

Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, March 28, 2024

145th year, 37th Issue — \$1

Union County reinstates coordinator following report

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

During a special meeting on Monday, March 25, the Union County Board of County Commissioners voted 4-1 to cancel County Coordinator Jimmy Williams's suspension with pay and reinstate him to his position.

This decision was made after a two-hour meeting in which the report generated by the county labor attorneys was heard, comments from Williams' attorney were heard, and the commission discussed the matter among themselves as well.

Public criticizes board

As has been usual in all meetings discussing Williams, the meeting began with public comments on the issue.

Paulette Davidson spoke first, stating that she was not happy that the commission had not already discharged Williams. She then proceeded to tell the board about all the things she had been hearing about

the matter, including that the board members had already decided before the meeting. She said that Williams was "not a man that I would like to say works for the county." She also questioned the reduction of time allowed for each citizen to give their comments from five to three minutes. She also accused the board of being disorganized because they were having so many meetings recently.

Asher Sullivan complained about the labor attorney's report, which criticized the previous report on the matter done by the State Attorney's office. He also expressed his displeasure that the board would not allow him to bring his attorney with him to speak at a meeting.

Local businessman Bart Andrews told the board that "if Jimmy Williams is not fired, then they all should be." He said the board was not accountable and mentioned projects where he had been the lowest bidder but had not been selected. Board Chairman Channing Dobbs called Andrews down several times about the

strong language he was using in his comments and was told by Andrews not to "lecture me like you are my daddy." His inappropriate language continued after this, punctuated by applause from several members of the audience, but he was soon asked to leave the podium by Dobbs because of it.

Former District 4 Commissioner Lacey Cannon told the board that on the day he lost his bid for reelection, he told Williams to resign as "the new commissioner and the clerk were out to get rid of him." He said that "the county has suffered from his (Williams') suspension, citing work on the courthouse grant falling behind in the required deadlines and grant opportunities being missed. He was heckled by members of the audience while he was speaking.

Williams' lawyer: We fully cooperated

Time was then given to Williams' attorney, Paul Hawkes, to speak

in his client's defense. He told the board members that he and Williams had cooperated with the most recent investigation, as they had with the one done by the State Attorney's office. He said that he had determined that most of the attacks on Williams had come from county employees. He then asked the board members if they had any questions.

Commissioner Donna Jackson asked Hawkes if Williams had enclosed the back porch on the house he was building if he had reported the changes in the plans to the building department (as it would change the energy figures for the project), and what type of power pole was installed in March of last year. Williams spoke up and answered her questions, saying that the changes to the plans were not yet reported but that it was within the regulations not to do so yet. He also clarified that the power pole installed on the property was a temporary pole, as is used in construction.

See REPORT, page 6



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WORTH NOTING

Eagle County Radiothon at The Arc Thursday

Eagle Country Radio will be live on location from The Arc of Bradford County at 1351 S. Water St. in Starke from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, March 28. Stop by and help The Arc stay afloat or call 904-964-7699 with your donation. Any amount accepted and appreciated!

Pickleball court grand opening

The city of Starke will hold a grand opening ceremony for the new pickleball courts at the Edwards Road Park on Monday, April 1, at 4 p.m. The public is invited to help celebrate this new amenity.

Easter egg hunt and more in Melrose

Mossman Hall will present and "Easter Eggstravaganza," including an egg hunt with 1,000 eggs, on Saturday, March 30, from noon to 2 p.m. There will also be family games, children's arts and crafts and Joanie's hot dogs.

It all takes place at Mossman Hall, 301 S.R. 26 in Melrose.

Last Supper reenactments in Starke and Melrose

First Presbyterian Church of Starke and Faith Presbyterian Church of Melrose will present dramatic reenactments of The Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, March 28, and Good Friday, March 29. The Thursday service is in Starke at 921 E. Call St. The Friday service is in Melrose at 2738 SE S.R. 21.

Both performances take place at 7 p.m. and are free to attend. Open communion will be served, and a reception will follow.

Restoration and Renewal at True Vine

True Vine Ministry will be hosting Fresh Start Spiritual Renewal and Restoration 2024. The dates are Thursday and Friday, April 4 and 5, with services beginning at 7 p.m. nightly. This year's featured speaker is Pastor Vincent Kohn of The Anointed Church of God Inc in Jacksonville.

True Vine Ministry is located at 422 N. Saint Clair St. in Starke. The public is invited to attend. For more info, please visit the website www.truevinemin.org, or you may call 904-964-9264.



Three generations of the Mejias family enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and all the food options at the Strawberry Festival. For more on their experience and others, see inside.

Smith resigning to run for county commission

Milner may run in special election

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Starke City Commissioner Shannon Smith has announced he will be resigning his position in hopes of being elected to the Bradford County Commission.

While yet to file officially as of press time Tuesday, Smith shared a social media post on March 22 confirming his decision.

Smith posted: "As a lifelong

Bradford County resident, business owner and your current Starke City Commissioner for District 3, our county needs a fresh conservative voice and a commonsense approach to local government. With these principles in mind and after much thought and prayer I officially announce my candidacy to become your next Bradford County District 1 Commissioner. I am humbled by the many who have pledged support and counsel in helping me arrive at this decision. I looked forward to visiting all the residents in District 1 in the upcoming months and discussing the import needs facing us, while earning

your support."

Smith also submitted a letter of resignation explaining his plans to Mayor Scott Roberts.

"Per Florida statute a candidate must resign their current elected position, with that being said I formally resign my Starke City Commissioner District 3 seat as of October 1, 2024. It has been a pleasure working with this board, past board members and staff for the last six years. I genuinely believe we have moved the city forward through tough and challenging situations and I leave the City of Starke heading in the right

direction."

Smith's announcement sets up a possible race between him and his former fellow city commissioner, Carolyn Spooner. Spooner has said she would seek reelection as county commissioner in District 1, but she has not filed yet.

It also means Smith's city commission seat will be open for a special election since his term does not end until fall of 2026. Former Sheriff Bob Milner said he has plans to run for the District 3 city commission seat.

See ELECTION, page 3

Economic group plans big reach to grow region

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation pitched participation to the county commission in Bradford as well as the community during a meeting last week.

The corporation's efforts are something the county commission has already demonstrated support for. When the Bradford County Development Authority was dissolved last year, nearly \$200,000 in financial assets was turned over to the county

in hopes that funding would be set aside for the new corporation's economic development activities. The county followed through, and corporation Vice Chair Bob Milner told commissioners they are using that money in "a very fruitful way."

Other familiar business and community leaders — some previously involved with the development authority — make up the board of the Economic Development Corporation. They include Chairwoman Sandra Kahle, Treasurer Patricia Evans, Secretary Marty Shaw and board

members Dean Weaver, Avery Roberts, Evan Douglas and Dawn Strickland.

Milner said their budget does not include enough to fund the salary of the average executive director, but he did introduce Amber Shepherd from Keystone Heights, who is serving as the corporation's strategic alliances business partner. With her wide-ranging experience in business, Milner said Shepherd has hit the ground running.

As the designated organization to coordinate economic development and

working closely with County Manager Scott Komegay, outside inquiries from businesses and industries about Bradford County and the region will be funneled through the corporation. They will also help existing local businesses and new entrepreneurs expand and sustain their success.

Shepherd shared the mission and vision statement for the NEFEDC.

"The mission of the Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation is to empower the

See GROWTH, page 7



Swing into Spring and raise money for band

Bradford High School's bands

are presenting Swing into Spring, a semiformal night of dinner, music and dancing at Belle Oaks Barn on Thursday, April 4, at 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30 p.m.) Tickets are \$30 each, with tables of eight for \$215 and tables of 10 for \$250.

Funds raised through ticket

sales as well as the silent auction and the cake and dessert auction will help fulfill the goal of all new band uniforms next year. Business donations for the auction are welcome.

Come enjoy a delicious dinner from BlueLine Q and your favorite music performed by

the concert and jazz bands, as well as the drumline. There will be plenty of room to get up and dance.

Please RSVP by emailing scarletstormboosterpresident@gmail.com or calling 904-263-2312.

April sobriety checkpoints announced

During the month of April, the Bradford County Sheriff's Office will be conducting sobriety

checkpoints in one or more of the following locations: U.S. Highway 301 and Market Road, S.R. 100 West, S.R. 100 East and Southeast 109th Street, Southeast S.R. 21, S.R. 16 and Southwest S.R. 231.

EASTER BLESSINGS

May all experience the joy of God's love throughout Easter Day and beyond.



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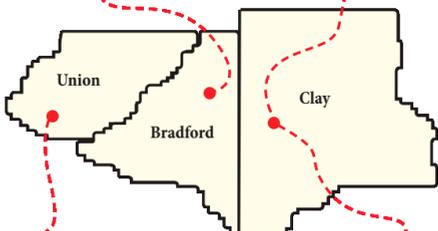
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APRN-FNP-C

Construction beginning on RaceTrac site south of bypass

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

Site preparation is underway for a long-rumored project hoping to catch rerouted traffic.

It seems like talk of a truck stop is older than the Starke bypass. Now work at the corner of County Road 227 and U.S. 301 is making way for RaceTrac, which acquired the 7-plus-acre parcel last November.

Bradford's Building and Zoning Department confirmed the gas station/truck stop.

The company began in Missouri in 1934 and went on to pioneer the concept of self-

service gas stations in Alabama, Florida and Georgia. By the late 1970s, they had adopted the RaceTrac branding and relocated the corporate headquarters to Atlanta.

A further evolution took place in 2004 with the introduction of fresh food offerings including sandwiches, wraps, salads and more. As the number of locations grew, so did their footprint. Larger parking lots and stores provided more seating and shoppable area along with amenities like free Wi-Fi. Last year, the first electric vehicle charging station were installed at an Alabama location, with plans

to expand the charging network in years to come. The year 2023 also brought another milestone — the largest acquisition in the company's history — Gulf Oil LLC.

With the closest locations in Middleburg and Palatka and many more throughout the South, locals might already be familiar with RaceTrac's offerings, from breakfast in the morning to pizza in the evening, along with other hot foods, fruit and snacks, Swirl World ice cream, doughnuts and pastries, a variety of beverages, and the ability to order ahead.

Brooker purchases property for clean up

BY CAROL MOSLEY
Special to the Telegraph

In February, the Brooker Town Council received their audit report for the past fiscal year, ending Sept. 30, 2023. The report from Reddish and White was positive with no abnormalities to report.

The mayor had been advised that waiting until 2024 to apply for the competitive Community Development Block Grant would be wisest. So, at the March meeting, a required resolution was passed to adopt any policies necessary to be in compliance. They are policies that are mostly already in place. The grant amount, based on population, would be \$600,000.

Then, details of CDGB implementation requirements were discussed. Mayor Gene Melvin pointed out that, if the funds were used to replace distressed properties, it would only allow for three to four mobile homes or maybe two new houses at today's rates.

Attorney John Maines noted that obtaining the CDBG grant is a lot of work. It requires a grant administrator and a

housing specialist. Nonetheless, it was determined that the town needs the help. Besides housing rehabilitation, the other project categories include neighborhood revitalization, commercial revitalization and economic development.

There was no public election for Brooker Town Council members, as there were no challengers to those currently holding seats. Melvin was retained as mayor. However, Vice Mayor Steve Acree nominated Sue Bennett to fill that position and she was voted in.

Fire Rescue Chief Ben Carter and County Commissioner Diane Andrews collaborated on submitting the paperwork to accompany the town's legislative fund a fire station in Brooker. Funding for both a station and fire truck have been included in the state budget, pending the governor's signature.

A fire station is especially important to the town due to the distance from the nearest station at Sampson City and because of the school now being opened again.

In January, Corp. Glen Ward

from county code enforcement informed Brooker Clerk Charlene Thomas that the clean up on the Castner property needed to be completed by Feb. 14 or the power would be turned off. He said his hands would be tied at that point.

Castner informed the clerk that the task of clean up and removal of an old camper, despite her expense and efforts, was just too daunting. She indicated that she may have to sell the property, though she hated being faced with that necessity.

The council entered into negotiations with Castner and has agreed to purchase the property for \$17,000. The town will take responsibility for the remaining clean up. The council's decision was based on the fact that the property would be of value to the town at large.

The property could serve as the location for a new fire station.

Thomas said Castner seemed to take at least some comfort in knowing the property would serve a purpose for the town. An agreement has been signed and closing is set to take place before the end of March.

ELECTION

Continued from page 1

Milner has served as a city commissioner before as well as city manager. His current roles include the Bradford Fair Association and Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation.

The date of the special election has not been set.

School board race in District 4

The county commission race is one of two races that have been recently set. The other is for the District 4 seat on the Bradford School Board. Dana Reddish Bell, a paraprofessional at Bradford Elementary School, has filed to run against incumbent Candace Osteen.

Osteen has served on the board since 2020, when she defeated incumbent Vivian Chappell.

With Cheryl Canova announcing this is her last year representing District 3 on the school board, someone has stepped forward to take her place. So far, Julie Johnson, an elementary school teacher for Florida Virtual School, has filed paperwork to run.

So far, she is unopposed, and that is true of most of the incumbents who have filed to run again, including county commissioners Chris Dougherty and Diane Andrews in Districts 3 and 5, Sheriff Gordon Smith, Clerk of Court Denny Thompson, Tax Collector Teresa Phillips, Property Appraiser Kenny Clark and Supervisor of Elections Amanda Seyfang.

Superintendent of Schools Will Hartley has announced he would run for reelection, but he has not filed yet. No one else has filed to run for the position.

Candidate packets are available in Seyfang's office. You can call 904-966-6266 to make an appointment. The primary election is Aug. 20, and the general election is Nov. 5.

Marker unveiling for historic school

The Consolidated High School Committee of Lake Butler is inviting the community to attend the former Consolidated High School Historical Marker Unveiling Ceremony at the Lake Butler Elementary School on Saturday, April 6, at 1 p.m. This was the former location of the school that was built for the Black students from first through 12th grade during 1957-1967.

This is a free event and open to the public. For more information, please contact Alicia Maxwell at 386-496-2336.

Work day at Dedan Cemetery

A work day is scheduled at Dedan Cemetery for Saturday, April 6, beginning at 8 a.m. General cleaning to include removal of all loose decorations and floral pieces not attached

to monument or base. Spray washing of headstones. Removal of all trash and debris from cemetery grounds. Evaluation and restoration as within means to sites in need of attention.

Volunteer help is needed and would be appreciated. Please bring your own tools and supplies. There is no installed water supply for consumption. There will be water for cleaning.

Please contact Margaret Dyal at 352-258-0947 to volunteer or if you have questions.

Get help quitting

Quitting tobacco isn't easy. Finding help should be. If you're ready to quit, join the next Tools to Quit Tobacco group. Virtual options by computer and phone are also available.

