

Bradford County Telegraph

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Memorial Day: Remembrance and gratitude

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Command Sgt. Brandon Williams of Camp Blanding's 211th Regional Training Institute told the assembled crowd at a Memorial Day observance in Starke to remember and be grateful to those who sacrificed themselves for the lives they enjoy today.

Williams was the keynote speaker during a May 27 ceremony held at Charles J. Schaefer Sr. Veterans Memorial Park and hosted by Jones-Langford-White American Legion Post 56.

"On this Memorial Day, let us remember those who took their last breath in service to our country," Williams said. "Allow us to honor the fearless souls put our lives in front of theirs so that we may live in freedom. May their names be etched in stone, while their spirits carry on in the hearts of all who value liberty.

"You see, Memorial Day is not only a day of remembrance, but is also a day of gratitude — gratitude for the



Boy Scouts Troop 70 members (l-r) Hunter Ruble, Logan Jackson and Enoch Durban salute during the posting of colors. They, along with fellow troop member Wonderful West, participated in the placing of wreaths.

freedoms we enjoy, the liberties we hold dear and the sacrifices made by those who came before us."

Williams shared the history of Memorial Day, which began in 1868 as Decoration Day, commemorating

those who gave their lives in the Civil War. It would evolve to honor those who died in all wars America was a part of.

"Service members like myself stand on the shoulders of giants — the men and women who marched before us, spearheading paths across the globe while defending our nation with gallantry and honor," Williams said. "From the earliest days of war to now, our brothers and sisters in arms have demonstrated unmatched bravery, tenacity and resolve in the face of adversity."

Not to be forgotten are also the families of those who died in service.

"We must not forget to also pay reverence to those families of the fallen, whose sacrifices were often silent, but immeasurable," Williams said. "They have endured the pain of unfathomable loss, not only with grace, but with resilience, while never surrendering support of their loved ones and our nation."

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WORTH NOTING

Revival at True Vine

True Vine Ministry will be hosting a special two-night revival on May 30 and 31 with services beginning at 7 p.m. nightly. The guest speaker is Apostle Frankie Smith, senior pastor of True Vine World Harvest Center in Savannah, Ga. The public is invited to attend.

True Vine Ministry is located at 422 N. Saint Clair Street in Starke. For more information, feel free to call 904-964-9264 or visit the website www.truevinemin.org.

Food giveaway in Hampton

Saturday, June 1, beginning at 10 a.m., Bradford Food Pantry, and The Arc of Bradford in Hampton are hosting a community drive-thru food giveaway at the old Hampton Elementary School, 10501 Hampton Ave.

Volunteers are needed to assist with traffic control, packing and loading food into vehicles. If you are able to assist, please be at the school at 7:30 a.m.

Soil and water conservation board meets

The Bradford Soil and Water Conservation District will meet at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 4, at the Bradford County Extension Office. The conditions of Bradford County's drainage systems and the potential for flooding during major rain events will be discussed.

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

Church of God food distribution

Starke Church of God by Faith plans a food distribution on Thursday, June 20, from 10-11:30 a.m. This is a drive-thru distribution. The church is located at 730 Old Lawtey Road in Starke. This distribution may begin early depending on the arrival of the food truck.

Homecoming at Lifeline

Lifeline Ministries of Starke will hold Homecoming on Sunday, June 2, with the Rev. Mark Smith ministering at the 11 a.m. service. Lifeline Quartet (Jacksonville/ Callahan) will be the guest singers. The gospel sing begins at 2 p.m.

Lifeline Ministries is located at 325 N. Christian St. in Starke.



Principal Laurie Burke congratulates Raegan Feldpausch after the valedictorian addressed her classmates.

KH grads leave Indian Strong

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

The Keystone Heights High School Class of 2024 walked across a stage at the school's football field Friday, concluding six years at Keystone Heights Junior-Senior High School and, for most, 12 years as classmates.

Class President Caitlin Frampton thanked her classmates for electing her to lead the class for all four years of senior high and reminded her fellow graduates of the gravity of the occasion.

"This year, we have experienced many lasts," she said. "The last time stepping on a field, or mat, stage or track. Our last homecoming week, last homecoming dance, last prom, and after tonight, possibly the last time seeing some of the people we have grown up with for the past six years."

Frampton added that the class will now experience many firsts and said having a purpose would keep them focused.

"My mom always tells me that your talent is a gift from God, and what you do with that talent is your gift back to him," she said. "We all have different talents. Not one of us is like the person next to you. We all have different ambitions and goals. Don't let someone take away your dream just because it's not what they would want. You're your own person, and you are created for a purpose."

She also said that each adventure in life could be viewed as positive or negative, depending on one's perspective.

See GRADS, page 3

Legislative committee scrutinizing Lawtey government

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

A recent piece of correspondence has instructed the city of Lawtey to get its act together.

In a May 6 letter addressed to Mayor Jimmie Scott, the Florida's Legislature's Joint Legislative Auditing Committee informed the city it is aware of potential violations of Florida statutes and requested a response.

The committee dives in addressing budget transparency and the city's perceived failure to post tentative and final budgets online, along with any budget amendments. If a municipality does not operate its own website, it must transmit the documents to be posted on the county's website. Final budgets must be posted for a minimum of two years.

The county has posted one-page budget summaries for Lawtey for fiscal years 2023 and 2024, and those are the only documents available. They are not located on the link provided for the city of Lawtey, however, but on the same page as the county's budget documents. The committee's letter indicates staff found no evidence the budgets were posted and has asked specific questions about when the documents were provided and posted.

The next concern was the process for adopting the budgets and whether

the city has been adopting the tentative and final budgets in separate public hearings as required. The letter states committee staff were informed that a statement about the timing of the hearings in the past five city audits was incorrect in its claim that the public hearings were conducted in July and August. One claim is that the city postponed a tentative budget hearing and never rescheduled it, proceeding directly to the final hearing.

The committee has asked for details and documentation that the past two budgets were adopted per state law.

Another complaint to the committee claimed the city has failed to comply with public record requests in timely manner. The committee has asked for a copy of the city's public record policy, if one exists, in addition to a summary of how public records requests are fulfilled. This includes the city's policy on providing time-sensitive documents prior to a meeting when requested.

On to traffic citation revenue, state law requires a municipality to report to the committee if traffic citation revenue makes up 33% or more of a police department's annual budget. The committee found Lawtey reported that information for fiscal years 2015-2017, but not since then, leading the

See LAWTEY, page 5

Orange Park BBQ destroyed by fire, rebuilding in Starke

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

A January 9 fire gutted G's Barbecue on Blanding Boulevard, putting nine of the eatery's 10 employees out of work.

The restaurant's owner, Gary Park, is now converting Starke's old Pizza Hut near the county courthouse into his newest location while looking for replacement property for his Orange Park operation.

G's first opened in 2012, near Blanding's intersection with Knight Boxx Road, featuring slow-cooked barbecue. After the fire, Park said his main concern was finding work for his employees. He held a three-day fundraiser for his workers in March at a Clay County VFW Post to assist them.

The owner added that remodeling and opening the Starke location is the quickest way for him to put his workers back on the payroll.



The G's owner, Gary Park, is now converting Starke's old Pizza Hut near the county courthouse into his newest location while looking for replacement property for his Orange Park operation.



CityWalk progressing to PUD

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
mark@bctelegraph.com

The first project to take advantage of Starke's new standards for planned unit developments was revealed as the city and Kingsley Development moved to amend future land use downtown for CityWalk.

The heart of the CityWalk project are the 48 townhomes that will be available to rent or purchase, with the target residents being teachers, nurses, first responders, correctional officers, active and retired military, etc.

City commissioners recently approved tentative future land use changes for the associated properties to allow high density residential development. The applications were made by the city and Kingsley Development. The parcels include the site of the current veterans memorial park, which will be relocated and expanded alongside the residential development.

A second commission vote is required to finalize the amendments, after which Dwight Hewett and his partner, Chris Raley of Sustainable Construction Group, can proceed with rezoning as a planned unit development.

Engineers with Woodward and Curran previously drafted an overall vision of CityWalk for Starke, imagining it as a central business and entertainment district that preserves the city's historic charm with unique shops, restaurants and events. Pedestrian friendly, there could be green areas with parks and

flowering gardens, including a walking trail. There could also be opportunities for expanding education and job training.

The vision takes its name from the residential development, which is meant to breathe new life into downtown Starke. Hewett recapped the history of the project which goes back to 2005 and a plan to build 90+ apartments downtown adjacent to the memorial park.

"The concept was to make a community that was very close to downtown, which I remembered as being very vibrant when I was a kid in the 60s," he said. "This is why the project has always been named CityWalk."

Then the housing market crashed. Then the state split the property and took half for the railroad overpass. Then COVID hit as Hewett was trying to reimagine the project. During the downtime, Hewett's neighbor and collaborator became an expert in sustainable development, something important to them both. Hewett suggested Starke as a place for a joint endeavor.

"Today, CityWalk is a planned 45-unit, sustainably constructed pathway to home ownership where you can rent, rent-to-own or just own," he said.

The units are two-story, three-bedroom, two-bath townhomes with a garage — around 1,550 square feet each, he said. But that is not what makes them unique. They feature solar power and are more than twice as efficient at insulating heat and cold than the standard home, he said. They are designed to incorporate technology and withstand natural

disasters. Five stormwater mitigation rain gardens designed in cooperation with the universities of Florida and Miami dot the property. An in-ground collection system is also used for irrigation. Four electric vehicle charging stations would be open to everyone, as would the linear park on the perimeter of the property.

Despite what anyone may have heard, Hewett said this has never been a subsidized housing project.

The project had only fans speak up at the first public hearing. Amber Shepard with the Northeast Florida Economic Development Association said she was highly impressed after speaking with Hewett about his plans.

"Personally and professionally, I do see a significant value for Starke if we can move forward with this project," she said, adding points for the development's sustainability goals.

Members of Starke Downtown Merchants, Dawn Strickland and Chrissy Thompson, talked about how creating foot traffic will support businesses and increase economic development downtown.

"It will be a win-win-win for everyone," Strickland said.

"Downtown businesses are starting to thrive after COVID, and we really need this project," said Thompson.

Pam Whittle, president of the North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce, said the lack of housing for CityWalk's target



Each unit has a garage and a solar array on the roof for power.

demographic hurts Bradford County because those who drive here for work eventually wind up working closer to home. Bradford trains them and then loses them, she said.

"This is a massive opportunity. The school system and a lot of other businesses have been looking for somewhere to house their workers," she said.

Whittle added that if Starke doesn't seize the opportunity, another community will.

"Mr. Hewett is doing this because he grew up here," she said. "He wants to do this. It's in his heart to do this. Don't think Green Cove and Palatka aren't courting him. They want this. They're ready to give him all kinds of incentives to come there."

On that point Whittle went further, saying the area needs an

immediate response team when these economic development inquiries come in.

"We can't be caught dragging our feet. Economic developers talk, and we do not want to get the reputation as somebody that's slow to do business with," she said.

As for the impact of the CityWalk residences downtown, Whittle said they promise a minimum of 90 customers living in and ready to do business with Starke merchants, with the added tax revenue for the city being the icing on the cake.

The chamber of commerce is constantly asked to do something to bring in new businesses and increase foot traffic, she said in her endorsement.

"He named it CityWalk. Think about it," she said.

The proposed land use

amendments received a negative recommendation from the city's zoning board. Zoning official Kevin Powell said concerns were raised about additional traffic into and out of the development as well as the relocation of veterans park, possible disruption for those who walk for fitness and flooding.

Powell, however, testified the parcels were buildable with the appropriate mitigation measures taken and said the requested changes were compatible with the surrounding area.

The commission voted 3-0 in favor of the amendments on first reading. Commissioners Janice Mortimer and Danny Nugent were absent.

Starke recently amended its code to allow for smaller planned unit developments like CityWalk.



Senior Class President
Caitlin Frampton



Salutatorian Ella Hutchins (left) welcomes her future University of Florida roommate to the stage, Valetorian Raegan Feldpausch.



Principal Laurie Burke, followed by (l-r) Vice Principal Barry Underwood and Assistant Principals Spencer Johnson and Melanie Rodriguez, leads the Class of 2024 onto the Keystone Heights High School football field.

GRADS

Continued from page 1

"I was once told hate has four letters, but so does love," she recalled. "Enemies has seven letters, but so does friends. Lying has five letters, but so does truth. Failure has seven letters, but so does success. Cry has three letters, but so does joy, and negativity has 10 letters, but so does positivity. Class of 2024, you always have a choice, so choose the better side of it, and from this day forward, I challenge you to go out and change the world for the better and never forget that failure is the catalyst of growth."

Salutatorian Ella Hutchins told the crowd she had mixed feelings about the night, excited about the future but nostalgic about the fond memories. She counseled her classmates to focus on the present while appreciating the past and looking forward to the future.

"Remember to always stay in the moment," she said, "because, as you can probably tell, time really does fly by."

Valetorian Raegan Feldpausch told her classmates that life is what you make of it. "There's too much good, too much potential in the world not to reach out to new friends and new beginnings," she exhorted.

Feldpausch added that finding friends and cultivating relationships is essential in life.

"I hope you all find your people in life as they truly make any experience worth living," she said. "You never know who your next lifelong friend will be, so I encourage you all to be brave and kind. It's easy to judge and get swept up in the idea of stereotypes on the premise of you are who you surround yourself with, but the

real truth is that you don't know somebody until you meet them, until you have a first sleepover, until you know their dreams and their goals. I think we could all do a better job at remembering this, especially going into adulthood."

Principal Laurie Burke told the class she hopes they leave the Orchid Avenue campus inspired, as they have inspired her.

"I learned so much from students, and this senior class is truly inspirational," she said. "It's funny how that works."

Burke reminded the class that their education had not concluded.

"If you think you've learned everything, then you are missing out," she said. "So, always be inspired and be inspiring."

Burke encouraged the class to follow the example of other KHHS graduates who have become leaders in Clay County and beyond.

