

The Sweetest Strawberries this side of Heaven

Bradford County Telegraph

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Bradford County acquiring fairgrounds to prevent foreclosure

Ownership will assure future of the fair

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Bradford County commissioners held a special meeting Monday night, agreeing to acquire the Bradford Fair Association's debt to secure the future of the fairgrounds.

The Fair Association met simultaneously and voted to deed the property to Bradford County.

The association found itself facing foreclosure again after it could not make regular payments to the private investor who had previously acquired the debt, James Gissy.

The association originally borrowed funds to continue fairgrounds reconstruction. Having acquired partial funding from the state, the association planned to repay the debt with future state funding, but that funding never came. Gissy's acquisition of the debt in 2023 saved the fairgrounds from foreclosure. It was the alternative to Bradford County's offer to purchase the promissory note, which came with a stipulation — that the county would assume ownership and management of the fairgrounds.

The fair association rebuffed the county's offer at the time, with BFA President Bob Milner noting that the fairgrounds was valued at millions of dollars more than the remaining debt. While there was ambitious talk, however, the association was unable to earn the revenue to repay Gissy's investment and still stood to lose the fairgrounds.

Bradford County commissioners confirmed with their Feb. 24 vote that they would use public funds to save the annual fair and the fairgrounds from an uncertain future were it be sold.

While nothing has been decided about ownership or management, commissioners unanimously voted to offer \$1.74 million to acquire the promissory note from Gissy. The closing date could be as soon as this Friday, according to County Manager Scott Kornegay.

The money would be paid out of the county's approximately \$12 million in contingency reserves, around \$7 million of which is available for emergency use, according to Finance Director Dana LaFollette.

As far as ownership of the fairgrounds, Commission Chairman Danny Riddick said, "The cleanest thing would be for the current association to all resign and sign it over to the county. That would be the cleanest way to go, and that's what we're hoping for."

As Kornegay pointed out, if the association was unable to pay the current lien holder, it's unlikely it could repay the county, meaning the county could foreclose on the property but without the fear that a private owner would develop something on top of the fairgrounds.

See FAIR, page 2

Sweet like Strawberry Candy



The Miss Bradford-Union County Strawberry Pageant crowned its 2025 royals over the weekend, with Union County High School hosting the show. Pictured are (l-r) Strawberry Princess Ellie Bay, Strawberry Queen Cailynn Boggs and Strawberry Shortcake Charley Box. Photo: Miss Bradford-Union County Strawberry Pageant.

Missing police evidence likely destroyed

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

The FDLE investigation launched into the management of the former Starke Police Department is over, concluding that thousands of missing evidence items were likely destroyed.

A year ago, Starke commissioners turned law enforcement over to Bradford County Sheriff Gordon Smith, who upon seeing the state of the evidence tracking and record keeping, called in the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

An audit of evidence and records is not unusual during such a transition, but what Smith said his employees saw sparked panic. A few weeks later, FDLE confirmed 2,560 of 4,012 items could not be located in the SPD evidence vault.

"They were stunned, as I was," Smith said of FDLE's team.

One FDLE investigator called the vault "haphazard" and "one of the most disorganized evidence vaults he has encountered." There were items without case numbers or descriptions in addition to the missing evidence and no offsite locations where evidence would have been stored.

"It was in disarray, the same thing we encountered," said Smith, adding that when he served as police chief, the evidence vault was audited and organized as they were working

toward accreditation.

Poor management and a lot of employee turnover is how the sheriff summarized what the department had become when the city commission closed it in a cost cutting move and turned law enforcement over to him.

FDLE interviewed 11 current and former employees, revealing multiple organizational issues. The high turnover rate contributed to insufficient training and knowledge about organizing and storing evidence.

"There was a lot of turn over. It never really stayed in one person's care," Smith said, although the sheriff's office tried to assist, sharing its Smart Cop software access to document and track evidence.

"According to witness statements, BCSD and SPD initially maintained proper communication pertaining to permissions and technical authoritative designations for the evidence custodian," the report states. "However, due to the high rate of turnover within the SPD, this communication and necessary software functionality diminished over time. The diminished operability, in addition to lack of technical training within SPD led to gross oversight within SPD's evidence management system."

Multiple witnesses were able to

confirm the large-scale destruction of evidence through a third-party vendor in 2022. However, the SPD employee preparing evidence for destruction had received minimal training for the position. He told investigators he assumed evidence marked TBD meant it was "to be destroyed." FDLE determined that that classification was unrelated to destruction. According to the sheriff, it meant the evidence should be held while its future was "to be determined."

Nevertheless, the evidence was destroyed, and the employee lacked the technical authority to reclassify items as destroyed within the software system. He said he kept the log in binders within the vault, but those binders were never located.

FDLE concluded it was highly probable that most of the evidence missing from the vault had been destroyed. Unable to determine a crime was committed, the case was closed.

"They interviewed people didn't find any criminal wrongdoing, other than basically mismanagement, lack of education, lack of training, those type issues," Smith said.

See MISSING, page 2



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WORTH NOTING

Homecoming at Johnstown

Johnstown Baptist Church's annual homecoming celebration is Sunday, March 9. The church is celebrating 77 years. Morning service will start at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served following the morning service. There will be an evening service around 2 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to join the congregation for a day preaching, singing and fellowship.

Democratic Women Meet Feb. 27

The Democratic Women's Club of the Lakes Area will meet on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30). Co-founder and Director of the Cultural Arts Coalition, and Environmental and Climate Justice Chair of the Alachua County Branch of the NAACP, NKwanda Jah will speak about issues of climate justice. All Democrats are welcome. Meetings are held at the Melrose Center, 309 S.R. 26 in Melrose. For further information call 352-235-4161.

Invitation to Mt. Zion's Pew Service

The Beatrice Scott Missionary Society of Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church in Lawtey and the pastor, the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Dupree, invite you to join them in the annual Pew Service on Sunday, March 9, at 4 p.m. The Rev. Sherron Willson, pastor of Grace Methodist Church, in Lawtey will be guest speaker for the occasion. The public is invited.

Market at Melrose

The Market at Melrose Farmers and Crafts Sale takes place the second Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Mossman Hall in Melrose, 310 S.R. 26. The market features local artists, homemade crafts, one-of-a-kind gifts, a farmers market, plants and animals.

To become a vendor, reach out to "Grumpa Curtis" on Facebook.



FAIR

Continued from page 1

The fair association also met Monday evening and voted to place the fairgrounds in the county's hands.

In a press release from the association, BFA President Milner said, "Based on statements made publicly by members of the [Board of County Commissioners], the purchase of the note and subsequent possession of the property by the BOCC ensures the barns, arena and other properties will allow the agricultural fair to continue in addition to the Strawberry Festival and hopefully many other anticipated events in the coming years. The BFA will hopefully have a well-attended and profitable fair next week, the Strawberry Festival later in March and then begin the transition to ownership of the

property by the BOCC."

Future management of the fairgrounds has yet to be decided, but Milner said there is more than 150 years of experience among the members of the fair board, many who may wish to remain involved. As for Milner and Fair Manager Dale Woodruff, they announced months ago this would be the last fair for them both.

"We will both be voluntarily stepping down upon transition to county ownership. After all bills are paid, we look forward to working with the BOCC to ensure a smooth transition to their ownership and we wish them and the citizens of Bradford County much success with all events at the fairgrounds," Milner said.

At the county meeting, Kornegay suggested a management plan could be developed for presentation at the commission's March 4 meeting. There was a call for a slower

approach.

Calling for public workshops, citizen Brad Thomas told the commission, "We get one chance of making this right."

Thomas asked that those who have worked hard for youth and the community and have experience with how these things work have a role in charting the future.

"If we're going to use the county's money, the taxpayers' money — and I believe that's in support, the taxpayers want to see it done — let's make sure we do it the right way, and let's involve the community," he said.

There have been comments in the past and at this meeting about BFA's alleged mismanagement, but Milner rejected that in the association's press release.

"It has been well publicized that the only reason the BFA found itself in the financial situation it did was because the state of Florida never came through with their previously promised \$1.5 million for the arena built in 2018. The BFA would be fully solvent and have no debt but for the failure by the state," he said.

He also said that since news broke of a pending foreclosure, there were multiple offers to purchase the debt, with several offering additional money on top of the buyout.

"However, the BFA insisted from day one that any new ownership must ensure the

continuation of the annual swine and cattle show and sale. This was and is our number one priority and the reason we obtained a \$3 million grant in 2023 to build the three new barns. Although promises were made by some potential buyers of the note, the fact is that they could renege and not allow the agricultural fair each year and could later sell the property and buildings for considerably more than they paid for them. These possibilities made such an arrangement a non-starter for the BFA."

MISSING

Continued from page 1

Additional information about management in general can be gleaned from the interviews, including supervisory role of Jeff Johnson, who served as police chief during the investigated period, 2010 to 2024. Drew Mullins, who continues to serve a management role in the city, said Johnson chose not to use an office at the police station, preferring to work from home. Another interviewee said Johnson was not present in the office on a regular basis, appearing once or twice a month.

Another interview revealed that SPD files that potentially included evidence were destroyed during a local burn of

records from the clerk's office in 2011. The clerk's office carried out a formal process to destroy physical records that had been digitized. According to the employee, Johnson arrived at the burn with boxes of SPD files that were thrown into the fire, according to the employee. When interviewed, Johnson said these boxes included outdated forms, field conduct cards, etc.

Johnson attributed the high employee turnover in his department to low salaries. He also said there was insufficient time and resources to conduct evidence audits each time a new evidence custodian was assigned.

At the conclusion of Smith's report to the city commission, commissioners thanked him and his staff for their work for the city.

"I think the decision to consolidate was done in the best interest of our citizens and for our public safety, and you guys are doing a stellar job," Commissioner Janice Mortimer said. "You restored the integrity back to law enforcement within the city of Starke, and that's greatly appreciated."

"This does reaffirm that we made the right decision to move forward with you guys," Mayor Andy Redding agreed. "Unfortunately, the police department had significant management issues, I think, some potential ethical issues and just a lack of responsibility to our

citizens."

He said he wanted city staff to continue investigating what happened to other valuable property missing from the department that has not been accounted for. City auditors are also performing a forensic audit.

Lawtey food giveaway

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Feeding Northeast Florida and True Vine Ministry will take place Wednesday, Feb. 26, 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.

Sign up now for flea market

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 230 is holding a community flea market at the post home on March 1 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Each 15-by-15 space can be reserved for \$15. The auxiliary will serve a pancake breakfast as well as lunch. Contact 352-481-4483 for more information. The post home is located at 20370 E. Hawthorne Road (S.R. 20) in Hawthorne.

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SATURDAY 3/1 CAPTAIN AMERICA: BRAVE NEW WORLD- 4:00 & 7:00 THE MONKEY- 4:00 & 7:00	SUNDAY 3/2 CAPTAIN AMERICA: BRAVE NEW WORLD- 4:00 & 7:00 THE MONKEY- 4:00 & 7:00

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Hours: 5 PM - 11 PM

Saturday - March 8
Hours: 2 PM - 11 PM

Sunday - March 9
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Hours: 1 PM - CLOSING

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DAILY EVENTS

FRIDAY, February 28	3:30 PM 4-H Table Setting Contest (4-H Area)	MONDAY, March 3	8-10 AM Steer and Breed Weigh-in	FRIDAY, March 7	4-6 PM BUSA & BUCSS Buyers Dinner - In Poultry & Rabbit Barn
6 PM	4-H Very Berry Bake Off & Award (LOCATION TBD)	10 AM	Poultry Judging	6 PM	Swine & Steer Auction
SATURDAY, March 1	8 AM Check-In Goats - \$3 Admission (5 and under- free admission.)	6:30 PM	Swine Showmanship	5 PM	BUSA & BUCSS Swine & Steer Auction
9 AM	Check-in Poultry and Rabbits	TUESDAY, March 4	6:30 PM 4-H & FFA Swine Show	5 PM	Midway Opens
10 AM	Bradford Union Youth Goat Show	WEDNESDAY, March 5	6 PM 4-H & FFA Steer Show & Showmanship Contest	11 PM	Midway Closes
1 PM	Poultry Showmanship	THURSDAY, March 6	9 AM Livestock Judging Contest	SATURDAY, March 8	12 PM Buildings and Barns Open to Exhibitors Only
5 PM	Rabbit Judging	5 PM	Midway Open	12 PM	BUSA & BUCSS Swine & Steer Awards Luncheon
SUNDAY, March 2	2 PM - 4 PM Swine Weigh-in	6 PM	4-H & FFA Heifer Show & Showmanship	2 PM	Midway Opens
		11 PM	Midway Closes	8 PM	Poultry & Rabbit Awards
				11 PM	Midway Closes
				SUNDAY, March 9 - FAMILY DAY on the Midway!	1 PM - Closing \$5 Admission (5 and under- free admission.)

New bill aims to strengthen rural Florida communities

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

A new legislative proposal could significantly impact rural counties like Bradford and Union in Florida.

Filed by State Sen. Corey Simon, Senate Bill 110, also known as the Rural Renaissance Bill, seeks to create a modern-day revival for rural areas across the state.

A priority of Florida Sen. President Ben Albritton, the bill is designed to address challenges faced by rural communities. The proposal includes measures to enhance broadband, transportation and other infrastructure, and health care services, while also fostering local economic development.

“Florida’s legacy rural communities offer a time-honored way of life worth preserving in modern Florida. Our rural communities are full of opportunity, but that doesn’t mean traditional development. We can create a rural renaissance by modernize some of our longstanding economic development programs with a focus on infrastructure, not incentives,” said Albritton. “Expansions to our broadband infrastructure will drastically expand opportunities for education, commerce, and health care in rural Florida and place big city employment options at the fingertips of our rural residents. Meanwhile, improvements to our farm-to-market roads will serve legacy farm and citrus operations essential to keeping fresh food within reach of Florida families. We have seen tremendous economic growth in urban areas of Florida, its Rural Florida’s turn.”

Infrastructure improvements

A central component of the bill is the modernization of rural infrastructure. It increases funding for the Rural Infrastructure Fund, which supports job creation and capital investment by helping communities plan and finance infrastructure projects. The bill also provides \$50 million for farm-to-market road improvements for transporting agricultural products from rural farms to markets.

