

Lake Region Monitor

USPS 114-170 – KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, FLORIDA

THURSDAY, DEC. 12, 2013

41ST YEAR – 32ND ISSUE – 75 CENTS

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Lakes recovery plan takes shape

Water from Lowry gets favorable review

Lake advocates weary of MFL changes

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

A St. Johns River Water

Management staff member presented several initiatives to the district's governing board on Dec. 10 that are designed to restore water levels to Keystone Heights-area lakes.

Hal Wilkening, with the

district's division of strategic deliverables, said the initiatives are the result of two work groups that have been looking at alternatives to restore water levels to Lakes Brooklyn, Geneva, Grandin and Cowpen

since February, 2009.

He said the two key strategies for the plan were to increase recharge to surficial aquifers around the lakes and to reduce upper Florida Aquifer withdrawals.

One project Wilkening said was already in process was a lake level management program promoted by Save Our Lakes President Vivian Katz. Under the plan, water levels for Lake Lowry in Camp Blanding would be set at a predetermined level and any excess water would be pumped to Alligator Creek.

Last summer, the district pumped 194 million gallons from Lake Lowry toward Keystone Heights to measure the effectiveness of such an approach. Lake advocates credited the experiment with pushing water levels on Lake Brooklyn to a two-year high.

Wilkening also proposed expanding the service area of Clay County Utilities Authority in the Keystone Heights-area. He said that CCUA's new well at Postmaster's Village draws water from the lower Floridan Aquifer while private wells in the area draw either from the upper Floridan or surficial aquifers. Hooking more customers up to CCUA would convert their upper Florida and surficial draws to draws from the lower aquifer.

Another concept Wilkening explained was pumping water from the lower Floridan to the Upper Floridan, which would raise the upper aquifer and along with it, Keystone area lakes.

Wilkening also outlined a regional project, proposing the construction of a transmission system or pipeline from the Middleburg area to a rapid infiltration basin at the southern tip of Camp Blanding. The transmission system could move reclaimed water from CCUA's mid-clay reservoir, now under development. The system could also move storm water from the First Coast Expressway. Wilkening said that partnering with the Department of Transportation to dispose of excess storm water had the advantage of using road funding for the project. He cited a SJRWMD project in Altamonte Springs to dispose of storm water along interstate 4 as an example of using DOT money to accomplish water resource objectives.

Wilkening told the governing board that several of the initiatives are already in the planning stages and the staff intends to move forward with the proposals regardless of the results of the district's re-evaluation of MFLs for Lakes Geneva and Brooklyn scheduled for next year.

Board members Fred N. Roberts Jr. and Chuck Drake complemented Wilkening for moving forward with the initiatives before the new MFLs were set.

However, several lake advocates said that while they agreed with the initiatives Wilkening presented, they were concerned that re-evaluated MFLs would take away the district's motivation for implementing the projects.

Save Our Lakes board member Chandler Rozear and Vice president Webb Farber said the proposed re-evaluated MFLs would render most of Lake Brooklyn dry.

Keystone Heights parade rocks around the Christmas tree

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

The Lake Region Kiwanis Club presented the Keystone Heights Christmas Parade Dec. 7 with the theme: Rocking Around the Christmas Tree. Around 30 floats and marching groups participated in the 6 p.m. event.

American Legion Post 202 won the Closest to the Theme award. Hedrick's Hair Salon placed second.

Girl Scouts of the Gateway won Best Youth entry. The Keystone Heights Junior High FFA chapter placed second.

The Minor Family won the Most Original prize. Keystone Heights Animal Hospital was runner-up in that category.

The Keystone Heights High School Dance Team won Best Marching or Walking Unit. Star Quality Dance and Cheer Center placed second.

Eatmon Welding won the Judges' Choice award. AMVETS Post 86 placed second.



Makayla Becknel, Amber VanWie, Evangeline O'Brien and Olivia Lahaye on the Girl Scouts float

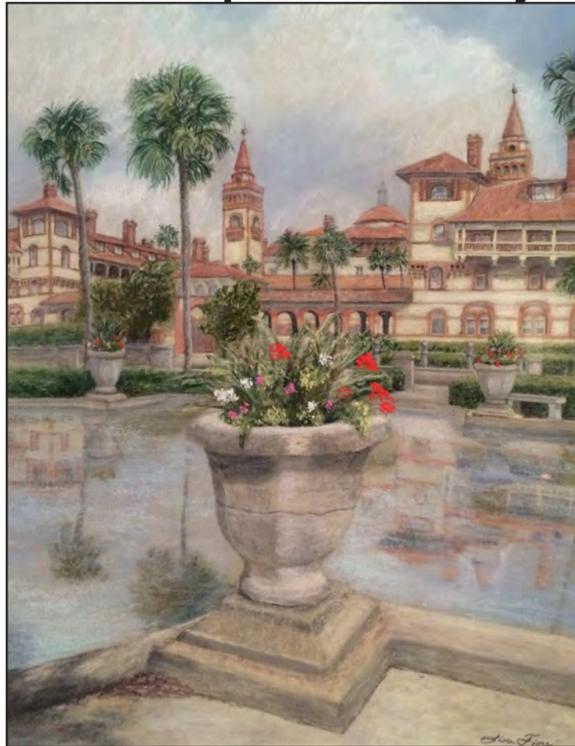
Other parade entrants included Helen Hersey Realty, Tina Bullock for School Board, The Keystone Heights Shriner Club's Keystone Cops, the Starling Family, American Heritage Girls

Chapter FL3130, Cody Peters, Fresh Start Fellowship's children program, Hey Day Delivery, Clay County School District Bus Drivers, Keystone Heights Senior High School FFA, Denise

Dull and Team Chaos, 501st Legion Vader's Fist, Living Hope Family Worship Center, Hope Christian Academy,

See PARADE, 2A

Melrose gallery hosts show for pastel society



"April in St. Augustine," by Lisa Flore, was one of approximately 50 works displayed by the First Coast Pastel Society during a member show at Gallery 26. Photo by Dan Hildebran.

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

Members of the First Coast Pastel Society displayed approximately 50 works at a Gallery 26 show on Dec. 6 in Melrose.

The Jacksonville and St. Augustine-based group is nearly two years old and promotes the use of soft pastel.