"Each one of you has been successful at many things in school," she said. "You have also overcome obstacles,

adversity, mistakes, and guess what? Mistakes are for learning. Now, you are stronger, wiser, and ready to take on life after high school."

Burke concluded by returning and be inspiring," she said. to her theme of inspiration. "You are Indian strong."

"Graduation Poem"
And as the years comes fleeting by
A tear almost comes into my eye
As I think of the past and memories so fond
There were so many special ones
Now I'll lay the in aside with the other past
And set my face forward to a greater task
To help others as I have been
That they to might have a better end.

"Tomorrow"
Tomorrow will start a brand new day
But you'll need a friend along lifes way
Someone to help you with everything
To lift your burdens and cause you to sing
Be a success in what you do
But think of the one that enabled you to
When you leave this life and the sorrow it brings
May you have left a good impression on things

— Henry Hodges
Lawtey, FL

Bradford County Eye Center would like to congratulate Dr. Minesinger on a wonderful career!
If Dr. Minesinger's existing patients would like a copy of their records, they are being stored at the Bradford County Eye Center.

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Lake Region



As we drove by 500 Grove Street in Melrose, our eyes landed on a very short, neat white fence in front of just a small part of the front yard.

Rogers' yard an eye-catcher

BY GINNY GEIGER AND BARBARA ANDERSON
Garden Club of the Lakes

What catches our eyes when we are riding around looking for our next Yard of the Month? Sometimes, it is the uniqueness of the landscape, the variety of plants, the beauty of the flowers, or a special theme. Sometimes, it is just one unique feature that draws us to a yard. We then, without fail, find the entire yard and the people responsible for it all most interesting.

The May Yard of the Month is one of the latter. As we drove by 500 Grove Street in Melrose, our eyes landed on a very short, neat white fence in front of just a small part of the front yard. In front of the little fence was a fun and eye-catching variety of plants. As we were "snooping" around the 1.4-acre lot, driving on the road right behind the house and the two side roads, there was this man curiously watching us.

Barbara, not being the bold type, let Ginny get out of the car and explain to him what we were doing. Steve Rogers seemed relieved that we were not stalkers and quickly agreed that he and Cindi, his wife, would be most pleased and honored to be Yard of the Month.

As we walked around, more things about this yard caught our eyes. The yellow doors have nothing to do with the yard, but who can miss seeing five yellow doors? Then there were the mermaids on the "Mermaid Cottage" used as an Airbnb.

When they moved to Melrose six years ago, the house needed some work – so work they did. Having lived in South Florida and loving it, they decided to go tropical on their theme. (Can't go too wrong with mermaids.) All mixed in together with other plants, their South Florida influence is obvious. There are Crotons, Hibiscus, Date Palms, Sunshine Ligustrum, Loropetalum, Bougainvillea, and numerous fruit trees: Meyer lemon, tangerine, pomelo, olive, and banana. Some were there when they moved in and some they planted.

The most fascinating part of this yard was the wall covered with some thick vine that grew from the ground all the way up one entire side of the house. Cindi was not sure of the name of it, but a vine-covered wall was something she had wanted



The most fascinating part of this yard was the wall covered with some thick vine that grew from the ground all the way up one entire side of the house.

for a long time. With the help of Ginny's trusty plant-identifying app, we found out the name! It is called Creeping Fig. Cindi was so glad to know its name.

Steve and Cindi said that they truly love Melrose, and especially their neighbors. "Everyone is so very friendly and helpful here."

Now, here's the kicker. They have sold their house to a young veteran couple with two young children, and the closing is in the middle of May. How many times do you think someone who has just bought a house drives up to unpack and sees a Yard-of-the-Month sign in their yard? That is just too fun. But we think they may feel some real pressure!

Steve and Cindi are torn by their move. They love their home and Melrose, but Cindi's father lives in South Florida, where they lived, and he needs care.

Steve said he would not miss the work it takes to keep up such a yard and the pine roots that make mowing a bumpy ride, but he will really miss the feeling of living in a "forest." He looked so peaceful when he said that.

Now Cindi loves her Creeping Fig wall. Hence, it makes perfect sense that their back patio is her favorite place - where her wall is. Anyone who saw it would understand her love.

There are several neat spaces around their yard. The firepit looks well used. They probably have many fun memories around

the fire, as well as all through their home and yard.

So, they are leaving their lovely home and yard they love, to go to take care of someone they love. We wish them the best. And to the new owners, we look forward to coming by in a couple of years and seeing what you have done to this Yard of the Month. No pressure!

As a side note, remember we said we found the people responsible for the lovely yards to be as fascinating as their yards? The Rogers proved to be no different. When we asked what each did before retiring, Cindi said (Steve had to go back out to work in the yard) that Steve was a worship leader and then very casually mentioned that Steve is the son of Adrian Rogers. Several of you will know that name. Pastor Rogers was a well-known Southern Baptist pastor and author whom Ginny enjoys listening to. She lit up like she had seen a celebrity.

If you want to learn more about the Garden Club of the Lakes or nominate yourself or anyone in the community for Yard of the Month, please call Pat Lorenzo at (904)728-9460.

Even though the Garden Club will not meet again until September, and there will be no Yards of the Month until then, please consider joining this awesome group and still find some Yards of the Month for us. That really helps! Bye for now.

Van Zant: remember the families of fallen service members

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

The new city manager of Keystone Heights gave the address at the city's Memorial Day ceremony, organized by AMVETS Post 86.

The former Army helicopter pilot told the crowd about two men he knew personally who gave their lives for their country.

The first was the father of Ethan Chapman. Ethan graduated from Keystone Heights High School the previous Friday, and Van Zant said his father, Sgt. Bryan Chapman died from wounds and disease during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Van Zant added that he met Middleburg resident Gary Rhodes when he and Rhodes underwent helicopter mechanics school together.

"A few years later, I learned as we were experimenting with external fuel tanks on the Black Hawk, he was aboard a Black Hawk in Wiesbaden, Germany, that went down," Van Zant recalled. "It killed a three-star general, and it also killed a young husband and father."

Van Zant added that he wondered why American men and women are willing to lay down their lives for their country.

"I had to stop and reflect on why people do this," he said. "Why is there such a commitment among American servicemen and women to actually lay down their lives? What is so special about our country that people would



Lt. Col. (Ret.) Charlie Van Zant, Keystone Heights City Manager

who said that constitutional government without the Gospel and without religion would fail.

Van Zant listed the number of Americans lost in each war since the beginning of the 20th century. He added that the people lost are more than numbers.

"As an Army aviator, I've long had the privilege to serve along some of the finest individuals our nation has had to offer," he said. "I've witnessed their courage, their resilience, and their unwavering commitment to duty. I've seen their sacrifices firsthand and felt the brotherhood that has sustained them through the darkest times."

The former Clay County School Superintendent added that he had also seen the cost of war on the families of fallen service members.

"I've also seen the toll that war exacts on lives lost on family," he said. "Shattered lives and deep scars, both physically and emotionally, that people bear as family members. Let us remember their families and their spouses who kissed them goodbye one day and never saw them again."

Van Zant encouraged the audience to take steps to memorialize the fallen by encouraging Gold Star family members and contributing to organizations that support them.

He also said that ordinary citizens can honor the memory of those lost by living lives of integrity and serving others.

freely do that?"

Van Zant said his question took him to the signers of the Declaration of Independence. He told the audience that of the document's 56 signers, five were captured and tortured by the British before they died, 12 had their homes ransacked and burned, two lost sons in the Revolutionary War, one had two sons captured, and nine fought and died for the new country.

"Our freedom has always come at a high cost," he concluded. "That tradition has been carried on through today by so many servicemen."

Van Zant said a spiritual dimension also inspired commitment to the country.

He quoted John Quincy Adams and George Washington,



Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody praises the work of the nonprofit Signal 35 Fund during a news conference in Green Cove Springs. Also pictured are (l-r) Signal 35 Fund board member Judson Sapp, Clay Sheriff Chief of Patrol Baylor Alexander, Moody, Sheriff Administration Director Ricky Wright, Sheriff Michelle Cook, and Patrol and Community Affairs Director David Barnes.

AG hails support for Clay deputies

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
dan@bctelegraph.com

Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody visited Green Cove Springs last week to recognize a nonprofit organization created to help deputies and officers facing financial challenges.

Sheriff Michelle Cook and community leaders launched the Signal 35 Fund in 2023 to help law enforcement officers in need.

The following year, the fund issued its first check to a retired Clay County deputy facing eviction after medical issues restricted her movement.

Moody said the fund is an example of communities and law enforcement agencies working together at a time when groups in other states were actively opposing peace officers.

"Signal 35 (was created) at a time when many states were

facing the opposite," Moody said. "In many states and cities across the nation, (agencies) were facing community groups that didn't have their back, that were doing everything vocally and otherwise to undermine law enforcement."

The cabinet officer called Florida "the most pro-law enforcement state in the nation."

Terry McCarthy

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Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6"

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Bradford High School JROTC instructor John Crews salutes after placing the Altrusa International of Starke wreath in remembrance of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. A total of 13 wreaths representing various organizations and Bradford County and Starke officials were placed.

MEMORIAL

Continued from page 1

Williams said communities carry on the legacy of those who died in war, ensuring that their memories extend beyond the battlefield.

"They will live on through the stories we tell to our children, the monuments that we build and the flags we fly," Williams said. "Their legacy lives on in the hearts of every American who cherishes the blessings of liberty and a brighter tomorrow."

Those who attended the ceremony were encouraged to honor those men and women who gave their lives by taking the time to "hear the snap of the flag as it waves in a gust of wind," to "listen to the laughter of children as they play on the ground these men and women laid down their lives to defend" and to "listen to a story or share a memory of a loved one and ensure their legacy lives on."

"May we always continue to commemorate their bravery,

courage and enduring legacy of service to our nation."

In closing, Williams quoted from a speech given by James Garfield prior to his presidency. On May 30, 1868, Garfield (then an Ohio congressman) spoke at the first Decoration Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.

"We do not know one promise these men made, one pledge they gave, one word they spoke," Garfield said, "but we do know they summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For love of country, they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts and made immortal their patriotism and virtue."

"Former President Garfield was speaking of men who died during the Civil War," Williams said, "but as we know, the nature of war has changed, and it is no longer men alone who bear the brunt of battle. Every service member who dons the uniform has been and will be put in harm's way. It was my honor to serve alongside these giants of



Following the conclusion of the Memorial Day observance, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the site where Charles J. Schaefer Veterans Memorial Park will be moved to. Pictured (l-r) are Bradford High School JROTC cadets Kaitlyn Hunter and Rachel Hager, Bradford County Sheriff's Explorer Henry Baker, BHS JROTC Cadet Ezra Green, BCSO Explorer Journie Sampson, BCSO Sgt. Scott Konkel, Boy Scouts Troop 70 members Hunter Ruble and Wonderful West, Starke Commissioner Shannon Smith, BHS JROTC Instructor John Crews, Jones-Langford-White American Legion Post 56 members Raymond Hunt, Dale Tenly and Norman Dowdy (commander), Starke Firefighter Andy Tison (not visible, behind Dowdy), American Legion Post 56 member Artie Rix, Starke Fire Assistant Chief Jason Clemons, Bradford County Commission Chair Carolyn Spooner, Boy Scouts Troop 70 members Enoch Durban and Logan Jackson and BHS JROTC cadets Lysa McKenzie, Tyler Shaffer, Melissa Hardy and Madison Miller.

Artie Rix, sergeant in arms for Jones-Langford-White American Legion Post 56, salutes after draping an empty chair with a POW/MIA flag. This symbolic observance is a part of all official American Legion meetings.



men and women who sacrificed their lives in defense of our nation."

Local American Legion and VFW posts, along with city of Starke and Bradford County officials, North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce, Bradford County Tourist Development, Downtown Merchants Association, Boy Scouts Troop 70, Daughters of the American Revolution, Altrusa International of Starke and Woman's Club of Starke paid tribute to those who gave their lives with

wreaths, which were donated by Downtown Merchants Association. The wreaths were placed by members of Boy Scouts Troop 70, Bradford High School JROTC and Bradford County Sheriff's Explorers.

Following the conclusion of the ceremony, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at what will be the new site for Charles J. Schaefer Veterans Memorial Park, which will be moved closer to the downtown square.



Posting the colors are Bradford High School JROTC cadets (l-r) Madison Miller, Lysa McKenzie, Melissa Hardy and Tyler Shaffer.

LAWTEY

Continued from page 1

committee to ask if the threshold in still being met but the city is failing to report it.

According to the letter, committee staff found it was being surpassed based on the city's most recent financial audit for Fiscal Year 2022.

Additional reporting requirements to the Florida Legislature's Economic and Demographic Research have been in place since 2019, but Lawtey has never complied. This includes providing details about how much the government spends per resident, how much debt the city carries per resident, the average salary of municipal employees, the percentage of the budget spent on employee salaries and benefits, etc.

The city has been asked if it intends to comply going forward, which means providing the required information by Oct. 15 each year.

Finally, the letter addresses Lawtey's habitual tardiness in the submission of its annual financial reports and financial audits. For nine of the past 11 years, the committee states the city has failed to provide one or both reports on time. Both are due 45 days after the audit is delivered to the city and no later than nine months after the end of the fiscal year. Lawtey's past three financial audits were all late, one by as long as 52 days. The annual financial report was late all nine years, with a range of 29 to 200 days after they were due.

Of all the problems mentioned, committee staff stated problems with this financial reporting endangers state revenue for the city.

"Other Florida municipalities have lost a total of over \$5 million dollars as a result of the committee's enforcement of these financial reporting requirements. The city should take steps to ensure that it submits these financial reports more timely,

or understand that it is at risk to lose municipal revenue sharing and half-cent sales tax funds," according to the letter.

Informational resources were attached to assist the city meet its obligations, but the committee closed the letter by stating a legislator, citizen petition or local government action could request the committee to direct the Florida Auditor General to conduct an operational audit of Lawtey, as previously occurred in Starke and Hampton, nearly costing the latter its charter.