This free, one-time two-hour group will give you tips on how to deal with triggers and withdrawal symptoms and how to prevent relapse.

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Meet the candidates

Osborne running for reelection

The following is an announcement of intention to seek public office paid for by the candidate.

I, Deborah K. Osborne, announce my candidacy for the office of supervisor of elections for Union County.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your supervisor of elections for the past 17 years.

I have been married to Robert Osborne for 39 years. We have three children Angie Osborne, Shane Goldie and Dana Osborne; two granddaughters, Kayla Osborne and Brooke Goldie; and one great-granddaughter, Rylie



Deborah Osborne

Osborne.

I served as assistant supervisor for almost 20 years under Mrs. Babs Montpetit. After the tragic death of Mrs. Babs, I was appointed by the governor to

finish her term and then ran in 2008 to continue as supervisor of elections.

I feel very blessed to serve the voters of Union County.

I have always been here for the people of our county and will continue to do so.

I am announcing my candidacy to continue as your Supervisor of Elections and serve the people of Union County with honor and integrity.

Candidates may submit an announcement and photograph to run one time for \$50. The deadline to submit announcements is Monday, June 17, at 5 p.m. Email announcements to editor@bctelegraph.com and make arrangements to pay prior to publication.

Letters

Shut down the circus

Dear Editor:

Ringling Brothers/Barnum and Bailey retired the circus but did not include Starke City Hall and city commissioners in the closure. Unfortunate for the citizens of Starke.

Let me first say to our Police Chief Jeff Johnson that I wish him the best retirement in the world. Despite the 104-page character assassination presented at city hall, Jeff Johnson has done a splendid job for the citizens of this fine city for many years. I have always felt safe and secure with him in office and overseeing police officers who responded well to calls and dedicated themselves to keeping us safe. I am, have been and will be proud to call Jeff a trustworthy man and friend.

City commissioners who simply want to turn everything in our city over to the county should simply resign and go run for county commissioner. The city of Starke does not need a city manager, especially an overpaid one who is not loyal to the citizens of the city, as he appears ready to destroy or sell what we have. And to make him city clerk is simply a joke.

I do not know what caused the FDLE raid on city hall or what affected the city election that was

referenced and resulted in the city clerk resigning. I believe, of course, that those details should be made available to the public in an expeditious manner. City hall has been in turmoil for the last eight to 10 years, receiving bad audits with little being done to correct that situation.

At least one city commissioner, who ran for police chief and lost to Jeff Johnson, has been exceedingly critical of and outspoken against the police chief. In the 104-page diatribe against Jeff Johnson, it is made clear that he resented the chief being an elected official, not appointed by or accountable to a city manager, whose position comes under an ordinance and not the city charter.

The city charter provided for both the police chief and city clerk to be elected by the people, and this has served us well for a long time. In recent years, the city commission and city manager have tried to usurp duties delegated to the city clerk in the charter. Hopefully, in the future the city commissioners will allow

the people a voice in such major changes through charter revision referendums.

In recent years, some pushed to have the city clerk become an appointed position and that referendum failed. The people spoke. As for giving the police department to the sheriff, while paying him highly to accept the gift, all news reports from city commission meetings where this was discussed indicated that city commissioners resented the people who spoke against such a move and ignored them, with some even speaking out against them.

Sad state of affairs. And my hat is off to, and my appreciation goes to my friend, Commissioner Danny Nugent, for trying to keep our city when others want to give it away. It appears now that we need to create a Starke utility commission to take care of our utilities with sufficient staff, then close down city hall, retire the city commission and cut out the clown acts.

Signed
James Powell

"He Arose"

*When Jesus died there on the cross,
The payment was made for all the lost.
But wait He's dead, it's a sad, sad hour,
He must arise and show His power.
Very early the first day of the week,
The women came their Lord to seek.
The stone is rolled away up the hill,
Inside the tomb the angels fill.
He's not here — He arose!
He's not here as ye suppose.
Why seek ye the living among the dead?
He's alive as He said.
Go and tell the disciples so they can see,
Their Lord lives, Oh thankful be.
Search the scriptures they tell of Me,
May the Word a comfort be.
This Easter story it blesses the soul,
All glory to the Lord of old.*

by Henry Hodges
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FRIDAY 3/29 GODZILLA X KONG: THE NEW EMPIRE- 7:00 (Downstairs) GHOSTBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE- 7:00 (Upstairs)	SATURDAY 3/30 GODZILLA X KONG: THE NEW EMPIRE- 4:00 & 7:00 (Downstairs) GHOSTBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE- 4:00 & 7:00 (Upstairs)

Happy Easter!

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Faces of the Festival: Annual tradition draws new and return visitors

BY MELISSA PYLE
Special to the Telegraph

Saturday was opening day for the 26th annual Strawberry Festival and the mostly sunny day did not disappoint festival-goers. This year's event showcased more than 200 food and craft vendors, many of them participating for the first time.

There were many local and "almost local" vendors from areas around the state and even the country. Each brandishing a smile and most asking if you would like a sample of one of their homemade goods. Taking a moment to chat with vendors and festival-goers alike, gave a glimpse and a new appreciation for their stories and time devoted to the festival.

Various local vendors like Stephen Rosier of Bucks & Struts to young Sadie Tew of SadieAnn's Designs returned this year to offer their creations to guests. Other vendors traveled to be at the event for the first time. Vendors like Mark Steele, a retired Delta pilot, who is helping his daughter, Shelly, get her Rise Yaupon Tea company up and running. Steele saw the festival as a chance to get their product into the hands of the public.

The public turned out to support the event, many festival-goers were visiting for the first time, and some like Karissa Davis, for the 15th time. Davis was attending the event with her two young daughters and her mother-in-law. Davis said she has come to the Strawberry Festival since she was a teenager. She and her family were



Teresa Faulkner and Hilma Gaskin selling this year's festival shirt.

like so many, who came, and enjoyed the delicious food offerings. Another local family, the Seymurs of Starke, have also attended the event several years in a row and left with an arm full of strawberries and happy children. Children who got to enjoy games, pony rides, and watch the new acrobat show offered this year.

Most people visiting were making the Strawberry Festival a new family tradition. The Mejias family, originally from Puerto Rico, were at the festival for the first time. They were

laughing and talking as they sat down at one of the picnic tables in the event's large, covered eating space. They were excited to taste some of the food options: homemade potato chips, popcorn, chicken tenders and boiled peanuts. They said they were excited to be at the festival together as three generations. The grandparents, now residents of Middleburg, had heard about the festival and thought it would be a nice place to bring their visiting guests who had arrived from Texas and Maryland.

The Mejias family said they



The Seymour family of Bradford make the festival an annual tradition and said they love buying fresh berries and seeing the community come together each year.

were enjoying the festival, they would like to see more strawberry food items in the future, but they had a unique answer when asked what their favorite thing about the festival was, an answer which should make Bradford County feel proud: "all the nice people."

"All the nice people" was a constant response when out-of-town guests were asked about their favorite things, of course, along with the strawberry shortcake that is a festival staple. Visitors like Brian and Natalie Maher of Jacksonville, and friends, Jo Roane and Kelli

Olson of Gainesville, were happy to have heard about the event this year and come for the first time.

There were even a few locals who sheepishly admitted they had never been to the Strawberry Festival in the past and this was their first visit. Rosalyn Nichols made up for lost time by purchasing several homemade dolls from a vendor. She said her family had been in the past, but she had never come before and was happy her family made sure she attended this year's festival.

Another local who was an admitted event "newbie" was

Phil Woodward. Woodward had family with him from Nassau County, in town to celebrate his birthday. Woodward's family said they were looking forward to tasting the strawberry lemonade.

The event was ripe with fun and loads of strawberries for sale from Bradford's own Norman's and King's Produce, the "sweetest strawberries this side of heaven" did not disappoint, neither did the residents, who apparently have some strawberry sweetness of their own, which seems to be the best part of this hometown tradition.



Brian and Natalie Maher, first-time event visitors from Jacksonville, said they were enjoying the strawberry shortcake and friendly atmosphere.



Gainesville friends, Jo Roane and Kelli Olson, visited for the first time after just recently hearing about the Strawberry Festival.



Local resident Phil Woodward said it was his first festival, and he was looking forward to food and the fun atmosphere.



Everyone wants a photo with the sweetest berry of them all: Bradford Berry!



Haley Norman and Cody Stratton of Norman's Produce were happily selling their sweet strawberries to festival-goers.



Rosalyn Nichols, local resident but first time visitor, came with family members who come every year. She said she enjoyed the music, the people, but wished for more money to spend at the vendors!



Sam is all smiles and said it's his eighth year as a food vendor at the Bradford Strawberry Festival.



Teens Hezi and Timber from Bayless Highway Baptist's 225 Youth Ministry sold pork sandwiches and homemade chicken and rice dinners to festival-goers.



Local vendors, the Tew family (l-r Holly, SandiAnn and Donna) of SandieAnn's Designs, sold beautiful handmade jewelry creations.

Lake Region

Clay Electric holds 86th annual meeting

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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Clay Electric members held their 86th annual meeting in the Keystone Heights High School auditorium on Saturday, March 23.

Public and Member Relations Director Derick Thomas said the move from the school's football stadium, where the event had been held in previous years, was in response to members' recommendations.

Trustee Karen Hastings introduced herself and the other trustees, stating that trustees John Henry Whitehead of Lake Butler and Kelly Smith of Palatka could not attend.

Hastings highlighted a new benefit for members, explaining the co-op's new usage alerts through its smartphone app, My Clay Electric.

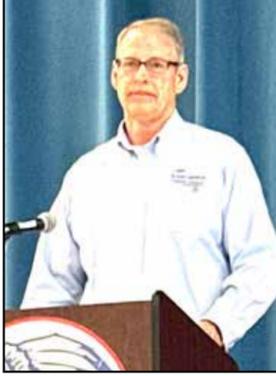
"Members like you can now stay empowered and in control of your energy usage," she said. "You'll receive a notification when your consumption hits your set threshold, allowing you to manage and monitor your power more efficiently and save money on your monthly bill."

Hastings also reminded members of the co-op's capital credits refund.

"Your board of trustees approved a \$12 million capital credits refund this year," she said. "This refund is available to members because Clay Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative."

Thomas asked the audience if any elected officials were present, and when no one responded, he introduced officials from the co-op's wholesale power supplier, Seminole Electric.

Co-op CFO Mark Maxwell delivered General Manager Ricky Davis's management report. Maxwell said Davis had attended 44 consecutive annual meetings before the March



Co-op CFO Mark Maxwell delivered General Manager Ricky Davis's management report.

23 gathering, which broke his streak.

Maxwell, reading from Davis's letter, emphasized the benefits of being a member of a nonprofit cooperative instead of purchasing electricity from an investor-owned or government-owned utility.

He said members' ability to elect their trustees, receive capital credit refunds, and benefit from the cooperative's concern for the community add to the advantage of receiving reliable, affordable energy.

"As Mrs. Hastings noted," Maxwell said, "our board of trustees voted this year to return \$12 million in capital credits, and cumulatively over the last 50 years, that's \$226 million that we've returned to our members."

Maxwell added that over the past year, Clay Electric employees improved infrastructure in the Salt Springs District, upgrading some lines from 7,200 volts to 14,000 volts.

"This changeover increased the lines' efficiency, reducing line loss and providing a reduction in costs over time," he said.

Maxwell said the co-op's

advanced metering infrastructure helps identify voltage issues, improve links, automatically report meter readings, and allow connects and disconnects remotely, saving time and resources.

The CFO also followed Hastings's endorsement of the My Clay Electric smartphone app.

"This app is easy to use and a great tool for managing your account," he said. "You can download the app to your computer, tablet, or smartphone, and you can view your account billing history, make payments, and view your daily usage. Another popular feature is the ability to know when your power is out and when it's restored."

Maxwell said the co-op spent \$13 million keeping lines free from vegetation and falling trees and limbs.

"Most of the outages you've experienced are from tree limbs or trees falling on the power lines," he said. "Of course, there are many other causes of outages, but vegetation is by far the largest."

He added that the co-op uses technology to keep lines clear of vegetation and predict future problem areas.

Maxwell said the co-op lowered its power cost adjustment several times last year. He added that the cost of materials continues to skyrocket, and wholesale power costs are slightly up this year.

The CFO reminded attendees of the co-op's connections discount card and its scholarships for traditional and older students.

"Receiving electricity from Clay Electric is more than a business relationship," he said. "It is a partnership founded on cooperative principles. We're honored that you are a member and a partner of Clay Electric."



(L-R) Carolyn Krall and Heather Obermiller of the Clay Education Foundation and Jennifer Goss of the library greet attendees at the event.

Library Night held at pavilion

The Clay County Public Library at Keystone Heights and the Clay Education Foundation hosted a family Library Night at the beach pavilion on March 4.



(L-R) McRae Elementary Principal Tammy Winkler talks to Elliana, Jaedon, and Isabella Cox and Madilyn Crowell about phonological awareness, which is the ability to sound out words. Children with good phonemic awareness skills are better at spelling, decoding, and writing. Children at age 5 with good phonemic skills should be able to count syllables and recognize rhyming words. Children aged 7 should be able to use sound deletion. For example, saying the word "seat"

Apple Award winners recognized at school board meeting

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

A Lawtey resident was recognized as Clay County's Teacher of the Year, and an instructor at Keystone Heights Elementary School won the Clay Education Foundation's inaugural Rookie of the Year award.

Clay Education Foundation officers lauded both recipients during the Clay County School Board's March 7 meeting. The pair was initially recognized during the foundation's Apple Awards program on Feb. 8 at the Thrasher-Horne Center.

Teacher of the Year Robin Campbell leads the science department at Wilkinson Junior High between Clay Hill and Middleburg. Her husband, Ryan Campbell, is a physical education teacher at Starke Elementary.

During the February ceremony,

Campbell's co-workers said she simplifies complex topics for her students and can instill excitement and curiosity into her lessons.

Sanders is a self-contained teacher for students with emotional-behavioral disorders. She started work at Keystone Heights Elementary in 2019 as a paralegal, worked as a behavioral health assistant while earning her bachelor's degree, and became a teacher in 2022.

During the March 7 school board meeting, foundation officers Gi Teevan, Michael Rathjen, and Terry Hicks also recognized the School-Related Employee of the Year: Philip Turturro from Doctors Inlet Elementary School.

Teevan said the foundation began sponsoring the Teacher-of-the-Year Award 15 years ago and has since expanded its support of Clay County public

schools to running a teacher supply store four times a year and underwriting the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which gives books to children from birth through age five.

The foundation leaders also thanked School Board member Mary Bolla for her support over the last eight years as the foundation's liaison to the school board.

Bolla said she volunteered to serve as liaison because the nonprofit awarded her a Great Ideas grant as a teacher.