Pastel sticks are composed of a color pigment and a binder, such as gum arabic or Methyl cellulose. Soft pastels have a lower proportion of binder in

the sticks and are therefore more susceptible to smudging.

Society member and Gainesville resident Karen F. Rose said pastel is the purest way to get pigment onto a surface, and results in vibrant colors that reflect light in unique ways. She said that in other mediums, like watercolor, the pigments are more diluted.

"When it is properly done, it glows" she said of pastels during the Melrose show.

See PASTEL, 3A

Santos crowned Miss KHHS Junior High



Emily Frampton (left) presents the Miss KHHS Junior High Trophy to McKenzie Santos. Also pictured is contestant Carissa Gagnon.

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

McKenzie Santos won the seventh annual Miss KHHS Junior High Pageant Dec. 7 at the school's cafeteria.

Santos is the daughter of Joe and Jessica Santos and Todd and Kristie Hanlon. She is a member of the school's flag football team, First Baptist Church, and a Keystone Recreation Association softball team. She hopes to participate in junior high softball this spring.

Hailee Gabel won first runner-up, Carissa Gagnon won second runner-up and Ashley Collins-

Wagner won third runner-up.

Gagnon also won the Miss Congeniality award. Other category award winners were Santos for the Leadership Award, and Collins-Wagner for the Scholastic Award.

Emily Peoples, Miss KHHS for 2013, hosted the pageant, and also sang "Part of Your World" from the 1989 Walt Disney Pictures film, "The Little Mermaid."

Two of Peoples' fellow contestants also participated in

See SANTOS, 3A

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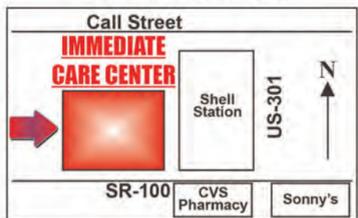
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- Afghanistan - 2009 Physician for Camp of 450 Army Infantry Soldiers at Mazar-e-Shariff, Northern Regional Hospital
- Okinawa Japan - Family Practice with credentials in Women's Healthcare, Colposcopy, Newborns and Pediatric
- Associate Professor Uniformed Services University of Healthsciences 2010



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Kimberly Beers Castillo, A.R.N.P.
Medical Bio

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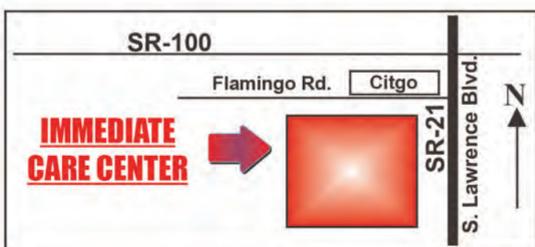
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Sheriff, schools share cost of cops on campus

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

The Clay County Commission's Budget, Finance and Human Resources Committee approved the 2013-2014 school resource officer agreement between the sheriff's office and school board.

Under the agreement, the sheriff's office provides deputies for all eight Clay County high schools, including the Bannerman Learning Center.

The school district will pay the county \$450,000 under the agreement. Chief Assistant County Attorney Fran Moss told the committee that the \$450,000 represents 60 percent of the county's total cost for the program. She said the county will finance the remaining \$300,000 through its general fund.

During its Dec. 2 meeting, the budget, finance and human resources committee also took the following actions:

Approved Pipes and Drums Corps reimbursements

The committee approved a \$1,550 reimbursement agreement with the Clay County Sheriff's Office Pipes and Drums Corps.

The Highland bagpipe band, formed in 2009, is a 501(c) 3 organization that participates in parades, church services and other community events.

Under the reimbursement agreement, the county will use Florida Arts license plate sale revenue it received from the state to reimburse the band for uniforms and percussion equipment.

Approved agreement with labor law firm

The committee approved an agreement with Jacksonville's

Constangy, Brooks and Smith to provide labor law consultations to the county attorney. Until Dec. 31, the firm will bill the county \$185 an hour for partner time and \$160 an hour for associate time. In 2014, those rates increase to \$200 and \$170 per hour.

In a memo to the committee, County Attorney Mark Scruby wrote, "This will be the first increase in fees for this firm in several years, and the new fees are still below what is seen in the market for the same types of services."

The proposal caps total fees at \$25,000.

Accepted bid for new 911 system

The committee accepted a \$473,921.42 bid from AK Associates to replace the county's current 911 equipment and software.

The new system is geodiverse, so if either of the county's two 911 call centers in Green Cove Springs or Orange Park become inoperable, the other call center can pick up the calls from the other.

AT&T also submitted a bid for the project in the amount of \$688,800.80.

Discussed matching grants for parks

Moss, County Manager Stephanie Kopelousos and County Auditor Mike Price asked the committee for guidance in handling in-kind contributions in the county's matching grant program for parks.

In July 2012, commissioners designated \$300,000 for parks improvements. Of that total, they set aside \$225,000 for 50-percent matching grants, available to neighborhood

athletic associations for park upgrades. Commissioners put \$450,000 into the program for 2013 and \$256,000 for 2014.

The Clay County Soccer Club, Orange Park Athletic Association, Oakleaf Park Athletic Association and Fleming Island Athletic Association have applied for matching grants under the program.

The county's staff said that recently, some associations have asked whether in-kind contributions made to their projects qualified for matching grants. The staff members presented that question to the committee. They also requested guidance on valuing the contributions, if commissioners allowed them.

Mark Dill, president of the Fleming Island Athletic Association, told the committee that his group secured an in-kind donation of 1,000 truckloads of dirt for its project, with each load valued at \$80. He wanted to know if that donation counted toward a matching grant.

Dill also said the association's engineer made an in-kind contribution.

"He is donating half of his hourly rate as a service-as-a donation," said Dill, "so how do we do that? Is that something that is eligible?"

In a memo to the committee, Karen Thomas, director of administrative and contractual services, proposed seven guidelines for applying non-cash donations to the county's matching grant program. She recommended capping such credits at \$100,000 a year, requiring pre-approval of such credits, and giving the county sole discretion in valuing in-kind donations.

Committee members Doug Conkey and Diane Hutchings told the staff members to continue working on the guidelines.

Hutchings said the biggest danger in allowing in-kind donations for matching grants is miscommunication. She told the staff members to consider putting together a handbook for the associations and hosting a workshop to communicate the program's rules.