"The focus of an operational audit is to evaluate management's performance in establishing and maintaining internal controls and administering assigned responsibilities in accordance with laws, rules, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other guidelines. The city commission may request an operational audit with a majority vote in a public meeting," according to the committee.

Lawtey would bear the cost of undertaking such and audit.

UCHS Class of '74 reunion

Union County's Class of 1974 will celebrate 50 years on Saturday, June 22, 2024. Save the date. The reunion will take place at 5 p.m. at Lake Butler Community Center. From 3 to 4:30 p.m., there will be a tour of Marjorie McGill Driggers Historical Museum, 401 W. Main St., Suite C in the Townsend-Green Building.

The reunion begins at the community center a 5 p.m. Please bring any memorabilia you would like to share with the class.

Duval County Line to headline KH anniversary kickoff

The Southern Rock and Blues band Duval County Line will

headline the Dec. 31, 2024, kickoff concert for Keystone Heights' 100th anniversary.

The nonprofit group Friends of Keystone Heights, which is running the yearlong anniversary celebration, approved the deal with the band during its May meeting.

The nonprofit's members also discussed the calendar of events for the anniversary and merchandising options during the meeting.

Pastor anniversary at New Covenant

New Covenant Baptist Ministries will be celebrating Pastor Jeffrey T. and Sister Daffany Jones' eighth anniversary on Sunday, June 23, at 11 a.m. The Rev. Ellsworth McGuire and St. John Missionary Baptist Church will be in charge of the service. The public is invited. Dinner will be served.

Summer Bingo fundraiser for CIS

The June 24 Summer Bingo Fundraiser for Communities of Schools of Bradford County, hosted by Bradford County Telegraph, will begin at 5:30 p.m. at Downtown Grill. Ten games for \$20. Last game blackout for \$100 prize. All bingo proceeds plus 25% of food and beverage purchases will go directly to CIS students.

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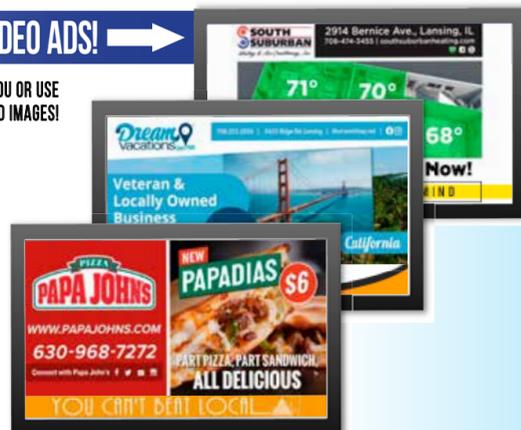
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UNION COUNTY

Union County observes Memorial Day

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

Union County residents came together on May 27, 2024, to honor those who have given their lives in service to their country at the annual Lake Butler American Legion Memorial Day Ceremony, held at the Lake Butler Masonic Lodge and Veterans Memorial on Main St. in Lake Butler.

More than 50 people came out on the warm day to honor our Nation's fallen. While all were gathering and getting seated, entertainment was provided with patriotic music and a selection of historical quotes pertinent to the occasion.

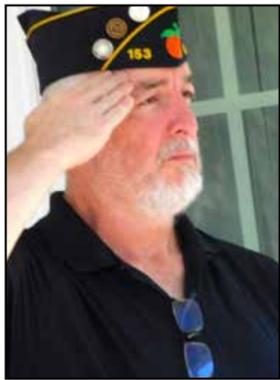
At 10 a.m. the spectators were welcomed to the event by Brian Reagan, American Legion Post 153 Adjutant, then Union County High School's JROTC Honor Guard presented the colors.

The Honor Guard members were: Natalie Piggott – Commander, carrying the American Flag, Chloe Harris – carrying the State Flag, Hunter Smith – carrying the American Weapon and Jamaal Reynolds – carrying the State Weapon.

Post 153 Vice-Commander Shawn Newsome then presented a history of Memorial Day, highlighting how the holiday came to be and its meaning.

After this Post 153 Chaplain Gene Gordon offered the invocation.

Boy Scout Troop #140 and Cub Scout Pack #140 then presented the Parade of Services and lead all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Reagan then led the crowd and attending Legion members in the singing of the National Anthem. He then read the list of names of the Union County Names who had given their lives for this country in World Wars



Post 153 Adjutant Brian Reagan



Post 153 Vice-Commander Shawn Newsome



Guest Speaker Sgt. Maj. Jordan Freeland

I and II, Korea, Vietnam and all of the more recent actions in the Middle East. Newsome and veteran Ken Parrish then laid the wreath at the Union County Veterans Memorial.

Newsome resumed the podium and explained the meaning of a small table set on the ground next

to the dais on which a place was set.

This was an honoring/remembrance of all of the nation's POW-MIA soldiers, the men who never made it home.

He concluded with thanks to members of the community who had made the American Legion



VFW Post 10082 Post and Auxiliary members- Pictured front row L to R Annie Pittman, Cynthia Whitehead, Barbara Fischer, and Margaret Reeves. Back row L to R Pops Brandt, Coleen Carroll, Eric Carroll, and Willie Wright.

scholarships possible.

U.S. Marine Sgt. Maj. (retired) Jordan Freeland was the guest speaker for the event. According to his biography in the program, Freeland began his military odyssey in Chaco, CA, in Feb. 1998 and retired in Sept. of 2020. His billets include Chief Scout Swimmer, Chief Scout Sniper, FAST Platoon Sergeant, Infantry Platoon Commander, Scout Sniper Platoon Commander, Foreign Advisor Team Commander, Chief SERE Instructor, Infantry Company First Sergeant, Marine Special Operations Company First Sergeant, Marine Special Operations Battalion Sergeant Major, Harrier Squadron Sergeant Major and Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion Sergeant Major.

Freeland spoke well and with humor about his branch of service, then grew serious (and emotionally affected) by giving a recounting or several American soldiers who lost their lives in recent military actions – talking about their families left behind.

“Not only do we honor our warriors, but we are also keeping

their spirit alive,” Freeland said. “I ask that all pray for the families, those who are hurt most. It is our responsibility as communities, Americans, and human beings to honor the fallen and see that they are never forgotten.”

After Freeland finished, Reagan resumed the podium, speaking about the internal conflicts in our country between the government and the military. He quoted a 1970 John Wayne production, made in support of the U.S. Armed Services, in which generals made the comment that the U.S. Congress “would not let us do our jobs.” He stressed the importance of this country's military, government, and people all being on the same page where the nation's security was at stake. He also pointed out that, for almost 50 years, the U.S. Military has been made up of volunteers.

“It has been almost 50 years since they abolished the draft,” Reagan said. “Those who serve today do so because they choose to serve.”

Reagan concluded his comments by thanking all who helped make the event possible,

including The Lake Butler Church of Christ (tables, chairs, and programs), the Lake Butler Woman's Club (refreshments and passing out the programs), Lake Butler Mayor David Stegall (online promotion of the event), UCHS JROTC (participation in the event), Sheriff Brad Whitehead and his deputies (for providing traffic control and event security), Lake Butler Cub and Boy Scout packs (participation in the event), Terry's Florals (for providing the wreath for the memorial) and the Lake Butler VFW (for providing the remembrance poppies).

The event concluded with the playing of “Taps” by Union County High School band member Nathan Pavlisko.

After the American Legion event, the action moved to the Lake Butler VFW Post, where members held an open house and lunch for anyone who wished to attend. About 20 people joined post members and members of the community for lunch and conversation.

FFA holds 83rd Awards Banquet

BY TRACY LEE TATE
Special to the Times

Lake Butler FFA held its annual Awards Banquet and ceremony Thursday, May 9, 2024 at the Union County High School auditorium. Most of both the Lake Butler Middle School and UCHS chapters were in attendance, along with many parents and members of the community. The Thursday night scheduling of the event may have hurt attendance a bit, as the number of attendees seemed lower this year, but the expected enthusiasm and spirit was as high as always. There were 400 FFA members present for the event.

Before the program began, as well as throughout the event, entertainment was provided by FFA members Vivian Hunt, Tucker Dortch, Kendyl Brannen and Saige Waters. UCHS JROTC presented the colors and Vivian Hunt sang the National Anthem. Senior Chapter President Tanner Connell and Junior Chapter President Saige Waters conducted the opening ceremony, then Connell welcomed his fellow members, the attendees, several guests (members of the district



Fila Perez was given the Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to the FFA.

staff, school board members and school administrators from UCHS and LBMS).

Connell and Waters then welcomed some special

guests that were to be made honorary members – persons who had shown themselves willing to advance agriculture education and the FFA that had



The State Champion Ag Sales Team. Team members will compete at the National FFA Convention in October. Pictured are (l-r): Sierra Mohl, Peyton Kilgore, Rebecca Langkau, Bailey Varnes and Sierra Bell. Not pictured: Gavin Kuhn.



The Food Science Team, ranked eighth in the state. Pictured are (l-r): Cailyn Boggs, Madison Starling, Shayna Durrance and Tanner Connell. Not pictured: Aubree Gay.

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rendered outstanding service to the organization, as voted on by the chapter members. These were Meagan Daniel, Tammy Wilkerson, Dianna Jackson and Andrew and Lori Augsburger. Each was introduced and the reasons they were chosen for honorary membership were given. All were welcomed to membership by chapter officers and awarded plaques commemorating their membership.

Next was the Distinguished Service Award, given to Fila Perez for his assistance to the chapters. Then the Blue and Gold Award was granted to Billy Ray Elixson of CDM. The award was accepted for Elixson by Paul Waters.

A representative of the Florida Farm Bureau was called to the stage to assist in the presentation of the Degree Pins to members who had earned them.

The first of the degrees is the Discovery Degree. Receiving a Discovery Degree pin were: Conner Atwater, Kullen Barnett, Delana Barton, Malachi Bennett, Ellie Boccanelli, Gabby Bradley, Bryson Bratcher, Autumn Burnette, Isaiah Cepeda, Tripp Connell, Gracie Crawford, Jackson Crawford, Melanie Elixson, Sophia Elixson, Arabella Gaultney, Bralyn Haight, Eric Hall, Emily Hann, Tenly Hardee, Canaan Harris, Rachel Harris, Harley Johnson, Jayden Johnson, Assyson Kelley, Ayden Klein, Kielee Leet, Taylor Lesch, Rylee

McDowall, Gracelyn McGee, Audrey Miller, Lindsey Nash, Fenix Norman, Tripp Norris, Owen Parrish, Za'miyah Pierce, Ridge Robinson, Kiptyn Shuler, Camryn Tempest, Weston Thompson, Riley Trowell, Presley Whitehead, William Wilkerson, Ashlyn Williams, Wyatt Wilson and Madison Woods. The Discovery pins given to each member were sponsored by Lake Butler Farm Center.

The next degree award was the Greenhand Degree, with the pins sponsored by Union County Farm Bureau. Recipients of the Greenhand Degree and pin were: Layla Alexander, Ezequiel Baker,

See FFA, next page



The Vet Science Team placed fourth in the state, while Shayna Durrance was the fifth high individual. Pictured are (l-r): Darby Andrews, Madison Starling, Shayna Durrance and Kali Tomlinson.

FFA

Continued from page 6

Jacee Box, Kendyl Brannen, Michaela Buckley, Naomi Coker, Lillie Conner, Jesse Davis, Tucker Dortch, Aubree Gay, Blayne Hendricks, Marcus Jefferson, Gabrielle Johnson, Mia Kent, Rebecca Langkou, Sierra Mohl, Carson Moss, Makenzie Radford, Rebekah Scott, Gavin Smith, Bayley Staier, Brady Tetstone, Jackson Thomas, Natalie Thames, Carsen Thomas, Cali Tomlinson, Grace Turknott, Madalynn Turknott, Brayden Williams, Malia Williams, Graysen Willis, Miley Wilson and Addison Wright.

The FFA Chapter pins, sponsored by Shatto Heating and Air, were then presented. Recipients were: Sierra Bell, Nolan Biegly, Landon Cason, Kierston Clemons, Jesse Davis, Jesse Dicks, Shayna Durrance, Delani Harden, Joseph Harris, Blayne Hendricks, Codi Huntley, Peyton Kilgore, Savannah Miller, Summer Shaw, Bailey Varnes, Bo Wilson, Macie Wilson and Addison Wright.

The Career Development Teams then took the spotlight. All of them competed and won at state and/or national competition.

The Ag Communications Team competed at the National level. The team had the highest media plan score in the nation. They brought home gold pins and are ranked as the Reserve National Champion Agricultural Communications Team. In addition, Madison Johnson placed fifth individually in the nation. Reagan Robinson had the highest score in both the test and practicum and was the high individual of the contest – making her a national champion.

The Middle School Chapter was represented by Bailey Varnes. Varnes placed second at the subdistrict contest. Emmy Vaughn represented the middle school chapter and won the subdistrict contest and placed third in the district contest.

Vivian Hunt represented the middle school in Extemporaneous Public Speaking, winning the subdistrict contest and placing second at the district contest. In the high school division, Tanner Connell competed at both the subdistrict and district level, placing third at the district competition.

The Middle School Chapter was represented in Creed Speaker competition by Jamie-Lynn Courson. She placed third at the subdistrict competition. The Senior Chapter was represented by Kendyl Brannen. Brannen placed at the subdistrict competition and took first place at the District level. He will represent the chapter at the state convention in June.

The Proficiency Awards are sponsored by Farm Credit of North Florida and Savannah Douglas. There are four recipients this year. They are: Cailynn Boggs – Equine Placement, Tanner Connell – Forage Production (Tanner is a state finalist), Peyton Kilgore – Feeder Swine and Reagan Robinson – Ag Education. All of the recipients received a medallion to honor their efforts.

The Carl Bielling Promise of Agriculture Award recognizes FFA members who have outstanding SAE projects and who hold the same values as the awards namesake did. Recipients of the award were: from the middle school – Jaime Lynn Courson (\$150) and from the high school – Joseph Harris (\$250).