Additionally, the bill proposes a boost to the Small County Road Assistance Program, aiding rural communities in resurfacing and reconstructing local roads. Florida Department of Transportation is currently required to expend \$25 million on the program, but this bill would more than double the state’s investment

Education and workforce development

In the education sector, the bill increases funding for regional education consortia, which serve smaller school districts. For example, districts in Bradford and Union counties could see a rise in funding per school district, from \$50,000 to \$150,000. This funding will support programs aimed at reducing administrative costs, offering new educational opportunities, and addressing workforce development challenges.

The bill would allow school districts to retain locally collected capital project funding when applying for special facilities construction funds from the state. Districts would be free to use that local revenue for other capital outlay needs while relying on state funds for new school construction.

The bill also introduces a new initiative for rural educators, offering student loan repayment assistance to teachers and administrators who work in rural, fiscally constrained counties. This program seeks to attract and retain quality educators in these communities, addressing the ongoing challenges of teacher shortages.

Health care access enhancements

The bill addresses significant health care disparities that rural communities often face. One of its key provisions is the creation of a grant program to help physicians and nurse practitioners establish primary care practices in rural areas. This initiative could improve access to essential health care services in rural counties, where residents frequently travel long distances for medical care.

Another provision focuses on enhancing rural hospital services, including the introduction of mobile medical units and telemedicine kiosks to provide urgent care in underserved areas. The bill also increases Medicaid payments to rural hospitals, which could help alleviate some of the financial challenges faced by these institutions.

A path forward for rural communities

Sen. Simon, who represents several rural counties, emphasized the importance of fostering growth without compromising the traditional ways of life in these communities.

“Our rural communities are full of opportunity, but that doesn’t mean traditional development. We can create a rural renaissance by focusing on infrastructure and innovation,” Simon said.

The bill would create an Office of Rural Prosperity, a new state agency designed to provide technical assistance to local governments, helping them navigate state and federal resources and secure funding for various projects. This office will play a key role in ensuring that rural areas like Bradford and Union can fully leverage the opportunities presented by the bill.

It would also shift to sales tax as the funding source for the annual state distribution to Fiscally Constrained Counties, increasing the allocation from around \$10.5 million to a minimum of \$50 million annually. Sales tax collection, per capita personal income and population would make up the new distribution formula. (Counties with declining sales tax or per capita personal income would receive more money.) It would require 50% to be spent on public safety, 30% on infrastructure and 20% for any other public purpose. A new grant program would also assist counties with declining populations.

To stimulate economic growth, the bill would establish new grant programs to support small businesses in rural areas. The Small Business Development Center program would be expanded to provide more resources for local businesses, including access to capital and technical assistance.

The bill also calls for more to support for rural housing, raising the minimum allocation for each county’s State Housing Initiatives Partnership program to \$1 million. Also, many older federally subsidized housing projects are set to age out of their use restrictions and move to market rate rental housing. To preserve these units as affordable rentals, the bill would appropriate funds for rehabilitation or acquisition for owners who agree to maintain the properties as affordable housing.

Soil and water group meeting

The Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District invites all to attend the March 4 meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradford County Extension Office, 2266 N. Temple Ave. (U.S. 301) in Starke. Topics for discussion will include potential appointments for vacant board seats, and proposed Senate Bill 986 to abolish Bradford and other duly elected soil and water conservation districts in Florida.

Contact Amy Morie at 323-274-8858 or email a.morie@bswcd@gmail.com for more information and the Zoom link.



Zoey Carney



Raven Kerr



Everleigh Spriggle



Cameea Goodwin



Karsyn Kerr



Savannah Jeffrey



Avery Wilson-Rosario



Amelia Coiana



Harper Blizzard



Lauren Fuller



Hailey Griffis



Bralee-Kate Chester



Teagan Bradley



Chylee Kahakua



Jolene Moore



Jessica Kingsbury

Miss Bradford Fest this Saturday

The 2025 Miss Bradford Fest Pageant will take place Saturday, March 1, at 6 p.m. at Bradford High School.

Contestants are preselling tickets for \$8. They will be \$10 at the door. Children under 5 enter for free.

There are 16 contestants this year across five

divisions.

Tiny Miss Division
Zoey Carney

Petite Miss Division
1 - Raven Kerr
2 - Everleigh Spriggle
3 - Cameea Goodwin
4 - Karsyn Kerr

5 - Savannah Jeffrey

Junior Miss Division
1 - Avery Wilson-Rosario
2 - Amelia Coiana
3 - Harper Blizzard

Teen Miss Division
1 - Lauren Fuller
2 - Hailey Griffis

3 - Bralee-Kate Chester

Miss Division
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2 - Chylee Kahakua
3 - Jolene Moore
4 - Jessica Kingsbury

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ELEVATE FLORIDA

Elevate Florida is a first-of-its-kind, groundbreaking statewide residential mitigation program. Led by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), this program is designed to protect homes and communities by reducing damage caused by natural disasters like hurricanes and floods.

Benefits For Property Owners

Elevate Florida expedites the process and completes a resident's mitigation project the following ways:

- May reduce insurance premiums
- Can increase property value
- With only a cost-share up to 25 percent, much of the project cost is covered
- Enjoy end-to-end assistance, from application to construction, including contractor services, temporary housing support, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations

Property Owner Eligibility

To become a potential customer of the Elevate Florida program, applicants must:

- Be over 18
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Contribute a portion of the project's total cost
- Be the legal property owner of a residential property in the State of Florida

Multi-family real estate such as duplexes, triplexes, condos, townhomes, semi-detached homes, apartments and manufactured homes may be eligible.

Eligible Projects

- Structure Elevation**
Physically raising an existing structure.
- Mitigation Reconstruction**
The construction of an improved, elevated building on the same site where an existing building and/or foundation has been partially or completely demolished or destroyed. These activities result in the construction of code-compliant and hazard-resistant structures. Mitigation Reconstruction is the alternative to Structure Elevation when the structure is not sound enough to elevate, as determined during application review.
- Acquisition/Demolition**
A structure is purchased from voluntary sellers and demolished, to be maintained by the local community as open space. The local community must agree to participate in this project type.
- Wind Mitigation**
Measures that reduce the risk of future wind damage to structures. This may include alterations to roofs, windows, doors, and other vulnerable components of structures.

Application

Create an account and complete the application on the Elevate Florida Portal at fdem-resmit.my.site.com/Elevate/.

For questions, technical support, or application assistance, submit a "Contact Us" form at the Elevate Florida Portal or email info@elevatefl.org. You can also call the contact center Mon-Fri, 7 a.m.-7 p.m. EST at 877-ELEV8FL (877-353-8835).

Project Timeline

Timelines vary based on project type, with some projects taking up to two years. There are five stages with estimated time periods of:

- Stage 1**: less than one week
- Stage 2**: one to four months
- Stage 3**: two to three months
- Stage 4**: three to nine months
- Stage 5**: one to three months



The property does not need to have experienced flooding or damage in the past to be considered. However, applications may be prioritized based on history of loss.

Funding and Cost-share

Federal grant funding will cover at least 75 percent of the project cost, meaning property owners only need to invest up to 25 percent—a significant savings.

- Property owners will be required to provide up to 25 percent of initial inspection costs prior to inspections being completed.
- The total construction cost for each property will be determined during the initial review period based on factors such as project type, square footage of living space, foundation and construction type, and any necessary project activities.
- Approved property owners will receive a detailed breakdown of their construction cost-share and will have time to decide if they would like to move forward with the project's next phase.
- The cost-share will also include relocation expenses during construction, meaning the program will pay at least 75 percent of these expenses.

For more information, visit the [Elevate Florida Portal](https://fdem-resmit.my.site.com/Elevate/) and view our frequently asked questions.



Get help strengthening your home to protect it from disaster

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

To protect Florida homes from the devastating effects of natural disasters, the Florida Division of Emergency Management has launched the Elevate Florida program — a statewide initiative designed to reduce damage from hurricanes, floods, and other environmental hazards.

The program could transform the way Florida residents safeguard their properties and prepare for future storm seasons.

The Elevate Florida program targets homeowners who are at risk of experiencing significant damage in the

event of a storm. Its mission is straightforward: to reduce damage by strengthening homes and making them more resilient to natural disasters. The program focuses on four types of projects: structure elevation, wind mitigation, mitigation reconstruction and acquisition/demolition, with a goal of enhancing the long-term safety and sustainability of communities.

While the program is open to all Florida homeowners, eligibility requires that participants be U.S. citizens over the age of 18, legal property owners of residential structures, and able to contribute up to 25% of the project's cost.

Interestingly, even properties that have not previously experienced flooding or damage can qualify, though applications may be prioritized for those with a history of loss. Even multifamily residences like townhomes and apartments may be eligible, as well as manufactured homes.

For homeowners seeking assistance, the application process is designed to be simple and efficient. By registering through the Elevate Florida Portal, applicants can complete an application in about 20 minutes, provided they have the necessary documentation in hand, such as photos of the property, insurance details,

and elevation certificates, if applicable.

Once submitted, the program's review process takes place over five stages, from initial application submission to the final closeout of the project, with an estimated timeline ranging from a few months to up to two years depending on the complexity of the project.

One of the key features of the Elevate Florida program is its cost-sharing structure. Federal grants will cover at least 75% of the total project cost, leaving property owners responsible for, up to 25%. While the program does not help cover this cost-share, homeowners may seek financial relief through loans

from the Small Business Administration.

Aside from offering significant cost savings — sometimes reducing flood damage protection costs by up to 100% — the program also helps homeowners lower their flood insurance premiums and increase their property values over time.

Elevate Florida says its impact goes beyond individual homes. By improving the resilience of properties, the program claims it could strengthen entire communities, helping to reduce the long-term effects of natural disasters on the state's economy and environment.

Elevate Florida offers additional assistance that includes contractor services, temporary housing during construction, and accommodations for residents with disabilities. The program's proactive approach aims to create a safer, more sustainable Florida for future generations.

For more information on how to apply or to get support, homeowners can visit the [www.floridadisaster.org](https://fdem-resmit.my.site.com/Elevate/), the Elevate Florida Portal at <https://fdem-resmit.my.site.com/Elevate/> or contact the support center at 1-877-ELEV8FL (1-877-353-8835).

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Keystone Council works on strategic plan

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights officials held a two-day workshop last week to craft a strategic plan for the city.

Jeff Hendry, director of the Florida Institute of Government, led the February 20 and 21



(L-R) Vice Mayor Christiine Thompson, Council Member Tony Brown, City Manager Charlie Van Zant and City Clerk Stephanie Silva discuss elements of the municipality's strategic plan.

sessions at city hall.

The group drafted the vision statement and prioritized the city's parks, lakes, and trails as vital assets. The mission statements during the Thursday session.

The vision statement prioritized the city's parks, lakes, and trails as vital assets. The mission statement emphasized Keystone Heights officials' aim

to provide outstanding municipal services, remain financially sound, and champion area lakes. It also listed the goals of providing a secure infrastructure, fostering responsible economic growth, and scheduling engaging events.

On Day 2 of the workshop, elected officials and staff members discussed the city's strategic priorities, which included sustainability, infrastructure, and local economic growth.

The group also identified specific projects that would fulfill the city's vision and mission statements and its strategic priorities.

Hendry said he would provide the city with a draft strategic plan based on the two-day workshop by March 10.

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Walk for veterans' suicide prevention

BY JENN SAMSEL
Special to the Monitor

On Saturday, February 22, the First Annual AMVETS 22-Mile Suicide Prevention Walk took place.

The group started at Bardin Trail at 7:15 A.M. and ended at the AMVETS post in Keystone Heights at 4:07 P.M.

Veteran suicide has been rising over the past decade. On average, it is estimated that about 8,030 service members die by suicide each year, whether while serving or as retired veterans.

Keri Judge, President of the Ladies Auxiliary and First Vice of the Riders, said, "Today, we walked 22 miles for Veteran Suicide Awareness."

"We lost one of our own to suicide here at our helm, and that's back on December 13, Billy Hall, a Veteran, who was very dear and one of ours. We're getting ready to present his wife, does not know; we are surprising her and the family by presenting her with his casket flag, so we're gonna do a little ceremony for her and the family, Judge said.

"During the ceremony at the AMVETS post, the room stood still, quiet while people were crying. Judge dedicated a powerful poem.

"No soldier is ever forgotten," she said.

AMVETS sponsored the event and is a large advocate for Veteran Suicide Prevention Awareness.

Jennifer Danek lost her son, Tony Danek (25), who died by suicide while serving on active duty in the U.S. Navy. Today, she dedicates her efforts to raising awareness about suicide after losing her son seven years ago.

Judge said, "So if somebody calls us in crisis, we are ready to jump in and assist and let them know it's okay. We will go to the person and help and support them."

AMVETS looks forward to the Second Annual 22-mile walk next year and plans to continue this tradition yearly.

If you need help, there is a support group. Contact Richard Judge at 352-260-3508 for assistance with suicide prevention or mental health.



The Woman's Club of Starke made Valentine's bags at its Feb. 12 luncheon, with the bags then being delivered to patients/residents at Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center. Each bag contained a Valentine's card, signed by each club member, and a pair of socks. Club members pictured are: (front, l-r) Courtney Buchanan, Saskia Thode, Dawn Corbett, Charlotte Williams, (back, l-r) Kay Starling, Penny Pearson, Jackie Grider, Lorie Riley, Carolyn Reddish, Lisa Rodgers, Vicki Teal, Brenda Bell, Kim Crawford, Charnelle Whittemore, Lori Thompson, Valarie Moore, Brenda Fertig and Merry Hess.



Members of AMVETS Post 86 and its affiliate organizations who participated in the walk to raise awareness of veterans' suicide prevention. Elouise Nobles, Tabitha Brown, Gary Wheeler, Jason Jennings, Myla Jennings, Richard Judge, Keri Judge, Olivia Plympton, Jennifer Danek, and Lisa Appling.

Starke Woman's Club shares the LOVE



Woman's Club of Starke member Lisa Rodgers (back, far right) is pictured with (front, l-r) Mary Foster, Bonnie Roberts, Jeanie Harrison and (back, from far left) Deidra Oliver, Fred Jones and Latisha Nichols.

Union commissioners take up growth

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

The Feb. 17 meeting of the Union County Board of County Commissioners was shorter than usual, thanks to both a shorter than normal agenda and the lack of any public comment.

Land development regulations

The board had asked Commissioner Melissa McNeal and County Coordinator Jimmy Williams to work with the North Florida Regional Planning Council concerning requests for possible changes to the county's Land Development Regulations. Williams included a list of these requests in the meeting's agenda packet, and the board reviewed them, with additional comments from County Attorney Russ Wade.

