

# Bradford County Telegraph

USPS 062-700 — Starke, Florida

Thursday, April 17, 2025

146th year, 40th Issue — \$1

## Fire destroys building at Tatum Sawmill

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
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Bradford and Clay County firefighters contained a structure fire at Lawtey's Tatum Sawmill on Monday, April 14. However, the blaze completely burned one structure.

Bradford Fire Chief Ben Carter said his department received the call on the fire around 3:40 a.m.

"Our main focus was just making sure it did not spread to any of the other buildings or the lumber stacks nearby," Carter said. "They made a quick attack on it and prevented it from spreading to the other structures. That was our main focus as we knew that building was going to be basically a total loss due to the amount of fire load that we had when we first arrived, and so our main focus was just making sure it did not spread to any of the other buildings or the lumber stacks nearby."

The chief added that because his units needed more water, they requested assistance from Clay County Fire Rescue, which eventually sent over 20 personnel, nearly double the number of Bradford firefighters at the scene. The neighboring agency also sent a ladder truck, which Carter said was a big help.

"(It) was extremely helpful to have that ladder there on scene and be able to have an elevated water stream,"



Bradford Fire Chief Ben Carter said his department deployed three engines and three tankers to the scene, joined by three additional tankers from the public works department.

Carter said. "That made our jobs much, much easier."

Carter said his department deployed three engines and three tankers to the scene, joined by three additional tankers from the public works department. Bradford units remained at the County Road 200A property

until around 10:15 a.m.

The chief added that he is confident of the source of the fire and that there will be no investigation of the incident.

"We didn't feel a need to involve the State Fire Marshal's Office," Carter said. "We determined the cause

was electrical in nature."

A Tatum family representative called the Telegraph Tuesday afternoon and expressed thanks to the firefighters who responded to the scene.



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## WORTH NOTING

### Sunrise service for Easter

Bayless Highway Baptist Church invites you to Easter Sunday service April 20 at Water Oak Creek Ranch — 6720 NW 203rd St., Starke. The sunrise service begins at 7 a.m. and will be followed by a pancake breakfast at 8:30. The worship service begins at 10 a.m. Lunch will follow at noon, and there will be an egg hunt at 1 p.m.

### Resurrection service in Raiford

The Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church of Raiford and Pastor Oscar Griffith will be having their annual Easter/ Resurrection Service on Sunday, April 20, at 11 a.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### VFW egg hunt

The Auxiliary of VFW Post 10082 is having its Community Annual Easter Egg hunt on Saturday, April 19, at 11 a.m. at the VFW Post off S.R. 231 in Union County. Lunch will be served and there will be an egg hunt. Contact President Barbara Fischer at 904-263-0647 with any questions.

In addition, the VFW still has bingo every Thursday at 7 p.m. at the post.

### Collection site closings

Bradford County solid waste collection sites will be closed for Good Friday and Easter Sunday on April 18 and 20. They will be open Saturday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### Scholarship for UC students

Esther King Memorial Scholarship applications are being accepted online. You will need to go to the Union County School District's website to access the application. Go to the UCHS guidance page at [www.union.k12.fl.us](http://www.union.k12.fl.us). Click on the tab for schools, Union County High School and then Guidance Office. The Esther King Scholarship link can be found under the heading "For Seniors."

Completed applications and all documents requested must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 2, 2025.

Questions can be emailed to [maddoxc@union.k12.fl.us](mailto:maddoxc@union.k12.fl.us).

### Democratic Women meet April 24

The Democratic Women's Club of the Lakes Area will meet on Thursday, April 24, at 7 p.m. (with doors opening at 6:30). Focus on organizing teams. All Democrats are welcome. Meetings are held at the Melrose Center, 309 State Hwy 26 in Melrose. For further information, call 352-235-4161.

## Union Commissioners grill tiny house builders

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

A couple who manufacture and rent tiny homes on wheels as short-term rentals in the Providence area came to the April 7 Union County Commission meeting with cookies, endorsements from a YouTube channel and a Gainesville magazine, and glowing reviews about their "glamping cabin getaways."

Govinda Carol and Krsna Balynas also pitched their manufacturing and rental businesses, which they said grossed \$1.6 million in revenues, as a driver of economic development in Union County and said they hoped county commissioners would work with them to find a way to keep the operation going while conforming it to county land use laws.

Instead, the two business owners got a grilling from commissioners, particularly Channing Dobbs and Donna Jackson.

During their March 17 meeting, commissioners discussed an alleged illegal campground operated by Carol and Balynas off County Road 241 on agriculturally zoned property.

According to a complaint, the couple rented tiny homes through Airbnb to out-of-town guests. According to Balynas, after the March 17 meeting, Commissioner Mac Johns visited the site and recommended that the pair address the complaints directly to commissioners.

Carol and Balynas tried to persuade commissioners of the benefits their operation brought to Providence and Union County, highlighting one review in which guests said they patronized Pop Pop's Pizza Box in Providence.

### Came to Union after problems in Alachua

However, Dobbs and Jackson quickly zeroed in on the couple's land use violations and suggested through their questioning that after the City of Alachua chased the pair away for land use violations in that municipality, the couple tried to set up their manufacturing operation in Union County under the radar.

"I think this is kind of a—we're in a situation of beg forgiveness instead of ask permission type thing," Dobbs told the pair. "I commend you for what you're doing. Really, I do. I think it's

great. But I think the proper channels have to be (adhered to)."

"You're supposed to abide by the county land development regulations," added Jackson. "Did you check into that before you started a business?"

Balynas: "No. So this grew very organically. It grew a lot faster than we had the ability to keep up."

Jackson: "Have you ever been cited at another county for a land development regulation or a failure to provide adequate permitting for your business?"

Balynas: "No. Alachua City had tried to close us down, but they didn't have any proper violations against us, which we just ended a two-year lawsuit with them over that because they allowed us to maintain with verbal permission for three years and then they changed their minds. We weren't actually violating any codes against their regulations."

Through their questioning, commissioners also uncovered that after obtaining septic permits from the Department of Health for two homes, the couple brought in multiple tiny houses and hooked the structures up to the two septic systems approved for two residences. They did the same with the electrical hookup, supplying power to several vacation cottages from the boxes of the two houses on the property.

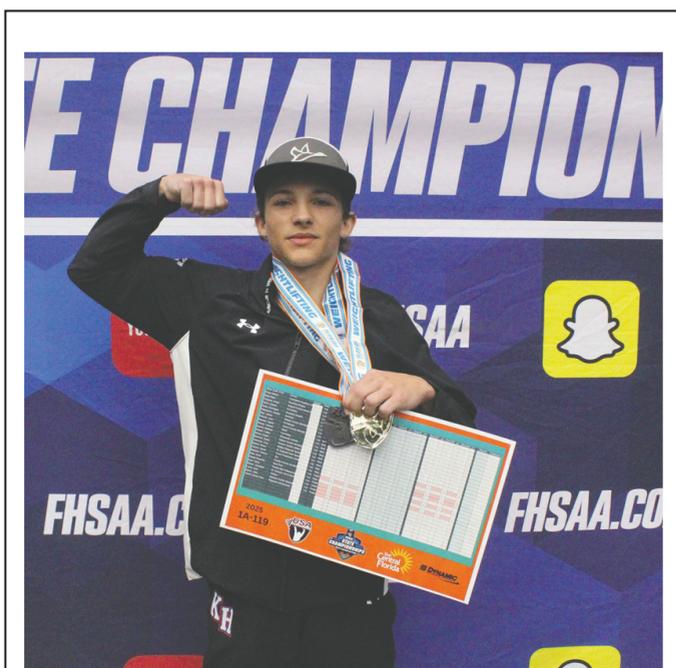
The pair claimed that the Department of Health said the setup created no immediate public health threat, but County Attorney Russell Wade said the county received a letter from the state health agency outlining the couple's violations.

### 'Did you just think that you could come to Union County and get away with this?'

Balynas told commissioners that the couple wanted to comply with county codes.

"But you don't feel like you should have met that standard before you were in violation?" asked Jackson. "You've had just come out of Alachua County where you've spent two years in a lawsuit, but yet you've come to Union County, and you start engaging in activities that you should have

See TINY, page 2



### Two medals for Keystone champ

Keystone weightlifter Elijah Mize won the traditional state championship in the 119-pound class. He would walk away with two medals on the day, also earning a fourth-place finish in the Olympic event. See page 8 for more.

## Evaluations seek improvement from Starke city manager

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
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Starke General Manager Drew Mullins received mixed reviews on his recent evaluation by city commissioners — including some comments that were quite critical of his performance — leading to talk of a new contract with benchmarks for improvement.

While some supported raising Mullins' pay — with Mayor Andy Redding saying it should be equal to Chief Administrative Officer Jimmy Crosby's salary — a raise was deferred until completion of a six-month performance improvement plan.

Most commissioners felt Mullins was meeting expectations, and in some cases exceeding them. Commissioner Janice Mortimer said he was not meeting expectations and recommended the performance improvement plan.

Commissioner Scott Roberts, who also raised several issues in his evaluation of the general manager, pointed out the need to develop a new contract that aligns with the duties of this position versus the former city manager position. Mullins' focus is now utilities while other departments are now overseen by Crosby.

Commissioner Danny Nugent wasn't in a rush to offer an additional raise as Mullins' pay was increased 10% when he was assigned additional duties that have since been redistributed.

Mortimer said she had met with Mullins to go over her evaluation and expectations for improvement, and she believed he would make the necessary steps to turn her opinion around. Until she sees those changes, she said she would not support increasing his pay.

See MANAGER, page 3



## KH council bids farewell to Brown

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
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Keystone Heights officials said goodbye to Council Member Tony Brown during the council's April 7 meeting at the Keystone Heights Beach Pavilion.

Brown chose not to run for re-election this year. Ryan A. Knight ran unopposed for Brown's Seat 1 during an April 8 municipal election.

### Chair, card, coin

City Manager Charlie Van Zant presented Brown with one of city hall's old chairs, which the airport authority now uses.

"Mr. Brown, he loves tradition," Van Zant told the audience at the city council meeting. "He loved these old chairs, and he said, 'All I want when I leave is one of those old chairs with a plaque.'" Mayor Nina Rodenroth told Brown she asked 31 people to give her a one-word description of the retiring council member. She added that the responses included traditional, optimistic, local legend, stylish dresser, servant, and big teddy bear.

"I created this word cloud in the shape of a tree that includes all those words," she said. "This is basically our card to you as a memory sake on behalf of your servant leadership for our city. This is a family tree with all of our faces throughout many, many events, and it's just to say thank you from all of us for your servant leadership from 1996 to

2025."

The mayor also presented Brown with a limited-edition commemorative coin from the Florida League of Mayors for his 30 years of civic leadership.

"You have gone above and beyond for the City of Keystone Heights," she said, adding that two of the three areas of recognition on the coin are public service and community leadership.

"You started with the Boy Scouts and the fire department at 15 years old," she said. "You started the city council leadership at 31...The Florida League of Cities, your involvement with them, your support, the regional and statewide events, your (membership on) nominating and environmental committees, your board membership, and you are also part of the Florida League of Mayors."

Rodenroth lauded Brown for representing the City in Tallahassee during Clay Day.

"The third item on the coin is vision," she continued. "At 15 years old, your father-mentor told you to lead a path that honors the legacy of those before you and ensures the promise of a thriving and united community."

The mayor then led the audience in a standing ovation for the outgoing council member.

### Started at age 15

Brown then addressed his colleagues and fellow citizens.

He recalled his first exposure

to civic leadership at 15 years old when the then Keystone Heights Police Department sponsored an explorer's club within the local Boy Scouts Troop.

Brown thanked his family for their sacrifices during his time in community leadership.

"Many 4th of Julys, starting off at six o'clock in the morning," he recalled of volunteering for Our Country Day activities. "They wouldn't see me until the next morning because they'd all be in bed by the time we got home."

He also thanked his parents.

"My dad died when I was 11 months old from cancer," he said. "I never knew him, but one of his friends took care of my mom, made sure she was taken care of, and I was taken care of, and thank God they married, but I learned a lot from him, a lot."

Brown recognized his mentors on the city council: Archie Green, Bob Beam, Bob Alexander, and Paul Yates.

"To the many women and men at the Keystone Heights Volunteer Fire Department," he continued. "I learned a lot from these guys and a lot of hours spent getting up in the middle of the night to serve this community that that volunteer fire department did."

### From the bottom of my heart

Lastly, Brown thanked the citizens of Keystone Heights for allowing him to serve them.

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart for trusting me as a councilman, as a mayor for all these years," he said. "My prayer is for the wisdom of this council to always be conservative with the funds and the tax dollars, and I feel like you are, but that goes on and on for future people to serve."

Later in the meeting, Green Cove Springs Mayor Connie Butler and Starke City Commissioner Danny Nugent presented Brown with a proclamation from the Northeast Florida League of



Green Cove Springs Mayor Connie Butler reads a proclamation from the Northeast Florida League of Cities recognizing Tony Brown's service to the group while Starke City Commissioner Danny Nugent holds a printed version of the proclamation.



Retiring City Council Member Tony Brown tries out a chair given to him by city officials. Also pictured (l-r) are Mayor Nina Rodenroth, City Manager Charlie Van Zant, and Council Member Elston "Speedy" Kussler.

Cities recognizing the outgoing council member for his board membership in that organization.

Butler said Brown served on the Florida Council of Mayors and on the League of City's

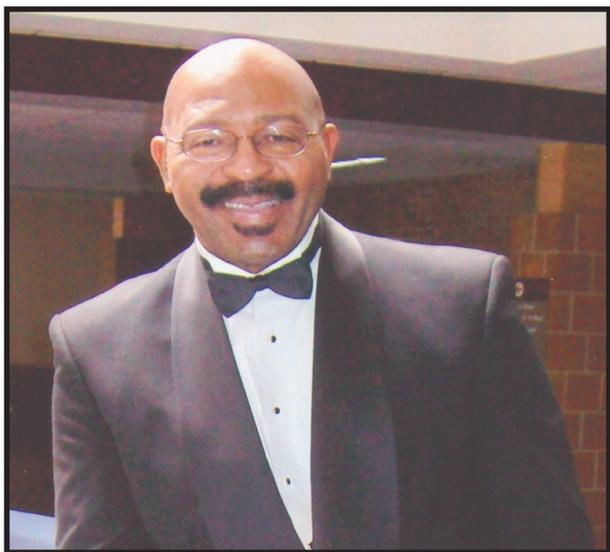
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|---|---|
| THURSDAY 4/17<br>THE KING OF KINGS- 6:30<br>MINECRAFT- 6:30               | FRIDAY 4/18<br>THE KING OF KINGS- 7:00<br>MINECRAFT- 7:00               |
| SATURDAY 4/19<br>THE KING OF KINGS- 4:00 & 7:00<br>MINECRAFT- 4:00 & 7:00 | SUNDAY 4/20<br>THE KING OF KINGS- 4:00 & 6:30<br>MINECRAFT- 4:00 & 6:30 |

## Dr. Benjamin Franklin Recognition Day Scholarship Fund Celebration



**Sunday  
April 27, 2025  
4 p.m.**

**Philadelphia Missionary  
Baptist Church**

1191 Middleburg Road  
Lawtey, Florida 32058

Rev. Charles Green, Pastor

**Rev. Dr. Kevin McBride  
Guest Speaker**

## TINY Continued from page 1

known (were not) appropriate. Did you just think that you could come to Union County and get away with this?"