Workhorse awards recognize the efforts of members who work to benefit the chapter. Each

receives a plaque, sponsored by Badcock Home Furnishings and more, Clay Electric, Jesse Bielling, Russell and Deborah Gordon and Spires IGA Grocery and a \$50 cash award, sponsored by Union Power, Allen and Carolyn Parrish, Hillandale, North Florida Custom Meats, Ashlyn Burtle, the Croft family, Brian Franzluebbbers, Jared Bielling, Daryl Brewer, Avery Roberts, Andrea Andrews Kinneman, Adam Burgess, Clay Electric, DLP Bank (Jennie Reed), Billy and Pam Woodington, Amanda James, Clint Williams, Ashley Osteen Brooks, Old Providence Farms (Shawn and Emily Newsom), Kyle and Taylor Parrish, Abi Ripplinger, Bielling Tire, Parrish Tractor Services (Branden Parrish) and Mary Parrish).

Workhorse award winners are: Noah Williams, Jesse Dicks, Riggs Davis, Kutter Durrance, Joseph Harris, Tanner Connell, Bo Wilson, Blayne Hendricks, Kody Stalnaker, Kendyl Brannen, Tucker Dortch, Saige Waters, Vivian Hunt, Tucker Williams, Mason Fassett, Cailyn Boggs, Bailey Varnes, Peyton Kilgore, Shayna Durrance, Bobbie Jo Montford, Bayley Staier, Sierra Bell, Madison Starling, Sierra Mohl, Jamie Lynn Courson, Hayden Robinson, Paislee Jo Stalnaker, Brylee Elixson, Gracelyn McGee, Rachel Harris and Addyson Kelley.

After ten years the annual poinsettia sale has become one of the primary sources of income for the chapters. High school members who sold more than 80 plants, thus winning the “Bub Cup” were: Peyton Kilgore, Mia Kent, Eva Whitehead, Abby Williams, Tanner Connell, Bobbie Jo Montford, Delani Harden, Gavin Smith, Jesse Davis and Sydney Box. The top five salesmen from both chapters received a certificate for their efforts. They are: first place with 264 plants – Peyton Kilgore; second place with 157 plants – Tanner Connell; third place with 150 plants – Bobbie Jo Montford; fourth place with 132 plants – Hayden Robinson and fifth place with 110 plants – Brylee Elixson.

Brittany McGee came to the podium to present the Outstanding Middle School Member awards. The winners are: Sixth grade member, receiving a \$50 check from the Bishop family, is Vivian Hunt; the Seventh grade member, receiving a \$50 check from Badcock, is Gracelyn McGee and the eighth grade member, receiving a \$50 check from TL Squared Builders, is Jamie Lynn Courson.

The Elite Eighth Grader award is given to a middle school student who has been involved in FFA since the sixth grade who has the most points on the chapter activities chart for their middle school career. Allen and Carolyn Parrish awarded this year’s recipient with a trophy and a \$100. That recipient was Jamie Lynn Courson.

The Outstanding Seniors awards are sponsored by Sheriff Brad Whitehead, Zeb and Georgie Howard and Kellie Rhoades. The winners are: (Ninth grade – 84 chapter points) Kendyl Brannen; (Tenth grade – 89 chapter points) Bailey Varnes; (Eleventh grade – 63 chapter points) Joseph Harris and (Twelfth grade – 112 chapter points) Tanner Connell. Each winner received a \$50 check from their sponsor.

Next in the program the Star awards were announced. Plaques were sponsored by Emerson Nursery and Rental Plants and a cash award was given by a sponsor. The Star Discovery Award, sponsored by Kyle and Taylor Parrish, went to Brylee Elixson. The Star Greenhand Award, sponsored by Bielling’s Tires, went to Bailey Varnes. The Star Chapter Degree, sponsored by Jason Stalnaker, went to Joseph Harris.

The Star Chapter Farmer Award, sponsored by Pritchett Trucking, went to Tanner Connell. The Star Agricultural Placement Award, sponsored by Roberts Land and Timber, went to Bobbie Jo Montford. The Star in Agribusiness Award, sponsored by Emerson Nursery and Rental Plants and Lavender House, went to Cailynn Boggs. The Star Agriscience Award, sponsored by the Dukes Family Farm and Emerson Nursery and Rental Plants, went to Peyton Kilgore.

Chapter scholarships are awarded to both junior and senior chapter members. From the middle school chapter, a pin and a check for \$50 from Pritchett Trucking went to Brylee Elixson; a pin and a \$50 check from Terra Johnson went to Rachel Harris and, a pin and a \$50 check from Brandon Parrish went to Addyson Kelley. In the senior chapter, a pin and a \$50 check from Clay Electric went to Rylie Parrish; a pin and a \$50 check from the Bishop Family went to Kendyl Brannen and a pin and \$50 check from Seth Parrish went to Jolena Rogers. In the high school chapter, Tanner Connell received a pin and a check from Caleb Waters; Cailynn Boggs received a pin and a check from Becky Raulerson; Bailey Varnes received a pin and a check from Carlton Faulk and Kendyl Brannen received a pin and a check from Jesse Bielling.

Seniors earning the Senior Emblem Award, who were recognized with an FFA letter were: Tanner Connell, Cailynn Boggs, Noah Williams, Ryleigh Rhoden, Bobbie Jo Montford, Lyndee Griffis, Rylie Parrish, Sydney Box, Kody Stalnaker, Jordan Hendricks, Hunter Merritt, Karli Jenkins and Calli Morrow.

State FFA Degrees are the highest honor bestowed by the

state and go to the graduating seniors that have contributed the most to the chapters throughout their career. Graduates earning their State Degrees are Cailynn Boggs, Tanner Connell and Bobbie Jo Montford.

The Superior Senior Award was sponsored by Audyn Woodington and Ashlyn Burtle, who provided a trophy and \$200. This award was won by Tanner Connell.

Next came the scholarships. The Harlis Ellington Memorial Scholarship was presented to Noah Williams. The Alice Griffis Ellington Scholarship was awarded to Tanner Connell. The Mary Alice Ellington Scholarship was awarded to Chrissy Quiett. The American Degree Recognition in Memory of Larry Davison was awarded to Keeley Durrance. The Lori Nicole Anderson Memorial Scholarships were awarded to Bobbie Jo Montford, Lyndee Griffis and Noah Williams. Winners of the Wild Turkey Federation Scholarships were Noah Williams, Chrissy Quiett and Bryson Huggins. The winner of the National FFA Scholarship was Tanner Connell. The Daniel Elixson Memorial Scholarships went to Cailyn Boggs, Morgyn Kirby and Karli Jenkins. The Ciara Kearns Memorial Scholarship was granted to Sydney Box. The Summer Crosby Memorial Scholarship were given to Lyndee Griffis and Rylie Parrish. The Hobo Tractor Scholarship was given to Cailyn Boggs and Karli Jenkins. The Workhorse Scholarship was given to Noah Williams.

The last recognition of the evening was the Inaugural Servant Leadership Scholarship, sponsored by Jace Bielling, Will Harden and Li Hendricks in the amount of \$500. Cailynn Boggs was selected to be the first

recipient of this scholarship. The evening concluded with the recognition of officers from both chapters, a slide show showing highlights from the 23-24 year and a closing ceremony by the Senior Chapter officers.

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

Briana Roshae Aaron, 34, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for possession of drug equipment, possession of cocaine, and destroying evidence.

Gordon Wayne Baker, 60, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 22 for an out-of-county warrant.

Ernest Lee Bates, 45, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 18 for a probation violation.

Ryan Edward Davis, 33, of Brooker, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 24 for battery.

James Clayton Gibbs, 63, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for possession of cocaine.

Danwandre Zikell Green, 24, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for selling cocaine and possession of cocaine.

Joshua Brian Gunter, 32, of Hampton, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for driving with a suspended or revoked license, resisting an officer, possession of drugs, and destroying evidence.

Travis Ryan Horn, 31, of Raiford, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 23 for arson.

Brandy Fawn Knight, 35, of Lawtey, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for fraud-impersonation.

Wallace Lee, 73, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for possession of cocaine and selling cocaine.

Ciara Latrice Montgomery, 39, of Jacksonville, was arrested by FHP troopers on May 18 for out-of-county warrants.

Christina Elaine Parker, 36, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for possession of opium, selling opium, and trafficking in drugs.

Michael Wayne Smith, 43, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 22 for smuggling contraband into prison and possession of drugs.

Alexandra Rebecca Starling, 32, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 21 for possession of drug equipment, possession of cocaine, and possession of drugs.

Gary Joseph Tague, 42, of Middleburg, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 23 for DUI.

David Fernando Valdez, 36, of Port St. Lucie, was arrested by FHP troopers on May 19 for an out-of-county warrant, vehicle theft, and driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Frederick Alonzo Whitehead, 58, of Saint Augustine, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 20 for withholding support.

Tomas Edward Witcherman, 40, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by FHP troopers on May 21 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Loni Latrelle Wilcox, 28, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on May 24 for aggravated battery.

Union

Leah Annette Brunson, 23, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Union deputies on May 20 for smuggling contraband into a prison.

Blake Curtis Cook, 36, of Lake City, was arrested by Union deputies on May 21 for a probation violation.

Willie Michael Hill, 65, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Union deputies on May 20 for a probation violation.

Mario Magdaleno Molina, 51, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Union deputies on May 22 for domestic battery by strangulation.

Jacob James Walker, 33, of Lake City, was arrested by Union deputies on May 27 for domestic battery by strangulation.

Clay

Randall Jordan Fincher, 64, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on May 23 for domestic battery.

Russell Neal Hatcher, 43, of Melrose, was arrested by Clay deputies on May 24 for battery on a person 65 years of age or older.

Michael Joseph Jarosz, 19, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on May 21 for burglary and vandalism.

David Lee Littles, 56, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on May 20 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Louis Elmer Platt, 35, of Melrose, was arrested by Clay deputies on May 18 for failure to appear.

Republicans welcome leaders, public to dinner

Join the Bradford County Republican Party on Saturday, June 22, 2024, for an evening with Senator Rick Scott, Congresswoman Kat Cammack, and State Representative Chuck Brannan at the Woman’s Club of Starke beginning at 6 p.m. Location is 201 N. Walnut St. in Starke.

Dinner will include a 10 oz. ribeye, potato, green beans, roll, side salad and dessert, with tea, coffee and water. Tickets are \$65 and are payable by personal check, cashier’s check or money order made out to BCREC. Mailing address is P.O. Box 213, Starke, FL 32091. If you mail a check your tickets will be available for pick up at the door.

Seating is limited. Purchase of a ticket is a donation to the Bradford Republican Party and is not refundable. For tickets contact BCREC Treasurer Donna Solze at 904-364-6076.

Solicitations in connection with this event are made by Bradford County Republican Party and are not made by any federal officeholder.

RUSS WADE

Attorney at Law

620 East Main Street
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Remembering law enforcement's heroes

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Violet Forgette

Violet Louise Forgette, 100, of Starke, died Sunday, May 26, 2024, at North Florida Regional Hospital in Gainesville.

Survivors are her children, Marvinna Steadman and Daniel (Ann) Stallings; son-in-law, Mike Dyer; sister-in-law, Elnora Pinner; four grandchildren; and many extended family members.

A Celebration of Life will be held Thursday, May 30, at 10 a.m. at Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel. The family will receive friends at the funeral home an hour prior to the service.

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



Marilyn Herring

Marilyn C. "Mickey" Medlock Herring born Oct. 16, 1933, passed away Thursday, May 23, 2024.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, May 31, from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. at Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel.

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

Tony Luke

Tony "Big T" Luke, beloved husband, father, son, brother, uncle, and friend, passed away on Friday, May 24, 2024, at Haven Hospice Lake City after showing incredible, bravery, strength, and courage during an eight-year battle with cancer. He was born on July 20, 1970, in Starke to Gary and Faye Luke. Tony was a man who never met a stranger and his heart of gold shone through in every interaction. His warm personality endeared him to all who knew him. He had a knack for teasing his loved ones in a way that always brought laughter and joy to their lives. He graduated from Union County High School in 1988 and went straight to work. Starting his professional career at Sysco, the family business, Homes of Merit, and finally as a warehouse supervisor for US Cold Storage for 10 years. His hard-work ethic and dedication made him a valuable employee anywhere he went. Outside of work, he found solace in the great outdoors. He had a passion for hunting and fishing. He embraced any activity that took him outside, camping, or near the water. He enjoyed riding his side-by-side vehicle with friends and he delighted in grilling delicious meals for his family.

He leaves behind his loving wife of 19 years, Debbie Burns Luke; his son, Cody Luke; as well as his parents, Gary and Faye Luke. He is also survived by his sister, Sherry (Robert) Shoup; nephew, Brandon (Kassie) Shoup and their children, Kennedy Castleberry and Gunner Shoup; along with brother-in-law, Robb (Paula) Burns; nieces, Heather (Trevor) Touchton, Hannah Burns; and many other aunts, uncles, and cousins.

A visitation to honor his life took place on Tuesday, May 28, at Johnstown Baptist Church in Lake Butler. This was followed by a funeral service. He was laid to rest immediately following the service at Mt. Zion/Swift Creek Cemetery. Services were officiated by Carl Olin.

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



PAID OBITUARY

Card of Thanks

Family of

Katrina (Kathy) Y. James

Words cannot express the gratitude our family has for everyone who took the time to express their sympathy, kindness and love during our difficult time of loss of our family member, Katrina James. The love you all possess for Katrina and our family is so evident and heartwarming. We deeply appreciate the shower of visits, meals, cards, floral arrangements and donations on her behalf. We feel your thoughts and prayers.

Thank you once again!

Family of Katrina (Kathy) Y. James

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Owner/Funeral Director



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Laura Crews
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Dedication. Courage. Selflessness.

Bradford County Sheriff Gordon Smith used those words to describe the type of people who choose law enforcement as a career — a career that can be dangerous and result in the ultimate sacrifice of giving one's life to serve one's community.

