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USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, March 31, 2022

142nd year, 33rd Issue — \$1

## 55 years for murdering Keystone Heights woman

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
 Monitor Editor

GREEN COVE SPRINGS — A Keystone Heights man was sentenced to 55 years in prison after pleading to killing his 25-year-old neighbor.

Joe Arthur Turner, 31, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, burglary and sexual battery on a victim 12-years or older. He was given credit for the over four years he has been in jail awaiting trial and he was designated as a sexual predator.

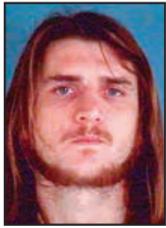
Jordan Cooper, 25, was reported missing by her family just after Thanksgiving in 2017. Clay deputies discovered her body on Dec. 9 in

the attic of her Payne Road home.

In the days following the woman's disappearance, over 150 deputies, members of other agencies and volunteers searched 1,000

acres surrounding Little Rain Lake Park, where the victim was last seen.

Detectives said Cooper had the mental capacity of a 13 to 14-year-old. According to a Jacksonville



Turner

television station, Turner addressed the victim's parents prior to sentencing.

"Miss Renee, there's nothing I can say or do that will ever bring Jordan back. That's why I want to apologize. I want to sincerely apologize, say I'm sorry. I'm sorry," the defendant said, according to First Coast News. "Jeff, I'm sorry. From what I've heard there is forgiveness in your hearts and I'm so thankful for that. I just hope in time things will be better for each one of you all."

Cooper's family started the Jordan Cooper Memorial Scholarship fund in 2018 to support Keystone Heights High School students. The organization also promotes anti-

bullying education and encourages animal rescue. The fund operates the Freedom 5K, a part of Our Country Day events around the Fourth of July.

Cooper's family issued a statement prior to sentencing.

"Jordan would love knowing that she is helping other graduates fulfill their dreams, whatever they may be," the family said. "In this way Jordan will live on, not only in our hearts, but in the hope that her memory brings to those students who receive scholarships. Jordan, we love you and we miss you. We wish you were still here with us."

## Marshals capture murder suspect

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
 Monitor Editor

LAKE BUTLER — The Union County Sheriff's Office said U.S. Marshals apprehended a man wanted for a March 19 murder in Lake Butler.

Anthony George was arrested around 9 a.m. on Monday, March 28 in Gainesville.

The sheriff's office said he would be booked into the Alachua County Jail before taken back to Lake Butler.

The office said that around 10 p.m. on Saturday, March 19, George shot three people. One of the victims: 35-year-old William L. Hope died from his injuries.



George

## Union Co. explores electrical franchise fee

BY TRACY LEE TATE  
 Times Editor

LAKE BUTLER — At its March meeting the Union County Board of Commissioners discussed whether or not to enter into a franchise agreement with Florida Power and Light. The fee would be based on an agreement with FPL that the county would not, in the future, pursue setting up its own electrical power service, thus guaranteeing that FPL would be able to retain the customers it serves in the county.

County Coordinator Jimmy Williams said that he had been speaking with representatives from the city of Lake Butler, which has a

similar agreement and that is raised about \$100,000 per year from the fee. In the discussion it was also stated the both the Raiford had a fee as well. Williams said that in his discussions with FPL it was determined that the county would collect about \$90,000 from the agreement.

Commissioner Willie Croft made motion to approve entering into the agreement with FPL and the motion passed on vote 5-0.

In other discussion, commissioners heard from Union County Emergency Medical Services Director Toby Witt concerning the hiring of a new medical director for the service. Witt said that there were numerous problems with communicating with

current director, Dr. Matthew Odom, that were affecting the ability of the service to acquire the medications and medical supplies it needed to care for county residents. He noted numerous phone calls to Odom that have gone unanswered.

Witt introduced Dr. Robert Spindell to the board as his recommendation for the position. Witt and Spindell had worked together at one of Witt's previous positions and Witt said that he (Spindell) had always been available when needed and seen to the needs of the departments he served.

Spindell is a retired emergency room director at the now defunct Shand at Live Oak emergency department, where he oversaw emergency

operations for 20 years. He now works full time serving as medical director for several area counties, including Baker and Columbia. He offered Union County his lowest rate for service, at an amount of \$20,000 per year. His contract states that he would be a county employee and qualify for the retirement program, but that he would waive worker's compensation, health insurance and most other county benefits.

Motion was made by Commissioner Channing Dobbs to terminate the county's contract with Odom which was approved by the board 5-0, then

See FEE, page 3

## Manager quits, then changes her mind

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
 Monitor Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — City Manager Lynn Rutkowski emailed her letter of resignation to city council members on March 22, but during a March 29 meeting to discuss the situation, the city council voted 4-1 to reject the resignation and Rutkowski rescinded her offer.

Rutkowski offered a verbal resignation during February but agreed to stay on the job and reconsider after urging from Vice Mayor Steve Hart and council members Tony Brown and Marion Kelly.

Her offer to resign in February stemmed from what her supporters characterized as a hostile work environment fostered by Mayor Karen Lake.

See MANAGER, page 3



Pictured are Altrusans Trish Tucker, Elizabeth Nazworth, Mary Kramer, Linda Johns, Paula Register, Shelly Bowen, Amanda Seyfang, Gale Trotter, Sandra Luke, Martha Epps, Sylvia Tatum, Jencie Stanwix-Hay, Margaret Anderson, Kim Hamilton and Sylvia Reddish. Not pictured: Sarah Long.

## Altrusa assembles Easter baskets for kids

Altrusa International of Starke supplies 30 decorated Easter baskets to the Guardian Ad Litem program annually. For the past 18 years, 30 children have received personalized baskets including age-appropriate toys, books, stuffed animals and candy.

Each year Vicki Teal and Kim Hamilton, chairs of the committee, start as soon as Easter is over purchasing items for the next year's baskets. A list of names and ages are received from Guardian Ad Litem and the basket purchases are completed a few weeks before Easter. All Altrusa members meet to assemble the baskets and deliver to the Guardian Ad Litem office. This is a favorite project of the club, enjoyed by all.

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# Bradford County's deep budget dive begins

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
Telegraph Editor

STARKE — For their first budget workshop of the year, Bradford County commissioners received a veritable textbook of information and a crash course in budgeting courtesy of staff from the clerk's finance office.

Commissioners and their departments are getting a head start on the process this year as spending cuts are anticipated in the face of rising costs and a lack of new revenue.

Chief Deputy Clerk Rachel Rhoden went over the budgeting basics, including terminology and process. This included a history lesson highlighting where the county has been and how it got to his point.

The county commission always approves a balanced budget. By law it must. The issue for several years has been how that budget is balanced — not with recurring revenue, but with reserve funding, one-time federal assistance and transfers of fiscally constrained county funding from the state.

"For a number of years, the clerk and auditor have warned the board that revenue has not been keeping up with expenditures and the difference is having to be made up from fund balance/reserves," Rhoden said.

The solution is new sources of revenue, budget cuts or a combination of both. Otherwise,

the county could revisit Fiscal Years 1995 and 1996, when the financial audits revealed two consecutive years of negative fund balance around half-million dollars. The county was required to report to the state, but instead of a bailout, the state told the county it must implement its full taxing authority to dig itself out of a bad situation.

So, the property tax rate was raised to 10 mills from 1999 to 2003, and a countywide electrical franchise fee was imposed at 5.5% around 1997. Overtime that was reduced to 3% and then 0% around 2000. Likewise, the commission gradually rolled back the millage rate, to 9.5 mills in 2004, 9.176 mills in 2008 and 9.1104 mills in 2014.

"While the board reduced its recurring revenue between the years 1999 and 2020, the county did not reduce its spending. Overtime the county became dependent on its unassigned fund balance/reserves/savings to help balance the county's budget," Rhoden said.

With renewed talk of franchise fees and even special assessments on fire and rescue services, the one action taken by the board to reduce a nearly \$2.7 million use of reserves to balance the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget was to crank the tax rate back up to 10 mills. That generated an additional \$1.5 million in property tax revenue, but it left a

hole to fill. The clerk's office demonstrated the seven-year trend looks quite different in the absence of federal pandemic and disaster funding used to fill that hole. Without it the, the fund balance in the general fund would be down more than \$5.1 million, an average of nearly \$736,000 a year. With that funding, the seven-year loss was under \$2.9 million, an annual average of \$410,000.

Noted several times is the \$1.3 million in fire department funding in added 2020-21, which has yet to be audited. If the board continues to fund fire operations at that level, then an additional \$1.8 million decrease in the future fund balance is anticipated (\$1.3 million plus the \$500,000 budgeted in previous years for fire).

Rhoden said while the board had requested cuts from departments, and those cuts were put in place, the additional fire department funding beginning in 2021 and employee raises in 2022 offset the cuts. (According to attorney Will Sexton, the raises were paid for with operational funding cuts, but that did not include the recurring cost of raises given by constitutional officers.) Currently, a nearly \$2.5 million use of fund balance is predicted for next year's budget unless the 10-mill property tax rate remains in place, reducing the use of reserves to around

\$966,000. Commissioner Diane Andrews said it's important information to have as they begin planning next year's budget.

"That's a very important number for us because we're cutting services, we're cutting public safety. We're looking at a lot of different things that could hurt our county," she said.

Going over some of the other funds outside of the general fund, commissioners looked at fines and forfeitures and discovered there were recurring costs for life and health insurance, worker's compensation, utilities, and more for the sheriff's office that are reflected in the board's budget, not the sheriff's budget. If those costs were added back to his budget, it would more accurately reflect the cost of law enforcement.

Commissioner Danny Riddick said adding those additional costs would increase the sheriff's budget to nearly \$9 million.

The decision to move insurance costs to the board was credited to the prior clerk to discourage the sheriff from shopping around for a more affordable plan for his employees. It was said pulling the younger employees in the sheriff's office from the county's overall insurance plan would have caused increased rates for other employees.

The need to address insurance costs is an issue that has been raised by Clerk Denny

Thompson, but people are resistant to change.

Commission Chairman Chris Dougherty talked about the need for additional revenue streams like franchise fees and a 1 cent sales tax to reduce the burden on taxpayers for funding county services. Like the gas tax, he said, franchise fees and sales tax would be paid by more people, including those traveling through the area.

"I'm not advocating for raising taxes everywhere. I'm just trying to fill the holes in a boat that's sinking," he said.

Riddick said the county was also missing out on money that could benefit an area like transportation by not charging impact fees to new development.

Finance Director Dana LaFollette followed up on Rhoden's presentation with an overview of several departments four months into the current fiscal year. She took the commission through the road department, for example, which at first glance looks to be overspending based on the amount of revenue coming in. However, she said, they had planned to use nearly \$1.7 million of the road department fund balance the budget. At the current rate of spending, the department will only spend a fraction of that, less than \$600,000 by the end of the fiscal year.

The road department is not self-sufficient, Sexton pointed out. The revenue generated must

always be supplemented by fund balance expenditures or transfers from the general fund. This has always been the case, but now the board is being given a better look at how that works.

At the same time, Rhoden said this has been the source of auditors' repeated warnings that the county is relying on reserves to balance budgets instead of generating revenue to cover those costs.

"The auditor has also advised us that it's healthy for a county to have no less than about five months of fund balance available to you to use. We're using it to help our operations, not just keeping it in the bank for a rainy day. We're actually using it to help fund our operations," she said.

While more than \$3.8 million in fund balance (mostly CARES money) was budgeted to help cover Bradford County Fire Rescue's expenses, the department is also on track to have money left over by the end of September. Once the CARES money is exhausted, however, the department will once again be relying on a transfer from the general fund to balance the budget.

The general fund is also on track to add to its fund balance by the end of the year. Through January, revenue outpaced expenditures by more than \$1.14 million. At this rate, the county could add more than \$3.4 million by the end of the fiscal year. However, the general fund budget was balanced this year with a transfer of more than \$2 million in fiscally constrained county savings and more than \$234,000 in out-of-county inmate housing revenue. Without those transfers, the addition to the general fund balance would be around \$1.19 million. Also, the inmate housing revenue was used to cover the cost of pay raises, which will be an ongoing cost.

Armed with this information and additional reports, the commission is planning on its second budget workshop on Wednesday, April 6, at 6 p.m.

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# Bradford down one ambulance

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
Telegraph Editor

STARKE — Beginning April 1, Bradford County Fire Rescue will be down one crew because of a county hiring freeze.

Director Allen Parrish said the loss of two more employees brings the total number of vacant positions in the department to five. It takes six employees to staff an ambulance 24-7, so one has to be cut.

The resulting savings will be around \$500,000 a year, or around \$200,000 for the remainder of this fiscal year. The station taking the hit

is Sampson City, but it is not being abandoned. The “dual-purpose station” will be staffed with a crew of paramedic firefighters who will be able to respond to calls with either an ambulance or firefighting apparatus — not both.

“We’ve kind of cut everything we can cut, and so now we’re down to response units,” Parrish said, adding there will definitely be a reduction in service. “There’s no way to avoid that.”

Fuel costs could also eat into many departments’ attempted savings. Parrish said they budgeted around

\$2.80 a gallon going into this fiscal year, but the price paid is now over \$4.50.

“We’re doing \$18,000 to \$20,000 a month in fuel,” he said.

Fortunately, call volumes have dropped post-COVID, and they plan on renegotiating what the hospital pays them for interfacility transports given the higher fuel costs.

“I believe that, although we’re within budget, I believe that we’ve heard the board loud and clear. We’ve heard Mr. Sexton loud and clear. We need to cut everywhere we can,” he said. “So we’ll be doing that beginning April

1. We really don’t have a choice there. We either do that, we fill the positions, or we pay overtime to fill those positions, and we all know we can’t afford that.”

## Spring Church Expo

Come support local vendors and small businesses at the Providence Village Baptist Church Spring Expo on Saturday, April 2, from 9 a.m.–1 p.m. The church is located at 4504 W. S.R. 23, Lake Butler. [www.providencevillage.org](http://www.providencevillage.org).

## MANAGER

Continued from page 1

Lake has publicly accused Rutkowski of lying about graduating from high school during her hiring process and tampering with her city personnel file.

Lake reiterated those claims on March 29, saying Rutkowski’s education nor her job performance were at issue, but rather lies she has told.

Lake also claimed Rutkowski filed a job application for her first position with the city and that application has disappeared from her personnel file. She added that Rutkowski was in the best position to get rid of the application and had the most to gain from the missing document.

Vice Mayor Steve Hart, and Council Members Tony Brown, Bobby Brown and Marion Kelly voted to reject the resignation. Lake voted against the motion.

## FEE

Continued from page 1

made motion to hire Spindell, which was also approved unanimously. The department will be operating with two directors for the next month, as Odom’s contract requires a 30-day notice of termination of services, but Spindell is on hand to see that EMS is able to meet its needs for medications and supplies.

Also EMS related, the board voted unanimously to terminate a long-standing interlocal agreement with Bradford County, entered into to deal with a personnel shortage in Union, to where off-duty Bradford EMS personnel would be sent to Union to make sure shifts were covered and be paid at the overtime rate plus benefits. Witt said that Bradford EMS Director Allen Parrish agreed that the need for this agreement had passed and was in favor of terminating the agreement. Witt noted that Union County EMS was now staffed and that he would rather see Union staff paid overtime if necessary, to cover shifts rather than sending the money out of the county. Commissioner Lacey Cannon made motion to give the required 60-day notice to Bradford County and then terminate the agreement and the matter was approved by the board 5-0.

In other discussion and action the Union County Board of County Commissioners:

—Heard a request from Wendy Crews, with Community Hospice and Palliative care, that the board accept and approve a proclamation recognizing the month of April as National Healthcare Decisions Month

(and April 16 as National Healthcare Decisions Day). She said the observance was intended to make to increase public awareness of advance directives and other health related prevent decisions made so that an individual is able to dictate the care they would receive in a case where they were not able to communicate their wishes. Motion was made by Cannon to approve the proclamation and the motion passed 5-0.

—Voted to release an unused easement given up by J.R. Davis to facilitate the work done on NW 150th Loop. Motion was made to give the property (easement) back to Davis and the motions passed 5-0.

