to-be-missed performance by classical guitarist Peter Fletcher begins at 4:30 p.m.

Fletcher, is bringing his audience friendly solo recital to Bradford County by special request. Fletcher, a classical guitarist based in Detroit and New York City, performs over 80 concerts a year. Fletcher's recordings on the Centaur Records and Towerhill Recordings labels have received critical acclaim.

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UFHealth
HEART AND VASCULAR CARE

From backyard chickens to telehealth, extension office improves quality of life

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

STARKE — Extension agents, including Director Samara Purvis, recently reminded county commissioners about how much their office serves the people of Bradford County.

The UF/IFAS Bradford County Extension is a federal, state and county partnership, Purvis said — one that is dedicated to developing knowledge in agriculture, human and natural resources, and the life sciences, and making that knowledge accessible to sustain and enhance the quality of life in the county.

“We are a team of extension faculty members, scientists, educators, administrative staff and volunteers all working to provide solutions for your life,” she said.

Livestock and natural resources agent Lizzie Whitehead introduced herself. A former member of 4-H and FFA, she said helping people every day is the best job she could have.

She assists livestock producers in making decisions, for example, helping them to be more efficient, save money and raise profits. She visits farms to identify harmful flora, takes soil and hay samples for analysis, and offers advice about fertilization.

Whitehead works with other livestock agents throughout the region to develop and present programs on livestock, horses, forages, etc. During one workshop on beef and forages, 43 participants showed up, she said.

“There’s not that many producers in Bradford County, but I think a lot of them did show up, and they wanted to come and learn,” she said. They heard presentations from specialists as well as extension agents in surrounding areas.

As she teaches, Whitehead is committed to continue learning so she can share what she has learned with others. That includes the youth she works with weekly, including helping them prepare for competitions, and accompanying them as well.

Upcoming programs include a pesticide applicator continuing

education course for pesticide license holders in this and surrounding counties. A class for beginners is also planned. Following the fair, Whitehead will join the North Florida Outdoor Expo as an instructor on natural resources. At the fair, she will put on the livestock show for Bradford and Union county youth, with an invitation extended to young people in other counties.

For those struggling with the price of eggs and anyone who has ever been interested in raising chickens, Whitehead is planning a workshop on raising and caring for backyard chickens. She will also work with other agents in the region to hold a livestock forage field day in July.

Luke Harlow began last fall as the horticulture and small farms agent for Bradford County, but he’s been involved with the extension service since 2015 and has a background in irrigation, landscaping and pest control. He said his job is split three ways, with one being Florida friendly landscaping. He works with residents on their lawns and ornamental landscaping, identifying issues and offering advice. He also leads the volunteers in the Master Gardener program, who assist with community projects, including the fair.

Harlow also works with small farmers on crop production like strawberries. He talked about “sap” testing the berries to determine their nutrients and the resulting recommendations for water and fertilizer.

“That in turn actually saves them money because they’re not just throwing fertilizer on the crops. We’re actually kind of helping them get the right amount for that maturity stage of that plant,” he said.

He’s presented several programs in local community centers since he began, and more are scheduled, including a beginners course on vegetable gardens. He will be working on a community garden at RJE as that restoration project progresses. In the meantime, he’s looking forward to his first fair in the county and his role in

the horticulture contests with the Master Gardeners.

Purvis has worked as the county’s 4-H agent, but transitioned back to her original specialty — family and consumer sciences.

As part of her presentation, she announced a new Telehealth program at the extension office where residents can meet with doctors out of town over the internet. Sometimes, patients don’t have the transportation to reach the doctors they need, she said. If they use a service, they may wait hours to be picked up following and appointment. Purvis said they are taking the middleman out and putting patients in touch with doctors.

What makes this experience unique are the tools available at the extension office allowing patients to check vital statistics like blood pressure under the direction of the physician. There’s even a camera for oral and auditory examinations.

They are also focusing on cancer prevention and treatment with the College of Education, targeting colorectal, uterine and skin cancer. This involves engaging community partners to reduce cancer rates through education and by promoting evidence-based interventions like screening and treatment.

Purvis works with local schools to promote health and wellness to families.

“Since I have a culinary arts degree and food is my heart, this is one of the areas that is real close to me — to teach people how to eat and how to eat healthy to prevent the onset of diseases,” she said.

She uses her knowledge to teach food safety and preservation, which can help families save money with food prices being so high. Knowing how to handle food safely is also important for those who want to work in the restaurant industry as well. She is also part of a program that is preparing volunteers to teach these skills.

As a partner with the Community Health and Wellness Hub, the extension agents will provide programming there, and



Behind the transformation

Being great at what you do often means greater challenges to come. This year, Leisa Sims and her crew at It’s Your Day Bridal and Formal Boutique were challenged to transform a conference center into a medieval castle for the annual Chamber of Commerce banquet, and they succeeded beyond anyone’s expectations. “It has been an honor to be chosen to decorate for the Chamber banquets the last three years. The decorations we supplied along with the It’s Your Day crew to do all the work of putting them up and taking them down is a lot of work. We love what we do though,” said owner Leisa Sims. “I have an amazing team of hard workers. Some of the decorations were even handmade by myself, my husband, David, Katelyn and Harley.” Pictured above (l-r) are Katelyn Sims, Leisa Sims, Reese Robinson and Harley Davis. This is the everyday team. Many more helped decorate, including David Sims, Luke Smith, Krista Fort, Angel Padgett and Heather Olin. “These were the people who decorated and devoted a lot of hard work to give the Chamber banquet the amazing medieval feeling it gave as you entered,” said Leisa Sims, expressing gratitude for the opportunity.

they work with Farm Share to distribute food to those in need. Purvis plans on relaunching Let’s Walk Bradford in the spring, an exercise program that began last fall. In the meantime, she’s working with low income families on filing their taxes.

As for 4-H, Purvis called it the best kept secret, but one that needs to be told. For those who don’t know about the program, she encouraged them to visit 4H.org. Through a variety of programs in agriculture, science and civic engagement, 4-H gives kids a voice to express themselves and make their lives and communities better.

Purvis said each extension

agent in Bradford County shares their specialty working with 4-H youth. What they need is a 4-H agent who can work on leadership, citizenship and workforce development, she said.

“It’s important that we keep all the things that we have, but we really build our kids up to prepare them to launch,” she said.

Some of the recent 4-H projects Purvis mentioned included baking 40 loaves of bread for

families and a giving tree that blessed eight senior citizens and 32 kids at Christmas, the clothing closet at Starke Elementary.

Throughout the presentation, commissioner asked questions and thanked the agents for the many ways in which they serve the community.

For more information on the UF/IFAS Bradford County Extension, please visit <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/bradford> or call 904-966-6224.

Westbound Call Street closed starting Wednesday

As part of the Florida Department of Transportation’s Starke Railroad Overpass Interchange Improvements project, eastbound Call Street will reopen and westbound Call Street (State Road 230) between U.S. 301 and Cherry Street will close to traffic starting Wednesday, Feb. 15.

Additionally, Walnut Street and Thompson Street will be closed between Call Street and Jefferson Street. Closures will begin at 6 a.m. and last 2-3 weeks, weather and unforeseen circumstances

permitting.

Traffic will be detoured during the closure as follows:

Westbound Call Street (S.R. 230) Detour: Westbound Call Street will be closed with local traffic access only from Cherry Street to U.S. 301. Vehicles travelling westbound will turn right onto Cherry Street, turn left onto Jackson Street, left onto Walnut Street, right onto Jefferson Street and proceed to U.S. 301.

Southbound Thompson Street Detour: Vehicles travelling southbound on Thompson Street toward Call

Street will turn right onto Jefferson Street, turn left onto U.S. 301, turn left onto S.R. 100 and proceed to Thompson Street.

Southbound Walnut Street Detour: Vehicles seeking to travel southbound on Walnut Street toward Call Street will turn right onto Jefferson Street, turn left onto U.S. 301, turn left onto S.R. 100, make a U-turn at Thompson Street onto westbound S.R. 100 and proceed to Walnut Street.

S.R. 230 Delivery Truck Detour: During westbound Call Street closure, delivery

trucks will travel regular detour but are expected to park in the closed westbound lane during delivery in order to allow for traffic flow.

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Lake Region

Appointment to Keystone Heights Airport board criticized

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Telegraph Staff Writer

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS—The chair, vice-chair, manager and a former Keystone Heights Airport board member criticized the city council's January appointment of Rex Siemer to the airport board during the council's February 6 meeting.

Last month, the council appointed Seimer, in addition to Charlie Van Zant and David Dagenais, to the board.

Siemer replaced incumbent board member Chad Rischar who also applied to be reappointed.

Airport board chair David Kirkland said he was disappointed in the council's decision because council members did not discuss the appointment with him nor with Airport Manager Maria Searcy before replacing Rischar.

Kirkland added that based on his conversations with council members, he discovered that Rischar's removal from the airport board was in retaliation for his departure from DRMP, the city's engineer of record.

"I'm puzzled as to why you would punish someone for accepting the job of a lifetime to better take care of his family," Kirkland said. "A couple of you shared that you got a call from our county commissioner recommending Mr. Seimer and apparently that swayed your vote. Sadly, none of these are even related to the seat and its responsibilities."

Kirkland added that Rischar has managed the airport's timber resources and conservation

efforts. "For unrelated reasons previously mentioned, you appointed someone else with no silvicultural experience," he said.

Airport Vice Chair Scott Fryar credited Rischar for contributing to the facility's fiscal turnaround.

Fryar added that losing Rischar's expertise in land management might force the airport to hire a consultant.

"He's also worked with Operation Outdoor Freedom (organizing) a hunting trip for wounded or disabled veterans, and I think he's been doing this for several years now. He's made a big difference."

Airport Manager Maria Searcy seconded Kirkland's claim that council members have always reached out to her and Kirkland about potential board members for past appointments.

"Something different happened this time," she said, "and I don't understand why we have always been given the consideration to be able for you to hear our opinions about how our business runs. We're out there every single day."

Rischar told council members that when he first applied for the board seat in 2015, he interviewed with Kirkland for an hour and a half, explaining his experience in land management.

"My application was not even entertained during the January meeting," he added. "Provided eight years of service and thousands of hours dedicated to the airport, I would at least expect my application to be noted in the public record."

Later in the meeting, Vice

Chair Steve Hart motioned to reopen the application process for the seat. However, his motion failed for lack of a second.

In other news from the February 6 meeting of the Keystone Heights City Council:

Key to the city: Answers Resource Facility

Mayor Karen Lake read a proclamation summarizing the work of Answers Resource Facility.

Lake called staff members of the group, who received a key to the city, "sisters in the trenches because we work with people who may not come from the same places that some of us come from, and so over time, we've done a lot of work together, and I just want to recognize the work you have done and are continuing to do."

In the proclamation, Lake noted that the nonprofit's founder Joanna Weldon started the organization in 2011 when she realized women and

families in the Lake Region needed compassion and someone who could see their worth regardless of their circumstances.

"Ms. Weldon and her staff have stood with many families as they walked through difficult days," Lake added.

The mayor said the group hosts a weekly girls' club at Keystone Heights Junior-Senior High School that helps young

women to recognize their value and helps them find purpose in their lives.

"Answers offers life-skills education in which participants can earn rewards like gas cards, diapers and wipes," Lake said, "and these classes can be taken at Answers facilities or on personal devices."

The mayor said the nonprofit offers pregnancy and sexual health support services to women, including pregnancy tests, obstetrical ultrasound, and HIV and STD testing.

Weldon told the council the recognition was special to her since she grew up in Keystone Heights.

"To God be the glory in every single situation that we've gotten to be a part of in regard to the women, the men and the families in our community," she said. "We are seeing miracle after miracle happen each and every day at Answers."

Solicitation ordinance approved

The council approved the second reading to an upgrade of its solicitation ordinance.

The previous ordinance focused on door-to-door salespeople and required anyone seeking orders from residences to obtain a city permit.

The updated ordinance does away with rules governing door-to-door sales and instead focuses on people interacting with traffic on public rights of way.

It prohibits "physical interaction between a pedestrian and an occupant of a motor vehicle, including the transfer of any product, material or monies, while the motor vehicle is located on the

traveled portion of a public road, street, or highway within the city limits of Keystone Heights."

The new law also prohibits people from standing in or occupying a median.

The new law makes infractions of the ordinance a misdemeanor, punishable by up to 60 days in jail and a fine of up to \$500.

County impact fees approved

The council approved an interlocal agreement with Clay County allowing the county to collect impact fees within Keystone Heights.

County Manager Howard Wanamaker and Assistant County Manager Troy Nagle

explained the fees to council members.

During the subsequent discussion, several council members expressed their desire that if the fees were collected within the city, then projects supported by the fees should occur within the city limits.

Wanamaker responded that projects built outside the city limits would still benefit Keystone Heights residents.

He said the planned construction of a new county fire station in Penny Farms would reduce the number of central Clay County calls firefighters at Station 11 in Keystone Heights would have to respond to. He said that now, firefighters and paramedics from Keystone Heights, McRae and Camp Blanding respond to calls north of the Lake Region.

"So, with the anticipation of the build within Penny Farms of a fire station and the apparatus and the firemen that are there will ease the burden of Station 11," he said.

Nagle added that the planned regional sports park north of the intersection of State Roads 21 and 16 would also benefit Keystone Heights residents. He said that out-of-town participants in events at the park need places to stay, places to eat and places to get gas, "and that brings a revenue stream to all of us."

In-person voting for April election eliminated

The council voted to have the city's April 11 election as a mail-in ballot only, eliminating in-person voting.

According to a memo from Supervisor of Elections Chris Chambliss, the city can conduct a mail-only election if the ballot contains only referendums and no candidates.

For Keystone Heights's April 11 election, the only seat up for voting was the mayor's seat, and only one candidate qualified for the seat: Nina Rodenroth.

Four charter amendments are on the ballot.

"No candidates in the upcoming Keystone Heights Municipal Super Tuesday election," wrote Chambliss, "affords the city council the option of conducting a mail ballot election for the remaining referendums."

The elections chief added that a mail-only election would save the city around \$1,000 in costs.

"I'm not in favor of doing it for every election," said council member Tony Brown, "but this is

not an election; this is for charter amendments. This wouldn't set a precedent for elections when we actually are voting for a person or persons. This is just a one-time thing, a one-and-done."

Keys to the city criticized

Tony Brown told Lake that the council's monthly practice of recognizing a person of impact in Keystone Heights and awarding keys to the city to those individuals may diminish the value of the award.

Since August, the council has awarded keys to the city to Seeds of Grace co-founder Terri Sapp, Lake Area Ministries, Johnny's Barbecue owner Johnny Mason, former mayor Mary Lou Hildreth, ex-council member Paul Yates, retired business owner Doug Wise, Mission of the Dirt Road Pastor Carey Morford, former school board member Tina Bullock, Twisted Oaks Rescue founder Jessie Shekels and Answers Resource Facility.

"When we started this key to the city, it was very good," Brown said. "I didn't know we were going to do it every month, and I have a concern about maybe it's getting a little bit regular."

Brown recommended lessening the frequency of the recognition.

"We've never really given out a lot of keys," he continued. "It's good to recognize people, but it's gotten regular."

Council member Chris Thompson said she agreed with Brown and complained that even though all council members were asked to nominate a person of impact, the mayor decided on whom to award the recognition.