"That way, you give everybody a fair shot at it," she said.

Other items

The committee also approved a \$33,307.33 disbursement for Microsoft software maintenance, and accepted a \$10,900 grant from U.S. Homeland Security to train county personnel on federal emergency management

Santos wins pageant

Continued from 1A



Miss KHHS Junior High contestants (l-r) Carissa Gagnon, Hailee Gabel, McKenzie Santos and Ashley Collins-Wagner.



The reigning Miss KHHS Emily Peoples introduces Marissa Williams, who gave her farewell address as Miss KHHS Junior High.

the pageant. Emily Frampton sang the Disney Princess song "The Glow," and Taylor Jewett served as hostess for the judges.

Eighth-grade girls participated in the junior high contest. Pageant Director Lynn Dickinson said the event is the little sister to the Miss KHHS

Pageant held in March.

Prior to relinquishing her title, the 2012 Miss Junior High, Marissa Williams gave her farewell address. Williams thanked her parents and recounted her duties over the past year, which included participating in parades and

helping to crown Peoples when she won the Miss KHHS Pageant earlier this year. Williams also addressed the contestants that were competing for her title.

"I would like to wish all of these girls good luck," she said, "and to not be nervous because they are all amazing."

PASTEL

Continued from 1A
Rose also said the medium gives artists a higher level of intimacy with their work.

"There is an immediacy in the stroke," she said, "a mind-eye

connection."

Rose said a common misconception about the medium is that it is fragile. She said that myth was created because many pastel artists in the past used low-quality paper. She added that the art form requires paper

with a rough surface, similar to sand paper.

At least three pieces sold during the show. Several attendees said they were surprised at the level of detail in the art and the high caliber of work displayed.

procedures.

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"Old Stand-by," by Linda Hart Green, was one of several pieces that sold during the show. Photo by Dan Hildebran.

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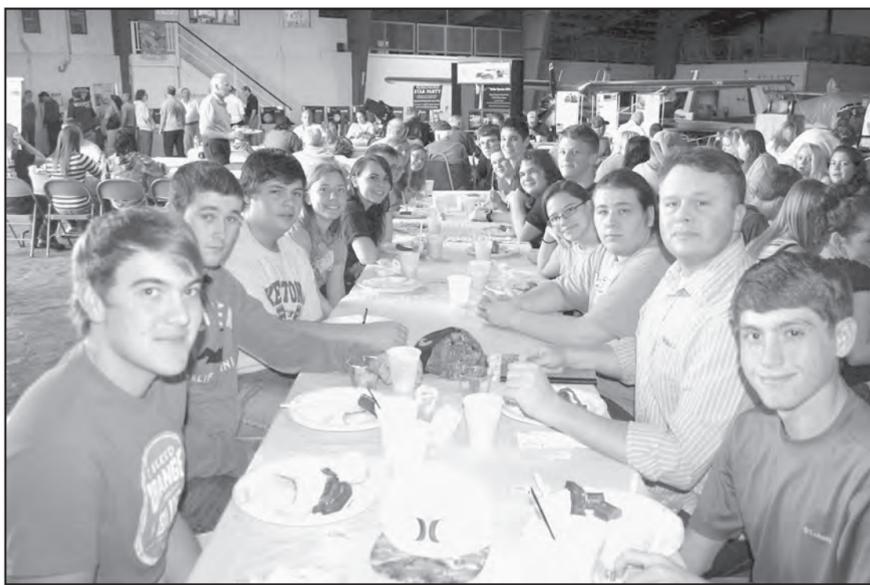
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History students join Wings of Dreams tribute to Pearl Harbor vets



KHHS history students enjoy breakfast at the Dec. 7 Wings of Dreams Fly-in. (L-r) Tyler Mundorff, James Curtis, Clayton Buie, Cera Anderson, Dayna Henley, Seneca Conner, Angela Beitz, Hannah Wacha, Jessica Beitz, Austin Hopkins, Jake Williams, Will Strassberger, Michael Davis, Ty Ormond, Hailey Johns, Jonathan Coleman, Teacher Chris Wester and Shaw Fuller.

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

Around 45 history students from Keystone Heights High School joined the Wings of Dreams Aviation Museum Dec. 7 Fly-In at the Keystone Heights Airport.

Teacher Chris Wester said he brought the 10th- and 11th- grade students to the event for the museum's commemoration of the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

Wester said he particularly wanted the students to talk to eyewitnesses of the event.

Bob Oehl, executive director of the museum, also counseled the students to obtain first-hand accounts from the veterans at the

breakfast event.

"I encourage the young people to seek out these folks, and ask them where they were, why they were there and what it was like," he told the audience during the event's program. "Much of this is not taught in schools today, and you will never get more of an honest answer than those face-to-face (talks), looking into the eyes of those who have been there."

After Oehl spoke, he showed a video presentation about the Pearl Harbor attack.

Wester said museum officials first approached him four or five years ago about bringing students to the museum, but

at that time he was not able to follow through.

He added, however, that when his students recently expressed an interest in studying local history, he discovered some of the fascinating stories behind the Keystone air field's service in World War II. That led to renewed discussions with museum officials.

Wester said he hoped the fly-in would be the first of many visits his students made to the airport. He said he hoped many would continue to participate in Wings of Dreams events and volunteer at the facility.

Senior Girls Club sends Christmas boxes



The Senior Girls Club at Keystone Heights High School prepared 30 boxes for Operation Christmas Child on Nov. 23.

Operation Christmas Child is a ministry of Samaritan's Purse that distributes Christmas gifts in shoeboxes to children around the world. Since 1993, over 100 million children in 130 countries have received gifts through the program.

Senior Girls Club sponsor Tammy Montford said the 23 students set a goal of packing 20 boxes but exceeded that goal by 15.

"It is a good project to help the girls to think of someone besides themselves," she said. "They enjoy buying the gifts and putting them together in boxes. Several of the girls also wrote a personal note to go in the boxes."

Kaycee Sapp, one of the members said, "Operation Christmas Child was a blessing to be a part of-- somewhere in the world making a child's Christmas wishes come true".