"As a teacher," she said, "the Grants for Great Ideas were huge for just those opportunities to expand our curriculum just enough to give kids hands-on experiences or to give kids opportunities to work with different manipulatives in math or science fair-type projects, tools, etc."



(L-R) Clay Education Foundation Treasurer Terry Hicks, foundation Chair Gi Teevan, School-Related Employee of the Year Philip Turturro, Teacher of the Year Robin Campbell, School Board Member Mary Bolla, and foundation Vice-Chair Michael Rathjen.

Bradford County Clerk of Court Announces Its Annual Event to Help Customers Save on Fees to Reinstate Driver Licenses

- WHAT:** Operation Green Light Event. An event held to reinstate drivers licenses.
- WHEN:** Monday, April 8, 2024 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM AND Friday, April 12, 2024 from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- WHERE:** Bradford County Courthouse - Clerk of Court's Office 945 N. Temple Ave., Starke, FL 32091
- WHO:** Individuals looking to save on fees and have their driver license reinstated.
- CONTACT:** For further information, please contact the Bradford County Clerk of Court's Office at 904.966.6280.

This upcoming event is an opportunity for Bradford County customers with suspended driver licenses to pay overdue court obligations, including traffic tickets, while saving money in additional fees.

HAPPY EASTER!

UNION COUNTY TIMES *Bradford County* Telegraph *Lake Region* Monitor

Churches in the tri-county area are going to be preaching the greatest love story ever told this Sunday.

Find a church near you to hear about how much Jesus loves you!



UNION COUNTY

Career fair creates ideas for youngsters

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

On March 8, Lake Butler Elementary School held its annual Career Day. Over 30 representatives from local businesses and services were on hand to show kids the variety of work experiences they can have in the future.

Law enforcement and related agencies were on hand to discuss what they do and how they help the community. The Union County Sheriff's Office, the Florida Highway Patrol, the Department of Corrections, Florida Wildlife, U.S. Forestry Service, and Union County Fire and Emergency Medical Services gave kids hands-on experience with some of the equipment they use in their work. Most of these sessions were held outside, where lights could be turned on to flash, and an occasional siren blast would not be an issue. Dogs also featured in a few of the programs, either those used in law enforcement or part of training and rehabilitation programs.

Presenters were realistic about the jobs they described, not minimizing the potential problems or danger they could



Members of the Department of Corrections Rapid Response Team were on hand to tell the kids about some of the hazards they must be prepared to deal with in their job. Here, Captain Logan Johnson (UCI) shows Kaylie Parrish how to suit up to deal with an emergency situation.

face at any time. They discussed real-life situations and how they must be dealt with to mitigate risks or problems.

Other careers, such as banking, real estate, teaching, and working with animals, were represented, as were the legal and medical fields.

All the children seemed excited about participating in the fair and learning about the various jobs available in the area. Many seemed to like the break in their morning routine of classwork to a more active and hands-on learning experience.



Correctional Officers (l-r) M.D. Lanigan and S.L. Cardinal brought one of the dogs used in a program at the RMC to teach inmates to handle and train dogs. All of the dogs used in the program come from the Lake City Humane Society.

Michael Southerland, from the RMC, brought one of the most popular "presenters" at the Career Day Event - Cici, a four month old bloodhound puppy who is just starting her training. She seemed to enjoy all the attention she was getting from the kids who wanted to pet her.



REPORT

Continued from page 1

Labor law firm reports

The investigator for Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete, the firm that serves Union County as labor attorneys, came to the podium to speak to the board about his report.

Colin Thakkar said he approached the investigation

from the standpoint of investigating the allegations of workplace misconduct – did Williams gain any improper benefit from his position as county coordinator, and did he try and cover up any violations? He gave a brief timeline of the situation, stating that Williams did email the plans for his project to the building department in Oct. 2022. Throughout the time after, Thakkar said that his review of the records showed that Williams was not treated any differently than any other contractor by the building department and could

find no evidence of any attempts to cover up misconduct by Williams.

Thakkar said his conclusion was based on the evidence that Williams had not abused his position with the county and that there was insufficient evidence to support the allegation that Williams received any favorable treatment. He stated that any member of the public would receive the same under similar circumstances. He also stated that there was no evidence that Williams made any attempt to conceal the alleged violations.

Thakkar also reported the sources used in his investigation, which included materials collected by the State Attorney's office in their investigation and additional sources not accessed in that first report, such as the email records and files pertaining to the already reported problems with permit numbering.

Johns: board is covering up for Williams

When Thakkar opened for questions from the commissioners about the report, Commissioner Mac Johns asked Thakkar if his firm had worked for the county in the past and, when answered in the affirmative, stating that the firm was hired by the county and was, therefore, a subsidiary of the county. He said that Williams was more than a citizen or a builder from Union County. He said he felt that the opinions expressed in the report were based on Williams' intentions, not his actions.

"I see this as an internal investigation," Johns said. "I feel that the state attorney was unbiased, and it is unheard of to find fault with a state attorney's report. It looks like the county went after a report that said what they wanted it to say. I think that this report lacks credibility and merit. If the board makes a decision based on this investigation, it looks like the board is trying to cover up something."

"When I first approached this investigation, I was not aware of any side I could take that would be good for business," Thakkar responded. "I knew that the report, however it came out, would not please everyone. I worked hard to come to conclusions that I believed to be true."

Commissioners respond

Jackson then spoke to Thakkar. "I thought that this investigation would review all of the evidence, which was done," Jackson said. "I expected and wanted that due to our responsibility to provide transparency. This report addresses two issues, legal violations of building laws and any special treatment towards Jimmy Williams and any benefit he derived. I have read both reports, laid side by side, and found that in some areas, they agree, and in some areas, they disagree. I disagree with the assumption that no one was asked to cover up some aspects of this situation. I see some of the conclusions reached differ between the two reports, likely due to different information, such as the IT material."

Jackson went on to say that if Williams were retained, she would like to see that he had

no authority over the building department, be made to pay a fine, and make sure that his payment of a special assessment on the property was proven.

Dobbs said he thought that people looking at the situation were not seeing the situation but either just citizens or a county coordinator. He said that in this situation, Williams was no different than any building contractor. He said that if the board voted to retain Williams, he would like to see a stipulation that Williams could not build any more projects in Union County and that any Land Development Regulation (LDR) matters he handled by County Attorney Russ Wade.

Jimmy Tallman said the State Attorney's report had stated that the findings had been submitted to the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), with Williams confirming that he had received notice of their investigation of the matter. He said they could fine Williams if he was found to be in violation and questioned whether the county could also require Williams to pay a fine. Wade said it was not under the authority to fine Williams but could make it a condition of continued employment.

Commissioner Willie Croft asked how the county could prohibit Williams from building in the county and Jackson told him the situation was already covered in the employee regulations.

Union County Tax Collector Lisa Johnson asked to speak and came to the podium, saying she was speaking as the tax collector, not as a private citizen. She said the whole situation was unethical and wrong, and that is what people have been commenting on.

"This has been going on for a long time," Johnson said. "Jimmy Williams should have pre-paid the special assessment but did not – he did, however, have the property put on the tax rolls. He seems to be someone who doesn't follow the rules but makes others follow them. This whole thing is one big pie, and no one has all the pieces. It is hard to judge a situation when you cannot see all of it."

Johns said he cannot trust or work with Williams, and he felt it would be to the benefit of the county to move on without him. He said they were once good friends and referenced the often-mentioned "feud" with Clerk of Court Kellie Rhoades. He said he felt the only way to deal with the situation and made a motion to terminate Williams. The motion died without a second.

Commissioner Jimmy Tallman said that many people had strong opinions, and this matter had confirmed his decision not to run again. He said that he felt Williams had provided what

he was hired to do and that he felt the county needed to keep Williams so the county could move forward.

Johns said, speaking to Tallman, that they could never talk about things, and that was a handicap. He also said that Williams got several grants, but after the work was done, the ball fields were still not usable because they lacked lights and still needed work.

Tallman said Johns had been calling to terminate Williams since before the building issue came up. He said the county needed someone to sit at a desk and find grants.

"The commissioners just don't have time," Tallman said. "Some of us are business owners, and others work full time. We need someone working for the county's benefit full time."

Johns said he had no hard feelings.

"I make my own decisions, and no one influences my decisions," Johns said. "It is time to make a decision on this and get it over with. I will work with him if I have to for the good of the county. I must do what is best for the county."

Jackson made a motion for the board to decide to bar Williams from working as a contractor in Union County as a condition of employment (as per the personnel policy) and to rescind any previous permissions to do so, and the motion passed the board unanimously. She then went on to require that the house Williams currently has under construction be prohibited from any more work until the energy survey update is put on file with the building department, the taxes are paid, and Williams hires an engineer to certify that the building is an accurate and true reflection of the plans. This motion also passed the board 5-0.

Tallman moved to return Williams to work, revoking his suspension. The motion passed 4-1, with Johns casting the dissenting vote.

Jackson had one final admonishment to Williams.

"One final thing," Jackson said. "Your employment here is a matter of trust for the commission. A lot of problems can be avoided with communication. I expect you to follow every rule of the county, and I will address the report from the BDPR when it comes out."

Before the meeting was adjourned, Wade told the commission that he would be happy to give recommendations on LDR issues, as he has been during Williams' suspension, but he felt it would be a possible conflict for him to make decisions because the LDR administrator was also the code enforcement official. The board agreed to discuss the code enforcement issue at another meeting and work to remove the conflict.

Breathing Easy: A Sincere Thank You for Making Our Parks Tobacco-Free
The Tobacco Free Union Partnership extends heartfelt appreciation to our Lake Butler City Commissioners for their continued support and recent adoption of the tobacco-free park ordinance. Policies like these create healthier environments for all to enjoy and promote healthier choices, while reducing youth exposure to tobacco.

Let's get out and enjoy our beautiful parks and celebrate the positive impacts that result from tobacco-free parks throughout our community.

Thank you for prioritizing our community's health and making our parks more enjoyable for all.

www.tobaccofreeunioncounty.com



Crime

Recent arrests in Bradford, Union and Clay

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

Bradford

Curtis Leonard Bloomfield, 40, of Sanderson was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 20 for an out-of-county warrant.

Yaharrie Jeremiah Deon Edwards, 28, of Jacksonville was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 19 for DUI.

Gunnar Lee Foster, 30, was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 21 for a probation violation.

Joemil Gonzalez, 37, of Gainesville was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 21 for attempted sexual assault.

Bo Matthew Harrell, 37, of Lake Butler was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 22 for an out-of-county warrant.

Makari Deon Harrison, 27, of Wildwood was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 20 for a probation violation.

Ephraim Obadiah Hernandez, 41, of Orlando was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 20 for withholding support, and an out-of-county warrant.

Jeremiah Benjamin Azuma Moore, 39, of Middleburg was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 19 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

James Allen Roberts, 52, of Lawtey was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 18 for DUI and possession of drug equipment.

Ricardo Rodriguez, 35, of Hampton was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 18 for DUI.

Jonathan Cory Rogers, 35, of Jacksonville was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 21 for failure to appear.

John Francis Thomas, 58, of Silver Springs was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 22 for burglary, larceny and criminal mischief with property damage.

Alexander Tripp, 49, of Jacksonville was arrested by FHP troopers on March 18 for resisting an officer.

Tiarra Lakia White, 33, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 19 for battery.

Abigail Kate Winters, 27, of Melrose was arrested by FHP troopers on March 19 for failure to appear.

Union

Michael Brown, 61, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on March 21 for trespassing.

Jackson Tide Molina, 26, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on March 24 for battery and evidence tampering.

Clay

Jennifer Lynn Bedford, 45, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 21 for petit theft.

Sebastien Attilio Masclat, 39, of Melrose was arrested by Clay deputies on March 21 for battery on a person aged 65 years or older.

Six plea to drug charges

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Kaleb Blayne Crawford, 23, was sentenced to 42 months with the Department of Corrections after pleading to possession of a controlled substance without a prescription and possession of more than 20 grams of cannabis.

According to a warrant affidavit, Starke police stopped the defendant at the corner of Temple Avenue and Brownlee Street on May 5, 2021, because his vehicle crossed the stop bar of the intersection. The officer wrote in the report that when speaking to Crawford, he could smell marijuana coming from the car. A subsequent search revealed a firearm, 50 grams of marijuana, and a set of scales.

On February 27, 2022, police stopped Crawford's Ford Ranger after one lawman heard the defendant shout through an open window, threatening another driver.

"Kaleb advised he was yelling at someone who was trash-talking his buddy Mike," Officer Frank W. Krol wrote in an arrest report.

A records check with dispatch revealed that Crawford was driving with a suspended license, and a search of the Ranger yielded 4.4 grams of mushrooms and 42 grams of marijuana.

Zoe Myshell Leilana Eiselen, 24, was sentenced to 15 months in prison after pleading to trafficking in methamphetamine, illegal use of a two-way communications device, sale of a Schedule III or IV controlled substance, possession with intent to sell a Schedule III or IV substance, keeping a public nuisance for drug activity, tampering with evidence in a criminal proceeding, use of possession or drug paraphernalia and possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

According to a December 6, 2023, arrest report, the defendant sold 20.38 grams of methamphetamine to a Bradford sheriff's confidential source.

In a December 12, 2023, arrest report, deputies reported that Eiselen sold 10 pills of Alprazolam in the Hampton area. Officers said the defendant used a two-way communications device to facilitate the transaction.

On December 19, 2023, the sheriff's drug task force executed a search warrant of the defendant's home. Inside the house, detectives found several bags around and in a toilet, in addition to methamphetamine and Fentanyl. Detectives also viewed footage from a camera in the bedroom, which showed the defendant retrieving items from the bedroom and taking them to the bathroom.

Brian Tavares Demps, 45, was sentenced to 15 months after pleading to possession of marijuana with intent to sell, felony battery, false imprisonment, and criminal mischief with property damage.

According to a May 18, 2023, arrest report, a woman selling pills in the Starke Winn Dixie parking lot led police to her supplier, Demps. A search of the defendant's room revealed 7.8 grams of marijuana.

According to a November 7, 2023, arrest report, a woman claimed Demps struck her during a domestic dispute and blocked her exit from the crime scene.

William Tyler Flowers, 29, was sentenced to five years in prison after pleading to possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

In a February 9, 2021, arrest report, Bradford deputies said they responded to the MJM Food store after receiving reports that a couple was offering large sums of money to anyone who would give them a ride to Lawtey.

The man claimed his name was Daniel Knighten. However, deputies later identified him as Flowers.

Officers discovered methamphetamine in the defendant's pocket. Deputies also found several warrants were active for Flowers's arrest.

Jeremiah Pridgen-Rosier, 32, was sentenced to 20.7 months in prison for possession of a

controlled substance without a prescription and use or possession of drug paraphernalia. According to an arrest report, Starke police responded to a trespassing complaint and encountered the defendant, who had an outstanding warrant.