—Heard comments from County Coordinator Jimmy Williams concerning the need for a workshop to finalized the spending plan for the monies received from the federal government under the ARPA program (COVID related). He said that there had been many changes required to the original plan as the Fed had taken much time to finalize the regulation as

to how the money could be spent. Union County has been holding the \$2.9 million in funds until it could formulate a plan that would best use the funds for the benefit of the county. Some of the possible expenditures to be discussed include public health and expenses and incurred, premium pay. The board agreed with Williams request and set a public workshop to discuss the matter for April 18 at 4 p.m., before the regular April board meeting.

—Heard a report from Williams that the county would be receiving a \$7,500 grant for advertising from the state Enterprise Fund to assist in presenting information about the county with the intent of interesting businesses in locating here and to assist in other economic development areas. Williams noted in his report that the funds were not derived from tax fund but were raised by Enterprise itself for the purpose.

—Heard comments from Solid Waste Director Kim Hayes that the annual Tire Amnesty program was set to take place

April 1-3 outside the Solid Waste department office at the West Gate of the DOC Reception Medical Center (RMC), behind the O.J. Phillips Park. She said tires to be disposed of would be limited to 20 per individual and would be accepted on or off the rim. She also noted that no commercial or off-road tires would be accepted.

—Heard comments from Cannon that he had been approached by Operation Grad to see if the county would allow the organization to use the meeting room at the Union County Agricultural Education Center for their annual after-graduation event. Cannon said that he had been assured by organizers that there would be not cost to the county and that there would be event insurance for the event and that Project Grad volunteers would take care of the clean-up afterward. Commission Chairman Jimmy Tallman said he thought it was a “great idea” and would help keep the young people safe and the board approved the use of the meeting room 5-0.

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# Bradford library director explains ties to state funding

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
Telegraph Editor

STARKE — None of the Bradford County commission's departments are immune from further budget cuts, but in at least one case, cuts now could cost the county down the line.

The public library budget has always presented this catch-22. Supported handsomely with the help of state grants, that support could be cut drastically or entirely if the county commission cuts too much from its own contribution.

Library Director Robert Perone explained to the board March 17 that once state funding drops, the county will never recoup it, even through increased local support.

Equalization grants from the state add to local funding to give libraries in small counties the same buying power as those in larger counties. They can provide as much as 50 cents on the local dollar in additional funding if the county spends more than the adjusted statewide average. That drops by half if the county spends less than that average, and if the county no longer qualifies for an equalization grant, the funding is phased out over several years.

"If you ever fall below that threshold for enhanced state aid, once you lose it, you can never get it back. You could turn around and spend a million dollars on library services, and you will be stuck in the 25-cent equalization rate. You will never get that 50

cents again," Perone said.

Multicounty grants go to counties like Baker, Bradford and Union that participate in a multicounty cooperative to share the costs of providing certain program services, such as their cataloging and circulation system. These counties are eligible for both a base grant as well as a matching grant based local county expenditures. That's at least \$250,000 plus 10 cents for every local dollar spent for the New River Cooperative.

Any county that qualifies for state aid is also eligible for an operating grant, paid for by the funds left over from the state's equalization and multicounty grants. They can provide a match of 25 cents for every local dollar spent.

This money for library services adds up quickly, and while the total has fluctuated, the amount received for the current fiscal year was nearly \$19.4 million.

"That's one of the reasons why we have the surplus we have that we can use for emergencies. If we were to have, say, a catastrophic failure of the heating and air conditioning system, we can use that grant money to replace that whole system," he said. "If we needed to replace carpet, we write a check out of state aid. Doesn't cost the commission anything."

Perone did not attempt to shield the library from budget cuts. In fact, he proposed

spending cuts through attrition as several employees are retiring over the next year. By freezing two positions that will be vacant and replacing the retiring assistant director of 45 years with someone at a lower salary, they will be able to shave money from their budget, he said.

One of those frozen positions will be the bookmobile driver, whose route just began circulating again post-COVID.

Commission Chairman Chris Dougherty thanked Perone for the information.

"I don't want to make any cuts, but it's down to this. We just can't afford it, period. That's where we are, and every department is going to be hearing the same thing," Dougherty said.

Perone thanked the board for all its support over the years as well as the hard work of the staff, both of which made the library Business of the Year at the annual chamber of commerce banquet.

"Bradford County is known as the smallest library in the state that does the number of programs we do," Perone said. "We do programs for all ages. We do ESE programs. You name it, we do it. We bring in speakers. We bring in music acts, all kinds of stuff. Glow in the dark paint programs. You think, 'Oh, that's for kids!' You'd be surprised how many adults come to those programs."



Library patrons gathered on March 18 to learn how to make do-it-yourself seasonal decor. Pictured are (front row, l-r) Darlene Padgett, Karen Hardee, Sheila Jackson, (back row) Kathryn Luke, Cyndy Weeks, Sue Crawford, Vickie Crews, Loretta Edwards, Angela Aquinn, Karen Smith, Debbie Geiger, Dee Canova, Susan Nichols and Donna Jackson.



During an informative Introduction to Canning Workshop presented by UF/IFAS Extension Agent D'Alia Straughter, Virginia Autry listens to instructions for pickling onions as she prepares to use her culinary skills to slice red onion into thin strips without shedding a tear.



At the conclusion of a hands-on workshop at Bradford County Public Library, UF/IFAS Bradford Extension volunteer Dottie Yarbrough holds one of the highly recommended books for food preservation: "Ball, Complete Book of Home Preserving."



Member of the Senior Social Club at the Union County Public Library include: Jane Russell, Wanda Godwin, Donna Godwin, Diana Marko, Monica Bayer, Dot Green, Lynda Pettit, Patti Metz, Chandra Mabrey, Carrie Ford, Deivory Green and Claudette Stoutamire. In back is library staff member Tennille Brennen.

## Senior Social Club hosted by library

BY MARY BROWN  
Special to the Times

LAKE BUTLER — Last year the Union County Public Library began hosting programming for local seniors known as the Senior Social Club. On the first and fourth Tuesday at 10am each month the group comes together at the Union County Public Library for a couple of hours to enjoy a wide variety of programs. Some of the fun activities include playing Bingo, Wheel of Fortune and other fun games, learning cool life hacks, having various presenters and musicians attend, creating awesome crafts and much more. All seniors and adults are welcome to attend this

fun, energetic group.

Most recently, the library hosted an ensemble that played bluegrass gospel tunes for all to enjoy. Martin Feagle, Tracy Weaver and Roy Witcher all traveled from North Florida and Georgia to entertain at the senior program.

Coming up on April 5 at 10am, a very special speaker, Bob Stone is lined up to present at the library. Mr. Stone is a Florida Historian and independent folklorist and media producer based in Gainesville. Stone is the winner of the Florida Folk Heritage Award in recognition of his outstanding achievements as a lifelong advocate of the folk

arts and folk artists of Florida. He specializes in the history and culture of the nation's oldest cattle ranching state. See and hear all aspects of Florida cattle ranching traditions.

"We are very excited to have Bob Stone here. This program is not just for the seniors in our area. Anyone is welcome to attend this free event," said Mary Brown, Library Director. "The library was able to book Bob Stone through a Florida Humanities grant."

Other upcoming fun programs for the Senior Social Club include:

April 26 - An outdoor picnic where the seniors will play cornhole, disc golf and horse shoes.

May 3 - Heart Health program by the Health Department along with heart healthy snacks

May 24 - A local jam session with Denise Crawford and friends

June 7 - Crafting with Mrs. T

June 28 - Cooking with Chef Warren

All Union County seniors are encouraged to come to the library and participate in this program designed with them in mind.



Recent visitors to the Senior Social Club entertained the members with bluegrass gospel. Pictured are: Roy Witcher, Tracy Weaver and Martin Feagle.

## Keystone librarian retires after 33 years

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

GREEN COVE SPRINGS — Margaret Whipple was hired by the county in 1989 as a clerk in the Keystone Heights library and was promoted to branch manager in 2007.

County commissioners recognized Whipple's 33 years of service during their Feb. 8 meeting. Whipple officially retired on Jan. 31.

Commissioner Betsy Condon read a proclamation praising Whipple which said: "She was very devoted to her job, conscientious and engaged with the community. She has always gone above and beyond the call of duty to help patrons."

Condon said Whipple served all ages at the Keystone Heights branch, helping children obtain their first library cards and playing with students on board games after school, as well as helping older patrons with technology.

Condon added a personal note to the proclamation, saying Whipple helped her research science fair projects at the branch when the now-county commissioner was a student.

Condon also told Whipple that she has family members that are sorry to see the librarian go.



Retiring Keystone Heights librarian Margaret Whipple said her job at the Keystone Heights Library was rewarding beyond her paycheck. "I've gotten back much more than I've ever given," she said. Also pictured are Commissioners Betsy Condon and Wayne Bolla. Photo: Clay County Government.

"My Dad is already sad that you are gone," she said.

Whipple told commissioners that the rewards of her job went

much farther than the paycheck she received from the county.

"I've gotten back much more than I've ever given," she said.

## Soil and water group meeting

The Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District will meet on Tuesday, April 5, at 9 a.m. at the Bradford County Extension Office.

The FloodWise Communities Vulnerability Assessment will be discussed. There will also be reports on the status of BSWCD

projects and activities.

These meetings are open to the public. Contact Paul Still at 904-368-0291 or stillpe@aol.com for more information.

Wednesdays from 6 to 7 p.m. All are welcome.

## Easter Egg Hunt

Get free candy and pictures with the Easter Bunny at Kingsley Lake Baptist Church's annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 9, at 10 a.m. The church is located at 6289 MaryDot Lane, Starke.

## New Bible study time

Beginning in April, St. John Missionary Baptist Church's new Bible study time will be

## Bradford County Telegraph

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Lawtey Elementary proudly accepts the STAR Reading Competition trophy in a surprise announcement on Friday, March 18. On hand were Candace Osteen, BCSD school board member; Rebecca Ansley, LES curriculum resource teacher; Terri O'Quinn, LES principal; Superintendent Will Hartley; and trophy sponsor Kenny Clark, Bradford County property appraiser.

## Lawtey Elem. wins Star Reader comp

Monitoring student reading progress and sharing that progress with students builds confidence in reading as well as sets a path for establishing goals. Since January, elementary teachers throughout Bradford County have been conferencing and goal setting to help their students achieve reading proficiency.

Beginning Jan. 18, Bradford County School District launched its second semester elementary academic competition, Be a STAR Reader! For seven weeks students read literature, both fiction and nonfiction, focusing on Florida's state B.E.S.T. English Language Arts Standards. From letter names and sounds to digging into complex text for deeper understanding, students learned based on grade level content standards and expectations. Student-teacher conferencing opportunities included a time for individual celebration and goal setting.

Every school reported gains in the median scale score on the STAR reading assessment which is part of the progress monitoring system in Bradford County. One hundred percent of all grade levels reported gains in the median scale score. Proficiency levels established within the STAR reading assessment have strong correlations with the Florida State Standards Assessment proficiency which monitors the progress of all Florida schools. Third-, fourth- and fifth-grade groups across the district begin state required testing on April 4 and continue through May 20.

While each school was encouraged to provide grade level incentives through friendly class challenges, the district established criteria was based on the greatest median scale score increase. Congratulations go to Lawtey Elementary School who rose to the top with a 59.3-point

change when comparing like data from December to March.

Lawtey Elementary will be honored with a staff luncheon sponsored by Bradford County Telegraph Publisher John Miller. Students will receive an icy pop treat to enjoy as they have grown in reading proficiency. They've earned bragging rights for the year to prominently display the Elementary Reading Champion trophy sponsored by Kenny Clark, Bradford County property appraiser. Bradford County teachers, staff and administrators continue to encourage a love of reading in students daily.

Contest announcement comes on the dawn of FSA testing, which begins April 4 with fourth-through 10th-graders completing the writing portion of the FSA ELA Assessment and with third-grade ELA testing on April 5 and 6. See complete Bradford testing schedule included with this article.

## STEM-ulating learning is happening at Southside Elementary School

BY LILLY CHAPPEL  
Southside Elementary

STEM Night on March 4 brought students and parents together at Southside Elementary to tour the campus and engage in different activities that the students have been working on since August.

From special guests, Clay Electric Cooperative, Starke Dance Academy and Strickland's Scoop, our families learned about safety around electricity, how to make a human machine and were introduced to an owl monkey named Cachura.

The tour continued through classrooms where they learned how to make a cloud in a bottle, program robots in a race, explore their imaginations with blocks, become engineers with Keva Planks, build houses and work in a team to stack cups. Fun was had by all, and students who completed the tour were gifted with a building toy to take home.

On March 14-16, fifth-grade students attended a STEM camp from STARBASE out of Jacksonville. Director Bruce Griner, LaShanette Campbell and Kristen Whitney led this three-day camp here at Southside. During the camp, students learned how to create a space pod for the astronauts on a CAD computer program and designed a special protective seat to use for their astronaut Eggbert as the shuttle comes in for a landing.

Students observed the landing then came up with different ideas for their design. Two out of the 20 teams had a successful landing with no injuries. Because failure leads to more learning, students learned life lessons as well. As a bonus, Ms. Norman, Mrs. Harrell, and Mrs. Chappell also took on the challenge and successfully landed their astronaut.

STEM stands for Science,



Steven and Brayton Nugent and Ashley Driggers.



Rayne Hayes and Marissa Justice

Technology, Engineering and Education Foundation, Southside Mathematics. This is the first year of the program and we would like to extend a huge thank you to all that have supported this first year at Southside. The following have been a huge part of the success of the program: NEFEC, Clay Electric, Bradford

administrators Mrs. Melvin and Ms. Morgan, Bradford County Schools administration, and friends and families that are too numerous to mention. Can't wait to see what the future holds! Stay tuned. I see great things happening here at Southside!

## Letters

### Buy local

Dear Editor:

I think everyone wants to have the best for our county. We probably all wish that our county had more of what the larger counties have. But, do you know that where we spend our money has a direct effect on how successful our county is?

The larger counties like

Alachua and Duval do not need our money, but a lot of us feel that we can buy better and cheaper in these counties. I found out recently that a bigger county does not always mean cheaper price. I needed four tires for my truck, so I felt I needed to check every tire dealership in Alachua County. After checking I came back to Bradford County and bought those tires \$200 cheaper.

I later came back and bought a new truck right here, and it was cheaper.

The point is that the money we spend in this county comes back as tax revenue to help keep our county running. None of the money spent elsewhere comes back to us. We should make every effort to spend local. This does not apply to just individuals, but businesses should do the same.

And how many of the city and county projects are being done with local labor and contractors?

I think if we make an effort we will all see improvements in our county. This is not a new concept and several counties have tried this and it works. Local is better. Buy local!

Wayne Blankenship

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# Crime

## Recent arrests in Bradford, Union and Clay

March 19 through 25

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

Christopher Eric Creekmore, 45, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 23 for DUI.

Jeremiah Demaggio, 54, of Melrose was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 24 for making a false report.

According to an arrest report, the defendant's truck was taken by an acquaintance without his permission. However, he called 911 to report that the vehicle had been carjacked and the acquaintance was kidnapped at gunpoint.

Deputy B. Whitehead wrote in an arrest report that after speaking with Demaggio, he quickly determined the defendant fabricated the story he told dispatchers.

"When asked about this statement," Whitehead wrote, "he said he only made the lie up to get law enforcement to respond quickly to get his truck back faster because he had to go to work and could not wait weeks to get it back."

Forrest Everett Forbes, 28, of Green Cove Springs was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 19 for contempt of court and a probation violation.

Ryan Ashley Gaskins, 41, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 25 for contempt of court and a probation violation.

Lajames Lewis Jamison, 33, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 20 for failure to appear.

Ryan Olen Kitchens, 42, of Gainesville was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 26 for failure to appear, possession of drugs and driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Cheryl Yvonne Knowles, 54, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 22 for battery.

According to an arrest report, the victim was in the process of moving out of the defendant's house and was retrieving a battery when the defendant struck him in the head with a solar-powered yard light.

Shakira Desiree Mitchell, 21, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 22 for a probation violation.

Norman Dewitt Newman, 45, of Hampton was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 21 for failure to appear.