(Left to right) Gabi Gee, Kierra Mason, Amanda Crawford, Heather Blakeslee, Corbin Frakes, Laura Danis, Rachel Wells, Haley Arzie, Cece Buckley, Diana Ramos, Miranda Moulton, Rachel Maddox, Olyvia Heinz, Taylor Heinz, Tori Hill, Ochusa Hall, Kaycee Sapp, Lucy Montford, Alexa Born, Aum Apichaya, Rachel Lee, Farrah Hicks and Caiylen Gonzales. Photo courtesy of Tammy Montford.

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Wreaths across America ceremony

On Dec. 14 at noon the first Wreaths Across America ceremony will be held at the Keystone Heights Cemetery.

The ceremony will be brief and coincide similar observances held around the United States. If you purchased a wreath for a veteran, please come to the ceremony so that you can lay the wreath on the grave. The public is also invited to the ceremony just to honor our veterans. The wreaths will be escorted by AMVETS Post 86 Riders down S.R. 21 from C.R. 352 at approximately 10 a.m. to the cemetery.

We have been honored to put on the same ceremony as Arlington National Cemetery and other veterans cemeteries across the nation.

The Keystone Heights ceremony is the only Wreaths

Across America event in Clay County.

After the ceremony, there will be an open house at AMVETS Post 86 on Brooklyn Bay Road. If you have any questions, please call Ursula at 727-207-1657.

Rotary pecan sales continue

The Keystone Heights Rotary Club has begun its annual fundraising pecan sale. Available now are 12-ounce bags of pecans in four varieties: pecan halves, pecans in pieces for all your holiday baking needs. This year, Rotary also offers praline and chocolate covered pecans. The halves and pieces are \$8 per 12 ounce bag; the covered pecans are \$9 per bag. All pecans are from this year's fresh Georgia crop.

Pecans may be ordered through any Rotary club member, but are also available,

while they last, at the Keystone Heights Brian's Ace Hardware and at the M&S Bank.

Funds raised through the sales go toward various Rotary projects, such as Lake Area Ministries, the Keystone Youth Soccer League and other local youth sports programs, the Clay

County Science Fair and Rotary International's campaign to eradicate polio worldwide.

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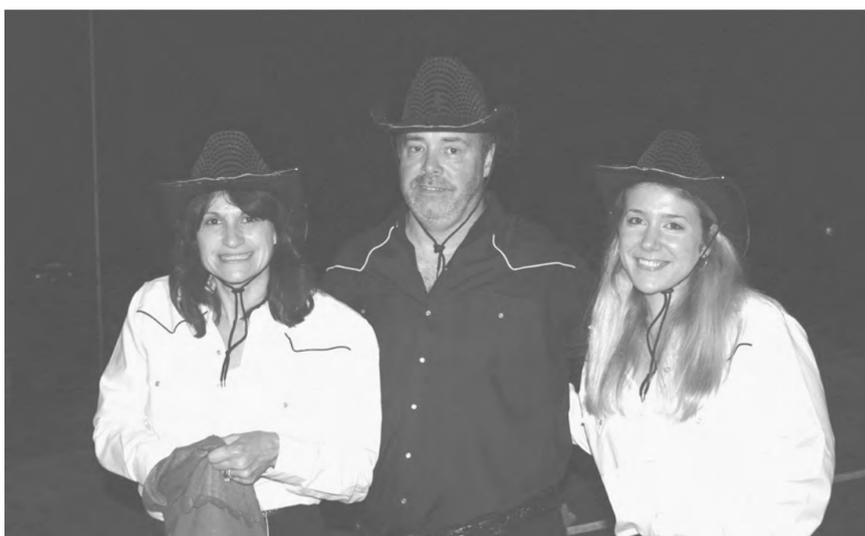
Photos from the Keystone Heights Christmas Parade



Cameron Denney, Riley Carr and Carlene Carr on the American Heritage Girls float.



Emma DeNunzio on the Fresh Start Fellowship float.



Pam Watkins, Robbie Watkins and Jessica Watkins with the Hey Day Delivery float.

PARADE

Continued from 1A

Lake Hill Baptist Church, the Keystone Heights High School marching band, The Lion's Club of Keystone Heights, the Keystone Heights Jaycees, the Keystone Heights Youth Football Association, Cub Scout Pack 146 and Hospoint Taxidermy.

10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14 at the Melrose Elementary Auditorium.

Breakfast includes all you can eat pancakes, 2 sausage patties, juice and coffee. Cost is \$6 per person or \$20 for a family of 4 if you prepay by Friday, Dec. 13. \$6 per person at the door. Price includes a picture with Santa. Come eat breakfast and then go see the Merry Melrose Christmas Parade.

Gallery 26 Christmas Concert

Gallery 26 in Melrose is hosting a Christmas concert on Dec. 14 from noon to 1:30 p.m. featuring the Santa Fe Brass Band. Refreshments will be served and Santa photos taken from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Winter Wonderland Dance

The Melrose Senior Center is hosting a Winter Wonderland



Denise Dull, Yancy Dull, MacKenzie Jowers, Dylana Lynn with Team Chaos.

Dance on Dec. 13 from 7 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for a couple.

Master food and nutrition class forming

Would you like to develop expertise in the area of food and nutrition and share your knowledge with others?

A Master Food and Nutrition Volunteer program is being offered by the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. The program is designed to provide food and nutrition training for selected individuals in Florida.

Master Food and Nutrition Volunteer is a title given to individuals who receive in-depth food and nutrition training from

County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agents. In return participants agree to give volunteer service to their local County Extension Office during the next year.

Master Food and Nutrition Volunteer training will be held at the Duval County Extension office on Wednesdays, beginning February 26, 2014, and ending April 23, 2014. Training sessions begin at 9:30 a.m. and last until 4:00 p.m. Training will include topics such as basic nutrition and health, food safety, food preparation, and the latest food preservation updates.

There will be a charge of \$75.00 to cover references and lab supplies for the course.