"We were not given the chance to vote as a council on who got it," she said.

Lake responded that she received a list of nominations from the city manager and is working through that list in making the awards.

"We weren't filtering anybody's list," she said.

"I would have preferred to have seen the names of who was being considered in advance rather than just being told at a meeting this is whom we're going to vote for," added Vice Mayor Hart.

Hart said that since Lake has only two months remaining in her term, he would be willing, as a professional courtesy, to allow the practice to continue through April.

See AIRPORT, page 5

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Cell phones, cameras and social media: Sheriff discusses trends in law enforcement

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Telegraph Staff Writer

STARKE—Bradford County Sheriff Gordon Smith and Col. Brad Smith said their agency continues to respond to technological changes and has benefited from many of those innovations.

The officers discussed several opportunities and challenges law enforcement has taken on recently and said one of the most severe challenges their agency dealt with lately had little to do with technology.

Recruiting challenges

Col. Smith said law enforcement is still recovering from two state and national developments that impacted the agencies' recruiting and staffing efforts: the George Floyd death and the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting.

He said the cultural fallout from the George Floyd incident caused many young people to shy away from law enforcement careers.

"We saw a dramatic shift away from people wanting to apply here, and we had to actively recruit and go out and try and find people," Col. Smith said. "Even the numbers of people going through the police academy had diminished quite a bit."

Smith added that graduating classes from Santa Fe College's police academy dwindled from between 25 and 30 to between six and eight.

"You're like: What is going on?" Smith recalled. "We'd never had to recruit before."

The sheriff added that after the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Act passed in 2021, his agency had to find eight additional deputies quickly.

The new statute required a law enforcement officer in every public school.

"That was our biggest hiring at one time ever," he said.

Both officers said police academies appear to be returning to normal class levels, but it will take some time for graduates to

reach the numbers seen before 2020.

Col. Smith said last year's legislative session in Tallahassee appropriated money for fiscally constrained counties, and the Bradford County Sheriff's Office received over \$500,000 in additional funding from the appropriation. He added that the extra money helped the office compete with higher-paying law enforcement agencies like the St. Johns County sheriff's Office.

"We saw that have an immediate, positive impact," he said. "Right now, our starting salary for a law enforcement officer is higher than Clay County because they didn't receive a fiscally constrained (appropriation)."

Col. Smith added that Florida's \$5,000 one-time bonus for new officers also helped the Bradford office, with four of the agency's new deputies getting the bonus.

"Two of them were explorers that we'd been developing for many years that finally came of age," he said. One of them was retired military; I think it was Army. And then the fourth one was a correctional officer with us that we sent through the police academy, and then it was his first time starting in law enforcement."

People are smarter

The sheriff said technology has served to educate the people deputies interact with.

He said younger people ask deputies more questions and are more knowledgeable, which some may misinterpret as disrespect.

"I think they question things a lot more now," the sheriff said. "I don't necessarily take that as a negative. Nowadays, everything's at their fingertips. They go to YouTube or Google to see what they're looking for."

Smith said that when a young person is pulled over, their first response is: "Why did you stop me?"

"If a cop would've stopped me back then, I would have said, 'I'm sorry, sir, what did I do?'" he added. "They're smarter

than we were at that age. We had encyclopedias. They have Google and YouTube."

Body cams

Both officers said body cameras have revolutionized the collection of evidence in criminal cases and have assisted the agency in enforcing its policies with its personnel.

"The body cam has been the best thing we have ever done as far as evidence," the sheriff said.

Col. Smith added that deputies, at first, were resistant to the new technology.

"A lot of the officers didn't want to do it, thinking it was just going to be disruptive to them," the colonel said. "We have seen them way more times save an officer during a complaint-type of a situation than be detrimental. I would venture to say in the 95% range, it shows the officers did what they were supposed to do within the policies and within the law and were professional in doing it."

Both men said they have received fewer complaints about deputies since officers began wearing body cameras.

"I don't get many anymore," the sheriff said, "maybe two or three a year. I've got a big T.V. in my office. When a (complainant) comes in, I get the video, project it up to the T.V., and we see what happened."

Smith said the only recent complaint about a deputy he could recall was that of Jacob Desue, who resigned after body cam and dash cam footage showed the officer violating agency policy after pulling over a mother driving between Starke and Lawtey for speeding.

The sheriff said another benefit of body cams is that deputies can use the video while writing their reports, increasing the accuracy of the documents.

Witness statements, victim claims, defendant statements, 911 calls, deputies' GPS locations, Miranda warnings—they're all recorded.

The GPS data is particularly useful for investigating complaints about deputies not



Deputies arrested a man they say stole a trailer from the Starke Golf and Country Club after cameras captured the theft on video and the sheriff's office posted an image of the crime on social media. Photo: Bradford County Sheriff's Office.

timely responding to calls or complaints of deputies speeding.

Ring cameras

The sheriff added that private surveillance cameras, such as the Ring cameras near the front doorbells of residences, have also revolutionized law enforcement.

"We used to canvas the neighborhood when a crime occurred," Smith said, "go-door-to-door asking people if they heard or saw anything. Now we do a video canvas."

"Just a week ago, at the country club," Smith recalled, "had a guy steal a trailer right there at the golf course during the day."

The sheriff said cameras captured the suspect's every move.

"We've got him sitting in the parking lot for nearly an hour, watching. He slowly gets out and does some things, and he sees nobody's looking. He hooks up the trailer. We've got him driving away. He actually drives by my house and past my son and my wife on their bicycles. My Ring camera catches it."

Smith said his agency posted images of the crime on social media, and within 24 hours, the defendant was in jail, and the trailer was back at the country club.

Like many of his neighbors, the sheriff has deployed Blink cameras around his home that are activated by motion detectors.

He added that between his own cameras and his neighbors, everyone passing through his neighborhood is tracked.

"We assume there's a camera everywhere," he said. "Technology works."

The sheriff added that courts are restricting the use of cameras in cases when a property owner's camera is viewing his neighbor's private property.

"(The courts) are saying if they have a reasonable expectation of privacy, then you're intruding on them," the sheriff said.

In addition, some camera owners could be prosecuted for voyeurism if their cameras peer into their neighbors' homes.

The sheriff said he hopes to one day stand up a real-time crime center like those in larger agencies like Clay County.

The Green Cove Springs-based agency operates a control room with live video feeds from roads, schools and other public locations. It is also obtaining

permission from business owners to tap into private surveillance cameras. In addition to monitoring crime in real-time, the center has analysts that look for trends and predict where crimes might occur next.

Cell phones

The sheriff said mobile phones continue to be a valuable tool for solving crimes.

"Every child now from middle school up has got a cell phone in their hands," he said. "Everything they do is tracked on that cell phone. Whether it be Snapchat where you think it's gone. Well, it's gone to you and me, but we send those phones off. It's a treasure trove of information."

Smith said judges are now restricting the type of information investigators may view on cell phones.

See TRENDS, page 8

AIRPORT

Continued from page 4

Lake said that although she has been mayor for five years, the person-of-impact recognition has only occurred since August 2022.

"These are people I've worked with over five years," she said, "some of them quite extensively, and I feel like everyone who works in our community needs to be recognized at some point in time."

"So yeah, two more months, one more agency, and you guys can do whatever you want."

Council member Bobby Brown said recognizing citizens who contribute to the community

is important, and he hopes the practice continues after Lake departs from the council.

Airport seeking grants for road, utilities

Airport Board Chair David Kirkland told council members that he and Airport Manager Maria Searcy are working on two appropriations requests for the facility.

One is a \$3 million request to build an additional access road to the airport's westside development in Bradford County. The potential project also includes turning lanes on State Road 100.

The second request is a \$30 million ask to hook airport properties to the water and sewer service the Clay County Utility Authority provides.

Airport manager resigning

City Manager Lynn Rutkowski announced that airport manager Maria Searcy is resigning.

The 12-year city employee will be moving to Largo with her family.

Rutkowski added that seeing Searcy leave will be personally hard on her since she and the outgoing airport manager started working for the city around the same time.



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UNION COUNTY

Andrews named Teacher of the Year for UCHS and District

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Times Staff Writer

A person never really knows where life is going to take them, despite dreams, intentions and preparation, and sometimes they end up in a place where they can do all the things they desired all along but in a setting not at all like their original vision.

This is true for the Union County High School Teacher of the Year, who has also been named Union County School District Teacher of the Year — Shawn Andrews.

Andrews is a lifelong Union County native, graduating Union County High School in 2007. He left for a time after graduation to attend the Baptist College of Florida, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Christian studies. He then attended Southern Seminary, where he earned a Master of Divinity degree. He was ordained as a Southern Baptist minister and served as a youth minister at Bethel Baptist in Alabama for two years, but then returned to Union County after that assignment.

Back home, he began substitute teaching in the school district in October 2015. After a time, he was offered a long-term substitute position in the math department by then UCHS Principal Mike Ripplinger (who had been Andrews government teacher when he was a student). He took the position and, after about a month (in February 2016), he was offered the position on a permanent basis.

"I really enjoyed the people I was working with and the whole math department," Andrews said. "I especially enjoyed working with the young people in a different capacity (than as a youth pastor). I have always had a passion for helping kids be more."



UCHS and UC School District Teacher of the Year, Shawn Andrews

He started out teaching a few different math classes, but soon ended up teaching geometry exclusively in 2018 and since has been teaching six classes a day in the subject. It is a good fit for both him and his students as the UCHS geometry program has scored fifth in the state (excluding university-based schools) for the past two years.

Andrews married his high school sweetheart, Cindy, and the couple has three children. He said he is an avid reader, reading science fiction, mysteries, theology and books about sports. He has recently learned to crochet to relax and loves to make stuffed animals, including Pokémon characters, for young people. Although he never played a sport in school, he served as the Upwards Basketball Coach at his church, Hopeful Baptist Church in Lake City. At home he enjoys watching the Jacksonville Jaguars and the University of Florida play. Most of all, he says he enjoys the time he can spend with his family.

At UCHS, Andrews serves as a sophomore sponsor, a tally for

the Miss UCHS contest, a helper for the homecoming celebration, chairman of the math department and offers afterschool tutoring to any students who need a little extra assistance.

Andrews admits that he struggled with math as a student and really did not like it but came to the subject again as an adult and found it more enjoyable. When he began subbing, he realized he needed to refresh his knowledge and used the Kahn Academy on the Internet to re-teach himself the subject after so many years. He credits current UCHS Assistant Principal Zeke Scaff as his "geometry guru."

About his being named Teacher of the Year for the school district, Andrews said he was very happy for two reasons.

"It is really exciting to be named, but also humbling when I think that I was selected by my peers, who all know what a teacher has to go through to do their job, to represent them," Andrews said. "But I am also excited that I get to represent math, a subject that is considered hard to make engaging to students, and now the subject is finally getting recognized."

To make sure he engages his students, Andrews uses several teaching techniques. Some days he lectures and demonstrates solving problems on the board as is traditionally done in math classes. Other days the class works singly or in groups on projects illustrating what they are learning and offering examples.

"I plan to continue as a teacher for a long time," Andrews said. "I enjoy what I do and feel like I am fulfilling my purpose. I feel that whatever I do, so long as it is a good thing, is for God's glory and I think that helping young people achieve and succeed is a good thing."

Union Firefighter of the Year

Union County Fire Rescue honored Rob Koch as Firefighter of the Year 2022 at the Jan. 17 Union County Commission meeting. Commissioner Mac Johns introduced Lt. Mickey Foster, who in turn awarded Koch the plaque.

Foster discussed some of the criteria considered for choosing an honoree.

"Rob Koch was voted on by his peers. He has been with Union County EMS and Union County Fire Rescue some 25 years. Rob has worked with the county, running calls and assisting the community whenever possible. Anyone who knows Rob understands his enthusiasm for the job. He lives the core value each and every day," said Foster.



Lt. Mickey Foster (right) awards the Firefighter of the Year Award to Rob Koch at the Union County Commission meeting.



Commissioners Willie Croft, Ryan Perez, Jimmy Tallman, Channing Dobbs and Mac Johns are pictured with Firefighter of the Year Rob Koch and Lt. Mickey Foster.

Smith named UCHS School-Related Employee of the Year

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Times Staff Writer

The last decade, with the advances in technology and the increase in accessibility and affordability of technology has created many changes in local school districts and has brought about just as many changes in how students are taught and how they learn.

Books were once the mainstay of schools, but now they are less apparent in the learning environment. One place in a school that has been radically changed by the digital world is the school library — now the media center — and the school librarian — now known as the media specialist.

At Union County High School this year, the School-Related Employee of the Year works in the media center, helping students navigate the digital world in search of knowledge.

Wesley Smith is a 2015 UCHS graduate. He said he has always been interested in working in education and helping young people, so it seemed the thing to do for him to start substitute teaching soon after graduation. He started out at Lake Butler Middle School as a ESE aide, then after two and a half years he transitioned to the media center for another two and a half years. He then moved to the media center at UCHS, where he has worked for the past two years.

His title is media library aide, a position that has replaced that of a librarian at many schools. He runs the library, serving as a tech liaison between the



UCHS School Related Employee of the Year Wesley Smith

technologies on hand and the students. He is also the coordinator of the school's mental health curriculum, the debt collector, has his own period in the virtual school, is the textbook coordinator for the dual enrollment program and serves as a senior sponsor.

Smith said he thought at one time of becoming a band director — he plays clarinet, saxophone, baritone and percussion — but that did not work out, although he still supports the band whenever he can. Currently, he is working on a degree in psychology with the desire to become a guidance counselor. Until then he said he was happy in the media center, where he is in a perfect situation to get to know the students and develop a long-term rapport with many of them.

"Coming to the high school from the middle school made it possible for me to know students through much of their education," Smith said. "I have worked with the seniors this year since they were in the fifth grade, and the juniors since they were in the fourth grade. It's nice to see them grow and be able to build relationships with them. It's a unique perspective for me, seeing the school system from the other side and the process of how things get done, since I have moved from being a student to being a staff member. Also unique is having many of my former teachers as colleagues. It's nice to move from a student/teacher relationship to a co-worker relationship ... and I finally get to call them by their first names."

Smith's sister is a junior at UCHS and he is pleased that he has been able to be "part of her journey through school." The siblings eat lunch together most days and enjoy having each other close by.

As for being selected as the School-Related Employee of the Year for UCHS this year, Smith is very appreciative of the vote of confidence from his peers.

"I am very appreciative of my peers for selecting me as SRE of the year," Smith said. "I feel that it is based on the relationships I have built with them here at the high school. I value all of them as peers and friends and hope to spend my entire working life here — I don't want to go anywhere else."

Pine Hill Lodge honors cadets

LTC Adam Ali, CPT Emma Fulton, SFC Jayden Timm and CPL Chloe Harris presented their thoughts on the UCHS JROTC Program with enthusiasm to the members of Pine Hill Lodge No. 9 on Feb 7. Their success both statewide and nationally speaks highly of the top caliber and enthusiasm of the cadets and instructors. The donation made again this year by Pine Hill Lodge will help influence another top rating statewide and nationally.

Submitted by Ted Barber, Pine Hill Lodge secretary.



John McKibben, Worshipful Master of Pine Hill Lodge No. 9, presents Cadet LTC Adam Ali with donation for the JROTC Program at UCHS.