A search also revealed that Pridgen-Rosier had marijuana and methamphetamine in his possession.

Drew Anthony Weaver, 25, was sentenced to six months in jail after pleading to possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

According to a November 25, 2023, arrest report, a loss prevention officer at Starke's Walmart told Starke police that the defendant stole merchandise from the retailer. The store employee said the victim did not want shoplifting charges prosecuted but wanted the defendant trespassing from the business.

While searching Weaver, officers found methamphetamine.



Joemil Gonzalez

Accused of attempted sexual battery

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Bradford deputies arrested a 37-year-old Melrose man on March 21, stemming from a November 2022 claim that he attempted to assault a woman sexually.

Joemil Gonzalez was arrested for attempted sexual battery.

According to a sworn complaint, the victim told deputies she went to the defendant's home on November 8, 2022, along with two other people.

The victim told deputies that she went out to her car to retrieve some items during the visit.

"Gonzalez followed her to her vehicle and began to 'push up' on her," wrote Deputy Lakiesha Lewis in the complaint. "(The victim) stated that he tried to take her clothes off forcefully while simultaneously pushing his body aggressively against hers."

The victim added that she told the defendant to stop while pushing him away with her arms, but Gonzalez continued to press up against her.

The woman told deputies she eventually broke free from her assailant, went back inside the home, and told her friends they needed to leave.

"Gonzalez started to apologize for his actions and asked both (the victim's friend) and (the victim) not to say anything, although (the friend) did not see anything," wrote the deputy.

Lewis wrote that after speaking to the victim and a witness, she drove to the defendant's home and asked Gonzales what had happened and who had been present earlier.

Lewis added that the defendant was "agitated and very jittery," refused to obey her orders not to re-enter his home, and claimed the victim's friend struck him.

"Gonzalez did have a small scratch on his forehead but refused any pictures and stated he did not want to press charges," wrote Lewis.

The deputy added that when a sergeant and lieutenant arrived at the home to question the defendant, Gonzalez refused to speak with them.

Road rage defendant sent to prison for 2 years

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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A 33-year-old Lake City man was sentenced to two years in prison after pleading to firing shots during a road rage incident north of Lawtey.

Christopher Mark Nicklas pleaded on March 18 to discharging a firearm from a vehicle, aggravated assault, DUI, and refusal to submit to a DUI test after a license suspension.

Deputy Lakiesha Lewis wrote in a July 17, 2023, arrest report that she met Lawtey Police Major Nathan R. Blom at the town's Shell gasoline station about an alleged assault.

"During the conversation, Ofc. Blom directed a subject who was in a gold truck to stay in his vehicle and advised me that the subject was the aggressor in the road rage incident that involved a firearm," wrote Lewis. "I then ordered the subject, who was later identified as Christopher Nicklas, to step out of the vehicle

and get on the ground."

Lewis added that she saw two shell casings on the driver's seat when she reached the defendant's truck.

"According to Nicklas, the shell casings were on the seat because he fired his weapon last night while sitting in his vehicle at some deer on his property," the deputy wrote.

Lewis added that Nicklas smelled of alcohol.

"He also had bloodshot, glassy eyes. He was slow to speak and in and out of being coherent," Lewis wrote. "I asked him several times if he had been drinking or doing drugs. He continued to state no, even after an empty alcohol bottle was found on the driver's side of the vehicle."

Lewis reported that she then interviewed the victim, who told her the incident started in Clay County, near U.S. 301's intersection with Clay County Road 218.

"Nicklas started to drive aggressively by cutting in front of him, trying to turn into him, and changing his speed from fast to slow," Lewis wrote. "(The victim) admitted he was driving fast to try to get away from Nicklas due to his aggressive driving but not before Nicklas

pulled out a black in color handgun and pointed at him."

The victim added that while viewing Nicklas in his rearview mirror, he saw the weapon pointed in his direction and heard gunshots.

"He then floored his vehicle to try to get away," Lewis wrote. "As (the victim) was giving his statement, he was visibly shaken up and terrified, and verbally told me he was simply scared for his life."

The deputy recovered a black Taurus handgun, two 9mm shell casings, empty magazines, a pipe, and an empty bottle of alcohol from the defendant's truck.

The defendant's prior convictions include domestic battery, improper exhibition of a dangerous weapon, DUI, leaving the scene of an accident with property damage, possession of less than 20 grams of cannabis, disorderly intoxication, driving a vehicle without a registration, driving with a suspended or revoked license, and possession or use of drug paraphernalia,

GROWTH Continued from page 1

Northeast Florida region through strategic economic initiatives, fostering public-private alliances, catalyzing business growth, and enhancing workforce opportunities, all aimed at securing a resilient and prosperous future for all stakeholders.

"Our vision is to position Northeast Florida as a cornerstone of economic innovation and sustainability, where new and existing businesses flourish, communities experience enhanced economic prosperity, and opportunities for employment and growth are plentiful, for all stakeholders."

Passion for the work

"I love the startup world," Shepherd said, introducing herself at the county commission meeting March 21.

Shepherd said she has lived in the area since 1984. She was director of career services at Fortis College for nine years, and prior to that at Everest College.

"Workforce development is in my heart and is a passion of mine," she said.

Shepherd pursued a master's degree in human resources management when she was developing professionally and looking for opportunities. The COVID pandemic, while difficult to navigate, created an opportunity she never imagined, she said. Connected to consultant in California, she was able to expand her reach globally by working with businesses in South Korea that were considering locating in the United States. That mission continued working with the Korean Business Development Center in Washington, D.C.

Having grown up on a dirt road in Clay County, Shepherd said she never imagined a future in global economic development. "I never thought about the global marketplace as I was growing up, but I see how things are changing and how we have to be at the forefront of that if we want our children and our children's children to have opportunities for those better wage jobs," she said.

Selling Bradford

Collaboration is a key word for the NEFEDC, working with state and local governments and businesses. They want to bring the right kind of businesses to Bradford County, Shepherd said. Collaborating with stakeholders can help ensure their choices are "good for everybody."

"We know that we can't move forward without all of us working together. And to be honest, and to be fair, when businesses are considering moving here, they don't know everything. They don't know what they don't know," she said.

As a liaison, EDC will facilitate these public-private partnerships, creating new relationships and opportunities for both new and existing businesses.

"We want to drive business expansion and innovation. We recognize that Bradford County and its surrounding counties have really good businesses that are already established, and a lot of people are ready for growth, but maybe they don't know how. So, we want to be a resource for those organizations as well," she said. "We want to elevate the community economic opportunity, because that's really what this is all about — strengthening our community so that we are all doing well together."

Thus far, NEFEDC became incorporated, built its website (www.nefedc.com) and is working on its marketing materials. Shepherd said she's busier than she has been in some time, including meeting with local business and community leaders and attending conferences with board members.

"We want to in our next phase begin some outreach. And with my experience, in the work that I've been doing, it really opens up a lot of opportunities for us to reach out nationally here to people in the United States, plus the opportunity to reach out to organizations that are growing globally and offer them the opportunity to come to the United States," she said.

Shepherd said that could include European businesses exiting the continent to seek more affordable energy costs, which she said Florida can provide. She also wants to learn from commissioners what their constituents want.

"With my marketing

capabilities, I can target those specific kinds of industries. As a matter of fact, for the work that we were doing with South Korea, they had a really big push to drive activity in smart technology. So, the AI but also electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles, all of that. Semiconductor manufacturing. We're seeing a lot of these parks formulating and growing down South. Those are high wage jobs, that bring opportunities for our students and our college graduates as well."

Shepherd said they will work with Florida Power and Light to create an inventory of developable properties served by the utility so FPL can help market those sites to potential businesses and industries.

"I'm the new kid on the block, but I have heard many great things about the working relationships that you guys had in the past with the BCDA, and we definitely want to be able to continue that as we grow forward," she said.

Invest

Shepherd shared investment information, which allows nonprofits and individual investors to join for as little as \$250. Business and public sector members can join from \$500 to \$1,000 depending on the size of the organization. Additional tiers include Bronze at \$1,500, Silver at \$2,500, Gold at \$3,500, Platinum at \$5,000 and Government at \$10,000.

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For more information, visit www.nefedc.com, or call 352-721-1209.

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Keystone Heights Junior-Senior High School Principal Laurie Burke cuts a ribbon for the school's new track. Also pictured (l-r) Student-Athletes Christine Djavaheri and Tyler Griffin, County Commissioner Betsy Condon, School Board Member Mary Bolla, Burke, Superintendent of Schools David Broskie, School Board Members Beth Clark and Michele Hanson and Student-Athletes Jaden Park and Kaylee Park.

KHHS holds dedication for track

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Dan@BcTelegraph.com

School and district leaders emphasized the benefits of athletics during a ribbon cutting for Keystone Heights Junior-Senior High School's new track on Friday, March 22. Because of rain, the ceremony was moved to the school's gymnasium.

Athletic Director Chuck Dickinson thanked several former leaders in the school's athletic department and administration for attending the ceremony, including Coach and Principal Mike Wingate, Principal and Superintendent David Owens, Coach and Principal Keith Harper, and Coach and Athletic Director Wesley Dicks.

Dickinson thanked Superintendent David Broskie and the school board for funding the project, which Broskie later said cost \$400,000.

The athletic director said he is a big believer in the value of extracurricular activities, including athletics, in developing the whole student.

"Through athletics, students learn to be accountable, how to work together as a team, how to battle adversity, and demonstrate sportsmanship," he said. "More importantly, athletics is a tool to help young men and women to be great husbands and fathers, wives and mothers, bosses and colleagues."

He said the new track will not only help coaches develop students but will also be a source of pride for the school and the community.

Principal Laurie Burke said she wanted to hold the ribbon-cutting ceremony because of athletics' impact on student achievement. She added that the nearly half-million-dollar investment in the new facility is well worth it.

"You can't put any cost on a student's education and their high school experience," she said. "You can't put a price on



(L-r) Former Principal and Superintendent David Owens, former Coach and Principal Mike Wingate, former Coach and Athletic Director Wesley Dicks and former Coach and Principal Keith Harper.

that because it is critical in their lives and then our country's future."

She said high school athletics builds future leaders and contributes to school spirit, improving student and staff engagement.

"There's nothing like school spirit that brings your school to life," she said, "(and increasing the desire for) kids who want to be here. That's the whole point. We want students to want to be here, and we want faculty and staff to want to be here."

She continued, "Just imagine a school without sports. Just imagine a school without school spirit."

The principal and Keystone Heights High School graduate recalled athletics' role in her life. Burke earned state titles in the 110-yard-high hurdles and the long jump and reached the state final four as a member of the basketball team.

She earned a bachelor's degree at Valdosta State University on a basketball scholarship.

"Our new track has a special place in my heart," she said. "I spent many hours on the old asphalt track, blood, sweat, and tears, all of it sometimes out

there on the asphalt track all by myself."

The principal added that the coaches and teachers she encountered on the Orchid Avenue campus had a long-lasting impact on her.

She singled out her father: Owens, her basketball coach; Wingate, Dicks, and Walt Darty for having outsized influences in her life.

Burke also recalled that Broskie was the assistant principal at Clay High School when Burke landed her first teaching job there.

Broskie told the crowd that another unique quality of the high school is its host community.

"When you think of Keystone, you think of the pride," he said. "Look at the pride that this community has, and this track is an example of that."

The superintendent also recognized the school's recent grade improvement to an A.

"That just doesn't happen," he said. "It's intentional."

Broskie added that the two most significant factors in a school's success are the teachers

See TRACK, page 12

Reed celebrates 90th birthday

Editor's note: Most of the material for this story, except where noted, was taken from a speech Deb Reed gave at Jo Reed's birthday party.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Josephine "Jo" Reed has lived a full life, indicated by not only the 90th birthday she just celebrated, but also by the number of people who helped her celebrate.

A party was held at Lake Swan Camp on March 10, with 155 in attendance.

Reed was born March 10, 1934, at the Lake Butler home of her parents, Seeber and Donnie Brannen. During that time of the Great Depression, the family was poor. Seeber worked for Southern Railroad, which enabled the family to live in railroad housing. Reed recalled walking a mile from her home so that she could attend Sunday school.

A son, Buck, joined the family two years after Reed's birth. She and her brother were exceptionally close until he passed away at the age of 54.

The family moved to Carraway (between Florahome and Palatka) when Reed was in the seventh grade. Again, they lived in railroad housing just beside the tracks. Seeber rode a push car to and from work.

Donnie held various jobs over the years, working at an egg plant, at Camp Blanding and at a laundry in Palatka.

An interesting incident from Reed's childhood had her going to Florida State Prison when she was 12. She broke her arm playing football with her brother. The prison was the nearest medical facility available for her to go to. Reed later went to a specialist in Jacksonville to have a steel plate inserted.

Reed graduated from Mellon High School (today's Palatka High) in 1952. She wasn't of the "popular crowd." She wasn't a cheerleader and didn't participate in any school activity, having no transportation or the ability to pay for things.

She was nominated for "Most Likely to Succeed," but a "popular" girl won the title. Therefore, Reed was a proud mother later in life when she saw her daughter, Deb, win "Most Likely to Succeed" when she was a student.

Finding love

Church was a large part of Reed's youth. She and a group

of friends attended the Church of God in Florahome, traveling there on the church bus, which was driven by the older sister of Reed's best friend.

A Sunday school teacher felt that the girls needed to meet the Reed boys, who lived in a Christian home. Arrangements were made for the Reed boys to attend a church function. One of the boys — Kenneth — didn't find the love of his life there, but the other boy — Gilbert — did. He and Jo began dating. He was older than her and had a car, which he used to pick Jo up from her job at five-and-dime store in Palatka.

"I was just a sophomore in high school at the time," Reed said in her 2016 Telegraph-Times-Monitor interview.

She can tell you stories about she and Gilbert eating at Angel's in Palatka and Gilbert parking his car under a streetlight so that she could knit.

The young romance wasn't fleeting. They married on June 15, 1952 — two weeks after Reed graduated from high school. In the Telegraph-Times-Monitor interview, Reed said Gilbert, as he was proposing, told her, "You've stolen my heart."

"I cried when he proposed to me," she said. "I was so happy."

The couple lived in Jacksonville, where Gilbert worked. They lived in several apartments — all of which had a bathroom at the end of a hallway that all the tenants shared.

It was a marriage that lasted 62 years until Gilbert passed away in 2014.

Keystone Bank

Reed moved to Melrose when Gilbert got a job with Clay Electric. She applied for a job at Keystone State Bank.

The bank president called her one day and offered her the job and asked her to start that same day. Reed was so excited that she wasn't going to tell the president she had no way to get to the bank that day. She had no driver's license, but she took Gilbert's car, which was at home (as he had gotten a ride to work that day), and managed to handle the stick shift and make her way to her new job. She continued to drive without a license for several months until the bank president learned of the situation and advised her to get her license.