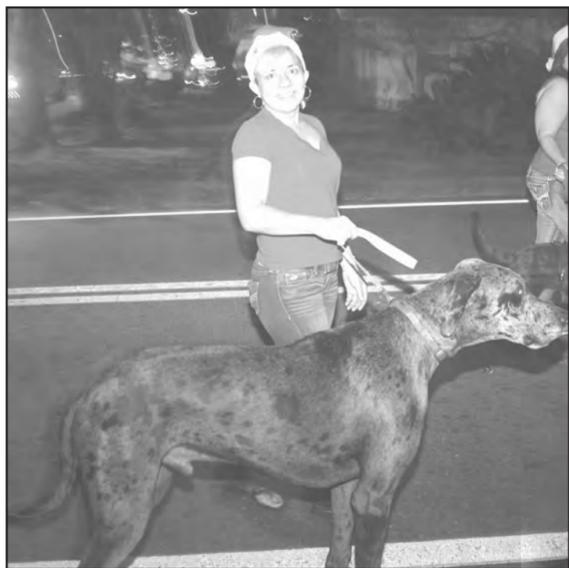
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Clay County-- Jackie Schrader at 904-284-6355 or 269-6355

Registration now open for Backcountry Film Scramble

One Book One Putnam announced today that registration is now open for the Back country Film Scramble scheduled for January 24 -26, 2014 here in Putnam County. The scramble is part of the events promoting the selection of Bob Lee's *Backcountry Lawman* as the 2014 county-wide reading selection. Registration is only \$5 per person per team and is available on line from now until midnight January 10, 2014. Winners will receive cash prizes totaling \$1,000 and have their films shown at the One Book One Putnam finale on February 27, 2014. Entry information and rules are available at www.backcountryfilmscramble.com.

The film scramble is scheduled for the weekend of January 24 to January 26, 2014. The event will kick off at Beef O'Brady's at 5:00 PM on Friday the 24th and run until 7:00 PM Sunday evening, at which point films will be submitted for judging. Awards will be announced and winning films will be presented at the One Book One Putnam Finale on February 27th. There will be a screening party, also at Beef O'Brady's on Friday, February 7 beginning at 6pm. At that time all films will be screened and the Audience Choice Award voted upon.



Crystal Ripolio with her dog Eros, walking with the Keystone Heights Animal Hospital float.

Toys for Kids

The Keystone Heights Jaycees will be handing out toys during its Toys for Kids event from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Dec. 21 at the club's S.R. 100 headquarters. Participants must sign up through Lake Area Ministries.

Faith Presbyterian Cantata

"And Glory Shone Around" A Christmas Cantata Celebrating Love's Perfect Light- December 15th at 11:00am. Directed by Laurel Lamme.

Faith Presbyterian Church, 2738 SE State Road 21 (Midway, between Keystone & Melrose).

Breakfast with Santa at Melrose Elementary

Breakfast is from 8 a.m. to



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Answers opens Commercial Circle facility



Answers staff, board members and volunteers at the facility's ribbon cutting Dec. 2. (Left to right) Back Row: Jennifer Mason, Susan Hatfield, Bonnie Clark, MaryLeigh Sehulster, Dorothy Rountree, Amber Castlevecchi and Amy Zackowski. Front row: Lynne McRae, JoAnna Weldon and Paige Vigil.

On Dec. 2 Answers Resource Facility cut the ribbon for the organization's new building on Commercial Circle.

Board Members, local community members, pastors and other guests attended and enjoyed refreshments and toured Answers' new home. The organization's leaders said they believe the new location will help them better serve the community for many years to come.

Answers Resource Facility, Inc. officially opened its doors in January, 2011.

The original vision for Answers as a women's resource center began in November of 2009.

JoAnna Merritt Weldon, CEO, said, "As a woman who has personally walked the path of shame and guilt because of my own unplanned pregnancy at the tender age of sixteen, I can't emphasize enough the overwhelming need for this type of ministry in our community."

The organization rented space from Champion's Heart for almost three years. Earlier this year, Answers officers signed a lease with Clay County to rent the former Clay County Health Department building at 115 Commercial Circle, across from the Post Office in Keystone Heights. The building had been vacant for many years.

Answers helps people in need regardless of their race, age, religious background or financial background. Since unplanned pregnancy threatens to tear families apart and can cause women to make rash decisions that can turn into lifelong regrets, Answers educates and informs their clients about all of the pregnancy options available to them.

In addition, clients are given resources and referrals for parenting and adoption. The facility does not refer for, nor do they encourage abortion as the best option for their clients, but are committed to offering accurate information about procedures and risks. Answers is also here to be a resource as well as offer support to the

parents and family members of their clients.

Answers is not limited to serving women in a pregnancy situation, but also offers help to women of any age facing relationship issues, family dynamics, past hurts from abortion, abuse or other sources of struggle.

All services are offered at no cost and are completely confidential. Answers is 100 percent donor-based and is incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization. Therefore, all donations are tax deductible.

Answers solely depends upon churches, civic organizations, businesses and families in the community to partner with them

financially.

To contact Answers, connect with them at P.O. Box 706, Keystone Heights, Florida or

See ANSWERS, 7A

DOT presents plans to widen S.R. 21 in Clay, S.R. 20 in Putnam

Also budgets improvements to Keystone Airport

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

Florida Department of Transportation officials presented their five-year tentative work plan for northeast Florida at a public meeting in Jacksonville on Dec. 9.

The road agency highlighted the widening of S.R. 21 from Orange Park to Middleburg and continued right of way acquisition for the First Coast Expressway in Clay County.

DOT has budgeted almost \$154 million over the next five years to acquire 17 miles of right of way for the expressway between S.R. 21 and U.S. 17.

It also plans to begin construction on a widening project for S.R. 21 from four to six lanes between Old Jennings Road and Branran Field Road in 2015. In 2018 it plans to expand the Black Creek Bridge in Middleburg from four to six lanes and in 2019, it will start widening the highway from C.R. 218 in Middleburg to Allen Murray Road.

Other upcoming Clay County pavement rehabilitation test projects include resurfacing, lighting and landscaping projects along U.S. 17 in 2016 and 2017, landscaping and traffic signal updates on Kingsley Avenue in 2016 and 2017, paving road shoulders on C.R. 218 from U.S. 301 to S.R. 16 in 2017, resurfacing S.R. 16 from S.R. 230 to S.R. 21 in 2017 and resurfacing U.S. 301 from the Bradford County line to Duval County.

Officials said they are also planning a \$32 million rigid

See DOT, 7A

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Clay board, JTA partner on commuter bus route

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

Clay County commissioners approved a nine-month agreement with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority to establish a commuter bus route between C.R. 220 and JTA's Rosa Parks Transit Station in downtown Jacksonville.