The first request was for the planning council to export their geographic information system to allow the county to overlay maps with zoning and the tax map to create a single map that would facilitate answering questions from builders and others without having to refer to multiple maps.

The planning council was asked to draft a proposed ordinance for up to three houses to share a common access drive to a county road if they are otherwise exempt from subdivision requirements. Also, a draft was requested for accessory dwelling provisions for permanent structures, removing "servants quarters" language, at the request of Commissioner Donna Jackson, and kitchen restrictions — applying to all zoning classifications.

The document also requested commissioners to discuss and arrive at a decision concerning

accessory dwelling use, including whether square footage should be limited, and if so, what, and whether there should be a limit on rental use or Airbnb/VRBO type rentals. Wade commented that such use was difficult to enforce and that under current regulations, it was legal if the rental was a single structure on the property, but not for accessory dwellings.

Also requested was the draft revision to allow special permits for RV/Travel trailers use as an accessory dwelling on a one-year renewal basis for family use, hardship situations, or caretakers. Wade added that this matter should be dealt with as an annual permit.

The planning council was also asked to research the creation of an RV Park comprehensive plan category.

Wade suggested a workshop for the board to review and discuss these documents and Williams said he would get all the options together, along with any needed explanations from the planning council for the board. Wade added that some of these cases may be best dealt with by special assessments. Wade also informed the board that the deadline for adjusting the existing special assessments was coming up soon and that the board would need to decide on the matter by the end of March.

Impact fees and special assessments

Jackson said she would also like to discuss impact fees in relation to fire protection and Emergency Medical Services. Wade explained that an impact fee would be charged for new

development that has no history of paying for services through special assessments. He said that new development created the need for services and the fee would be a way to collect compensation from them. Union County Clerk of Court and Comptroller Kellie Hendricks Rhoades mentioned that to her knowledge, funds derived from impact fees could only be used for infrastructure and not operations costs, such as salaries. Wade responded that such funds would be used for new equipment. He cautioned the board that once the amount of an impact fee was set, it was very difficult to increase at a later time, but additional impact fees could be added for other purposes, such as roads. Williams added that funds from a reasonable impact fee, based on the growth in the county, could pay for a new EMS units or brush trucks in two years and a new fire truck in about five years.

Jackson commented that an influx of new residents into the county was already underway and shows all the signs of continuing. The commissioners all agreed on the need for a workshop to deal with both the special assessment and impact fee issues. Williams asked that they wait until he has the cost-to-the-county figures for the coming year from the New River Solid Waste Association and some other materials for the commissioner to discuss at the workshop. It was decided that the date and time for the workshop would be set at the board's next meeting on March 3, Jackson said she wanted to make sure that the workshop was scheduled so that members of the public would be able to attend and offer comments on the matters under discussion.

See GROWTH, page 7

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The growing sport of canine scent detection comes to Bradford County

BY JENN SAMSEL
Special to the Monitor

When we think of dog training or competitions, we usually think of pedigree or something similar. However, dog sniffing training for competitions is less common but has grown exponentially over the decades.

On February 7, the National Association for Canine Scent Work (NACSW), K9 Nose Work(TM), held trials at the Montgomery Center in Starke, Bradford County. The training sessions took place throughout the entire week.

K9 Nose Work began in 2008 in Los Angeles, California, and has since grown nationally. The sport runs from November to April.

Leah Gangelhoff, a Senior Faculty Member at the Association of Canine Scent Work, has been with the organization since 2008. She has a true passion for her work and loves what she does. Originally from Jacksonville, Leah now resides in Alabama but frequently travels to Florida to assist with professional training. She has two dogs: Butterbean, an Australian Cattle Dog, and Bruno Mars, a Chihuahua mix.

According to Gangelhoff, "K9 Nose Work started when classes were created for dogs adopted from ASPCA shelters in Los Angeles. The founders of this organization designed these classes to enhance the lives of



Erica Benson

newly adopted shelter dogs, and from that point on, the sport grew rapidly. The founders possess a strong understanding of scent detection, having worked in the narcotics unit."

"K9 Nose Work is an activity sport that we participate in, and it follows the guidelines of the NACSW. It is a scent-detection sport modeled after professional detection work. We compete in trials nationwide, ranging from low-level competitions to challenging high-level events," said Gangelhoff.

Dogs are trained to detect specific odors using prepared cotton Q-tips infused with certain scents. These scented Q-tips are hidden on a football field, and the dogs are skilled at locating them. Remarkably, dogs have about 350 million scent receptors, which enhances their ability to find these hidden odors.

The sport is open to any pet dog and their owner. Dogs search for specific target odors, and upon finding the hidden scent, they are rewarded with their favorite treats or high-value food. This



Patti Campbell and Hola

is a great activity, especially for senior dogs, even if they are retired.

Erica Benson, who has an Aussie, Cocker Mix, and a Cattle Dog Mix, shared her thoughts on dog sports, particularly nose work.

She said, "I've participated in dog sports but really appreciate nose work. As Leah mentioned, it is very accessible for different types of dogs, and our friends have noted that it suits dogs of all ages. What's great about nose work is that you can do it almost

anywhere. Unlike agility, which requires a lot of equipment, and other sports requiring a large pool or dock, nose work is portable. You can easily carry all the necessary items in a small case. For example, if you're on your way home from work with your dog, you can stop at a park, set up some hides, and engage in a fun sniffing activity. It's a fantastic way to build a strong relationship with your pet."

Linda Brendlinger (Piper, Airedale Terrier) mentioned, "The trial typically runs from

9 AM to 4 PM, during which we inspect vehicles, including their exteriors, interiors, and containers."

Patti Campbell (Hola, Kerry Blue Terrier) shared her thoughts on dog sports: "I participated in many agility competitions over the years, beginning in the mid-90s. However, when I discovered nose work, it really became my passion. Nose work is unique because it allows me to step back and not constantly direct my dog during the competition. This creates a special bond and enhances our relationship. Additionally, it's a non-impact sport, making it great fun for both of us. You can bring any dog, regardless of size or shape, to the starting line and get involved. This is especially beneficial for people with mobility challenges."

The sport effectively builds confidence in dogs by helping them learn to solve scent problems with autonomy. This independence aids them in addressing scent puzzles.

It's important to note that these unique scents and devices do not affect the environment or areas where dogs could find them. All these scents are immediately removed after they are used.

To join or learn more about the sport, visit www.k9nosework.com to find a Nose Work Instructor. Group Patti Campbell Linda Brendlinger Leah Gangelhoff Betsy Railford Erica Benson

Building a house to pay for the house

Culture House Church aims to expand support to the county

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

A Union County church is building a home in Raiford to sell the 1,475-square-foot house, use the sales proceeds to pay off the debt on its worship center, and

increase its giving to community causes.

Culture House Church, Inc. purchased its 5.25-acre property, formally used by Anchor Christian Fellowship, in August 2023. The land and its main building, an 8,600 square-foot structure, is near County Road 321, about one mile south of the Department of Corrections Reception and Medical Center.

The church financed the \$380,857 acquisition with a

First Federal Bank of Lake City mortgage.

"It's kind of a pretty poor county"

Associate Pastor Rob Jarvis said the congregation's primary missions focus is addressing Union County's needs. He said the plan to build and sell the Raiford home and pay off its mortgage will allow the church to increase its giving to community



Rob Jarvis (left), associate pastor of Culture House Church, and Walker Starling stand in front of a home the church is building in Raiford.

causes.

Jarvis said the church already contributes to feeding schoolchildren, supporting public service workers, and other worthy causes, but the goal is to earmark 25% of its revenue for community contributions.

"We just want to do more," he said. "We understand Union County. I've lived here most of my life. It's kind of a pretty poor county. There's just not a lot (of money available for charitable causes)."

Jarvis said the idea of building a home and then using the sales proceeds to pay off the church's debt originated from a worship service visitor.

"He's a contractor, and we've got quite a few folks that are in the contracting business in some form or another: plasterers, painters, whatever," Jarvis recalled. "But he came to me after the service and said, 'Hey man, with all you guys' talent, why don't you build a house to pay for the house? Then, you can take that \$3,800-a-month (mortgage payment) and put it back into the community.' And we thought, man, that's a great vision."

The associate pastor said that volunteers came forward once word got out about the idea.

"I had one contractor after another, whether it be siding guys, roofers, different things, say, 'Yeah, I'll help out.' And now that we've got the project going, probably 75% of the contractors have done the work and just said, we're good. We're just going to donate it toward the cost for the county. So, it's kind of blown us away."

Ordinary people with everyday problems

Culture House Church grew from Jarvis's son, Robbie, who felt the call to ministry. He started the new congregation, which met at the Lake Butler Woman's Club for under a year before the

Anchor Christian Fellowship property became available.

Rob Jarvis said the new congregation attracts many people who had given up on church earlier in their lives.

"It seems like they're mostly in the 20, 30, and 40-something crowd," he said.

"The basis of Culture House is relationships," he added, "not so much— put your hand up if you're unsaved—even though we believe in all that."

He added that the congregation consists of business owners and prison employees—people from all walks of life.

"But I'd say probably 25% of our people have never been to church, they're just attracted to it," he said. "It's just—I don't know. 'It's just a come-as-you-are type of thing. It doesn't feel like church. It feels more like family.'"

Jarvis said practicing Catholics attend the services, as well as believers who identify as Baptists and Charismatics.

"It's just a mixed culture," he said. "Another church might call it interdenominational or nondenominational."

Walker Starling, 19, said a friend invited him to Culture House a few months ago when the congregation was just beginning to come together.

Growing up in Baker County, he attended Catholic and Southern Baptist churches before moving to Union County.

"In the churches I've been to in Baker," he said, "there's less unity and more judgment between the people that you don't even realize. And at Culture House, it's just like family."

He added that a new young adult group the church started, and he meets with, is refreshing in its openness and honesty.

"It just causes a lot of vulnerability between everybody," Walker explained, "and it just allows you to be more comfortable with the people who you're with. And, I don't know, it is less of a religious group and more of people who just have

a relationship with Christ, and that's what we're bonding over."

Focusing on Union County needs

Jarvis said the congregation does not support foreign missions at this point, not because members think missions are wrong but because the church has prioritized supporting Union County's needs.

He added that the congregation, with members employed in the school system, public housing agencies, nonprofits, and other professions, is aware of the community's needs.

"They've got their hands on the pulse of the schools," he said of his members. "We've got a deputy at the sheriff's office, so he's making us aware of communities and areas that are hurting."

Jarvis said the church seeks to help ordinary people deal with the everyday problems in their families.

"They may not have a money problem," he said, "but they may have a relationship problem or a marriage problem."

Second home planned

Jarvis said the church purchased two lots in Raiford, between the post office and State Road 16 in August. Volunteers broke ground on the three-bedroom, two-bath in November, and the foundation, siding, and roof were complete by Christmas. The associate pastor thinks the home will be on the market by the end of March.

He added that because the housing market has softened since the church first pondered the idea, it will have to build a second, smaller home on the other lot to pay off its mortgage.

Jarvis estimated that around seven contractors have contributed \$100,000 in materials and labor to the project.



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	• Insecticides	• Pesticides	

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

Cameron Bacchus, 40, of Brooker, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 17 for DUI and driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Brianna Bevins, 24, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 20 for a probation violation.

Stanley Brown, 58, of Gainesville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 19 for DUI and resisting an officer.

Jonathan Burns, 30, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 19 for a probation violation.

Benjamin Chessler, 39, of Melrose, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 20 for a probation violation.

Charlie Daniels, 27, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 19 for resisting an officer.

Robert Gallion, 47, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 18 for failure to appear.

Chelsea Green, 32, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 19 for an out-of-county warrant.

Michael Hankerson, 43, of Lake City, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 20 for a probation violation.

Philip Henson, 60, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 20 for a probation violation.

Antonio Morgan, 44, of High Springs, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 18 for larceny, burglary, and vehicle theft.

Lisa Moss, 41, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 21 for withholding support.

Brian Nelson, 48, of Green Cove Springs, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 17 for failure to appear.

Nartpat Sintupanpratum, 33, of Gainesville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 19 for failure to appear.

Aaron Sturrock, 23, of Gainesville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 17 for hit-and-run.

Randy Williams, 67, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 21 for trespassing.

Christopher Woods, 42, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on February 18 for a probation violation.

Union

Frank Dickison Junior, 33, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on February 24 for assault and battery.

Willie Donaldson, 46, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Union deputies on February 20 for driving with a permanently revoked license.

Johnny Herrera, 31, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Union deputies on February 18 for failure to appear.

Tyler Keller, 21, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on February 17 for failure to register a motor vehicle and driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Timmy Kinner, 37, a Department of Corrections inmate, was arrested by Union deputies on February 24 for smuggling contraband into a prison and murder.

Angel Nickerson, 21, of Chiefland, was arrested by Union deputies on February 22 for trespassing.

Douglas Parker, 36, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on February 21 for an out-of-county warrant.

Joshua Thompson, 40, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Union deputies on February 18 for a probation violation.

Clay

Charles Bailey, 38, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on February 16 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Adam Svitek, 40, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on February 15 for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and discharging a firearm in a public place.

'I'm not a bad mom'

Child neglect defendant struggling to get children back

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

A 33-year-old Bradford County mother pleaded with a judge to spare her from jail so she could work to regain custody of her children.

Bradford deputies arrested Whitney Brianna Tetstone-Jenkins for child neglect on October 16, 2024, while executing a Drug Task Force search warrant for narcotics in her Riverbend Estates mobile home.

Also arrested for child neglect, possession of a controlled substance, and resisting an officer was her partner, 33-year-old John R. Stout.

According to an arrest report, deputies found methamphetamine, a glass pipe, and needles in a trash can within reach of a small child.

"In addition, wrote a deputy in the report, "multiple power tools including electric drills and saws were scattered throughout the house and on the floor within reach of a child. A machete was also located hanging from the ceiling by a hand screw."

During a January 29 hearing, Tetstone-Jenkins entered an open plea of no contest. Her lawyer, Delinda Jan Smith, told Circuit Judge James M. Colaw that she and prosecutors had agreed that the defendant would be sentenced to community control. However, because Tetstone-Smith violated a pre-trial release no-contact order, which prohibited her from contacting her partner and co-defendant, the state was now insisting on a 90-day jail term in addition to supervised release.

Smith added that her client's only concern was getting her children back after DCF officials took the two toddlers following their parents' arrests.