"We grew our business from nothing," replied Balyas, "and we made choices that we had to make in order to continue growing our business, to give opportunities to our family that we didn't have access to. And so, at the time, when we started our business, it wasn't an option for us. We didn't have the resources to go through all of the loops and the jumps to establish..."

Jackson cut the speaker off. "One point five million dollars later, I wouldn't think resources would be a problem," the commissioner interjected.

"That's revenue, and that's not net profit," countered Balyas. "That's not how we've been functioning for five years. We started out building one tiny house in our backyard on nights and weekends, and it grew organically from there. And we've just been trying to keep up with managing a very large business that grew bigger than we were able to keep up with. And so that's why we're here today because we want to do it right, and we want to make sure

that everything—the t's are crossed, and i's are dotted and that we can stay in your county because we believe that it's a beautiful offering to this county."

"Those are things that are done through proper channels that are permitted through the appropriate departments and come before this board for approval," stated Jackson, "not things that are done illegally."

### Amazing, but illegal

Johns capsulated the situation from his perspective.

"They're common-sense folks," he said of Carol and Balyas. "They know they're doing wrong. I know they're doing wrong. None of that stuff is legal. There are two things going on. There's a campground, basically, and there's a manufacturing assembly plan out there for tiny homes. None of it's permitted. None of it's legal. I think y'all know that, but we're not here to decide, and we're not here to really chastise you or penalize you or blame you. The bottom line is it's all out in the open now, so we can't hide from it either."

Johns added that he thought the tiny house campsites were commendable.

"I'm telling you, they're nice," he said. "They're not septic pipes running out on the ground with chickens eating up sewage. It is

really amazing what you've done out there, but it is illegal."

Commissioners told the couple that bringing their operation into compliance would be difficult.

Dobbs said he hoped the pair would find an appropriate place in Union County to operate.

"If y'all can get in the right spot or if you can, if it's possible for you to rezone this, I want you to build a thousand of them," he said. "Because I think, just like everyone else here, we need more business growth, but we have to do it the right way."

## Breast Cancer Walk raises money for scholarship

The second annual Cancer Walk in support of Breast Cancer Awareness and Education will take place Saturday, April 26, at 9:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Shirley Ann Brown Livingstone Scholarship Foundation and organized by director and breast cancer survivor Carolyn Brown Spooner, the walk will begin at Mr. Pisgah AME church located at 102 SE 44th Ave. (Steel Mill Road) in Starke.

The 2.2-mile walk will take participants down C.R. 100A where they will turn around at the steel plant and return to the church. Water and Gatorade stations will be set up at Mt. Pisgah and Ebenezer Baptist Church, and restrooms are available at Lincoln City Park, next to Ebenezer Baptist.

If anyone would like to donate, please make your donation to the Shirley Ann Brown Livingstone Scholarship Foundation. The scholarships aid local students pursuing their college education in medical fields such as nursing, cancer research, pharmacy, physical therapy and other fields that aid cancer patients. Educational materials on breast cancer will be shared at the event. For further information, contact Carolyn Spooner at 904-364-6271.

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# BHS donations through VyStar multiply

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
mark@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School and VyStar Credit Union celebrated four years of partnership at the school board meeting Monday with a check presentation.

The partnership provides paid internships to a select number of students, but a lot more in terms of financial literacy, leadership training and community service.

BHS Principal Chris Coffey thanked VyStar for being a “phenomenal partner.”

“Every single person we’ve ever worked with from VyStar has been exceptional. They’re just really incredible to work with, and it’s really neat to see our students really blossom within the programs,” he said.

VyStar Vice President of High School Programs Michael Rathjen was equally enthusiastic about the support of the school and district. He described the internship experiences as “super competitive” but also rewarding. Students earn course credit and a financial education while on campus, but on the job or in training they earn \$15 an hour. Over the years, Rathjen said that conservatively amounts

to \$120,000 in compensation directly to the 44 students who have participated in the yearlong internships.

Some graduating the program have even gone on to work for the company, and the end of this year means a fourth scholarship will be awarded, Rathjen said.

One of the students who went to work for VyStar while continuing her education was also present. Joy Murungi was in the first group of interns at BHS, and she now works as an academic support specialist at Santa Fe College. Both students present, Saniyah Thompson and Kaylah Vargas, are also part of the Upward Bound program, she said, and she helped prepare Saniyah to enter the program. Murungi said she was proud of what they are doing in the community.

“Financial literacy within a rural community is very important,” she said. Participants share what they learn with their fellow students.

Rathjen and the group were there to present a check from the High School Debit Card Give Back Program. Each of the participating high schools has a co-branded debit card available



Pictured are BHS VyStar Teacher Becky Wilhite, BHS Principal Chris Coffey, VyStar Branch Vice President Jennifer Reddish, VyStar Assistant Branch Manager Kim Edmond, Joy Murungi from Santa Fe College, students Saniyah Thompson and Kaylah Vargas, VyStar School Program Coordinator Morgan Wooley, BHS Assistant Principal Nichole Stafford, and VyStar Vice President of School Programs Michael Rathjen.

to anyone with a personal checking account with VyStar. For each purchase made with the card, 5 cents is donated to the corresponding school, up to \$10,000 a year.

“So, this is one of the items they use to promote their student body, and this is more than just a piece of plastic, because we know how important it is to support the student body and the student community,” he said.

In the first two years since the debit card was released, the school received \$200 a year. This year that grew to \$2,132.

“It really is showing that the school is promoting the partnership, and the community is buying in to support the partnership. And every time

you swipe, it’s like an ongoing fundraiser for the school, and nothing comes out of the person’s pocket,” Rathjen said.

Rathjen acknowledged the support of others present including VyStar Branch Vice President Jennifer Reddish and VyStar Assistant Branch

Manager Kim Edmond whose leadership helps the students get through some of the tougher parts of the job. VyStar School Program Coordinator Morgan Wooley directly oversees the partnership. Becky Wilhite is the VyStar teacher at BHS.

## MANAGER Continued from page 1

In her evaluation, Mortimer said that without improvement in six months’ time, she would recommend the commission take steps to terminate his contract.

Mortimer and others had higher expectations for communication from their manager, which makes it difficult for her to respond to citizens’ questions and concerns. Further, she felt he withholds information, “creating a sense of distrust,” and avoids addressing difficult issues or challenges. She also said he struggles to articulate his vision, goals and expectations, leading to confusion and misinterpretation.

According to Mortimer, Mullins’ leadership has fallen short of expectations. “Significant improvements are needed to effectively lead the city,” she wrote in her evaluation. While he has strong technical skills, she said he needed a mentor or leadership training program for guidance. She wrote that his overall effectiveness is satisfactory, noting he works well with Crosby to meet some expectations, but “his inability to consistently follow up on assigned tasks demonstrates a deficiency that must be corrected.”

As for his integrity, she wrote that on multiple occasions he provided inaccurate information, never offering an explanation or apology. “I have become extremely guarded when I ask him a simple question. I am concerned that he tells me what he thinks I want to hear, rather than the truth. After I have consistently advised him to tell

me the truth. It remains a serious concern.”

Roberts agreed with Mortimer on leadership improvement, saying his explanations of situations lack detail. There needs to be more clarity, and he should justify reasons why certain decisions are made, according to Roberts. While agreeable and good-natured, he said Mullins needs to improve his self-management and his willingness to spend whatever time it takes to do a good job.

Others noted Mullins should work on communication in and outside of meetings. Commissioner Bob Milner did praise Mullins for his grasp of the budget and working within that framework, as well as his work with Crosby and their assembly of a highly qualified staff.

On that point, Redding noted that Mullins had to replace a large percentage of his workforce because they left or were let go. He called it a “daunting task” to replace, manage and develop a workforce at the same time and said Mullins’ efforts would pay off in the long run with consistent management in place.

Redding also noted the manager’s working knowledge of policies and directives, his responsive to media and the positive image he projects of the city. While he could respond to citizens in a timelier manner, Redding said Mullins was courteous and respectful to citizens, saying he’s heard no complaints from the community. He also said Mullins showed exceptional moral and ethical character by making tough budgetary decisions regarding the police and fire departments, enduring in the “face of great scrutiny.”

Mullins’ knowledge of state and local laws helps him find avenues to navigate the system on the city’s behalf, according to Redding. But he said the manager needs to delegate and make sure there is follow-through from subordinates. More effort is needed toward making and completing short- and long-term goals.

During post evaluation discussion, Redding said this was Mullins’ first evaluation since he came to Starke, and so it was the commission who had been negligent in communicating its expectations and helping the manager improve.

“You can’t live in the past, and I’m not asking anybody to do that, but it is upon us to develop him and give him the avenues for success, which we have not adequately defined those avenues for success. So, it becomes very subjective and opinionated when we do this evaluation process,” he said.

Four commissioners decided Mullins was meeting expectations, and based on that, Redding wanted to see Mullins’ salary raised to meet Crosby’s, with a reevaluation of his performance in six months after his responsibilities and performance expectations were better defined.

Commissioners, however, voted for development of a new contract with a better position description with a reevaluation and possible raise in six months.

Since that meeting, it was decided Mullins would continue to operate under his existing contract. The contract will be readdressed in October.

## Money for more meals



With St. Patrick’s Day occurring in March, the Woman’s Club of Starke celebrated Irish culture at its monthly meeting, serving up a traditional menu of shepherd’s pie, Irish flag salad, soda bread and Irish apple cake. Club members enjoyed a presentation by Amy Polk, owner of Hometown Grounds Coffee Company, followed by the club making a \$1,000 donation to A Place of Grace Inc., a local nonprofit that helps feed the disadvantaged. The Porchiazzo family provides a meal to anyone in need every day at 1 p.m. at the Rags to Riches thrift store. The community has come together to help provide these meals, with local churches and individuals helping prepare and serve the food. Pictured (l-r) are Arts and Culture Co-Chair Lorie Riley, President Sheila Barnes, Third Vice President Cleo Elder, Crystal Porchiazzo and First Vice President Cindy Little.

## 2K event promotes wellness

Register your team for the 2K Run, Walk and Roll Relay for fun prizes and activities. The event takes place at the Bradford County Senior Center (1805 N. Temple Ave. in Starke) on Wednesday, April 23, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. alongside a health fair that includes no costs fitness tests and health screenings, as well as information on health cooking, eating and fitness. Enjoy refreshments and giveaways while accessing to health and wellness resources.

Movement, stretching and Zumba dance zones will be set up, and teams can register for the 2K (1.5 mile) track where they can run, walk, use a walking device or wheelchair to complete

the relays. No team, no worries. Just call 904-349-1037 to sign up.

The event is sponsored by the senior center, the Florida Department of Health in Bradford and Bradford County Fire Rescue.

## Sons of Allen service

Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church of Lawtey and its Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Dupree, will host its Sons of Allen worship service at 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 27. The theme for this service is “Men Under Construction.” Guest messenger for the occasion is the Rev. Michael Ward, pastor of Greater New Bethel A.M.E. Church in Live Oak. The public is invited to join this exciting worship service.

### Happy 100th Birthday!

**Oscar Davis**  
April 23, 1925

Oscar Davis, a World War II veteran, will celebrate his **100th** birthday on April 23. Dad, we are so blessed to be able to celebrate with you.

Love, your children: Loraine (John), Charline (Irving), Wesley, Wayne, Diane (Lester), and Curtis (Jackie)

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# Study examines flood vulnerability, raises questions

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
mark@bctelegraph.com

A grant-funded flood vulnerability assessment produced by NV5 and shared at the March 18 Bradford County Commission meeting set some priorities but also raised some questions.

Ryan Thompson, a senior project manager for the company, presented the project results. The assessment defines where flooding occurs in the county, evaluates the severity and — based on the impact to transportation, critical infrastructure, high-risk populations, etc. — prioritizes focus areas. From there recommended adaption strategies and future project funding can be identified.

The project began last April by establishing a steering committee that included staff from the county, regional planning council, water management district and the city of Hampton. Thompson said they collected critical assets as determined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the agency administering the grant, and verified those assets with the committee members.

They ran computerized flooding models, conducting six scenarios from the years 2024, 2040 and 2070 using both 100- and 500-year storms. They compared the flood models with the mapped assets to determine the sensitivity of each, refining

the list of assets based on critical need during a flood.

Of 60,000 assets collected, they narrowed it down to around 300 by excluding private wells and septic systems as well as historical, natural and cultural resources not considered critical during a flooding event. County staff added recommendations to the critical assets remaining. Beyond the asset sensitivity revealed by the flooding model, they used an index that considers the population living near the asset (social vulnerability), the area around the asset (physical vulnerability) and risk to the asset itself (direct vulnerability).

The final list included 30 bridges, five communications towers, four boat ramps and three health care facilities.

Thompson said the model is great at identifying areas of concern but not detailed enough to determine the exact extent of a concern. That's why 30 bridges countywide are on the list but not culverts in flood prone areas.

"Although it's good and it's appropriate at this stage in the vulnerability assessment, what you'll hear me say when we come to recommendations is those adaptation plans are to look more closely at some of these areas to determine exactly what the needs are, so you can have very specific mitigation measures and then apply for implementation funding," he said.

The focus list included Lake Sampson, Alligator Creek running through Starke and



## Focus Areas:

- Lake Sampson
- Alligator Creek
- Water Oak Creek/  
NE 171st ST / 12th AVE
- Bridges

Water Oak Creek, in addition to bridges countywide. Assets around Sampson include several bridges and a communication tower, as well as the Three Pipes water control structure. Alligator Creek flooding impacts residential areas in Starke and surrounds other assets such as the electric substation and Starke ER. This is worse when water is released by Chemours. Water Oak Creek is also infiltrated by drainage from Trail Ridge, flooding Northeast 171st Street and Northwest 12th Ave.

Thompson said the recommendations from the vulnerability assessment are to prioritize Alligator Creek and Water Oak Creek, including a more detailed analysis to identify

specific means of mitigation and seek funding.

What wasn't mentioned in the presentation was the flooding of residences around Sampson and Crosby lakes as well as private rural neighborhoods like Riverbend Estates. But commissioners, raised those issues, describing people having to paddle down dirt roads to get out.

"We've seen it. It's like nothing you've ever seen," Commissioner Diane Andrews said.

Commissioner Chris Dougherty pointed out that before it gets to the lakes, it comes through Starke, and more so when Chemours is releasing water during a storm. The golf

course as well, Andrews said. A focus on Alligator Creek could benefit downstream. Dougherty said they know where it is coming from, it's about controlling it.

"We're kind of overstudying it. I think it's time to move forward and try to find out if we can mitigate it," he said, although he did recommend some follow up discussion about other areas they know are also impacted.