Eric Rohan Palmer, 34, of Gainesville was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 21 for a probation violation.

Charles Ronald Paterson, 21, of Jacksonville was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 23 for failure to appear.

Gari Alaina Perry, 32, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 25 for a probation violation.

Christopher David Plemons, 34, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies and Starke police on March 22 for battery and possession of drugs.

According to an arrest report, the defendant tried to grab a cell phone away from the victim during an argument and scratched the victim's neck during the struggle.

Juanita Sanders Smith Proffitt, 65, of Starke was arrested by Starke police on March 25 for fraud.

Trudy Lynn Randolph, 48, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 24 for fraud and exploitation of an elderly person with losses between \$10,000 and \$50,000.

Justin Kyle Randolph, 31, of Hampton was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 26 for a probation violation.

Landen Reese Siger, 41, of Macclenny was arrested by Starke police on March 22 for an out-of-county warrant.

Michael Thomas Trent, 31, of Pomona Park was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 25 for an out-of-county warrant.

William Anthony Vindigni, 40, of Apopka was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 23 for failure to appear.

Dominique Trev'on Williams, 22, of Starke was arrested by Starke police on March 21 for possession of marijuana, possession of drug equipment and an out-of-county warrant.

Rudolph Williams, 46, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 21 for failure to appear.

### Union

Donald Charles Fortune II, 38, of Raiford was arrested by Union deputies on March 23 for driving with a suspended or revoked license, possession of drugs, possession of drug equipment and an out-of-county warrant.

Jeremy Luke Powell, 37, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on March 22 for vehicle theft.

Cody Franklin Rowe, 32, of Starke was arrested by Union deputies on March 22 for an out-of-county warrant.

Jacob Elijah Thomas, 15, of Lake Butler was arrested by Union deputies on March 25 for aggravated battery.

According to an arrest report, the victim said the defendant stabbed the victim in the left thigh, lower leg and back, then fled on foot.

After deputies located the defendant at a nearby residence, they found a small folding knife in one of the defendant's pockets.

### Clay

Jonathan Joseph Brooker, 31, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 21 for sale and delivery of a controlled substance.

William James Costello, 38, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 22 for cruelty toward a child.

Duane Carl Damon, 48, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 22 for selling methamphetamine.

Christian Bryant Gray, 32, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 19 for battery.

According to an arrest report, the defendant struck his girlfriend of five months in the face after she told him she thought they should break up.

Megan Marie Lewis, 28, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 19 for domestic battery.

According to an arrest report the victim, who is the defendant's sister said Lewis struck her during an argument over money.

The defendant told deputies that the victim hit her first and that she responded in self-defense.

Anthony Ray Madron, 36, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 21 for fraudulent use of a credit card and a probation violation.

According to an arrest report, Madron admitted to stealing his mother's credit card and using the card 45 times for a total of \$1,592.72.

Robert William Matthews, 51, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 20 for burglary.

According to an arrest report, a neighbor reported seeing Matthews and another man near a vacant home on Immokalee Road.

Deputies found the pair in the process of removing appliances from the home. The two men said they were brought to the house by a methamphetamine dealer to which the two men owed money. The pair added that they were to remove the appliances from the home and load them onto the dealer's vehicle to settle the debts.

Paige Elizabeth Paterson, 26, of Keystone Heights was arrested by Clay deputies on March 21 for sale and delivery of fentanyl and possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

## Woman attacked at storage facility

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

STARKE — Starke police arrested a 67-year-old man after they said he attacked a 34-year-old Lawtey woman at a Starke self-storage facility.



Fayson

Alvin Jerome Fayson was arrested for assault, battery and false imprisonment on Monday, March 13.

According to court papers the incident occurred on Saturday, March 12 at Allen's Attic on Water Street.

The victim said she drove to the facility to put her toolbox in a storage unit and was approached by the defendant who offered her \$500 in exchange for sex.

The victim told officers the defendant resides in one of the storage units. She said she has spoken to the defendant before and has given him food.

The victim told officers that after she declined the \$500 offer and then refused to drive the man to a convenience store down the street, the defendant struck her in the mouth with a closed fist, busting her lip and damaging her teeth.

The woman then drove the man to the store. Fayson took the woman's keys with him into the building, preventing her from leaving and then after returning to the vehicle, attacked the woman again for around 15 minutes, striking her, choking her and threatening to kill her.

## Cleaned victim's home, then victim's bank account

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

STARKE— A woman who cleaned the home of a deceased elderly person was arrested after police determined she used a credit card linked to the victim's account to withdraw nearly \$22,000.



Randolph

Trudy Lynn Randolph, 48, of Starke was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 24 for fraud and exploitation of an elderly person with losses between \$10,000 and \$50,000.

According to a sworn affidavit, the victim's daughter discovered suspicious transactions on her mother's bank statement after the mother's death. The daughter told Starke police she believed the card belonged to the defendant.

Randolph told police she cleaned the victim's house for approximately one year and that the victim gave her permission to link the card to the bank account in order for the defendant to repay student loans.

Randolph added that the victim authorized her to use up to \$30,000 of the victim's funds.

The defendant told police that the transactions stopped after the death of the victim. However, police found 15 transactions totaling \$7,831 that occurred after the woman's death.

Detective Jonathan Guinn wrote that Randolph could not produce any documentation of the agreement between herself and the victim, who was 99 at the time of her death.

## Burglar falls asleep in spare bedroom

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

LAKE BUTLER— A Lulu man told Union deputies that drones led him to break into a Lake Butler residence and watch television before falling asleep in

a spare bedroom.

Matthew Edward Odom, 46, was arrested by deputies on March 18 after a woman discovered the intruder snoozing in a bedroom next to her own.

The victim told Deputy Staci L. Stock that she discovered the man after waking up.

"(The victim) told me that she woke up and went to put something into the room next to hers when she discovered the suspect sleeping in her spare bed," wrote Stock in an arrest report. "(The victim) told me that she quietly went to her bedroom, locked the door, armed herself and then called 911."

Stock wrote that the defendant may have entered the home through a front door left unlocked.

"There were no signs of forced entry," she wrote. "It appeared that prior to entering the house, Odom took off his shoes and pants, leaving them on the front porch along with a large, plastic box with his belongings. It appeared he sat down and watched television prior to trying to locate the most comfortable bed in which to sleep."

The deputy added that it appeared Odom tried out an upstairs bedroom before settling on the room next to the homeowner.

Stock wrote that Odom appeared to be under the influence of methamphetamine or some other mind-altering drug.

"He kept telling Deputy Johnson and I that he was led to this house by the drones," Stock wrote. "He said, 'Just check the SD cards and you will see that the drones led me here.'"

Stock wrote that the case was turned over to the sheriff's office investigations unit and that a detective collected several SD cards among the defendant's belongings.

## Man arrested for beating 6-year-old

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — Clay deputies arrested William James Costello, 38, of Immokalee Road on March 22 for cruelty toward a child.

According to an arrest warrant affidavit, the child's mother reported bruising on the 6-year-old after the boy visited his father over a weekend in January. The father sent a text message to the mother telling her he had spanked his son because the boy continuously lied to him.

The mother also had photographs of a 2018 spanking which left bruising on the child. She told Clay Sheriff's Detective J.R. Drury that she reported the 2018 incident to the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, but a criminal investigation was not pursued.

Drury wrote that he and a Florida Department of Children and Families investigator interviewed the victim at the First Coast Child Protection Team in Jacksonville where the victim said his father beat him with a cooking spatula several times.

When the detective contacted the defendant by phone, Costello refused to meet with law enforcement.

"He further advised he does not want to speak to DCF and does not want them on his property and will not agree to any sanctions placed by DCF," wrote Drury. "The defendant went on to explain that corporal punishment is legal in the state of Florida and that he did nothing wrong."

The detective wrote that the bruises on the victim were consistent with excessive and unreasonable corporal punishment indicative of child abuse.

## Trial dates set for Lake Butler men accused of abusing bears

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

LAKE BUTLER— April trial dates have been set in Marion County for three Lake Butler men accused of abusing bears in



Dustin Reddish posted a photo of himself with a dead bear on Instagram in September 2018.

the Ocala National Forest.

Dustin Reddish, William Tyler Wood and Troy Travis Starling are charged with several felonies and misdemeanors including animal cruelty, illegal taking and baiting of black bear and Florida RICO Act violations.

Also slated for trial is Christopher Lindsey of Moultrie, Georgia.

According to a news release by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the defendants lured black bears by placing drums of dog food, doughnuts, pastries and peanut butter in various areas throughout Baker, Flagler, Marion and Union counties. The defendants then used large packs of dogs to chase and maul the black bears.

"After some of the attacks, the defendants posted numerous videos of the acts on Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat," the agency said in the news release. "None of the individuals involved tried to call off the dogs or stop the attack on the bears. The Office of Statewide Prosecution obtained warrants for the social media accounts where the defendants posted videos of the attacks."

Another defendant: William Edward Landrum of Millbro, Virginia pleaded guilty on March 25 to animal cruelty and will serve 5 years' probation.

In 2020 Haley Anders of Lake Butler pleaded guilty to similar charges and agreed to testify against eight co-defendants, including her ex-husband, Dustin Reddish.

Anders will serve between 18 months and 4 years in prison. Also pleading guilty with promises to help prosecutors are Christopher Elliot Haun of Ormond Beach who will be sentenced to 8 years' probation, Charles "Buddy" Luther Scarbough III of Callahan who will be sentenced to between 5 years' probation and 5 years in prison and Hannah Scarbough of Callahan who will be sentenced to 5 years' probation.

According to a probable cause affidavit obtained by an Orlando television station, FWC obtained information in January 2018 that black bears were being killed by dogs in North Florida after being baited.

Following the tip, FWC conducted an 11-month investigation which included examining the defendants' social media accounts and placing a GPS tracking device on Dustin Reddish's truck.

Investigators found videos posted on Haley Reddish's Instagram account in November 2017 showing dogs fighting with bears.

News 6 also reported that in a Feb. 11, 2018, Instagram video posted on Haley Reddish's account, a bear is videoed clinging to the top of a tree while dogs barked below.

"Someone can be heard beating the tree with a stick, according to FWC, which causes the bear to jump off and land on the ground where it is attacked by a pack of dogs," the station reported.

"This bear thought he could fly," Reddish allegedly wrote on her Instagram page under the video.

News 6 also said investigators believe the group was training dogs to hunt bears in order to sell the dogs in states that allow bear hunting. Florida does not.

## Charges dropped for two

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

STARKE — The State Attorney's Office dropped charges against Mario Lavon Hankerson and Frank Harold Warring.

Hankerson was arrested on July 1, 2021, for the distribution of cocaine.

Warring was arrested by Bradford deputies on June 29, 2021, for trafficking in methamphetamine, possession of drug equipment and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

## FHP: man hit by car while pumping gas

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

STARKE — The Florida Highway Patrol said a 26-year-old man was driving east on Southeast 144th Avenue in Bradford County during the

evening of Tuesday, March 22, drove across State Road 100 and into the parking lot of a Circle K gas station.

The SUV hit the front of a parked car at a gas pump, then hit the gas pump itself, along

with the 19-year-old who had been standing at the pump next to the car.

Both men were transported to area hospitals with non-life-threatening injuries.



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# Water from Black Creek to flow south in August 2024

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS — The executive director of the Lake Region Development Corporation said the Black Creek Water Resource Development Project is still on track to break ground in August and should be operational two years later.

Scott Kornegay said during the March 24 meeting of a Clay Chamber group in Keystone Heights that the St. Johns Water Management District is awaiting one last permit from the Army Corps of Engineers before proceeding with bidding.

When complete the 17-mile pipeline will pump up to 10 million gallons of water a day from Black Creek to a recharge area in southern Camp Blanding.

"Twenty-four months from the time they start digging," he said, "we should be pulling water from the south prong of Black Creek into Lake Brooklyn."



Scott Kornegay addresses the Clay Chamber's Lake Region Prosperity Council on March 24.



Clay Electric's Derick Thomas hands the keys to a 2016 Ford Fusion to Ryan and Jaclyn Palmer of Orange Park. Photo: Clay Electric Cooperative.

## Orange Park couple wins Clay Electric's car giveaway

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS— Clay Electric announced prize winners and trustee elections results before its March 26th annual meeting.

Ryan and Jaclyn Palmer of Orange Park won the grand prize, a 2016 Ford Fusion in the

co-op's annual meeting trustee election prize drawing.

The co-op said this is the 24th consecutive year it has given one of its retired fleet vehicles to members.

The cooperative also announced the winners of its trustee election with incumbents Carl Hagglund, Jo Ann R. Smith

and Karen Hastings winning reelection.

This year, the co-op limited voting to absentee ballots, and prize winners were drawn from absentee ballots.

Additional door prizes will be given away during the co-op's 84th annual meeting on March 26.

## New chamber head visits KH

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, Friday, March 25, 2022— The new leader of the Clay County Chamber of Commerce stopped by the chamber's Lake Region Prosperity Council meeting Thursday night at Keystone's Cedar River Sea Food.

The chamber's board of directors appointed Dana Heisler as director of operations after the departure of President Wendell Chindra.

The owner of Heisler Studios in Green Cove Springs, Heisler has participated in chamber councils and committees over the past three years. Last year she joined the organization's board of directors.

Heisler encouraged the Keystone crowd to stay in contact with her and other chamber representatives.

"If you don't reach out to me," she said, "I will reach out to you."

Heisler also said that her family has long-term land holdings in the Lake Region, "so I am very emotionally attached to Keystone."



Clay Chamber Director of Operations Dana Heisler speaks to the Lake Region Prosperity Council Thursday night in Keystone Heights.

## County loses \$15k due to recordkeeping omissions

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
Monitor Editor

GREEN COVE SPRINGS —Clay County Sheriff's Office CFO Vicki Adams told Clay County Commissioners that because the office did not properly track administrative costs for a grant, the county must forfeit \$15,662.75 of grant funds.

The \$313,255 grant was from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and paid for the installation of a generator.

"Unfortunately, with turnover, these administrative costs were

not tracked," Adams said, "and I don't have the records to recreate. I fully recognize the importance of taking on that opportunity in the future, and we are working with the county to implement a process to make sure that when a grant does afford the opportunity to try to recoup administrative costs, we have the records in place in order to establish that and seek reimbursement."

Commissioner Jim Renninger recommended that all future grants be administered by the county's grant department and

not by the county's operating departments or independent agencies like the sheriff's office.

"We have a grant department," Renninger said. "We have certified grant writers, certified grant managers. We have a skill set here that they don't have, and tonight was a reflection of that. It costed the county \$15,000 and that's just the tip of the iceberg."

Renninger also said the person responsible for the oversight that costed the county over \$15,000 is no longer employed by the government.

## Tree climbing sessions at Camp Montgomery

Come share the joy of being aloft high in the canopy of a leafy tree. Global Organization of Tree Climbers and WildRice Adventures will guide you into the treetop canopy.

Safety and fun are the two most important criteria as you are going out on a limb. You will be safe and sound in your harnesses secured with a rope and wearing a helmet under the supervision of professional staff. They even have therapeutic climbing gear to access the treetops, so please don't let any special personal challenges hinder you from accessing the treetop canopy.

Suggested: wear comfortable clothes such as long pants, T-shirts and closed toe shoes that are sturdy (no sandals, flipflops, etc.). Please bring a water bottle, insect repellent and sun block. You may want to bring climbing gloves and a lawn/camp chair as well.

The climbing event is free (donations are accepted to help continue to offer these programs) and will occur at Camp Montgomery, 88 SE 75th St., Starke.

Six sessions are available: Saturday, April 2, from 1 to 2 p.m. and 2 to 3 p.m.; and Sunday, April 3, from 10 to 11 a.m., 11 a.m. to noon, 2 to 3 p.m. and 3 to 4 p.m.

They are also offering an Adaptive Climbing Techniques Workshop for educators and high adventure facilitators on Saturday April 2, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Limited spots are available, so please RSVP by contacting Dan House at treeclimbingkansascity@yahoo.com or call 913-282-3283.

For more information about rope-assisted tree climbing, you can go to [www.gotreeclimbing.org](http://www.gotreeclimbing.org) or [wildriceadventures.com](http://wildriceadventures.com).