"The only reason we're in an open plea posture rather than entering negotiation is because Ms. Tetstone-Jenkins is on a parenting plan already," Smith said. "She's already working towards being reunified with her children. The 90 days in jail is 90 days off of her ability to work that case plan."

"We were able to, a couple of weeks ago, when she was in front of Your Honor, to negotiate a community control sanction instead of a jail sanction," Smith added. "The jail sanction is back on the table because of the violations of the pretrial release."

Smith said that the co-defendants and parents of two young children were discussing their children during recorded jail calls.

"It was a violation, of course," Smith said, "but they weren't talking about how they were going to get out of this trouble or how she was going to say one thing or another in those violations."

'I had nobody'

Tetstone-Jenkins told the judge that she was totally dependent on Stout for money and had no one else to turn to after the couple was arrested.

"I have depended on him for 10 years," she told the judge. "I've been with him for 10 years. I fully had my bank accounts, everything through him. That's (why) I contacted him to begin with because I had no sense of—I mean, I fully put my life into this man. I had nobody."

"What's going on in this house?" the judge responded. "What's going on? Help me understand that."

"Our house was small," the defendant answered. "My husband had a drug problem. They were after my husband. They let me leave that day. Whenever they arrested me, they let me leave with my children. I knew that was going to open up a DCF case. I knew that I passed the drug test that day and everything. I couldn't help that he was struggling."

Smith described her client's marriage as an abusive relationship. "Maybe not physically abusive, but there was a lot of control—power and control issues going on."

'I'm not a criminal'

"You don't have a drug problem?" Colaw asked the mother of two.

"I got mine under control," Tetstone-Jenkins answered, adding that she had just entered her fifth year of a treatment program that includes a prescription of Suboxone, which is commonly used to treat opioid dependence.

Earlier in the day, Colaw sentenced Stout to two years in prison after he pleaded to drug and child neglect charges. With gain time, Stout could be released sooner.

"What happens when Mr. Stout gets out of prison in 18 months or so?" the judge asked Tetstone-Jenkins. "I mean, you're still going to be under sentence. What happens when he gets out of prison? Do you have a plan for that?"

"I don't," the defendant admitted. "I don't. We don't even live in our home anymore. I currently live with my family. I don't know. I can't tell you what the future holds."

"I'm not a criminal," she continued, crying. "I'm not a bad person. I'm not a bad mom. I'm sorry I'm emotional. This is very hard."

Colaw told the defendant that the state's request for 90 days in jail was reasonable, especially given that she had violated the no-contact order.

In a motion the state had earlier filed to revoke Tetstone-Jenkins' bond, prosecutors claimed the couple talked by phone over 80 times while Stout remained in jail.

Trauma-bonded

The judge added that the mother's ongoing communications with Stout might also impact her DCF parenting plan.

"Even if (DCF is) convinced of everything you're telling me," the judge said, "that you're not someone who breaks the law, you are not a bad mom. They also have to be concerned about well, despite those things, are you still a young lady who is emotionally tied to a man who is putting the kids at risk, and are you in a position and strong enough to not allow...that influence to come back in?"

"I'm not allowed to," Tetstone-Jenkins answered. "I do love him, but I've been so happy. Every day, it gets easier because I'm trauma-bonded to him. Every day that he's been gone, I'm becoming more and more myself and it feels good. I mean it really does."

Colaw said that because of her repeated no-contact order violations, he would have considered a six-month jail term

instead of the 90 days the state requested.

"But I'm going to give you a shot," he told the 33-year-old. "I'm going to withhold adjudication of guilt. Place you on one year of Level I community control, followed by three years of supervised probation, special conditions. You served 20 days in jail with 20 days credit."

He also warned the defendant that if it is proven that she violates any of the terms of her supervision, she should not be surprised if he sends her to jail for a longer time than the state had recommended.

Tetstone-Jenkins assured Colaw that she would comply with all the terms of her supervision, not only to stay out of jail but to rectify what she called the most severe penalty of the entire episode.

"I got the worst punishment," she said, "when they took my children."

Lawtey woman convicted of trespassing at city hall

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

A Bradford County jury convicted a 55-year-old Lawtey woman of trespassing at city hall.

After a February 19 trial in Starke, the six-person panel found Yolanda Louise Clark guilty of trespassing on an occupied structure.

Senior Judge Bo Bayer sentenced the defendant to a suspended 10-day jail term and 50 hours of community service. Clark may avoid the jail time if she completes the community service.

The maximum penalty for the first-degree misdemeanor is 60 days in jail.

According to a July 26, 2024, sworn complaint, Lawtey Police issued a trespass warning to Clark on March 6 after she threatened a city council member following a council meeting.

On July 26, a city official called police to report Clark was inside the city's headquarters.

Lawtey Police Major Nathan R. Blom wrote in the complaint that he contacted the defendant as she was getting into her car in the municipality's parking lot. He added that he informed Clark of the March trespass warning and instructed her to leave.

"She became argumentative and told me that (City Attorney) Dan Sikes told her she could be on City owned (sic) property but was unable to provide documentation to corroborate her claim," wrote Blom. "She then proceeded to drive off claiming that she was going to file a lawsuit."



Holton

9 months for allowing dog to kill neighbor's pet

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

A Brooker woman was sentenced to 270 days in jail and three years' probation after pleading to allowing her dog to kill a neighbor's pet.

Mary Catherine Holton, 43, was ordered to undergo a mental health evaluation and adhere to any treatment as a result of the assessment. She was also ordered to pay the victim \$1,170 in restitution.

Bradford deputies arrested the defendant on November 13, 2024, for aggravated animal cruelty.

According to an arrest report, the victim arrived home on the evening of Thursday, November 7, to find her small maltipoo dog "Tuxedo" dead in a pool of blood.

Surveillance video, witnesses in the victim's neighborhood, and the victim's description of her previous encounter with Holton led officers to the 43-year-old.

The victim told deputies that the day before she discovered her deceased pet, she was attempting to turn her vehicle around in her driveway, and a woman, later identified as Holton, was walking what she described as a brown boxer in the driveway.

A deputy wrote in a report that after the victim asked the woman to leave her property, the "woman angrily yelled back before leaving."

According to court papers, when deputies questioned Holton about the maltipoo's death, she told them she was walking near the victim's home with her dog when God told her to enter the victim's RV.

"Holton stated that upon entering, the brown and tan dog attacked the victim's dog," wrote a deputy in an arrest report. "Holton stated that she did not know if the dog died or not and left."

5 years for RV park burglaries

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

One of five defendants arrested for breaking into cars in the Keystone Heights RV Park in September 2024 was sentenced to five years in prison as part of a plea agreement.

Jessie Eugene Barnes, 18, of Gainesville, pleaded to armed burglary, possession of burglary tools, and grand theft of a vehicle. The state dropped additional counts of trespassing, loitering, wearing a hood or mask on the property of another, and four more counts of armed burglary.

During a hearing on Wednesday, January 29, Barnes's lawyer, Delinda Jan Smith, told him the maximum sentence for the armed burglary count was life, and the maximum penalty for the other two counts in the plea agreement was five years each.

According to the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, deputies were called to the RV park on September 28 after surveillance cameras showed several men scaling the facility's perimeter fence. One deputy wrote in an arrest report that when he arrived on the scene, he found a pickup backed up to the wall behind the Orange Blossom Restaurant.

Parked next to the white Dodge pickup was a gray Kia, in which a window had been smashed, and the steering column had been broken, exposing the ignition.

While one deputy waited near the vehicles, two more entered the park searching for the suspects.

"At 4:02 a.m.," wrote Deputy Glen Ward, Jr., who was waiting near the pickup and Kia, "five suspects jumped over the fence from inside the RV park. The suspects appeared to be wearing masks and jumped the perimeter fence in the exact area where the truck was backed up near the fence."

Ward reported that he engaged the suspects with loud verbal commands. Four of the men lay down on the ground while one, Barnes, threw a gun back over the fence and climbed back into the park. Deputies later located the 18-year-old in the back of the park.

Ward said three of the suspects were wearing masks and gloves. Deputies found flashlights and screwdrivers inside the truck. Three guns were found on the ground inside the perimeter fence where the defendants were observed. A fourth weapon was found in the truck.

Five RV park residents reported that their vehicles were burglarized, with a firearm, knife, oxycodone, \$75 in cash, a wallet, and a backpack taken from the vehicles.

The cases against the remaining adult defendants, Raymon Jakravis Campbell, 20, and Jayden Manns, 19, both of Gainesville, are still pending.

GROWTH

Continued from page 5

Other issues

Later in the meeting, Jackson commented that she felt the department head reports should be given at the regular meeting (3rd Monday of each month) rather than at the newly established meeting on the first Monday of the month, which was added to facilitate getting the bills paid on time. The new meeting starts at 4:30 p.m., which makes it difficult for working members of the public to attend, and she finds that to be

problematic in that the residents cannot address problems with the department heads if necessary. It was decided that, starting with the March regular meeting, department heads will give their reports at the regular monthly meetings.

During the individual commissioners' reports McNeal noted that the site plan for the fire department fill station at Harmony Baptist Church would be delivered to Clay Electric the following day and that she was in discussions with Farm Share concerning the county facilitating monthly food distributions to the elderly in the county. She said she was told that this would allow the serving of 150 more county seniors.

Commissioner Mac Johns reported that the new roof had been installed on the Providence Community Center to replace the one damaged by hurricane winds in the area. It was noted that some of the cost was paid by insurance on the building, and the balance should be paid by FEMA.

One amendment to the county budget was approved by the board by resolution to recognize unanticipated income from the State of Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in the amount of \$1,985 and was given the county to pay for additional chemicals for mosquito control.

RUSS WADE

Attorney at Law

620 East Main Street
Lake Butler, FL 32054
(Across from Subway Plaza)

386-496-9656

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Cowboys signing up for spring league

The Bradford County Athletics Association is signing up for its spring league, which is open to ages 6-12.

Sign-ups will be held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays at 1080 Pine St. in Starke. The fee is \$50.

Players will have free use of helmets and pads, though they must provide their own cleats and practice outfits.

For more information, please call 904-861-4759 or 352-256-0359. You may also visit the association's Facebook page

(Bradford Cowboys Athletic Association).

Keystone has high finishes at Feb. 21 Falcon Friday meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's Olivia Griffin had two top-four finishes and helped the 4x400m relay team place second, while the Indians had two boys relay teams place in the top five at Menendez High School's Falcon Friday track and field meet on Feb. 21 in St. Augustine.

Griffin placed third in the 400m with a time of 1:03, while also running a fourth-place time of 2:43 in the 800m.

She teamed up with Christine Djavaheri, Jasmine Walls and Sophia Moses to run a runner-up time of 4:57 in the 4x400m relay.

Djavaheri, ran a fifth-place time of 28.86 in the 200m.

The 4x100m team of Cali Chamberlain, Laura Herndon, Laila Briseno and Moses ran an eighth-place time of 57.98, while Chamberlain was ninth in the 400m hurdles with a time of 1:31.

Keystone placed fourth in the 4x400m boys relay, with De'Shawn Williams, Dereon Tochterman, Aaron Wiley and Clark Byrnes teaming up to run

4:13.

Eli Rabe, Ryder Thomas, Ryeland Wahl and Jason Parales teamed up to run a fifth-place time of 9:46 in the 4x400m.

Byrnes earned an individual fourth-place finish in the long jump with a distance of 5.64 meters, while Thomas ran a sixth-place time of 5:11 in the 1600m.

The boys 4x100m team of Byrnes, Tochterman, Jamari Turner and Mason Clark ran an eighth-place time of 48.38.

Keystone had three boys earn ninth-place finishes: Baylor Ford with a time of 25.05 in the 200m, Hunter Sheppard with a time of 2:22.17 in the 800m and Luke Lewis with a throw of 31.83 in the javelin.

Wahl was 10th in the 800m with a time of 2:22.23.

The Indians also had the following boys results: 100m — Wiley 12.12, Byrnes 12.24, Turner 12.30, Ford 12.34, Tochterman 12.63, Clark 12.65; 200m — Clark 26.44; 400m — Wiley 58.31, Byrnes 1:01; 800m — Oliver Miller 2:58, Gavin Morford 3:07; 1600m — Rabe 6:11; high jump — Thomas 1.53, Turner 1.53, Tochterman 1.53; long jump — Turner 5.37, Williams 4.54, Clark 4.05, Morford 3.1; discus — Ricardo Rosario 24.11, Tyler Kerner 21.14, Trase Wooden 4.7; javelin — Kerner 25.07, Judah Moses 19.63, James Carsey 12.47; and shot put — Rosario 9.46, Kerner

9.09, Wooden 8.78.

Additional girls results were: 100m — Djavaheri 13.69, Moses 14.59, Briseno 14.63, Jayla Jamison 16.03, Walls 16.47; 200m — Moses 30.80, Kenslee Phillips 31.82, Herndon 32.23, Jamison 33.60; 400m — Raven Bastin 1:24.09, Walls 1:24.48, Madylinn Michaud 1:26; 1600m — Bailee Morris 7:22; long jump — Herndon 3.94, Moses 3.54, Bastin 3.44; discus — Xana Briley 13.82; and shot put — Briley 6.39.

The Indians will compete in the 11th annual Craig Speziale Memorial Track and Field Invitational on Saturday, March 1, at Ponte Vedra High School.

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"I am really happy with their performance. They installed a new well and septic for me and they literally did it in a day. The team in the office is very friendly and professional."

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"Course has come a very long way! Thomas and his crew have put in a tremendous amount of work and it show! I was skeptical as to how well it would be given the short turn around time Thomas has been managing. But the course is very playable! And you can't beat the value! Hope to see it only progress more!"

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"I was very pleased with the staff & doctor, they were very knowledgeable, courteous, efficient, & gentle. All in all, a pleasant experience! I'm looking forward to my follow up appointment & feel like I've finally found my eye specialist which is something I've never felt before."

SHOP LOCAL ALL
2025



Bradford's Region 1-1A qualifiers, who all placed second at the District 4 meet, are (l-r) Daniel Banda, Wyatt Acevedo and Miguel Rivera.

BHS has 3 runners-up at District 4-1A wrestling meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School's Wyatt Acevedo, Daniel Banda and Miguel Rivera qualified for region-level competition by placing second in their weight classes at the District 4-1A wrestling meet, which was held Feb. 19 at Episcopal School of Jacksonville.