Citizen Paul Still followed up at the commission's April 1 meeting, saying the vulnerability report fell short. He said there were "serious problems" with the assessment, and he urged commissioners to hold a workshop with citizens impacted by past flooding. Multiple errors in the document need to be

addressed before it is officially submitted, he said. Among those he named the incorrect mapping of Alligator Creek and misreporting of flooding issues.

"One of the problems is that it doesn't look like the consultant used any of local resources to evaluate what they were saying — people who were knowledgeable about previous flooding events," Still said. That information includes data and interviews conducted by the Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District.

Dougherty again recognized there were some follow-up discussions that needs to occur.

## Work begins on gate for airport road

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

Contractors began work on a gate for the Keystone Heights Airport westside access road this month

The \$200,000 project includes removing a fence near State Road 100 and replacing it with a gate further east with an electronic

keypad.

The Florida Department of Transportation has approved using the new road only for emergency purposes until turning lanes are constructed on State Road 100. Officials are trying to secure funding from the state for the turning lanes.

Airport Board Chair David

Kirkland said that although the new road will be a county road, the current access street leading to the airport will remain private.

Kirkland added that Bradford County would connect the State highway to the new road later, funded by an earlier Florida Department of Economic Opportunity grant.



Airport Board Chair David Kirkland said that Bradford County would connect the State highway to the new road later, funded by an earlier Florida Department of Economic Opportunity grant.

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## DOH issues algae health alert

The Florida Department of Health in Bradford County has issued a health alert for the presence of harmful blue-green algae toxins in Lake Sampson-Rowell and Sampson Canal. The alert is in response to a water sample taken on April 9, 2025. The public should exercise caution in and around Lake Sampson-Rowell and Sampson Canal.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:

—Do not drink, swim, wade, use personal watercrafts, or come into contact with waters where there is a visible bloom.

—Wash your skin and clothing with soap and water if you have any contact with algae, or discolored or water that smells unpleasant.

—Keep pets and livestock away from the area to avoid any contact with water. Waters where algae blooms are present are not safe for animals. Pets and livestock should use an alternative source of water when algae blooms are present.

—Do not cook or clean dishes with water contaminated by algae blooms. Boiling the water will not eliminate toxins.

—Eating fillets from healthy fish caught in freshwater lakes experiencing blooms is safe. Rinse fish fillets with tap or bottled water, throw out the guts, and cook fish thoroughly.

—Do not eat shellfish in waters with algae blooms.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection and partners collect algae samples from reported bloom locations. After samples are analyzed at their laboratory, the toxin results can be viewed on the Protecting Florida Together or on DEP's Algal Bloom Dashboard.



### What is blue-green algae?

Blue-green algae are a type of bacteria that is common in Florida's freshwater environments. A bloom occurs when rapid growth of algae leads to an accumulation of individual cells that discolor water and often produce floating mats that emit unpleasant odors.

Blue-green algae blooms can also appear as scum, foam or paint on the surface of the water in various colors. To learn more about the appearance of algae blooms, visit Protecting Florida Together.

Some environmental factors that contribute to blue-green algae blooms are sunny days, warm water temperatures, still water conditions and excess nutrients. Blooms can appear year-round but are more frequent in summer and fall. Many types of blue-green algae can produce toxins.

Blue-green algae may not always be visible as a bloom, but it can still be present in the water.

### Is blue-green algae harmful?

Blue-green algae can produce toxins, which can be harmful to human and pets as well as ecosystems, including fish and other aquatic animals. Sensitive individuals (e.g., children, the elderly and those who are immunocompromised) may still be at risk even at low concentrations and should avoid

any exposure.

For additional information on potential health effects of algae blooms, visit the Florida Department of Health's harmful algae blooms webpage.

Where can I find current water status information?

Current information about Florida's water quality status and public health notifications for harmful algae blooms and beach conditions is available at Protecting Florida Together. You can subscribe to receive notifications when water quality changes in your area.

Where can I report issues related to algae blooms?

Algae blooms: DEP monitors algae blooms and collects samples for analysis. Blooms can be reported to DEP online or by calling toll-free at 1-855-305-3903.

Human health: Report symptoms from exposure to a harmful algae bloom or any aquatic toxin to the Florida Poison Information Center by calling 800-222-1222 to speak to a poison specialist.

Animal health: Contact your veterinarian if you believe your pet has become ill after consuming or having contact with blue-green algae contaminated water.

Fish kills: Dead, diseased, or abnormally behaving fish or wildlife should be reported to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission online or at 800-636-0511.

If you have other health questions or concerns about blue-green algae, please call DOHBradford at 904-964-7732.

# Hope Christian students win Florida Farm Bureau shoebox contest

Hope Christian Academy fourth grade students won the 2025 Florida Farm Bureau Shoebox Float Celebrate Agriculture Contest that was judged in February and awards presented before the HCA student body in March. The class won a pizza party with the overall top winners presented monetary prizes:

- overall winner \$100, HCA student Talen James.
- overall second place winner \$75, Liz Rangel.
- overall third place winner \$50, Baylee Bake.

“The fourth graders spent two weeks in science class learning about agriculture and its benefits in our community,”



**Overall contest winner Talen James. (Photo by LaToya Foster.)**

said HCA instructor LaToya Foster. “It was such a joy seeing their excitement and enthusiasm as they transformed their knowledge in such a creative way by building their Celebrate Agriculture ShoeBox floats.”

The awards were presented by Bradford County Farm Bureau representatives Richard Duggar, and Norman Dowdy.

“It was the perfect project for the students to learn about the benefits of agriculture as we move into our Life Science Unit in class,” said K5-12 Director of Education Rachel Morgan. She added that the students worked hard and had some great submissions.



**At Hope Christian Academy, (front to back, l-r) third place winner Baylee Baker, second place winner Liz Rangel, Rhett Taylor, Braylyn Summerlin, Dream Gardner, Jacob Adkins, Ayden Ramos, HCA instructor LaToya Foster, Jocelyn Stoddard, Emma Frazier, Nathalia Villar, Wyatt Simon, HCA K5-12 Education Director Rachel Morgan, HCA Head of School Terry Denmark, Farm Bureau Board Treasurer Norman Dowdy and Farm Bureau Office Manager Richard Duggar. (Photo by Virginia Denmark.)**



**Attendees take part in fun and games.**

## Design(her): impacting girls for 14 years

Design(her), a community girls conference, celebrated its 14th year at First Baptist Church of Starke on April 4, with 178 middle-school and high-school students experiencing an evening of connection, fun and spiritual growth.

A vibrant pre-part kicked off the event, followed by a meal, worship and games that set the tone for the evening.

The highlight was a powerful message from Pam Davis, who spoke from the heart on the theme of “Knowing Who You Are and Whose You Are.” She reminded the attendees that true identity is found only in Christ, the one who created them with purpose and love.

The evening continued with a high-energy after party that included food trucks, a silent disco and time to hang out and deepen friendships.

Though the conference is over, girls don’t have to wait until 2026 to enjoy all that Design(her) has to offer. Design(her) Summer

Gatherings have been announced for June 22, July 27 and Aug. 25. These meet-ups will be open to all girls in the community, allowing them to learn what discipleship really means, build and strengthen friendships, study God’s word and just have fun doing life together.

The prayers of those involved with making Design(her) a reality are that these events will not only help girls grow spiritually, but that churches and communities will unite in meaningful, lasting ways.

## The Magic of Bees

Do you love honey? Are you curious about how bees produce their golden nectar? The April meeting of the Alligator Creek Garden Club will feature Joan Kramer, a beekeeper with a wealth of gardening knowledge. She is a National Garden Club consultant in environmental, gardening and landscape design. Her talk is open to the public, and you are invited to come.

The meeting will be held Thursday, April 17, at 2 p.m. at the Bradford County Senior center at 1805 N. Temple Ave., in Starke (U.S. 301 north in front of the health department). The club will have refreshments and a plant exchange. For more information, contact Pat Caren at 352-339-3673.



## UC Farm Bureau in Washington

Members of the Union County Farm Bureau visited with Florida’s Congressional delegation in Washington earlier this month to discuss various federal policies that affect farmers and ranchers. The visit included a series of conversations on trade and tariffs, tax cuts, and priorities for the Farm Bill. Pictured (l-r) are Sandy Crawford, Kyndall Brannen, U.S. Congresswoman Kat Cammack, Union County Farm Bureau President Tommy Crawford and Colleen Brannen.

## Letters

### DOGE in local government

Dear Editor:  
It recently came to my attention that, beyond the customary retainer Union County pays its attorney, in the last 12 months the county paid an additional \$56,180.25 in professional charges for legal services.

The county attorney receives a retainer of \$2,910 a month, or \$34,920 annually, to attend all regular and special meetings as required by the board of county commissioners. The attorney receives \$212 per hour for all other legal services to the county.

A public records request was submitted for statements of professional charges from the county attorney for the period of March 2024 through February 2025.

The attorney’s work was documented as a line item by date, time charged, work performed, and total dollars billed for that date. There were 183 dates during the 12 months reviewed resulting in billing to the county. Numerous dates included several events having occurred on the same date; however, they do not reflect time dedicated to the individual event

or individual cost, only total for that date.

Of the approximately 75 contacts with citizens, 64 were related to land development regulations (LDRs). Statements reveal about 64 individual citizens communicated with the attorney by telephone or email, six on two occasions, one on three occasions and one seven times.

Total cost to county for line items, including LDR, was \$29,391.25.

Total cost to county by line item where LDR and “citizen,” or name of person not employed by county is included with other tasks is approximately \$18,638.25.

Total cost to county by line item where only LDR and citizen is listed is approximately \$3,791.

Without each task being documented as a separate line item, it is impossible to determine the exact cost to the county for citizens to be contacting the attorney directly.

Land development regulations, unlike Florida statutes, generally do not require a law degree to comprehend, which begs the question, why is the county attorney fielding so many calls from citizens about LDRs? How are (and who directs) citizens

to contact the county attorney directly?

In that the LDRs are integral to many functions under the county purview, it would seem there would be an employee at the Union County Board of Commissioner’s office, well versed in the LDRs, sufficient to inform citizens on land development issues and less expensive than \$212 an hour.

At a special meeting of the Union County Board of Commissioners on March 25, 2024, there were citizens and elected officials who expressed distrust in the county coordinator to properly execute their duties and conflicts of interest. A commissioner recommended the county coordinator never supervise the building department or LDRs. Another commissioner suggested the county attorney assume the role of LDR administrator.

The governor’s office recently created the Florida Department of Government Efficiency to identify, review and report on unnecessary spending within local governments. Perhaps over reliance on the county attorney warrants examination.

*Jack Schenck*

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## “He Arose”

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

*by Henry Hodges Lawtey, FL*

# Cambodian native speaks at Trinity Baptist

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

Trinity Baptist Church hosted an Operation Christmas Child Full Circle Event on Friday, April 4. Cambodian native Lyda Giedd shared how the gift of a shoebox at age 12 impacted her life. Two area pastors also spoke at the event, describing how the evangelism program that ships millions of Christmas gift boxes around the world marked their congregations.

Operation Christmas Child is a ministry of Samaritan's Purse. Since 1993, the effort has given shoe-box-sized Christmas gift boxes filled with toys, school supplies, and hygiene items to over 232 million children in 170 countries.

During Full Circle events, people who received a gift box as a child describe their experience and tell how they are now involved in giving back to the effort.

## Like the fish and the loaves

Before Giedd described her experience with the ministry, Trinity Baptist's Jeff Michel interviewed two local pastors about their experience with Operation Christmas Child.

Pastor Joel Weck of Waldo's First Baptist Church told the audience he had only been at the church for eight months. He added that the Waldo congregation had participated in Operation Christmas Child since the ministry's inception in the mid-1990s. The New York native said he has also participated in the program for around 30 years at various churches.

"But coming here to First Baptist Church of Waldo, one of the things that I love that they do at this church is it's not a one-month or two-month thing," he said, "because usually in the churches I've been in the past, it's kind of like a race to get the



Lyda Giedd said that when she packs a gift box, it always includes a set of colored pencils.

boxes filled and we start thinking about it at Thanksgiving. This is an all-year thing at First Baptist Church of Waldo, and it's really, really awesome the way that we prepare for that."

Weck said that until last year, the church packed around 150 boxes for shipment to children worldwide. In 2023, the effort topped 300 boxes. He said one person suggested the congregation aim for 500 boxes in 2024.

"And I thought, I don't know, 500, that's a high number," Weck recalled of his reaction to the ambitious goal. "And I prayed about it, and I kind of sensed from some other people I was talking to, I think God wants to do this in our church."

Weck said that as the effort progressed, he was mystified by how many Christmas shoe boxes the church brought in.

"I didn't know where they were all coming from, all these boxes coming in," he said. "It was God...it was like the fish and the loaves. I mean, it just kept multiplying. And we finally got our last box in, and the grand total was 578 boxes."

Weck told the audience that Americans undervalue the impact a shoebox filled with toys

and supplies can have on a child in a foreign land.

"We live in a country where we have so much and children in this country, they have video games and phones and all this stuff," he said. And it's amazing with all this stuff that our kids have, and they say, 'We're so bored.'"

Weck then recalled a mission trip to the Dominican Republic, where he saw houses patched together with scrap material and children playing with a ripped, deflated soccer ball.

"And they had so much joy over that," he said of the kids.

"It's not about a box and stuff," he said of the ministry. "It's about the people. I want you to imagine that child, I want you to imagine that family when that box is opened up, and the joy that's going to be on their faces and the gospel is going to be shared with every single one of these shoe boxes."

Nilo Dominguez, who leads a Spanish-speaking congregation in Gainesville, said that Operation Christmas Child allows his entire congregation to participate in overseas evangelism rather than just a smaller group traveling to the mission field.

"This has allowed for a big part of our church to come together and work on something together," he said through a translator. "We've had meetings where there's been a little 1-year-old and then a 100-year-old man in the same meeting."

The Cuban native added that one member of his congregation received a gift box in Mexico as a child.

"And she tells us about how God came to her through that," he said.

## Kidnapped by mother's sister-in-law

Giedd told the audience she was born 10 years after Cambodia's civil war, which led

to the four-year reign of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, a Chinese Communist Party-backed regime that killed around 1.5 million Cambodians.

She said that as a child, the social upheaval from the war and the communists' rule was still evident.

"Back at that time, everyone was poor and brokenhearted, and life was very difficult for everyone," she said.

Giedd said her impoverished single mother had to work virtually nonstop to support the family, resulting in the child being left home alone for extended periods.

"And one day, I was kidnapped by her sister-in-law, and I was sold to a brothel," she remembered, "and I was four years old. I was so terrified, and I cried so hard that they tied me to a tree out from the house."

Giedd, who now lives in Williamsburg, Virginia, said that as she cried while tied to the tree, a Cambodian Christian couple discovered her and rescued the four-year-old, returning the child to her mother.

"It's a miracle," she said of her rescue. "And I wish I knew who that couple was because they saved my life."

Giedd said she does not remember the couple's names or faces but does recall their message.

"All I could remember is that they said, 'Little girl, we believe in Jesus, and we want to let you know that Jesus loves you, and we love you too.' And I thought in my head, I have no idea who Jesus is. My mother was not Christian, and they disappeared."