Father-daughter dance

Victory Christian Center of Lake Butler invites all fathers to bring your daughter(s) to the King and Princess Daddy Daughter Dance, which will be a memorable and wholesome event for fathers and daughters of all ages. It will take place on Friday, Feb. 24, at 6 p.m. at Pine

Grove Barn.

Register by Feb. 19 at <https://fs12.formsite.com/vcclakebutler/form8/index.html>. The cost is \$50 per couple.

Fish and grits served

Get fish and grits at a community drive-thru at the Bradford County Faith Community Center on Saturday, Feb. 25, from 2 to 5 p.m. (or until

out). The center is located at 721 Old Lawtey Road in Starke.

Church of God food distribution

Starke Church of God by Faith and Farm Share plan a food distribution on Thursday, Feb. 16, from 10–11:30 a.m. The church is located at 730 Old Lawtey Road in Starke. This is a drive-thru giveaway.

Union County COMMUNITY HEALTH SURVEY

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Survey link:
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Community prayer planned for first Mondays

Concerned Citizens of Bradford County will host community prayer on the first Monday of the month. Join the Concerned Citizens at noon in front of the RJE gymnasium, 1050 N. Pine St. in Starke. Everyone is invited.

Starke's Black History Month Celebration was a huge success

River Life Studio, Bradford Environmental Forum, Concerned Citizens of Bradford County Inc., and The Alligator Creek Garden Club are pleased with the successful outcome of the 2023 Black History Month Celebration – Legacy March, which took place on Feb. 11 at The Old Rec Center, home of the Robinson Jenkins Ellerson (RJE) Alumni Association in Starke.

The festive event was attended by close to 100 folks from Bradford County's historic Black neighborhoods and visitors from as far away as Georgia.

With heavy rain forecasted, the day's activities were moved indoors. The change made for an intimate atmosphere of rooms creatively decorated with African fabrics adorning potted plants, accenting vendor tables, and artful displays of literature and historic photographs.

An exhibit of full-sized photos of Black women of the African Continent and Diaspora formed an appealing backdrop for the audience as a history of Black hair and styles was presented.

The display was generously donated by Evelyn Colon, executive director of Highway Park Neighborhood Preservation & Enhancement District, and a member of the celebration's planning committee.

Highlights of the event:
 • Lively entertainment of old school R&B music from DJ Derek Dean and African drumming performed by Ngoma Thunder African American Drum Troop.

• The Nan Nkama Pan-African Junior Dance Ensemble thrilled the audience with authentic Mande dances from West Africa.

• Vignettes of Bradford County history and neighborhoods – Reno, The Slue, The Hill, Lawtey, Speedville, Hampton, Lincoln City, and Pleasant Grove – were presented by Valara Petteway.

• A rousing recitation of "His Story" by Gil Scott Heron, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," a Langston Hughes poem, and stories of family connections to Starke were presented by

"You could feel the love in the air as various members of the community told their stories and their history of growing up in Starke. There was camaraderie and pride in each person's accomplishments," said attendee Linda Diksha Altman of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.

Jacksonville native, Rahman Johnson.

• The Legacy March featured audience members with family ties to Bradford County announcing the names of their families followed by a moment of silence to honor their ancestors.

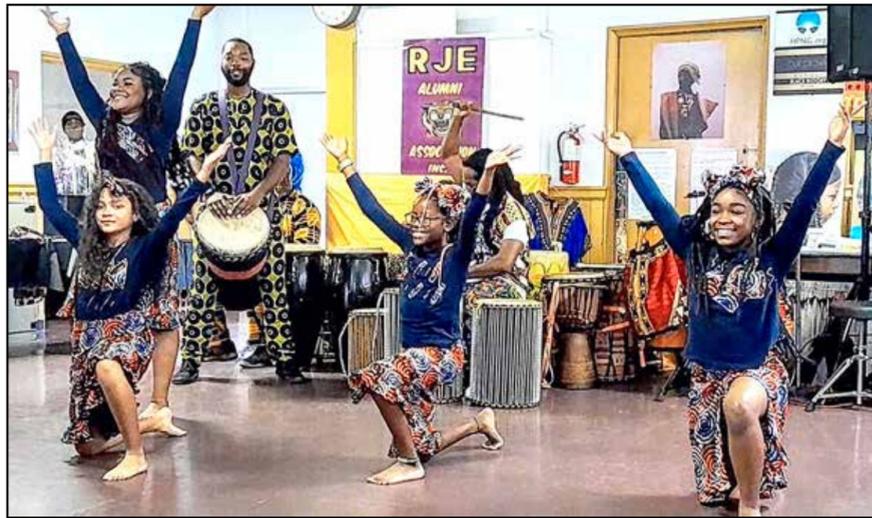
Event Coordinator Ok Sun Burks was delighted with the turn out for this first event. "I could not have asked for a better result. Even with the dreary day and intermittent drizzling, people came out and stayed, said Burks. "Attendees shopped with vendors – Starke native Joann Williams Addison sold out of

her pies and cakes, while lines formed at Green Cuisine's food truck to partake Chef Berlin Bernard's delicious Caribbean dishes."

"I want to extend special thanks to VyStar Credit Union for their sponsored support, Henry Wade whose turn as Master of Ceremonies kept the program interesting, and Angela Thompson and Martini White, who graciously donated gift bags for giveaways. In a couple of months we'll begin planning for next year's celebration. So, keep an ear to the ground."



Event organizer Ok Sun Burks with lifelong friend, Joann Williams Addison, whose popular cakes and pies sold out.



Nan Nkama Pan-African Junior Dance Ensemble: Arieana Gordon (captain), Pashence Jacobs, Clarke York and Elysse Ford.



Event Organizer Ok Sun Burks (center) with members of the Concerned Citizens of Bradford County Carnell Williams, City Commissioner Janice Mortimer, Alica McMillian and Judy Sumter.



(L-R) Ngoma Thunder's Don "Griot" German, Semaj "Jah the Mad Cellist," Ryan "Ngoma" Sinclair, Eugene "The Elder" Wilson, Flip "Professor" Taylor, Vanetta "Queen of djun djun" Sinclair and Jolita "2 Slick" Crumell.



Participants in the Legacy March shared stories of their families.

Pink and Red Event for women's health

On Saturday, Feb. 18, the Florida Department of Health is hosting a Pink and Red Health Event for women from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Starke Downtown Square in observance of American Heart Month.

Precision Imaging will be on site to perform free mammograms. (Preregistration is required at TheBeautifulGateInc.com). The UF Mobile Unit is expected to be present for pelvic exams and wellness checks. There will be free screening for blood pressure and diabetes, plus a wealth of health education.

Bradford County Faith Community Center and

The Beautiful Gate Inc. are partnering with the health department for this event. For more information, please call 904-964-7732, ext. 1600.

Democratic Women meet Feb. 23

The Democratic Women's Club of the Lakes Area will hold its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. Kim Cook, president of ACEA PAC, will speak on how to ensure quality education for our children.

All Democrats are welcome, and doors open at 6:30 p.m. The club meets in Melrose at the Historic Homemakers Club, 25728 Park St. For further information, call 352-235-4161 or write Info@dwc-la.org.

BCEF spelling bee returns March 16

The Bradford County Education Foundation Adult Spelling Bee is making its return and will be held Thursday, March 16, at the Bradford High School cafeteria and auditorium. Dinner is at 6 p.m., followed by the bee at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$20. The event needs participating teams, which will consist of two members each. One member will be the designated team spokesperson.

Teams are asked to be creative with names and costumes and are encouraged to bring a cheering section.

Prizes will be awarded to the first-place team and the team with the best costumes.

The registration fee is \$200 and includes dinner.

Goody bags will be presented to all teams.

Registration forms may be obtained from and returned to Lila Sellars at the Bradford County School District office and Matt Dyal at Capital City Bank of Starke.

You may also contact Cheryl Canova at ccanova53@gmail.com for more information.

All proceeds support Bradford schools.

Believer's dropping BOMB

Believer's Outreach Ministry's Blessings, or BOMB, is a giveaway taking place Saturday, Feb. 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please bring any gently

used, clean items to giveaway that day as a blessing to someone else. Volunteers are also needed to assist at the giveaway.

The church is located at 8736 S.R. 21 in Melrose.

Prom dresses at BOMB event

Believer's Worship Center, through its Believer's Outreach Ministry Blessings program, is hosting A Night to Remember for young ladies in need of a prom dress. Some shoes and accessories also available.

Come enjoy the evening on Saturday, March 4, beginning at 5 p.m. The church is located at 8736 S.R. 21 in Melrose.

If you have donations of dresses, shoes or accessories, please contact Wanda Strickland at 386-972-0937.

Flea market benefits vets

American Legion Auxiliary of Hawthorne will hold a huge flea market on Saturday, March 4, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be a pancake and sausage breakfast, and lunch will be served as well. Spaces are available outside, 15-by-15 for \$15. Proceeds benefit causes like veterans relief, food giveaways and special education.

The flea market will take place at American Legion Post 230, 20370 E. Hawthorne Road (S.R. 20). For more information, contact 352-481-4483.

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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

Rachel Joy Adkins, 36, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 7 for DUI.

Scott Patrick Adkins, 42, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 8 for a probation violation.

Christopher Lee Collett, 39, of Lake Butler was arrested by Lawtey police on February 7 for loitering.

Jarvis Courtez Davis, 29, of Starke was arrested by Starke police on February 9th for selling cocaine, possession of cocaine and unlawful use of a two-way communications device.

William Joshua Dodd, 43, of Graham was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 8 for an out-of-county warrant.

Scott Anthony Dudley, 37, of Polk City was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 10 for a probation violation.

Michael Leonard Hankerson, 40, of Starke was arrested by Starke police on February 10

for battery and an out-of-county warrant.

Denise Hedrick, 40, of Lake Butler was arrested by Starke police on February 9 for an out-of-county warrant.

Eric Lamar Johnson, 33, of Gainesville was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 8 for failure to appear.

Jasmine Alexis Kornfield, 19, of Gainesville was arrested by Starke police on February 8 for DUI.

James Malcolm Lewis, 53, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 6 for being an out-of-state fugitive.

William Edgar Lindsey, 27, of Lady Lake was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 10 for failure to appear.

James Anthony Mazy, 40, of Englewood was arrested by Starke police on February 10 for fraud, possession of drugs, possession of drug equipment an out-of-county warrant and larceny.

David Austin McHale, 51, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 10 for a probation violation.

Katrina McSpadden, 50, of Lake Butler was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 8 for a conditional release violation.

Bruce Lavell Perry, 57, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 7 for a probation violation.

Steve Quinton Rehberg, 39, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 5 for an out-

of-county warrant and larceny.

Robin Duane Roy, 40, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 5 for being an out-of-state fugitive.

Michael David Sanerfeit, 52, of Gainesville was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 5 for an out-of-county warrant.

Ronnie Lee Seay, 50, of Brooker was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 10 for a probation violation.

Caitlyn Marie Simons, 28, of Jacksonville was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 7 for a probation violation.

Nicole Kristine Steinhilber, 35, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 6 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Reginald Tison, 33, of Starke was arrested by probation and parole officers on February 9 for a probation violation.

Threw heater at boyfriend

Jimea Alise Tyson, 23, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 8 for aggravated battery.

According to an arrest report, on January 28 the victim told deputies he and Tyson got into an argument at her home. He called his ex-girlfriend to pick him up which made Tyson furious.

The victim added that Tyson threw a heater at him.

Reporting officer T. Lovell wrote in an arrest report that Tyson told him she and the victim got into an argument about the victim calling his ex-girlfriend. "I asked Jimea about the

laceration to (the victim's) head to which she stated it could have happened during the argument," wrote Lovell. "I then asked Jimea if she threw the heater at (the victim), and she stated she did not."

Lovell added that he observed a large amount of blood on the defendant's hoodie. Tyson admitted the blood was the victim's.

Miranda Jean Varnum, 43, of Hampton was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 9 for a probation violation.

Tiffany Dawn Wilkerson, 30, of Lawtey was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 9 for possession of drugs and possession of drug equipment.

Ronald Eugene Willis, 54, of Starke was arrested by Starke police on February 6 for aggravated assault, simple assault and resisting an officer.

Union

Markevias D. Banks, 36, was arrested by Union deputies on February 13 for smuggling contraband into a prison.

Derrick A. Beard, 40, was arrested by Union deputies on February 13 for smuggling contraband into a prison.

David Eric Michael Bresee, 37, of Hampton was arrested by Union deputies on February 12 for a probation violation.

Edward Tillman Cook II, 37, of Lake City was arrested by Union deputies on February 13 for a probation violation.

Charles Arthur Futch III, 36, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on February 12 for aggravated assault, vehicle theft, robbery and possession of drugs.

Wesley Michael Morgan, 36,

of Orange Park was arrested by Union deputies on February 9 for aggravated stalking.

Stole merchandise from Dollar General

Kimberly Diane Sellers, 42, of Lawtey was arrested by Union deputies on February 6 for larceny.

According to an arrest report, an employee of Dollar General told deputies she saw the defendant in the store with merchandise in her purse.

Arresting officer Shelby Brooke Ellis wrote that she waited outside the business for Sellers to exit.

"I made contact with her identified by Florida License as Kimberly Sellers," wrote Ellis. "I asked Sellers if there was anything in her purse that belongs to the store that she did not pay for. Sellers stated no."

The defendant then allowed Ellis to search the purse. The deputy found two power banks and a USB car charger valued at \$57.

Eric Michael Summers, 32, was arrested by Union deputies on February 12 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Emitt Nathan Wade, 69, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on February 10 for disorderly intoxication.

Chad Michael Walker, 42, of High Springs was arrested by Union deputies on February 8 for a probation violation.

Claude Brian West, 49, of Lake City was arrested by Union deputies on February 8 for a probation violation.

Dustin Taylor Wise, 28, of Lawtey was arrested by Union deputies on February 12 for a probation violation.

Clay

Brandon Christopher Gibbs, 34, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on February 9 for possession of a controlled substance without a prescription and possession of drug equipment.

Shatamra Lee Gillyard, 25, of Melrose was arrested by Clay deputies on February 7 for trespassing.

Stabbed victim in chest

Justin Thomas Edward King, 25, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on February 9 for attempted second-degree murder.

According to an arrest report, deputies responded to a report of a person being stabbed.

"Upon arrival, deputies found the victim with multiple stab wounds to the chest," wrote arresting officer J.W. Smith.

The victim and witnesses identified King as the assailant. The victim was treated at UF Health Shands and later released.

Struck victim in face

Priscilla Lynn Manning, 55, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on February 7 for battery.

According to an arrest report, the victim and a witness told deputies Manning threw her purse, pushed her and hit her in the face at a Crystal Lake-area residence.

"Upon my arrival I observed the victim and the witness in the driveway of the residence, picking up the victim's purse and belongings," wrote arresting officer William S. Grubbs. "The defendant was on the front porch of the residence continuing to yell at the victim and witness."

Grubbs added that the victim had a red mark on her face.

Mom, family members fight at Southside Elementary

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Telegraph Staff Writer

STARKE — A 35-year-old Starke woman was sentenced to one year, six months' probation after pleading to interfering with a school function and trespassing.

Tiffany Lanae Dobbs was initially charged with battery on a person aged 65 or older and burglary with assault. However,



Dobbs

the State dropped the battery charge, and Dobbs pleaded to the lesser trespassing charge instead of burglary.