The top four in each weight class earned the right to advance to the Region 1 meet, which will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 28-March 1, at Bay High School in Panama City.

Acevedo, who had a first-round bye, pinned two straight opponents to reach the championship match in the 144-pound class. He defeated Bishop Snyder's Curran Davis in 1:40 and Bishop Kenny's Jonathon Valdiva in 2:33. Acevedo then lost by a 20-4 technical fall to Episcopal's Levi Ritter.

Rivera, who wrestles in the 150 class, had byes in the first two rounds before defeating Union County's Hunter Cruz by a 17-2 technical fall. In the championship match, he was defeated by a 17-2 technical fall by Episcopal's Turner Glenn.

Banda pinned two opponents after a first-round bye to advance to the championship match in the 157 class. He defeated Bolles' Lucas Comora in 5:16 and Episcopal's Worth Athey in 2:34. Banda then lost by an 18-3 technical fall to Providence's Camden Garcia.

Fifth- and sixth-place finishers could possibly wrestle at the region meet if slots are needed to be filled in their weight classes. Bradford had three fifth-place finishers in Jonathon Armstrong, Aiden Scott and Taylor Touchton.

Scott, who wrestles in the 120 class, had two losses before earning a win by forfeit, while Armstrong went 2-2 in the 126 class. Armstrong pinned Providence's Parker Brown in 53 seconds before then getting pinned in 39 seconds by Wolfson's Taylor Martinez. Armstrong got pinned again, losing to Episcopal's Logan Henson in 1:20. He then faced Providence's Brown again, winning again with a pin in 2:40.

Touchton went 1-2 in the 190 class. He was pinned by Episcopal's Christian McGarity and Trinity Christian's Nicco Musso, but ended his day by pinning University Christian's Cooper Martell in 2:59.

Ty Keim didn't win a match, but he was sixth in the 285 class. Jayden Prevatt (132 class) and Tremeze White (165) also participated for Bradford.

The Tornadoes placed eighth out of 11 teams. Episcopal won the team championship, while Bishop Kenny was runner-up.

BHS bats deliver in 16-7 softball win over Colts

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Seven players drove in runs in the Bradford High School softball team's 16-7 win at North Marion on Feb. 21.

Addyson Hinds, who went 2 for 4 with a double, drove in three runs for the Tornadoes, who evened their record at 1-1.

Bradford had a five-run second to go up 6-2. The Tornadoes loaded the bases, with Kallie Yowell hitting a single in between walks drawn by Taym

Flowers and Kelsie Cochran. A bunt single by Regan Adams scored one run, while another scored when Keegan Yowell drew a bases-loaded walk. Amber Wynn hit an RBI single, while Keegan Yowell and Wynn (after Adams was caught stealing home) scored on a wild pitch.

The Tornadoes had another big inning, scoring six runs in the fourth. Hinds hit a double that scored Keegan Yowell and Wynn, who both walked. A Summer Sutton ground out scored a run and put Bradford ahead 9-2. Flowers walked, while Kallie Yowell was hit by a pitch. Cochran and Adams both reached on errors, with a run scoring on the ball put into play by Cochran. Kallie Yowell and Cochran both scored on passed ball to make it a 12-2 game.

Kingslee Phillips had two RBI, while the following each had one: Adams, Sutton, Wynn, Kallie Yowell and Keegan Yowell.

Wynn and Kallie Yowell went 2 for 2 and 2 for 3, respectively.

Kolee Lemire pitched a complete game, giving up four earned runs and four hits, while striking out seven.

Bradford entered the game off a season-opening 10-6 loss to visiting Clay on Feb. 18.

The Tornadoes trailed 10-2 before scoring four runs in the bottom of the seventh. With two outs and no one on, Sutton and Hinds each singled, with a Kallie Yowell double scoring one run. Flowers and Cochran reached on errors, which allowed three runs to score.

Sutton and Kallie Yowell each went 2 for 4 with an RBI. Yowell hit two doubles.

The Tornadoes were scheduled to host Bishop Snyder on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 6:30 p.m. Bradford hosts P.K. Yonge on Friday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. and then hosts Newberry on Tuesday, March 4, at 6:30 p.m.

Tornadoes struggle at the plate in 13-3 loss to Rams

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School batters had just four hits and struck out 10 times versus two Interlachen pitchers in a 13-3 baseball loss on Feb. 21 in Starke.

Nehemiah Flowers hit a two-run double in the bottom of the first to tie the score at 2-2, but the Rams responded with four runs in the second to take the lead for good.

Bradford's final run came on a Breion Johnson double in the fourth.

The loss was part of a 2-1 week for the Tornadoes (3-2).

On Feb. 19, Ryland Rike pitched a complete-game shutout in a 3-0 win over host Gainesville.

It was a scoreless game going into the seventh. Rike and Patrick Pendarvis both walked. Each runner stole a base before scoring on a Ryder Thompson double. Flowers hit an RBI line drive to account for the final run.

Rike, who struck out all three batters he faced in the bottom of the seventh, allowed one hit and one walk. He struck out six in all.

Bradford traveled to play Yulee on Feb. 20, with Flowers hitting a two-out, two-run double in the fifth that gave the Tornadoes a 9-5 lead in what was an eventual 10-8 win.

The Tornadoes scored the game's first runs with a four-run second. A Kaedan Parks double and walks issued to Flowers and Jaron Hale loaded the bases. Taylor Bice walked to force the first run in. After Rike ground into a fielder's choice, which resulted in Flowers being put

out at home, Pendarvis hit a two-run double. Thompson and Avery Burgin both walked, with Burgin's walk forcing a run in.

An error and steals of home by Parks and Thompson helped the Tornadoes keep the lead.

It was 7-5 going into the fifth. Pendarvis and Thompson both walked and then scored on Flowers' double.

Flowers and Pendarvis each finished with two RBI, while Bice and Burgin each had one.

Parks and Pendarvis each had one double, with Pendarvis going 3 for 4 and Parks going 2 for 5.

Pendarvis entered the game to pitch with two outs and one on in the bottom of the sixth. He promptly recorded a strikeout and went on to strike out three more batters in the seventh. He allowed no hits.

The Tornadoes played Hilliard this past Tuesday and will host Keystone Heights on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m. Bradford then hosts Hamilton County on Monday, March 3, at 6 p.m.

Contes, McCall wrestle way to regionals for KHHS Indians

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's Atreyu Contes and Mikey McCall qualified for region-level competition with second- and fourth-place finishes, respectively, at the District 5-1A meet, which was held Feb. 19 at Crystal River High School.

The top four in each weight class earned the right to advance to the Region 2 meet, which will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 28-March 1, at Palm Bay High School in Melbourne.

Contes earned his runner-up finish in the 113-pound class. After a first-round bye, he defeated Citrus' Jimmikal Jackson 4-2 in a tiebreaker. Contes was then pinned in 45 seconds by Crystal River's Scott Knight in the championship match.

McCall went 1-2 in the 138 class. He opened with a 10-3 loss to Crystal River's Mark Miranda. After a bye, McCall bounced back by pinning Interlachen's Robert Maschella in 45 seconds. He then faced Crystal River's Miranda again, losing 18-3 by technical fall.

Jared Goetzman and Alyx Nichols each earned a fifth-place finish, which means they could possibly compete at the Region 2 meet if slots need to be filled in their weight classes.

Goetzman, who wrestles in the 120 class, was pinned in 2:51 by Crystal River's Braedyn Jones, but then recorded a 15-1 win by major decision over Interlachen's Jaden Perry. After getting pinned in 4:31 by Dunnellon's Mason Lane, Goetzman faced Crystal River's Jones again. Goetzman came out on top in the rematch, winning by a 21-2 technical fall.

Nichols began his day in the 190 class by getting pinned in 1:20 by Crystal River's Zaid Moore. He Pinned Citrus' Ayden Burke in 2:31 before then getting pinned in four minutes by Lake Weir's Blake Napper. Nichols won his final match, pinning Interlachen's David LeBaron in 1:56.

Arthur Durning, who competed in the 132 class, earned one win, defeating Interlachen's Camden Jackson by a 19-4 technical fall.

Keegan Goetzman (106 class), Seth Fernandez (144), Jackson Kehler (157), Dylan Saley (165), Joshua Bruzzese (175) and Charlie Kehler (285) also competed for Keystone.

Keystone placed eighth out of nine teams, with Crystal River winning the team championship. Menendez was runner-up.

Franklin has big night for KHHS baseball in 8-6 victory

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Ethan Franklin hit a two-run double in the fifth that proved to be the difference in an 8-6 win for the Keystone Heights High School baseball team over visiting Ridgeview on Feb. 24.

It was the second of two two-run doubles hit by Franklin, who



Union County's Region 1-1A qualifiers are (l-r) Wyatt Elixson, Breydan Peugh, C.J. Ivey, Gavin Sparkman, Carsen Thomas and (not pictured) Hunter Cruz.

finished 2 for 3 with four RBI.

Franklin also earned the win on the mound, allowing four runs (one earned) and four hits through the first four innings. He had seven strikeouts.

Ridgeview held a 3-0 lead, but Franklin made it a one-run game with a two-run double in the second.

The Indians (5-2) took the lead for good with a three-run third that included a two-run triple hit by Tallon Campbell.

Keystone led 6-4 entering the bottom of the fifth. With one out and no one on, Gage Barry walked, followed by Ty Mitzel reaching on a single. Franklin scored both with his second double, which came on an 0-2 pitch.

Barry finished 2 for 2 with an RBI.

Tyler Brinson pitched the final three innings, giving up two runs (one earned) and two hits, while striking out four.

It was the third straight game for the Indians decided by one or two runs.

On Feb. 20, Keystone scored a run in the bottom of the seventh on an error to defeat visiting North Marion 2-1.

The bottom half of the final inning began when Andrew Wilson drew a walk. He moved to second on Aiden Screen's sacrifice bunt before North Marion intentionally walked Austin Smith. Campbell then drew a walk to load the bases. Brinson hit a ground ball, with the Colts committing their third error of the game, which allowed Wilson to score.

Keystone had just three hits, one of which was a double by Smith.

Starting pitcher Mitzel threw five innings, giving up one unearned run, three hits and one walk, while striking out nine.

Franklin finished it off on the mound, allowing one hit in two innings.

The Indians traveled to play Middleburg on Feb. 21, with pitchers Barry and Brinson allowing just five hits in a 4-2 win.

Smith, who went 2 for 4 with two RBI, drove in Keystone's first run with a single in the first.

With two on and two outs in the third, Brinson and Barry (2 for 3) each hit a run-scoring single.

Smith hit an RBI double in the sixth.

Barry got the start on the mound, giving up one run and three hits in five innings. He struck out eight.

Brinson allowed one unearned run and two hits in the final two innings.

Keystone, which has won five in a row, was scheduled to play at Santa Fe on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m. The Indians play another road game when they take on Bradford in Starke on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m.

The Indians host Baker County on Tuesday, March 4, at 7 p.m. before traveling to play West Nassau on Wednesday, March 5, at 6:30 p.m.

6 Union Co. wrestlers to compete at region level

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Wyatt Elixson and Gavin Sparkman won their weight classes and were two of six Union County High School wrestlers to qualify for region-level competition at the District 4-1A meet, which was held Feb. 19 at Episcopal School of Jacksonville.

The top four in each weight class earned the right to advance to the Region 1 meet, which will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 28-March 1, at Bay High School in Panama City.

Sparkman was the 138-pound class district champ, defeating

two opponents after byes in the first two rounds. He first recorded a 13-0 win by major decision over Providence's Albie MacDonald. Sparkman then won the championship match by pinning Episcopal's Thomas Coppedge in 1:04.

Elixson, who wrestles in the 165 class, went 3-0 after a first-round bye. First, he pinned Episcopal's Lucca Martinez in 2:13. After pinning Bolles' Joao Nogueira in 1:41, Elixson defeated Trinity Christian's Alexander McKay 9-5 in the championship match.

Three Union wrestlers earned the right to advance with third-place finishes: Hunter Cruz, Breydan Peugh and Carsen Thomas.

Peugh went 2-1 in the 113 class after byes in the first two rounds. He lost by a 20-9 major decision to Wolfson's Asher Nathanson, but bounced back with a 19-3 win by technical fall over Providence's Garrett Croxton. Peugh the pinned Episcopal's Thomas Riley in 1:27.

Cruz, who wrestles in the 150 class, took on four opponents, defeating three of them. After a first-round bye, he pinned Bolles' Walker Creel in 1:04. Cruz then lost 16-1 by technical fall to Bradford's Miguel Rivera, but rebounded by pinning Bishop Snyder's Jacob Preston in 1:10. He then ended his day by pinning Wolfson's Lucas Langdon in 3:16.

Like Cruz, Thomas went 3-1. Thomas, who wrestles in the 175 class, had a first-round bye before pinning Bolles' Sooryan Gandhi in 47 seconds. After getting pinned in 1:46 by Bishop Kenny's Lian Bradley, he pinned University Christian's Landon Adams in 45 seconds. Thomas then earned a 16-11 win over Episcopal's Shay Eberle.

C.J. Ivey also qualified for the Region 1 meet after placing fourth in the 190 class. Ivey had byes in the first two rounds before getting pinned in 59 seconds by Episcopal's Christian McGarity. He pinned University Christian's Cooper Martell in 1:22 before then getting pinned in 1:26 by Trinity Christian's Nicco Musso.

The Tigers' Alec French (132 class) and Matthew Rogers (215) also competed.

Union placed fifth out of 11 teams, with Episcopal winning the team championship and Bishop Kenny earning the runner-up trophy.

UCHS baseball team keeps rolling with win over Williston

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Erick Lasseter hit a two-run single as part of a three-run fifth inning that helped the Union County High School baseball team defeat visiting Williston 6-3 on Feb. 21.

The Tigers (5-1) have won five straight after dropping their season opener.

Union scored two runs in the third to take a 3-0 lead. With two outs and no one on, Jeffrey Brugh singled and advanced to third on an error. Devin Diggs reached on an error that scored Brugh and then scored when Lasseter reached on an error.

It was 3-2 when the Tigers added three more runs in the fifth. Brezdyn Browning and Brugh hit consecutive singles, while Diggs walked to load the bases. Two runs scored on a Lasseter single, while Diggs scored Union's final run on a steal of home.

Lasseter finished with two RBI, while Browning and Brugh went 2 for 3 and 2 for 4, respectively.

Starting pitcher Kacen Thomassen gave up three runs (two earned), four hits and no walks in six innings. He had five strikeouts.