## Gambler and womanizer

Giedd described her father as a gambler and womanizer who popped in and out of the home. She added that her mother was so angry about her home life

that she set the house on fire. Although the structure survived, the family later found themselves homeless after the father lost the house gambling.

"And so, my pregnant mother, we had no place to live," Giedd remembered. "We were homeless, we were hopeless and loveless. At four-and-a-half years old, I learned how to hate people, and I hated my own father. I wanted revenge."

Giedd said it became apparent that her mother could not support and protect her, so she went to live with her mother's brother.

Giedd said that even though her kindhearted uncle gave her the security and education her mother could not provide, she felt like an outsider and became a scapegoat whenever things went wrong.

She said that when she was 12, she and her cousins attended a church event where she received an Operation Christmas Child gift box.

"And I felt so excited as I was standing in that line," she said. "I could not believe that I was going to receive my very first gift ever. For 12 years. I never received—I don't remember that I ever had a toy of my own."

She said the box contained a jump rope, which she had never seen before, personal hygiene products, and colored pencils, among other items. Her favorites were the pencils.

"It was so special to me because I loved to draw and color, and it was the only activity that I could do to comfort myself," she said. "I missed my mom, and when I felt I needed comfort, drawing and coloring could comfort me."

## Life's most important lesson

Giedd said the joy in receiving the gifts led her to think about the people who sent the presents.

"It was the moment that I realized that, 'Oh, there's

someone that cares for me.' And through the shoebox gift, it was the moment that I realized God was real because these people who loved God packed this shoebox for me, just for me."

"I was amazed that someone who did not know me, lived across the world from me, would care enough to pack a shoe box just for me even though I was filled with so much pain," she said. "But I can clearly see God's hand as he was protecting me and caring for me."

Giedd said that after receiving God's forgiveness through the gospel, she struggled to forgive the man who caused her so much pain during her childhood.

"I learned the most important life lesson is to forgive those who hurt me just as Christ forgives my sin," she said. "Talking about forgiving someone who hurt you or wronged you or embarrassed you, it's hard, but that is what God did for us. He forgave us, and he asked us to do so to others."

Giedd said that when she opened that shoe box at age 12, she never thought she would be in America packing shoe boxes for other children around the world. She added that every box she packs contains one essential item.

"I never forget to pack good quality colored pencils in each box that I pack because this reminds me that I just want to express my love to the child that I pack for," she said. "And I have a personal life letter telling them that I was 12 years old, and I also received this shoe box, and this is what I received, so, I just hope you enjoy it and you'll use it in a good way."

# From teller to advisor — building wealth and giving back

For Matt Dyal, a career in banking wasn't always part of the plan. Starting out as a youth pastor in Starke, Dyal made a significant career change over a decade ago when he joined Capital City Bank.

The financial advisor explained his career path recently to the Keystone Heights Rotary Club, and the organization summarized his talk in a social media post.

Initially, he viewed his first role at the bank as just a job. "It was time to do something different," Dyal said. "When I started at the bank, I really thought it was a job until I found out what was next. But something happened along the way. I found it was a great place to work, an opportunity to grow a career. And so here I am 10 years later doing something that I was not hired to do."

He began as a teller, a position that many would consider an entry-level role, before rising through the ranks to become a lead teller and then a teller manager. But after several years, he felt the pull to change his

career again, this time without changing his employer.

"I decided I wanted to go in another direction and took a bunch of classes and learned a whole bunch of stuff about the investment side," Dyal explained. Today, he's the financial advisor for the Starke, Keystone, Palatka, and Hastings areas, helping clients manage and grow their wealth.

## Middle school teacher sparked interest in stocks

Dyal's interest in investments dates back to his middle school years, although it took a while for it to resurface in his professional life. "Whenever I was in eighth grade, I had one of those teachers in school who was more than just a teacher. They taught you a lot about life, and she had to fight to get me in her class," Dyal recalled. "She taught me about the stock market because that's what you learn in English class."

In an English class far from the norm, Dyal participated in the stock market game, a program that allowed students to invest fake money in real stocks. "I took my fake money and I bought Microsoft, Nike, and Coca-Cola," he said. "I finished in the top 10 of the state, and I thought, this is really cool. This is a lot of fun." But despite his early success, Dyal initially pursued a different path as a youth pastor before his current role brought him full circle.

## Encouraging some to save, and helping others leave a legacy

Today, Dyal's work as a financial advisor allows him to combine his analytical skills with his desire to help others. "I help folks plan and prepare for growing their wealth," he explained. "Whether that means retirement planning or you just have some money that you want

to work for you, I'm able to help with that."

One of his most rewarding experiences involves helping young people understand the power of investing early. He recounted a conversation with a 26-year-old who had some extra money and wasn't sure what to do with it. "We talked about how a Roth IRA might be a great opportunity for him. You've already paid taxes on this money, you can put it in this market, you can invest it, and it's going to grow tax-free," Dyal said as he described the young man's decision to start his investment journey early, something many in their twenties neglect to consider.

"That's going to compound, and one day he's going to retire. I'll probably be dead and gone by the time that happens, but he's going to live a comfortable lifestyle because he made some choices here as a 26-year-old that most 26-year-olds just don't make."

In addition to helping younger clients, Dyal also works with older individuals who are preparing to leave a legacy for their heirs. "A lot of the times I get to help people who are on the other end of that lifecycle," he explained. "They've done all the things in life that they want to do, and now they have this money that they want to leave



Matt Dyal explained his career path recently to the Keystone Heights Rotary Club.

to their heirs. So, how do we keep that safe? How do we help it to continue to grow?" Dyal works closely with these clients to create personalized plans that reflect their individual goals and risk tolerance.

## Professional obligation becomes personal passion

Beyond his professional life, Dyal has also made a significant impact in his community through his involvement with Rotary. "Rotary's fun. I enjoy it a lot," he

said with a smile. A past president of the Starke Rotary club, Dyal has seen firsthand the positive impact that the organization has around the world. "Rotary's a wonderful organization. We do a lot of good stuff around the world." He joined Rotary initially as part of his commitment to community service, which is a requirement for many bank employees. "Working at a bank, one of the things that is required is a lot of community service. So I went out and I joined a bunch of different organizations," Dyal explained. However, what started as a professional obligation quickly became a personal passion. "When I did it, I thought that Rotary would be the thing that was good for business, but not necessarily so much good for just my own enjoyment."

Matt Dyal's journey from a bank teller to a financial advisor and community leader reflects not only a successful career transition but also his commitment to serving others. Whether he's helping clients grow their wealth or contributing to Rotary's global initiatives, Dyal's focus remains on making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. "In a nutshell, that's kind of what I do," he said, humbly summarizing his multifaceted role.

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## Scholarship for graduating UC girls

The Lake Butler Woman's Club is offering a \$1,000 scholarship for a female resident of Union County to attend an accredited university in the state of Florida. This scholarship is in memory of Joan Gartman, a devoted member of the club for many years, and is sponsored by her family. Applications are available in the guidance department at Union County High School. Completed applications must be received in the guidance office no later than Friday, May 2, 2025.

For further information, please

contact Tracey Fortner at 352-448-5250 or Bobbie Morgan at 386-867-0781.

## Scholarship available for medical studies

The Shirley Ann Brown Livingstone Scholarship is available for the 2025-26 school year. Students must apply by Friday, May 30, to be considered for this coming fall and spring semesters.

This scholarship is for students going into any field of study related to medicine, e.g.

nursing, pharmacy, radiology, or any other health care related fields of study, including medical research, cancer research, or clinical psychology or sociology. The scholarship is provided in memory of the late Shirley Ann Brown Livingstone, a registered nurse who died from breast cancer.

Applications are available at the Santa Fe College Andrews Center in Starke, Bradford High School guidance office, North Florida Technical College, Starke City Hall and CareerSource North Central Florida's Starke Office.

For further information you may contact Carolyn Brown Spooner at 904-964-5807.

# Crime

## Recent arrests in Bradford, Union and Clay

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

### Bradford

Ryan Chesser, 38, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on March 6 for larceny, resisting an officer and assault.

Brittney Ford, 36, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 11 for a probation violation.

Donald Howard, 58, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 9 for possession of obscene material.

Lanaria Ivery, 23, of Gainesville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 11 for child neglect.

Michael James, 36, of Orange Park, was arrested by Bradford

deputies on April 10 for driving with a suspended or revoked license and an out-of-county warrant.

Joseph Kilpatrick, 38, of Palatka, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 10 for DUI.

David Millette, 52, of Hampton, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 5 for an out-of-county warrant.

Michael Morris, 44, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 10 for larceny.

Shynequia O'Neill, 29, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 7 for a probation violation.

Donald Pennington, 54, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 7 for failure to appear.

Glenda Rickoff, 36, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 6 for battery.

Arianna Stockton, 34, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on April 9 for failure to appear.

### Union

Jordan DiPaul, 29, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on April 7 for a probation violation.

Marah Hess, 34, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on April 12 for aggravated battery.

Nicole Kelley, 33, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on April 8 for an out-of-county warrant.

Joshua Padget, 33, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on April 8 for trespassing.

Nathan Perez-Sober, 24, of Lulu, was arrested by Union deputies on April 9 for child neglect with great bodily harm.

A'Niya Slater, 25, of Gainesville, was arrested by Union deputies on April 11 for smuggling contraband into a prison.

### Clay

Xavier Boykin, 32, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on April 10 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Theron Rasmus, 45, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on April 9 for driving with a suspended or revoked license and driving without registration.

## Digital evidence management comes at higher cost

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD  
mark@bctelegraph.com

State Attorney Brian Kramer thanked Bradford County for its electoral support while detailing added legal costs for the county commission April 1.

The Eighth Judicial Circuit covers Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy and Union counties. The circuit has a budget for each of these counties, a budget from the state and the shared budget for information technology.

The state pays for office personnel as well as "due process expenditures" such as purchasing depositions or witness travel costs. Counties pay for facility costs, including offices, telephones and information technology.

Centralizing IT services helps spend money from the counties most efficiently, Kramer said. The total cost is divided among the counties based on each county's population.

Prior to his election, Kramer said he served as executive director of the office. From 2012 to now, he said the IT budget has remained stable. Times are changing.

"I think everybody's aware a lot has actually changed in the criminal justice system. And so,

I wanted to kind of give you an overview of where things are changing and why that cost is going to increase in the future," Kramer said.

The state attorney's office runs a paperless case management system which is shared with the public defender's office, allowing information to be transmitted without complication. In recent years, however, the amount of information has grown exponentially.

"One of the things that has changed, and you all may be aware of this, is the amount of what we call digital forensic evidence that exists in the world, which is anything that can be reduced to bits and bytes and be part of a criminal case. So, license plate readers. We have license plate readers all over the circuit, surveillance cameras, cameras in Walmart, Ring doorbell cameras, all those types of stuff that's all digital forensic evidence. And then you have photographs, which are now, of course, all digital. But most importantly is now almost every agency in within the circuit has fully deployed body cameras," he said. That's a recorded video for each officer responding to an incident.

"So, it's really sort of a revolutionary piece of equipment for us, but it's not free," he said.

This additional cost will also be shared across all six counties based, again based on population. Bradford County is looking at an approximately \$23,000 a year increase.

"I wanted you to be aware that this is on the horizon, that it is something that's necessary and an integral part of the office, and it's and it does serve to benefit the citizens of Bradford County," Kramer said.

The decreased cost of local storage on multiple servers will help lower the increase, but an increase is unavoidable.

Enter a new digital forensic

## Less carbs, more fat: Nutritionist speaks to KH Rotary

BY DAN HILDEBRAN  
dan@bctelegraph.com

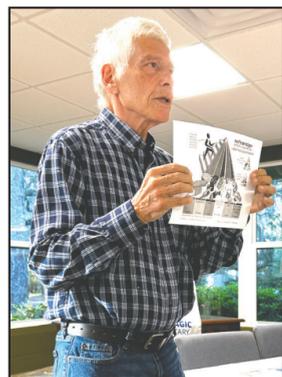
A nutritionist who retired after 36 years at the University of Florida's Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences spoke to the Keystone Heights Rotary Club on Wednesday, March 26.

Dr. Harry Sitren reviewed the U.S. Government's attempts to get Americans to eat healthier foods.

He showed the group the food pyramid that used to be printed on food labels. Sitren declared the effort a failure.

"The bottom of the pyramid was widest, and they wanted you to eat lots of grains in breads and cereals," he said. "There was no evidence that it ever worked. That'll increase your body weight, and our country's getting wider, and chronic diseases are getting more common, especially obesity, diabetes, cancer, heart disease is still up there."

Sitren said the food pyramid was influenced less by nutrition science and more by the fact that the U.S. agriculture industry grows a lot of grains.



Dr. Harry Sitren shows the Keystone Heights Rotary Club one version of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's food pyramid which he said failed to make Americans healthier because of its emphasis on eating carbohydrates.

that— don't eat as much or exercise more...because we eat primarily to satisfy our appetite," he said. "We eat until we feel satiated. Satiated means full that you don't want to take another bite."

### Carbohydrate-insulin model of obesity

The retired professor and graduate coordinator said the latest research shows the carbohydrate-insulin model of obesity is the best way to think about healthy eating.

Sitren said that the body breaks down carbohydrates into glucose, and the pancreas secretes insulin to the bloodstream, which signals cells in the body to take the glucose from the bloodstream and send it to the cells, which produce energy.

He said this process should take around two hours, after which the glucose level should return to its baseline of 100 milligrams per deciliter.

However, too much glucose in the bloodstream for too long can start glycation, in which glucose sticks to protein cells and interferes with their function.

"And then that eventually leads to all the adverse effects of having elevated blood sugar, which is diabetes," he said. "That's why with diabetes, which is rampant in our country, leads to blindness and toe amputations

and it attaches all that high glucose levels in there, attaches to proteins of the body and interferes with their function."

Sitren said diabetes is the Number 1 cause of blindness and kidney transplants in the U.S.

"We just keep eating carbohydrates as the base of our diet, which is what USDA says," he claimed, adding that according to the government, Americans should be getting around 30% of their energy from fat, around 20% from protein, and the rest from carbs.

"But this is the result," he said. "We're getting bigger, diabetes is rampant in the country, and healthcare costs are tremendous."

Sitren said that European studies conclude that half of all diabetes patients can eliminate their diabetes on a very low-carbohydrate diet.

"They're not cured of it because if they go back on carbohydrates, they'll experience all the adverse effects of diabetes," he said.

### Eat more fat

Sitren said Americans should decrease their carbohydrate intake to less than 10% of energy consumed. He added that it is hard to get protein intake above 50%, so that leaves fat.

"You have more oils in your diet, more fat in your diet," he said. "Don't trim away the fat around the beef steak. Eat that olive oil. Fat is what gives food flavor, but that's what we are still being told to eat less of. But it should be the opposite. You should knock out carbs as much as you can, which is grains and pasta. Minimize that."

"The protein is fine," he said of the government's recommendation of 20% of calories a day. "It's the carb and fat ratio that you want to change. And that means eating more butter, healthy oils, olive oil, and that kind. Cheeses are fine. Whole milk instead of skim milk to get those fat calories in."