Her entire career didn't take place just at Keystone State Bank. After leaving her job to prepare for the upcoming birth of her son, Arnold, Reed went to work for a bank in Starke.



Jo Reed celebrated her 90th birthday on March 10. She worked for 30-plus years for what used to be Keystone State Bank in Keystone. She was bank president for eight years.

She would, however, return to Keystone State Bank, taking the position of drive-in teller.

Reed moved her way up at the bank, which was purchased by Gainesville State Bank, Compass Bank and BBVA during her time there. She would become only the sixth woman in the entire state to become the president of a bank.

Deb said her mother's story is inspiring as she didn't follow in the footsteps of relatives who worked at the bank. Reed grew up poor, but worked her way through the ranks.

Reed served as president for eight years and worked at the bank for more than 30. She retired in 1988.

While interviewed in 2016 by the Telegraph-Times-Monitor, Reed said she has been approached by so many people over the years who thanked her for giving them their first loan.

She's also received thanks from people who credit her with helping them achieve their dreams of starting a business. Reed told the Telegraph-Times-Monitor it makes her feel good to know she played some small part in that, saying, "It's really rewarding to see their businesses flourishing now."

Hobbies

While working at the bank in Keystone, Reed and her husband opened what she described as a "neat, unique" gift shop — Plain & Fancy, which remained open for five years.

"My husband said it was the most expensive hobby his wife ever had," Reed was quoted as saying in a 2016 Telegraph-Times-Monitor story. "That's the truth. It was more of a hobby. It certainly wasn't profitable, but it was something I dearly loved and enjoyed."

Something else she enjoyed was cooking, inspired by her mother, who was an outstanding cook. During her 2016 Telegraph-Times-Monitor interview, Reed said she learned how to make biscuits as a child by standing on a chair in the kitchen and watching her mother.

In 1983, Reed published a recipe book: "Plain & Fancy, but 'Jest Good Eatin'." Reed

See REED, page 9



Jo Reed (second from right) is pictured at her birthday party with her daughter, Deb Reed, granddaughter Alison Reed Davis and her son, Arnold Reed.

March 28 radio-thon to benefit Arc of Bradford

The Arc of Bradford County and WEAG 106.3-FM will host a fundraising radio-thon on Thursday, March 28, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Arc facility at 1351 S. Water St.

Proceeds will benefit the Arc as it strives to serve those with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

To support the cause, drop by in person at 1351 S. Water St. or call 904-964-7699.

DAR chapter meets April 1

The Col. Samuel Elbert Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, will meet on Monday, April 1, at 10:30 a.m. at Keystone Beach Historical Pavilion.

Do you have a Revolutionary War-era patriot in your family

tree? If you would like to find out, DAR can help with its genealogical resources. Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, who can prove direct descent from a person who aided in achieving American independence between April 19, 1775, and Nov. 26, 1783, is eligible for membership.

If you're interested in joining the chapter, please attend, and you will be assisted with becoming a member.

DAR accepting applications for scholarship

The Col. Samuel Elbert Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, will award the \$1,500 Betty Warren Memorial Scholarship to a deserving student who has completed 24 hours at Santa Fe College.

Applications may be obtained from Patricia Landon at the Santa Fe College Andrews Center in Starke or Karen Lake at the Santa Fe College Watson Center in Keystone Heights.

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Obituaries

UCHS hosts signing for Nichols, Williams

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School seniors Johnthe Nichols and Thomas Williams signed letters of intent to play football at the next level during a scholarship-signing ceremony on March 14 in the school's media center.

"I'm just blessed," said Williams, who'll be attending Thomas University, an NAIA school in Thomasville, Georgia. "I came from nothing. I'm blessed to have had the opportunity to come this far, to get my degree from college and move on in life."

Nichols, who'll be attending Division III Madonna University in Livonia, Michigan, said his hard work and dedication paid off.

"It's made me feel real good and especially made my family super proud," Nichols said.

Nichols didn't play his sophomore year, saying, "I just felt like it wasn't for me anymore."

However, it proved hard to stay away from football.

"I went to the games. I saw my brothers out there playing," Nichols said. "I was like, 'Man, I need to be out there.'"

UCHS Head Coach Andrew Thomas said, "He didn't give up on it. He came back. I think the light really started shining for him in the weight room. He really developed a lot physically and mentally."

Nichols, who's 5-11, 190 pounds, started out playing corner, but lined up at linebacker this past season.



Thomas Williams (far left) is pictured at his signing ceremony. He'll play football at Thomas University in Thomasville, Georgia. He's pictured with (l-r) his cousin Thomas Webb, his aunt Felicia Harvey and cousins Allante Webb and Samirra Benjamin.

"He was willing to do whatever to help the team and put himself in that position," Thomas said. "He didn't pout and go, 'I want to be a DB.' He said, 'Hey, this will get me on the field faster.' Credit to him for that."

Nichols was fifth on the team this past season with 38 tackles. He recorded 51 his junior season, which was third on the team.

"The last two years have been good," Nichols said. "Coach Thomas believed in me and gave me a starting opportunity this year. I balled out. I just put in the work. It all paid off."

Thomas said Nichols has the size, athletic ability and knack for finding the ball that were going to land him at some college program.

"If you've got size like that, and you're a good athlete with good ball skills, people are going to find you," Thomas said. "You're going to give yourself an

opportunity. That's what he did."

Nichols said Madonna was one of four schools at the top of his list, joining Averett, Brevard and Ottawa. He decided to go where he felt he was most wanted.

"The Madonna coach just kept in touch and kept showing me love," Nichols said. "He called my mom almost every day to just say how much he really wanted me."

Nichols plans to study business. He said Madonna's top program is its business program.

He also likes the idea of being part of a big city, Livonia is a suburb of Western Detroit.

"I'm not really a country boy," Nichols said.

Thomas said Nichols can play any position in the secondary, which is where Madonna coaches are initially thinking he'll play, but can also continue playing linebacker at the next level.

"With his athletic ability and size, he can play several different positions," Thomas said, adding, "When you have size and athletic ability, you can run around. It allows you to play multiple positions."

Nichols said, "I don't care where I play as long as I'm on the field."

To make a successful transition to the college game, Nichols said he'll have to continued working on his technique and work on improving his speed. He said he's been working with UCHS Assistant Coach Craig Slocum on improving in those areas. Slocum, a UCHS alumnus, played defensive back at Troy

University.

Riley Reed, another UCHS assistant coach, said the sky's the limit for Nichols' potential.

"Johnthe's best football is in front of him," Reed said.

When imagining what it'll feel like the first time he steps onto the field as a Madonna Crusader, Nichols said, "It's going to feel good. All I want to do is play ball. I don't care where it's at. It could be in Alaska. As long as I'm playing ball, it doesn't matter."

Williams, a 5-11, 205-pound linebacker, is coming off a senior season in which he was hindered by an injury. He recorded 33 tackles, which was sixth best on the team.

He may not have been able to make the impact he wanted to, but when he was on the field, he gave it his all.

"He's such a competitor," Thomas said. "He was kind of our alpha male going into the season. His season didn't turn out like he or we wanted it to because he got an injury early in the year. He missed a bunch of games. A high ankle sprain is tough to come back from."

Williams played the inside and outside positions at linebacker. Thomas envisions him playing outside in college.

"I think he probably fits best on the edge," Thomas said, adding, "When healthy, he's a heck of a ball player. He has a chance to be on the field early for them."

Williams said he was

See SIGN, page 13

Maegan Crockett

Maegan Renee Crockett, 34, of Starke, passed away on Sunday, March 17, 2024, after a long battle with Huntington's disease. She was born on April 5, 1989, in Orange Park. She is described as an exceptional daughter, sister, and mother who saw the good in everyone. She was non-judgmental and was filled with love and kindness. She was always thankful, grateful and forgiving, never met a stranger, and lived every day to the fullest like it was her last. She had an infectious laugh and personality that made her irresistible. But, above all, she loved her family, especially her sons. She was preceded in death by her father, Michael Earl Crockett; and an aunt, Michelle Cribbs.



Survivors include her sons, Nolan Michael Dicandio and Kaden Reese Fowler; mother, Kimberly Renee Crockett; brother, Josh Crockett; niece, Addison Crockett; maternal grandparents, Joe and Carolyn Sapp; favorite aunt, Michelle Muse; uncle, Jamie Cribbs; half-sisters, Brittani Matthews and Chelsea Bugnet; half-brother, Zack Crockett; as well as many aunts, uncles, cousins and extended family.

There will be a memorial service to honor her life at Madison Street Baptist Church with arrangements to be announced later.

PAID OBITUARY

Ilse Griffis

Ilse Griffis, 97, of Starke died Monday, March 11, 2024, at Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center. She was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany on May 30, 1926.

Survivors are her sons, Collier Griffis of St. Augustine and Craig Griffis of Starke.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Monday, April 1, at 2 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

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

Cecil Pressley

Cecil Lavern Pressley, 75, of Trenton, went to his heavenly home on March 18, 2024, at his residence. He was born on Aug. 29, 1948, in Alachua, to the late Talmadge Pressley and Edna Glisson Pressley. He was raised in Alachua and Starke and graduated from Alachua High School in 1966. Shortly after graduating, he joined the United States Army, where he proudly served our country for four years. Following his honorable discharge from the military, he enjoyed a long successful career as a lineman and was able to travel throughout the state. He served in the IBEW union for 35 years before his retirement. He loved life and lived to the fullest. He was stubborn and set in his ways, but he was very giving and could always bring laughter and joy to your day. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and tending to his little farm at his home. He loved his chickens and was always trying to give away eggs to family and friends. He resided in Keystone Heights for years, but more recently made Trenton his home. He was thankful to be born again and saved by God's grace. He enjoyed attending church with his family. More than anything, he loved his family and cherished every moment he had with them. He was preceded in death by his parents; and sister, Ruby Tilger.



He is survived by his loving children, Kenneth Pressley of Keystone Heights, Stephanie (Chuck) Mullins of Raleigh, North Carolina, Christopher Pressley of Middleburg, and Heath Pressley of Lafayette, Louisiana; brother, Lamar (Lisa) Pressley of Lenoir, NC; sisters, Patricia (Jim) Paisley and Quinell Tilger both of Lenoir, North Carolina; grandchildren, Lane (Kristin) Pressley, Mason Mullins, Allison Mullins, Holden Mullins, Emily Pressley, Chloe Pressley, and Alana Pressley; great-grandchildren, Hazeleigh Venezuela, Hayden Pressley, Summer Pressley, and Tate Myers; along with numerous extended family members and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, March 24, at 12 p.m. at Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel with Chaplain Jim Cox officiating. The family will receive friends an hour prior at the funeral home. Interment to follow at Newnansville Cemetery in Alachua.

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

PAID OBITUARY

Rosemary Rogers

Mrs. Rosemary (Willmarth) Rogers, 88, of Melrose died Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at Port Orange Hospice Care Center.

Survivors are five daughters, Kathleen Rogers Taler, Anne Rogers Hollows, Wendy Rogers Van Duyn, Betsy Jo Swanson, and Nancy Lynn Rembert; and numerous extended family members.

A graveside service will be held at Eliam Cemetery at a later date. Arrangements are under the care of Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 340 E. Walker Drive, Keystone Heights, 32656. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com.

In Memory

In Memory of Steven Toms

March 27, 2014, devastated our lives. We love and miss our Steven every day. Even though we are not the same without you here, the precious memories and priceless photos of your sweet smile and silly personality encourage us to enjoy life and laugh often.

Forever 15

From your family



In Memory

In loving memory of Al Coston Jr.

Aug. 10, 1946-March 29, 2016

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal.

Love leaves a memory no one can steal.

Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure, You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure.



REED

Continued from page 8

published a second edition in 2016.

The book was a way for Reed to show others that delicious meals didn't have to be complicated. In her Telegraph-Times-Monitor interview, she said, "My goal in the first one was to do some (meals) that had easy, simple recipes that people were able to go to the grocery store and buy the ingredients. They didn't have to go to some gourmet shop to get the ingredients. Most of them are only five or six ingredients."

"That was my goal, to do something simple and easy that had been tried and tasted and was good."

Later in life, Reed would become involved with glass art, something she discovered in Waynesville, North Carolina — an area she and Gilbert loved to visit. They eventually had a home there at Winchester Creek Campground.

As part of a Nov. 16, 2017, Monitor story, Reed described how she and family members went to thrift stores, yard sales and estate sales, looking for glass pieces, such as candy dishes, plates and other tableware. She would find pieces that matched and assemble three to five pieces into multi-layered flowers.

Mother's example

At the birthday party, Deb Reed talked about her mother's life and the influence she had on her. She remembered her mother working in their church, leading the singing and the youth choir and singing solos.

Gilbert was involved, too, teaching children's church.

Life lessons Deb said she learned from her mother were: Don't judge people because you have no idea what you would do in their situation; you never have to defend yourself to people who don't know you because God knows the truth; and God will fight your enemies, and his punishment is worse than anything you could ever dish out.

"Those principals have guided my life and made it easier to live," Deb said at the party. "Thank you, Mother, for the lessons you taught me."

What better birthday present could one have at 90 years old or any age, really, than the love of your children and knowing that you helped shape their lives for the better.

Reed may not have received that "Most Likely to Succeed" award while in high school, but her life and the number of people who helped her celebrate 90 years are proof that she did in fact succeed.



Johnthe Nichols (far right) is pictured at his signing ceremony with (from far left) his father, also Johnthe, his grandfather Charlie McCastle and his mother, Mahogany Grimsley. Nichols will be playing for Madonna University in Livonia, Michigan.

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Take me out to the ballpark



LEFT: Tajuan Williams prepares to make a catch during the Cubs' pre-game work following Bradford Youth Athletics' opening-day ceremony on March 9 at Starke's Edwards Road Complex. **BELOW:** Piper Denmark fields ground balls prior to her team's game.



Maddox Hilliard throws the ceremonial opening pitch for baseball.



Callen Howard walks to home plate to catch the ceremonial first pitch.



Camber McKinley throws softball's first pitch to catcher Tai Lynn McKinley.



Avery Crawford, who plays for the Dirty Bombers, prepares to make a catch.



Displaying the bond among friends and teammates are (l-r) Tai Lynn McKinley, Anslee Weis and Camber McKinley.



Bradford High School JROTC Color Guard Cadets Hayden Starling (left) and Olivia Crews stand in front of players during the performance of the national anthem.



Bristol Manning is pictured during the national anthem.



Cubs player Connor Mosley attempts to make a sliding catch during warmups.



Gage Fischer throws for the Dirty Bombers during warm-ups.



Bandits catcher Tucker Roberts receives pitches during pre-game.



Ella Outlaw works on fielding and throwing prior to her team's game.

Indians defeat Tornadoes 5-1 in baseball

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's baseball team returned from spring break and kept its winning streak intact, defeating visiting Bradford 5-1 on March 19.