The agreement runs from Jan. 6, 2014 to Sept. 30. Service will consist of two morning and two afternoon runs.

The route begins at the authority's transit center at Hogan and Union streets, proceeds south on U.S. 17, turns west on Kingsley Avenue, then southwest on Blanding Boulevard and south on College Road. The route then turns east on C.R. 220, then north on U.S. 17 and back to Jacksonville

The agreement also stipulates the construction of a park-and-ride facility near the intersection of C.R. 220 and College Road.

Now, JTA runs two routes into Clay County. Its regular Blanding and Orange Park route runs south on S.R. 21 to the Orange Park Mall and returns to Jacksonville along the same route. The transit system also runs an express service to the mall, which makes additional stops along Wells Road and Kingsley Avenue.

In addition, JTA connects to Clay Transit routes at several locations.

Putnam County's Ride Solutions also operates a route from Palatka to the Orange Park Mall and Jacksonville's Naval Air Station. That route makes several stops along

Blanding and U.S. 17 in Clay County, including stops at the Clay County Courthouse, Orange Park Medical Center and Fleming Island.

According to the agreement, Clay County will pay JTA \$29.78 per hour and \$1.86 per mile for the new service. Any fees generated on the route will offset the county's costs. County Manager Stephanie Kopelousos told commissioners the county has budgeted \$46,000 for the project. The agreement also states that the parties are applying to Florida's Department of Transportation for a service development grant and JTA will credit the county for any funds obtained under the grant.

Commissioner Doug Conkey said the new route will enhance the county's primary public

transportation service: Clay Transit, which is operated by the Council on Aging. In 2009, Clay Transit recorded 94,000 trips. By 2012, the agency completed over 120,000 trips.

DOT

Continued from 6A

materials office in Gainesville.

DOT has also budgeted several projects for the Keystone Heights Airport, including upgrades to the facility's access road on S.R. 100, construction of hangers, rehabilitation of a runway, construction of a new terminal and rehabilitating a concrete apron.

In Putnam County, officials said they plan to complete the widening of S.R. 20 from two to four lanes in 2019. The highway is now four lanes from Palatka to Interlachen and two lanes from Interlachen to the Alachua County line.

DOT also plans to update traffic control devices on S.R. 100 at Putnam Hall in 2018.

ANSWERS

Continued from 6A

www.findanswersnow.org.

You can also call the office at 352-473-1000 on Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30-4:30.

The organization will host an open house on Sunday, Dec. 15 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Johnny's BBQ and Catering is providing complimentary desserts and refreshments for attendees to enjoy as they tour the new facility.

Submitted by Amy Zackowski, Answers Resource Facility Board Member.

Legislature to decide on New River reopening next year

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Monitor Editor

Sen. Rob Bradley told the Keystone Heights Rotary Club that a decision on whether to reopen New River Correctional Institution will be made in March or April.

The Department of Corrections closed the prison, in addition to other facilities in 2012, because of a decline in the statewide inmate population. However, in November, the department asked the legislature for \$59 million to reopen New River, along with eight other facilities it also closed last year. Corrections officials said forecasts showed an uptick in the prison population, which would create demand for more beds.

"That certainly is something that is being discussed," Bradley said of reopening the shuttered lockups, "but it is very premature to make any predictions about what facilities will, or will not be reopened."

Bradley chairs the senate's Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice. His district includes Bradford, Clay and Alachua counties.

Bradley said the decision on New River will depend on updated forecasts for prison populations and projections for state revenues for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

He also said that pending legislation to reform sentences for non-violent, non-repeat offenders may also impact prison population forecasts.

Several influential organizations, including Florida TaxWatch and Associated



Sen. Rob Bradley speaking to the Keystone Heights Rotary Club.

Industries of Florida are pushing prison reforms that would divert non-violent offenders away from long-term incarceration and toward drug treatment programs and other alternatives. Backers of the initiative claim the reforms would save the state millions of dollars and reserve prison beds for offenders that threaten public safety.

"That is a very serious discussion we are having in Tallahassee right now," Bradley said of the proposed reforms. "We need to start treating people that we are afraid of, differently than people we are just mad at."

Bradley added that he did not favor DOC's original decision to close New River. He said that if the state needed to reduce prison beds, he preferred an approach that closed dormitories at several facilities instead of shuttering an entire site.

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REGIONAL NEWS

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NEWS FROM BRADFORD COUNTY, UNION COUNTY AND THE LAKE REGION

'We light this candle so that your light will always shine'

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Regional News/Sports Editor

"The seasons change, time passes by, but the sureness of our memories never fade."

Wayne Wetherington spoke these words, not just in honor of his deceased daughter, Amanda, but in honor of all those children—young and old—who left their parents way too soon.

Wetherington, his wife, Bernie, and other parents who have experienced the death of a child remembered their children as part of Compassionate Friends' worldwide candle-lighting event, which took place on Dec. 8. The Lake Area-Keystone Heights chapter, which is led by Chuck and Mary Kramer, met at Champion's



Alice Watts is pictured during a moment of reflection as the names of the deceased are read aloud.

"To honor you, I take the time to appreciate everyone I love," Boggs said. "I know now there is no guarantee of days or hours spent in their presence."

Boggs closed her reading by saying deceased children live on through their parents.

"They can still participate in our lives by allowing their influences to bring out the best in us," Boggs said. "This is one of the best ways we can show our continuing love for them."

Chuck Kramer read aloud the 84 names of chapter members' deceased children, with present family members or friends lighting candles accordingly.

Prior to the reading of names, there was a lighting of five large candles that symbolized the feelings of grieving parents. Larry Fosser, who lost a son named Allen, lit the first candle, with his wife, Ann, saying, "As we light this candle in honor of our loved ones, we light it for our grief and sorrow, for our courage and hope, for our memories and friendship, and for our love."

The second candle was lit by Gloria Moran, who lost a daughter named Brianna, with Ann Fosser saying, "This candle represents our grief. The pain of losing you is intense. It reminds us of the depth of our love for you."

As Bernie Wetherington lit the third candle, Fosser said, "This candle represents our courage to confront sorrow, to comfort each other and to change our lives."