## Christ Lutheran Easter schedule

Christ Lutheran Church, located at 3760 SE S.R. 21 in Keystone Heights, is holding midweek Lenten services at 7 p.m. each Wednesday.

The Holy Week schedule includes the Palm Sunday service on April 10, the Maundy Thursday Service on April 14 and the Good Friday service on April 15, all at 7 p.m. Easter Sunday service will be at 10 a.m. with brunch to follow at 11 a.m.

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## Basketball and tutoring

The Concerned Citizens of Bradford County's 2022 Jr. NBA Spring Basketball League

will play every Tuesday and Thursday through April 28, 6-9 p.m. This developmental basketball league will also include free tutoring for all kids K-8th grade from 5-7 p.m. Parents please bring your kids to not only develop basketball skills but also develop and improve their academic skills.

## Faith & Family Ag Festival

Promised Land Family Ministries in Lake Butler invites everyone to its Faith and Family Ag Festival on Saturday, April 2, from 8:45 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The festival is designed for K-12 youth and their families to enjoy agricultural activities, games, prizes and food. It is free for all.

Preregistration is strongly encouraged at [www.PromisedLandFM.org](http://www.PromisedLandFM.org) or on Facebook @PromisedLandFM.

In person registration begins at 8:45 a.m. the day of the event. The welcome begins at 9:15, followed by activities, lunch and prizes.

Promised Land Family Ministries is located at 6886 SW 74th Way in Lake Butler.

## 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 on

Thursday, April 14, from 3-5 p.m. at the Bradford County Health Department. 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. You'll also receive up to four weeks of free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges.

This group more than doubles your chance of quitting for good.

Pre-registration is required. Call 866-341-2730 to reserve your spot.

## Hunt glowing eggs

Believer's Worship Center, 8736 S.R. 21 in Melrose, will have a Glow in the Dark Easter Egg Hunt on Friday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m. There will be refreshments and door prizes and, of course, candy for all! Bring your friends and family. This is a free event.

## Melrose Fire Fest

The third annual Melrose Fire Fest will take place Saturday, April 23, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Melrose Heritage Park.

The festival includes music, vendors, barbecue meals, fried okra, raffles and more. Entry is \$1 per person, but children 10 and under enter for free.

Interested vendors may contact Barbara Franklin at 352-478-1372 or [franlin@keystoneheightsins.com](mailto:franlin@keystoneheightsins.com).

All proceeds benefit the Melrose Volunteer Fire Department.

# Legal Notices

## Bradford

### NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINT

To: Ivan T. Sargeant  
Case No.: CD202200666/D 1708101  
An Administrative Complaint to revoke your license and eligibility for licensure has been filed against you. You have the right to request a hearing pursuant to Sections 120.569 and 120.57, Florida Statutes, by mailing a request for same to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Licensing, Post Office Box 5708 Tallahassee, Florida 32314-5708. If a request for hearing is not received by 21 days from the date of the last publication, the right to hearing in this matter will be waived and the Department will dispose of this cause in accordance with law.

3/10 4tchg 3/31-BCT

### IN THE CIRCUIT COURT IN AND FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA

PROBATE DIVISION  
File Number: 04-2021-CP-000115  
AMENDED PETITION FOR SUMMARY ADMINISTRATION  
IN THE ESTATE OF: CORNEILUS C. SCOTT, Deceased

You are hereby notified that an Amended Petition For Summary Administration has been filed in Bradford county, Florida, Probate Division, Clerk of Court, Bradford County, Probate Division, 945 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091. The decedent's date of death was May 06, 2021. The total value of the estate is \$5,886.00. The name/s of the beneficiary/ies are as follows: Mary Beth Scott, address unknown, Neil C. Scott, Daniel R. Scott, Douglas Scott, Michael Scott, and Cleighton Scott. You are required to respond with any claims or demands against decedent's estate to the Clerk of the Court, Bradford County, Probate Division, File Number: 04-2021-CP-000115, in the estate of Cornelius C. Scott.

A hearing is scheduled for Case Management Conference on Monday, April 18, 2022, at 11:30am, as to the status of providing formal notice to Mary Beth Scott, and as to subsequent amendments to the petition to reflect surviving spouse's intestate share of the estate.

Petitioner  
Daniel R. Scott  
645 Lake Susan Road  
Hawthorne, Florida 32640

3/24 2tchg 3/31-BCT

### BUDGET WORKSHOP

THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Board of County Commissioners of Bradford County, Florida will hold a budget workshop on April 6, 2022 at 6:00 PM at the Bradford County Courthouse, located at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida.

The public is encouraged to visit [www.bradfordcountyyfl.gov/meetings](http://www.bradfordcountyyfl.gov/meetings) or to call the Office of the County Manager at (904) 966-6327 to obtain a copy of the agenda for this meeting.

3/24 2tchg 3/31-BCT

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

PROBATE DIVISION  
CASE NO.: 21-000134-CP  
IN RE: ESTATE OF ELIJAH JONATHAN LANGILLE, Decedent.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
The administration of the estate of ELIJAH JONATHAN LANGILLE, deceased, whose date of death was August 26, 2021, is pending in the Circuit Court for Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 945 North Temple Avenue, P.O. Drawer B, 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 24, 2022. Attorney for Personal Representative: Personal Representative: ROBERT A. RUSH, P.A. Marian B. Rush, Esq. [marian@robertarushpa.com](mailto:marian@robertarushpa.com) Florida Bar No.: 3 73583 11 SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Gainesville, FL 32601 (352) 373-7566 Maria A. Puffer 474 S.E. 43<sup>rd</sup> Street

Keystone Heights, FL 32656  
3/24 2tchg 3/31-BCT

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned Starke 301 U-Store LLC, pursuant to SECTION 83.801-809 Florida Statutes "Storage Facility Act" will sell to the highest bidder the contents of the following storage units located at 1650 S. Walnut Street, Starke, Florida 32091. Said contents consisting of personal property, household and other goods, furniture, etc., or as otherwise indicated. Sale will take place April 16th, 2022 @ 11:00am. This sale is being made to satisfy a statutory lien. Registration will begin at 10:15am.

A27- Ciera Oliver  
B73- Yolunda Pruitt  
B58- Kimberly Sanford  
Entire contents of the following units will be sold to satisfy a lien & other charges according to Florida Statutes 83.806. Seller reserves the right to reject any bids and to withdraw any unit from such sale. Open bids only. CASH PAYMENTS ONLY All Sales Are Final. 10% Buyers Premium. Contents must be removed by close of business 4/16/2022. For any winning bid the buyer must present a \$50.00 cleaning fee for each winning unit and is refundable upon returning the unit broom swept by close of business 4/16/2022.

3/31 2tchg 4/7-BCT

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:

MIRACLE AUTOMOTIVE & TRUCK SERVICE CENTER INC. gives notice that on 04/15/2022 at 12:00 PM the following vehicle(s) may be sold by public sale at 620 N. THOMPSON ST. STARKE FL 32091 to satisfy the lien for the amount owed on each vehicle for any recovery, towing, or storage services charges and administrative fees allowed pursuant to Florida statute 713.78.

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3/31 1tchg-BCT

### NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME

Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the undersigned: Starke Community Church, 2138 N. Temple Ave., Starke, FL 32091 sole owner, doing business under the firm name of: Fusion Coffee House, 2138 N. Temple Ave., Starke, FL 32091, intends to register fictitious name under the aforesaid statute. Dated this 24th day of March A.D., 2022, in Bradford County.

3/31 1tchg-BCT

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

CIVIL ACTION  
Case #: 2018-CA-000553  
Wells Fargo Bank, NA  
Plaintiff,

-vs.-  
Tabitha Nicole Terry a/k/a Tabitha Nicole Moore a/k/a Tabitha N. Terry a/k/a Tabitha N. Moore a/k/a Tabitha Terry a/k/a Tabitha Harvey; Unknown Heirs, Devisees, Grantees, Assignees, Creditors, Lienors, and Trustees of Ricky Allen Terry a/k/a Rick Allen Terry a/k/a Ricky A. Terry a/k/a Rick A. Terry a/k/a Ricky Terry, Deceased, and All Other Persons Claiming by and Through, Under, Against The Named Defendant (s); Unknown Spouse of Tabitha Nicole Terry a/k/a Tabitha Nicole Moore a/k/a Tabitha N. Terry a/k/a Tabitha N. Moore a/k/a Tabitha Terry a/k/a Tabitha Harvey; Florida Credit Union; Unknown Parties in Possession #1, if living, and all Unknown Parties claiming by, through, under and against the above named Defendant(s) who are not known to be dead or alive, whether said Unknown Parties may claim an interest as Spouse, Heirs, Devisees, Grantees, or Other Claimants; Unknown Parties in Possession #2, if living, and all Unknown Parties claiming by, through, under and against the above named Defendant(s) who are not known to be dead or alive, whether said Unknown Parties may claim an interest as Spouse, Heirs, Devisees, Grantees, Assignees, Creditors, Lienors, and Trustees of Kathy J. Terry a/k/a Kathy Geiger a/k/a Kathy Eaton, Deceased, and All Other Persons Claiming by and Through, Under, Against The Named Defendant(s)

Plaintiff,

TO: Tabitha Nicole Terry a/k/a Tabitha Nicole Moore a/k/a Tabitha N. Terry a/k/a Tabitha N. Moore a/k/a Tabitha Terry a/k/a Tabitha Harvey; LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: 17145 SW 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Starke, FL 32091 and Bradford Land & Cattle Company, Inc, a dissolved Florida Corporation; Unknown Heirs, Devisees, Grantees, Assignees, Creditors, Lienors, and Trustees of Kathy J. Terry a/k/a Kathy Geiger a/k/a Kathy Eaton, Deceased, and All Other Persons Claiming by and Through, Under, Against The Named Defendant(s)

NOTICE OF ACTION FORECLOSURE PROCEEDINGS-PROPERTY

TO: Tabitha Nicole Terry a/k/a Tabitha Nicole Moore a/k/a Tabitha N. Terry a/k/a Tabitha N. Moore a/k/a Tabitha Terry a/k/a Tabitha Harvey; LAST KNOWN ADDRESS: 17145 SW 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Starke, FL 32091 and Bradford Land & Cattle Company, Inc, a dissolved Florida Corporation; Unknown Heirs, Devisees, Grantees, Assignees, Creditors, Lienors, and Trustees of Kathy J. Terry a/k/a Kathy Geiger a/k/a Kathy Eaton, Deceased, and All Other Persons Claiming by and Through, Under, Against The Named Defendant(s)

Residence unknown, if living, including any unknown spouse of the said Defendants, if either has remarried and if either or both of said Defendants are dead, their respective unknown heirs, devisees, grantees, assignees, creditors, lienors, and trustees, and all other persons claiming by, through, under or against the named Defendant(s); and the aforementioned named Defendant(s) and such of the aforementioned unknown Defendants and such of the

aforementioned unknown Defendants or they may be infants, incompetents or otherwise not sui juris.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that an action has been commenced to foreclose a mortgage on the following real property, lying and being and situated in Bradford County, Florida, more particularly described as follows: LOT 12 RIVER BEND ESTATES (AN UNRECORDED SUBDIVISION) LYING IN THE EAST 1/4 OF THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 19, TOWNSHIP 7 SOUTH, RANGE 21 EAST, BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA; SAID LOT BEING CONVEYED WITH A RIGHT OF INGRESS AND EGRESS OVER EASEMENTS AS SHOWN ON SAID PLAT, ALSO BEING SUBJECT TO EASEMENTS TO CLAY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC., AS SHOWN ON SAID PLAT; SUBJECT TO COVENANTS AND RESTRICTIONS, DATED NOVEMBER 1, 1984, RECORDED NOVEMBER 1, 1984, IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 239, PAGE 460, ET. SEQ., PUBLIC RECORDS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA. SAID PARCEL BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID RIVER BEND ESTATES; THENCE S 00°18'49" W ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID PLAT FOR A DISTANCE OF 1688.74 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, BEING THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 12; THENCE S 00°18'49" W ALONG THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 12 FOR A DISTANCE OF 140.02 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 12; THENCE N 89°22'03" E ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 12 FOR A DISTANCE OF 640.80 FEET TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID LOT 12; THENCE S 89°22'03" W ALONG THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 12 FOR A DISTANCE OF 637.79 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. TOGETHER WITH THAT CERTAIN MANUFACTURED HOME, YEAR: 2005, MAKE: FLEETWOOD, VIN#: GAFL435A89637EX21 AND VIN#: GAFL435B89637EX21.

more commonly known as 10248 Southwest 111th Avenue, f/k/a 10248 Southwest 111th Avenue Graham, FL 32042, Brooker, FL 32042.

This action has been filed against you and you are required to serve a copy of your written defense, if any, upon LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP, Attorneys for Plaintiff, whose address is 2424 North Federal Highway, Suite 360, Boca Raton, FL 33431, within thirty (30) days after the first publication of this notice and file the original with the clerk of this Court either before with service on Plaintiff's attorney or immediately there after; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint. WITNESS my hand and seal of this Court on the 22 day of March, 2022. Denny Thompson  
Circuit and County Courts  
By: Lisa Brannon  
Deputy Clerk

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator: 201 East University Avenue, Room 410, Gainesville, Florida 32601 (352) 491-4490 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification of the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days. If you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

3/31 4tchg 4/7-BCT

### NOTICE OF WORKSHOP

The Lawtrey City Council will be conducting a workshop to discuss City Ordinances on Monday, April 4, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at Lawtrey City Hall, 2793 Lake St. Lawtrey, FL 32058. All interested parties are invited to attend. The regularly schedules monthly council meeting will follow at 7 p.m.

3/31 1tchg-BCT

### NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN:

Jennifer L. McCaulley  
Last known address of:  
13285 SW County Road 227  
Starke FL 32091

You are hereby notified that your eligibility to vote is in question. You are required to contact the Supervisor of Elections, in Starke, Florida, no later than thirty (30) days after the date of this publishing. Failure to respond will result in a determination of ineligibility by the Supervisor and your name will be removed from the statewide voter registration system. Published one time in the Bradford County Telegraph  
Amanda Seyfang  
Bradford County Supervisor of Elections  
P. O. Box 58  
945 N. Temple Ave., Suite C  
Starke, FL 32091  
Date: March 28, 2022

3/31 1tchg-BCT

CITY OF STARKE FL - EAST CALL STREET LIFT STATION REPLACEMENT LEGAL NOTICE  
City of Starke, Florida (Owner) will receive sealed Bids for East Call Street Lift Station Replacement, CWSRF W0040200, until 3:00 p.m. local time on May 4, 2022 at City of

Starke Florida, City Manager's Office, City Hall, P.O. Drawer C, Starke, FL 32091. Bids received will then and there be publicly opened and read aloud. Bid security in the amount of 5 percent of the Bid must accompany the Bid. This Project consists of reconstruction of an existing pump station; and all materials and equipment, services and construction inherent to the Work. The Work shall be substantially complete by January 31, 2023 and completed and ready for final payment by March 2, 2023 as set forth in the Agreement.

Pre-Bid conference by web conference at 11:00 a.m. local time on April 14, 2022. Instructions for web conference to be sent to registered parties in advance. Bidding Documents may be obtained electronically at no cost on or after 10:00 a.m. on April 4, 2022 by registering with the Issuing Office via email only at [dandrews@woodardcurran.com](mailto:dandrews@woodardcurran.com) (and a copy to [shines@woodardcurran.com](mailto:shines@woodardcurran.com)) with the subject line "Starke FL - East Call Street Lift Station Replacement" to obtain the Bidding Documents and other related public information. Printed copies will not be made available.