Ty Mitzel pitched a complete game for the Indians, who won their seventh straight game after their season-opening loss to Clay. Mitzel allowed three hits and three walks, while striking out six.

Keystone's Alex Addington, who went 2 for 4, hit a single to lead off the bottom of the first. He was replaced by courtesy runner Tallon Campbell, who stole second and advanced to third on a Connor Guy ground ball. An error on the play allowed Guy to reach safely. After Austin Musgrove drew a walk to load the bases, Austin Smith hit a ground ball that scored Campbell, while the Tornadoes turned a double play, with second baseman Ryder Thompson, shortstop Ryland

Rike and first baseman Mattox Burgin teaming up to get outs at second and first.

The Indians added another run in the bottom of the second. Aiden Screen drew a leadoff walk, stole second and advanced to third on Mitzel's sacrifice bunt. He scored on Andru Siemer's two-out single, putting Keystone up 2-0.

Bradford's Patrick Pendarvis was hit by a pitch to lead off the top of the third. He stole second before Jaxson Carter was hit by a pitch. Jeffrey Brugh then ground into a fielder's choice, with Pendarvis scoring to cut his team's deficit to one.

Keystone answered in the bottom of the inning, which began with a double by Guy. Musgrove and Smith drew walks to load the bases before Guy scored on a passed ball. Bradford pitcher Cason Pilcher struck out three straight batters to end the inning.

Pilcher threw five innings, giving up three earned runs and five hits, while striking out eight.

Pendarvis pitched one scoreless inning for the Tornadoes, giving up no hits and striking out two.

Keystone's Screen put the last two runs on the board in the fifth, driving an 0-1 pitch over the fence in left for a two-out home run that also scored Musgrove, who walked to lead off the inning.

came on a two-out single by Aiden Screen.

Austin Smith, who went 2 for 3, hit an RBI double in the seventh.

Starting pitcher Austin Musgrove gave up two runs, five hits and one walk in five innings. He had seven strikeouts.

Gage Barry pitched a complete game on March 21, allowing four hits and striking out four in the Indians' 5-2 win over host Yulee.

It was a scoreless game until Keystone pushed three runs across in the top of the third. Ty Mitzel hit a leadoff double, advanced to third on a passed ball and scored on Alex Addington's ground ball. With two outs, Guy and Musgrove reached on a walk and a single, respectively, before the Hornets committed an error on a ground ball hit by Smith, which scored Guy. Kerlin then hit an RBI single to make it 3-0.

Addington hit an RBI single in the fourth, which scored Tallon Campbell, who reached on a leadoff double.

Musgrove, who went 2 for 4, hit an RBI single in the sixth.

Keystone will host Williston on Tuesday, March 26, at 7 p.m. and will host Orange Park on Thursday, March 28, at 7 p.m. The Indians host Palatka on Friday, March 29, at 7 p.m. and then travel to play Middleburg on Tuesday, April 2, at 6:30 p.m.

KHHS wins 2 more after playing BHS

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's baseball team won two more games after defeating Bradford (see related story) to move to 9-1 on the season.

The Indians (9-1) haven't lost since their season opener against Clay.

On March 20, the Indians built a 7-0 lead en route to defeating host Ridgeview 8-5.

Keystone scored two runs each in the first, third and fifth innings. Connor Guy, who went 3 for 3, hit an RBI triple in the first, while Brady Kerlin had the highlight in the third, hitting a bases-loaded single that scored two. One of the fifth-inning runs

BHS baseball team has now lost 3 in a row

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School's baseball team dropped two more games after playing Keystone Heights (see related story) and is now in the midst of a three-game skid.

The Tornadoes, despite getting a 4-for-4 game from Mattox Burgin, lost 8-3 to visiting P.K. Yonge on March 20.

P.K. Yonge scored two runs in the top of the first, but Bradford answered with two runs in the bottom of the inning. The Tornadoes got three straight singles from Ryland Rike, Luke Stucky and Burgin, with Rike scoring on Burgin's hit. Stucky scored on a sacrifice fly by Ryder Thompson to even the

score at 2-2.

The Blue Wave scored two runs in the second on an error and a passed ball.

Burgin and Thompson each had one RBI, as did Jeffrey Brugh, who went 2 for 3.

Bradford got extra-base hits from Brugh (triple) and Burgin (double).

The Tornadoes traveled to play Englewood on March 21, losing 4-1.

Bradford trailed 2-0 before Patrick Pendarvis' two-out double in the fifth. That scored Rike, who reached on a single.

Pendarvis went 2 for 3, while Denver Hudson was 2 for 4.

Brugh hit a double.

Rike started on the mound, giving up three runs (two earned), seven hits and two walks in 4.2 innings. He had five strikeouts.

Pendarvis relieved Rike and pitched the rest of the way, allowing one run, one hit and one walk, while striking out two.

Bradford (5-6) will return to action with a road game against Parker on Tuesday, April 2, at 6:30 p.m. The Tornadoes will travel to play Hilliard on Thursday, April 4, at 7 p.m. and then host Union County on Tuesday, April 9, at 7 p.m.

UCHS defeats KHHS for 3rd straight win in girls tennis

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School defeated host Keystone Heights 4-3 on March 25 for its third straight win in girls tennis.

The Tigers (5-4) won three singles matches. Jordan Hendricks and Morgyn Kirby won 8-5 and 8-2, respectively, at the number-one and number-two spots, while Gracie Manning took an 8-5 win at the number-five spot.

Hendricks and Kirby teamed up to win 8-1 at number-one doubles.

Keystone (4-7) earned an 8-0 win in doubles from the team of Shaylyn Williams and Reagan Feldpausch. Feldpausch also won at number-three singles by a score of 8-0, while Alyssa Lee won 8-2 at the number-four spot.

Kiwanis Golf Tournament

Friday March 29th
at 8:00 a.m.

Annual Starke Kiwanis golf tournament to raise funds for youth programs in Bradford County. Pulled pork lunch will be provided to all players and sponsors.



- 10 Teams of 4
- \$200 includes golf cart
- Door prizes
- Sponsorships available



Kiwanis

CALL:
David Kniseley: (954) 873-3457
Jim Lewis: (352) 494-3296

KHHS lifters win Clay County championships

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School won the traditional and Olympic championships at the March 22 Clay County Meet, which KHHS hosted.

The Indians won four weight classes in each event. In traditional, Keystone had a score of 68 to finish ahead of Middleburg (40), Oakleaf (36), Fleming Island (28), Ridgeview (21), Clay (19) and Orange Park (8). The Indians had 68 points also in Olympic, placing ahead of

Oakleaf (41), Middleburg (31), Fleming Island (29), Ridgeview (25), Clay (21) and Orange Park (4).

Wyatt Van Zant, Jayden Goodman and Trey Jeffries won their classes in both traditional and Olympic.

Van Zant set a school clean-and-jerk record in Olympic in the 139-pound class with a 260-pound total. He had a 175 snatch for an overall Olympic total of 435. His 230 bench press gave him a 490 traditional total.

Goodman, who lifts in the 219

class, had a bench of 300, a clean and jerk of 305 and a snatch of 215, giving him a 605 traditional total and a 520 Olympic total.

Jeffries won the 238 class with a bench of 365, clean and jerk of 340 and snatch of 225. That gave him a 705 traditional total and 565 Olympic total.

Tyson Baxter won the 119 class in traditional with a 355 total (155 clean and jerk, 200 bench), while Jed Tisdale won the 129 class in Olympic with a 340 total (140 snatch, 200 clean and jerk). Baxter's bench tied a

school record for his class.

Tisdale, who had a 200 bench, had a third-place traditional total of 400, while Baxter, who had a 100 snatch, finished with a fourth-place Olympic total of 255.

4 lifters are runners-up in traditional

Keystone had four lifters earn second place in traditional: Ben Ulsch with a 585 total (280 clean

and jerk, 305 bench) in the 169 class, Bryson Wester with a 590 total (265, 325) in the 219 class, Brayden Hall with a 555 total (240, 315) in the 238 class and Tyler Duncan with a 630 total (305, 325) in the unlimited class.

Joining Tisdale as third-place finishers were Davin Adams with a 465 total (230, 235) in the 154 class and Layton Wright with a 470 total (235, 235) in the 183 class.

Colton Hollingsworth had a fourth-place total of 390 (185, 205) in the 129 class, while

Declan Shine had a fifth-place total of 405 (190, 215) in the 139 class.

Adding to Keystone's traditional point total were sixth-place finishers Andrew Ulsch, who had a 245 total (130, 115) in the 119 class, Zane Leger, who had a 465 total (225, 240) in the 199 class, and Brayden Wester, who had a 590 total (275, 315) in the unlimited class.

Damien Dunlap just missed scoring with a seventh-place total of 440 (205, 235) in the 154

See LIFT, page 12

Legal Notices

Legals for the week of March 28, 2024

BRADFORD

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
File No. 2024-CP-000032
Division: Probate

IN RE: ESTATE OF THOMAS ROBERT ASA IV
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of Thomas Robert ASA IV, deceased, whose date of death was October 9, 2023, is pending in the Circuit Court for Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 945 N. Temple Avenue Starke, FL, 32091. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below. All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court ON OR BEFORE THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

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

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

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

The date of first publication of this notice is March 21, 2024.

Attorney for Personal Representative: JENNIFER F. W. STICHA, ESQ. Florida Bar No.: 1010878 LISA A. DIFRANZA, ESQ. Florida Bar No.: 0087566 3840 Belfort Road, Suite 301 Jacksonville, FL 32216 Telephone: (904) 372-0216 Facsimile: (904) 800-1241 Email: Jen@DifranzaLaw.com, Lisa@difranzalaw.com Attorneys for Petitioner Personal Representative: Thomas Robert ASA IV

NC Bar # 33073

3/21 3tchg 4/4-BCT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

To satisfy the owner's storage lien, KO Storage LLC will sell at public lien sale on April 17, 2024. 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 April 10, 2024 and end at 2PM on April 17, 2024. The public sale will take place on www.storage-treasures.com. KO Storage of Starke - S Walnut St, 1650 South Walnut Street, Starke FL 32091, (952) 314-7121 Time: 02:00PM CST A20, JOHNSON, Elizabeth Public sale terms, rules, and regulations will be made available on www.storage-treasures.com. All sales are subject to cancellation. We reserve the right to refuse any bid. Payment must be by credit/debit card, we do not accept checks or cash. Buyers must secure the units with their own personal locks. To claim tax-exempt status, original RESALE certificates for each space purchased is required. By KO Storage LLC, 10301 Wayzata Blvd, Minnetonka, MN 55305. (952)-314-7121.

3/21 1tchg 3/28-BCT

LEGAL NOTICE:

The Bradford County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Planning Committee/Workgroup will meet Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 3:00 pm in the Bradford County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) located in the Bradford County Sheriff's Office at 945B North Temple Avenue, Starke, FL 32091. Bradford County Emergency Management encourages any interested citizens and business owners to attend and provide input. The Committee guides the preparation and contents of the Bradford County Local Mitigation Strategy which serves as the plan submitted to the Florida Division of Emergency Management to reduce the community's long-term risk for protecting people and property from the effects of natural disasters and to build a safer and stronger community.

This public meeting is being conducted in a handicapped accessible location. Any handicapped person wanting to attend the meeting and requires assistance with accessibility and/or interpretation should contact the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Division at (904) 966-6336 at least 5 calendar days prior to the meeting date. Any person wishing to provide comments who cannot attend the meeting may do so by submitting written comments via email to becm@bradfordsheriff.org at least 5 calendar days prior to the meeting date. The meeting agenda may be obtained within 5 days of the meeting date via email request as well, or by visiting www.bradfordsheriff.org/emergency-management/lms/.

Please contact the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Division at (904) 966-6336 for more information.

A FAIR HOUSING/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE JURISDICTION

3/21 2tchg 3/28-BCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NO.: 23000371CA
DIVISION: Mortgage Foreclosures

METRO NORTH FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, a Florida credit union, Plaintiff,

VS. JESSICA LYNN BROWN, an individual;

AUDREY MARLENE CLEMONS, an individual; BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; and ANY AND ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING BY, THROUGH, UNDER AND AGAINST THE HEREIN NAMED INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANT(S) WHO ARE NOT KNOWN TO BE DEAD OR ALIVE, WHETHER SAID UNKNOWN PARTIES MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST AS SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEES OR OTHER CLAIMANTS; JOHN DOE AND JANE DOE AS UNKNOWN TENANTS IN POSSESSION,

Defendants.

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to the final judgment entered on March 4, 2024 in Case No. 23000371CA of the Circuit Court of the Eighth Judicial Circuit in and for Bradford County, Florida, in which METRO NORTH FEDERAL CREDIT UNION is Plaintiff, and JESSICA LYNN BROWN, AUDREY MARLENE CLEMONS, BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; and ANY AND ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING BY, THROUGH, UNDER AND AGAINST THE HEREIN NAMED INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANT(S) WHO ARE NOT KNOWN TO BE DEAD OR ALIVE, WHETHER SAID UNKNOWN PARTIES MAY CLAIM AN INTEREST AS SPOUSES, HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEES OR OTHER CLAIMANTS; JOHN DOE AND JANE DOE AS UNKNOWN TENANTS IN POSSESSION, are Defendants, I, the Bradford County Clerk of the Court, will sell to the highest bidder for cash at: Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple Ave., Starke, FL 32091, at the hour of 11:00 a.m. on the 25th day of April, 2024 the following described real property:

PARCEL 21
A PARCEL OF LAND LYING IN THE NW1/4 OF THE NW1/4 OF SECTION 14, TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 21 EAST, BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; SAID PARCEL BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID NW 1/4 OF NW 1/4 AND RUN NORTH 88 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 09 SECONDS EAST, ALONG THE NORTHERLY BOUNDARY THEREOF, 454.53 FEET TO A SET 1/2" IRON ROD AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING, FROM POINT OF BEGINNING THUS DESCRIBED CONTINUE NORTH 88 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 09 SECONDS EAST, ALONG SAID NORTHERLY BOUNDARY, 127.82 FEET TO A SET 1/2" IRON ROD; THENCE SOUTH 01 DEGREE 01 MINUTE 07 SECONDS EAST, 448.78 FEET TO A SET IRON ROD; THENCE SOUTH 88 DEGREES 34 MINUTES 36 SECONDS WEST, 127.82 FEET TO A SET IRON ROD; THENCE NORTH 01 DEGREE 01 MINUTE 07 SECONDS WEST, 448.78 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL BEING SUBJECT TO AND TOGETHER WITH AN EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS OVER AN EXISTING ROADWAY ALONG THE NORTHERLY 25 FEET OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PARCEL AND EXTENDING EASTERLY TO THE WESTERLY BOUNDARY OF THE RIGHT OF WAY OF COUNTY ROAD 225.