Michele Hylek, the daughter of Larry and Ann Fosser, lit the fourth candle to represent memories.

"This candle we light in your

See LIGHT, 7B



Lyn Kramer lights a candle representing love during the Compassionate Friends candle-lighting event held annually in remembrance of lost loved ones.



Lori Boggs gets a hug from Mary Kramer during an emotional reading.



Larry Fosser lights a candle representing grief and sorrow, courage and hope, memories and friendship, and love.

Heart Life Center in Keystone to take part in what is an annual event

"It's just a way to remember your child and celebrate your child as opposed to mourning your child," said Mary Kramer, who lost daughter Danielle in March 2007.

Tears were shed, of course. Lori Boggs, the mother of deceased children Tanya and Theresa, was overcome by emotion several times while speaking at the Lake Area-Keystone chapter event. She persevered, though, in talking about honoring her children, whether it's listening to music they would've liked "and singing at the top of my lungs with the windows rolled down instead of up," taking chances in life and saying what she feels without holding anything back, or simply by cherishing time with loved ones.

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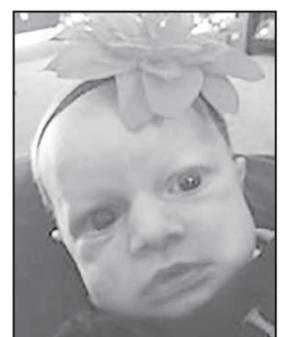


Hazel Reddish Land

Land to celebrate 90th birthday

Family and friends are invited to help celebrate the 90th birthday of Hazel Reddish Land (born Dec. 15, 1923) on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 2 p.m. at 9297 N.W. 212th St.

Please call 904-368-1148 or 904-964-5957 to RSVP or get directions. No gifts, please.



Birth: Jillian Faith Jenkins

Jonathan and Kelli Jenkins of Providence announce the birth of a daughter, Jillian Faith Jenkins, born on Sunday, Nov. 17, 2013 at 3:42 am. at North Florida Regional Medical Center in Gainesville.

She weighed 6 pounds 13 ounces and was 19 3/4 inches long. She joins two older sisters, Karli and Kenli and a big brother, Jackson.

Maternal grandparents are Carlton and Gayle Bielling of Providence.

Paternal grandparents are Tom and Karen Jenkins of Lake Butler.

Maternal great grandparents are Carl and Pauline Bielling of Providence.



Derek Peddicord

Peddicord graduates from basic training

Air Force Reserve Airman Derek Peddicord graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio.

The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness and basic warfare principles and skills.

Airmen who complete basic training earn four credits toward an associate in applied science degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

Peddicord is the son of Gabriella Peddicord of Gainesville and Claude Peddicord of Keystone Heights.

He is a 2006 graduate of

Keystone Heights High School.

Craver, Greene complete Navy basic training

Navy Airman Recruit Allie Craver, granddaughter of Karle A. and Tara L. Craver of Lake Butler, and Navy Seaman Bobby L. Greene III, son of Lisa M. and Bobby L. Greene II of Starke, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, Ill.

During the eight-week program, Craver and Greene completed a variety of training, which included classroom study and practical instruction on naval

customs, first aid, firefighting, water safety and survival, and shipboard and aircraft safety. An emphasis was also placed on physical fitness.

The capstone event of boot camp is "Battle Stations." This exercise gives recruits the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the fleet. Battle Stations is designed to galvanize the basic warrior attributes of sacrifice, dedication, teamwork and endurance in each recruit through the practical application of basic Navy skills and the core values of honor, courage and commitment. Its distinctly Navy flavor was designed to take into account what it means to be a sailor.

Craver is a 2013 graduate of Union County High School.

Greene is a 2013 graduate of Bradford High School.

Miss Bradford Fest is Jan. 18

The fourth annual Santa Fe College Miss Bradford Fest, which is open to ages 4-22, is scheduled for Jan. 18 at the Bradford High School auditorium at 7 p.m.

Contestants will compete in Western wear, talent, party dress, evening wear, photogenic and on-stage question categories in the following age divisions: 4-7 (Little Miss), 8-12 (Junior Miss), 13-17 (Teen Miss) and graduating high school seniors-22 years old (Miss). The winner of the Miss division could win a two-

year Santa Fe College scholarship. (Must meet eligibility requirements for college enrollment.)

The deadline to enter the pageant is Jan. 4. Entry forms may be obtained via email. Please send email requests to thorn99@embarqmail.com.

For more information, please call Lisa Tatum at 904-966-1514 or Brenda Thornton at 904-364-8266.

Talent Fest Showdown is Jan. 25

The annual Bradford Fest Talent Fest Showdown is scheduled for Jan. 25, 2014, at 6

p.m. at the Bradford High School auditorium.

Prizes for contestants are as follows: \$1,000 for first place, \$300 for second place and \$200 for third place. In addition, the top three will participate in final auditions April 18 for a chance to perform at the 2014 Suwannee River Jam as well as receiving a radio opportunity with WEAG. The first-place individual will also be invited perform at a May 17 Santa Fe College concert.

The deadline for participants to enter is Jan. 15.

For more information on entry fees and requirements, please contact Cheryl Canova at the Santa Fe College Andrews Center at cheryl.canova@sfcollge.edu or 352-395-4410.

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"IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!" **THIS IS FORD COUNTRY**

DOC, Guardian ad Litem team up for a merry Christmas

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Regional News/Sports Editor

As a volunteer with Guardian ad Litem, Arthur Wright gets a chance to give back to his community in the form of helping children in need.

Thanks to the generosity of the Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency and Department of Corrections employees, Wright and others associated with the local Guardian ad Litem program (Bradford, Union and Baker counties) get to give a little more the month of December.

Every year, the Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency organizes a toy drive among Department of Corrections employees. Wright—as is the case every year—was at the Guardian ad Litem office in Starke on Dec. 10, transporting gifts from several vehicles. This year, 99 children will be the beneficiaries.