"And now," he added, "there are plenty of studies to show this works. Plenty of people with diabetes can get off their medications. They're almost all off by knocking out the nutrient that causes all the problems in the body."



The Bakery II's staff, (l-r) Curtis Matuse, Heather Keller, Teri Gibbs and Skye Fullington.

## The Bakery II is back in Keystone and sweeter than ever

### A Hidden Gem Reborn with Heart and Cinnamon Rolls

BY JENN SAMSEL  
Special to the Monitor

The Bakery in Keystone Heights, which had been operating for four years, closed in July 2018 and reopened in 2024.

"I closed so I could take care of my brother," said owner Teri Gibbs. "After his passing, I decided to call the Bakery number two because his name

was Francis Glenn Mielkey, the second, so I wanted to open up the Bakery as the second in honor of him. The little blue hearts that are on the sign there, those are for colon cancer because he passed (due to) colon cancer."

In addition to The Bakery II's breakfast, lunch, desserts, and cakes, they've made a name for themselves primarily due to their irresistible cinnamon rolls.

"We're also known as the hidden gem of Keystone Heights," Gibbs said of her operation, which is across Commercial Circle from the Keystone Heights Post Office.

"(That) is kind of cool because we're tucked away a little bit, but yet word of mouth really gets, you know, gets our name out there." Gibbs said she appreciates the bakery's prior customers who have returned since the reopening.

"Thank you for the continued support over the years, she said, "and for never giving up on us."

The Bakery II is now open Tuesday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Gibbs said that as the business grows, she will expand its operating hours. The Bakery II also caters and makes special cakes on the weekends.

## Food distribution at True Vine

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Farm Share and True Vine Ministry will take place Tuesday, April 22, at 10 a.m. at True Vine Outreach Ministry in Starke.

Food boxes often include fresh

produce, deli and bakery items, dairy and some meats. Inventory is subject to change based on availability. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## Lawtey food giveaway

A communitywide food distribution hosted by Feeding

Northeast Florida and True Vine Ministry will take place Wednesday, April 23, at 9 a.m. at the Philadelphia Baptist Church in Lawtey.

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



# Russ WADE

## Attorney at Law

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# Obituaries

## Daniel Badenhorst

Daniel Badenhorst, 60, of Hawthorne died at home on Wednesday, April 9, 2025.

Survivors are his wife, Elena (Meyer) Badenhorst; sons, Frans Badenhorst and Gert Badenhorst and their wives, Samantha and Marilda; four grandchildren and one more on the way; two sisters; and extended family and friends.

Graveside services will be 2:30 p.m. Friday, April 18, at Eliam Cemetery in Melrose.

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

## Cathy Sapp

Lois Catherine "Cathy" Sapp, 83, of Starke died Saturday, April 12, 2025, at ET York Care Hospice Center in Gainesville. She was preceded in death by her husband, Eldon Rudolph "Rudy" Sapp; and son, David Morgan Sapp.

Survivors are a daughter, Rhonda (Chris) Douglas; and extended family. A Celebration of Life will be held Thursday, April 17, at 10 a.m. at Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel. Interment will follow at Jacksonville National Cemetery at 2 p.m.

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

## Ginger Stahler

Ginger Darlene Stahler, 60, of Starke, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Friday, April 11, 2025, at Haven Hospice in Gainesville. She was born on May 27, 1964, in Palatka to Ronnie and Bonnie Fowler. She was a devoted wife and mother, and her family was the cornerstone of her life. She truly enjoyed cooking, decorating and spending time with her family and sweet, little Dachshund, Sugar. She had a very kind and generous heart and was always helping others before herself. Her memory will live on in the hearts of her family and friends, and her spirit will be remembered with great love. Her warm heart, infectious laughter, and unwavering support for family and friends will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. She was preceded in death by her father, Ronnie Fowler; and mother, Bonnie Fowler. She is survived by her loving and devoted husband, Neal Stahler; daughter, Lindsay (Trevor) Hoehns; son, Ronnie Hoffner; sister, Rhonda (Robert) Luke, brother, Chuck (Lorie) Fowler; and sister, Edith (Trey) Appleton. Her memory will be cherished by three grandchildren; one niece; and six nephews.

Crevasse's Simple Cremation of Gainesville is honored to serve the family. A celebration of Ginger's life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Haven Hospice Attic or the American Cancer Society (donate.cancer.org).



PAID OBITUARY

## Card of Thanks

The Sirmones and Sykes family would like to extend our sincere appreciation for your calls, visits, texts, private messages, monetary gifts and your thoughts and prayers during the loss of our family member, Langston Sykes.

Thank you for all the kindness shown! The Family of Langston Sykes



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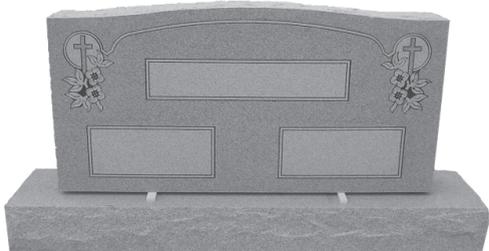
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# Mize wins state title for Indians

## 5 weightlifters combine to win 7 medals at Class 1A state meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School placed third in the Olympic and traditional events, with Elijah Mize winning the traditional championship in the 119-pound class at the Florida High School Athletic Association Class 1A Boys Weightlifting Finals on April 12 in Lakeland.

The Indians had three individuals in all earn medals for top-six finishes in traditional, including Colton Hollingsworth, who was the runner-up in the 129-pound class.

Hollingsworth and Mize received medals in Olympic as well and were two of four KHHS lifters to do so.

### Traditional

Keystone got 13 points from its three medal winners, which left it trailing champion Fort White (27) and Baker (20).

Mize lifted 175 pounds on his second clean-and-jerk attempt, but missed 190 on his third. That left him trailing Imagine's Angel Vazquez by 20 pounds going into the bench press. Mize benched 210 on his first attempt, while Vazquez benched 195. Vazquez bettered his bench by 10 pounds on his second attempt, but Mize made a 15-pound jump, which left the lifters in a tie in overall total. Vazquez missed his third attempt at 210, which meant Mize, despite missing his third attempt, had the championship wrapped up due to the weigh-in tiebreaker.

"He did a good job coming back from being down 20 pounds from the clean," Keystone Head Coach Jakob Alvarez said. "His bench press definitely helped him."

The 225 bench total by Mize was the best in his class by 10 pounds.

As for Mize's third bench attempt, Alvarez said, "He tried a new (personal record) at 245," Alvarez said, "but his butt came up (off the bench)."

With their 400-pound overall totals, Mize and Vazquez

finished 35 pounds ahead of the next best lifter (Andrew Ulsch of Fort White).

Like Mize, Hollingsworth came out on top in a weigh-in tiebreaker, earning the second-place finish in his class over Glades Central's Javier Flores. Hollingsworth's best clean and jerk of 205 left him trailing Flores by 10 pounds going into the bench press.

Both lifters benched 205 on their first attempts, but Hollingsworth benched 220 to Flores' 210 on their second attempts. Each lifter missed his third attempt, leaving them tied with a 425-pound overall total.

Glades Central's Alijah Collins won the 129 class championship with a 450 total, while Walton's Orion Evans placed behind Hollingsworth and Flores with a 415 total.

Keystone's Zane Leger had a sixth-place total of 565 (275 clean and jerk, 290 bench) in the 199 class, earning the last medal ahead of Florida High's Jason Harville, who had a 555 total.

Brayden Wester finished one spot shy of getting a fourth medal for Keystone. He had a seventh-place total of 585 (285, 300) in the 238 class. Wester unsuccessfully went for 310 on his third bench attempt, which would've given him a medal. He finished 5 pounds ahead of Baker's Makani Abdon and Sneads' Bryce Everett, who both had 590 totals. If Wester had finished in a three-way tie with those lifters, he still would've been in seventh place.

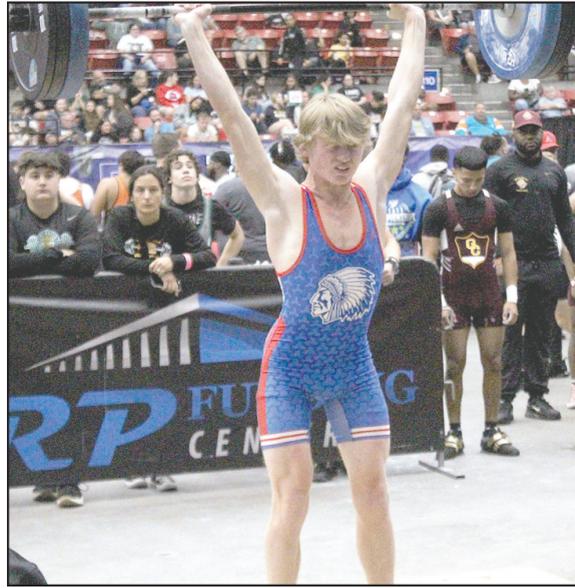
Earning eighth-place finishes were Dylan Currington, with a 345 total (180, 165) in the 119 class, Jagger Lancaster, with a 460 total (200, 260) in the 154 class, and Kyle Perkins, with a 545 total (265, 280) in the 199 class.

Two other lifters placed in the top 10. Trase Wooden had a ninth-place total of 530 (265, 265) in the 219 class, while Damien Dunlap had a 10th-place total of 460 (215, 245) in the 154 class.

The Indians also had the following results: Aiden Nobles, with a 325 total (165, 160) in the 129 class, Layton Wright, with a 485 total (250, 235) in the 169 class, Pete Bostic, with a 525 total (250, 275) in the 238 class, and Jackson Herman, with a 595 total (300, 295) in the unlimited



Elijah Mize, with teammate Damien Dunlap spotting, would post the best bench-press total in the 119-pound class of 225, which wrapped up the traditional state championship for him. His bench total was the best by 20 pounds, and he was one of only three lifters in the class to do at least 200.



Colton Hollingsworth competes in the clean and jerk. He was the 129-pound class runner-up in traditional and also earned third place in Olympic.

class.

### Olympic

Keystone finished with 13 team points in Olympic, which left the Indians trailing champion Fort White (24) and runner-up Williston (16).

Hollingsworth and Herman

each placed third in his class, with Hollingsworth finishing with a 355 total (150 snatch, 205 clean and jerk) and Herman finishing with a 525 total (225, 300). Hollingsworth had the best snatch total in his class, while Herman was down to a do-or-die lift on his third clean-and-

See STATE, page 9

# Thompson enters USI Hall of Fame

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Chris Thompson, who played basketball at Bradford High School, was inducted into the University of Southern Indiana Athletic Hall of Fame on Feb. 7.

Thompson, who first went to Pasco-Hernando State College after graduating from BHS in 2001, played two years for USI and was the Screaming Eagles' leading scorer and rebounder as a senior during the 2005-06 season. He was the Great Lakes Valley Conference Co-Player of the Year in 2005-06. That same year, he also earned first-team All-American and All-Region accolades from Daktronics and Basketball Times as well as being named the Midwest Player of the Year by Daktronics.

The first-team All-GLVC selection was named NCAA II Player of the Month twice in 2005-06.

Thompson started in 18 games during his first season at USI and played in all 32. He was the leading scorer in four games. Thompson averaged 11.3 points per game, scoring 362 total. His high-point total for the season was 28 in a 97-70 win over Olivet Nazarene on Nov. 15, 2004.

The former Tornado shot 60 percent from the field and made 46 percent of his three-point



Chris Thompson, a 2001 Bradford High School graduate, was recently inducted into the University of Southern Indiana Athletic Hall of Fame. Photo provided courtesy of USI Athletics.

attempts. He also shot 73 percent from the foul line.

Thompson led the team in rebounds in 20 games and finished with a team-high 293 for the season (9.2-per-game average). He grabbed his season-high of 15 rebounds twice: in an 87-66 win over Indianapolis on Nov. 26, 2004, and in an 80-67 win over Northern Kentucky on

Feb. 3, 2005.

In 2005-06, Thompson started all 134 of the Screaming Eagles' games. He scored a team-high 622 points (18.3-per-game-average) and was the team's leading scorer in all but 12 games. Thompson scored 20 points or more in 14 games, posting a season high of 35 in an 88-71 win over Caldwell on Nov. 11, 2005.

Thompson shot 62 percent from the field and made 46 percent of his three-point attempts, which led the team. He also made 78 percent of his free throws.

By season's end, Thompson had grabbed a team-high 332 rebounds (9.8-per-game average). He was the leading rebounder in all but seven games and posted his season high of 15 three times: in a 95-70 win over Indianapolis on Jan. 26, 2006, an 80-52 win over Missouri-St. Louis on Feb. 25, 2006, and a 71-80 loss to Saint Joseph's on March 3, 2006.

Thompson has the eighth-most career rebounds at USI with 625. He's also second in career double-doubles with 28.

At BHS, Thompson scored 1,550 points, which broke Marvin Blye's school record of 1,379. He earned team MVP honors his junior and senior seasons and was the Florida Athletic Coaches Association's Class 3A Player of the Year as a senior.

During his junior year, the Tornados went 23-6, advancing to the Class 3A regional finals before losing 58-57 to Ribault. Thompson had 14 points in that game.

Bradford was the District 3 runner-up that year. The Tornados got 18 points from Thompson in defeating Hamilton County 59-40 in a district semifinal game before losing 65-53 to Baker County in the championship game, which included 11 points from Thompson.

Thompson scored nine points in a 56-37 regional quarterfinal win over Paxon and then poured



Chris Thompson (left) led Southern Indiana in scoring and rebounding his senior season (2005-06). Photo provided courtesy of USI Athletics.

in 29 points in a 68-47 semifinal win over Walton that put the Tornados into the finals round and the matchup against Ribault.

The Tornados went 26-5 in Thompson's senior year, which also saw Bradford advance to the regional finals before its season ended.

Bradford opened play in the District 4-3A tournament with a 78-43 quarterfinal win over Baldwin in which Thompson scored 27 points. Thompson then had 11 points in a 72-71 semifinal win over Hamilton County.

The district-championship game went into overtime before Bradford came out on top of Baker County 68-62. Thompson scored 29 points.

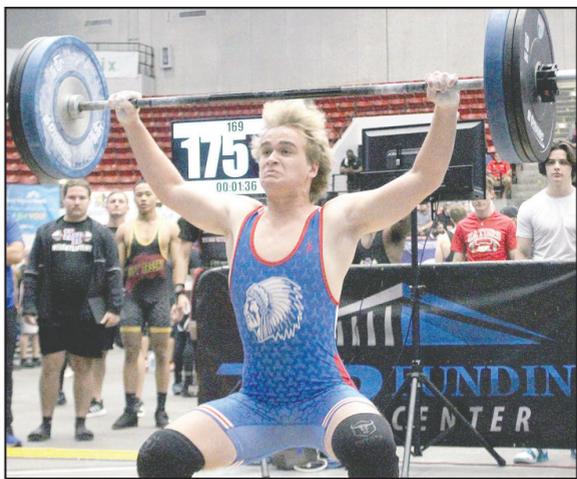
Thompson had 32 points as the Tornados opened the regional playoffs with a 64-58 quarterfinal win over Shanks. Bradford defeated Chipley 70-67 in the semifinal round, getting 21 points from Thompson.