TOGETHER WITH A 1998 HICK TRIPLEWIDE MOBILE HOME WITH THE IDS# GAFLW35A14358HH21, GAFLW35B14358HH21, AND GAFLW35C14358HH21 WHICH IS LOCATED THEREON. Property address: 8118 NW 183rd Terrace, Starke, Florida 32091.

Any person claiming an interest in the surplus from the sale, if any, other than the property owner as of the date of the Lis Pendens must file a claim within 60 days after the sale.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, if you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in a proceeding, you are entitled to be provided with certain assistance at no cost to you. Please contact the ADA Coordinator, Alachua County Family and Civil Justice Center, 201 East University Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601 (352-337-6237) at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days. If you are hearing or voice-impaired, call 1-800-955-8770 via Florida Relay Service.

JIMERSON BIRR, P.A.
By: Austin T. Hamilton Florida Bar No. 0099431 ahamilton@jimersonfirm.com Mateo C. Dayo, IV Florida Bar No. 1049754 mdayo@jimersonfirm.com One Independent Drive, Suite 1400 Jacksonville, FL 32202 Telephone: (904) 389-0050 Facsimile: (904) 212-1269 michellem@jimersonfirm.com fileclerk@jimersonfirm.com

Attorneys for Plaintiff

3/21 2tchg 3/28-BCT

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

CIVIL ACTION
CASE NO.: 2023-CA-000209
TRJMG FUND, LLC
Plaintiff,

Vs.
HARRY EDWARD DEEVERS,
KATHY JOE DEEVERS,
Defendants.

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above-styled cause on March 4, 2024 in the Circuit Court of Bradford County, Florida, Denny Thompson, the Clerk of Court of Bradford County, Florida shall sell to the highest and best bidder for cash at the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 North Temple Ave., Starke, Florida 32901, on June 13, 2024 at 11:00am, in the hallway directly past the security checkpoint, the following described property as set forth in said Final Judgment to wit:

A PARCEL OF LAND LYING IN LOTS 7 AND 8 OF WOODLAWN, SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 22 EAST, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE(S) 17, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; SAID PARCEL BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 12 AND RUN NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 38 SECONDS EAST, ALONG THE NORTHERLY BOUNDARY THEREOF, 337.8 FEET FOR THE POINT OF BEGINNING, FROM THE POINT OF BEGINNING THUS DESCRIBED RUN SOUTH 00 DEGREES 32 MINUTES 02 SECONDS WEST, 600.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 21 SECONDS EAST, 693.73 FEET TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY BOUNDARY OF THE RIGHT OF WAY OF STATE ROAD 200 (U.S. 301); THENCE NORTH 17 DEGREES 43 MINUTES 38 SECONDS EAST, ALONG SAID WESTERLY BOUNDARY, 632 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY BOUNDARY OF SAID SECTION 12; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 38 SECONDS WEST, ALONG SAID NORTHERLY BOUNDARY, 900 FEET, MORE OR LESS, TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. LESS AND EXCEPT:

A PARCEL OF LAND LYING IN LOT 7 OF WOODLAWN, IN SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 22 EAST, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE(S) 17, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 12 AND THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 38 SECONDS EAST, ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 12, A DISTANCE OF 337.80 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE LANDS OF ROY MORGAN; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 20 MINUTES 28 SECONDS EAST, ALONG THE MONUMENTED WEST LINE OF SAID LANDS OF ROY MORGAN, A DISTANCE OF 600.00 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LANDS, THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 12 SECONDS

EAST, ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID LANDS OF ROY MORGAN, 695.23 FEET TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF STATE ROAD NO. 200 (U.S. HIGHWAY 301) (A174 FEET WIDE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY); THENCE NORTH 17 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 41 SECONDS EAST, ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE, 277.18 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE NORTH 75 DEGREES 19 MINUTES 38 SECONDS WEST, 209.20 FEET; THENCE NORTH 18 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 07 SECONDS EAST, 209.36 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 75 DEGREES 17 MINUTES 40 SECONDS EAST, 210.45 FEET TO A POINT ON SAID WEST RIGHT

OF WAY LINE AND SAID POINT, BEING ON A CURVE CONCAVE TO THE SOUTHEAST AND HAVING A RADIUS OF 5854.58 FEET AND CENTRAL ANGLE OF 01 DEGREES 21 MINUTES 32 SECONDS AND BEING SUBTENDED BY A CHORD BEARING OF SOUTH 18 DEGREES 36 MINUTES 27 SECONDS WEST, AND A CHORD LENGTH OF 138.69 FEET; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG THE ARC OF SAID CURVE, AN ARC DISTANCE OF 138.70 FEET TO THE POINT OF TANGENCY OF SAID CURVE; THENCE SOUTH 17 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 41 SECONDS WEST, 70.63 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. AND LESS AND EXCEPT:

COMMENCE AT THE NW CORNER OF SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 22 EAST, BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; THENCE RUN NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 38 SECONDS EAST, 337.8 FEET; THENCE CONTINUE NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 38 SECONDS EAST, 196.73 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, THENCE CONTINUE RUNNING NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 38 SECONDS EAST, 704.12 FEET TO THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY OF SR 200; THENCE RUN SOUTH 20 DEGREES 22 MINUTES 09 SECONDS WEST, 75.51 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 12 SECONDS WEST, 468.70 FEET; THENCE RUN SOUTH 00 DEGREES 20 MINUTES 28 SECONDS EAST, 208.72 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 12 SECONDS WEST, 208.72 FEET; THENCE RUN NORTH 00 DEGREES 20 MINUTES 28 SECONDS WEST, 208.72 FEET; THENCE CONTINUE NORTH 00 DEGREES 20 MINUTES 28 SECONDS WEST, 69.35 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. AND LESS AND EXCEPT:

A PARCEL OF LAND LYING IN SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 22 EAST, BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA, SAID PARCEL BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCE AT AN IRON PIPE FOUND AT THE NW CORNER OF A PARCEL DESCRIBED IN O.R. BOOK 1888, PAGE 85, FOR THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND RUN SOUTH 88 DEGREES 27 MINUTES 39 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE NORTHERLY BOUNDARY OF SECTION 12 (BEING THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE NORTHERLY BOUNDARY OF O.R. BOOK 1888, PAGE 85, A DISTANCE OF 135.00 FEET TO A SET 1/2" IRON ROD (LB4012) BEING 399.46 FEET EAST OF A CONCRETE MONUMENT FOUND AT THE NW CORNER OF SAID SECTION 12; THENCE SOUTH 01 DEGREES 49 MINUTES 48 SECONDS EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE WESTERLY BOUNDARY OF SAID PARCEL 277.79 FEET TO A SET 1/2" IRON ROD (LB4012); THENCE NORTH 88 DEGREES 35 MINUTES 20 SECONDS EAST, 135.00 FEET TO A FOUND IRON PIPE AT THE SW CORNER OF SAID PARCEL; THENCE NORTH 01 DEGREES 49 MINUTES 48 SECONDS WEST, ALONG SAID WESTERLY BOUNDARY 278.09 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

TOGETHER WITH MOBILE HOME VIN #GAFL47A7S506SP21 AND GAFL475B75506SP21 Property address: 25712 N. Hwy 301, Lawley, FL 32058

IF YOU ARE A PERSON CLAIMING A RIGHT TO FUNDS REMAINING AFTER THE SALE, YOU MUST FILE A CLAIM WITH THE CLERK NO LATER THAN THE DATE THAT THE CLERK REPORTS THE FUNDS AS UNCLAIMED. IF YOU FAIL TO FILE A CLAIM, YOU WILL NOT BE ENTITLED TO ANY REMAINING FUNDS. AFTER THE FUNDS ARE REPORTED AS UNCLAIMED, ONLY THE OWNER OF RECORD AS OF THE DATE OF THE LIS PENDENS MAY CLAIM THE SURPLUS.

If you are a person with disability who needs an accommodation in order to access court facilities or participate in a court proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. To request such an accommodation, please contact Court Administration, ADA Coordinator, 201 East University Avenue, Gainesville FL 32601, at 352-337-6237 at least 7 days before your scheduled court

appearance, or immediately upon receiving a notification of a scheduled court proceeding if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days.

Submitted by: Ivan Dimitrov Ivanov, Florida Bar Number 39023 Ivanov Wolf PLLC 3310 W. Cypress Street, Suite 206 Tampa FL 33607 Attorney for Plaintiff ivan@iwfirm.com

3/28 2tchg 4/4-BCT

UNION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
CASE NUMBER: 63-2024-CA-0008
J.R. DAVIS, as Trustee of the J.R. DAVIS TRUST,
Plaintiff,

vs.
UNKNOWN HEIRS, DEVISEES, GRANTEES, ASSIGNEES, LIENORS, CREDITORS, TRUSTEES, AND ANY OTHER PARTIES CLAIMING BY, THROUGH, UNDER, OR AGAINST LOUISE FIELDS a/k/a LOUISE FIELDS GLOVER, deceased,
Defendants.

NOTICE OF ACTION TO ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED OF THE filing of a Complaint against you to quiet title to the following property in Union County, Florida: TOGETHER WITH: A parcel of land containing a total area of 0.50 acres, more or less, lying, being and situate in Section 31, Township 5 South, Range 20 East, City of Lake Butler, Union County, Florida, more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCE at the Southeast corner of the North 1/2 of Government Lot 1, said Section 31, and run North 01 degree 46 minutes 19 seconds West, along the East line of said Section 31, a distance of 103.48 feet to the intersection with the North right of way line of State Road Number 121 (Southeast 6th Street); thence run South 85 degrees 12 minutes 21 seconds West, along said North right of way line, a distance of 210.66 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING of the hereinafter described parcel of land: Thence continue running South 85 degrees 12 minutes 21 seconds West, continuing along said North right of way line, a distance of 210.24 feet; thence run North 01 degree 43 minutes 32 seconds West a distance of 105.17 feet; thence run North 85 degrees 30 minutes 03 seconds East a distance of 210.19 feet; thence run South 01 degree 43 minutes 32 seconds East a distance of 104.08 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING. SUBJECT TO all existing easements, rights of way, restrictions, reservations, covenants and jurisdictional areas, whether of record or not of record.

Union County Parcel Identification Number: 31-05-20-00-000-0040-0 You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, on M. Aaron Dukes, the Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Post Office Box 328, Lake Butler, Florida 32054, on or before the 11th day of April 2024, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either immediately before service on Plaintiff's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint. DATED this 5th day of March, 2024.

KELLIE H. RHOADES
Deputy Clerk
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Published in: Union County Times
3/14 4tchg 4/4-UCT

NOTICE OF SELF STORAGE SALE. Please take notice Lake Butler Mini Storage, located at 1015 SW 3rd St. Lake Butler, FL, 32054 intends to hold an auction of goods stored in the following units in default for non-payment of rent on Lockerfox.com. The sale will occur on 05/06/2024 at 12:00 am on Lockerfox.com. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings.

Unit #49 Matt Whitehead Unit #54 Kiara Randolph All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. See manager for details.
3/21 2tchg 3/28-BCT

Bradford County Telegraph
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Tigers go 3-0 in Viera baseball tournament

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School's baseball team outscored three opponents 21-2 in going undefeated at Prospect Select's High School Classic, which was held March 18-20 in Viera.

The Tigers (7-6) and Cardinal Newman were the only teams to go 3-0.

On March 18, Union scored four runs each in the second and third innings in defeating Port St. Lucie 9-1.

Riggs Davis and Preston Bonsall each hit an RBI single on a 1-0 pitch in the second, which also saw Trenton Klein hit an RBI double on a 1-0 pitch. Erick Lasseter drove in the fourth run on a ground out.

The Tigers had the bases loaded with one out in the third when Davis drove in a run on a sacrifice fly. Bonsall, after falling behind 0-2 in the count, hit a 2-2 pitch for an RBI single. Klein hit a ground ball that scored one run, while an error on the play allowed another runner to cross home plate.

Bonsall, who went 3 for 3, and Davis finished with two RBI each. Klein, Lasseter and Landen Miller each had one RBI.

Kacen Thomassen went 3 for 3 as well as starting on the mound. He threw five innings, giving up one run, three hits and one walk, while striking out four.

Clayton Poppell and Bo Wilson each pitched an inning, with Poppell giving up one hit and Wilson giving up none.

Davis and Klein drove in two runs each in the Tigers' next game, a 7-1 win over Lake Nona on March 19.

Klein drove in the first two runs with a sacrifice fly in the first and a single in the third. A Davis ground out scored a run in the fourth to put the Tigers ahead 3-0.

It was 3-1 when Union scored four in the sixth. Davis hit an RBI double, while Ayden Androlevich hit an RBI single.

The Tigers also scored runs on a balk and an error.

Lasseter was the only batter with multiple hits for either team, going 2 for 4. He also earned the start on the mound, giving up one run, five hits and no walks in five innings. He struck out four.

Devin Diggs pitched the final two innings, allowing no hits and striking out four.

Three pitchers combined to give up no runs in the Tigers' 5-0 win over Evangelical Christian on March 20.

Androlevich started, allowing three hits and one walk in five innings. He struck out three.

Bonsall and Baler Waters each gave up one hit and no walks in pitching one inning each.

Union scored two runs in the second, with Diggs hitting an RBI single and Bonsall drawing a bases-loaded walk.

The Tigers had two outs with no one on in the third before scoring another two runs. Thomassen and Diggs both walked before Androlevich hit a two-run single.

Androlevich's single was one of just four hits for the Tigers.

Union, which had won four in a row, played Oakleaf this past Tuesday and will travel to play West Nassau on Thursday, March 28, at 7 p.m. The Tigers then travel to play Williston on Tuesday, April 2, at 6:30 p.m.

Wagner has 4 RBI in Indians' 12-4 win over Tornadoes

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Amber Wagner hit a bases-loaded triple as part of a six-run second inning, which helped propel the Keystone Heights High School softball team to a 12-4 win over visiting Bradford on March 25.

Wagner, who went 2 for 4, drove in four runs in all as the Indians (5-3) snapped a two-game losing streak.

Keegan Yowell, who went 3 for 4, drove in all of Bradford's runs, including two off a home

run in the fifth.

Walks to Caitlin Frampton and Riley Shuford and a single by Alaina Kinsall loaded the bases for Keystone in the second. Wagner, who drove in her team's first run on a bunt in the first, was facing a 1-2 count when she hit a pitch into center field to clear the bases and put the Indians up 4-0.

Keystone added three more runs with two outs, getting an RBI double from Abbie Roach and RBI singles from Kadence Massey and Frampton.

The Tornadoes (3-9) got their first hit in the third inning, courtesy of a Carly Beggs double. Rylie Blankenship followed with a bunt single. Beggs was put out at third on a ground ball hit by Tinsley Higginbotham, leaving Bradford with runners on first and second with two outs. Yowell ripped a line drive into center field for a double that scored both runners and made it a 7-2 game.