Law-enforcement personnel from Bradford and Union counties as well as local Florida Department of Corrections personnel gathered at Starke's Northside Baptist Church on May 23 to pay their respects to their fallen comrades during the 31st annual Bradford-Union Law-Enforcement Memorial.

"Today, we honor the memories of those brave individuals who gave their lives in the line of duty, and we offer our deepest gratitude to their families and loved ones for their unwavering support and sacrifice," said Smith, who was the event's keynote speaker. "Let us unite in solidarity to pay tribute to those fallen heroes and reaffirm our commitment to upholding the values of justice, integrity and service that they exemplified."

During his welcome to begin the service, Bradford County Emergency Management Director Brad Witt asked those in attendance to reflect on the words of John 15:13 (English Standard Version): "Greater love have no man than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

"Our heroes have shown us the true meaning of these words," Witt said. "It is our duty to ensure that their memories live on, both in our hearts and continued service."

Smith said no career in the U.S. is tougher than law enforcement, which he said also includes "our brothers and sisters in corrections, who, a lot of times, our legislators seem to forget, but we don't, and we will not."

The memorial service included a roll call of the 34 Bradford and Union law-enforcement and corrections personnel who died while in the line of duty from 1885 through the present. Smith said their sacrifices are a cause to grieve, but not despair.

"Unlike most other careers, the brave men and women who embark on a life in law enforcement know fully that they may one day be called upon to lay down their lives in the call of duty," Smith said. "This isn't



Pastor Paul Samson Jr. sings the national anthem. Behind him (l-r) are Bradford Sheriff Gordon Smith, Union Sheriff Brad Whitehead and Lawtey Police Chief Jerry Feltner. Smith, Whitehead and Feltner participated in the roll call — the reading aloud of Bradford and Union law-enforcement personnel (including those in corrections) who died while in the line of duty from 1885 to the present.

just a profession. It is a calling. Those we honor tonight made that choice willingly. Indeed, they embraced it. That is why their ultimate sacrifice means so much. They served and sacrificed for a purpose far greater than themselves.

"I can think of no truer definition of a hero."

The roll call was performed by Union Sheriff Brad Whitehead, Lawtey Police Chief Jerry Feltner, Bradford Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy Brad Smith and Florida Department of Corrections Region 2 Director John Palmer. Prior to its start, Whitehead mentioned Union deputies Hal Croft and Ronald Jackson.

"First, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention May 23, 1961 — 63 years ago — in Union County, two young men were serving a felony warrant in Raiford on a house and were both gunned down," Whitehead said.

The Union County Sheriff's Office posts on social media every May 23 in remembrance of the two deputies. Whitehead said they're never forgotten, but posting about their sacrifice every year "brings it back to life."

"You realize the severity of what those family members have gone through," Whitehead said.

The roll call consisted of the following:

- Sheriff George W. Epperson, Dec. 25, 1885.
- Sheriff Henry W. Epperson, Jan. 20, 1890.
- Sheriff David Levy Alvarez, May 30, 1891.
- Deputy Andrew J. Kite, Feb. 21, 1899.



Also participating in the roll call were (l-r) Bradford County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy Brad Smith, Florida Department of Corrections Region 2 Director John Palmer and BCSO Chief of Operations George Konkel.



Presenting the colors for the pledge and the national anthem are Bradford County Sheriff's Office honor guard members (l-r) Cpl. Lakiesha Lewis, Detective Zach Jones and deputies Chris Gardiner and David Bukowski.

- Starke Marshal Jeff Jones, Nov. 19, 1903.
- Lawtey Marshal Henry Richarde, Nov. 19, 1903.
- Sheriff Everette E. Johns, Dec. 6, 1905.
- Sheriff Joe A. Bennett, Aug. 6, 1907.
- Sheriff J.W. Langford, Aug. 23, 1912.
- Deputy Sheriff W.T. Andrews, 1914.
- Constable Richard Bennett, March 30, 1921.
- Police Officer Leonard E. Colson, 1951.
- Assistant Superintendent James G. Godwin, April 4, 1955.
- Police Officer William Burtis Jackson, April 20, 1956.
- Deputy Sheriff Hal Croft, May 23, 1961.
- Deputy Sheriff Ronald Jackson, May 23, 1961.
- Correctional Officer Howard D. Starling, July 4, 1964.
- Correctional Officer Julie Gabor Caddell, Sept. 22, 1974.
- Correctional Officer Paul Jordan, Jan. 24, 1976.
- Correctional Officer Charlie T. Foster, Nov. 27, 1976.
- Correctional Officer Richard Burke, Oct. 12, 1980.
- Correctional Officer John S. Dennard, May 5, 1983.
- Deputy Sheriff Hesley D. Griffis, May 13, 1992.
- Correctional Officer Jerome A. Williams, July 26, 1995.
- Correctional Officer William H. Shaw, July 18, 1998.
- Deputy Sheriff Renee D. Azure, Aug. 6, 2002.
- Correctional Officer Adam Sanderson, March 6, 2009.
- Correctional Officer Timothy Forehand, July 2, 2021.
- Correctional Officer Joanie Miller, July 8, 2021.
- Sgt. Col. Abraham, July 15, 2021.
- Sgt. Charles McKinney, July 18, 2021.
- Correctional Officer Donnie Orman, July 30, 2021.
- Sgt. Lawrence Scott, Aug. 4, 2021.
- Correctional Officer Sandra Crews, Aug. 7, 2021.

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See HEROES, page 11

Indians defeat Panthers, Rams in spring jamboree

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Dan@BcTelegraph.com

Keystone Heights outpaced Interlachen 28-14 in the first half of its spring football jamboree in Orange Park and outscored host Ridgeview 7-0 in two more quarters.

The Indians' outing got off to an inauspicious start against the Rams when Interlachen scored on an 80-yard pass play to open the half.

Keystone Coach Steve Reynolds said his defensive back in coverage had his eyes on the wrong spot.

"And then you watch the same kid a couple plays later make a tremendous pass breakup, learning from rep after rep after rep of being in the game," Reynolds said. "Sometimes it

takes something like that to wake you up and realize, all right, look, man, you know what to do. Just go out there and have fun and execute."

The Indians battled back against the Putnam County team, keyed on the running of Colton Hollingsworth and Zane Leger.

Jackson Parmeter also stood out with a 60-yard reception and a touchdown-saving interception.

Reynolds said watching his players take on two teams in after weeks of intrasquad scrimmages was enjoyable.

"I thought we had a great spring," he said. "I thought the kids caught onto the concepts and the installation that we put in, and watching them play was a lot of fun."

Reynolds said one priority for



Jackson Parmeter made big plays as a receiver and as a defensive back. Photo: Sally Jackson.

him this spring was to see which skilled players would fill the void left by graduating seniors.

"We lost quite a few receivers and defensive backs, and we needed to find a running back," the coach said. "So, watching our skill group develop and then come alive in the game and play so well was really good."

Reynolds added that quarterback Baylor Ford continues to develop, particularly when facing pressure from incoming linemen.

"He's not looking at the pass rush," Reynolds said. "He's feeling it. He reads the coverages quicker and better now. His development has come along nicely. We're pleased."

The coach also said his seasoned offensive line played well, anchored by center Bryce Daniels.

He added that lineman Jackson Herman has been a varsity

Keystone Head Coach Steve Reynolds said quarterback Baylor Ford (right) continues to develop, particularly when facing pressure from incoming linemen. Photo: Sally Jackson.



contributor to some extent on both sides of the ball since he was a freshman.

"His leadership, his commitment and dedication are shown every day," the coach said of Herman. "And then you've got these guys like Pete

Bostic and Luke Bacorn, Bryce Daniels, Jackson Faul and Teddy Westbrook. We've got a lot of really, really good players. And then we got some good backups that can come in and help out if they need to."



LEFT: UCHS graduate Leah Clark drove in a team-high 77 runs for the College of Central Florida this season and led the team in five other categories. BELOW: KHHS graduate Emma Rogel was in the top five in five offensive categories for CCF.

Clark, Rogel earn 1st-team softball honors

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

College of Central Florida softball players Leah Clark, a freshman infielder, and Emma Rogel, a sophomore catcher, were announced as first-team All-Citrus Conference selections.

Clark, a 2023 Union County High School graduate, batted .420, which ranked her third on the team. She led the Patriots in RBI (77), home runs (16), triples (8), slugging percentage (.819), runs scored (85) and walks (32). Clark was second in doubles (13) and stolen bases (45) and third in on-base percentage (.515).

Rogel, a 2022 Keystone Heights High School graduate, batted .367, which was seventh on the team. She was fourth in RBI (38), runs scored (44) and on-base percentage (.445) and fifth in doubles (8) and walks (19).

The two players have had big moments in the Patriots' last five regular-season games.

See **SOFTBALL**, page 12



Duty Owens Family Scholarship Recipients



2024 Keystone Heights High School graduates who received the Duty-Owens Family Scholarship are:

From left to right: Kolby Thomas – \$2,000; Jaden Park – \$500; Ashley Nugent – \$1,000; and Amber Cunningham – \$500.

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The Duty Owens Family Scholarship



VeRonica R. Owens, Esquire

The Duty Owens Family Scholarship, also known as the "D.O." Scholarship, was founded in 2011 by attorney, VeRonica R. Owens, and the Duty and Owens families. The D.O. Scholarship started as a small seed that VeRonica and her family planted the year after she opened her private law practice in Keystone Heights, the goal of which was to honor her grandparents, Earnest and Frances Duty and Woodrow and Lena Owens, who reflected the grit and determination found in James 1:22, "Be ye *doers* of the Word."

In its first year, the scholarship presented three awards at three area high schools, and over the last fourteen years, the D.O. Scholarship has grown in its participation and reach. Members of the Duty and Owens families from Florida, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Nebraska joined together to grow the fund and honor their living, thriving heritage of hard work, faith in Christ, and dedication to future generations. They truly believe that they sit in the shade of trees planted long ago. As of 2024, VeRonica and her family have awarded over \$65,000.00 in scholarships to 164 deserving seniors at eight Florida high schools and one Virginia high school, located in the hometown of VeRonica's parents, Ron and Rose Owens.

VeRonica was the Keystone Heights High School's class of 2002 salutatorian, and went on to attend Florida State University and later obtain her Juris Doctor in 2009. She is married to her law school sweetheart, Peter Penrod, who has recently joined her practice after nearly fifteen years working for the State of Florida, the Governor's Office, and Florida's Chief Financial Officer. They have five spirited children, Peter II (age 10), Evangelena (age 8), Margarete (age 7), Francena (age 5), and Christiane (age 2). VeRonica is proud to serve throughout the State of Florida and has established offices in Keystone Heights, Middleburg, and Tallahassee. VeRonica is a Florida Supreme Court Certified Family and Circuit Mediator and has her certification in Elder Mediation. Her prayer is to serve her communities in accordance with Micah 6:8, "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God."

Tripp Davis having strong postseason

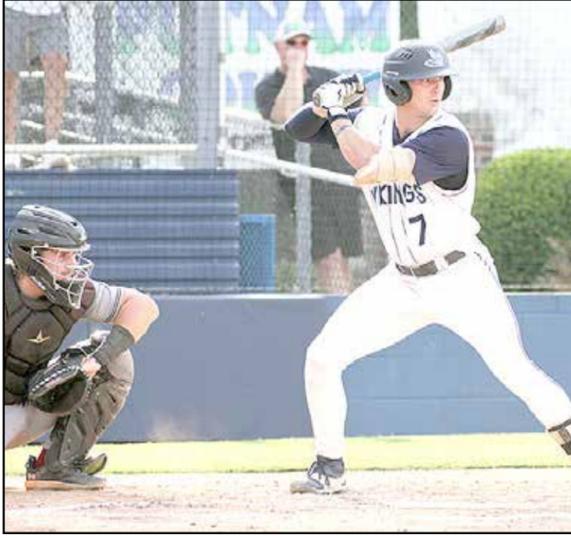
BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Tripp Davis, a 2022 Union County High School graduate, batted .462 in eight postseason games for the St. Johns River State College baseball team, which is currently competing in the National Junior College Athletic Association Division II World Series.

The Vikings (40-23) won their first two World Series games and played Louisiana State University at Eunice this past Tuesday.

St. Johns' postseason began with a 3-1 performance in the Florida College System Activities Association Division II/NJCAA Region 8 tournament, resulting in the Vikings' second straight state championship. Davis batted .416 in the four games, driving in five runs.

Davis scored two runs in St. Johns' first game, a 12-2 win over Palm Beach State on May 2. In the Vikings' next game, a 7-1 win over South Florida State on May 3, he went 2 for 3 with a double and an RBI, which occurred on a sacrifice fly in a five-run third inning that put the Vikings ahead



Tripp Davis, a 2022 Union County High School graduate, is currently playing in the NJCAA Division II World Series with St. Johns River State College. He leads the Vikings with a .394 batting average. Photo: St. Johns River State Athletics.

5-0. St. Johns was then defeated 7-4 by South Florida State on May 4. Davis went 2 for 3 with a double, two runs scored and an RBI. The Vikings were trailing 2-0 when

Davis hit a run-scoring double in the second. He later scored on a single to even it up at 2-2.

Davis drove in three runs in an 11-8 win over South Florida State to wrap up the championship on

May 5. He drove in a run on a sacrifice fly that left his team trailing 3-2 in the third.

The Vikings led 9-5 when Davis hit a two-run single in the bottom of the seventh.

St. Johns swept Coastal Alabama in the NJCAA South District tournament, earning the right to advance to the World Series. The Vikings opened with a 7-6 win on May 10, with Davis going 2 for 4. On May 11, St. Johns won 7-1, with Davis going 1 for 3 with an RBI. He also scored a run.

The World Series, which is being played in Enid, Oklahoma, began on May 25. St. Johns won its opening round game, defeating Westchester Community College (Valhalla, New York) 12-0. Davis went 2 for 3 with a triple, two RBI and a run scored.

On May 26, Davis went 2 for 4 with a double and run scored in a 12-4 win over Heartland Community College (Normal, Illinois).