Bradford faced Baker County in the regional finals, with the Wildcats winning 65-58. Thompson had 12 points.

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Layton Wright competes in the snatch. He would place fifth in the 169-pound class in Olympic.

## STATE

Continued from page 8

jerk attempt. Judges deemed his first two attempts at 285 unsuccessful. Herman did 300 on his final attempt, getting the successful green light from all three judges.

Mize earned a fourth-place finish with a 310 total (135, 175), while Wright also received a medal with a fifth-place total of 425 (175, 250).

Two lifters fell one spot shy of earning medals: Currington, with a seventh-place total of 290 (110, 180), and Clark Byrnes, with a seventh-place total of 400 (180, 220) in the 154 class. Each was 5 pounds away from placing sixth, with Currington actually

having the same total as Holmes County's Jessie Slay, who held the advantage in the weigh-in tiebreaker.

The Indians had two eighth-place finishers in Perkins, who had a 480 total (215, 265), and Logan Madden-Moore, who had a 450 total (195, 255) in the 219 class.

Wester had a ninth-place total of 465 (180, 285), while the following each placed 10th: Nobles, with a 300 total (135, 165), and Bostic, with a 440 total (190, 250).

Bostic had a perfect day, with three successful lifts each in the snatch, clean and jerk and bench.

Also competing were Leger, with a 460 total (185, 275), and Wooden, with a 445 total (180, 265).



Jackson Herman would have two attempts at 285 in the clean and jerk ruled unsuccessful by judges, but he successfully did 300 on his final attempt, helping him finish third in the unlimited class in Olympic.

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# Hunt double leads Tigers past Tornadoes in softball

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Brooke Hunt's RBI double in the bottom of the sixth proved to be the difference as the Union County High School softball team rallied from a 4-2 deficit to defeat visiting Bradford 5-4 on April 10.

Emma Handley threw just six pitches in the top of the seventh, as the Tigers (13-6) quickly recorded three outs to end the game, winning for the 10th time in their last 12 games.

Handley, in a complete-game effort, gave up seven hits and struck out three.

Bradford (7-7) got a one-out double from Amber Wynn in the first inning, but she was left stranded as Union third baseman Courtney Manning caught a line drive for the second out and then fielded a ground ball in making the third out.

Wynn made her mark

defensive in the bottom of the first, catching three fly balls in center field.

Summer Sutton drew a walk to lead off the Tornadoes' half of the second. After Tayrn Flowers hit a single into right, Regan Adams popped up to shortstop Mackenzie Orton. The ball was hit deep enough to allow Sutton to tag up and score. Kolee Lemire walked, giving Bradford two on with just one out. Handley then caught a line drive from Kingslee Phillips, which was the start of a double play to get Union out of the inning.

Hunt hit a one-out double for the Tigers in the bottom of the second, followed by a walk drawn by Shyla Crowe. A Mia Kent fly out allowed courtesy runner Autumn Burnette to advance to third. Both base runners then scored on a Jaydin Alvarez double into left, putting Union up 2-1.

The Tornadoes retook the lead in the third. Keegan Yowell walked, while Wynn singled. Addyson Hinds ground out to short to drive in Yowell, while a Sutton single brought Wynn home to make it 3-2.

Bradford was able to keep the inning going. Flowers was hit by a pitch, while Adams singled, loading the bases with two outs. Handley recorded a strikeout to get out of the inning.

Neither team had a hit in the fourth and fifth innings. Handley struck out the first batter she faced in the sixth, but Adams and Kellsie Cochran then hit back-to-back singles for the Tornadoes. After Union left fielder Campbell Webb made a diving catch to record the second out, Bradford got an RBI single from Yowell, putting the Tornadoes up 4-2. The Tigers' Orton caught a line

drive to record the third out.

Union's rally in the bottom of the sixth began with the first of three consecutive hits — a single by Leanne Dicks. Manning then hit a double before Orton hit a

line-drive single into left that scored both runners and tied it up at 4-4. Yowell caught an infield pop-up for the first out, but Hunt then stepped to the plate and hit her second double of the game,

scoring Orton and giving the Tigers a 5-4 lead.

The Tigers had the chance to score more runs. After a Crowe walk and a Kent sacrifice bunt,

Alvarez was hit by a pitch, loading the bases. A fly ball to Wynn, who recorded her sixth

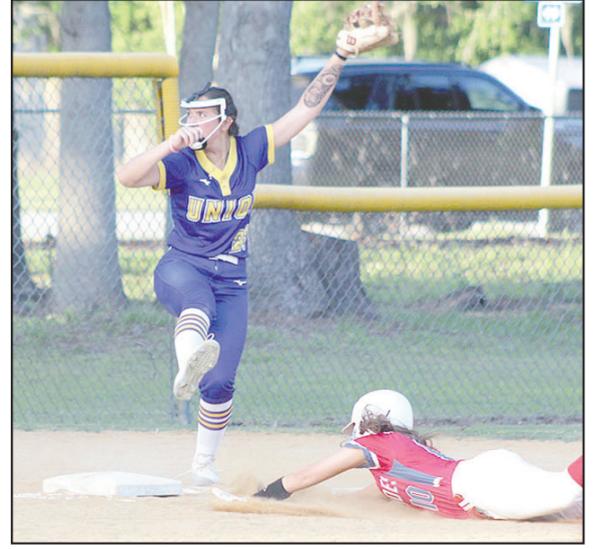
See BALL, page 11



Union's Emma Handley pitched a complete game in the win over Bradford.



LEFT: Union's Brooke Hunt (left) celebrates after hitting a sixth-inning double that gave the Tigers the winning run against Bradford. Bradford's Tayrn Flowers is also pictured. BELOW: Bradford's Kallie Yowell (right) waits on a throw as Union's Leanne Dicks advances to third on a sixth-inning double by the Tigers' Courtney Manning.



Bradford's Keegan Yowell (right) slides safely into third as Union third baseman Courtney Manning comes down from attempting to catch an off-target throw from the outfield.

## Bradford drops 11-1 game to Class 5A Blue Devils

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School's softball team was held to four hits against the 15th-ranked team in Class 4A, losing 11-1 to host Clay on April 14.

The Class 3A Tornadoes (7-8) scored their lone run in the top of the fifth when Regan Adams doubled and scored on a Kingslee Phillips ground out.

Keegan Yowell, who also hit a

double, batted 2 for 3.

Bradford played Eastside this past Tuesday and was scheduled to host P.K. Yonge on Wednesday, April 16, at 7 p.m. The Tornadoes travel to play Buchholz on Monday, April 21, at 6:30 p.m. and then return home to play Keystone Heights on Tuesday, April 22, at 6 p.m.

On Wednesday, April 23, Bradford travels to play Newberry at 6 p.m.



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# Indians defeat Rams, will play for baseball title

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's baseball team held a 10-2 lead after two innings and went on to defeat visiting Interlachen 13-6 in a District 4-2A tournament semifinal game on April 17.

The top seed Indians (18-7) will host third seed Trinity Catholic (9-16) for the championship on Thursday, April 17, at 7 p.m.

Keystone scored five runs in each of the first two innings against fourth seed Interlachen (12-9).

Destin Harnage led off the bottom of the first with a double and scored on a one-out double by Austin Smith. Guage Barry walked, while Aiden Screen was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Ethan Franklin then drew a walk to force a run in. Barry scored the third run on a passed ball before Tallon Campbell hit a two-run single.

The Rams took advantage of a single, two walks and an error to score two runs in the top of the second.

Harnage led off the Indians' half of the second, hitting a single. Andrew Wilson walked before Barry hit an RBI single with one out. After the Rams recorded the second out, Franklin hit an RBI single, while an error on the play allowed another run



Ethan Franklin drove in three runs and earned the win on the mound in Keystone's 13-6 District 4-2A semifinal win over Interlachen.

to score, making it an 8-2 game.

The inning continued with a Campbell single. Keystone then scored two runs on two errors to go up 10-2.

Franklin hit a sacrifice fly in the fourth that scored Screen, who walked, to put the Indians ahead by nine runs.

The teams combined to score six runs in the final two innings. Keystone had two runs in the sixth, with Campbell driving in one on a sacrifice fly and Tyler Brinson driving in another on a single.

See DISTRICT, page 14

# Tigers lose 4-2 to Branford in district tourney

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Second seed Union County held a 2-1 lead after three innings, but fell 4-2 to third seed Branford in the April 15 semifinals of the District 6-Rural tournament in Lake Butler.

The Tigers (12-14) had only two hits in the final four innings, with both occurring in the bottom of the seventh. Foster Smith had a leadoff single, but Branford recorded two straight outs on a fly out and a strikeout. Jeffrey Brugh got a single off a 1-2 pitch to keep a potential rally alive, but a ground out to second ended the game.

Branford (21-6) will play top seed Lafayette (19-2) for the championship on Thursday, April 17, at UCHS.

Union put the first score on the board in its district semifinal game. Kendall Carter hitting a one-out single, while Smith walked with two outs. Kacen Thomassen hit a single to score Carter before the Bucs got out of the inning with a strikeout.

The Bucs led off the top of the third with back-to-back doubles to tie the score.

Brugh, who batted 2 for 4, led off the bottom of the third with a single, but was put out at second when Erick Lasseter hit into a fielder's choice. Jake Walker walked before Trenton Klein hit into a fielder's choice. An error on the play allowed Bo Wilson, who entered to run for Lasseter, to score and put the Tigers up 2-1.

Two errors and a hit batter allowed Branford to tie the score in the fourth.

The Bucs took advantage of two singles, a walk and a wild pitch to score two runs in the sixth.

Union entered the tournament off a 6-4 win over Class 7A West Port on April 10 in Lake Butler.

The Tigers, who got a run on Wilson's sacrifice fly in the fourth, trailed 3-1 entering the bottom of the fifth. Devin Diggs walked before Walker and Smith hit back-to-back singles, with Diggs scoring on Smith's hit. Ayden Androlevich reached on an error, which allowed the tying run to score. A Thomassen sacrifice scored a run before Androlevich, who advanced to third on a passed ball, scored on a wild pitch, making it a 5-3 game.

Diggs hit an RBI double in the sixth to complete the Tigers' scoring.

Androlevich finished as the only Union batter with multiple hits, going 2 for 2.

Walker earned the win, taking the mound with one out in the fifth and pitching through the sixth inning. He gave up one run and no hits, while striking out three.

Carter Whitehead threw the final inning, allowing no runs and no hits.

The win snapped a two-game losing streak, which began with an 11-1, six-inning loss to visiting Lafayette on April 8.

Union had just three hits, with one being a solo home run hit by Smith in the third inning.

Lafayette entered the game ranked second in the Rural Class, while the Tigers were ranked seventh.

On April 9, Union lost 10-3 to The Villages at St. Johns River State College in Palatka.

It was a 10-0 game before the Tigers scored three runs in the bottom of the sixth — two on a Diggs single and one on a bases-loaded walk drawn by Androlevich.

# BHS baseball team loses 17-1 in district semifinals

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Bradford High School's baseball season ended with a 17-1, four-inning loss to second seed Palatka in a District 5-3A tournament semifinal game on April 15 in Palatka.

The third seed Tornados (11-13) were held to three hits. Their only run was scored by Ryland

Rike, who reached on an error in the first and later scored on a steal of home.

Bradford entered the tournament off a 5-4 win over visiting P.K. Yonge on April 8.

The Tornados scored four runs in the sixth. Ryder Thompson, Taylor Bice and Matthew Stafford all walked to load the bases. Rike hit a double into left to score two runs. Patrick Pendarvis reached on a fielder's choice that resulted in Stafford being put out at home. Rike scored on a steal of home to tie it at 4-4 before Pendarvis scored the go-ahead run on a passed ball.

Rike, whose double was just one of four hits for Bradford, started on the mound, giving up two earned runs, seven hits and just one walk through five innings. He had nine strikeouts.

Stafford earned the win, allowing no runs and two hits in the final two innings.

# BALL

Continued from page 10

put out, ended the inning.

Orton fielded a ground ball for the first out in the top of the seventh, while right fielder Jailyn Simmons recorded the final two outs.

Hunt, Dicks and Manning all batted 2 for 3 for the Tigers, while the Tornados' Adams also went 2 for 3.

Union entered the game off a 15-0, three-inning loss to visiting Trenton on April 8.

Webb hit a double, which was the Tigers' only hit against the seventh-ranked team in the Rural

Class.

Union, which is ranked 11th in the Rural Class, played Bell this past Tuesday and will host Hilliard on Friday, April 18, at 7 p.m. The Tigers then travel to play Lafayette on Monday, April 21, at 6 p.m.

Class 3A Bradford defeated Class 6A Toco Creek prior to playing Union, defeating the visiting Toros 4-1 on April 9.

Bailey Smith pitched a complete game, allowing an unearned run and two hits.

The Tornados had only three hits, scoring runs on a sacrifice fly by Hinds, an error, a passed ball and a wild pitch.



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# BHS rolls into District 4-1A title game with 53-0 win

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Ar'Nayshia Griffin threw three touchdown passes, rushed for one score and also had two interception returns for touchdowns in Bradford High School's 53-0 win over visiting Newberry in a District 4-1A flag football tournament semifinal game on April 15.

The number-one seed Tornadoes (11-2), who also got two punt returns for touchdowns from Nichelle Brown, will host second seed Santa Fe (10-1) for the championship on Thursday, April 17, at 6 p.m.

Bradford's first score against fourth seed Newberry (5-5) was a 46-yard pass play from Griffin

to Rhianna Davis. Brown's reception on the conversion attempt made it 7-0.

Griffin threw a 15-yard pass to Brown on the Tornadoes' next series, which set up a third-and-1 on the Newberry 21. Griffin kept the ball and picked up the first down and more, running her way into the end zone. She again connected with Brown on the conversion attempt, putting Bradford up 14-0 as time expired in the first quarter.

Bradford's first series of the second quarter began at the Newberry 28. Griffin completed a 6-yard pass to Brown before then finding Cherish Bing all alone for a 22-yard touchdown, making the score 20-0.

The Panthers gained just 4 yards on their first three plays following the score, but elected to go for it on fourth since they needed just 2 yards. The play, however, resulted in Griffin's first pick-six, which covered approximately 20 yards and put the Tornadoes ahead 26-0.

Griffin wasted little time making her second interception, which occurred on Newberry's second play of the ensuing series. This return covered approximately 30 yards and put Bradford up 33-0 after Kaylee Devore's reception on the conversion attempt.

Bradford's offense got back into the scoring act in the third quarter. With a Brown punt return setting the Tornadoes up at the Newberry 12, Griffin completed a 6-yard pass to Brown before then hooking up with Bing for a 6-yard touchdown. Brown's reception on the conversion attempt made it a 40-0 game.

Brown capped the scoring with two consecutive punt returns for scores. The first covered approximately 35 yards, while the second went for approximately 45 yards. The Tornadoes had a successful conversion attempt following Brown's second touchdown, with Bing catching a pass from Griffin.