Roach, who went 4 for 4 with an RBI, hit a one-out double in the fourth and scored when the Tornadoes committed an error on a Massey bunt. Massey would later score on a Bella Cumbo single, giving the Indians a 9-2 lead.

Beggs was hit by a pitch to lead off the top of the fifth. Two outs later, Yowell drove a pitch over the fence in left to make it a five-run game.

Keystone added its final runs in the sixth, which began with Roach hitting her third double. As in the fourth inning, Massey laid down a bunt, with Bradford again committing an error on the play, which allowed Roach to score and Massey to reach safely. Bradford then committed errors

on the next two plays — a Delia Johnson fly ball and a Frampton single — that allowed the final two runs to score.

Frampton finished 2 for 3.

Ashley Nugent started in the circle for the Indians, giving up two runs, three hits and no walks in three innings.

Frampton entered to finish it off, allowing two runs, three hits and two walks in four innings. She struck out seven.

Bradford's only batter with multiple hits besides Yowell was Beggs, who went 2 for 2.

Keystone played Oakleaf this past Tuesday and will travel to play Baker County on Thursday, March 28, at 7 p.m.

The Tornadoes travel to play Union County on Monday, April 1, at 6:30 p.m. and then travel to play Hilliard on Wednesday, April 3, at 6:30 p.m.

Keystone entered the Bradford game off an 8-7 loss to host Santa Fe on March 21.

The Indians trailed 5-0 before scoring three runs in the fifth. Kinsall drove in one with a double, while an error allowed two to score.

Keystone took a 7-5 lead in the sixth, scoring four runs with two outs. Kinsall and Wagner drew walks and scored on a Nugent single. After a Roach single and a Massey walk, two runs scored on a Johnson single.

Santa Fe had a runner reach on an error in the sixth and score on a single, making it a one-run game.

In the bottom of the seventh, the Raiders had two on after a triple and a fielder's choice. A sacrifice fly and subsequent error allowed the tying and winning

runs to score.

Nugent was the only Keystone batter with multiple hits, going 3 for 4.

BHS softball team entered KHHS game on 2-game skid

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Prior to its 12-4 loss to Keystone Heights on March 25 (see related story), the Bradford High School softball team dropped two in a row, getting outscored 23-4 by Branford and Orange Park.

The Tornadoes had just one hit in a 15-1 loss to visiting Branford on March 18. Branford, last year's Class 1A state runner-up, hit three home runs, including a grand slam.

Bradford's lone run occurred in the first. Rylie Blankenship hit a leadoff single and advanced to second on a Tinsley Higginbotham ground out before scoring on an error.

On March 20, the Tornadoes fell behind 5-0 in an 8-3 loss to Orange Park.

It was 8-1 before Bradford scored two in the bottom of the seventh. Carly Beggs and Blankenship hit back-to-back singles with one out. Amber Wynn reached on a ground-ball error that allowed a run to score. Keegan Yowell, who went 2 for 4 with two RBI, then hit a double to score another run.

Two straight strikeouts ended the game.

Kallie Yowell and Wynn each hit a double and went 2 for 3 and 2 for 4, respectively. Addyson Hinds also hit a double.

BHS ends losing skid in boys tennis with win over UCHS

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School snapped a three-match losing streak in boys tennis, defeating visiting Union County 4-3 on March 14.

The Tornadoes (3-5) swept doubles play, with Calum Butler and Rowan Butler teaming up for an 8-3 win and James Hudgens and Nikolas Vargas winning 8-6.

Calum Butler and Rowan Butler won their singles matches by scores of 8-1 and 8-4, respectively.

Union (2-3) won the number-three through number-five slots in singles: Scott Douglas by an 8-2 score, Braden Adams by an 8-6 score and Patrick Maxwell by an 8-1 score.

The Tigers were coming off a 5-2 win over Seven Rivers Christian on March 8.

Kendre Stephens had an 8-8 (8-6) win at the number-two singles spot, while Douglas and Adams had 8-1 and 8-4 wins, respectively, at number three and number four. Tucker Williams won the number-five match 8-0.

The doubles team of Stephens and Adams won 8-8 (7-4).

LIFT

Continued from page 11

class.

Trace Wooden had a 10th-place total of 400 (215, 185) in the 199 class, while Jackson Parmeter had an 11th-place total of 385 (200, 185) in the 169 class.

Ulsch, Herman are 2nd in Olympic

The Indians had two runners-up in Olympic: Ben Ulsch, who had a 200 snatch and an overall total of 480, and Jackson Herman, who had a 205 snatch and a 280 clean and jerk for a 485 total in the 238 class.

Four earned third-place finishes: Hollingsworth with a 315 total (130 snatch), Wright with a 390 total (155), Bryson Wester with a 425 total (160) and Duncan with a 495 total (190).

Joining Baxter as a fourth-place finisher was Adams, who had a 365 total (135).

Earning fifth-place finishes were Andrew Ulsch with a 210 total (80), Shine with a 325 total (135) and Brayden Wester with a 460 total (185).

Also contributing to the team's Olympic score were sixth-place finishers Brayden McCall, who had a 320 total (135, 185) in the 154 class, and Leger, who had a 375 total (150).

Two finished in seventh place: Parmeter with a 345 total (145) and Wooden with a 360 total (145).



Athletic Director Chuck Dickinson said he is a big believer in the value of extracurricular activities, including athletics, in developing the whole student.

TRACK

Continued from page 8

in the classroom and the school's leadership. He said that the community has a hometown success story with Burke and a strong school leader with what he called the "Keystone flair."

Broskie also recognized the school's three-time state champion weightlifting team and the football team's repeat winners of Florida's academic championships.

The superintendent also repeated Dickinson's and Burke's theme on the importance of athletics.

"Students don't come to school for English, math, science, and social studies," he said. "They look forward to coming to school because of athletics and other extracurricular activities."



(L-r) School Board Member Mary Bolla, Principal Laurie Burke, and School Board Members Beth Clark and Michele Hanson.

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Bradford County **Telegraph** Lake Region **Monitor** UNION COUNTY **TIMES**

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Easley earns 1st- and 3rd-place finishes for Tornados

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School competed in the March 22 Middleburg Bronco Track and Field Invitational, with boys team member Jaleel Easley winning the 400m and placing third in the 110m hurdles.

Easley ran the 400m in a time of 52.89 and completed the hurdles event in 19.2.

The boys team got a runner-up finish from Parviele Lee, who had a distance of 38-4.75 in the shot put.

Elijah Lawrence and Brayden Smyth each earned a fourth-place finish, with Lawrence running the 200m in 24.29 and Smyth jumping 18-6.5 in the long jump.

The boys also got a fifth-place time of 45.96 from Lawrence, Justin Hall, Trejan Tyson and Branden Williams in the 4x100m relay and a sixth-place time of 11.85 in the 100m from Williams.

Other boys results: 100m — Hall 12.37, Maurice Green 13.11; 200m — Easley 25.04; and 800m — Krystian Harris 2:35.

Bradford got two eight-place finishes in the girls events, with Diamond Ferguson running 13.86 in the 100m and Madison Miller throwing the javelin a distance of 46-11.5.

The Tornados also had the following girls results: 100m — Kendell Shanks 13.91, Ja'Myrah Newsome 15.73; 200m — Ferguson 29.51, Newsome 33.7; 400m — Lysa McKenzie 1:29; 100m hurdles — Miller 23.5; and long jump — McKenzie 12-10.75.

Prior to the meet, Bradford competed in the March 16 Columbia High School Invitational, with the boys team winning three events.

Easley ran a first-place time of 52.42 in the 400m, while also placing fifth in the 110m hurdles with a time of 19.07. Tyson took first in the high jump by clearing 5-8, while Elijah Kellum won the long jump with a distance of 21-

10.5. Kellum was also runner-up in the 100m with a time of 11.23.

The boys 4x100m team had a fourth-place time of 44.36, while Smyth was fifth in the long jump with a distance of 18-11.5.

Other boys results: 100m — Williams 11.78, Lawrence 11.79, Tyson 12.46; 200m — Easley 24.91, Hall 25.6, Ezra Green 32.7; 400m — Jordan Barton 56.2, Green 1:12; and 800m — Harris 2:33, Hayden Starling 2:43, Andrew King 2:43.

Shanks earned a runner-up finish for the girls team with a time of 13.72 in the 100m. The girls also placed second in the 4x100m relay with a time of 53.27.

Kaelyn Booker placed third in the 400m with a time of 1:06 and fourth in the 100m hurdles with a time of 21.19.

Ferguson ran a third-place time of 28.63 in the 200m and a seventh-place time of 13.93 in the 100m.

Other girls results: 100m — Jordynn Littles 14.56; 200m — Melissa Harding 31.24, Newsome 34.7; and long jump — McKenzie 11-5.5.

Boys team member Kellum competed in the March 21 Santa Fe Raiders Mini Meet 2, winning the triple jump (47-6.5) and placing third in the 100m (11.21).

Thomas earns runner-up finish for Indians in track and field

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's track and field teams competed at the Santa Fe Raiders Mini Meet 2 on March 21, with boys team member Ryder Thomas and girls team member Olivia Griffin earning second- and fifth-place finishes, respectively.

Thomas was behind only Buchholz's Luke Geltner in the 1600m, crossing the line in 4:29.29. Geltner had a time of 4:48.68.

The boys team had two other top-10 finishers in Luke Lewis, who had a ninth-place distance of 102-1.5 in the javelin, and Jaden Park, who had a 10th-place distance of 36-11 in the triple jump.

Other boys results were: 100m — Park 12.2, Jamari Turner 12.43, Tyler Griffin 12.48, Tyler Sapp 12.73, Ryeland Wahl 12.81; 200m — Josiah Durrenberger 25.66, Sapp 26.04, Turner 26.15, Lewis 29.11; 400m — Griffin 56.11, Wahl 57.18, Durrenberger 57.2, De'Shawn Williams 1:05, Carter Andrews 1:17; 800m — Hunter Sheppard 2:18, Jason Parales 2:30; 1600m — Parker Pescara 6:03; triple jump — Turner 35-10.75; javelin — Ricardo Rosario 72-11.25, Pescara 43-5.75; and shot put — Rosario 30-1.75.

Olivia Griffin was one of two girls team members to place in the top 10, running a fifth-place time of 1:03 in the 400m. Zoey Gill had a 10th-place distance of 60-11.5 in the javelin.

Keystone also had the following girls results: 100m — Kaylee Park 13.86, Christine Djavaheri 14.19, Laila Brisenio 14.92, Cali Chamberlain 14.98, Kenslee Phillips 15.41, Jasmine Walls 16.67; 200m — Griffin 28.31, Park 28.83, Brook Gaudons 33.57, Walls 35.07; and 400m — Chamberlain 1:10, Djavaheri 1:10, Phillips 1:11, Brisenio 1:14, Gaudons 1:18.

UCHS boys get 4 wins at March 14 meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School's track and field teams competed in a March 14 meet hosted by Branford, earning four wins on the boys side and one on the girls side.

The Tigers won two boys relay events, with Blake McCoy, Brycen Boney, Bobo Woodall and Dayquan Diston teaming up to run 45.15 in the 4x100m and McCoy, Boney, Bo Thomas and Deonte Jones teaming up to run 3:47 in the 4x400m.

Woodall won the 100m with a time of 11.21, while Jones won the 400m with a time of 53.09.

Diston finished second to Woodall in the 100m with a time of 11.26. Gavin Sparkman was runner-up in the 800m with a time of 2:30.

Union had three third-place finishes: Braylen Tyson in the 200m (25.41), Thomas in the 400m (55.35) and McCoy in the long jump (18-5.25).

C.J. Ivey was fourth in the discus (92-7.75), while Dillon Lane was fourth in the shot put (33-4).

Fifth-place finishes were earned by Tyson in the 100m (12.36), Boney in the 400m (57.09), Ashton Bunkley in the 3200m (14:38) and Jacob Jenkins in the shot put (32-10).

Lane was eighth in the discus (82-6.25), while Anthony Holmes was eighth in the shot put (31-0).

Other boys results were: 100m — Zayden Williams 13.69; 200m — Thomas 29.74, Boney 30.58; 800m — Williams 2:46; discus — Matthew Rogers 70-10.75; and shot put — Ivey 30-10.5.

Faith Sirmones won an event for the girls team, running the 200m in 29.88. Teammate Holly Halfacre had a third-place time of 31.43.

Ivy Wilson was runner-up in the 100m with a time of 14.31.

Mia Odum took fourth in the 400m (1:12), while fifth-place finishes were earned by Mackenzie Ring in the 800m (3:08), Amia Bethea in the long jump (12-1.25) and Melinda Mabrey in the shot put (24-5.75).

Ring finished sixth in the 1600m (7:25), while Mackenzie Barry was seventh in the long jump (11-11.25).

Eighth-place finishes were earned by Maddison McKenzie in the 400m (1:23) and Briana Haight in the shot put (23-11).

Other girls results were: 100m — McKenzie 15.52, Barry 15.76; long jump — Odum 11-4.5, Halfacre 10-10.25; discus — Haight 51-5.25, Mari Williams 45-6.75, Ja'Kari Hill 44-1.5; and shot put — Sommer McKenzie 14-8.

SIGN

Continued from page 9

considering a few schools, but that Thomas gave him the best opportunity — an opportunity that had to do with more than just football.

"I like that it's a military school," Williams said. "I've always wanted to be in the military and do football at the same time. They gave me that opportunity."

Williams will be a part of the Georgia National Guard while in school.

"It's great," Thomas said. "To be able to do that and to serve others — that's just going to help him develop as a young man. I'm proud of him making that choice and knowing, 'That's a commitment I want to make.'"

It's also a return to Williams' home state. He lived in Wilcox County (a couple of hours away from Thomasville) before moving to Florida and playing for UCHS for three years.

Williams said he'll always

remember how he was accepted like family at UCHS.

"I loved it," he said.

At Thomas University, Williams said he's willing to play wherever coaches feel he's the best fit. He said he needs to work in improving his speed, but he's confident in the rest of his abilities.

"Everything else I have," he said.

Reed said Williams has a competitive drive that served him well in multiple sports, including basketball, weightlifting and track and field.

"I think if (UCHS Head Baseball Coach) Jiwon (James) would let him, he'd go out there and pinch run for him in baseball, too," Reed said. "He's just competitive, fearless and tough."

Thomas said, "As long as he stays committed and keeps that drive he had in high school, he's going to succeed."

When asked what it'll feel like when he first plays as a Thomas Night Hawk, Williams said, "I might be nervous at first, but it's going to feel great."

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New River Community Health is proud to be partnered with the Union and Bradford County Health Departments to provide medical care to our local residents, insured or no insurance.

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