Jake Walker closed it out,

allowing no hits and striking out three in the final inning.

The win capped a 3-0 week for the Tigers that began with a 13-5 win at Nease on Feb. 18.

Starting pitcher Lasseter allowed four runs (three earned) on five hits and two walks, while striking out six.

Landen Miller pitched the remainder of the game, giving up one run and two hits.

The Tigers had two big innings offensively, beginning with a five-run second. Foster Smith was hit by a pitch before Thomassen and Miller each singled, with Miller's hit scoring a run. Bo Wilson hit a two-run double to make it 3-0. After a Browning single, Brugh drove in a run on a ground out, while Trenton Klein drove in another on a single, giving the Tigers a 5-0 advantage.

Union made it a 12-1 game when it scored seven runs in the sixth. Thomassen walked, while Miller reached on an error. Diggs, who entered to run for Thomassen, and Miller each stole a base before Diggs scored on a balk and Miller scored on a passed ball. Browning reached on an error, while Brugh singled. Another error allowed Klein to reach and a run to score. Lasseter then hit a two-run single to make it 10-1.

The inning continued when Walker singled and Smith was hit by a pitch. Thomassen hit a sacrifice fly to score a run, while Miller drove in another on a single.

Lasseter, who finished with three RBI, drove in the final run on a sacrifice fly in the seventh.

Thomassen went 2 for 2, while Klein and Miller each went 2 for 4. Brugh finished 2 for 5.

On Feb. 20, the Tigers scored four runs in the top of the seventh to defeat host West Nassau 5-2.

Diggs hit a single to lead off the seventh. Ayden Andreleivich walked, while Brugh singled, loading the bases. Diggs scored on a wild pitch to tie it up at 2-2. Klein and Lasseter drew back-to-back walks, with Lasseter's walk forcing a run in. Walker drove in the team's fourth run on a single, while Smith plated the final run on a sacrifice fly.

Lasseter finished with two RBI, while Smith and Walker each had one.

Brugh went 2 for 3. Smith got the start on the mound, giving up two runs (one earned) on four hits and one walk.

Walker threw the final inning, giving up no hits and striking out one.

Union was supposed to play at Dunnellon on Feb. 24, but the game was postponed until Wednesday, Feb. 26, because of the weather.

The Tigers will travel to Ocala to play Trinity Catholic on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m. and then travel to play Oakleaf on Tuesday, March 4, at 7 p.m.

UCHS softball team loses to 1A runner-up

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School's softball team traveled to play Branford (last year's Class 1A state runner-up) on Feb. 21, losing 12-2 in five innings.

Courtney Manning hit a two-out single and scored on an error in the top of the first. The Class 1A Tigers (1-2) held that 1-0 lead until the second, when Branford scored four runs off two singles, two walks, a sacrifice fly and an error.

By the time Union scored again (in the fifth), the Buccaneers had 10 runs on the board.

The Tigers finished with just four hits against Branford pitcher Laila Arnold, who struck out six and walked none.

'Coach Ollie' honored prior to KHHS softball opener

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Ollie Powell, who was once a big part of the Keystone Heights High School softball program, was honored prior to the Indians' season opener on Feb. 21.

"Coach Ollie," who passed away Nov. 19, 2024, at the age of 81, was an assistant coach for the KHHS program for more than 10 years before retiring

after the 2006 season. In a June 22, 2006, Telegraph-Times-Monitor story, former KHHS Head Coach Kathy Smith was quoted as saying, "I've pretty much been the manager. He did the coaching."

Powell's family members, including his wife, Karen, gathered on the field and watched as great-grandson Kanner threw a ceremonial first pitch to KHHS catcher Amber Wagner.

Former KHHS player Ashley Nugent, a 2024 graduate, said a few words prior to the first pitch.

"I never had the chance to play for Ollie Powell as an Indian, but I feel like I got to experience it all the same," Nugent said. "Mr. Ollie was my pitching coach for many years. He taught me not only softball, but also life lessons that I now carry on to the younger children that I coach."

Nugent added that she never

had a "Papa, a Grandpa or a Pepaw, but I did have Ollie Powell."

Former players talked of the relationship they enjoyed with Powell as part of the June 22, 2006, Telegraph-Times-Monitor story, which covered Powell's surprise retirement party. Ashlee Painter Horton, a 1999 graduate, said, "He's the best. He deserves the best. He's a good man."

MaryAnne McCall Gamble, a

2006 graduate, credited Powell as the reason she continued playing softball as a youth, which led to her getting the chance to play at St. Johns River College.

"I wouldn't be where I'm at today without him," she said.

Those who played for him saw a coach who didn't tolerate mental errors and one who demanded perfection. In fact, many players found him intimidating at first. Gamble said

when she first met him, she was scared.

"Then, after that first year, everything changed," Powell said. "They realized that whatever I was doing was for their benefit."

Smith, the former KHHS coach, said that was a credit to Powell's personality and his willingness to take players under

See POWELL, page 11



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40 Notices

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Family members of the late Ollie Powell, including Powell's wife, Karen, who holds flowers presented to her by KHHS Head Coach Jessica Marquart, look on as Powell's great-grandson, Kanner, throws the ceremonial first pitch prior to the Indians' season opener against Baker County on Feb. 21.

POWELL

Continued from page 10

his wing. What developed was a bond that was about more than just softball.

"Even though he's a male, they'll talk to him about anything," Smith said. "He's like a father to them."

Horton agreed, saying, "He was practically my father for a while. I loved all of his positive

comments." Gamble referred to Powell as her "best buddy," saying, "He's been the most dependable person in my life so far other than my parents."

Powell, whose specialty was working with pitchers, said with Gamble's graduation, the time was right to retire. He didn't want to begin working with a new pitcher and not be able to be there until she, too, graduated. Working with a pitcher for just

part of her high-school career wasn't an option.

"They deserve 100 percent of whatever you've got or else don't do it," Powell said.

Powell said he played softball on "some pretty good" teams in Gainesville before he got into coaching.

"I just enjoyed the game and felt like I had something to pass on to the kids playing the game," he said. "I've always enjoyed kids. I've always liked being

around them and interacting with them. I felt like I had some knowledge that they could benefit from."

Prior to KHHS, Powell coached for the Keystone Recreation Association. He was asked to do so by Yancy Dull, who was coaching a team that wasn't playing well. Powell's first game as a part of that team was a 20-run loss.

"I told the kids after that game that we would never ever take another beating like that," he said. "We wound up winning the league in the KRA."

Powell and Dull also coached an all-star team that came within one win of making it to the Babe Ruth World Series.

KHHS didn't have a softball field on campus when Powell began coaching the school's junior varsity program, so he and Dull, who also coached at the school, took it upon their selves to help create one.

"Tina (Bullock), who was the principal at the time, thought we were just fooling when we told her we were going to build a field for the girls," Powell said. "She came to school, and there were two bulldozers out there working."

Donations and contributions helped the field become a reality. All Florida Electric, for example, provided several services for free, while Powell's brother Bobby, who worked for Alcon

Construction, built the dugouts among other things. Someone made an \$11,000 donation to help purchase and install lighting.

"You just can't give enough thanks to all the people who worked up there," Powell said.

Powell, of course, deserved thanks, too, for his commitment to the KHHS program.

As Nugent said during the recent honor on Feb. 25, "He will be remembered here forever."

Indians fall late to 4A runner-up Baker Co.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School rallied late to tie the score, but visiting Baker County, which was the Class 4A state runner-up last season, scored in the top of the seventh to defeat the Indians 5-4 in a Feb. 21 softball game.

It was the season opener for the Class 3A Indians.

Keystone trailed 4-1 entering the bottom of the sixth. Tayler Buchanan drew a walk to lead off the inning before Bailey Amato and Kadence Massey hit back-to-back doubles, with Massey's hit plating two runs. Audry Cisco walked after the first out, followed by Kaleigh Marquart hitting into a fielder's choice that resulted in Massey being put out at third. Chloe Still then hit a single into right field. Baker committed an error on the play,

which allowed Cisco to score and even it up at 4-4.

The Wildcats' Sadye Harvey hit a single to lead off the top of the seventh. After a ground out, Baker got back-to-back doubles from Mallory Jackson and Baleigh Shields, with Shield's hit driving home what would be the winning run.

Massey finished 3 for 3 with two RBI, while Amato went 2 for 4 with an RBI. The rest of the team went 2 for 19 against Baker pitcher Rylee Walker.

Walker threw a complete game, as did the Indians' Massey, who gave up three earned runs, eight hits and one walk. Massey and Walker both had five strikeouts.

Keystone was scheduled to play at Toco Creek on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m. and will travel to play Newberry on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 6 p.m. The Indians host Providence on Friday, Feb. 28, at 6 p.m. before playing two straight on the road: at Baker County on Tuesday, March 4, at 7 p.m. and at Clay on Wednesday, March 5, at 7 p.m.

Legal Notices

Legals for the week of Feb. 27, 2025

BRADFORD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE
To satisfy the owner's storage lien, KO Storage LLC will sell at public lien sale on March 18, 2025. The personal property in the below-listed units, which may include but are not limited to: Household goods, boxes/totes/bags, clothing, bedding, tools and toys. The public sale of these items will begin at 10AM on March 11, 2025 and end at 10AM on March 18, 2025. The public sale will take place on www.storage-treasures.com. KO Storage of Starke - S Walnut St, 1650 South Walnut Street, Starke FL 32091, (952)-491-6837
Time: 10:00AM CST
B13, Sofield, Ashley, B46, Richardson, Trevor, B50, Neats, Rachael
Public sale terms, rules, and regulations will be made available on www.storage-treasures.com. All sales are subject to cancellation. We reserve the right to refuse any bid. Payment must be by credit/debit card, we do not accept checks or cash. Buyers must secure the units with their own personal locks. To claim tax-exempt status, original RESALE certificates for each space purchased is required. By KO Storage LLC, 10301 Wayzata Blvd, Minnetonka, MN 55305. (952)-491-6837.
2/20 2tchg 2/27-BCT

COMMISSION MEETING
THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners will have a board meeting on March 4, 2025, at 9:30 AM inside the county commission meeting room, located in the north wing section of the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple, Avenue, Starke, FL. A copy of the meeting agenda may be obtained from the Bradford County website: www.bradfordcountyfl.gov. Said meeting location is secured - no firearms or weapons are permitted.
2/27 1tchg-BCT

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

CASE NO.: 04-2024-CA-000363
RICHARD DAVIS, JR. A/K/A RICHARD DAVIS AND SHARON DAVIS, PLAINTIFFS, VS. UNKNOWN TENANTS, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEES, ASSIGNEES, LIENORS, CREDITORS, TRUSTEES, AND ALL OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING ANY ESTATE, RIGHT, TITLE, OR INTEREST BY, THROUGH, OR AGAINST ANDREW TIMMONS, DECEASED; NATALIE TIMMONS A/K/A NATALIE THOMAS, DEFENDANTS

NOTICE OF ACTION
TO: UNKNOWN TENANTS, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEES, ASSIGNEES, LIENORS, CREDITORS, TRUSTEES, AND ALL OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING ANY ESTATE, RIGHT, TITLE, OR INTEREST BY, THROUGH, OR AGAINST ANDREW TIMMONS, DECEASED

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action has been filed against you, and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on Richard Davis, Jr. a/k/a Richard Davis and Sharon Davis, c/o Owens Penrod, P.A., whose address is 189 S. Lawrence Blvd., Keystone Heights, FL 32656, on or before 30 days from the 1st day of publication, and file the original with the Clerk of the Court, Bradford County, 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091, before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Petition. Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents upon request. You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed to the address on record at the clerk's office. Dated: February 14th, 2025. DENNY THOMPSON CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT BY: Kanetra Jenkins Deputy Clerk
2/27 4tchg 3/20-BCT

BUDGET WORKSHOP
THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners will hold a workshop to discuss the 25-26 Fiscal Year budget on March 4, 2025, at 10:30 AM, or immediately following the regular BOCC meeting, inside the county commission meeting room, located in the north wing section of the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple, Avenue, Starke, FL. A copy of the meeting agenda may be obtained from the Bradford County website: www.bradfordcountyfl.gov. Said meeting location is secured - no firearms or weapons are permitted.
2/27 1tchg-BCT

City of Starke
NOTICE OF FAIR HOUSING
This notice will serve to advise all residents of the City of Starke that the following actions, if based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, familial status (families with children), or handicap (disability) are prohibited by Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Act): Refusing to sell or rent to, deal or negotiate with any person. Discriminating on terms or conditions for buying or renting housing. Discriminating by advertising that housing is available only to persons of a certain race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, handicap (disability), age, ancestry or with no animals. Denying that housing is available for inspection, sale or rent when it really is available. Denying or making different terms or conditions for home loans by financial institutions. Denying to anyone the use of or participation in any real estate services, multiple listing services or other facilities related to the selling and renting of housing. "Blockbusting" and "steering" are two discriminatory practices that are also prohibited by the Act. Blockbusting includes engaging in conduct which conveys the impression that a

neighborhood is about to undergo certain changes and, thus, panic owners into selling their properties. Steering involves guiding an individual seeking housing toward or away from particular property for discriminatory reasons. If you would like to obtain more information about fair housing, or file a fair housing complaint, please contact the Fair Housing Coordinator listed below: Stephanie Mann, Fair Housing Coordinator Director of Administrative Operations 209 North Thompson Street Starke, FL 32091 Phone: (904) 964-5027
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/ AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES
2/27 1tch-BCT

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION
Pursuant to Section 324 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, the following information is available to the public upon request during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday, at the North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee, located at 2009 NW 67th Place, Gainesville, FL 32653-1603. Hazardous Chemical Inventory (Tier Two) Forms Shelter In Place Training Assistance Safety Data Sheets Emergency Release Follow-up Reports Hazards Analyses for Section 302 Facilities Local Emergency Planning Committee Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan How-to-Comply Information for Hazardous Materials Users Free Hazardous Materials Response Training for First Responders The North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee serves Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union Counties. To obtain information on the above items, please contact Garrison Vandegrift at 352.955.2200, ext. 108, email vandegrift@ncfrc.org or visit www.ncflepc.org.
2/27 1tchg-BCT