For the season, Davis is batting a team-high .394. He's second in on-base percentage (.489), fourth in slugging percentage (.560) and seventh in RBI (25).



Dakota State's Hannah McFarland, a BHS graduate, earned first-team all-conference honors and a Gold Glove Award for defense. Photo: Dakota State University Athletics.

McFarland earns Gold Glove and conference honors

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Hannah McFarland, a 2022 Bradford High School graduate, was one of three Dakota State University players honored at the North Star Athletic Association softball awards ceremony.

McFarland, a sophomore, was a first-team all-conference selection as an outfielder, while also receiving a Gold Glove Award after a season in which she had a perfect fielding percentage, with 79 put-outs and three assists. She started in

center field in all 39 games.

The BHS alumnus led Dakota State in batting average (.387), on-base percentage (.497), slugging percentage (.478), walks (23), runs scored (35) and stolen bases (26). She also hit nine doubles, which was second on the team.

McFarland was third in the North Star Athletic Association in batting and led the conference in stolen bases.

One of her season highlights

See HONORS, page 11

Legal Notices

Legals for the week of May 30, 2024

BRADFORD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE
To satisfy the owner's storage lien, KO Storage LLC will sell at public sale on June 19, 2024. The personal property in the below-listed units, which may include but are not limited to: Household goods, boxes/totes/bags, clothing, bedding, tools and toys. The public sale of these items will begin at 10AM on June 12, 2024 and end at 2PM on June 19, 2024. The public sale will take place on www.storage treasures.com. KO Storage of Starke - S Walnut St, 1650 South Walnut Street, Starke FL 32091, (952) 314-7121 Time: 02:00PM CST A45, Hurlbert, Monica, B23, Shell, Curtis, B46, Blake, Alfreda, B57, Bowen, Shaundolin Public sale terms, rules, and regulations will be made available on www.storage treasures.com. All sales are subject to cancellation. We reserve the right to refuse any bid. Payment must be by credit/debit card, we do not accept checks or cash. Buyers must secure the units with their own personal locks. To claim tax-exempt status, original RESALE certificates for each space purchased is required. By KO Storage LLC, 10301 Wayzata Blvd, Minnetonka, MN 55305. (952)-314-7121. 5/23 2tchg 5/30-BCT

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF BRADFORD COUNTY, FLORIDA

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of County Commissioners of Bradford County, Florida shall hold a public hearing on Tuesday, June 4th, 2024 at 9:30 A.M., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the Board of County Commissioners Chambers at the Bradford County Courthouse, located at 945 N. Temple Avenue in Starke, Florida, to consider the exercise of its authority pursuant to Chapter 336, Florida Statutes, to close and abandon the following:
A 30 foot platted street running North and South thru Lots 54, 55, 58 & 59 of Woodlawn, Plat Book 1, Page 17 of the public records of Bradford County, Florida and lying South of NE 247th St., a County Maintained Road, East of State Road 200/US Highway 301 and West of CSX Transportation Railroad in Section 12, Township 5 South, Range 22 East, Bradford County, Florida.

AND
A 30 foot platted street, lying in Woodlawn, Plat Book 1, Page 17 of the public records of Bradford County, Florida, with the centerline being the Southerly boundary of Section 12, Township 5 South Range 22 East and the Northerly boundary of Section 13, Township 5 South, Range 22 East, and lying in Lots 57 & 58 of said Section 12 and Lots 7 & 8 of said Section 13, all lying East of State Road 200/US Highway 301 and West of CSX Transportation Railroad, Bradford County, Florida.

Copies of materials related to this public hearing may be obtained by any member of the public at the Office of the Zoning Department, located at 945 North Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida, during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, exclusive of holidays, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00

P.M.. On the date, time and place first above mentioned, all interested persons may appear and be heard with respect to this matter. The public hearing may be continued to one or more future dates. Any interested party shall be advised that the date, time and place of any continuation of the public hearing shall be announced during the public hearing and that no further notice concerning the matter will be published. All persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at the public hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Persons with disabilities who require assistance to participate in the meeting are requested to notify the Clerk of the Court, Bradford County Courthouse, Starke, Florida, 904-966-6280 at least two business days in advance; if you are hearing or voice impaired call 1-800-955-8771. 5/30 1tchg-BCT

PUBLIC NOTICE
Bradford County Solid Waste Collection Sites will be closed, June 6, 2024, from 11:45 PM to allow attendants to participate in the Bradford County Employee Appreciation Day. Sites will reopen at 2:00 PM. 5/30 1tchg-BCT

UNION

IN THE COUNTY COURT, EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA.
CASE NO.: 63-2024-CC-0010
CLYATT WELL DRILLING, INC., a Florida Profit Corporation
Plaintiff,

vs.
TATE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES LLC, a Florida Limited Liability Company
Defendant

NOTICE OF ACTION
TATE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES LLC, c/o REGISTERED AGENT: JAMES GABRIEL 20536 NW 20TH TERRACE BROOKER, FL 32622
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED of the filing of a Complaint against you for monies owed to the Plaintiff, CLYATT WELL DRILLING, INC.
You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, on M. Aaron Dukes, the Plaintiffs' attorney, whose address is Post Office Box 328, Lake Butler, Florida 32054, on or before the 17th day of June, 2024, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court either immediately before service on Plaintiffs' attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint. **DATED** this 10th day of May, 2024.
KELLIE H. RHOADES
Clerk of the Circuit Court
BY: C. NORMAN
Deputy Clerk

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Notice

If you are a person with a disability who needs an accommodation in order to access court facilities or participate in a court proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator, Alachua County Family and Civil Justice Center, 201 East University

Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601 (352-337-6237) at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days. If you are hearing or voice-impaired, call 1-800-955-8770 via Florida Relay Service. If you are deaf or hard of hearing and require an ASL interpreter or an assisted listening device to participate in a proceeding, please contact Court Interpreting at interpreter@circuit8.org
Published in: Union County Times
On (dates): 5/16, 5/23, 5/30 and 6/6/2024
5/16 4tchg 6/6-UCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
Family Law Division
Case No.: 2024-DR-0029
IN RE: THE MATTER OF: THE TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS FOR BRAXTON WESLEY DAVIS

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR PUBLICATION

TO: BRIAN WESLEY DAVIS
ADDRESS UNKNOWN
YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for Termination of Parental Rights has been filed against you. You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to this action on Brian M. Monk, Esq., of Monk Law Group PLLC, Petitioner/Mother's attorney, whose address is 1102 South Florida Avenue, Suite 111, Lakeland, Florida 33803, on or before June 17, 2024, and file the original with the Clerk of this court at Union County Courthouse, 55 West Main Street #1654, Lake Butler, Florida 32054, either before service on Petitioner/Mother's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition. **WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.**
DATED this 9th day of May, 2024.
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
C. NORMAN
Deputy Clerk
For Publication in:
Union County, Florida
Bradford County, Florida
Gilchrist County, Florida
5/23 4tchg 6/13-UCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA.
CIVIL DIVISION
CASE NO. 23000011CAAXMX
U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF 2 ACQUISITION TRUST, Plaintiff,
vs.
LLOYD S. HEDMAN, JR. A/K/A LLOYD S. HEDMAN A/K/A LLOYD HEDMAN A/K/A LLOYD SONDEE HEDMAN, JR.; TAMMY J. HEDMAN A/K/A TAMMY B. HEDMAN A/K/A TAMMY HEDMAN; UNKNOWN TENANT NO. 1; UNKNOWN TENANT NO. 2; and ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING INTERESTS BY, THROUGH, UNDER OR AGAINST A NAMED DEFENDANT TO THIS ACTION, OR HAVING OR CLAIMING TO HAVE ANY RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST IN THE

PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED, Defendant(s).
RE-NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 45
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to an Order or Summary Final Judgment of foreclosure dated January 17, 2024 and an Order Resetting Sale dated May 08, 2024 and entered in Case No. 23000011CAAXMX of the Circuit Court in and for Union County, Florida, wherein U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF 2 ACQUISITION TRUST is Plaintiff and LLOYD S. HEDMAN, JR. A/K/A LLOYD S. HEDMAN A/K/A LLOYD SONDEE HEDMAN, JR.; TAMMY J. HEDMAN A/K/A TAMMY B. HEDMAN A/K/A TAMMY HEDMAN; UNKNOWN TENANT NO. 1; UNKNOWN TENANT NO. 2; and ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING INTERESTS BY, THROUGH, UNDER OR AGAINST A NAMED DEFENDANT TO THIS ACTION, OR HAVING OR CLAIMING TO HAVE ANY RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED, are Defendants. I will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash on the Front Steps of the Union County Courthouse, 55 West Main Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054, 11:00 a.m., on July 18, 2024, the following described property as set forth in said Order or Final Judgment, to-wit:
PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING SITUATE IN SECTION 8, TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 18 EAST, UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:
COMMENCE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 8, AND RUN S. 02°25'03" E. ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION 8 A DISTANCE OF 913.81 FEET; THENCE RUN N. 86°45'38" E. A DISTANCE OF 71.48 FEET TO THE INTERSECTION WITH THE EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF COUNTY ROAD NO. S-245 AND TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED PARCEL OF LAND; THENCE CONTINUE RUNNING N. 86°45'38" E. A DISTANCE OF 195.43 FEET; THENCE RUN S. 05°33'50" E. A DISTANCE OF 390.19 FEET TO THE INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF COUNTY ROAD NO. S-241-A; THENCE RUN S. 86°44'06" W. ALONG SAID NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE A DISTANCE OF 190.34 FEET TO THE POINT OF CURVATURE OF A CURVE TO THE RIGHT; THENCE RUN NORTHWESTERLY, CONTINUING ALONG SAID NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF COUNTY ROAD NO. S-241-A, AND ALONG THE EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF COUNTY ROAD NO. S-245, ALONG THE ARC OF A CURVE CONCAVE NORTHEASTERLY AND HAVING A RADIUS OF 50.00 FEET, THROUGH A CENTRAL ANGLE OF 94°57'00"; AN ARC DISTANCE OF 82.86 FEET, SAID ARC BEING SUBTENDED BY A CHORD HAVING A BEARING OF N. 45°47'24" W. AND A DISTANCE OF 73.70 FEET, TO THE POINT OF TANGENCY; THENCE RUN N. 01°41'06" E. CONTINUING ALONG SAID EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE, A DISTANCE OF 336.91 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, LYING AND BEING SITUATE IN UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA. ~
TOGETHER WITH THAT CERTAIN DOUBLE WIDE MOBILE HOME DESCRIBED AS 1998 MERI, #S FLHMLCB135917048A & B, TITLE

PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED, Defendant(s).

RE-NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 45
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to an Order or Summary Final Judgment of foreclosure dated January 17, 2024 and an Order Resetting Sale dated May 08, 2024 and entered in Case No. 23000011CAAXMX of the Circuit Court in and for Union County, Florida, wherein U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF 2 ACQUISITION TRUST is Plaintiff and LLOYD S. HEDMAN, JR. A/K/A LLOYD S. HEDMAN A/K/A LLOYD SONDEE HEDMAN, JR.; TAMMY J. HEDMAN A/K/A TAMMY B. HEDMAN A/K/A TAMMY HEDMAN; UNKNOWN TENANT NO. 1; UNKNOWN TENANT NO. 2; and ALL UNKNOWN PARTIES CLAIMING INTERESTS BY, THROUGH, UNDER OR AGAINST A NAMED DEFENDANT TO THIS ACTION, OR HAVING OR CLAIMING TO HAVE ANY RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED, are Defendants. I will sell to the highest and best bidder for cash on the Front Steps of the Union County Courthouse, 55 West Main Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054, 11:00 a.m., on July 18, 2024, the following described property as set forth in said Order or Final Judgment, to-wit:
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TOGETHER WITH THAT CERTAIN DOUBLE WIDE MOBILE HOME DESCRIBED AS 1998 MERI, #S FLHMLCB135917048A & B, TITLE

#S 71559242 AND 71559241
ANY PERSON CLAIMING AN INTEREST IN THE SURPLUS FROM THE SALE, IF ANY, OTHER THAN THE PROPERTY OWNER AS OF THE DATE OF THE LIS PENDENS MUST FILE A CLAIM BEFORE THE CLERK REPORTS THE SURPLUS AS UNCLAIMED. THE COURT, IN ITS DISCRETION, MAY ENLARGE THE TIME OF THE SALE. NOTICE OF THE CHANGED TIME OF SALE SHALL BE PUBLISHED AS PROVIDED HEREIN.
DATED at Lake Butler, Florida, on May 15, 2024.
KELLIE HENDRICKS RHOADES
As Clerk, Circuit Court
BY: C. NORMAN
As Deputy Clerk
Diaz Anselmo & Associates, P.A.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
P.O. BOX 19519
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33318
Telephone: (954) 564-0071
Service E-mail: answers@dallegal.com
Publish in: Union County Times
5/23 2tchg 5/30-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 June 1, 2024 at 12:00 am on Lockerfox.com. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods and furnishings.
Unit #82 Daffaney Jones \$335.60
Unit #48 Shannon Hill \$436.76
Unit #999 Sherrie Anderson \$295.00
Unit #12 Katheryn Morabito \$276.56
Unit #14 Kristin Parker \$115.10
Unit #54 Kiara K. Randolph \$205.88
Unit #27 Tashona Jackson \$115.10
Unit #24 Ana Wise \$161.02
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.
5/23 2tchg 5/30-UCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROBATE DIVISION
File No. 63-2024-CP-018
Division Probate

IN RE: ESTATE OF NANCY VANESSA SOWDERS
Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The administration of the estate of Nancy Vanessa Sowders, deceased, whose date of death was August 2, 2022, is pending in the Circuit Court for Union County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 55 West Main Street, Room 103, Lake Butler, FL 32054. The names and addresses of the personal representative and the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

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

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

OF THIS NOTICE. ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION 733.702 WILL BE FOREVER BARRED. NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED. The date of first publication of this notice is May 23, 2024. Attorney for Personal Representative: /s/ Norm D. Fugate Norm D. Fugate Florida Bar Number: 044458 Post Office Box 98 Williston, FL 32696 Telephone: (352) 528-0019 Fax: (352) 528-4919 E-Mail: norm@normdfugatepa.com Secondary E-Mail: lilija@normdfugatepa.com Personal Representative: Steven Sowders 5/23 2tchg 5/30-UCT

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 8th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR UNION COUNTY, FLORIDA
Case No.: 63-2024-DR-0062 and 63-2024-DR-0063
Division:

SCOTT THOMAS, Petitioner and CRISTINA THOMAS, Respondent.