According to a sworn complaint, on October 21, 2022, Dobbs telephoned the father of their daughter and told him she could not pick up the child from school due to an emergency.

The father responded by asking his parents to pick up the student since they were in Starke, and he was not.

"While (the grandparents) were at the school," wrote Deputy T. Lovell in the complaint, "Tiffany shows up and began demanding (the student). (The girl) then

began screaming that she did not want to go with Tiffany."

The grandfather told Lovett that Dobbs began pulling on his vehicle door handles to gain access to the child, and the mother struck him on the left side of his face through an open window, knocking his glasses off.

"I observed a cut on the left side of (the victim's) face as well as on the left side of his nose," wrote Lovett. "He then stated that he got out of the vehicle, and Tiffany began hitting him again, at which time he struck her, knocking her to the ground. Tiffany then got back up and

started hitting him again, at which time he then struck her again, knocking her to the ground. I did not observe any injuries to Tiffany."

Lovett added that the school's principal, Cassandra Melvin, obtained permission from the student's father to talk to the child about the incident.

"Cassandra stated that (the child) told her that her mother showed up and hit her 'Pepaw'" wrote Lovett. "(The child) showed Melvin where Tiffany hit (the 71-year-old). Melvin asked (the child) if the grandfather hit or shoved Tiffany, to which she answered that he attempted to get

Tiffany off him.

The child's grandmother said she was having heart complications due to the incident. Bradford Emergency Medical Services transported her to St. Vincent's in Middelburg.

Dobbs complained of neck pain due to being knocked to the ground. She added that she had neck injuries before the incident at the school.

Lovett wrote that he reported the incident to DCF and that the school's principal wanted Dobbs trespassing from the campus except for dropping off or picking up the student from school.

TRENDS Continued from page 5

"We used to get everything from your cell phone in a search warrant," he said. "Now, in the search warrants, the courts are saying, what exactly in that cell phone are you wanting to search?"

"We've got to pinpoint it," he continued. "And that's the only information we can get from that cell phone because they've learned that the cell phone's a computer. And if I'm looking for a specific crime, that's what I can go into your cell phone for. The judicial system is catching up with technology."

The sheriff said that if investigators happen across evidence on a phone not related to the case they are working on, like discovering child pornography on a phone while investigating a theft, then investigators would

have to go back to the judge before taking further action.

Social media

Sheriff Smith said social media continues to be a challenge for the office.

He added that what he calls social media court is always in session, with defendants being accused, defended and sentenced to public humiliation or a damaged reputation on social media.

"The sad part is most of the time, they get it wrong," he said. "Opinions, wrong people. We spend a lot of time on inaccurate information. People report what they've heard through gossip via social media, and many people get falsely accused."

The sheriff said new libel and slander laws might begin to hold people accountable for posting false information on social media.

"I'm all for it because I see too many people's lives get ruined for no reason other than you put it on social media," he said. "And I may be the only person in Bradford County that thinks that way."

"When we're talking to people that are victims of crimes or had, say, a family member get killed or something like that, one of the first things that we do as law enforcement now is to tell people: don't get on social media," the sheriff said. "Don't listen to these threads going back and forth because they will drive you crazy. You're going to focus on all the negative ones, not see the positive ones, and it's going to distract you from what's really important right now."

Brad Smith said he used to follow the several Bradford County word-of-mouth pages.

"I followed it initially when it came out," he said. "I realized there's too much gossip on it. I

just deleted it off of mine. I don't even track it."

Sheriff Smith added that many people can't keep the details straight when his agency posts information on social media.

"Even when we post a vehicle (we are looking for) on Facebook, we state the type of vehicle it was," he said. "It's a Ford Escape, white, blah blah blah."

Smith said that while his deputies may be looking for a Ford Escape, social media posters sometimes send back information on other models.

"No, that's a Ford Explorer," he said. "Now you got a spiderweb effect, with people online posting that so-and-so drives a Ford Explorer. Well, we're not looking for a Ford Explorer. We're looking for an Escape."

The sheriff added that social media has expanded the number of critics his agency has to deal with.

He said that after news broke of Deputy Jacob Desue's actions during a traffic stop between Lawtey and Starke, the sheriff's office fielded complaints from across the U.S. in addition to Europe.

"When we had the Desue case, we had to 24-7 monitor our social media because we had these people from England, some from Denmark, some from other countries, they would just go on our (page) and just write ugly things, send stupid stuff," the sheriff said. "We just hide, hide, hide, hide, hide. We destroy nothing. It's public record. We just hide it."

"We had to set up a phone line

specifically for calls coming in on Desue," added Col. Smith.

The officers said that initially, complainers accused the agency and the deputy of racism because the mother pulled over in the traffic stop was African American. However, as news broke that the deputy was biracial, the accusations changed to excessive force.

The sheriff said he still gets letters over the Desue traffic stop and retrieved from his trash can a letter he had just received from a man complaining about Desue's conduct.

The envelope had a return address in Tallahassee and a postmark from San Antonio, Texas.

"I am an auditor for the IRS and am told many of the sheriff's deputies were holding other jobs and not reporting their income," the letter writer with an illegible signature wrote. "This is tax evasion and is punishable by time in jail and enormous fees for tax lawyers and defense lawyers."

The letter writer claimed that he would look for unreported income by Desue and would also be on the lookout for any unreported income by any officer at the Bradford sheriff's office.

"They don't give you a number to call," Sheriff Smith said. "You can't read the name that signs it. It's File 13 for me. A lot of people would take that personally, and they would get upset."

The sheriff added that when his agency started posting warning signs in the yards of sexual predators, he was criticized nationwide and even received death threats.



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UCHS holds signing ceremony for football trio

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

If you have a childhood dream, you can make it come true.

Union County High School seniors Daylyn Diston, Auntrell Ross and Markus Strong are proof of that as they'll get a chance to play football at the next level.

A signing ceremony was held Feb. 3 at UCHS, though Strong, a defensive lineman, had already signed with Oklahoma during the early signing period in December.

Like Strong, Diston, a defensive back, will get a chance at the Division I level, too. He

signed his letter of intent to play at East Carolina University.

Ross, a defensive back, will be going to West Palm Beach's Keiser University, which was the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) runner-up in 2022.

"It feels great because all three of us have been dreaming about it since we were little," Ross said of getting the chance to play college ball. He added that it shows "the community you can do anything you put your mind to."

Diston said, "It really is a blessing. Not too many people can say they've done this. It's

really a huge blessing to say that I did this."

Sooner Strong

Since he officially signed in December, the Telegraph-Times-Monitor has already published a story on Strong. He was quoted in that Dec. 29, 2022, story as saying, "It's a huge blessing. That's my first feeling. Other than that, it's pure excitement. I'm ready to go work for them — go to work and play football like I love to do."

He was seriously considering such schools as Georgia Tech, Maryland and West Virginia,

but he loved the atmosphere at Oklahoma and said he had some "amazing, good times" on his visits there.

It's quite an opportunity for Strong, who missed his junior season due to an ACL injury. As a senior, he recorded 55 tackles (21.5 for loss) and 10.5 sacks. He also caused three fumbles and recovered two fumbles.

"Everything happened for Markus real fast this year with the recruitment process," Union Head Coach Andrew Thomas said. "He really didn't have any schools on him because of his missing junior year. There was no film and stuff."

"I'm sure it's extremely rewarding for him to know not to give up and to keep working, knowing that you can work and get back on the field and give yourself a chance."

Thomas said the fact Strong went from little in the way of offers entering his senior year to signing with Oklahoma is "a big deal."

"It's a great opportunity for him to be in a program like that," Thomas said. "It's one of the biggest programs in the nation when you think of football."

Thomas said Strong, at 6-3, 265, is powerful, but added that he's also athletic for someone that size.

Strong is also versatile, able to line up inside or outside.

"He just brings a lot to the table because he can play so many different positions on the line," Thomas said.

Strong is still a young player, Thomas said, explaining that he still won't be 18 when he steps onto the Oklahoma campus.

"Hopefully, they understand how young he is," Thomas said. "I think his ceiling is extremely high for being that young."

The biggest thing for Strong is to be able to consistently work in the weight room, Thomas said. Because of the ACL injury as well as an already existing knee injury, Strong hadn't gone through a full offseason workout program since Thomas has been the Tigers' head coach.



Markus Strong is pictured between his parents, Angela and Maurice Strong.

"I think he's got all the physical tools," Thomas said. "It's just maturing with his body and then continuing to work."

In the Dec. 29, 2022, story, Strong said his excitement level will certainly be high when he steps onto the field for the first time as an Oklahoma player.

"I'll be like a kid in a candy shop," Strong said.

Getting on the field will be the culmination of a lot of hard work — on the field and in rehab.

"He's got an opportunity to do some big things there," Thomas said. "I'm just proud of him for not giving up."

Diston to don some familiar colors

Several things stood out to Diston when he visited East Carolina, such as the impressive facilities.

He also couldn't help but like the team's colors.

"They've got everything," Diston said, "and it's a purple-and-gold school, just like my high school."

Diston said he had approximately 17 offers, but one of the things that made him sign with East Carolina was Jules Montinar — a coach he developed a relationship with when Montinar was at Temple. Montinar is now East Carolina's

cornerbacks coach/defensive pass game coordinator.

"The day he got to ECU, I was one of the first people he called," Diston said. "I felt like that man really sees something in me, so I just had to go play for him."

After becoming an official ECU Pirate during his signing ceremony, Diston said the opportunity is a blessing.

"It really is awesome, and it's put smiles on people's faces around the community and especially my family," he said.

Thomas said Diston basically "came out of nowhere" when he put together a junior season that consisted of 36 tackles and six interceptions.

"He let his on-field performance kind of speak for itself, going from an unknown kid to being recruited by a lot of schools," Thomas said.

Two of his six interceptions his junior season were returned for touchdowns in a 52-14 win over Hilliard in a Region 3-1A semifinal playoff game.

"That was crazy," Diston said. "It was a lot of work that paid off."

Last season, Diston had three interceptions (with one returned for a touchdown), a caused fumble and a fumble recovery to go along with 25 tackles.

See TRIO, page 12



Daylyn Diston is seated between his stepfather, Ibn Williams, and his mother, Christina Scott.



Auntrell Ross sits between his parents, Janice and Andre Ross.



Bryar Schenck, seated between his parents, Tori Hersey and Dave Schenck, signs to play with River City Prep. Also pictured are John David Schenck Jr. (far left), Brian Gentry (second from left) and Christina Rose (far right). Photo by Cliff Smelley.

KHHS' Schenck to play football at River City Prep

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School senior Bryar Schenck's hard work paid off, as Jacksonville's River City Prep is giving him the chance to keep playing football after high school.

Schenck, who participated in a signing ceremony in the KHHS media center on Feb. 1, said, "Making such a big commitment, you have to put your all into it. You have to really dive into it and be dedicated in order to accomplish something like this. You've got to really have a love for it."

"He wants to play," former KHHS Head Coach Chuck Dickinson said. "That's a big part of it, wanting to be a part of something. I think he'll do well."

What Schenck, who was the Indians' second-leading rusher last year (628 yards and seven touchdowns on 125 carries), is becoming a part of is a post-

graduate football program preparing to begin its inaugural season. The goal is to help student-athletes, who'll take classes at St. Johns River State College, receive opportunities at four-year colleges. River City Prep has its own in-house promotion system, with a connection to more than 700 colleges.

Schenck, who also caught 11 passes for 103 yards and two touchdowns in 2022, said he heard about River City from KHHS Assistant Coach Jakob Alvarez, who told him the program was looking for players in the area just like him. Schenck is one of 11 players from Clay County schools on River City's current roster.

"When I got the official offer, I dove into this place," Schenck said. "I looked up all kinds of stuff about it."

Still, it was almost hard for him to believe that the thing he

worked so hard for and prayed for came true. In the aftermath of his signing ceremony, Schenck said, "It's surreal. It's a lot to take in."

What the Admirals are getting is a player Dickinson described as a hard worker who's also unselfish.

"His junior year, he played tight end for us and did a heck of a job there," Dickinson said. "We moved him to running back because we lost all our running backs from the year before. I told him, 'You need to know more than one position.' He was willing to do anything to help the team win."

It didn't matter if things were going good or bad, Schenck said his mindset was to always give his all. He said, "I had to show my team and all my coaches, 'Hey, I'm still here. I'm not going to quit.'"

See SCHENCK, page 10

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Education to ministry: Lasko finds home at First Baptist of Starke

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

If Joel Lasko acted on his own instincts, he'd probably still be living in Tennessee, but his faith in God brought him and his family to Bradford County, where he will, through God, work to have a positive, spiritual impact as the new youth pastor at First Baptist Church of Starke.

From his own perspective, nothing was preparing him to end up at a church in Starke, but in looking back on his life, he can see how things unfolded from God's perspective.

"God was shaping and preparing me for this moment here, in this church, in this county, for this specific time," Lasko said. "I didn't see it."

Lasko and his family were rooted in Tennessee, living in Nashville's Mount Juliet suburb. His whole life had been spent in Tennessee. He was enjoying success working in real estate, while his wife, Lauren, ran a boutique she bought.

When his friend Matthew Page, who's been the lead pastor at First Baptist of Starke since ??, asked him to come down and interview for the youth pastor position, Lasko said he told his friend he was crazy.

Yet Lasko and his wife both prayed about the matter, with God providing the answers they needed in pondering such a life-changing move.

The church voted on accepting Lasko as the new youth pastor during a visit to First Baptist of Starke in June 2022. His first Sunday in that capacity was Oct. 17.

Lasko said the process was a reminder to him and his wife, and a valuable lesson to his two children, that what might not make sense to you makes a lot of sense to God, who has the bigger picture in mind.

"It started to teach my wife and me — and even our girls — obedience, about putting our faith in God and allowing Him to direct our paths versus us saying that just because it doesn't make sense (at the time) doesn't mean it can't happen or shouldn't happen."

Lasko felt a calling to work with young people shortly after graduating from high school, but his first role was teaching in public schools.

A call to teach and minister to youth

Lasko, who accepted Christ as his savior at the age of 10, admitted he was unsure of what he wanted to do after high school. He first attended a community college, but after rededicating his life to God, felt like he needed to attend a seminary.

"I realized God had a greater purpose for me, and that I needed to surrender my life to Him," Lasko said.

He attended Johnson Bible College (Johnson University now) in Kimberlin Heights,



Joel Lasko is the new youth pastor at First Baptist Church of Starke. He's pictured with his wife, Lauren, and their daughters: Quinn, 9, and Harper, 7.

outside of Knoxville, Tennessee. While there, he felt the desire to work with children and decided to pursue a career in education, with a focus on teaching in the public-school season.

Lasko had several friends who were pursuing degrees in education, which he believed was no coincidence. It was part of God's plan.

"There was a reason why my closest friends were in education," Lasko said. "I knew at that point I was supposed to do something with young people."

He eventually went on to teach for 15 years — the majority of those at the middle-school level. However, though he enjoyed teaching, Lasko began to feel that the job wasn't fulfilling. He also sensed God was wanting him to make a change.

"I was very comfortable in the school system," Lasko said. "I could've just stayed there and retired as a schoolteacher. Not that that would've been a bad thing. I think (God) was like, 'I've got something greater for you to do, a greater purpose.'"