Griffin finished with more than 130 yards passing, while Bing and Davis each had more than 40 yards in receptions.

Bradford went 2-2 in its four final regular-season games, suffering its first loss of the season by a score of 20-19 in an overtime game at Buchholz on April 1.

The Tornadoes led 6-0 at halftime, but the Class 3A Bobcats took advantage of a long run to score on their first possession of the second half. An interception set up a second score.

Brown had a touchdown run in the fourth quarter as Bradford evened the score at 13-13.

Buchholz had the first series in overtime, with Taylor Booth catching a touchdown pass from Isabella Alexander. Dunae Chappell's catch on the one-point conversion attempt put the



**Nichelle Brown is ready to make some moves on a punt return. She'd return two for scores in the district tournament win over Newberry.**

Bobcats up 20-13.

The Tornadoes answered, with Brown catching a touchdown pass from Griffin, but Bradford's pass on the conversion attempt was intercepted.

On April 3, Bradford defeated host Middleburg 20-19, with the defense getting two interceptions

from Bing and one interception each from Brown and Davis.

Griffin completed 17 of 22 passes for 190 yards on two touchdowns, with Brown catching both scoring tosses.

Brown finished with seven receptions for 90 yards, while Bing and Davis each caught four passes for 40 yards.

Griffin also rushed for 25 yards and a touchdown on five carries.

The Tornadoes traveled to Tallahassee on April 8 for a showdown between top-10 Class 1A teams. Florida High, which is ranked third, defeated seventh-ranked Bradford 13-7.

Brown caught eight passes for 100 yards and a touchdown, while also rushing for 40 yards on six carries.

Griffin completed 16 of 23 passes for 150 yards.

The defense got one interception each from Bing, Davis and Griffin.

It was the fourth straight win for Florida High (11-3).

Bradford capped the regular season with a 28-0 win over visiting Ed White on April 9.

Brown caught seven passes for 120 yards and three touchdowns and had 65 yards and one touchdown on three rushing attempts.

Griffin, who rushed for 75



**Cherish Bing prepares to catch a touchdown pass in the second quarter of the district tournament win.**

yards on 10 carries, completed 11 of 18 passes for 155 yards.

On defense, the Tornadoes got one interception each from Bing and Griffin.



**LEFT: Quarterback Ar'Nayshia Griffin takes off on a run that would turn into a 21-yard touchdown in the win over Newberry. BELOW: Talayshia Cummings (left) pulls the flag of Newberry's Sarah Beaulieu.**



**Kaylee Devore (center) and Tatyana Brown (far left) attempt to corral Newberry's Brandy Whitfield.**



**Melanie Crabtree (center) and Aubre Miller (far right) bring pressure against Palatka quarterback Mikhia Peoples.**

## KHHS defeats Palatka, but loses to Santa Fe in district semifinals

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Alee Horton threw three touchdown passes and returned an interception for another score in the Keystone Heights High School flag football team's 26-14 win over visiting Palatka in the quarterfinals of the District 4-1A tournament on April 14.

The third seed Indians (9-8) lost to second seed Santa Fe 20-6 in the April 15 semifinals.

Against sixth seed Palatka, the Indians scored on the opening series. A reception by Aubre Miller for approximately 40 yards gave Keystone a first-and-goal just past the Palatka 10-yard line. Horton hooked up with Ashlyn Brown for a touchdown pass to put the Indians up 6-0. The conversion attempt was no good.

Miller finished as the Indians' leading receiver with four catches for 80 yards.

Palatka (3-8) picked up a first down on its first possession, but tackles by Miller and Alyssa Sanford had the Panthers facing third-and-16. Melanie Crabtree pressured quarterback Mikhia Peoples into an incompletion on third down, forcing Palatka to punt.



**Ashlyn Brown prepares to head upfield after catching a pass.**

Keystone's second series didn't get off to a good start, with a penalty and a sack on the first two plays. A Horton run, however, set up a third-and-short play. Palatka's Jhane Fountain tackled Horton short of the first down on a third-down run, but another Horton run on fourth-and-inches picked up the

necessary yardage.

Horton, who rushed for 55 yards on 14 carries, gained 16 yards on a first-down run and then completed a 22-yard pass to Miller on the next play, setting up first-and-goal at the 1. Alex Papaianou caught a touchdown pass, while Horton added a successful run on the one-point conversion attempt, giving the Indians a 13-0 lead early in the second quarter.

A tackle by Tatum Hall and a sack by Sanford helped force the Panthers to punt on their second series, but Palatka cashed in on its third possession, thanks to a punt return of more than 30 yards by Fountain. The return, with penalty yardage tacked onto the end of it, gave the Panthers a first-and-goal at the 3-yard line. Fountain caught a pass from Peoples for a touchdown, while Rachel Dodd caught a pass on the conversion attempt, making it a 13-7 game.

Fountain delivered another spectacular punt return, fielding the ball inside her 40-yard line and taking it back to the Keystone 23, giving the Panthers the chance to score with 16 seconds

## The Matthews Museum (Bradford County Museum) Needs Volunteers!

- \* Show visitors around the museum.
- \* Share interesting facts about Bradford County.
- \* All of this in a climate controlled location.
- \* Students can earn Community Service Points.

To find out more

Contact: Chuck Kramer  
(904) 964-5001 or (904) 364-6977



## Lawrence, Lopey earn top-5 finishes for BHS at Santa Fe meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Elijah Lawrence and Ny'asia Lopey earned third- and fifth-place finishes, respectively, for Bradford High School in track and field at the April 10 Santa Fe Raiders Last Chance Meet.

Lawrence's high finish occurred in the 200m with a time of 23.33, while Lopey's occurred in the triple jump with a distance of 31-5.75.

Bradford also had the following boys results: 100m — Lawrence 11.42, Brandon Williams 11.47, Iyen Addison 12.14; 200m — Jarrell Harris 23.87, Addison 25.91; 4x100m (Williams, Harris, Addison, Lawrence) 45.09; long jump — Jaydin Williams 15-10.25; shot put — Parviele Lee 40-0.75, William Aldridge 30-8.25, Raimond Pedro 29-7.5; and discus — Aldridge 109-11.

The Tornados entered the meet off performances at the April 8 Suwannee Mini Meet and the April 9 Menendez Falcon Last Chance Meet.

Lee won the shot put at the Suwannee meet with a distance of 41-4.25, while Harris was fourth and sixth in the 200m and 100m, respectively, with times of

23.90 and 11.67.

Also competing in the shot put were Aldridge (33-3) and Pedro (31-2), while Brandon Williams (12.41) and Addison (27.79) ran the 100m and 200m, respectively.

At the Menendez meet, Aldridge took second in the discus with a distance of 104-3, while Lee was third in the shot put with a distance of 39-10.5.

Bradford got a pair of sixth-place finishes from Lawrence in the 100m, with a time of 11.33, and Harris in the 200m, with a time of 23.76.

Brandon Williams had an eighth-place time of 11.40 in the 100m.

The Tornados also had the following results: 100m — Harris 11.51; 200m — Addison 26.09; 800m — Liam Reaves 2:46; 1600m — Reaves 6:08; long jump — Jaydin Williams 16-0.5; and shot put — Aldridge 31-6, Pedro 30-7.

## KHHS boys win relay event at Santa Fe

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Keystone Heights High School's track-and-field teams competed at the April 10 Santa Fe Raiders Last Chance Meet, with the boys 4x400m relay team placing first with a time of 3:45.

The winning team was composed of Jamari Turner, Baylor Ford, Ryeland Wahl and

Ryder Thomas.

Individually, Thomas earned a third-place finish in the 1600m with a time of 4:48, while Turner placed sixth in the high jump by clearing 5-7.75.

The boys 4x800m relay team of Thomas, Wahl, Hunter Sheppard and Mason Gray ran a seventh-place time of 9:19.

Other boys results were: 100m — Aaron Wiley 11.72, Ford 11.88, Turner 12.06; 200m — Wiley 24.24; 400m — Ford 54.39, Logan Wilson 1:02; 800m — Wahl 2:24, Jason Perales 2:29, Gray 2:46; 1600m — Sheppard 5:04, Hunter Gray 5:54; 3200m — Oliver Miller 13:11; 110m hurdles — De'Shawn Williams 20.0, Mason Clark 20.82; 400m hurdles — Clark 1:09, Williams 1:14; long jump — Clark 15-7; triple jump — Williams 32-4.75, Carter Andrews 28-5.75; shot put — Ricardo Rosario 31-8.5, Tyler Kerner 31-2; and javelin — Luke Lewis 107-2, Kerner 104-7.

The Keystone girls team had two second-place finishers: Olivia Griffin in the 800m with a time of 2:27 and Kaylee Park with a time of 16.94 in the 100m hurdles.

Kenslee Phillips, Ashly McCarthy, Christine Djavaheri and Griffin teamed up to run a fourth-place time of 4:36 in the 4x400m, while the 4x800m team of Cali Chamberlain, Raven Bastin, Melody Tyre and Bailee Morris had a seventh-place time of 11:53.

Keystone also had the following girls results: 100m — Laura Herndon 14.48, Alexis VanNordstrand 14.53,

Laila Briseno 14.71; 200m — Djavaheri 28.24, McCarthy 28.32, Park 28.75; 400m — Phillips 1:10, VanNordstrand 1:11, Jasmine Walls 1:21; 800m — Tyre 2:51; 1600m — Tyre 6:17; 400m hurdles — Park 1:17, Chamberlain 1:21; 4x100m (Herndon, VanNordstrand, Sophia Moses, Briseno) 55.94; high jump — Chamberlain 4-2; long jump — Herndon 12-9.25, Walls 11-8.25, Bastin 11-0; discus — Xana Briley 79-2, Tatum Hall 41-2, Taegen Gubics 34-2; and javelin — Briley 70-9, Hall 54-2, Gubics 36-2.

## UCHS girls get 2 wins at April 8 track meet

BY CLIFF SMELLEY  
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Union County High School's track-and-field teams competed at the April 8 Suwannee Mini Meet, with girls team members Amia Bethea and Holly Halfacre each earning a win.

Bethea ran the top time of 25.65 in the 200m, while Halfacre won the triple jump with a distance of 31-3.75.

Earning third-place finishes for the girls team were Brianna Taylor, with a time of 13.72 in the 100m, and Melinda Mabrey, who had a distance of 27-9.25 in the shot put.

The girls team also got points from Rachel Harris' sixth-place finish in the 1600m (6:58) and

Ivy Wilson's seventh-place finish in the 100m (14.33).

Union also had the following girls results: 100m — Hayden Robinson 14.62, Jaden Johnson 14.78; and shot put — Jamie Webb 21-2, Allayah Blocker 20-8, Alexia Cyr 20-7.

Jesse Chakin had the highest finish for the boys team, placing fourth in the 100m with a time of 11.57. Chakin also had one of three fifth-place finishes for the team with a time of 24.15 in the 200m.

Union's other fifth-place finishes were earned by Landon Cason in the triple jump (32-3.75) and C.J. Ivey in the shot

put (34-6.25).

Ashton Bunkley, Clayton Cason, Gavin Smith and Joseph Harris teamed up to run a sixth-place time of 10:08 in the 4x800m relay.

Earning seventh-place finishes were Harris in the 1600m (5:16), Gavin Jenkins in the 100m (11.68) and Bo Thomas in the 400m (56.57).

The Tigers' other boys results were: 100m — Jabari Young 11.86, Thomas 12.15; 200m — Natwan Richardson 27.23; 1600m — Smith 5:38, Bunkley 6:05, Gaultney Cole 6:27; and shot put — Edward Durant 32-3, Matthew Rogers 27-10.

## KHHS

Continued from page 12

remaining until halftime.

It was Keystone, however, that added to its point total, with Horton intercepting a pass and returning it approximately 70 yards for a touchdown as time expired in the half. Horton's run on the conversion attempt made the score 20-7.

Palatka failed to gain a first down after its first three plays in the second half, thanks to tackles by Sanford and Ashly McCarthy, but the Panthers went for it on fourth-and-2 from their own 18. Keystone's defense came up big again, with Brown intercepting a pass and giving her offense the ball at the 17-yard line.

Two plays later, Horton's pass into the end zone bounced off

the hands of Miller, but fell into the hands of Brown, giving her a second scoring catch on the night and putting the Indians up 26-7. The conversion attempt failed.

Horton finished 10 of 19 passing for 148 yards, with Brown making four catches for 53 yards.

Palatka answered with a 10-play scoring drive, which culminated with a 2-yard touchdown run by Fountain. Treasure McGee caught a pass on the conversion attempt, resulting in the 26-14 final score.

Keystone entered the tournament off a 33-6 win over visiting Interlachen in its regular-season finale on April 8. Prior to that, the Indians defeated host Columbia 13-12 on April 3 and lost to visiting Fleming Island 33-2 on April 7.

# Legal Notices

Legals for the week of April 17, 2025

## BRADFORD

### NOTICE OF ACTION

Bradford County, Florida  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING  
IN RE: The license to practice Nursing Assistance

Jessica L. Yates, C.N.A.  
4673 Southeast 8th Avenue,  
Melrose, Florida 32666  
CASE NO.: 2023-02313  
LICENSE NO.: CNA331464

The Department of Health has filed an Administrative Complaint against you, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting, Philip A. Crawford, Assistant General Counsel, Prosecution Services Unit, 4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin #C65, Tallahassee Florida 32399-3265, (850) 558-9829. If no contact has been made by you concerning the above by May 22, 2025, the matter of the Administrative Complaint will be presented at an ensuing meeting of the Board of Nursing in an informal proceeding. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the individual or agency sending this notice not later than seven days prior to the proceeding at the address given on the notice. Telephone: (850) 245-4640, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770 (V), via Florida Relay Service.

4/10 4tchg 5/1-BCT

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

CASE NO.: 04-2025-CA-53

DIVISION:

SHERMAN BEAU CARNES and DORIS M. CARNES, Plaintiffs, v. ESTATE OF MARION SAMS, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF MARION SAMS, HARRIETT MOORE, ESTATE OF ANN L. MEYERS A/K/A ANNIE LEE MYERS and HEIRS OF ANN L. MEYERS A/K/A ANNIE LEE MYERS, Defendants.