The Project being bid is subject to Section 255.20 Florida Statutes and other applicable Laws. The Owner expects to finance the resulting Agreement/Contract with assistance from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), which administers a State Revolving Fund loan program supported in part with funds directly made available by grants from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Applicable requirements include and compliance with following is required as a minimum: Florida Administrative Code Chapter 62-503 (Revolving Loan Program) and/or Chapter 62-552 as applicable; applicable female participation; affirmative action and equal employment opportunity provisions; the American Iron and Steel requirements of H.R. 3547 "Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014"; and the Davis Bacon Act and wages. The goals and timetables for minority and female participation, expressed in percentage terms for the Contractor's aggregate workforce in each trade on all construction work in Florida, are as follows:

Goal for female participation: 6.9 percent statewide

Goal for minority participation: 22.2 percent for Bradford County

3/31 1tchg-BCT

### NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REGISTER FICTITIOUS NAME

Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given that the undersigned: Julie Hammock, 587 SE 43rd Street, Keystone Heights, FL 32656, sole owner, doing business under the firm name of: HAMMOCK HAVEN PAWS PLUS, 587 SE 43rd Street, Keystone Heights, FL 32656 intends to register fictitious name under the aforesaid statute. Dated this 31st day of March A.D. 2022, in Bradford County.

3/31 1tchg-BCT

### STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

#### NOTICE OF DRAFT PERMIT

The Department of Environmental Protection gives notice of its preparation of a draft permit in the Chemours Company FC LLC, that applied on September 28, 2020, to the Department of Environmental Protection for a permit to construct and operate a new 0.13-MGD industrial wastewater treatment facility which would discharge 0.130 MGD AADF of process wastewater and stormwater to waterbody ID numbers 3630, 3605F, 3605, and 3605C. The proposed new discharge (D-001) will send treated water to a remnant man-made ditch that connects to further downstream features until it joins with Double Run Creek (5.3 miles downstream from the facility discharge point at D-001). Double Run creek flows to the south and into the Santa Fe Swamp. The facility will have the option for a secondary discharge alternative/backup (D-002) through a remnant man-made ditch to Blue Pond and then south and ultimately to Lake Brooklyn and Lake Geneva. This alternative discharge (D-002) is the existing point of discharge ditch that flows to Blue Pond (Class III Fresh waters, WBID#2245A). The facility will be located at latitude 29° 54' 46.15" N, longitude 82° 1' 52.35" W, on 5222 Treat Road, Starke, Florida 32091 in Bradford County. The Department has assigned permit file number FLOA00014-001-1W3S to the proposed project.

The permit application file and supporting data are available for public inspection during normal business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays, at the Department's Northeast District Office, 8800 Baymeadows Way West, Suite 100, Jacksonville, Florida 32256-7577, at phone number (904)256-1700.

#### NOTICE OF RIGHTS

The Department intends to issue the permit unless as a result of public comment appropriate changes are made. Written Comments or Request for Public Meeting  
Any interested person may submit written comments on the Department's proposed permitting decision or may submit a written request for a public meeting to Florida

DEP, Permitting Program, 8800 Baymeadows Way West, Suite 100, Jacksonville, Florida 32256-7577, in accordance with Rule 62-620.555, F.A.C. The comments or request for a public meeting must contain the information set forth below and must be received in the Department's Northeast District Office.

The comments or request for a public meeting must contain the following information:

The commenter's name, address, and telephone number; the applicant's name and address; the Department permit file number; and the county in which the project is proposed; A statement of how and when notice of the Department's action or proposed action was received; A statement of the facts the Department should consider in making the final decision; A statement of which rules or statutes require reversal or modification of the Department's action or proposed action; and

If desired, a request that a public meeting be scheduled, including a statement of the nature of the issues proposed to be raised at the meeting. If a public meeting is held, any person may submit oral or written statements and data at the public meeting on the Department's proposed action. As a result of significant public comment, the Department's final action may be different from the position taken by it in this draft permit.

Time Period for Submitting Written Comments or Requesting a Public Meeting

Comments submitted by any persons other than the applicant, and other than those entitled to notice under Rule 62-620.550, F.A.C., must be received within 30 days of publication of the public notice. Failure to submit comments or request a public meeting within this time period shall constitute a waiver of any right such person may have to submit comments or request a public meeting under Rule 62-620.555, F.A.C.

If a public meeting is scheduled, the public comment period is extended until the close of the public meeting. However, the Department may not always grant a request for a public meeting. Therefore, written comments should be submitted within 30 days of publication of this notice, even if a public meeting is requested.

3/31 1tchg-BCT

### IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION

File No. 042022CP000001CPAXMX  
IN RE: ESTATE OF CHARLES WRIGHT  
Probate Division  
Deceased

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The administration of the estate of Charles Wright, deceased, whose date of death was April 2, 2021, is pending in the Circuit Court for Bradford County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 945 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida 32091. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

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

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

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

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

The date of first publication of this notice is March 10, 2022.

Attorney for Personal Representative: Andrew E. Gindea, Esq.

Florida Bar No. 109688  
Sachs Sax Caplan  
Attorneys for Personal Representative

6111 Broken Sound Pkwy NW, Suite 200  
Boca Raton, Florida 33487  
Phone: 561-994-4499

E-mail: [agindea@ssclawfirm.com](mailto:agindea@ssclawfirm.com)  
E-mail: [martascos@ssclawfirm.com](mailto:martascos@ssclawfirm.com)  
Personal Representative:

Joseph Walker  
799 Joe Lewis Avenue  
Pahokee, Florida 33476

3/31 2tchg 4/7-BCT

### FOR SALE

COMMUNITY STATE BANK WILL BE ACCEPTING SEALED BIDS ON A 2013 FORD ESCAPE FROM MARCH 31, 2022 THRU APRIL 13, 2022. PLEASE CALL COMMUNITY STATE BANK @ (904)964-7830 OR (904)364-2867. COMMUNITY STATE BANK HAS THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ANY AND ALL BIDS. VEHICLE WILL BE SOLD AS IS.

3/31 2tchg 4/7-BCT

BUDGET WORKSHOP  
THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Board of County

Commissioners of Bradford County, Florida will hold a budget workshop on April 12, 2022 at 6:00 PM at the Bradford County Courthouse, located at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida.

The public is encouraged to visit [www.bradfordcountyyfl.gov/meetings](http://www.bradfordcountyyfl.gov/meetings) or to call the Office of the County Manager at (904) 966-6327 to obtain a copy of the agenda for this meeting.

3/31 2tchg 4/7-BCT

## Union

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA.  
Case No.: 63-2022-DR-006

IN RE: Maegan S. Kelly, I  
Petitioner,  
and  
Jesse R. Kelly,  
Respondent.

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE  
TO: Jesse R. Kelly  
8391 SW 155<sup>th</sup> Road  
Lake Butler, FL 32054 (last known address)

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for dissolution of marriage and an urgent motion for temporary relief have been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to iton Katherine E. Macdonald, attorney for Maegan S. Kelly, Petitioner, whose address is 2233 N.W. 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 300-D, Gainesville, FL 32606, on or before April 28, 2022, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court, Union County Courthouse, 55 West Main Street, Room 103, Lake Butler, FL 32054, before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. If you fail

# Bradford FFA students show poultry champs at Bradford Agricultural Fair

Bradford's senior FFA chapter received the grand championship and reserve grand championship awards at this year's Bradford Agricultural Fair.

The grand champion was a White Leghorn hen, while the reserve grand champion, was a Red Cochon hen.

The chapter also had an additional entry in a Golden Sebright hen that earned a red ribbon.

Avery DeKorver earned four blue ribbons for a Naked-Neck Turken hen, a Mille Fleur hen and two Mille Fleur roosters. She also earned two red ribbons for White-Crested Polish hen and a White-Crested Polish rooster.

Reagan Adams, Jasper Ballard, Koy Hartley, Gavin Key, Kyndal Key and Blayne Taylor each

earned two blue ribbons each: Adams for a Mille Fleur hen and Mille Fleur rooster, Ballard for an Australorp hen and a Speckled Sussex hen, Hartley for Cochon rooster and a Naked-Neck Turken rooster, Gavin Key for a Black Australorp hen and a Crested Polish hens, Kyndal Key for a Welsummer hen and a White Leghorn hen, and Taylor for two Mille Fleur hens.

Taylor also earned two red ribbons for a Cochon-Silkie hen and a Golden Sebright hen, while Ballard earned a white ribbon for a mixed rooster.

The following earned one blue ribbon: Hallie Ballard for a Black Australorp hen, Hunter Brewster for a Black Australorp hen, Jackson Brewster for a Black Sexlink hen, Adeline DeKorver



Bradford senior FFA students Amanda Zink and Kyndal Key hold the chapter's grand champion in this year's poultry show at the Bradford Agricultural Fair. Key also won senior showmanship. Photos provided courtesy of Kaitlin VanHeusen.

for a Modern Game Bantam rooster, Shalyn Hannah for a Black Australorp hen, Mckynzie Stopka for an Ameraucana hen, James Taylor for a Barred-Rock Hen, Nick Ward for a bearded Belgian d'Anver rooster and Shaun Ward for a bearded Belgian d'Anver rooster.

Adeline DeKorver also earned two red ribbons for an Orpington hen and a Sapphire Splash hen. Hallie Ballard received a red ribbon for a Lavender Orpington hen, while James Taylor received a red ribbon for an Australorp hen.

Hannah exhibited a bearded rooster that received a white ribbon.

Autumn DeKorver earned

two red ribbons for a German Bielefelder hen and a Silkie hen, while the following earned one red ribbon each: Delaney Crosby for a Black Brahma rooster, Jeffery Eaves for a Black Copper Maran rooster, Barrett Giles for a Mille Fleur rooster, Blayne Hartley for a Leghorn rooster, Layne Hartley for a Speckled Sussex hen, Wayne Hartley for a mixed rooster and Dakota Johnson for a Silkie hen.

Layne Hartley also received a white ribbon for a Silkie rooster, while Wayne Hartley received a white ribbon for a mixed rooster.

Madelyn Ballard earned three white ribbons for a Cochon hen, a mixed hen and a mixed rooster.



LEFT: Joshua Griffis exhibited the grand champion at the Bradford Agricultural Fair rabbit show. Photo by Cliff Smelley. RIGHT: Alli Gray exhibited the reserve grand champion. Photo provided courtesy of her family.

## Griffis, Gray show top rabbits at Bradford Fair

Joshua Griffis and Alli Gray exhibited the top two rabbits at this year's Bradford Agricultural Fair. Griffis' English Spot buck received the grand championship, while Gray's Florida White doe earned reserve grand champion.

Austyn Thornton earned two blue ribbons: one for a Holland Lop doe that placed third overall and one for a Dutch doe.

Brytol Benton earned a blue ribbon and fourth overall for a Mini Rex doe.

The show consisted of 12 other exhibitors: Gavin Cook, who earned a blue ribbon for a Dutch buck; Gracelyn Cook, who earned a blue ribbon Dutch buck; Avery DeKorver, who earned a

white ribbon for a mixed buck; Shayna Durrance, who earned a blue ribbon for a Dutch buck; Kimber Giles, who earned a blue ribbon for a Dutch buck; Klara Giles, who earned a blue ribbon for a Dutch buck; Caleb Griffis, who earned a blue ribbon for a Florida White doe; Clarabell Martin, who earned a blue ribbon for a Dutch doe; Brett Polk, who earned a blue ribbon for a Mini Lop buck; McKynzie Stopka, who earned a blue ribbon for a Mini Lop buck; Blayne Taylor, who earned a white ribbon for a mixed buck; and James Taylor, who earned a white ribbon for a mixed doe.



Bradford senior FFA students Madison Miller and Savannah Trollinger display the reserve grand champion, which was raised by Miller and cared for by both her and Trollinger.

# BHS softball players Funderburk and McFarland sign college letters of intent

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Seeing Allie Funderburk and Hannah McFarland together on a softball field just seems so natural that it made perfect sense for the two Bradford High School seniors to be seated next to each other when they signed their letters of intent during a March 18 scholarship signing ceremony in the BHS media center.

"It's special," Funderburk said of the moment. "We grew up together."

McFarland said, "We've played together since we were in middle school."

They've played together — and are still playing together. Now they've signed together.

Funderburk, a shortstop, will be attending Waldorf University, located in Forest City, Iowa.

"It's really exciting," Funderburk said. "I've worked so hard to get to where I am now."

McFarland, a center fielder, will be taking her talents to Dakota State University in Madison, South Dakota.

"It's an amazing feeling," McFarland said of accepting a scholarship to play ball. "Not many people get to have this opportunity."

Waldorf and Dakota State are approximately 1,300 miles and

1,500 miles away from BHS, but Funderburk and McFarland say they're going to schools that'll provide them with an atmosphere similar to what they enjoy at BHS and the surrounding area.

Funderburk said Forest City is a small town and added, "It just felt like family (at Waldorf)."

"It's a small school," McFarland said of Dakota State. "I didn't want to go anywhere big. I mean, look at Bradford. Bradford's not that big of a school. I wanted something small."

McFarland said she was considering some other schools, adding that some doors closed during the process, but the door to Dakota State opened up.

"Everything happens for a reason. I didn't think I'd go to South Dakota," McFarland said, adding, "I'm just happy that I found my spot."

That spot happens to be 236 miles away from where Funderburk will be going to school.

"We're three hours from each other," McFarland said. "We're going to be pretty close."

They're scheduled to be on the same field next season as Dakota State and Waldorf will play each other.

"It's going to be a fun game, that's for sure," McFarland said.



Hannah McFarland (left) and Allie Funderburk sign their letters of intent to play softball at Dakota State University and Waldorf University, respectively. Photos by Cliff Smelley.

Funderburk batted .329 as a freshman, which ranked her fourth on the team. She had eight RBI.

After her sophomore season was cut short due to the pandemic, Funderburk batted .394 as a junior, driving in nine runs. Her batting average was third best on the team, while her six doubles tied her for the team lead.

Through the first five weeks of this season, Funderburk batted .542 (third best), with four doubles (tied for team lead) and eight RBI. She was second on the

team in stolen bases with six.

"She always has a strong bat," Bradford Head Coach Kaylan Taylor said. "When she comes up, she comes up clutch. She always does. You know she's going to come through."

As a defensive player in the infield, Funderburk, since her freshman year, has an average fielding percentage of .894.

"She does a very good job managing that spot and getting us out of tight situations," Taylor said, adding, "Allie strives to be

See SIGN, page 10

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Margaret Ernesta Rose

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# Obituaries

## Larry Crawford

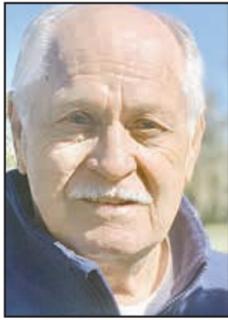
Larry Lorenza Crawford, 75, passed away on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 in Gainesville surrounded by his family. He was born April 23, 1946 in Starke to Zary and Reba Crawford. He was the youngest child of 10, with four brothers and five sisters. He graduated from Bradford High School, then attended college at Brigham Young University. After school, he went on to own and operate many businesses; he was a true entrepreneur. While being his own boss, he had the chance to work alongside his children and family and he loved being able to do that. He loved Florida Gator football and being outdoors.

Most of all, he loved his family. He will be dearly missed by them.

He is survived by his loving wife of 38 years, Mary 'Denise' Crawford; children, Terri (Daren) Williams, Traci (Matt) Waters, Chad (Sarah) Crawford; grandchildren, Delaney Crosby, Landen Waters, Brooklyn and Claude Crawford, Josh, Tyler, Kara, and Lisa; brother, Ronald Crawford; and many nephews and nieces.

A celebration of life will be planned at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family requests any donations be made to Haven Hospice.

PAID OBITUARY



## Ida Mast

LAKE BUTLER Ida Mabel (Bear) Mast, 73, of Lake Butler, went home to her eternal reward on Friday, March 25, 2022 after suffering a heart attack. She was born on June 2, 1948, in Lima, Ohio to Clarence S. and Mary E. (Brunk) Bear. She grew up in Ohio and on April 6, 1974, married Lawrence (David) Mast. The two surrendered their lives to Christ and spent their 48 years of marriage in faithful service to God and others. They had six children, who she loved dearly. She showed the love of Jesus to many through cooking, sewing, and helping others. She also enjoyed traveling, camping, and flowers. In 2004 they moved to Lake Butler from North Carolina to help plant the Sante Fe Mennonite Church. She was preceded in death by a daughter, Lily; her parents; and brothers, Gaylord, Raymond, Frank, and Willis Bear.