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR TEMPORARY CUSTODY BY EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBER
IN UNION COUNTY, FL CASES 63-2024-DR-0062 AND 63-2024-DR-0063

TO: CRISTINA THOMAS 12137 NE SR 121, RAIFORD, FL 32083

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for TEMPORARY CUSTODY BY EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBER has been filed against you and that you are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to it on SCOTT THOMAS, whose address is 1660 S JEFFERSON AVE, CLEARWATER, FL 33756, on or before JUNE 25, 2024 and file the original with the clerk of this Court at: UNION COUNTY CLERK OF COURT, 55 WEST MAIN STREET, ROOM 103, LAKE BUTLER, FL 32054 before service on Petitioner or immediately thereafter. If you fail to do so, a default may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition. Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents upon request. You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Designation of Current Mailing and E-Mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed or e-mailed to the addresses on record at the clerk's office. **WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.**
Dated: MAY 21, 2024
KELLIE HENDRICKS RHOADES
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
BY: C Norman
Deputy Clerk

5/23 4tchg 6/13-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.
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131 West Call Street • Starke, Florida 32091
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John Miller, Publisher
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Sports Editor: Cliff Smelley
Advertising: John R. Tillman
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Sports Editor: Cliff Smelley
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Keystone Heights High School's Amber Cunningham is presented with the Cliff Avril Family Foundation Trade School Bound Scholarship by former NFL player and Clay High graduate Cliff Avril.

Keystone's Cunningham receives scholarship from former NFL player Avril

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Recent Keystone Heights High School graduate Amber Cunningham was the first recipient of the Cliff Avril Family Foundation Trade School Bound Scholarship, which she received during on May 23 at KHHS.

Cliff Avril, a 2004 Clay High School graduate who played linebacker in the NFL, presented the \$2,500 scholarship to Cunningham, who applied, but was unaware that she had been selected as its recipient. She plans to attend the American

Academy of Cosmetology.

Avril, who played at Purdue University and was a Pro-Bowl selection and Super Bowl champion with the Seattle Seahawks, created the Trade School Bound Scholarship in honor of his late father, Samuel, who migrated from Haiti in the 1980s. His father provided for the family by becoming a welder.

The Cliff Avril Family Foundation also awarded its inaugural \$5,000 College Bound Scholarship to Fleming Island High School's Cyril Boktor.

Harris retires after 31 years in Bradford, Union schools

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

David Harris didn't don a cap and gown, but like recent high school graduates, he'll be experiencing a change in what has become a routine — day after day and year after year.

"I'm in that same boat now," Harris said. "I'm graduating again."

In reality, he's retiring from a 31-year career in education, all of which was spent in Bradford and Union counties. Harris, who currently teaches carpentry at North Florida Technical College, thinks back to being 22 years old and beginning his career as a social-studies teacher at Lake Butler Middle School. That version of himself would've viewed 31 years as a long time away.

"It went by fast," Harris said.

A career at home

Harris, who attended Union County schools, enjoyed agriculture and history, and thought he'd like to do some coaching in the future. Add to that the fact he never wanted to leave home, and education seemed like a natural career path to follow.

He attended the University of Florida and earned a degree in history. He inquired about a job in Union and was told positions were available at either Lake Butler Middle School or Union County High School.

"At the time, I was 22 years old and still had friends who were in high school," Harris said. "I said, 'You better give me middle school.'"

Harris admitted that before going to UF, he was interested in earning a degree in agriculture, but he couldn't see an opportunity to teach Ag in Union County, which had instructors Tom Williams at the high school and

Mark Bracewell at the middle school.

"I said, 'Neither one of them is ever going to leave, so I better do something else.' My second-favorite love was history," Harris said.

As it turned out, the year he graduated from UF, Bracewell moved into administration. "There would've been an opportunity," Harris said. "A couple of years after that, they created another (Ag) position and then another position. I had plenty of opportunities."

Though he didn't have a degree in Ag, he did wind up teaching it after an enjoyable time at LBMS.

"It was fun," Harris said, explaining that teaching middle school students was a good experience for a teacher right out of college. "They were young enough to still do some fun stuff, but old enough to understand how to sit down and listen."

He also enjoyed coaching football prior to becoming an Ag teacher. Harris did so during the UCHS varsity team's run of three straight state championships from 1994 through 1996. He was a coach for the LBMS team, but was involved with the UCHS team as well.

"That was amazing just to be a part of that," Harris said.

As a coach, he helped create the Suwannee Middle Athletic Conference, which is known as SMAC.

"I was actually one of the writers for the bylaws of the SMAC," Harris said. "That was neat to be able to do that."

When Harris got the opportunity to teach Ag, he enjoyed being able to work alongside Williams.

"He had been my Ag teacher and had been a mentor of mine," Harris said. "That was pretty special."

Harris said he and Williams were part of a good team that consisted also of Charlotte

Emerson and Scott Register.

"We worked well together, and we all enjoyed each other's company," Harris said.

One of Harris' highlights to this day was coaching the Lake Butler FFA poultry team to the national championship in 2002. It was the third team ever from Florida to win at the national level and the first Florida poultry team to do so.

"That was really special to be able to do that," Harris said. "When we were about to go on stage and receive our reward, I told (the students), 'If you can bottle this moment, you need to do so because it's going to be one of your top-10 moments in life probably. It just doesn't happen to everybody.'"

Harris' next career opportunity took him out of the Union County School District, which he had been a part of as a student or a teacher from the age of 5 until the age of 40.

"The only four years that I hadn't been in the Union County school system was the four years I was in college," Harris said.

A move to Bradford

Harris accepted the job of coordinator of adult programs/assistant director of career and technical education at North Florida Technical College in 2012, saying the timing was perfect to leave Union County. Harris' two children — Ashley and Lake — were getting older, and one thing he said he didn't want to do was be in the position to teach and/or coach them.

"I taught my kids how to do things on their own," Harris said, adding, "Anything they did, I wanted them to do as a result of them."

He was offered several administrative positions in Union, but Harris also didn't

See HARRIS, page 12



Bradley earns Bradford Village Scholarship

Recent Bradford High School graduate Teagan Bradley (left) received a \$1,000 Bradford Village Scholarship, presented by Bruce and Peggy Williams. The scholarship was created in honor of Bruce Williams' father, Joe, who owned and managed Bradford Village Apartments across from BHS from 1974 to 1991. Bradley, who is pictured with Bruce Williams, can receive an additional \$500 if she takes 12 credit hours her first semester and maintains at least a 2.3 GPA.

HEROES

Continued from page 8

Agent Esteban Pena (April 15, 2023) died from streptococcal meningitis. St. Johns County Sheriff's Sgt. Michael Kunovich (May 19, 2023), who had a heart condition, died during a struggle with a suspect. Jasper Police Chief Anthony Rickerson (June 11, 2023) was killed when his vehicle struck a deer.

A moment of radio silence was observed following the roll call. The Reception and Medical Center honor guard then provided a three-volley salute outside the church, which was observed inside via video. Corrections personnel Jared Cox (a warden) and Rodney Cayton (an inspector) played "Taps."

The service also included Bradford County Commission Chair Carolyn Spooner reading a proclamation passed by the commission. The proclamation, which designated May 2024 as Law-Enforcement Month in Bradford County, described law-enforcement personnel as "critical to the safety and security of the society that the citizens of Bradford County know and enjoy." It also stated that law-enforcement personnel "serve without fanfare and celebration... but show a dedication and commitment to their service that is commendable."



The Kiwanis Club of Starke awarded three Steve Denmark Memorial Scholarships this year. Pictured (l-r) are scholarship committee member Cheryl Canova, recipient Taylor Wilkinson, scholarship committee member George Konkol, recipient Kinley Burkhalter, scholarship committee member Pat Mundorff, recipient Hagen Kadlec and scholarship committee member Cliff Smelley.

Starke Kiwanis Club awards 3 Steve Denmark Scholarships

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

The Kiwanis Club of Starke presented this year's recipients of the club's Steve Denmark Memorial Scholarships at its May 14 meeting at The Downtown Grill.

Recent Bradford High School graduates Kinley Burkhalter, Hagen Kadlec and Taylor Wilkinson were selected from nine applicants. Each received \$500, with funds coming from the club and Kitten Denmark, the wife of the late Steve Denmark.

Each recipient was given the

chance to thank the club and share their future plans.

Burkhalter, who dual enrolled at Santa Fe College while in high school, plans to continue attending Santa Fe to earn her AA degree. Then, she wants to transfer to the University of Florida and major in Speech Pathology.

Kadlec plans to attend the University of North Carolina, majoring in Communications and participating in ROTC so he can be commissioned as an

See DENMARK, page 14

7 KHHS winter sports athletes earn All-Clay County honors

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Soccer players Kiersten Shaw and Aaron Wiley were first-team selections and two of seven Keystone Heights High School athletes who received recognition

on the All-Clay County teams for winter sports.

Shaw was the only girls soccer player honored, while Wiley was one of three boys players honored. Luke Brunt was named to the second team, while

Bryce Huntley earned honorable mention.

Boys basketball players Darrion Grady and Garrison Teague received honorable mention, as did girls basketball player Alana Anderson.

HONORS

Continued from page 10

included her performance in a March 15 double-header against Mayville State. McFarland went 2 for 3 with two doubles, an RBI,

three runs scored, a walk and a stolen base in the first game, while in the second game she went 3 for 4 with a double, an RBI, four runs scored, two walks and two stolen bases.

McFarland went a combined 7 for 13 in a four-game series

(April 5-6) against Valley City State. She went 3 for 4 twice against Viterbro on April 13 and April 14, while in an April 20 double-header against Waldorf she was a combined 4 for 6 with two RBI, three runs scored, a walk and two stolen bases.

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Class Ads 05/30/24

40 Notices

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY. All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 in which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate in which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777, the toll-free

telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275. For further information call Florida Commission on Human Relations, Lisa Sutherland 850-488-7082 ext. #1005

45 Land for Sale

FOR SALE BY OWNER; 2.63 acres/Starke. \$32,000. 904-207-5518.

47 Commercial Property (Rent, Lease, Sale)

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55 Wanted

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57 For Sale

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65 Help Wanted

WRITER POSITION OPEN- News & event coverage in Bradford, Union & Keystone Heights. Writing experience necessary, must have good transportation. Assignments are all office based and often require night

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Tri-County Classifieds
Bradford County Telegraph, Lake Region Monitor, UNION COUNTY TIMES
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Canova now retired after career as music teacher

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
cliff@bctelegraph.com

Teaching was music to Cindy Canova's ears, leading to a 26.5-year career in the Bradford County School District that ended with her retirement last December.

"As a friend of mine would say, I am in a different season of life now," said Canova, who taught music at the elementary and middle school levels. "I've taught in the school system. I've done a lot of things over the years with music in the community."

It was only natural for Canova

to go into teaching music as a career. Her paternal grandmother, Mona Canova, taught music at Starke Elementary and also taught private piano lessons. Canova was one of her grandmother's piano students.

"I studied with her all through high school," said Canova, who possesses the piano she learned to play on, which was given to her after her grandmother's death.

Canova said her mother, Joan, was a "wonderful pianist," too, and also gave private lessons.

"My love of music came from my family," Canova said.

Canova began giving private piano lessons as well when she was still a student at Bradford High School and is still teaching one on one today.

She, of course, was involved in the music program at BHS when she was a student and also served as an accompanist for choirs.

Canova received a scholarship to Santa Fe College. Before her two years there were up, she was contacted by a University of Florida professor who taught organ. He had heard about her and told her he'd like her to study with him.

"I received a full scholarship

to UF, where I studied organ," Canova said. "I eventually got my bachelor's degree in Music Education."

Becoming a music teacher seemed like a natural career choice. As Canova said, teaching allowed her "to share the joy of music with others and to help students realize that music is not just something you do when you're a young person."

Teaching was also a good choice because she said she believed she was good at helping people in general.

"I feel like that God's given me the ability to see the needs in

others," Canova said.

Teaching elementary and middle school

Canova began teaching at Bradford Middle School three days a week. She also spent one day each at Brooker and Hampton elementary schools before the BMS position became full-time entering her second year of teaching.

That wasn't the end of her elementary school experience.

Canova eventually wound up teaching at Starke Elementary, which is where she was when she retired. For some of her time at Starke Elementary, she returned to teaching one day a week at the Brooker and Hampton schools. Canova said she went to Brooker and Hampton on consecutive days to keep loading and unloading materials from her car to a minimum.

"The small-school days had to be back to back due to the fact that there was no music room,"

See CANOVA, page 14

SOFTBALL

Continued from page 9

Clark hit a two-run homer in a 9-0 win over visiting Miami Dade on April 20, while Rogel hit a two-run double in an 11-1 win at St. Petersburg on April 23.

In a second game against St. Petersburg on April 23, Clark and Rogel combined for six RBI in an 8-1 win. Clark, who went 2 for 4 with five RBI, hit two-run and three-run homers. Rogel went 2 for 4 and drove in one of the Patriots' two runs in the seventh inning.

Central Florida hosted a double-header against Indian

River on April 27, with Clark going 2 for 3 with two RBI in the first game, a 7-2 win. She hit an RBI double in the first inning for the game's first run and had an RBI triple in the fifth to put the Patriots up 6-0.

Clark and Rogel combined to go 4 for 6 with four RBI in a 6-5 win in the second game against Indian River.