Lasko said he felt as if God was calling him to impact youth in a different way, which he explained to Page — who was still living in Tennessee at the time — over lunch one day. He told Page, "I'm not sure where God is leading me, but part of me feels like he's re-directing me to full-time ministry."

Page's response was, "Just pray about it. If it's ministry, He will make that known to you at the right time."

Lasko did leave his teaching job and began working in real estate. It proved to be something he was successful at, but Lasko still felt that God was wanting him to work in youth ministry.

Yet Lasko couldn't help but wonder if that was really what was meant to happen. His only ministerial experience was during his final two years at Johnson, when he worked part-time as a youth pastor at a small church.

"I'm not sure anybody would ever take a chance on me," Lasko admitted to himself and others.

Page, again, encouraged him, saying, "If that's where God wants you and has called you, it's going to happen."

Happen it did. Now Lasko finds himself in the "awesome" position of working alongside one of his friends and feeling grateful for a church that took a chance on him.

"I believe that God called me here," he said. "It was all in God's working for a 47-year-old ex-teacher to be here for this moment and to walk alongside Pastor Matthew and the leaders of this church."

Making the move, transforming lives

Lasko, his wife, Lauren, and their children, Quinn, 9, and Harper, 7, now enjoy a life that's not quite so hectic as the go-go atmosphere of Nashville.

"It's kind of a little bit slower-paced here, which has been a breath of fresh air, just to be able to breathe a little bit," Lasko said.

The family had made visits to Florida in the past, having enjoyed vacations at beaches in cities such as Destin, Seacrest, Seagrove Beach and Seaside, so it's nice to now be living somewhere that doesn't require a

See LASKO, page 13



Members of Edrick Hamilton's Bradford County mentoring program, 12 Guys in Bowties and 12 Girls in Pearls, attended the MLK Holiday Grand Parade in Jacksonville and helped clean up (and inspire others to do the same) afterward. Pictured (l-r) are: Jaden Hendrieth, Avery Wulff-Vanderpuije, Beaux Hunter, Ryder Detweiler, A'miriyah Glover, Jordan Brown, Caden Eison and Sterling Alexander.

Bradford mentoring group attends MLK parade, provides clean-up



LEFT: Caden Eison is pictured cleaning up, along with (background, l-r) Jordan Brown and Edrick Hamilton. ABOVE: Avery Wulff-Vanderpuije (foreground) and (background, l-r) Jaden Hendrieth, Caden Eison and Sterling Alexander.



Edrick Hamilton (right) assists Jaden Hendrieth in the post-parade clean-up.

Pictured (l-r) are Edrick Hamilton, Jordan Brown, Caden Eison and Avery Wulff-Vanderpuije. Sterling Alexander is pictured in the background.



Emptying the trash they collected are (l-r) Zori Resendiz, Beaux Hunter, Edrick Hamilton, Jordan Brown, Caden Eison, A'miriyah Glover, Ryder Detweiler and Lindsay Detweiler.

SCHENCK Continued from page 9

Last season was the first time Schenck played running back at the varsity level, though he had some experience at the position at the junior varsity level. However, where River City

plays him remains to be seen. At the moment, he's listed on their roster as an athlete.

"Wherever they put me is where I'm willing to play," Schenck said. "I think they like me at running back or linebacker. As long as I'm on the field playing, I'm not going to be upset."

Dickinson said, "There's a lot

of upside. He's got a lot to learn at the next level, but every year you play, you learn something new."

Schenck said he believes River City coaches will help him make improvements in speed, agility and recognition, which will complement what he already brings to the field, which he described as "grit."

"I remember a lot playing running back, I would never let one person bring me down," Schenck said. "I'd be like, 'You're going to need the whole team to be able to take me down.' If I'm on defense, I'm going to be the person who hits you the hardest."

Schenck said all he's ever wanted was to play football at the next level. That's what he's been working toward, so when he steps onto the field again, he's going to feel like he's right where he should be.

"It's going to feel like home again," he said. "I think it's going to feel like I'm back where I belong."

IMPORTANT TAX FILING INFORMATION

The IRS announced it has begun accepting and processing tax returns on Monday, Jan. 23, 2023. The filing deadline to submit 2022 tax returns or an extension to file and pay tax owed is Tuesday, April 18, 2023, for most taxpayers.

Call me to make a tax preparation appointment ASAP: Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-8 p.m. • Saturdays, 8 a.m.-12 noon.

As always, we provide client safety with locked documents.

ALL PRO TAX SERVICE

Jean Tanner
24275 US Hwy 301 N.
Lawtey, FL 32058
Appointments: cell 904-364-6250
fax 904-782-1810



Practical Nursing Open House

You're Invited!

Practical Nursing ENROLLMENT EVENT

A chance to win a \$1,000.00 Scholarship

\$100.00 Off Program Cost

TEAS Test Vouchers

Door Prizes

Complimentary Food and Snacks

Campus Tours

And Much More!

Thursday, February 23, 2023

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

For more information call

904-966-6764



Bradford's Ar'Nayshia Griffin (left) and Keystone's Dezaray Bright were the FACA District 6 Players of the Year in their respective classifications.

BHS, KHHS earn top FACA awards in girls basketball

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford High School freshman Ar'Nayshia Griffin was named the Florida Athletic Coaches Association District 6-3A Player of the Year, while Keystone Heights High School senior Dezaray Bright and Head Coach Jessica Carter were the FACA District 6-4A Player of the Year and Coach of the Year.



Jessica Carter

The Telegraph-Times-Monitor was unable to obtain Griffin's stats for the season, but Bright scored 301 points (12.5 per game) and grabbed 337 rebounds (14 per game). Bright posted a points-rebounds double-double in 20 of the 24 games she played, ranking her third in the state among players whose stats were

recorded on MaxPreps. She was 13th in the state in total rebounds. Carter guided the Indians to a 16-9 record. FACA District 6 is composed of schools in Bradford, Clay, Flagler, Putnam and St. Johns counties.

BHS girls fall to Providence in playoffs

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford High School was seeking its playoff win since 2016, but host Providence made 15 of 18 free-throw attempts in the second half, which helped the number-one seed Stallions defeat the eighth seed Tornados 58-46 in a Region 1-3A girls basketball quarterfinal on Feb. 9 in Jacksonville.

Providence (20-5) played fourth seed Florida High (17-10) in a semifinal game this past Tuesday (Feb. 14).

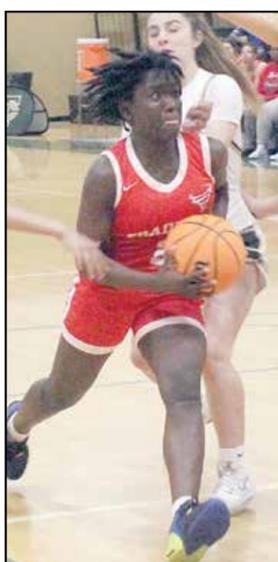
Bradford (10-12) was making its sixth postseason appearance in the last eight years.

The Tornados outscored Providence 16-15 in the first quarter, getting four points each from Nichelle Brown and Jada Hankerson. Bradford scored only six points in the second quarter and trailed by three points going into the half.

Providence made seven second-half field goals to Bradford's 10, but the Stallions put an 0-for-4 start from the foul line behind them, making 83 percent of their free-throw attempts in the second half.

Conversely, the Tornados went 3 of 7 from the foul line in the second half and 3 of 9 overall.

Hankerson and Ar'Nayshia Griffin each scored 13 points, which made them the game's second-leading scorers behind the Stallions' Ella Orman, who had 19 points.



Jada Hankerson scored 13 points in the Tornados Region 1-3A quarterfinal loss to Providence.

The Tornados also got 10 points from Brown, four points from Ayanna Pringle and two points each from Destiny Crum, Kah'mya Hankerson and Ajjayah Jackson.

KHHS girls soccer season ends with 9-1 loss to Bolles

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School earned an at-large bid to the girls soccer Region 1-3A playoffs, but

saw its season end in the first round with a 9-1 loss to second seed Bolles in Jacksonville on Feb. 7.

The seventh seed Indians (19-6) got its one goal from Ella Hutchins, who scored off a Kiersten Shaw assist.

Goalkeepers Miranda Yow and Kendall Gagnon made 12 and six saves, respectively.

Though she didn't score, Shaw is still second in the state in goals scored this season with 71.

Bolles got seven goals from Annalise Cannada.



Ella Hutchins scored the Indians' lone goal in a Region 1-3A quarterfinal loss to Bolles.

UC boys win 1st tourney game since '15 before bowing out in semis

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Union County High School saw its season come to an end with a 65-51 loss to Newberry, but not before picking up its first district tournament win in eight years.

The Tigers (14-11) were seeded fourth in the District 6-1A tournament. They defeated fifth seed Bell 70-42 in the Feb. 7 quarterfinals before losing to top seed Newberry in the Feb. 8 semifinals.

Thomas Williams scored 19 points in the quarterfinal win, while John'te Nichols and Gavin Jenkins scored 12 and 11 points, respectively. The Tigers also got nine points from Jayce Puni, six points from Dee Williams, five points from Cole Andersen-Davis and three points each from Jayden Jenkins and Kam Paytee.

Dee Williams led Union in rebounds against Bell with 10, while Andersen-Davis had eight. Gavin Jenkins recorded a team-high four assists, while Thomas Williams led the team in steals with five.

Despite the loss in the tournament semifinals, the Tigers had just their third winning season in seven years. Their 14 wins were the most they had since winning 25 games in 2015-16.

Legal Notices

Legals for the week of Feb. 16, 2023

2/16 4tchg 3/9-BCT

BRADFORD

NOTICE OF SALE
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Florida Self Storage Facility Act Statutes (Section 83.801 - 83.809); Santa Fe Storage of Waldo. Will sell for CASH to the highest bidder on Storageauctions.net

For location at 15540 NE HWY 301, Waldo, County of Alachua, Florida; ending at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, the 22nd day of February, 2023, and continuing day to day thereafter until sold: the household goods and misc. contents of the following:

0A004 Wanda Edelen
0B015 Wanda Edelen
2/9 2tchg 2/16-BCT

NOTICE OF SALE
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Florida Self Storage Facility Act Statutes (Section 83.801 - 83.809); Santa Fe Storage of Starke will sell for cash to the highest bidder on storageauctions.net for location at 1630 North Temple Ave, Starke, County of Bradford, FL, at 2:00 pm on Wednesday, the 22nd day of February, 2023 and continuing day to day thereafter until sold: the household goods and misc. contents of the following:

0F003 Katelyn Thornton
0G010 Valory Payne
0H003 Valory Payne
0I028 Shantiqua Davis
2/9 2tchg 2/16-BCT

NOTICE OF SALE
T & M Towing gives notice of lien and intent to sell this vehicle on March 6, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at T & M Storage lot located at 1451 Hayes Ave., Starke, FL 32091. T & M Towing reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids.
Vin # 1ZVHT85H065125354 2006 FORD
2/16 2tchg 2/23-BCT

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

Notice is hereby given that MID-FLORIDA DEVELOPMENT LLC the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and names in which it was assessed are as follows:
Certificate Number: 653
Year of Issuance: 2020
Parcel Number: 02545-0-00000
Case Number: 04-2023-TD-0002
Description of Property: Lots Three and Six of Block Twenty-four of North Reno, a sub-division of West Half of SE1/4 of SE1/4 and SW1/4 of NE1/4 of SE1/4 of Section 21, Township Six South, Range Twenty-two East, as same appears of record in the current Public Records of Bradford County, Florida.
Name in Which Assessed: MAGGIE SMALL EST.
Name on last tax roll, if different: All of said property being in the County of Bradford, State of Florida. Unless such certificate or certificates shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder at the BRADFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, STARKE, FL on the 4/12/2023 at 11:00 AM, or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
Denny Thompson
Clerk Of The Circuit Court
Bradford County, Florida
BY: Kanetra Jenkins
Deputy Clerk
Contact the Tax Deed Office at 904-966-6280 to obtain the amount necessary to redeem.
DATED: February 13, 2023
2/16 4tchg 3/9-BCT

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

Notice is hereby given that MID-FLORIDA DEVELOPMENT LLC the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number and year of issuance, the description of the property, and names in which it was assessed are as follows:
Certificate Number: 407
Year of Issuance: 2020
Parcel Number: 01590-0-00000
Case Number: 04-2023-TD-0001
Description of Property: Lot Fifty Nine in Section Twenty Six in East Lawtey. Note: The above legal description is per Deed Book 44, Page 269 and includes all of Lot 59. Less and except: That portion of: Lots 51, 59, 43 (except the Westerly 1 acre of said Lot 43), and Lots 44, 39 and 35 according to plat of Lawtey - East side, lying within 100 feet of the centerline of State Road 121, Project 5502, LESS AND EXCEPT, HOWEVER, that portion of said lands lying within 50 feet of said centerline, said centerline being described as passing over and across a portion of said Lawtey - East Side as follows: Being on the Westerly boundary of Lot 57 of Lawtey - East Side at a point of 200 feet Northeasterly from the Southwest corner of said Lot 57 and run thence South 89°30'30" East 454.33 feet to the point of a curve to the right, having a radius of 229.183 feet and central angle of 54°19'30"; thence Southeasterly along said curve to right 2473 feet to point of tangency; thence South 35°11' East 40.44 feet to the Southerly boundary of said Lot 33 at a point 323.9 feet East of the Southwest corner of said Lot 33. It is the intention of the first party to retain title to and reserve to itself that portion of the first above mentioned lands lying with-in 50 feet of said centerline, and to quitclaim to said second party that portion of the first above mentioned lands lying outside of and beyond said reserved lands within 100 feet of said centerline. Note: The above legal description is per Deed Book 52, Page 107 and includes a portion of Lot 59. This Deed conveyed back a portion to L.H. Hill within the 100' of the centerline, but retains 50' for the right of way.
Name in Which Assessed: L.H. HILL & EMMA PEARCE HILL; EMMA HILL PEARCE (DECEASED)
Name on last tax roll, if different: All of said property being in the County of Bradford, State of Florida. Unless such certificate or certificates shall be redeemed according to law the property described in such certificate or certificates will be sold to the highest bidder at the BRADFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, STARKE, FL onth 4/12/23, at 11:00 AM, or any subsequently scheduled sale date.
Denny Thompson
Clerk Of The Circuit Court
Bradford County, Florida :
BY: Kanetra Jenkins
Deputy Clerk
Contact the Tax Deed Office at 904-966-6280 to obtain the amount necessary to redeem.
DATED: February 13, 2023
2/16 4tchg 3/9-BCT

LEGAL NOTICE:
The Bradford County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Planning Committee/Workgroup will meet Thursday, March 2nd 2023 at 3:00 pm in the Bradford County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located in the Bradford County Sheriff's Office at 945B North Temple Avenue, Starke, FL. Bradford County Emergency Management encourages any interested citizens and business owners to attend and provide input. The Committee guides the preparation and contents of the Bradford County Local Mitigation Strategy which serves as the plan submitted to the Florida Division of Emergency Management to reduce the community's long-term risk for protecting people and property from the effects of natural disasters and to build a safer and stronger community. This public meeting is being conducted in a handicapped accessible location. Any handicapped person wanting to attend the meeting and requires assistance with accessibility and/or interpretation should contact the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Division at (904) 966-6336 at least 5 calendar days prior to the meeting date. Any person wishing to provide comments who cannot attend the meeting may do so by submitting written comments via email to bcem@bradfordsheriff.org at least 5 calendar days prior to the meeting date. The meeting agenda may be obtained within 5 days of the meeting date via email request as well.
Please contact the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Division at (904) 966-6336 for more information.
A FAIR HOUSING/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE JURISDICTION
2/16 2tchg 2/23-BCT