She is survived by her loving husband, Lawrence (David) Mast of Lake Butler; sons, Ivan (Jennifer) Mast of Virginia, LaVern (Evelyn) Mast of Lake Butler, Wendell (Jodi) Mast of North Carolina, Dwayne (Lynelle) Mast of Arkansas, and Dwight (Susita) Mast of Lake Butler; grandchildren, Gwenette, Brooke, Joelle, Kaden, Mindy, Lucy, LaVaughn, Trenton (Brooke), Colton, JoLyn, Regan, Bailey, Jackson, McKenzie, and Keaton; siblings, George (Mary Ellen) Bear and Stanley (Virginia) Bear all of Ohio, Louise (Ernest) Birky of Oregon, and Arvilla (Richard) Frieson of California; sisters-in-law, Verba Bear of Ohio, Judy Bear of Alberta, Canada, and Elmeda Bear of Lake Butler; and a host of extended family.

A funeral to honor her will be held on Wednesday, March 30, at 2 p.m. at Christ Central in Lake City with Jason Miller officiating. She will be interred immediately following the funeral at Sante Fe Mennonite Church Cemetery. A visitation and viewing will be held on Tuesday, March 29, from 3 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. and again from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at Christ Central in Lake City.

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

PAID OBITUARY



## Shelby Snipes

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS Shelby J. Snipes, 84, of Keystone Heights passed away Sunday, March 27, 2022, in Gainesville following a short illness. She was born May 30, 1937, in Kayford, West Virginia to Kenneth and Dreama (Pitt) Bradshaw. She was employed with Anchor Hocking Glass Container for many years until her retirement. She was a Southern Baptist and very active with her grandkids. Being outdoors working in her yard was a great passion of hers. She enjoyed life, and never met a stranger. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a grandson, Jerrimy Sumner; brothers, Russell, Gary, and Kenny.

She is survived by her loving and devoted husband of 47 years, Gene Snipes of Keystone Heights; children, Timmy (Tina) Hackney of Green Cove Springs, Tammy Snipes (Charles 'Stewart') Browning, and Kevin Snipes all of Starke. She was lovingly called "Granny" by Jason, Garrett Hackney, Christopher Sumner, and Travis Ryan Home; and great-grandchildren Paislee, Xavier Sumner and Elijah Sumner.

Viewing will begin at 1 p.m. Wednesday, March 30, at the graveside, followed by services beginning at 2 p.m., with Pastor Rick Jackson officiating. Interment will be at Keystone Heights Cemetery.

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

PAID OBITUARY



## Roger Gilmore

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS Roger Dale Gilmore, 71, of Keystone Heights died at his home on Tuesday, March 22, 2022. He was born in Palatka on Sept. 15, 1950, to the late Marshall and Mildred (Bohannon) Gilmore. He graduated from Clay High in 1969, then served in the United States Air Force.

No services are scheduled at this time.

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

## Patricia Lape

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS Patricia "Pat" Ann Lape, 74, of Keystone Heights passed away on Friday, March 25, 2022, at Ascension St. Vincent's Clay County in Middleburg with her loving family by her side. She was born in Gainesville on Aug. 17, 1947, to the late Gordon Parker and Dorothy Glisson Parker. She was raised in Gainesville, where she resided while attending school. She married the love of her life, David William Lape, in 1989 and they enjoyed 33 years of happy marriage. She and David enjoyed their time in Jacksonville, where they raised their sweet children. She was a devoted wife and loving mother, whose main passion in life was her family. She took pride in tending to her family and their needs, and thoroughly enjoyed being a homemaker. In 1996, they made Keystone Heights their forever home, where they had a peaceful property, and she enjoyed gardening. She enjoyed the aesthetics and sweet fragrance of her flowers, and the simplicity of country living. She loved her Lord and Savior, and enjoyed attending the in-home assembly church, which was of the Pentecostal faith. More than anything, she loved spending time with her family and making precious memories. She was preceded in death by her parents; sister, Linda Faye Parker; son-in-law, Michael Elliott; and sister-in-law, Dee Glisson.

She is survived by her loving husband, David Lape, of Keystone Heights; children, Linda L. Elliott and Sharon P. Daugherty, both of Keystone Heights, Denise (Archie) Bennett of Callahan, and David Tetstone of Keystone Heights; stepson, Christopher (Cherie Hodges) Lape of Jacksonville Beach; brother, Kenneth Glisson of Keystone Heights; grandchildren, Christopher, Joshua, Matthew, Chelsey (Ron), Amber (Matt), Eric, Becky, Michael, Stephen, Lydia, Riley, Alan, Brandon, Ryan, Kayla, David, and Caitlyn; and great-grandchildren, Jayden, Ronald "Little Ron", Raiden, and Carson; along with numerous extended family members and friends, who she loved dearly.

A graveside Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, April 2, at 11 a.m. at Dedan Cemetery, 13883 SW C.R. 231, Brookier, with Pastor Jerry Daniel officiating.

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



## Morris Norman

GRAHAM Morris "Wayne" Norman, 76, of Graham gained his wings on Monday, March 7, 2022 at St. Vincent's Medical Center Riverside, in Jacksonville. He was born Aug. 19, 1945 in Raiford to Leamon and Beulah (Browning) Norman. He lived his entire life moving between Miami and Starke; eventually calling Starke his home. Prior to retirement, he worked in construction; building whatever you needed. He never met a stranger. If he knew you he would reminisce with you as long as you wanted. If by chance, he didn't know you, he would still talk with you. And before the end of the conversation he knew your family member from selling them strawberries; or "Oh yeah, I put A/C work in their home." Or, "I done a concrete job for them" and, in reality, he had. He was an avid fisherman; he told stories of how he caught fish by throwing a "stick of dynamite" in the water so all the fish would jump in the boat. His prize fish was a 13.75 pound bass that he caught in Kingsley Lake.

He is survived by his wife, Yvonne (Reed) Norman; children, Ronnie Norman of Gainesville, Elisha Norman of Graham; siblings, Marie Wilson of Starke, and Danny Norman of Lawtey; grandchildren, Tyler (Shelie) Palmer of Irmo, South Carolina, Taylor Palmer of Greenville, South Carolina, Nate Norman of Tampa, Zack Norman of Lake Butler; and a great-grandson, Maddox Osborne of Irmo, South Carolina.

His grand entrance into heaven will be celebrated on Friday, May 6, at 12 p.m. at the New Covenant Baptist, 863 E. Brownlee St., Starke.

PAID OBITUARY



## Cornelia Simmons

LAWTEY Cornelia R. Simmons, 89, of Lawtey passed away on Friday, March 25, 2022 at North Florida Regional Medical Center in Gainesville. A lifelong resident of Lawtey, she attended the schools of Bradford County. She retired from Bradford County Hospital as a Certified Nurse Aide.

She is survived by two sons, Cleveland Simmons, and Bruce E. Simmons; two brothers: Haywood Randolph, and James Randolph; a sister, Mary Lewis; eight grandchildren; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and grieving friends.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 2, in the True Vine Outreach Ministries Church, 422 St. Claire St., Starke. Interment will be at Peetsville Cemetery in Lawtey, under the direction of Haile Funeral Home Inc., 802 N. Oak St., Starke. Visitation will be Friday, April 1, from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. at True Vine Outreach Ministries Church, and one hour prior to the service on Saturday. The cortege will form at 10:30 a.m. at the residence of Mrs. Simmons on Saturday at 22561 NE Third St., Lawtey. All attendees are asked to wear a face mask and practice social distancing measures.

PAID OBITUARY



## Carrie Starling

LAWTEY Carrie Coburn Starling, 54, of Lawtey died on Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

She is survived by her parents, Larry and Valrie Coburn; her husband, William Page Starling; children, Richard "Chris" Warren of Lawtey and Valarie Jackson of Maryville, Tennessee; brothers, Chuck (Jennifer) Coburn, Adam, Anthony, Brian; sisters, Carmella (Aurthor) Johnson, Vanessa, and Joanna "Kayla"; and five grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

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



**Athletic Director Sampson Jackson (far right) helps Hannah McFarland (far left) and Allie Funderburk get started on their paperwork.**

## SIGN

Continued from page 9

the best that she can be. It really shows. She works hard, and she gives it her all. She never gives up. She's a leader."

Funderburk said she believes the strength of her game is her defense. She also said she's not one to lose her composure when she's playing in the field, which helps her teammates as well. "I keep my head up," Funderburk said. "I can talk the other girls up."

Funderburk said she needs to get stronger on the offensive end, but Taylor believes she's ready to succeed at the next level.

"I think she'll fit right in," Taylor said. "I think she'll need some support from her family because she is going quite a long way away, but I think she'll transition and succeed very easily."

McFarland began her BHS career by being the Tornadoes'

leading batter her freshman year with a .397 average. She shared the team lead in RBI with 25 and hit a team-high seven doubles.

Following the COVID year, McFarland batted 3.94, which was third on the team in 2021. She shared the team lead in doubles with six and drove in nine runs.

Through this season's first five weeks, she was second on the team with a .552 batting average. Her two triples led the team in that category. McFarland had eight RBI and shared the team lead in stolen bases with seven.

"She has a very strong bat," Taylor said. She's our two-hole hitter. She really holds that position down well. She comes up with runners on base usually. She does a very good job of moving them around and getting on base."

Taylor said McFarland, whose fielding average since her freshman season is .963, makes plays that most outfielders don't make.

"She makes those plays that are the difference in the game," Taylor said.

The coach said McFarland is much like Funderburk.

"Hannah is a true leader. She also strives to be the best on the field," Taylor said, adding, "She excels at everything she does."

Taylor said she also sees McFarland, like Funderburk, having no trouble making that transition from high school to college. McFarland said she believes she needs to develop "more confidence, to be there and to help my team because I want to help my team as much as I can."

McFarland said stepping onto the field for the first time as a college player will be a dream come true. Funderburk said, "It'll probably be unreal."

It's a reality that wouldn't have come about if not for countless hours of effort put forth by both players. That's evident to the Tornadoes' first-year head coach.

"I've seen how hard they work, even though it's just been this season," Taylor said. "They've worked so hard. To see them get to accomplish this goal is just an amazing experience for me."

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**ONE DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY? HOW ABOUT TWO?** The Keystone Heights High School boys weightlifting team won the District 7-1A titles in both the traditional (bench press and clean and jerk) and snatch events and earned 38 Region 2 qualifying spots between the two events. Photos by Cliff Smelley.

## Indians win district weightlifting titles

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School captured the District 7-1A championships in both the traditional (bench press and clean and jerk) and snatch events on March 29 at KHHS.

The Indians scored 95 points in the traditional event, finishing ahead of Palatka (44), Union County (34), Bradford (15), Cedar Creek Christian (13), Eagle's View (11) and Bishop Snyder (5).

In the snatch event, Keystone totaled 97 points, placing ahead of Palatka (46), Cedar Creek Christian (26), Eagle's View (15), Union (10) and Bishop Snyder (5).

The Indians qualified 19 individuals in each event for the Region 2 finals, which KHHS will host on Friday, April 8, at 10 a.m. The top six in each weight class earned the right to advance.

Five individuals won their weight classes in the traditional event: Ulysses Freed with a 500 total (275 bench press, 225 clean and jerk) in the 154 class, Logan Williams with a 590 total (315, 275) in the 169 class, Trey



**Mason Dicks won the unlimited class in the traditional and snatch events.**

Jeffries with a 630 total (330, 300) in the 219 class, Caleb Moncrief with a 615 total (315, 300) in the 238 class and Mason Dicks with a 645 total (345, 300) in the unlimited class.

Keystone lifters also took second in all but one of those weight classes the school won: Landon Hovsepian with a 480 total (255, 225) in the 154 class, Nathan Tisdale with a 575 total (300, 275) in the 169 class, Tyler Anthony-Rozier with a 630 total (355, 275) in the 219 class and

Luke Snider with a 625 total (325, 300) in the unlimited class.

The Indians also had the following second-place lifters: Wyatt Van Zant with a 410 total (195, 215) in the 129 class, Tyler Jenkins with a 545 total (300, 245) in the 183 class and Jayden Goodman with a 530 total (255, 275) in the 199 class.

Five lifters placed third: Reid Begue with a 365 total (215, 150) in the 129 class, Davin Adams with a 325 total (150, 175) in the 139 class, Clayton Kicklighter

with a 530 total (285, 245) in the 183 class, Bryson Wester with a 515 total (275, 240) in the 199 class and Brayden Wester with a 485 total (260, 225) in the 238 class.

Declan Shine and Jed Tisdale placed fourth and fifth, respectively, in the 119 class. Shine had a 305 total (170, 135), while Tisdale had a 275 total (145, 130).

Keystone had seven lifters win their weight classes in the snatch event: Adams (120), Freed (185), Bryar Schenck in the 183 class (185), Goodman (185), Jeffries (195), Moncrief (175) and Dicks (195).

Finishing as runners-up were Van Zant (135), Nathan Tisdale (185) and Snider (195).

Seven earned third-place finishes: Begue (135), Sam Ulsch in the 154 class (150), Ben Ulsch in the 169 class (175), Jenkins (175), Jacob Andrews in the 199 class (150), Anthony-Rozier (170) and Jackson Herman in the 238 class (155).

Shine and Jed Tisdale placed fourth and fifth, respectively, with totals of 95 and 85.

## Union County earns 13 Region 2-1A spots in traditional and snatch events

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

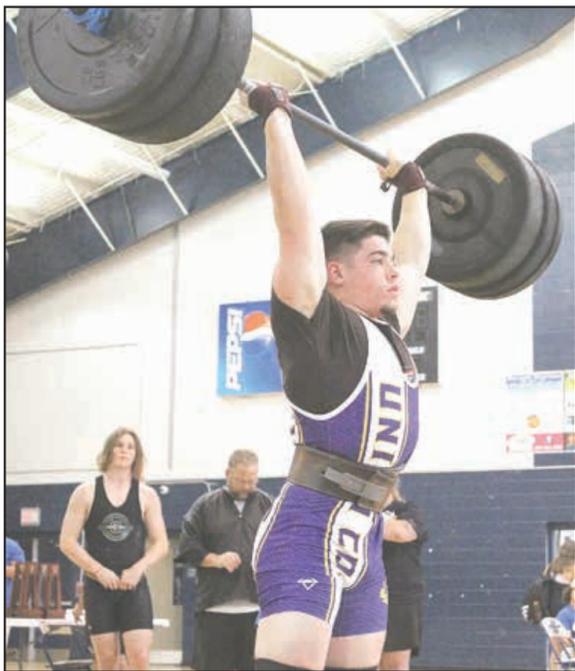
Union County High School had 11 qualify for regional competition in the traditional event (bench press and clean and jerk) and two in the snatch event at the District 7-1A meet, which was held March 29 at Keystone Heights High School.

The top six in each weight class earned the right to move on to the Region 2 finals, which will be held at Keystone on Friday, April 8, at 10 a.m.

Union placed third as a team in the traditional event with 34 points, finishing behind Keystone (95) and Palatka (44). The Tigers were 19 points ahead of fourth-place finisher Bradford.

Christian Simmons and Quinn Raulerson were individual champs in the traditional event. Simmons had a 395 total (225 bench press, 170 clean and jerk) in the 119 class, while Raulerson, who's seeking to win his second straight state championship, had a 665 total (390, 275) in the 183 class.

Mikah Wilson and Tucker Baynard placed third and fourth, respectively, in the unlimited class. Wilson had a 600 total (325, 275), while Baynard had a



**Quinn Raulerson won the 183 class with a 665 overall total — the highest total in the bench press/clean and jerk competition.** Photo by Cliff Smelley.

575 total (335, 240).

Maddox Wheeler took fourth in the 238 class with a 460 total (260, 200).

Four earned fifth-place finishes: Dayquan Diston with a 285 total (150, 135) in the 129 class, Thomas Williams with a

505 total (280, 225) in the 183 class, Erich Seager with a 455 total (260, 195) in the 199 class and Gabe Castlen with a 450 total (245, 205) in the 238 class.

Earning sixth-place finishes were Daylyn Diston with a 365 total (190, 175) in the 154 class and Trenton Klein with a 330 total (155, 175) in the 169 class.

In the snatch event, Simmons and Raulerson each placed second in his class with totals of 115 and 185, respectively.