City of Hampton
NOTICE OF FAIR HOUSING
This notice will serve to advise all residents of the City of Hampton that the following actions, if based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, familial status (families with children), or handicap (disability) are prohibited by Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Federal Fair Housing Act): Refusing to sell or rent to, deal or negotiate with any person. Discriminating on terms or conditions for buying or renting housing. Discriminating by advertising that housing is available only to persons of a certain race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, handicap (disability), age, ancestry or with no animals. Denying that housing is available for inspection, sale or rent when it really is available. Denying or making different terms or conditions for home loans by financial

institutions. Denying to anyone the use of or participation in any real estate services, multiple listing services or other facilities related to the selling and renting of housing. "Blockbusting" and "steering" are two discriminatory practices that are also prohibited by the Act. Blockbusting includes engaging in conduct which conveys the impression that a neighborhood is about to undergo certain changes and, thus, panic owners into selling their properties. Steering involves guiding an individual seeking housing toward or away from particular property for discriminatory reasons. If you would like to obtain more information about fair housing, or file a fair housing complaint, please contact the Fair Housing Coordinator listed below: Mary Lou Hildreth, City Clerk/Administrator City of Hampton P. O. Drawer 250 (5784 Navarre Avenue) Hampton, FL 32044 Office: 352-468-1201 Fax: 352-473-1350 Clerk@hamptonfl.gov
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/ AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES
2/27 1tchg-BCT

INVITATION TO BID
RFP 2025-001
The Bradford County Board of County Commissioners is requesting sealed bids from General and Building Contractors for the new construction of the Public Works Facility Steel Building, located at 720 West Market Road, Starke, FL 32091.
BASE BID:
The work shall consist of but is not limited to the new construction of a 60 ft by 120 ft by 20 ft enclosed steel building including five (5) roll-up doors, each 14 ft wide by 16 ft high, two (2) high-impact walk-through doors, two (2) high-impact windows, insulation of building walls and roof to meet or exceed local building codes, 7,200 square ft of concrete slab foundation. Deadline for receipt of sealed bids has been set for March 26, 2025, at 2:00 PM. Send, or deliver in person, 1 original, 1 copy, and 1 electronic copy (USB drive) of the sealed bids to Bradford County Clerk of Courts, 945 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091. Only sealed bids received on, or before, the aforesaid time and date will be considered. Vendor must indicate the Bid Number and Description of Bid on the outside of the envelope (package). The Bradford County Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids and to waive any informalities. Bradford County complies with all federal statutes relating to non-discrimination. Bradford County is an equal opportunity employer. Failure to follow the Bid Protest procedures prescribed by the Bradford County Purchasing Ordinance shall constitute a waiver of your protest and any resulting claims. Interested parties can download the RFP from www.BradfordCountyFL.gov/bid-advertisements/ or by email to Heather_Hinds@BradfordCountyFL.gov.
2/27 1tchg-BCT

INVITATION TO BID
The Bradford County Board of County Commissioners is soliciting sealed proposals for the CR 325 Hampton Trailhead at Bobby Sheppard Park. All bidders must be FDOT pre-qualified for all categories of work required for this project. Qualified firms or individuals desiring to provide the required products or services must submit two (2) packages in a sealed envelope or similar package marked "Sealed Proposal for CR 325 Hampton Trailhead at Bobby Sheppard Park" to the Bradford County Clerk located at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091 no later than 3:00 PM local time, on March 27, 2025. All proposals MUST have the responder's name and mailing address clearly shown on the outside of the envelope or package when submitted. Proposals will be opened, and respondents announced at 3:15 PM, local time, or as soon thereafter as practical, on March 27, 2025, in the Board of County BOCC Chambers located at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091. No faxed or emailed proposals will be accepted. RFP will be provided to interested parties via email. Interested parties are to contact Jenni Bennett with CHW at jenni.bennett@nv5.com to obtain an FTP link for download of the RFP. Project is funded entirely through FDOT SCOP. Financial Project ID: 447120-1-58-01. Design of the project is being handled by STV Incorporated. CEI services will be provided by an FDOT CEI consultant. A non-mandatory pre-bid conference will be held at the Board of County BOCC Chambers located at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091 on Monday, March 10, 2025, at 2:00 PM. Representatives of Owner and Engineer will be present to discuss the project. Bidders are encouraged to attend and participate in the conference, but attendance is not required for submittal of Bid. The County reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to reject any or all proposals, to cancel or withdraw this solicitation at any time and waive any irregularities in the RFP process. The County reserves the right to award any contract to the lowest responsive responsible bidder. The County is not bound to award any contract. The County, in its sole and absolute discretion, also reserves the right to waive any minor defects in the process. Additional information may be obtained from: Jason Dodds, Director of Public Works

(904) 966-6243
jason_dodds@bradfordcountyfl.gov
BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, Bradford County, Florida
2/27 2tchg 3/6-BCT

UNION

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION
Pursuant to Section 324 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, the following information is available to the public upon request during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday, at the North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee, located at 2009 NW 67th Place, Gainesville, FL 32653-1603. Hazardous Chemical Inventory (Tier Two) Forms Shelter In Place Training Assistance Safety Data Sheets Emergency Release Follow-up Reports Hazards Analyses for Section 302 Facilities Local Emergency Planning Committee Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan How-to-Comply Information for Hazardous Materials Users Free Hazardous Materials Response Training for First Responders The North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee serves Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union Counties. To obtain information on the above items, please contact Garrison Vandegrift at 352.955.2200, ext. 108, email vandegrift@ncfrc.org or visit www.ncflepc.org.
2/27 1tchg-UCT

LAKE REGION

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME
Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the undersigned: ESG AEROSYSTEMS, INC., 7110 Airport Road, Starke, FL 32091, SOLE owner, doing business under the firm name of: ESG AEROSYSTEMS, A HENSOLDT COMPANY, 7110 Airport Road, Starke, FL 32091, intends to register fictitious name under the aforesaid statute. Dated this 20th day of FEBRUARY A.D., 2025, in CLAY County.
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Obituaries

Benjy Bass

Mr. Benjy Bass, 55, of Sampson City, passed away unexpectedly Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2025, at HCA Starke Medical Center. He was born Jan. 4, 1970, at the Naval Station Hospital in Jacksonville to Gene and Hazel "Coleman" Bass. He attended Bradford County High School, where he was involved and graduated with the class of 1988. His career began 33 years ago at Dupont as their maintenance-department mechanic, where he loved working and spreading God's word with his friends. He was a very outgoing and energetic kind of guy who would ALWAYS have you laughing and smiling. He was an active member of Sampson City Church of God, loved traveling to various restaurants to see whose BBQ was the best, loved walking around cemeteries, and, mostly, taking his loving wife out for coffee and sitting by the river. Thirty years ago, with his talents of singing and playing the drums, a band called "The Backwood Boys" was born. This was a big part of Benjy's life, it gave him the opportunity to do something he loved, but also the opportunity to witness to others. He was and is still definitely a man of God. He was preceded in death by his father-in-law, John Wayne Hersey.

His survivors are his loving and devoted wife of nearly 32 years, Holly Hersey Bass; their two children, Ethan Bass and Ansley Bass; parents, Gene and Hazel Bass; brother, Shane Bass and his wife, Heather Hersey Bass; and a sister, Regina Bass Frampton and her husband Johnny. Also left behind is his mother-in-law, Peggy Hersey; several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and a host of extended family members and friends who will miss him dearly.

The family received friends, Saturday, Feb. 22, at Sampson City Church of God. Funeral services followed with Mr. Johnny Frampton officiating. The family has asked to please omit flowers and donate to the Acute Myeloid Leukemia Research in honor of Benjy's friend, Jennifer Fender.

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

PAID OBITUARY

Wanda Corbett

Emma "Wanda" Griffis Corbett, 74, of Starke died at her residence Monday, Feb. 24, 2025, surrounded by her family. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; 11 brothers, and two sisters.

Survivors are her children; Wendy (P.J.) Knipp, Joyce (Dion) Coblentz and Randall (Amanda) Coblentz, brother, James (Deborah) Griffis; sisters, Rose Mary (Dewayne) Vanzant and Diane Moody; three grandchildren; and many extended family members.

A Celebration of Life will be held Thursday, Feb. 27, at 2 p.m. at Air Park Baptist Church.

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

Donald Carmichael

Donald Carmichael died Monday, Feb. 17, 2025, at his home in Lawtey. He was born May 13, 1947, in Bartow to Mac and Nat Carmichael. He was the second to the youngest of eight children. He lived in Florida, Wyoming, and Kentucky until the 80s, when he settled in Wisconsin. In 1990, he met his wife, Brenda Briese. They were married Nov. 10, 1990, and lived in Green Lake, Wisconsin for the next 30 years until they moved to Florida.

He is survived by his wife, Brenda Carmichael of Lawtey; children, Bobbi (Albert) Garcia of Green Lake, Wisconsin, Jamie Briese of Lawtey, Robin (Garth) Metcalfe of Apopka and Tracy (Al) McWilliams of Casselberry; and five grandchildren, Ethan (Renee) Briese of Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, Faith Hill of Madison, Wisconsin, Diego Garcia of Green Lake, Wisconsin, and Madison Metcalfe and Mathew Metcalfe, both of Apopka. Many nieces and nephews also survive.

A Celebration of Life will be held in May 2025 in Green Lake, Wisconsin. A Celebration of Life will be held in Lawtey at a later date.

PAID OBITUARY

Mary McNeill

Mrs. Mary Noegel McNeill, 81, of Kingsley Lake, died Thursday, December 19, 2024, at her residence.

Survivors are her husband, Willie "Sonny" McNeill Jr.; children, Bryan McNeill and Lori Elizabeth McNeill; sister-in-law, Barbara Noegel; and two grandchildren.

Services will be held Saturday, March 1, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church Parish Hall at 1 p.m. Interment will follow at Crosby Lake Cemetery.

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



Benjamin Norsworthy

Benjamin E. Norsworthy, a loving husband, father and friend, passed away Friday, Feb. 21, 2025, at the age of 44. Born Feb. 5, 1981, he was a skilled handyman who enjoyed working on projects around his home. He took great pride in providing for his family and creating a warm and welcoming space for them. His greatest joy was spending time with his loved ones. He cherished every moment with his wife, children, and extended family. His kindness, generosity and infectious smile touched the hearts of everyone he met. He was preceded in death by Donald Glenn; sisters; Lisa Brown and Janet Norsworthy; and brother, Everett Norsworthy.

He is survived by his loving wife of 15 years, Tonya; children, Benjamin (Maisyn) Norsworthy, Kaytlyn (Omarion) Norsworthy, and Brad Norsworthy; stepchildren, Tayler (Brandon) Brown and Dylan Phillips; and many nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 4964 N.W. 182nd Way on Thursday, March 6, at 12 p.m. If you would like to attend, contact Tonya at 904-629-0350.

Rest in peace, Ben. Your love, smile and legacy will be deeply missed.
PAID OBITUARY



Chelsea Tew

Chelsea Layne Tew, born March 14, 1994, in Columbus, Georgia, departed this life Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, in Swainsboro, Georgia after a courageous battle with cancer. She was a vibrant spirit, known for her vivacious and outgoing personality. She never met a stranger; her warmth and kindness enveloped everyone she encountered. A proud graduate of West Marion High School, she continued her education at Marion County Technical College, ultimately completing the cosmetology program at TENAJ Salon Institute. Her passion for beauty and creativity shone brightly through her work and hobbies. She had an intrinsic love for the outdoors and cherished moments spent buggy riding, horseback riding, and motorcycle riding. Additionally, she expressed her artistic flair through various arts and crafts, which not only brought her joy but also brought smiles to those lucky enough to receive her creations. Chelsea's family was a central pillar in her life. She is lovingly remembered by her daughter, Leigha Grace Piechowiak; and Leigha's father, Ryan Piechowiak; her mother, Sharon Denise Crawford Marrero, alongside her "Papi," Roberto Marrero Sr., provided unwavering support throughout her life. She also leaves behind her biological father of Alabama, Jody Boyd Tew; a loving cousin, Jason Fillingim; her siblings, Valine Marie (Chad) Marrero, Melissa Ann (Brandon) Candow, and Roberto Marrero Jr.; along with a half-sister on her biological father's side, Gabrielle "Gabby" Aldora Fillyaw; and her grandfather, Luther Boyd Tew. She held a special place in the hearts of her aunts and uncles, Billy Darrell (Alice) Crawford, Bryan (Mary) Turner, Diane Turner Crawford, Denise (Mac) McDonald, and Kelly (Joseph) Holmes. Special acknowledgment goes to her uncle and aunt, Raymond and Lucy Bembry, who stood steadfastly by her side throughout her battle. Their love and presence became an invaluable source of strength.

Chelsea was preceded in death by her grandfather, Amos Crawford and Alice; her grandmothers, Billie Catherine Johns Griffis and Dicie Pauline Tew; her uncle, Stacy Allan Crawford; and three triplet sisters, Alma Earle, Catherine Alice and DeAire Montez.

Visitation was held Sunday, Feb. 16, 2025, at Archer-Milton Funeral Home in Lake Butler. A graveside service followed at Mt. Zion/Swift Creek Cemetery in Lake Butler.

Archer-Milton Funeral Home of Lake Butler is honored to serve Chelsea's family. 386-496-2008 www.archerfuneralhome.com

PAID OBITUARY



Grady Overstreet

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Grady Overstreet, who left us on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2025, at the age of 80. Born Oct. 20, 1944, he lived a life full of passion for simple pleasures and cherished moments with family and friends. A devoted husband to his beloved wife of 60 years, Dimple Overstreet; daughter, Catrell (Mike) Cooney; and grandchildren, Morgan, Zachary, and Harrison Cooney. Grady was a man of many interests. He took great joy in gardening, where he spent countless hours tending to his plants and enjoying the fruits of his labor. Fishing was another of his great loves, whether out on the water or sharing stories about his latest catch. And let's not forget his insatiable sweet tooth. He could always be counted on to seek out the best ice cream around. Grady dedicated 44 years of his life to Winn Dixie, where he built lasting friendships and was known for his hard work and kindness. After retiring from there, he continued to share his incredible work ethic at Murray Ford for an additional five years. He left a lasting impression on all who had the pleasure of knowing him. He will be sorely missed, but he leaves behind a legacy of laughter, love, and good times. He was preceded in death by his parents, Billy and Annie Overstreet; brother, Marice Overstreet; and sister, Doris Clark.

A private Celebration of Life was held. In lieu of flowers, we ask that you enjoy a scoop of ice cream in his honor or donations may be made in his honor to Vitas Healthcare, 2614 N.W. 43rd St., Gainesville 32606.