Workshop Notice
The City of Lawtey City Council will be conducting a maintenance department workshop on February 20, 2023, at 6 p.m. at Lawtey City Hall, 2793 Lake St. Lawtey, FL 32058. All interested parties are invited to attend.
2/16 1tchg-BCT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:

SPRATLIN TOWING & RECOVERY gives notice that on 02/07/2023 at 09:00 AM the following vehicles(s) may be sold by public sale at 10875 US HWY 301 S HAMPTON, FL 32044 to satisfy the lien for the amount owed on each vehicle for any recovery, towing, or storage services charges and administrative fees allowed pursuant to Florida statute 713.78.
5FNRL3865B125399 2007 HOND
1C4NJCEA2HD147818 2017 JEEP
IFTYR14V8YPC03144 2000 FORD .
1G11E5SA5DF135298 2013 CHEV
1GNEK13294R301407 2004 CHEV
1GNERFKWOKJ311786 2019 CHEV
1HGFA16817L028197 2007 HOND
2G4W552MXX1508018 1999 BUIC
2GCEC19V851376877 2005 CHEV
2/16 1tchg-BCT

CONCURRENT NOTICE

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS
Date of Publication: February 16, 2021

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME
Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the undersigned: Amy Morie, 24686 US Hwy 301, Lawtey FL 32058, sole owner, doing business under the firm name of: mulberry hill farm, 24686 US Hwy 301, Lawtey FL 32058, intends to register fictitious name under the aforesaid statute. Dated this 13th day of February A.D., 2023, in Bradford County.
2/16 1tchg-BCT

LEGAL NOTICE:
The Bradford County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Planning Committee/Workgroup will meet Thursday, March 2nd 2023 at 3:00 pm in the Bradford County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located in the Bradford County Sheriff's Office at 945B North Temple Avenue, Starke, FL. Bradford County Emergency Management encourages any interested citizens and business owners to attend and provide input. The Committee guides the preparation and contents of the Bradford County Local Mitigation Strategy which serves as the plan submitted to the Florida Division of Emergency Management to reduce the community's long-term risk for protecting people and property from the effects of natural disasters and to build a safer and stronger community. This public meeting is being conducted in a handicapped accessible location. Any handicapped person wanting to attend the meeting and requires assistance with accessibility and/or interpretation should contact the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Division at (904) 966-6336 at least 5 calendar days prior to the meeting date. Any person wishing to provide comments who cannot attend the meeting may do so by submitting written comments via email to bcem@bradfordsheriff.org at least 5 calendar days prior to the meeting date. The meeting agenda may be obtained within 5 days of the meeting date via email request as well.
Please contact the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Division at (904) 966-6336 for more information.
A FAIR HOUSING/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE JURISDICTION
2/16 2tchg 2/23-BCT

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The City of Lawtey City Council will be conducting a maintenance department workshop on February 20, 2023, at 6 p.m. at Lawtey City Hall, 2793 Lake St. Lawtey, FL 32058. All interested parties are invited to attend.
2/16 1tchg-BCT

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME
Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the undersigned: Amy Morie, 24686 US Hwy 301, Lawtey FL 32058, sole owner, doing business under the firm name of: Tiny Worlds Farm, 24686 US Hwy 301, Lawtey FL 32058, intends to register fictitious name under the aforesaid statute. Dated this 13th day of February A.D., 2023, in Bradford County.
2/16 1tchg-BCT

CONCURRENT NOTICE
NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS
Date of Publication: February 16, 2021

Name of Responsible Entity: City of Starke
Address: 209 North Thompson Street City, State, Zip Code: Starke, FL 32091
Telephone Number: 904-964-5027
These notices shall satisfy two separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the City of Starke. REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS
On or about March 7, 2023 the City of Starke will submit a request to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for the release of Community Development Block Grant funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1974, as amended, to undertake a project within the City of Starke that will include the use of up to \$700,000 in CDBG funds for the construction of building improvements to the RJE Renaissance Center which is located at 1080 North Pine Street, Starke, Florida 32091. Also, up to \$500,000 will be contributed to the project with funds from the American Rescue Plan provided by Bradford County. Several building improvements are planned and will be addressed in order of priority until the grant funds are used up. The highest priority item is the replacement/repair of the roof, followed by the replacement of the south wall of the gymnasium. Also ranked as 2nd priority is the construction of a 30'x30' concrete pad on the north side of the building. The third priority is modernizing the RJE Center restrooms. The fourth and fifth priorities include the installation of electrical upgrades for a high efficiency HVAC system and an emergency generator. Priorities six, seven and eight include replacement or repair of the RJE Center's floors, one for one replacement of selected windows, and miscellaneous interior upgrades and repairs. Priority nine is minor site grading to control stormwater runoff, while the final priority (#10) is the installation of a 30'x30' pre-manufactured building (pavilion) to be installed on top of the previously mentioned concrete pad. The CDBG-CV amount budgeted for construction activities is \$623,000. The \$500,000 in American Rescue Plan funds will be used primarily for roof repair/replacement activities. Grant administration activities will include complete management and reporting for each project activity. Engineering/Architectural costs will include project inspection and construction contract administration. CDBG funds in the amount of \$50,000 has been budgeted for grant administration, while \$27,000 has been budget for Engineering/Architectural services.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
The City of Starke has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the City of Starke Clerk's office located at 209 North Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091. The Environmental Review Record (ERR) can be examined at this location and/or copied on Mondays thru Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., or by appointment by contacting Jimmy Crosby, City Clerk at 904-964-5027.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the City of Starke (Attention: Jimmy Crosby, City Clerk, 209 North Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091). All comments must be received by March 6, 2023. Comments will be considered prior to the City of Starke requesting a release of funds. Comments should specify which notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS
The City of Starke certifies to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and HUD that Scott Roberts in his capacity as Mayor consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The State's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the City of Starke to use the CDBG funds.
OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS
DEO will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Starke certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the City of Starke; (b) the City of Starke has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR part 58; (c) the grant recipient has committed funds or incurred costs not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by the State; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures at 24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76 and shall be addressed to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, CDBG Program, MSC-400, 107 East Madison Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-6508. Potential objectors should contact the City of Starke to verify the actual last day of the objection period. Contact information: Jimmy Crosby, City Clerk, 209 North Thompson Street, Starke, Florida 32091. Mr. Crosby can also be reached by email at jrcrosby@cityofstarke.org or by phone at 904-964-5027. Scott Roberts, Mayor and Certifying Officer
2/16 1tchg-BCT

CITY COMMISSION MEETING
The City Commission of the City of Lake Butler will hold its Regular Meeting on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 6:00 PM in the Commission Chambers at City Hall located at 200 SW 1st St, Lake Butler, FL 32054.
2/16 1tchg-UCT

LAKE REGION
Public Notice
City of Keystone Heights
The City of Keystone Heights is now seeking applications for Keystone Airport Authority Seat #4. These seat's term will run to May 2026. The KHA meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm at the Keystone Airport. Members interested in serving on this board must reside within 10 miles of the city limits of Keystone Heights. All terms are three-year terms. Closing date for applications will be March 20th, 2023 at 4:00pm. For more information, please contact Keystone Heights Airport Authority (352)473-0031 or Keystone Heights City Hall (352)473-4807.
For more information regarding these seats, please see Section 38 of the City's Code of Ordinances.
2/16 1tchg-LRM

UNION
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION
File Number: 2022-CP-0033
IN RE: ESTATE OF KELLY JO MULLEN
Deceased.
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The administration of the estate of KELLY JO MULLEN, deceased, whose date of death was 03/25/2022, and whose Social Security Number is xxx-xx-6207, is pending in the Circuit Court for Union County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 55 W. Main Street, Lake Butler, Florida 32054. The names and addresses of the Petitioner and that of Petitioner'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 WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.
All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.
ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN

THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED. NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.
Attorney for Petitioner
/s/Maurice T. McDaniel, Esquire
Maurice T. McDaniel, Esquire
Florida Bar Number: 0125864
18581 High Springs Main Street, Suite 20
High Springs, Florida 32643
Telephone: (352) 559-0930
Facsimile: (352) 559-0931
Petitioner
/s/Audrey K. Deason
Audrey K. Deason
Personal Representative
2/9 2tchg 2/16-UCT

LAKE REGION
Public Notice
City of Keystone Heights
The City of Keystone Heights is now seeking applications for Keystone Airport Authority Seat #4. These seat's term will run to May 2026. The KHA meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm at the Keystone Airport. Members interested in serving on this board must reside within Clay County. All terms are three-year terms. Closing date for applications will be March 20th, 2023 at 4:00pm. For more information, please contact Keystone Heights Airport Authority (352)473-0031 or Keystone Heights City Hall (352)473-4807.
For more information regarding these seats, please see Section 38 of the City's Code of Ordinances.
2/16 1tchg-LRM

LAKE REGION
Public Notice
City of Keystone Heights
The City of Keystone Heights is now seeking applications for Keystone Airport Authority Seat for Clay County. This seat's term will run to May 2026. The KHA meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm at the Keystone Airport. Members interested in serving on this board must reside within Clay County. All terms are three-year terms. Closing date for applications will be February 28, 2023 at 4:00pm. Interested parties should submit an application to the City Hall or email application to assistant@keystoneheights.us. For more information, please contact City Hall (352)473-4807.
For more information regarding these seats, please see Section 38 of the City's Code of Ordinances.
2/16 1tchg-LRM

LAKE REGION
Public Notice
City of Keystone Heights
The City of Keystone Heights is now seeking individual to serve on its Heritage Commission. The Commission meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 10:00 am. All terms are three-year terms. Closing date for applications will be February 28, 2023 at 4:00pm. Interested parties should submit an application to the City Hall or email application to assistant@keystoneheights.us. For more information, please contact City Hall (352)473-4807.
For more information regarding these seats, please see Section 38 of the City's Code of Ordinances.
2/16 1tchg-LRM

LAKE REGION
Public Notice
City of Keystone Heights
The City of Keystone Heights is now seeking applications for Keystone Airport Authority Seat for Clay County. This seat's term will run to May 2026. The KHA meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm at the Keystone Airport. Members interested in serving on this board must reside within Clay County. All terms are three-year terms. Closing date for applications will be February 28, 2023 at 4:00pm. Interested parties should submit an application to the City Hall or email application to assistant@keystoneheights.us. For more information, please contact City Hall (352)473-4807.
For more information regarding these seats, please see Section 38 of the City's Code of Ordinances.
2/16 1tchg-LRM

Obituaries

Mildred Cobb

Our precious mother, Mildred "Micki" Bridges Cobb, has finally gone to be with her sweet Lord Jesus. Her greatest prayer was for all of her family and loved ones to seek a closer life with Jesus Christ as she waits to be reunited with them in Heaven and live together in eternal peace. At the age of 92, she passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by her children, three generations of family and close friends. She was born June 25, 1930, to Elijah (Jim) Bridges and Ida Mae Bridges in Raiford. When she was 7 years old, her mother passed away, and she and her three brothers were then raised by her grandmother, Pearl Dowling Johns. She then attended Raiford Elementary School with her brothers. She then attended Union County High School in Lake Butler, where she met and married Bill Cobb Jr. They were married in May 1947 and moved to West Palm Beach. Bill served in the U. S. Navy during the Korean War, stationed in French Morocco, where Micki joined him. After military service, they returned to West Palm Beach, where they raised their three children. As a young mother, she was a homemaker dedicated to the care and love of her three children and to building a family on a foundation of love and faith in Jesus Christ. Her love of children and Christ was always present in her home, and she would often be seen bringing many children to church to teach them to know and love Jesus. In later years, she re-entered the workforce and enjoyed a successful career in real estate in West Palm Beach. After moving to Lake City in 1980, she served in clerical and managerial positions at the local credit bureau and at a franchise corporation. After retiring in 1990, she became a foster mother for several years, where she made an impact on the lives of many children, opening her home at all hours, day or night. Over the years since then, she would regularly hear from these children; one of them is here today, Candy Rowe. She was a generous, giving, and self-sacrificing soul who opened her home to many and offered comfort and refuge from the difficulties in life. It was said by her oldest and dearest friends, that she was the best friend they ever had in their lives. She was full of life every day, even to her last days. Her passion and favorite things in life were her Lord and her large family. As a long-time member of North Lake City Church of God, she served the Lord continually, and was always eager to take on new responsibilities. She was best known as Leader of the Prayer Ministry from 1996-2010, Sunday School, VBS, Finance Committee, Youth Board, and many more tasks, both large and small. She was preceded in death by her husband, William A. Cobb; foster son, Charles Cobb; sister, Evelyn Lyles; and brothers, J. C., James, Charles, and Hal Bridges.

She is survived by her daughter, Romaine Cobb (Craig) Thormodson of Madelia, Minnesota; sons, William A. "Billy" Cobb and Richard Cobb; grandchildren, Gina Watson, Alysa Thormodson, Sarah (Michael) Bower, William A. "Will" (Amanda) Cobb, Ryan, Zach, McKinleigh, and Brayden Cobb; great-grandchildren, twins, Adriana and Briana Watson, Carson Watson, Erin, Asa, and Roselyne Cobb, Bailey Taylor, and Matthew Bower. She is also survived by special friends, Thea Baglino, Ashley Cobb, and Beth Smith.

Services will be held Thursday, Feb. 16, at 2 p.m. Visitation will begin at 1 p.m. at the church. It was her request that, in lieu of flowers, donations be considered to the North Lake City Church of God Benevolence Fund.

Arrangements are under the direction and care of Gateway-Forest Lawn Funeral Home, 3596 S. US Hwy 441, Lake City, 32025, 386-752-1954. Please leave words of comfort for the family at www.gatewayforestlawn.com.

PAID OBITUARY



William Crawford

William Donald Crawford of Raiford, or "Donnie" as he was affectionately known to his friends and family, entered this world on Oct. 19, 1954, and passed from this life of pain and suffering on Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023. He was a man who touched more lives than can be counted and he leaves behind a multitude of friends who will miss him dearly. He was preceded in death by his dear mother, Barbara Jean Conner Crawford; and his loving father, Jason Bruce (J.B.) Crawford.

He is survived by his wife of 49 years, Denise Mooneyham Crawford; son, Daniel Wallace Crawford; daughter-in-law, Carrie Croft Crawford; daughter, Abigail Dawn Crawford; and brothers, Allen Bruce (Elaine) Crawford, Gordon Chris Crawford, and Eric Jason (Charmin) Crawford. He was blessed with nine grandchildren, Nicholas Luke Crawford, Landon Thomas Crawford, William Rhett Crawford, Ethan Paul Crawford, Ashlinn Faith Crawford, Jillian Brooke Crawford, Gracie Elizabeth Crawford, Jackson Colt Crawford, and Avie Michaela Wise; and one great-grandson Asher Rhett Crawford. His four sisters-in-law are Cheryl Mooneyham (Pat) McDaniel, Lisa Mooneyham (Chris) Lawson, Lori Mooneyham (Shands) Howard, and Marcie Mooneyham (Jay) Tucker.