## BHS will send 6 to weightlifting regionals

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Easton Wynn was a runner-up, while five of his Bradford High School teammates also had top-six finishes at the March 29 District 7-1A boys weightlifting meet at Keystone Heights High School.

Lifters who placed in the top six earned the right to advance to the Region 2 finals, which will be held at Keystone Heights High School on Friday, April 8, at 10 a.m.

Wynn had a 490 total (275 bench press, 215 clean and jerk) in the 238 class,

while two of his teammates earned fourth-place finishes: Marcus Hewitt with a 315 total (175, 140) in the 129 class and Devon McBride with a 440 total (245, 195) in the 169 class.

Jacob Brugh took fifth in the 154 class with a 375 total (200, 175).

The Tornados final two regional-qualifying lifters earned sixth-place finishes: Dayton Roberts with a 445 total (260, 185) in the 219 class and Nathaniel Bowlan-Smith with a 480 total (280, 200) in the unlimited class.

**Easton Wynn competes in the bench press. He placed second in the 238 class. He's one of six BHS lifters who'll move on to the Region 2-1A finals.** Photo by Cliff Smelley.



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# Business Section

Helping Small Businesses' Dreams Become A Reality

**Business Section Spotlight on Local Farming in the Tri-County Region**

## 10 Reasons to Support Local Farmers, Farmer Stands & Farmers Markets



A shopper checks out the fresh strawberries and blueberries offered at a farmers market stand.



Strawberries and blueberries are among the fresh, delicious fruits grown in the Tri-County and Lake Area Regions.

From savoring produce at the peak of freshness to meeting the people who grow your food, there are countless reasons to support local farmers, farmer stands and farmers markets. Here are just a few!

### 1. Taste Real Flavors

The fruits and vegetables you buy at the farmers markets and stands are the freshest and tastiest available. Fruits are allowed to ripen fully in the field and are brought directly to you—no long-distance shipping, no gassing to simulate the ripening process, no sitting for weeks in storage. This food is as real as it gets—fresh from the farm.

### 2. Enjoy the Season

The food you buy at the farmers markets and stands is seasonal. It is fresh and delicious and reflects the truest flavors. Shopping and cooking from the farmers market helps you to reconnect with the cycles of nature in our region. As you look forward to asparagus in spring, savor sweet corn in summer, or bake pumpkins in autumn, you reconnect with the earth, the weather, and the turning of the year.

### 3. Support Family Farmers

Family farmers need your support, now that large agribusiness dominates food production in the U.S. Small family

farms have a hard time competing in the food marketplace. Buying directly from farmers at their stands and local farmers markets gives them a better return for their produce and gives them a fighting chance in today's globalized economy.

### 4. Protect the Environment

Food in the U.S. travels an average of 1,500 miles to get to your plate. All this shipping uses large amounts of natural resources (especially fossil fuels), contributes to pollution, and creates trash with extra packaging. Conventional agriculture also uses many more resources than sustainable agriculture and pollutes water, land, and air with toxic agricultural by-products. Food at the farmers market or stand is transported shorter distances and is generally grown using methods that minimize the impact on the earth.

### 5. Nourish Yourself

Much food found in grocery stores is highly processed and grown using pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and genetic modification. Some of it has been irradiated, waxed, or gassed in transit. These practices may have negative effects on human health. In contrast, most food found at the farmers

market or stand is minimally processed, and many of our farmers go to great lengths to grow the most nutritious produce possible by using sustainable techniques, picking produce right before the market, and growing heirloom varieties.

### 6. Discover the Spice of Life: Variety

At local farmers markets and stands you find an amazing array of produce that you don't see in your average supermarket: red carrots, a rainbow of heirloom tomatoes, purple cauliflower, stinging nettles, green garlic, watermelon radishes, quail eggs, maitake mushrooms, and much, much more. It is a wonderful opportunity to savor the biodiversity of our planet.

### 7. Promote Humane Treatment of Animals

At local farmers markets and stands, you can usually find meats, cheeses, and eggs from animals that have been raised without hormones or antibiotics, who have grazed on green grass and eaten natural diets, and who have been spared the cramped and unnatural living conditions of feedlots and cages that are typical of industrial animal agriculture.

### 8. Know Where Your Food Comes From

A regular trip to a local farmers market or stand is one of the best ways to connect with where your food comes from. Meeting and talking to farmers, growers and food artisans is a great opportunity to learn more about how and where food is produced.

### 9. Learn Cooking Tips, Recipes, and Meal Ideas

Few grocery store cashiers or produce stockers can give you tips on how to cook the ingredients you buy, but farmers, ranchers, and artisans at local farmers markets and stands are often passionate cooks with plenty of free advice about how to cook the foods they are selling.

### 10. Connect with Your Community

Wouldn't you rather stroll amidst outdoor stalls of fresh produce on a sunny day than roll your cart around a grocery store with artificial lights and piped in music? Coming to the local farmers market or stand makes shopping a pleasure rather than a chore. Local farmers markets are a type of community hub—a place to meet up with your friends, bring your children, or just enjoy the variety of folks found in our local community.

*Adapted from original source at: www.cuesa.org*

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# BHS boys, KHHS girls earn wins in tennis

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

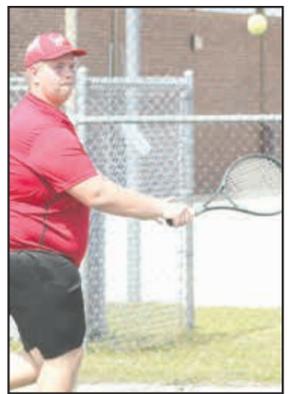
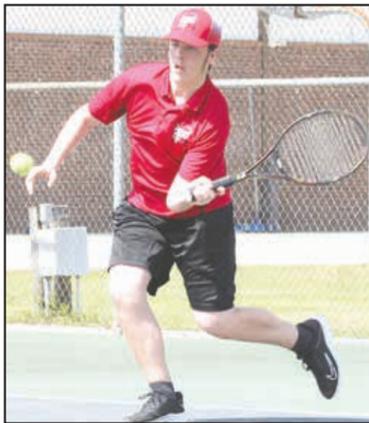
Keystone Heights High School hosted Bradford for tennis on March 28, with the Tornadoes' boys team winning 5-2 and the Indians' girls team winning 4-3.

The Tornadoes won all but one of the singles matches on the boys side. In the number-one slot, Joshua Higginbotham defeated Keystone's Evan Booth 8-3,

while Zachary Clayton defeated the Indians' Curran Capper 8-5 at the number-two slot.

Keystone's number-three seed Dalton Moore defeated Bradford's Gideon Jordan 8-6, but the Tornadoes took the wins at number four and number five, with Calum Butler defeating Ethan Teague 8-6 and Hayden Knight defeating Beckett Capper 8-3.

**RIGHT: Bradford's Joshua Higginbotham won at number-one singles. BELOW: Bradford's Mary-Jane Lebert earned a win in doubles, teaming up with Brooklyn Reddish. BELOW RIGHT: Dalton Moore had Keystone's only win in boys singles.**



**ABOVE: Bradford's Zachary Clayton won at number-two singles. ABOVE RIGHT: Keystone's Tara Tarvit won at number-one singles. RIGHT: Keystone's Rebecca Lasca won at number-two singles. Photos by Cliff Smelley.**

In boys doubles, Bradford's number-one team of Higginbotham and Clayton defeated Booth and Curran Capper 8-5. Keystone's number-two team of Moore and Teague defeated Butler and Troy Smith 8-6.

On the girls' side, Keystone's top three seeds each earned an 8-1 win, with Tara Tarvit defeating Alexandria Wells, Rebecca Lasca defeating Mary-Jane Lebert and Whitney Buchanan defeating

Reagan Harris.

Bradford would get the wins at the number-four and number-five slots, with Brooklyn Reddish defeating Reagan Feldpausch 8-3 and Caitlyn Jackson defeating Shaylynn Williams 8-5.

At number-one doubles, the Indians' team of Tarvit and Lasca defeated Wells and Harris 8-4. The Tornadoes' number-two team of Lebert and Reddish defeated Buchanan and Olivia Yount 8-5.

## UCHS tennis teams defeat Madison Co.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Union County High School recorded wins on the boys and girls sides during a March 17 match against Madison County, with the boys team winning 7-0 and the girls team winning 5-2.

In boys singles, Jody DuBose (number two), Jackson Crook (number three) and Parker Johnson (number five) all won 8-0. Number-one seed Landon Klein won 8-4, while number-four seed Trenton Klein won 8-1.

The number-one doubles team of DuBose and Alex Dure won 8-1, while the number-two team of James Rogers and KeAndre Stephens won 8-5.

Union won three of five singles matches on the girls side, with Morgyn Kirby and Lauren Coleman, the third and fourth seeds, each winning 8-0. Top seed Jordan Hendricks won 8-5.

Kirby and Taryn Norman teamed up for an 8-6 win at number-one doubles, while Lyndee Griffis and Jessica Kingsbury won 8-4 at number-two doubles.

The girls team broke a two-match losing streak with the win, but are 4-2 in the month of March, including a forfeit win over St. John Paul II on March 28. In a 5-2 win over Madison County on March 1, the Tigers won all five singles matches: Maegan Beatty 8-5, Hendricks 8-1, Josie Croft 8-2, Kirby 8-0 and Coleman 8-2. On March 3, Union defeated West Nassau 5-2. The doubles team of Beatty and Hendricks won 8-2, while the following wins were recorded in singles: Beatty 8-2, Hendricks 8-6, Kirby 8-2 and Coleman 8-2.

With the March 28 forfeit win over St. John Paul II, the boys team has now won three straight. Prior to the March 17 Madison match, the Tigers defeated Santa Fe 4-3 on March 14. Earning wins in singles were DuBose 9-7, Crook 8-1 and Caleb Zapp 8-0. The doubles team of DuBose and Dure won 8-3.

That proved to be Union's second straight 4-3 win, with the first one occurring March 3 over West Nassau. The doubles team

of Landon Klein and Crook won 8-8 (8-6), while the following wins were recorded in singles: Landon Klein 8-8 (7-2) Zapp 8-6 and Dure 8-2.

## Kinsal drives in 5 in Keystone softball team's 12-1 victory

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Alaina Kinsal hit three doubles and drove in five runs for the Keystone Heights High School softball team, which defeated host Clay 12-1 in six innings on March 25.

The Indians (4-6) scored the first two runs on Kinsal's first double, which occurred in a three-run second inning. The hit scored Madi Mitzel and Delia Johnson, who each singled. Kinsal eventually scored on an Emma Rogel single.

Keystone increased its lead with four runs in the third. Ashley Nugent walked, Kinley Carlton was hit by a pitch and Mitzel singled to load the bases. Johnson was hit by a pitch to force a run in before Kinsal cleared the bases with her second double, making the score 7-0.

Mitzel and Kinsal went 4 for 4 and 3 for 4, respectively. Johnson went 2 for 2 with two RBI, while Abbie Roach went 2 for 4.

Carlton, Nugent, Rogel and Caitlin Frampton each had one RBI.

Mitzel earned the win in the circle, giving up six hits and no walks, while striking out five in a complete-game effort.

The Indians entered the game off a 10-4 loss at Oakleaf on March 22.

Keystone trailed 5-1 before scoring three runs in the fourth. Carlton reached on an error, while Nugent and Mitzel each singled, with Mitzel's hit driving in a run. After Saige Dennis reached on an error, Kinsal ground into a fielder's choice to score a run. Roach was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded to force a run in and make the score 5-4.

That was as close as the Indians would get, though they did load the bases with one out in

the sixth. Kinsal and Rogel each singled, while Roach was hit by a pitch. The scoring threat ended with two straight strikeouts.

Kinsal and Rogel went 2 for 3 and 2 for 4, respectively. Kinsal, Mitzel and Roach each had one RBI.

Keystone will begin play in the Roger Jones Kissimmee Classic at Fortune Road Complex against Robinson on Thursday, March 31, at 6 p.m. On Friday, April 1, the Indians will play at 1 p.m. if they lost to Robinson or at 7 p.m. if they won.

Search for "Roger Jones Kissimmee Classic Softball Tournament" on Facebook for a complete tournament schedule. Keystone plays in the Gold Bracket.

The tournament concludes on Saturday, April 2.

Keystone returns home to play Oakleaf on Tuesday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m.

## BHS softball team drops 4-2 game at Yulee

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford High School's softball team was held to one run through the first six innings, returning to action after spring break with a 4-2 loss to host Yulee on March 28.

Yulee took advantage of two walks, a single and a wild pitch to go up 2-0 in the bottom of the first.

The Tornadoes (6-3) got an inside-the-park home run from Hannah McFarland in the top of the second, but the Hornets answered with a run of their own in the bottom of the inning.

Trailing 4-1, Bradford got a one-out single from Kiersten Hodges in the top of the seventh. After a ground out, Allie Funderburk hit a run-scoring double. The game ended with the next at-bat on a fly out.

McFarland finished 2 for 2.

Funderburk's double was one of two for the Tornadoes, with Taylor Reddish hitting the other. Reddish, who entered the game at pitcher with no outs in the first, gave up two runs on three hits through six innings.

Bradford entered spring break off a 10-0, six-inning win over

visiting Bishop Snyder on March 18, getting three RBI each from Hodges and Cassidy Spratlin.

The Tornadoes scored three runs each in the second, third and fourth innings.

Hodges hit a two-run double in the second inning, which also consisted of McFarland's run-scoring triple.

Funderburk, Macey Padgett and Spratlin hit back-to-back-to-back singles in the third, with Funderburk and Padgett scoring on Spratlin's hit. Hodges later drove in her third run on a sacrifice bunt.

In the fourth, Reddish hit a run-scoring double, while Padgett and Spratlin each drove in a run on a single.

Padgett drove in the final run on a single in the sixth.

Hodges and Spratlin went 1 for 1 and 2 for 2, respectively, while Padgett was 3 for 3. McFarland and Reddish each went 2 for 3, while Funderburk went 2 for 4.

Spratlin started in the circle, giving up two hits in four innings. Rylie Blankenship closed it out, giving up one hit in two innings.

The Tornadoes, who played Williston on Wednesday, March 30, travel to play North Marion on Thursday, March 31, at 7 p.m.

On Monday, April 4, Bradford travels to play Orange Park at 6:30 p.m.

## UCHS baseball team goes 1-2 at Viera tourney

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

The Union County High School baseball team spent part of spring break playing in the Prospect Select Spring Training tournament, going 1-2 at the March 21-23 event at the USSSA Space Coast Complex in Viera.

Union (5-6) opened play with a 10-run win before losing two games by a total of three runs.

On March 21, Ayden Elixson and Tre'von Lee each hit a two-run triple as the Tigers defeated Coral Springs 12-2 in five innings.

Coral Springs scored two runs

See UCHS, page 14

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# KHHS lifters win Clay County meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School took the top two spots in three weight classes and had five individual winners in all in winning the Clay County Boys Weightlifting Championships, which Keystone hosted on March 25.

The Indians, the defending 1A state champ, totaled 85 points to finish ahead of 3A Fleming Island (41), 3A Oakleaf (41), 2A Orange Park (18), 2A Middleburg (17), 2A Ridgeview (14) and 2A Clay (4).

Keystone took the top two spots in the 154, 169 and 219

classes, which gave the Indians 12 points in each class. Ulysses Freed won the 154 class with a 520 total (275 bench press, 245 clean and jerk), while Landon Hovsepian was second with a 510 total (255, 255). In the 169 class, it was Nathan Tisdale placing first with a 595 total (300, 295) and Logan Williams finishing second with a 580 total (320, 260). Tyler Anthony-Rozier's 635 total (350, 285) topped the 219 class, with Trey Jeffries taking second with a 620 total (320, 300).

Caleb Moncrief won the 238 class with a 650 total (315, 335), while Mason Dicks won the



Nathan Tisdale, shown competing at the District 7-1A meet, won the 169 class at the Clay County Championships.

unlimited class with a 680 total (330, 350).