NOTICE OF ACTION

TO: ESTATE OF MARION SAMS  
O JONES FL LANE 32058  
UNKNOWN HEIRS OF MARION SAMS  
O JONES FL LANE 32058  
LAWTY, FL 32058  
ESTATE OF ANN L. MEYERS A/K/A ANNIE LEE MYERS  
C/O HARRIETT T. MOORE 6318 LORENZO AVENUE ORLANDO, FL 32818  
HEIRS OF ANN L. MEYERS A/K/A ANNIE LEE MYERS 6318 LORENZO AVENUE ORLANDO, FL 32818  
YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action to quiet title on the following property in Bradford County, Florida: THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED LAND, SITUATE, LYING, AND BEING IN BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO WIT: THE EAST HALF OF THE SOUTH EAST QUARTER OF THE NORTH EAST QUARTER OF THE NORTH EAST QUARTER QUARTER OF

SECTION TWENTY SIX, TOWNSHIP FIVE SOUTH OF RANGE TWENTY TWO EAST AND CONTAINING FIVE ACRES MORE OR LESS, has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on The Law Office of C.W. Wickersham, Jr., P.A., Plaintiffs attorney, at 2720 Park Street, Suite 205, Jacksonville, Florida, 32205, Phone Number: (904) 389 6202, not less than 28 days of the first date of publication of this Notice, and me the original with the Clerk of this Court, at 945 N Temple Ave, Starke, Florida 32091 before service on Plaintiff or immediately thereafter. If you fail to do so, a Default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint. Dated this 26th day of March 2025  
Clerk of the Circuit Court By: Kanetra Jenkins Deputy Clerk

4/10 4tchg 5/1-BCT

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

To satisfy the owner's storage lien, KO Storage LLC will sell at public lien sale on May 20, 2025. The personal property in the below-listed units, which may include but are not limited to: Household goods, boxes/boxes/bags, clothing, bedding, tools and toys. The public sale of these items will begin at 10AM on May 13, 2025 and end at 10AM on May 20, 2025. The public sale will take place on www.storage treasures.com. All sales are subject to cancellation. We reserve the right to refuse any bid. Payment must be by credit/debit card, we do not accept checks or cash. Buyers must secure the units with their own personal locks. To claim tax-exempt status, original RESALE certificates for each space purchased is required. By KO Storage LLC, 10301 Wayzata Blvd, Minnetonka, MN 55305. (952)-491-6837.

4/17 2tchg 4/24-BCT

### SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION  
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, the following application for permit was received on March 19, 2025: Thomas Harman, 215 Pendleton Street, Waycross, GA, 31501 has submitted an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) application number ERP-007-250988-2. The project is located in Bradford County, Section 24, Township 7 South, Range 21 East, and includes 2.97 acres of impervious area on a total project area of 5.12 acres. Interested persons may comment upon the application or submit a written request for a staff report containing proposed agency action regarding the application by writing to the Suwannee River Water Management District, Attn: Resource

4/17 2tchg 4/24-BCT

Management, 9225 C.R. 49, Live Oak, Florida 32060. Such comments or requests must be received by 5:00 PM within 14 days from the date of publication.

No further public notice will be provided regarding this application. A copy of the staff report must be requested in order to remain advised of further proceedings. Substantially affected persons are entitled to request an administrative hearing, pursuant to Title 28, Florida Administrative Code, regarding the proposed agency action by submitting a written request after reviewing the staff report.

PUBLISH: no later than April 17, 2025  
/tm

4/17 1tchg-BCT

### PUBLIC SALE

An auction pursuant to statute #713.78 to be held April 29, 2025 at 10:00am at 6841 Apache Junction, Keystone Heights, FL 32656 for the following vehicle: 4TASN92N9XZ551472 1999 Toyota Tacoma

4/17 1tchg-BCT

### Request for Proposal: 2025-01

5k Jet-A Refueler Truck  
The Keystone Heights Airport Authority (KHAA) hereby requests bids from responsible firms for the fabrication and delivery of a 5k Jet-A Refueler Truck. The KHAA shall select the lowest or most responsive and responsible bid. In addition to price, the KHAA shall also take into consideration anticipated delivery when awarding the bid.

Before packages must be submitted on or before the deadline. Questions shall be e-mailed to the contact listed below and, all questions will be answered in writing to all interested parties. Any materials submitted pursuant to this ITB shall become property of the KHAA. The KHAA supports Equal Opportunity Employment, Fair Housing and Providing Handicapped Access. The KHAA reserves the right to waive any irregularities submitted, reject any and/or all submittals, re-advertise, and accept any submittals deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

Advertisement Date: April 18th, 2025  
Deadline for submissions: May 15, 2025  
Contact: Craig Coon—Airport Manager  
7150 Airport Rd. Starke, FL 32091  
352.473.0031 or ccoon@keystoneairport.com  
Respondents are required to submit one (1) original and one (1) copy. The bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope stating on the outside the proposer's name, address, telephone number and ITB title-number and delivered to: Keystone Heights Airport Attn: Craig Coon — Airport Manager 5k Jet Refueler RFP-2025-1 7150 Airport Rd Starke, FL 32091  
Hand-carried and express mail proposals may be delivered to the above address ONLY between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., EST, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays observed by the KHAA.

Respondents are responsible for informing any commercial delivery

4/17 2tchg 4/24-BCT

service, if used, of all delivery requirements and for ensuring that the required address information appears on the outer wrapper or envelope used by such service.

Any proposal received after the deadline will not be considered and will be returned unopened. The KHAA reserves the right to reject any and all submittals received in response to this ITB as determined to be in the best interests of the KHAA. The KHAA may not award an agreement solely on the basis of this ITB. Proposals must be signed by an officer of the company who is authorized to enter into contractual agreements on behalf of the company. Proposals are to have, either, the company's corporate seal affixed to the proposal or the proposal notarized by a Notary Public (see attachment A). Non-acceptance of any proposal will not imply any criticism of the proposal or convey any implication that the proposal was deficient. Non-acceptance of any proposal will mean that another proposal was deemed to be more advantageous to the KHAA. All material submitted in response to the ITB becomes the property of the KHAA and will be returned only at the option of the KHAA.

Costs for developing proposals in response to this ITB are entirely the obligation of the respondent and shall not be chargeable in any manner to the KHAA. Explanations desired by the submitter(s) regarding the meaning or interpretation of this ITB must be obtained from the contact person, in writing via email, as is further described below.

To ensure fair consideration and consistent and accurate dissemination of information for all proposers, the KHAA prohibits communication to or with any department, employee, or agent evaluating or considering the proposals during the submission process, except as authorized by the contact person.

During the blackout period as defined herein, except as pursuant to an authorized appeal, no person may lobby, as defined herein, on behalf of a competing party in a particular procurement process. KHAA officials or employees. Violation of this provision shall result in disqualification of the party on whose behalf the lobbying occurred. The blackout period means the period between the time the submittals to the invitation for bid are received by the KHAA and the time KHAA award the contract. Lobbying means when any natural person, for compensation, seeks to influence the governmental decision-making, to encourage the passage, defeat or modification of any proposal, recommendation or decision by the KHAA, except as authorized by procurement documents.

See Appendix "A" for a list of specifications, including requirements of items and options preferred for the refueler truck. The list is not all inclusive and is provided as a guide for the most part. All dealer fees are to be included in bid total.

The Bidder must be licensed to do business in Florida or become licensed within 30 days after the bids are due.

FAIR ASSOCIATION  
THE PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED

that the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners is accepting applications for volunteers who wish to serve on the Board of the Bradford County Fair Association. Applicants must provide a resume and letter of intent or recommendation to be considered. Please apply online at [www.bradfordcountyfl.gov/fair](http://www.bradfordcountyfl.gov/fair) or bring a resume and letter of intent/recommendation to the County Manager's Office, located in the north wing section of the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple, Avenue, Starke, FL. Deadline to apply is May 9, 2025, by 5:00 PM.

4/17 2tchg 4/24-BCT

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notification is given that First Federal Bank, 4705 US Hwy 90 West, Lake City, Florida has filed an application with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency on April 18, 2025, as specified in 12 CFR 5 for permission to relocate an approved but unopened full service branch office from 311 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida to 841 South Walnut Street, Starke, Florida. Any person wishing to comment on this application may file comments in writing with the Director for Licensing at 1700 Pacific Avenue, Suite 3600, Dallas, TX 75201 or at [LicensingPublicComments@occ.treas.gov](mailto:LicensingPublicComments@occ.treas.gov) within 15 days of the date of this publication. To request a copy of the public portion of the filing, contact the Director for Licensing at 1700 Pacific Avenue, Suite 3600, Dallas, TX 75201 or email [Licensing@occ.treas.gov](mailto:Licensing@occ.treas.gov). Filing information may also be found in the OCC's Weekly Bulletin available at [www.occ.gov](http://www.occ.gov).

4/17 1tchg-BCT

## UNION

### ADVERTISEMENT FOR SALE OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

The City of Lake Butler is accepting SEALED BIDS for the purchase of a 27.6-acre parcel with (1) partially completed steel building and one (1) fully enclosed storage building which are located on parcel #36-05-19-000-000-0190-0, address 9422 SW SR 121 Lake Butler, FL 32054. Improvements to the property will be sold in "as is" condition. The zoning of the property is COMMERCIAL GENERAL (CG) and future land use classification is COMMERCIAL. The City Commission has established a minimum bid of SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$700,000) which MUST be made in U.S. Dollars. The survey description, utilities information, and photos of the exterior and interior may be viewed on the City's website at [www.cityoflakebutler.com](http://www.cityoflakebutler.com). The City will host a SITE INSPECTION/TOUR of the subject property on THURSDAY, MAY 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 at 10:00AM at the address of the property 9422 SW SR 121 Lake Butler, FL 32054. Sealed bids will be received until 3:00pm on THURSDAY, MAY 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at which point the bids received will be opened publicly and read aloud. Only one bid per entity or person bidding will be accepted. Closing of the sale of the property shall occur within SIXTY (60) DAYS of bid award or bid will be disqualified automatically absent an extension granted by the City Commission. The City shall

issue a warranty deed at its expense, with other costs to be paid by the successful bidder. Contract for sale and purchase MUST be executed within SEVEN (7) DAYS of bid award. The City has the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason.

4/17 2tchg 4/24-UCT

NOTICE OF SELF STORAGE SALE  
Please take notice Lake Butler Mini Storage, located at 1015 SW 3rd St. Lake Butler, FL, 32054 intends to hold an auction of goods stored in the following units in default for non-payment of rent on Lockerfox.com. The sale will occur on May 2, 2025 at 12:01 pm on Lockerfox.com. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings.

Unit#76 Yolonda Webb \$327.04  
All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. See manager for details.

4/17 2tchg 4/24-UCT

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS  
UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
ENGINEER'S PROJECT NUMBER L220209UCC

UNION COUNTY WILL RECEIVE BIDS FOR THE FOLLOWING:  
92nd / 146th / 152nd Reconstruction  
Deadline for Questions: May 12, 2025, 5:00 PM, LOCAL TIME  
Date & Time for Receiving Bids: 2:00 PM, LOCAL TIME, May 19, 2025  
Late bids will not be considered.

Place for Receiving Bids: Union County Board of County Commissioners  
Board Office- BOCC Office Secretary 15 Northeast 1st Street Lake Butler, FL 32054

Date & Time for Bid Opening: May 19, 2025, 2:00 PM or as soon thereafter  
Place for Opening Bids: Union County Courthouse Board Room 55 West Main Street, Room 103 Lake Butler, FL 32054  
Bid Documents Available From: North Florida Professional Services, Inc. P.O. Box 3823 Lake City, FL 32056 (386) 752-4675, FAX (386) 752-4674  
Contact: Debbie Moten (dmotes@nfps.net)

[www.nfps.net/bid/opportunities/](http://www.nfps.net/bid/opportunities/)  
Deposit for Bid Documents: Payment of \$200.00 per paper set with a two (2) set maximum or the bidding documents may be retrieved at no cost to the Contractor via the NFPS website at <http://www.nfps.net/bid-opportunities/>. Payments from Contractors are non-refundable. Bidders using partial sets of Documents are fully responsible for any errors or omissions made due to not reviewing the entire set of Construction Documents.

Project Description: This project consists of reconstruction and repaving of 92<sup>nd</sup> Street/146th Lane/152nd Court from SR121 to SR 238. Including, but not limited to clearing and grubbing, pipe culverts, mitered end sections, sidewalk and driveways, signing and marking, sodding and mulching.

Date of Advertisement: April 17, 2025  
4/17 1tchg-UCT

**Bradford County Telegraph**  
USPS 062-700  
Published each Thursday and entered as Periodical Postage Paid at Starke, Florida under Act of March 3, 1879.  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to:  
**Bradford County Telegraph**  
131 West Call Street • Starke, Florida 32091  
Phone: 964-6305 • P.O. Drawer A • Starke, FL 32091  
**John Miller, Publisher**  
Editor: Mark J. Crawford  
Sports Editor: Cliff Smelley  
Advertising: John R. Tillman  
Typesetting: Mary Goodge  
Advertising & Newspaper Prod: C. Hurston  
Bookkeeping & Classified Adverts: Heather Wheeler  
Bookkeeping Asst: Mary Goodge  
Front office Asst:

Subscription Rate in Trade Area  
Area: \$52.00 per year;  
\$26.00 six months  
Outside Trade Area:  
\$52.00 per year;  
\$26.00 six months

**Lake Region Monitor**  
USPS 114-170  
Published each Thursday and entered as Periodical Postage Paid at Keystone Heights, Florida under Act of March 3, 1879.  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to:  
**Lake Region Monitor**  
P.O. Drawer A - Starke, FL 32091  
131 W. Call Street - Starke, FL 32091  
Phone: (904)964-6305 • Fax: (904)964-8628  
**John Miller, Publisher**  
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Subscription Rate in Trade Area  
Area: \$52.00 per year;  
\$26.00 six months  
Outside Trade Area:  
\$52.00 per year;  
\$26.00 six months

**UNION COUNTY TIMES**  
USPS 648-200  
Published each Thursday and entered as Periodical Postage Paid at Lake Butler, Florida under Act of March 3, 1879.  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to:  
**UNION COUNTY TIMES**  
131 W. Call Street • Starke, FL 32091  
uctimeseditor@gmail.com  
904-964-6305 • fax 904-964-8628  
**John Miller, Publisher**  
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Typesetting: Mary Goodge  
Advertising & Newspaper Prod: C. Hurston  
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# DISTRICT

Continued from page 11

Campbell, who batted 2 for 2, and Franklin each finished with three RBI, while Barry, Brinson and Smith each had one.

Smith finished 2 for 4, while Harnage batted 2 for 5.

Franklin got the start on the mound and earned the win. He gave up two unearned runs and two hits through five innings. He had seven strikeouts.

The Indians went 1-1 in their final two regular-season games prior to the tournament, beginning with a 10-0, six-inning win over visiting Eagle's View

on April 8. Barry and Ty Mitzel combined to pitch a no-hitter. Barry, who threw the second through sixth innings, struck out seven.

Screen, who went 2 for 3 with three RBI, hit a home run in the fourth inning to give the Indians their first two runs.

Barry and Screen hit an RBI

single and an RBI double, respectively, as part of a two-run fifth.

Keystone pushed six runs across in the sixth. Barry, who finished 2 for 3, and Mitzel each hit an RBI single, while Ryder Trull drove in the final two runs on a walk-off single.

Barry, Smith and Trull each

had two RBI, while Mitzel finished with one.

The Indians traveled to play the seventh-ranked team in Class 4A on April 10, losing 12-2 in five innings to Clay.

Keystone trailed 3-0 before scoring both of its runs in the third inning. Harnage singled, while Wilson walked. Smith, who went

2 for 3, drove in Harnage on one of his two doubles, followed by Barry driving Wilson in on a ground out.

Clay answered with a run in the bottom of the third and then scored four each in the fourth and fifth innings.

Keystone was held to four hits.

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