A service to honor him will be held at Fellowship Baptist Church on Saturday, Feb. 18, at 3 p.m. The family will receive friends for a visitation beginning at 2 p.m. Immediately following the service, he will be laid to rest at Conner Cemetery. Services will be officiated by Brother Gene Burnsed.

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Archer-Milton Funeral Home, 386-496-2008 www.archerfuneralhome.com



George Hoffer III

George William Hoffer III died on Friday, Dec. 23, 2022.

He is survived by his son Michael Hoffer and daughter-in-law, Amanda Hoffer, both of Starke; brother, Jeff Hoffer of Palm Coast; and sisters, Sue Hoffer of Vermont, and Tricia Drumm of Jacksonville.

Services will be held on Friday, Feb. 24, at 10:30 a.m. at Jacksonville National Cemetery.

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

Bert McGee Jr.

Bert Edward McGee Jr., 59, of Camden, Tennessee passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023, at his residence. He was born on Aug. 23, 1963, in Killeen, Texas to the late Bert Edward McGee Sr. and Beverly Chapman McGee Poag. He was employed with Dupont-Chemours for 40 years. He was a Baptist by faith. He was an avid fisherman and outdoorsman. He had a zest for life and loved making people smile and laugh. He loved spending time with family and friends. Two of his favorite things to do were to cheer on the Florida Gators and cook crawfish.

He is survived by his mother, Beverly Chapman McGee Poag of Lake City; wife, Leslie Johns McGee of Camden, Tennessee; son, Dillon McGee (Autumn Ratliff) of Big Sandy, Tennessee; son by choice, Wally Johns of Starke; daughter, Laine McGee (James Moore) of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee; brother, Robert (Patty) McGee of Starke; sister, Marilynn (Marty) Martinez of Lake City; his grandpup, Gus McGee; and several nieces, nephews, cousins and family friends.

Visitation with the family will be held on Saturday, Feb. 18, from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. at Oakdale Funeral Home, 401 Hwy 641, Camden Tennessee 38320. Memorial services will begin at 4 p.m.



Paul Finley

Paul Brian Finley born Sept. 10, 1958, passed away from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma on Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022.

He is survived by his daughter, Genevieve Finley; son, Christopher Finley; brother, David Finley; and sister, Susan Day.

He wished to be cremated, so a Memorial Service will be held Saturday, Feb. 25, at 11 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1415 McDuff Ave. S., Jacksonville, 32205.

PAID OBITUARY

Nancy Fox

Nancy Lee Fox, 87, longtime resident of Keystone Heights, stood upright for the first time in so many years and looked face-to-face at her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023. She was born at home in Otis in Duval County on Dec. 16, 1935. She was preceded in death by Glenn Fox, her Valentine of 66 years. Those who have also gone before her are her parents, Kenneth and Daisy (Williams) Kimbrell; and her half-sister, Mavis (Ellis) Starling.

She is survived by her children, Glynese (Mike) Ronquille, Kimberly Fox, and K. G. (Michelle) Fox; grandchildren, Kenda (Dan) Smith, Gavin (Amber) Ronquille, Ben (Candice) Hightower V, Elisa (Drew) Kellogg, Katie (Matthew) Veal, Amanda Miller, Hannah (Zach) Poole; great-grandchildren, Kellin Ronquille, Hailee Peoples, Elijah Smith, Gauge Ronquille, Elijah Kellogg, Baylie Ronquille, EmmaLee Miller, Paisley Ronquille, Gideon Kellogg, and Stevie Lee Poole.

She loved the Lord, her family and her church. Even at 87, she was faithful to visit and call the "elderly and infirmed." She prayed... You may honor her by serving Christ, your family and others, as she did. You may pay your respects at River of Life Church of God, 2225 US 301 South, Starke, on Thursday, Feb. 16, from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. The service will begin at 11 a.m. with Pastor Terry Clark officiating. Family is welcome to join at graveside for interment at Sellers Cemetery, Halsema Road, Jacksonville.

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



PAID OBITUARY

Edward Gardner

Edward Joseph Gardner, 67, of Keystone Heights, died on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023, due to injuries sustained on Jan. 25, 2023. He was preceded in death by his parents; and his sister, Carol Louise Lineback.

He is survived by two sons, Larry Edward Gardner and Joseph Michael Gardner; his sister, Wilma Jean (Bill) Drew of Georgia; and other extended family.

Arrangements are by Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home of Keystone Heights, 352-473-3175 www.jonesgallagherfh.com

Melvina Green

Melvina M. Green, 92, of Lawtey, passed away Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023, at her residence. She was born in Lawtey and was a life-long resident of Bradford County. She attended the local schools of Bradford County. She was a member of Macedonia Freewill Baptist Church in Lawtey and served as an usher, cook and mother of the church. She was the Leader of the Young People Christian Organization and a giver to the community.

She is survived by her children, Jerome Terry Turner, Patricia Smith and Marian King; and seven grandchildren.

Visitation will be held Friday, Feb. 17, at the Macedonia Freewill Baptist Church. Family hour will be from 4 p.m. until 5 p.m. Public visitation will be from 5 pm. until 7 p.m. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 18, at the Macedonia Freewill Baptist Church in Lawtey, with Elder Mary Palmer conducting the services. Interment will be held following the services at Peetsville Cemetery in Lawtey under the direction of Haile Funeral Home Inc. 802 N. Oak St., Starke, 32091 904-964-7905. The Cortège will form at the home of Mrs. Melvina M. Green on Saturday.

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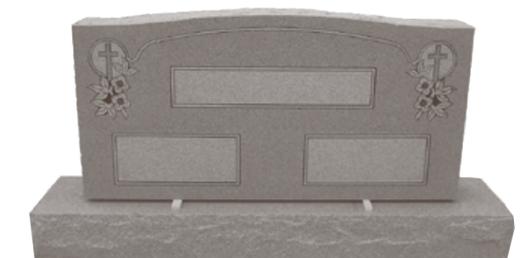
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Helen Riddlehoover

Helen Riddlehoover, 84, died Tuesday, Nov. 22, 2022. She was preceded in death by her husband, Calvin Riddlehoover.

She is survived by three daughters, Annette (Greg) Pusateri, Karen McRae, and Monica Riddlehoover; six grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Services will be held Saturday, Feb. 18, at 11 a.m. at Grace Community Fellowship Church.

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

TRIO

Continued from page 9

"They're recruiting him as a corner," Thomas said. "He played safety for us. He can get up there and be a kid who can play multiple positions, depending on their need and how he develops and where he develops. He can end up being a safety. He can be a nickel or be a corner.

In describing his game, Diston, who's 6-0, 175, said, "I'm so long. I can get picks easier and stuff like that. I can read the offense. Being an offensive player, too, I know what they're going to run."

Thomas said Diston just has a knack for taking advantage of opportunities when they present themselves.

"He brings a lot to the table. Has great ball skills. His instincts are really good," Thomas said, adding, "Sometimes he freelances a little bit, which can get you in trouble at times, but at the same time, he sees a lot on the field and can make plays."

Diston is eagerly looking forward to stepping onto the field for the first time as an ECU Pirate.

"I'm going to love it," he said. "I'm just waiting for that day to come. I'm just so blessed."

Ross joining a 'brotherhood'

Ross said he was looking at six or seven schools, but at Keiser, he saw a program that just feels special.

"The reason I chose Keiser is

they're building a brotherhood," Ross said. "They have a strong coaching staff. It's a strong team. They can do something special. I want to be a part of that."

After making it official during the Feb. 3 signing ceremony, Ross said, "It just feels amazing. I can finally say I got a scholarship for football."

He'll also get the opportunity to participate in track and field at Keiser. Right now, Ross, who's 6-1, 160, competes in the 100- and 200-meter dashes as well as the long jump.

The speed he puts on display in those sprints also pays dividends on the football field.

"My strength is my speed," Ross said. "I'm able to get across the field really quickly."

Thomas said, "He's got such great athleticism that he's got a chance to be a really good player."

Ross has a lot of potential, Thomas said, explaining that Ross had primarily been a backup until entering his senior season. Ross made 34 tackles and had three interceptions for the Tigers in 2022.

"I think his ceiling is just really high," Thomas said, adding, "You could see his development through the year. His confidence level got higher and higher the more he played."

His dream of getting the chance to play college football may have come true, but Ross admitted he'll probably still feel like he's dreaming when he steps onto the field for the first time as a Keiser Seahawk.

"It's not going to feel real," he said. "I'm just going to soak it all in and pray for the best."

NFTC provides HVAC program for FSP inmates

Editor's note: In recognition of Career Technical Education Month, the Telegraph is presenting a series of stories on North Florida Technical College.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Terry Arthur has such a passion for passing on his knowledge to others that he only hesitated briefly when considering a job doing so within the confines of a prison.

Arthur teaches an HVAC program at Florida State Prison as part of a contract between the prison and North Florida Technical College. He currently teaches 19 students during the program's morning session (7:30-10:30) and 14 students in the afternoon session (11:30-2:30).

"I look forward to it," Arthur said, adding, "One of the things I really like about this program is that I'm able to teach people of all different nationalities and from all walks of life. One of the things that has really inspired me is that I feel like I've really been able to get some people interested in this trade who probably never would



Terry Arthur

have entered into it (otherwise)." North Florida Technical College Director Brad Bishop said he attended a conference in which he and other career technical school personnel talked with Florida Department of Corrections personnel. Like career technical schools, the Department of Corrections also receives federal Perkins money for career technical education.

"At the time, there was a big push for providing career technical education for inmates in hopes of reducing recidivism," Bishop said. "The thought was if they come out of the prison system with a credential or a certification within a specific

trade that they would be less likely to go back to prison."

Bishop said since then, several career technical education schools throughout the state have partnered with DOC, providing education for inmates who are within a year and a half to two years of being released. North Florida Technical College entered into a contract with the prison system in 2018.

Arthur said when he interviewed for an NFTC teaching position, he didn't know that it would be teaching at FSP.

"That took me a minute to think over, but my desire to teach and pass on some of the things I know basically overcame that," he said. "A lot of these people really, really need a second chance. If nobody wants to get out there and put themselves in these types of situations, then nothing will ever get done."

Take the prison setting away. What Arthur is left with is a group of students who want to learn from their teacher, just as if he was teaching HVAC on the

See HVAC, page 14

Hoops season ends for BHS, KHHS boys

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

The boys basketball teams at Bradford and Keystone Heights high schools saw their seasons come to an end in the first round of their respective district tournaments.

Bradford, which was coming off the program's first-ever state championship, was the fourth seed in the District 2-3A tournament, losing 67-15 to top seed P.K. Yonge in the Feb. 7 semifinals. The Tornados ended the season with a 1-18 record.

Keystone, the number-five seed in the District 5-4A tournament, lost 67-54 to fourth seed Eastside in a Feb. 7 quarterfinal game. The Indians finished the season 14-11, which was its best season in terms of wins since the 1998-99 team won 28 games.

2S All-State teams include 4 1st-team picks from Bradford

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford High School had four first-team selections and a total of seven honored overall with the release of the Class 2S All-State football teams.

The Tornados' defense, which recorded nine shutouts and allowed 79 points all season, had three first-team picks in juniors Torin Brazell, Chason Clark and Chalil Cummings. Brazell, a lineman, made 68 tackles (25 for loss) and caused two fumbles, while Clark, a linebacker who was named to the team as an athlete, had 101 tackles (14 for loss), three sacks, a caused fumble and a fumble recovery. Cummings, a defensive back, had 71 tackles and three interceptions.

Clark was also a first-team Gainesville Sun Big-School All-Area selection, while the paper named Brazell and Cummings to its second team.

Senior lineman Jayden Luna was named to the first-team offense. Luna (also a first-team

Gainesville Sun All-Area pick) and the offensive line helped pave the way for a rushing attack that averaged 234.8 yards per game (3,287 yards on 476 carries).

Bradford had one second-team pick in senior linebacker Bryson Bowen. Bowen, who earned first-team Gainesville Sun All-Area honors, had 94 tackles (12 for loss), seven sacks, two caused fumbles, one fumble recovery and one interception.

Junior running back Willie Pollard and sophomore quarterback Jeremiah McKenzie earned honorable mention. Pollard rushed for 1,106 yards and 11 touchdowns on 167 carries. McKenzie completed 52 of 80 passes for 855 yards and 10 touchdowns, while also rushing for 549 yards and 12 touchdowns on 119 carries.

Pollard and McKenzie were both first-team Gainesville Sun All-Area selections.

5 Union Co. players receive 1st-team All-State honors

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Union County High School had eight players recognized, including five who were first-team selections, with the release of the Class 1R All-State Football Teams.

The Tigers had three players named to the first-team defense, including University of Oklahoma signee Markus Strong, a senior defensive lineman who recorded 55 tackles (21.5 for loss) and 10.5 sacks. He also caused three fumbles and recovered two fumbles.

Strong's play also got him named as the Gainesville Sun's Small-School Defensive Player of the Year.

Senior defensive back Daylyn Diston and senior linebacker Dayviontae Thompson were also first-team picks.

Diston, an East Carolina University signee, had three interceptions (with one returned for a touchdown), a caused fumble and a fumble recovery to go along with 25 tackles. He was a first-team Gainesville Sun Small-School All-Area selection.

Thompson, who was also a second-team Gainesville Sun

All-Area pick, made 58 tackles (eight for loss) and had six sacks.

Senior quarterback A.J. Cortese and junior kicker Jonathan Edwards were first-team All-State picks on offense. Both players were also first-team Gainesville Sun All-Area selections.

Cortese completed 78 of 133 passes for 1,277 yards and seven touchdowns, while also rushing for 647 yards and 10 touchdowns on 71 carries.

Edwards made 46 of his 47 extra-point attempts and was 4 of 4 on field-goal tries.

Senior running back Rayvon Durant and senior linebacker Dalton Lane were second-team All-State selections as well as first-team Gainesville Sun All-Area picks. Durant led the Tigers with 1,554 yards and 17 touchdowns on 200 carries, while Lane had 58 tackles (eight for loss).

Junior linebacker Thomas Williams earned All-State honorable mention. He had 51 tackles (13.5 for loss), two interceptions, three caused fumbles, one fumble recovery and a blocked punt.

Baseball, softball regular seasons begin on Feb. 20

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford, Keystone Heights and Union County high schools will start the regular season in baseball and softball next week, with the Tornados playing games in both sports on Monday, Feb. 20.

The Bradford baseball team opens with a road game at Suwannee on Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. and will then travel to play Middleburg on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 6:30 p.m.

In softball, the Tornados will travel to play Columbia on Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. That will be followed by a game at Gainesville on Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

Keystone's baseball and softball teams both host Clay on Tuesday, Feb. 21, with each game starting at 7 p.m.

Union's baseball team opens its season at home against Baker County on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7 p.m., while the Tigers' softball team plays that same night at home against Bell at 6:30 p.m.

LASKO

Continued from page 10

long drive to a beach.

"My daughters love the beach," Lasko said, adding, "The beach is just their Heaven on earth, I guess."

Actually, the whole family loves the beach, as well as the weather in Florida, so the move to Bradford County basically fit the criteria necessary for Lasko to leave his home state.

"If we're going to out of Tennessee, we want to be close to the beach, and we want to be someplace warm," he said. "We're not on the beach, but we're close, and we're someplace warmer."