Two Keystone lifters tied for first in their classes, but were awarded second place due to the weigh-in tiebreaker. Wyatt Van Zant and Orange Park's Cam Griffith each had a 420 total to top the 129 class, but Griffith weighed in at 2.8 pounds less than Van Zant, who had a 195 bench press and a 225 clean and jerk. Zach Glover had a 500 total (275, 225) in the 1399 class, which tied him with Fleming Island's Justin Nolley, who weighed in at 1.4 pounds less than Glover.

Tyler Jenkins earned a second-place finish as well with a 590 total (315, 275) in the 183 class.

Three Keystone lifters placed third: Declan Shine with a 300 total (160, 140) in the 119 class, Bryson Wester with a 530 total (280, 250) in the 199 class and Luke Snider with a 640 total (325, 315) in the unlimited class.

Jed Tisdale placed fifth in the 119 class with a 260 total (135, 125), while the following placed sixth: Clayton Kicklighter with a 520 total (280, 240) in the 183 class and Brayden Wester with a 475 total (245, 230) in the 238 class.



Ulysses Freed, shown competing in the March 29 District 7-1A meet, won the 154 class at the March 25 Clay County Championships. Photos by Cliff Smelley.

# Indians drop 4-3 baseball game to Palatka

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School whittled away at its deficit after falling behind 4-0, but the Indians eventually lost 4-3 to host Palatka in a March 25 baseball game.

The Indians (3-6) scored two runs in the fifth to make it a 4-2 game. Ashton Roach and Noah Branch hit back-to-back doubles to lead off the inning, with Roach scoring on Branch's hit. Jeremy Miller and Connor Guy drew walks to load the bases. Dalton Hollingsworth then drew a walk

to force a run in.

With two outs in the top of the seventh, Hollingsworth and Ryan Jones each singled. After Ty Glenn walked, Hollingsworth scored on a passed ball. A ground out to third ended the rally.

Hollingsworth went 2 for 3. Gage Smith threw three innings of scoreless relief, giving up no hits.

Keystone entered the game off an 11-6 loss to visiting Santa Fe on March 23.

Santa Fe scored five runs in the first inning, taking advantage of four singles with two outs. The

Raiders went up 7-0 after hitting a two-run homer in the top of the fifth.

Miller and Guy each drove in a run on a ground ball in the bottom of the fifth.

The Raiders went up 11-2 in the sixth, scoring four runs on two singles, a double, two walks and a wild pitch.

Keystone loaded the bases with no outs in the seventh. Alex Addington singled, followed by a Miller double. Guy then walked. After two straight strikeouts, Smith singled to drive in two runs. Chase Packham, who went

2 for 4, drove in another run on a double. Glenn was then hit by a pitch to load the bases. Branch walked to force a run in before the game ended on a strikeout.

The Indians played Union County and Baldwin this past Tuesday and Wednesday and will host Williston on Thursday, March 31, at 7 p.m. Keystone travels to play Yulee on Monday, April 4, at 6:30 p.m. before then traveling to play Williston on Tuesday, April 5, at 7 p.m.

Keystone returns home to play Orange Park on Wednesday, April 6, at 7 p.m.

# UCHS

Continued from page 13

in the top of the first, but in the bottom of the inning, Union answered with three runs — two of which scored on Lee's triple.

The Colts had two hits in the first inning, but were held to three the rest of the way by Tigers pitcher Eli Rimes, who gave up five hits and two walks, while striking out five in the complete-game effort.

It was a 5-2 game when the Tigers scored four in the fourth. Elixson, Lee and Jay Cohen each hit an RBI single in the inning, while Blake Agner drove in a run with a double.

The fifth inning consisted of an RBI double by Cohen and Elixson's two-run triple.

Elixson and Lee went 2 for 3 and 3 for 4, respectively. Each finished with three RBI.

Cohen went 3 for 4 with two RBI, while Rimes was 2 for 3 with an RBI.

Agner finished with two RBI, while Bryson Huggins hit a double. Union played Green Farms Academy (Westport, Connecticut) on March 22, with its seventh-inning rally coming up short in a 5-3 loss.

Lee plated the game's first run off a single in the top of the first, but Green Farms took advantage of three consecutive singles, two walks and a sacrifice fly to score three in the second.

Green Farms added to its lead with RBI singles in the third and fifth innings.

The Tigers loaded the bases with no outs in the top of the seventh. Jake O'Steen and Cohen were each hit by a pitch, while Lee walked. After a strikeout for the first out, Rimes hit into a fielder's choice. O'Steen scored, while Lee was put out at second, leaving the Tigers with runners at the corners.

Jeff Cook walked as Union loaded the bases again. Trevor Holtzendorf drew a walk to force a run in, but the rally ended with a strikeout during the next at-bat.

Lee went 2 for 3, while Huggins hit a double.

Quinten Rawls had a solid outing on the mound in the Tigers' next game, but the result was a 1-0 loss to Pembroke Pines' Flanagan on March 23.

Rawls threw 5.1 innings, giving up a run on a double and a single in the bottom of the sixth. He allowed four hits and no walks, while striking out six.

Agner went 2 for 3, but the rest of the Tigers combined for just three hits — one of which was a double by Cohen.

Union entered the tournament off a tough 6-5 loss to Suwannee on March 17 in which the host Bulldogs scored the winning run on a wild pitch in the bottom of the seventh.

The Bulldogs' Matthew Gill reached on a two-out error in the final inning. He stole second and advanced to third on a passed ball before scoring the winning run on a wild pitch.

Union led 5-2 after the first two innings.

Rawls led off the game with a walk, followed by an O'Steen single. Elixson then homered to center field to put Union ahead 3-0. Rimes doubled and scored on a Holtzendorf single.

Suwannee cut into the lead in the bottom of the first, scoring two runs on an error to make the score 4-2.

Cook drew a walk to lead off Union's half of the second. He eventually scored on a Cohen single.

The Bulldogs made it 5-3 in the fourth, with a runner who reached on a walk scoring on a double.

Suwannee then tied the score with a two-run fifth. Camdon Frier, who walked, scored on a ground out, while Joshua Fernald hit a solo homer.

Rimes was the only Union batter with more than one hit, finishing 2 for 4.

Pitchers Rawls and Lee combined to give up three hits, striking out five and four, respectively.

The Tigers played Keystone Heights and Oakleaf this past Tuesday and Wednesday and will host Oak Hall on Monday, April 4, at 6 p.m.

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# Dowd selected as Bradford's Teacher of the Year

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Ashley Dowd doesn't think she's yet become the best teacher she can be, which is why she was "shocked" to learn that she is the 2021-22 Teacher of the Year for the Bradford County School District.

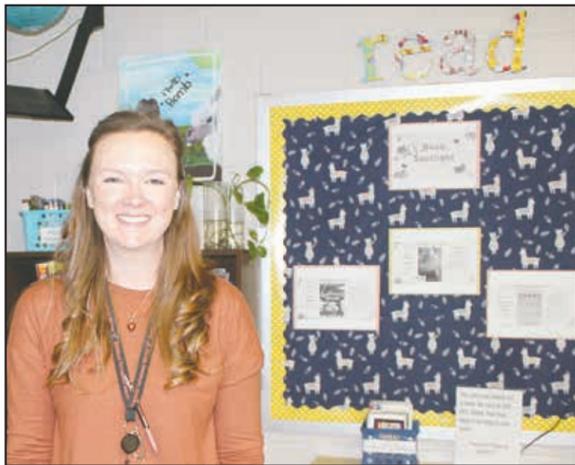
Dowd, who's in her third year at Bradford Middle School, said, every day at school is a learning experience for her. She becomes aware of what her colleagues are doing and uses that information so that she can become a better teacher.

For her, a Teacher of the Year honor sounds like something that should come at the end of a career.

"I still feel myself growing every year, so I don't think I'm done," Dowd said. "Teacher of the Year feels like a done thing, like you get Teacher of the Year when you're done. You don't get Teacher of the Year when you're still growing as much as I am."

## Dream comes true after slight detour

Dowd, who teaches four classes of eighth-grade English language arts and spends two class periods coaching other teachers, is fulfilling a passion she had at a young age. In first grade, she wrote that she wanted to be a teacher when she grew up so she could help children read.



**Bradford Middle School's Ashley Dowd is the district-wide Teacher of the Year, though she believes that implies a pinnacle she's yet to reach. "I still feel myself growing every year, so I don't think I'm done," she said. Photo by Cliff Smelley.**

"I spelled 'read' incorrectly," Dowd said, laughing.

Following her graduation from Fleming Island High School in 2005 (she was a member of the school's first graduating class), Dowd went to the University of Central Florida. She wasn't planning on being a teacher by that point. She actually worked toward and earned a bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management. The whole time she was going to school, she worked in restaurants, bars, hotels and golf clubs, gaining the

experience to go along with her major.

A month before she was to graduate, however, Dowd decided she would continue going to school with the future goal of teaching. She earned a master's degree in a teaching program for out-of-field students.

It was while working at the Nickelodeon Hotel in Orlando that Dowd decided her future wasn't going to be "getting old behind a bar."

"I realized that I was having a lot more fun playing with the

kids at the hotel and teaching them silly dances than I was serving drinks," Dowd said.

Dowd did tell some church-family friends she would work as a crew member on their yacht, so that's what she did, traveling up and down the east coast for six years while working toward her master's degree.

"It was like one last hurrah in hospitality management," Dowd said.

Besides her time at Bradford Middle School, Dowd taught two years at Bradford High School. She's also taught one year in Jacksonville, one year in Orlando and two years in Arkansas.

BMS is a school where Dowd feels she has flourished. She enjoys the support of

school administrators and the friendliness she's received from her colleagues, especially the other English Language Arts teachers.

"I've told a couple of people that I wasn't a good teacher until I moved to this school," she said.

## Liking and loving middle-school kids

The joy Dowd derives from teaching comes from building relationships with her students. It's what she believes is so important for those in her profession.

It's not enough to simply be good at teaching content.

"My favorite professor in college said kids don't care what

you know until they know that you care," Dowd said.

Caring about them means liking them, which Dowd said is more than having a love for them.

"There is a difference," Dowd said. "I feel like everybody in this community loves kids. That's just truth, but you have to like them every day."

Dowd, with the exception of seventh grade, has taught children in all grades from sixth to 12th.

"I joke with kids that I'm afraid of seventh-graders," she said.

What Dowd eventually discovered was that she had

See DOWD, page 16

## Local DAR chapter meets March 7

The Col. Samuel Elbert Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution welcomes Florida State Society Regent Debbie Duay from Plantation as the guest speaker at its Monday, April 4, meeting, which will begin at 10:30 a.m. at the Montgomery Conference Center (88 S.E. 75th St., Starke).

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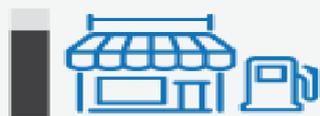
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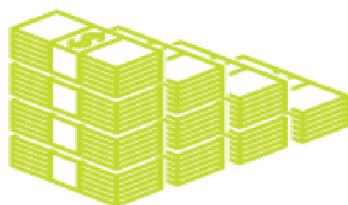
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# 'Coach Bat' is Bradford's School-Related Employee of the Year

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
Telegraph Staff Writer

Being recognized is nothing new for Bradford Middle School Safety Paraprofessional James McNeal. Within the last five years, he's been voted as the school's Employee of the Year.

This year, though, he wasn't just voted the best at BMS. He was voted the district-wide Employee of the Year.

"It was very shocking," McNeal said, adding, "Somebody likes me. Somebody definitely likes me."

Not only does somebody like him. Somebody — a lot of people, actually — likes what's going on at BMS, as the school's Ashley Dowd was also named the district's Teacher of the Year.

"That was very special we did it in the same year," McNeal said. "It lets us know how special we are at Bradford Middle School."

The man who most people know as "Coach Bat" said the honors bestowed upon him and Dowd aren't about them.

"It's about the kids," McNeal said.

BMS Principal Danielle Rosson said, "It's a huge honor to have a high-quality staff on our campus. I can honestly say that both Coach Bat and Ms. Dowd are focused. Their focus is on our students. They are really, really the center of our campus. They both have very strong relationships with all of our students."

McNeal's relationships with Bradford youth were in existence before he became Bradford Middle School's safety paraprofessional. He coached baseball and football for the school.

He worked previously at the University of Florida, but McNeal was encouraged to work at BMS when he was the school's head football coach. The feeling was that it benefited the student-athletes to have their head coach on campus.

McNeal's now been working full time at BMS for eight years.

He's still impacting young lives, but the impact is greater than it was when he was just coaching.

"I get to affect everybody, including girls," McNeal said, adding, "It's like an overall effect versus the coaching, where I only got the boys."

As the safety paraprofessional, McNeal said some of his duties include making sure the school is up to date on lockdown and fire-drill procedures. However, he also handles a lot of discipline issues, removes students from class when they're being disruptive and makes sure students are where they're supposed to be.

Being involved with discipline puts him in contact a lot with teachers, which he believes has helped him be named School-Related Employee of the Year multiple times.

"I think one of the reasons I keep getting voted for it, to be honest with you, is I'm the one who interacts with most of the teachers around campus,"

**James "Bat" McNeal has been School-Related Employee of the Year multiple times at Bradford Middle School. This year, he's the district-wide honoree. Photo by Cliff Smelley.**



public and talk to him.

"It just really lets you know you had an impact on their life," he said. "If you didn't do anything for them, they aren't going to come up to you like that."

In a sense, the students he interacts with and gets to know become like his own children. McNeal said his biological children may be grown, but he's still got a reason to attend high school graduation every year.

"I really look forward to their graduation. I love to see a kid who came through (BMS) and remembers me, and I remember them when they were here," McNeal said, adding, "I possibly made a difference in their lives. What they're doing now they might not have done if I hadn't put them on that right path."

McNeal said.

McNeal said he enjoys being around middle school students and all the things they have going on in their lives, whether it's adapting to a school environment different from the one they were used to at the elementary level or dealing with the early stages of

the transition from adolescence into adulthood.

"I guess I like to be in the middle of all that and try to control it," he said.

McNeal said it's fulfilling when a former BMS student or someone he used to coach takes the time to approach him in

## DOWD

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more fun teaching in middle school than high school. She laughed and said she and her fellow middle-school teachers are "a special kind of weird, for sure."

All joking aside, middle-school teachers are catching children at a "pivotal" point in their lives, Dowd said.

"These kids can go two ways," she said. "They can really decide to make it or not. This is the moment we need to catch them — before they decide to make all the mistakes."

Dowd remembers her own experiences in eighth grade and how she often felt awkward and embarrassed.

"I just felt like everybody was looking at me," Dowd said. "Everybody was judging."

Now, though, Dowd realizes her classmates were all thinking the same thing, so she had no basis for feeling the way she did. She said she tells her students all the time, "Nobody's paying attention to you. They're too busy worrying about their own

eighth-grade selves."

"I tell them my own eighth-grade year was terrifying," Dowd said, adding, "I tell them this all the time: 'That's why I'm here — to help you through the worst year I had.'"

Having the opportunity to build relationships with middle-school students is rewarding for Dowd because it allows her to see the "real people" in kids, which she described as "neat."

"They just get such bad reputations, but they're really cool people," she said. "They don't know who they are yet. It's kind of fun to see from the beginning of the year to the end of the year who they turn out to be."

## Teaching is about more than students

When asked what her definition of a "Teacher of the Year" would be, Dowd said "somebody who not only has mastered a couple facets of teaching, but who can also help other teachers."

In fact, Dowd said her favorite part of the day is when she's fulfilling her role as a teacher coach. She may be helping them,

but they, in turn, are helping her. "Every day, I learn something from another teacher," Dowd said.

Dowd said if teachers find that something they do works really well, they should share it with their colleagues so they can all become the best teachers they can be. As an example, Dowd said the seventh- and eighth-grade English language arts teachers at BMS are working "super closely together."

"Now, it's a think tank of four, super-capable women," Dowd said. "It's neat."

She may be a teacher coach, but Dowd will leave you with the impression that her colleagues deserve as much credit for her being Teacher of the Year as she does.

"They've all got better ideas than I do," Dowd said.

Dowd admitted that she's honored to be selected as the district-wide Teacher of the Year, but she also feels a little embarrassed.

"It made me feel good, of course," she said. "I feel super respected, but also I don't want anybody to ever think that I think I deserve it. That just feels wrong."

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