Clark, who had three RBI, hit a solo homer in the first for the game's first run, while Rogel drove in the game's second run with a double in the second. The Patriots trailed 5-3 entering the bottom of the fifth, but Clark tied the score with a two-run double. One of the runners who scored was Rogel, who led off the inning with a single.

In Central Florida's first Florida College System Activities Association Division II Region 8 state tournament game, a 7-6 win over Gulf State on May 8, Clark had two RBI and scored two runs, while Rogel hit a triple and scored a run.

The Patriots wound up going 1-2 in the tournament. In their

final game, a 5-4 loss to Eastern Florida State on May 10, Clark hit a three-run homer in the bottom of the seventh to tie the score at 4-4 and force extra innings. Eastern Florida State hit a solo homer in the 10th to win the game.

Clark finished with three RBI and scored a run.

HARRIS

Continued from page 11

want to be in the position of supervising teachers who were once colleagues.

Harris said he had been at NFTC for about a week when a colleague asked him when GED classes were going to start. He laughed when sharing the memory, saying his response was they'd have to find out who oversaw the GED classes. The colleague's reply was, "You're in charge of it."

"That was something I had no idea about," Harris said. "No one mentioned that to me at any point in time. I had to saddle up and get with it."

It wouldn't be the first time in his career he had to "get with it." When faced with something he wasn't familiar with, Harris always took the time to learn all he could and turn to people who would be valuable resources. For example, he knew nothing about coaching poultry teams when he began doing so in Union County.

"I went over to the University of Florida," Harris said. "I worked with Dr. Ben Mather all summer long, and I learned poultry."

Harris credited his first football-coaching opportunity for helping him tackle new things and to prepare himself to do the best job possible. His junior season as a player at UCHS was cut short by an injury, which also prevented him from playing as a senior. Head Coach Jim Niblack told Harris he still wanted him to be a part of his program and asked him if he'd like to coach.

When Harris responded he knew nothing about coaching, Niblack cracked that everyone becomes

an expert on the game when they stop playing it.

So, there Harris was, helping Mark McGraw and Wayne Pennington coach the junior varsity team as a high school senior.

He may not have expected being a student coach, but he enjoyed the experience. The same can be said of overseeing the GED program at North Florida Technical College, which turned out to be one of his career highlights. Harris liked seeing people get a second chance in life.

"Just getting a GED doesn't mean it's the end of the road for you," Harris said. "That's just the beginning."

Three years after serving in a coordinator position, Harris moved up to the position of director, replacing Christy Reddish.

"Chad Farnsworth was the superintendent at the time," Harris said. "He offered me the directorship here at the center. That was a very rewarding job — a tough job."

Harris said the director as well as other staff members have to juggle numerous responsibilities at North Florida Technical College due to the fact it serves secondary and post-secondary students.

"You have to wear a lot of different hats when you work at a center such as this," he said. "Even though it's small, we still have to do a lot of the same things a center with a larger population has to do."

Tough job aside, Harris said "it was really, really a fun time."

"We had a great staff," Harris said.

Another three years went by before Harris found himself in another position, that of Bradford



David Harris (left) receives a plaque of appreciation from North Florida Technical College Director Brad Bishop during a retirement party in Harris' honor.

County Schools' assistant superintendent.

"It was not on my radar at all," Harris said, who was offered the position by Superintendent Beth Moore.

Harris said he's proud of the things that were accomplished during the time he was assistant superintendent and Moore was superintendent. He noted such things as renovations of the Bradford High School auditorium, science labs and tennis courts. It was also during that time the artificial football field was installed at BHS and the baseball program got its own separate facility.

"We were able to do some things here I felt like were very long-lasting," Harris said.

Harris said being assistant superintendent was kind of like being a football coach.

"You have a situation, and you have to find a solution for it," he said. "You have to find that solution very quickly, and

it has to be right, or at least the majority of people need to feel it's right."

He turned to numerous people for advice, including those he'd worked with in the past, as well as speaking to people in larger school districts.

"The thing is, the same problems we have here are happening in every other school," Harris said. "It might take a little bit longer to get to the smaller places like Bradford and Union counties, but they're going to happen here, too, at some point in time."

"A lot of times, the larger districts have already experienced some of those problems. You can turn to them, and they're always willing to help out."

Networking with people in organizations such as North East Florida Educational Consortium was also a benefit, he said.

Classroom return

For the last three years, Harris has filled the role in which he began his career — that of classroom teacher. It was an easy transition for him to make as far as simply teaching, but the challenge has been overseeing carpentry lab work that can be dangerous.

Harris, though, oversaw some potentially dangerous situations as an Ag teacher, too.

"It doesn't matter if you're de-horning cows in Ag or you're letting kids work with bandsaws and table saws and skill saws — things that can really hurt them," Harris said. "You have to be able to, number one, teach them how to be safe, and number two, make sure everyone's on task for being safe."

In fact, an element of danger is something that those who aren't career and technical education teachers can fully understand.

"What we do is dangerous," Harris said. "In welding, kids are dealing with 9,000 degrees over there and more. They've got to know what they're doing."

"There's no horseplay over here because we can't afford it. Lives and limbs are at stake every day with career and technical education."

Career and technical education is something Harris strongly believes in because it sets students up for opportunities, giving them something that goes beyond standardized-test results and state-assigned school grades.

"I understand that school grades are important," Harris said, "but not a single employer who I know of has ever asked a potential employee, 'What was your school grade?' You ask them what their skills are."

"That's what we're developing here (at NFTC). We'll let

someone else worry about school grades. (Grades are) important to the educational system because funding is tied to that, but in the grand scheme of things, it's the skills that students walk away with. Not just the skills, but the experiences they walk away with."

Retirement

Harris believes that sometimes it's just the right time to walk away, saying, "Society changes, but I don't think we (as individuals) change quite as rapidly. Sometimes, it's good to make room for some younger people to come in and have a chance to do some of those things. I'll find something else."

What that something else is remains to be seen.

"I don't know what the next chapter will be like, but that's OK," Harris said, adding, "I've got some plans, but I've got to figure out what the next step is because come August, I'm not going to be here (at NFTC)."

He doesn't rule out a return to education. If he's learned one thing in his 31-year career, it's that you never say never. Teaching again may not be in his plans now, but he knows too well that plans change.

"My original plan was to do 10 years at the middle school, 10 years at the high school and 10 years in administration in Union County," Harris said.

It all worked out for the best, though, giving Harris opportunities he never envisioned, but which he enjoyed.

"I got to meet so many people and do so many things," he said. "I've had a great career."

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SLIMY SCHOLARS

Bradford Elementary Principal Cassie Melvin gets slimed by Ja'Cianna Brown. Some of the school's fourth-graders, as a reward for high achievement throughout the year, got to slime administrators and teachers during the last week of school.



Brilynn Douglas laughs as she's the first one to slime Bobbie Tatum.



ABOVE: Kristin Riddick gets a shower of slime, courtesy of Jalaiah Carter. LEFT: Katherine Roberts reacts to getting slimed by Colton Khuel. RIGHT: Zion Tyson enjoys covering Heather Alvarez with slime.



Denisha Brown reacts to getting slimed by Zion Tyson.



JaHziya Hutchinson gives Assistant Principal Laurén Morgan her first-ever sliming experience in her career in education.

Superintendent Will Hartley gets a massive slime shower from his "number-one fan," Ariana Hadley. As the event's VIP, Hartley was given a paper crown to wear, but it got knocked off during a previous sliming. The swimming cap, though, remained in place.

While fourth-graders were enjoying getting to slime teachers and administrators, kindergarteners had the opportunity to do just the thing on a hot day, run around underneath a massive spray of water, courtesy of Starke Fire Rescue. Pictured (l-r) are Gino Rocca, Nora Reed and Daniel Luna.



You see nothing but smiles from this group, who were more than happy to get slimed as a reward to those students who proved to be high achievers. Pictured are: (front, l-r) Katherine Roberts, Bobbie Tatum, Denisha Brown, Heather Alvarez, (back, l-r) Superintendent Will Hartley, Tonjala Tyson, Assistant Principal Laurén Morgan, Principal Cassie Melvin, Jaquan Bryant and Stefanie Jones.

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2. Can you tell me what benefits from the Florida Air National Guard have helped you the most?
 The National Park Pass, as well as EDD, Education Dollars for Duty, are the programs I have utilized most since joining the Florida Air National Guard. The ability to employ EDD funds, which cover the full cost of tuition and fees for any public college in the state of Florida, gave me the opportunity to complete my Office Specialist Certificate as well as currently enroll in an AS Accounting program. Next fall semester I plan on transferring to a FL university complete a bachelor's degree, where EDD will continue to cover tuition and fees. While on TDY in Montana, we were allotted some time over the weekend and a group of us were able to visit Yellowstone National Park. It was breathtakingly beautiful, truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, which I would not have had if it weren't for joining the Florida Air National Guard.

3. Can you talk about some of the new skills you have learned in the Florida Air National Guard that have helped you in the civilian work force?
 Working in the Florida Air National Guard, I have developed numerous skills in the areas of inventory tracking, cargo palletization, C-17 load configurations, and even b-span construction. However, by far the most beneficial capability that has been of service to me in the civilian work force has to be the leadership skills I have gained. I would say I was somewhat effective as a leader before joining, but the Guard has given me a fresh perspective and my mentors in the unit have been remarkable in demonstrating better ways to lead my fellow Airmen.



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CANOVA

Continued from page 12

Canova said. “Anything I needed I had to pack up and haul. That means you drive up to the school, you unload, you set up an area in the library like your music room (at Starke Elementary). At the end of the day, you pack it back up into the car, and you go to the other outlying school the next day.”

Teaching in middle school and elementary school, of course, provided different experiences. Middle school music classes are more performance-based. Though she taught elementary students how to play instruments, count rhythms and read notes, Canova said at that level — especially with the youngest students — it’s more about introducing students to music and, hopefully, fostering a love for it.

“In middle school, you’re perfecting songs A, B and C, and you’re going over them for their phrasing and for their sound — the more higher-level technical things,” Canova said. “In elementary, you just want them to like what they’re doing.” Canova did more than just ensure that elementary students liked what they were doing. She taught the older elementary students how to play various instruments and how to read

notes, for example.

“Older elementary — they like challenges,” Canova said. “They have more confidence. They don’t mind singing solos or playing rhythm instruments in small groups.”

With technology becoming a part of teaching, Canova was able to do more with her elementary students. She may not be able to play certain instruments, but she could show her students other people playing those instruments on YouTube videos.

“I tried to introduce my students to a new instrument once or twice a week,” she said.

During her time at BMS, she introduced students to new experiences. Her philosophy was if students were going to understand how to perform, they were going to have to attend performances.

“I took kids to the Times-Union Performing Arts Center there in Jacksonville to see Broadway shows,” Canova said. “I loved to look at their faces. A lot of them had never been to Jacksonville before.”

Canova also liked introducing middle school students to types of music they may not have been familiar with.

“You can teach them music from different genres,” Canova said. “You can help guide and teach them to accept things that are different.”



Cindy Canova spent almost 27 years teaching music in Bradford County schools. She still gives private piano lessons, which she began doing when she was still a student at Bradford High School.

talk to little Johnny about that and help him understand that skill? No.”

Her private students are able to go at their own pace so that they can comprehend what Canova’s teaching. Canova said she tells her private students, “You are on your own here. We can move as quickly through these books as you want. It depends on you. It depends on your attentiveness. It depends on your practicing habits.”

Private lessons offer such special moments. Canova mentioned a recent occurrence in which she and a student were playing a duet that they had been working on for a couple of weeks.

“It just gave me this warm feeling in my heart because I could tell that that child was feeling confident and feeling happy about the challenge they had met,” Canova said. “It sounded good. They knew it sounded good. They knew they had done a good job even without me praising them.”

Passing on her piano knowledge to private students is something Canova will continue to do.

“I like to share my gift with those who are willing to learn, who want to learn and who have an appreciation for it,” Canova said.

The future

Canova’s last official day was Dec. 31, 2023, but because of the holiday break, her last day in the classroom actually occurred earlier in the month.

She let administrators know at the end of the previous year that she would be retiring. Then, word started spreading around campus.

“There were very heart-felt moments when teachers began to learn of my retirement,” Canova said.

She admitted it was rough when the students began learning that she was leaving.

“They just have to understand that you still love them and care about them, but it’s time for you to retire,” Canova said.

She reassured her students that they’d probably still have chances to see her.

“I still live in Starke,” she told them. “I’m sure I’ll see you at the Walmart or the Winn-Dixie.”

Canova enjoys gardening, so she expects to devote time to that hobby. She also has some landscaping ideas for her home that she wants to bring to fruition.

Other than that, she has no big plans and doesn’t intend to do any traveling.

“It’s time for me now just to unwind a little bit, enjoy my beautiful yard, work with my private piano students and have more time with my family,” Canova said.

Love of teaching one on one

As someone who enjoys helping others, Canova especially enjoys teaching students one on one through private piano lessons. Obviously, it’s a lot different than working with groups of students in the classroom.

“Picture a classroom of, let’s say, 22 students, and you’re trying to teach a certain concept or a certain skill to all these children at the same time,” Canova said. “Will 100 percent of them understand? No. You’re lucky if 50 percent of them understand.”

“If you’re the intuitive one that I am, and you see that little Johnny over here is not really understanding — you see it on his face — do you have time to

DENMARK

Continued from page 11

officer in the Army.

Wilkinson, who dual enrolled at Santa Fe while at BHS, wants to major in Business Administration and start her own business.

Scholarship namesake Steve Denmark passed away at the age of 71 on April 28, 2019. The

lifelong resident of Starke and Kingsley Lake graduated from BHS and received a business degree from the University of Georgia. After college, he returned to Starke and took over the family business — Denmark Furniture.

Denmark was a charter member and past president of the Kiwanis Club of Starke and had a great love for the community,

giving of himself through service and donations to support many organizations, businesses and schools.

“Steve was a great member,” said Kiwanis member Cheryl Canova, who served on the Steve Denmark Memorial Scholarship committee. “If you didn’t know him, he did a lot for us and this community. We were very blessed to have had him.”

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