Lasko, of course, was going to go wherever God led him, and he can see that First Baptist of Starke is indeed where God wanted him. Yes, it's "really awesome" to serve alongside his friend Page, he said, but at First Baptist, he's met a collection of people wanting to impact lives, especially those of youth.

"They want to see God do great things here," Lasko said. "That was one of the main things that really pulled me to come here. My calling is to serve God and to share the love of Jesus and allow God to transform young people's lives."

"You can see the need for that here and in this community."

The church has started having youth-led Sunday services, which Lasko said are planned for four to five times a year.

"We want to see more of that," he said, adding, "It was cool to see that vibrance and excitement in our people for our young people, to see them involved. I'm looking forward to that, to see a church that wants to see kids involved."

The church had a Wednesday night student ministry that kind of went by the wayside when COVID became a thing. Following the pandemic, Page (before Lasko's arrival) began meeting with three young men who were coming to the church in an effort to get the ministry up and going again.

Lasko was interviewed for this story on Jan. 23. At that time, he said the previous Wednesday (Jan. 18) consisted of 15-16 as part of that student ministry. The credit for the ministry's growth, he said, goes to the youth, especially the revived ministry's original three boys, who asked others to be a part of the ministry with them.

"It's not anything that I did, obviously," Lasko said. "It's the kids — the students here — knowing there's a church that cares. We're providing something for them on Wednesday nights — some community for them, for them to be with other kids in a safe environment."

Lasko is enjoying being a part of the First Baptist of Starke family — and grateful.

"They didn't have to take a chance on me," he said, adding, "I believe that God called me here. It was all in God's working for a 47-year-old ex-teacher to be here for this moment and to walk alongside Pastor Matthew and the leaders of this church."

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Prevatt to be honored as a Woman of Distinction

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Whatever Lisa Prevatt has done throughout her life and is still doing to help others makes her no different from any number of women.

Well, that's her opinion, anyway.

However, Santa Fe College has chosen to put the spotlight on her and four others as part of its annual Woman of Distinction and Woman of Promise honors.

Prevatt, who lives on Hampton Lake, will be recognized at a luncheon on Wednesday, March 1, at 11:30 a.m. at the Hilton UF Conference Center in Gainesville. Tickets, which are limited, are \$40 and may be purchased online. Visit sfcollege.edu/wod and click on the tickets link.

"I've always enjoyed going to that distinguished-women's luncheon and hearing about all the just exciting work women were doing in our community," Prevatt said. "Now that it's me, I just feel like I don't do anything different from so many other people, so I guess I feel like I'm a representative of all the women who work hard to do good things within their communities and to help others."

Prevatt, of course, felt honored when she was informed that she had been selected for the honor, along with Women of Distinction Bea Awoniyi, Annette Bauer (deceased) and Yvette Carter and Woman of Promise Emma Katie-Grace Hutto, but she admitted it kind of left her speechless.

"I don't feel distinguished, except I'm 6 feet tall," Prevatt said. She then laughed and said, "There you go. I do stand out sometimes."

If you take away her height, you're still left with someone who stood out, especially when

Bradford County's Lisa Prevatt, a former teacher and administrator in Bradford schools, is one of Santa Fe College's 2023 Women of Distinction. She'll be honored at a March 1 luncheon. Photo by Matt Stamey/Santa Fe College.



it came to education. She worked for more than 20 years in the Bradford County School District as a teacher and administrator.

Making a rewarding change in careers

Education was the retired Prevatt's second career. She initially worked 10 years in the field of nuclear-medicine technology after graduating from Santa Fe College. After the birth of her first child, she found the career to be emotionally challenging when working with pediatric patients. Plus, when you are trying to raise a child, it's a challenging career that consists of long workdays and having to be on call.

Prevatt's second career began in 1989 as a teacher at what was then known as Lawtey Community School.

"It's just really a great job for mothers because the hours are so similar to your children's," Prevatt said. "If you need to be a working mother, it's a great career. It's served me and my family well. I loved it, too, being able to just touch the lives of children is a precious thing."

Teaching also seemed to be a good fit for someone who had to overcome her struggles with reading as a child. She wanted to rely upon the experiences she had with her teachers (good and bad) to help children with their own struggles.

"That definitely molded me and drew me into my philosophy, which is that all students can learn, but they don't all learn the same," Prevatt said. "They need a lot of encouragement and patience when they're struggling. They also need to see all the little successes they have so they don't give up. You just have to be that great encourager."

Of course, nothing's better than when a teacher sees that student's face light up when they finally make that breakthrough after their struggles and comprehend what they're learning.

"That's such a reward," Prevatt said. "That's what education's about, just helping them to get there."

Prevatt said the appeal of teaching in elementary school was the chance to witness that "very obvious educational

See PREVATT, page 15



Harrison Avery (left) gets fingerprinted in his Criminal Justice class at North Florida Technical College by Instructor David Bukowski, who's a deputy with the Bradford County Sheriff's Office. Photos by Cliff Smelley.

Learning the ins and outs of criminal justice at NFTC

Editor's note: In recognition of Career Technical Education Month, the Telegraph is presenting a series of stories on North Florida Technical College.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Freeze! You're under arrest!

That phrase immediately conjures up the idea of law enforcement in most people's minds, but there's so much more to the career than arresting people, which Bradford High School students and Bradford Middle School eighth-graders are finding out in the criminal justice classes offered at North Florida Technical College.

Bradford County Sheriff's Office Deputy David Bukowski, who teaches the classes, said some students are surprised at all of the components that make up law enforcement and criminal justice "because all they know about is what they see on TV — cops running around, chasing bad guys and putting them in jail and things like that."

Bukowski, who also worked for the Starke Police Department (retiring from there after more than 20 years of service), teaches one class for eighth-graders — Exploration of Criminal Justice — which provides an overview of the various aspects of law enforcement, from the local level to the federal level.

"They're looking at the sheriff's office, corrections, FBI and different things like that," Bukowski said.

Bukowski also teaches five Criminal Justice Operations classes for high school students. Those classes are offered at three different levels.

"Criminal Justice 1 just starts with the basic history of law enforcement," Bukowski said. "Students work their way into different aspects. What's the difference between a sheriff's department and a police department and state police? Things like that."

The three levels of Criminal Justice Operations classes cover such topics as how to respond to calls for incidents and services, traffic stops, arrest techniques, use-of-force guidelines, crime-scene protocol, investigative writing, how to prepare written reports, forensic science, ethics and professionalism, the juvenile justice system and crime-prevention programs and how to implement them.

Students recently participated



BHS sophomore Journie Sampson enjoys the Criminal Justice program. He wants to work in law enforcement.

in a mock trial, Bukowski said, adding, "They learned about the criminal justice process and the due process that everybody's entitled to."

Bukowski also explains to students how other school subjects are important if they want to pursue a career in criminal justice.

"Even when I was a young kid, I didn't realize how much math plays a part in law enforcement," he said.

Even if students choose to take a different career path, they're learning interpersonal and communication skills that will benefit them.

For those who do decide they want to go into criminal justice, the job opportunities are there, Bukowski said, adding, "Especially nowadays with the way law enforcement is looked at. Recruiting is very important now to get people interested in law enforcement."

BHS sophomore Journie Sampson, who's in his first year of taking Criminal Justice Operations, doesn't have a negative view of law enforcement. It's something he's dreamed of pursuing since he was in elementary school.

"I had a good interaction with a deputy," Sampson said. "It kind of made me think about it as a career."

Sampson, who's a member of the Bradford County Sheriff's Office Explorers youth program, likes the fact that the classes are taught by someone who actually works in law enforcement, saying Bukowski is able to share "what he's been through."

For someone who thinks highly of law enforcement, Sampson believes that the NFTC Criminal Justice program is a good thing, that it will inspire youth like him to think about a career in criminal justice.

HVAC

Continued from page 13

NFTC campus.

"Some of these guys are about to get out of there," Arthur said. "They're not looking to get into trouble or make more problems from themselves. They want to complete the program. They're very respectful."

"A person really shouldn't be afraid to do something like this because you're probably the safest person on the compound, really."

When Arthur begins teaching a new course, the starting point is always safety. At the completion of the program, students will have 10 hours of OSHA-authorized training.

"We do an introduction to the tools, where they basically get to see them and hold them," Arthur said. "They inspect them to make sure they're safe to use. Sometimes I'll intentionally do something to something to make it unusable, just so that when they see something like that, they're like, 'This is not usable.'"

Arthur said the course is just the starting point of learning the trade, which will continue on the job.

"With this type of training, they're going to be able to enter into the workforce as an apprentice," Arthur said. "Of course, there'll be a lot of on-the-job training for them at that point. From me being in the industry for over 20 years, it always starts with working with someone who has the heart of a teacher and will pass that information down."

"My hope is that through learning the terminology and basic tool usage, they will be able to hone those skills under a good technician who will teach them the right way to do things." Bishop said NFTC has received transcript requests from some of the students who've already gone through the program who are looking to further their education and earn more certifications.

Arthur said some of his students begin taking the course knowing from the start they want to pursue a career that utilizes HVAC skills. He also had a student who wasn't interested in an HVAC career, but did want to learn the skills because his goal was to flip houses when he got out of prison.

"He thought it was a good idea to have some knowledge in this kind of thing," Arthur said.

Some students have no idea about HVAC at all, and the course proves to be an enlightening one that introduces them to a possible career in which there is a demand for workers.

"They're looking for an opportunity," Arthur said. "They see these types of classes come around, and they're like, 'Hey. This might be it. I might be able to go in there and really enjoy doing this. I might be able to be successful with it.'"

That's what career technical education is all about, whether it's on a school campus or in a prison — providing someone with a skill to better their life.

Arthur said NFTC does an excellent job of that.

"I think the courses that are being offered here are very practical," Arthur said, adding, "I can't think of a single program (at NFTC) that somebody wouldn't really benefit from. I feel like the school and the staff are second to none."

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PREVATT

Continued from page 14

growth” that young children make.

“And they love their teachers when they’re little,” she added.

Prevatt also taught at Starke Elementary School before moving into administration. That phase of her career began at Southside Elementary School under Principal Mary Agnes Goldwire, who Prevatt described as a “great mentor.” From there, Prevatt returned to Lawtey to serve as that school’s principal.

Though she considered herself an elementary school person, Prevatt had the opportunity to go to Bradford High School as an assistant principal. She was hesitant about that move when it was first mentioned to her by Harry Hatcher, who was superintendent of schools at the time, but in discussions with him, she finally said, “Wherever you need me.”

“So I ended up going to the high school, which ended up being a good experience,” Prevatt said.

Prevatt said she had envisioned working at the district level one day, but never had an eye on being assistant superintendent, but that was the next position Hatcher had for her.

“He wanted the focus of that

office to be more curriculum and instruction, so he just asked me to do that,” Prevatt said. “That was an honor.”

During her final four years before retirement, Prevatt once again found herself back at the school where it all began, serving as Lawtey principal again.

“Honestly, the best four years,” Prevatt said. “The best way to end my career, back with teachers and children. I was so thankful for that. What a great staff that was. We truly were Team Lawtey.”

“You never know what life’s going to bring you, but I found that God is good, and He has good plans. Being in Lawtey was a good thing.”

Prevatt may not work in the school system anymore, but she’s still helping a student as a mentor in Communities in Schools of Bradford County’s Take Stock in Children program. This is her first year as a mentor. She’s paired with a BHS freshman and will have the chance to mentor her until she graduates.

“That has been a lot of fun, just spending some time getting to know her,” Prevatt said. “I go and have lunch with her a couple of times a month. We get to talk about her career goals, how things are going and then just life in general, too — just building a relationship, to help encourage her to continue her education and

do the best she can.”

Santa Fe trustee

Prevatt thinks highly of Santa Fe College, saying, “Santa Fe just represents so much that I believe is important, including not only education, but equity and access to education. They really try to serve all students.”

The Santa Fe alumnus had the opportunity to work with the college as a member of its District Board of Trustees, taking the place of Bradford County resident Evelyn Womack. Prevatt said Jackson Sasser, who was the college president at the time, asked Womack to recruit someone to fill her spot. That led to Prevatt being interviewed by Sasser as well as by then Gov. Rick Scott.

Prevatt would serve on the board for approximately 11 years — including a term as board chair in 2017-18 — before stepping down in April 2022.

“What’s so interesting is how that little board, with its different skills and experiences, can come together and share and discuss and help make good decisions for that college,” Prevatt said. “I truly enjoyed working with other trustees and getting to know them.”

One of the trustees she got to work alongside was Mike Goldwire, the husband of Mary

Agnes Goldwire, whom Prevatt worked under at Southside Elementary School.

“He is so energetic and so passionate about helping this community,” Prevatt said.

Serving as a trustee was a great chance for Prevatt to become more aware of the college, its programs and its personnel.

“When you get to see behind the scenes, so to speak, and you get to really hear the work and the heart of the people at that institution, it made it easy for me to stay there as long as I did. They really have a heart for educating students and for working in the community. They have always been highly involved, even here in Bradford County. That’s a wonderful thing, too.”

Prevatt likes the fact that the college has a center in Starke and gives BHS students a head start on their post-high school lives through dual enrollment.

“Some of them even have their associate’s degree by the time they graduate high school,” Prevatt said. “What a benefit that is.”

A highlight during her time as trustee was Santa Fe receiving the Aspen Institute’s designation as number-one community college in the nation in 2015.

“The interview process with the Aspen folks was very thorough,” Prevatt said. “They interviewed us as a board, too.

They really wanted to know what Santa Fe was all about, who they really were.

“Sure, the data was pretty good, but are people just talking the talk or truly walking the walk? Santa Fe walks the walk.”

Encouraging others

She may not see herself as one deserving of the public spotlight, but Prevatt said that by being a Woman of Distinction, she’ll hopefully encourage others to give back to their communities in some way.

That’s why she likes the fact that Santa Fe honors Women of Distinction and Women of Promise (ages 16-21) every year. She believes that when someone sees what someone else is being honored for, it makes them evaluate how they, too, can make a difference in their communities.

In other words, Prevatt believes Santa Fe is helping keep the process of giving back going. “God created us all different, with different skills and gifts,” Prevatt said. “When we see them used for such good, that’s what is an amazing thing.”

Prevatt said her fellow Woman of Distinction honorees — Bea Awoniyi, Annette Bauer (deceased) and Yvette Carter — and Woman of Promise (age 16-21) Emma Katie-Grace Hutto certainly provide a good example

to follow.

“It’s just what makes our world so much better — when people are willing to give their time and energy into different things just to help others,” Prevatt said.

Women of Distinction traces its origin back to 1987, the inspiration of Ann Bromley, Santa Fe’s coordinator of women’s programs and special projects. She sought to develop a program that would provide recognition and visibility to women for their contributions of time and talent.

Since its inception, Santa Fe College has bestowed the honor to over 190 women.

The Woman of Promise category was added to honor outstanding up-and-coming young women for leadership in their community and civic involvement. As of this date, 16 young ladies have received this honor.

In 2014, the Women of Distinction honorees began raising funds to establish the first Woman of Distinction Scholarship fund. The first award was given for the 2015-16 academic year. More than \$220,000 has been raised to endow four scholarships designed to enable women to achieve their academic goals.

A goal was set in 2022 of creating a fifth scholarship.



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