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

PAID OBITUARY



Rev. Brian York

Rev. Brian James York, 79, of Keystone Heights, passed away Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025, at North Florida Hospital in Gainesville. He was born Oct. 31, 1945, in Salamanca, New York to the late Edward and Etta (Nichols) York. They moved to Chicago, Illinois, where he grew up and graduated from Moody Bible Institute. Then, he became a business owner shortly after. In 1990, he and his family moved to Florida. He started the car donation program at Rodeheaver Boys Ranch. He loved people. He was truly a man of God and enjoyed sharing the gospel every chance he got. He was an active and longtime member of Friendship Bible Church and loved cars of all types, and spending time with his family.

He leaves behind his loving and devoted wife of nearly 51 years, Janet (Clericus) York; two children, David James (Megan) York of Palatka, and Jennifer (Michael) Duluck of Erie, Colorado; a brother, Dennis (Karen) York of Kentwood, Michigan; along with many nieces and nephews. He was the perfect "Grandpa" to Brittany (Jacob) Bourgeois, and their daughter, Blakely James, and one on the way.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 1, at Friendship Bible Church, with Pastor Carl Metzger officiating. Flowers or donations are welcome. Please make a memorial donation to Friendship Bible Church, 1155 Orchid Ave., Keystone Heights 32656.

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

PAID OBITUARY



Curtis A. "Lex" Sanders Attorney at Law



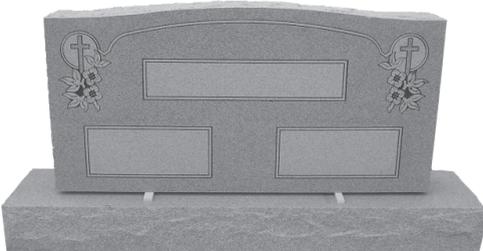
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UCHS

Continued from page 9

Union opened the season with a 7-1 loss to host Hilliard on Feb. 17. Manning and Mackenzie Orton each went 2 for 3, with Manning hitting a double.

Shyla Crowe drove in the lone run on a sacrifice fly in the fourth.

The Tigers earned a win on Feb. 18, with Campbell Webb driving in two runs in a 5-3 win over visiting Bronson.

Bronson led 3-1 before Union scored three runs in the bottom of the fourth. The Tigers loaded the bases, with Crowe and Brooke Hunt walking and Webb getting hit by a pitch. Jailynn Simmons, who entered to run for Crowe, scored on a passed ball. Jaydin Alvarez reached on an error, which allowed a run to score. Emma Handley then hit a sacrifice fly that put the Tigers ahead 4-3.

Webb, who went 2 for 2, drove in the final run with a fifth-inning double.

Crowe pitched a complete game, allowing five hits and no walks. She had nine strikeouts.

Union played Lafayette this past Tuesday and will travel to play Trenton on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 7 p.m. The Tigers continue the string of road games, playing at Bell on Friday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. and at North Marion on Tuesday, March 4, at 7 p.m.

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

BHS scores late, defeats Columbia in flag football

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Ar'Nayshia Griffin's 8-yard touchdown run with 39 seconds left gave the Bradford High School flag football team an 18-12 win over visiting Columbia on Feb. 25.

The play capped an eight-play, 58-yard drive that featured 29-yard pass from Griffin to Nichelle Brown that set up first-and-goal at the 10.

Bradford (2-0) scored on the game's opening possession. Brown caught three passes for 41 yards as the Tornadoes moved to the Columbia 25. An 8-yard run by Griffin set up first-and-goal at the 13. Griffin later had an 8-yard run that set up her 4-yard touchdown pass to Brown. The conversion attempt failed.

The Tigers tied the score late in the second quarter, with a 4-yard touchdown run capping a nine-play, 66-yard drive. Bradford, though, was able to march down the field and score with 38 seconds remaining in the half. Brown caught passes of 16 and 22 yards, while a 16-yard reception by Talaysia Cummings set up first-and-goal at the 12. After completing a 6-yard pass to Brown, Griffin ran for a 6-yard score. The conversion attempt failed, but the Tornadoes went into halftime leading 12-6.

Griffin intercepted a pass on defense to put a stop to Columbia's first drive of the second half, but the Tigers cashed in on their second series, scoring on a nine-play, 52-yard drive to even it up at 12-12 in the fourth quarter.

The Tornadoes punted on the following series, giving Columbia the ball at its own 22. Izarriah DeSue made a tackle for no gain on first down, while Griffin broke up a pass on second down. After a run attempt gained 9 yards, the Tigers, who needed 9 yards for a first down, punted on fourth down.

Bradford had to convert a fourth-and-4 play on what would prove to be the winning drive, with Griffin running for a 5-yard gain to the Columbia 39. She then hooked up with Brown for the 29-yard gain on the next play,



Ar'Nayshia Griffin heads upfield after intercepting a pass inside Bradford's 5-yard line in the Tornadoes' season-opening 51-0 win over KIPP Bold City on Feb. 20. Griffin and the Tornadoes then improved to 2-0 with an 18-12 win over Columbia on Feb. 25.

Columbia ran one offensive play following Griffin's 8-yard touchdown run, which resulted in Griffin's second interception of the game and her sixth in two games.

Griffin completed 15 of 26 passes for 170 yards, while rushing for 71 yards on 11 carries.

Brown caught 12 passes for 138 yards.

The Tornadoes opened the season with a 51-0 win over visiting KIPP Bold City on Feb. 20.

Bradford wasted little time in scoring, with Griffin throwing a 66-yard touchdown pass to Brown on the game's first play from scrimmage.

A 29-yard reception by Brown set up a goal-to-go opportunity on the Tornadoes' third possession, which ended with a 17-yard touchdown run by Griffin.

The first of four Griffin interceptions set up a 33-yard touchdown run by Brown.

Bradford was successful on all of its conversion attempts in the first half, with a Brown reception adding three points to the first score, a Griffin run adding two points to the second and a Brown run adding a point to the third.

It all added up to a 24-0 halftime lead.

Bold City struggled offensively for most of the game, finishing with 67 yards to Bradford's 256. The Greyhounds' worst series occurred at the start of the third quarter, with the Tornadoes' Tatyana Brown and Amaya Watts making tackles for losses of 5 yards each on first- and second-down plays. On third-

and-16 from Bold City's 4-yard line, Tatyana Brown sacked the quarterback in the end zone for a safety, making the score 26-0.

Bradford received the free kick that was awarded following the safety, which set the Tornadoes up at the Bold City 21. Two plays later, the Tornadoes got a 6-yard run from Griffin to set up first-and-goal at the 9. Runs of 3 yards by Griffin and 5 yards by Nichelle Brown set up Griffin's 1-yard touchdown run, which put the Tornadoes ahead 32-0.

The Greyhounds got a 43-yard run and a 10-yard pass reception on their next drive, setting up first-and-goal at the Bradford 13. Griffin stopped the scoring threat by intercepting a pass in the end zone.

Bradford's offense moved quickly downfield, with Griffin and Nichelle Brown running for gains of 15 and 24 yards, respectively. A 26-yard reception by Nichelle Brown set up Griffin's 3-yard touchdown run, making the score 38-0.

Bold City's third offensive play following the score resulted in Griffin's third interception, which put the Bradford offense at the Greyhounds' 14-yard line. Nichelle Brown threw a touchdown pass to Griffin from there, with Cummings' run on the one-point conversion attempt making it a 45-0 game.

The Greyhounds' first play from scrimmage on the next series resulted in a 4-yard sack by Tatyana Brown. Griffin intercepted a pass on the next play and returned it approximately 20 yards for the final touchdown.

Griffin rushed for 45 yards on

six carries and completed 5 of 12 passes for 138 yards.

Nichelle Brown rushed for 62 yards on three carries and caught four passes for 136 yards.

The Tornadoes host Ridgeview on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 6 p.m. and then host Suwannee on Monday, March 3, at 6 p.m. Bradford travels to play Florida School for the Deaf and Blind on Tuesday, March 4, at 5:30 p.m.

Indians get OT win over Orange Park in flag football

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

On a night that Keystone Heights High School Head Flag Football Coach Brad Harvey said it was the coldest game he'd ever been a part of, it seemed as if the Indians' offense was as cold as the sub-50 temperatures.

The Indians got hot after being shut out in the first half, scoring three touchdowns — one of which was on an Ashlyn Brown reception in overtime, giving Keystone a 18-12 win over visiting Orange Park on Feb. 21.

It was Brown's second touchdown reception and the third scoring toss by quarterback Aleex Horton, who also threw a touchdown to Riley Shuford.

The two teams combined for six interceptions in the first half, with Brown and Horton picking off one and two passes, respectively, for Keystone.

Still, the Raiders built a 12-0 lead and threatened to score again after sacking Horton for a 6-yard loss on a fourth-and-1 play at the Keystone 19-yard line. The Raiders gained 3 yards on first down, moving them to the 10. Teilah Hall broke up a pass on second down, followed by Brown getting her interception on third down.

Orange Park had another goal-to-go opportunity in the third quarter, but turned the ball over on downs after Shuford broke up a fourth-down pass attempt in the end zone.

The Indians' offense responded by driving 63 yards for its first score. Horton completed passes to Whitney Buchanan and Alex Papaianou to give Keystone a first down to the 38. Shuford then had a 32-yard reception to set up first-and-goal at the Orange Park



Alee Horton (left) intercepts a pass in the end zone to stop an Orange Park scoring threat.

10. After two incompletions, Horton hooked up with Brown for a score, leaving the Indians trailing 12-6. The one-point conversion attempt failed.

Orange Park again was able to march downfield and give itself a goal-to-go opportunity at the Keystone 10-yard line. After a 3-yard run on first down, Brown made a tackle for a 10-yard loss on second down. The Raiders threw an incompletion on third down and went for it on fourth down, with Horton intercepting the pass in the end zone and taking it out to the Keystone 26-yard line.

Aubre Miller had an 8-yard reception and a 6-yard run to give Keystone a first down at midfield. Horton scampered for a 17-yard touchdown pass to Shuford with 4:40 to play in regulation. The one-point conversion attempt failed, leaving the score tied at 12-12.

Horton completed 6 of 10 passes for 94 yards on the Indians' two scoring drives. Shuford caught two of those passes for 55 yards.

The Raiders' offense consumed most of the remaining time before turning the ball over on downs at the Keystone 35 with 17 seconds remaining.

Orange Park had the ball first in overtime, which gives each team four downs to score, with the possession beginning at the 10-yard line. The Raiders lost yardage on two straight run plays. After an incompletion on third down, Shuford broke up a pass in the end zone on fourth down.

Keystone's first play in overtime was an incomplete pass, but Horton came back on second down and found Brown for the winning score.

The Indians opened the season with a 20-19 win over visiting Toccoi Creek on Feb. 18. Horton rushed for 103 yards and two touchdowns on seven carries, while also completing 8 of 12 passes for 82 yards and one score.

Shuford caught the touchdown pass and finished with three receptions for 62 yards. Papaianou caught three passes for 28 yards.

Alyssa Sanford led the defense in tackles with four and had two sacks for a total loss of 8 yards.

Ashley McCarthy had three tackles, while Melanie Crabtree had one 5-yard sack.

The Indians lost 24-13 to host Baker County on Feb. 20, despite getting 300-plus yards of offense from Horton.

Horton completed 13 of 20 passes for 225 yards and rushed for 90 yards on 10 carries.

Shuford caught five passes for 110 yards, while Brown and Miller each had one reception for 25 yards. Horton caught two passes from Brown for 25 yards.

Hall recorded four tackles, while Shuford made two interceptions. Horton also had an interception.

Keystone travels to play Mandarin on Thursday, Feb. 27, at 6:30 p.m. It'll be the first of three road games, with the Indians also playing at Crescent City on Monday, March 3, at 6 p.m. and at Buchholz on Tuesday, March 4, at 6 p.m.



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KHHS defeat Suwannee 7-0 in boys tennis

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School won its second straight match in boys tennis, defeating visiting Suwannee 7-0 on Feb. 20.

Dalton Moore and Ethan Teague recorded 8-2 and 8-3 wins, respectively, at the top two singles slots, followed by Evan Booth with an 8-1 win, Will Begue with an 8-0 win and Beckett Capper with an 8-2 win.

In doubles, Moore and Booth teamed up to win 8-5, while Teague and Curran Capper won 8-3.

The Indians (3-1) opened the season with a 5-2 win at Santa Fe on Feb. 4, with four wins in singles by Booth, Teague, Beckett Capper and Curran Capper. Keystone also won in number-two doubles.

After a 7-0 loss at Eastside on Feb. 11, Keystone traveled to

Starke, defeating Bradford 5-2 on Feb. 18. Moore and Booth each won 8-2 in singles, with Begue and Beckett Capper recording 8-4 and 8-1 wins, respectively. Teague and Curran Capper won 8-2 in doubles.

Keystone hosts Ridgeview on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 3 p.m. and then hosts Santa Fe on Tuesday, March 4, at 3:30 p.m.

Keystone girls defeat BHS for 3rd tennis win

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School improved to 3-3 in girls tennis with a 7-0 win at Bradford on Feb. 18.

Addison Smith and Alli Tisdale took 9-7 and 8-6 wins, respectively, while Kaiya Thompson won 8-4. Evie Hallberg and Avrylle Wilson won 8-1 and 8-0, respectively.

In doubles, the team of Maria Papaioannou and Rachel Blank

won 8-4, while Kherrington Norman and Aryiah Wilson teamed up for an 8-3 win.

It was one of two wins for the Indians over Bradford this season, with Keystone coming out on top 7-0 at home on Feb. 11.

Whitnee Buchanan won 8-0 at the top singles spot, followed by Smith winning 8-3, Thompson winning 9-7, Norman winning 8-2 and Aleah Hallberg winning 8-6.

Tisdale and Evie Hallberg won 8-2 in doubles, while the team of Papaioannou and Blank won 8-3.

Keystone defeated visiting Union County 6-1 on Feb. 10 for its first win of the season, with the Indians coming out on top of all of the singles matches, with Buchanan winning 8-0, Smith winning 8-3, Tisdale winning 8-2, Evie Hallberg winning 8-6 and Thompson winning 8-0.

The doubles team of Bralee-Kate Chester and Emery Compton won 8-3.

Keystone played Ridgeview on Wednesday, Feb. 26, and will travel to play Santa Fe on Tuesday, March 4, at 4 p.m.



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