“Just to see the smiles on the



Pictured in a roomful of toys at the Guardian ad Litem office in Starke are (l-r) volunteer Arthur Wright, Richard Walmsley of the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, Charles Minta (on bike) of Baker Correctional, Guardian ad Litem's Lisa Rodgers, Department of Corrections inspector Jerri Hale and Dorothy Minta, Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency-Chapter 5 president.

kids' faces when you present (the gifts)—it's unbelievable the excitement,” Wright said. “It feels good to make a difference.” Lisa Rodgers, who works

in the local Guardian ad Litem office, said it is impressive to note that even in a tough economy, people are still willing to give. First Christian Church

of Starke, as it does every year, stepped up to sponsor children receiving gifts, as did Corizon Correctional Healthcare and its employees. Plus, as it does every

year, the First United Methodist Women of Starke supported children throughout the year by

presenting them with gift cards on their birthdays.

“People are still eager to give so children can have a good Christmas,” Rodgers said.

Guardian ad Litem volunteers are appointed by courts to represent the best interests of children in dependency court proceedings as a result of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Volunteers make sure children are safe and also gather incredibly important information for the court so that the best decisions possible can be made for the children. They are also mentors and someone who spends time with the children, letting them know they are important.

For a few hours a month, you can make a difference.

If you are interested in learning more about Guardian ad Litem or becoming a volunteer, please call 904-966-6237.



Computer class: opportunities for adults and high school students

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Regional News/Sports Editor

If you're an adult and ambitious when it comes to learning a career skill, perhaps the Computer Systems and Information Technology program at the Bradford-Union Technical Center is for you.

Instructor Jeff Ledger said the class has seats available. Last year, the program had an enrollment that consisted of 12 adults students. This year, there are four.

What students can achieve is certification in three areas: CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+ and CompTIA Security+.

“If you get your A+ certification, you'll probably make \$15 an hour starting out,” Ledger said. “If you get your Net+, you're looking at about \$22. If you get your security (certification), you're making about \$25, \$26.”

Plus, through an articulation agreement, students who complete the course can earn credits toward furthering their education at Santa Fe College.

The course, however, is demanding due to changes through the Florida Department of Education. What was once a 1,650-hour course is now 900 hours.

Ledger said in essence, students have gone from covering one chapter in their textbooks per week to covering three chapters per week.

“It's too much material at one time,” student David Wilkerson said, adding that he was spending a lot more time outside of class on the material than he was in class.

Racheal Latham said it's a grueling schedule for her as she has two children to care for. On the other hand, she can sit down and do her homework along with her children.



LEFT: Bradford High School student Dana Carney works on a computer. BELOW: Instructor Jeff Ledger (left) assists student David Wilkerson.



“They'll do two or three different subjects of homework, and then they're done,” Latham said. “I'm still trying to get my one chapter done.”

Latham, though, is glad she enrolled in the program.

“I really enjoy it,” she said. Ledger admitted he doesn't like the reduction in hours, but did say the course is now ideal for high school students.

“They do a chapter a week and have a whole year to do

it,” Ledger said of high school students. “These adults have 10 weeks to do it. They're burning some midnight oil at home.”

Bradford High School students who are enrolled in the course are Brandon Baker, Dana Carney and Cole Johnson. Ledger is especially proud of Carney, a junior, who has already earned her A+ certification. She is the first sophomore to accomplish that as part of the technical center program. (The program's new format allows high school students to receive A+ certification as sophomores, Network+ certification as juniors

See TECH, 11B



Racheal Latham works at reassembling a computer.

Helping to unload presents from vehicles are Arthur Wright (top photo), Jerri Hale (at left in right photo) and Lisa Rodgers. This year's annual toy drive will benefit 99 Guardian ad Litem children.



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LETTERS

EDITOR@BCTELEGRAPH.COM

Round of thanks in aftermath of Lawtey election

Dear Editor:

After a rather difficult atmosphere in Lawtey prior to the local election, it is now a wonderful feeling to know that the people have spoken loud and clear about what are the priorities for this city. It is quite obvious that they place the agenda of the city first and foremost over that of certain individuals.

Therefore, it is most appropriate that thanks be directed first to the people who got out and voted. They now need to follow up as well and attend the monthly Council meeting held on the first Monday of the month. Only by doing that can they continue to have a voice in their government as well as hearing the truth of what is really being done to benefit the city and all its residents.

Second, many thanks to the editor who both published a rather long editorial as well as his own investigation of allegations to get the truth before writing his own article.

Last but certainly not least, many thanks to those who were re-elected, as well as one newly elected, for all their hard work on behalf of the city in the past. Knowing each of them personally, I have great confidence that they will continue on the right path and help the city continue to move forward. There is a great deal that still needs to be done and now there is more hope for the city than ever before.

Barbara Kasck-Mercier
Lawtey

A tribute to Nelson Mandela

Dear Editor:

We are fortunate to live in a life-time to experience such an incredible world leader. This is my tribute to him:

Tribute To Nelson Mandela Madiba- The World Heavy Weight Champion for Freedom, Justice, Equality, & Democracy Nelson Mandela once said there was one thing he regretted, that he never became a heavy weight champion. I wish for his family to know that in the eyes of the world, Madiba was the World's Heavy Weight Champion for Freedom, Justice, Equality, & Democracy.

He went 27 rounds against injustice, when he was unjustly imprisoned for 27 years for standing up freedom. He endured the blows of injustice and hatred, round after round, but he kept on fighting until he saw the chance to give the knockout punch to Apartheid. He raised a clenched champion fist, and gave the knockout punch to Apartheid that was heard around the world. He rose from prisoner to president, and became the champion of a nation and the world!

He wears the belt as the "World Heavy Weight Champion" for Freedom, Justice, Equality, & Democracy.

He helped to heal a nation through truth, reconciliation and love rather than hatred and revenge.

He was the world's greatest humanitarian and exemplary

icon of love & forgiveness, teaching the world that Love is the greatest gift & healer for all hearts.

Amanda! Hamba Kahle, sweet rest Madiba, thy good and faithful servant.

Carolyn Brown Spooner
Starke

Operation Christmas Child has record year

Dear Editor:

I write with enthusiasm again this year about Operation Christmas Child, an evangelistic ministry of Samaritan's Purse. A record number of 5018 shoeboxes came in to the Keystone Heights Relay Center for impoverished children in other nations! This marvelous record of shoeboxes collected in a depressed economy reveals the evergiving hearts of people in our Lake Area Region. These simple gifts of small toys, school supplies, and hygiene items are now en route from the Atlanta Processing Center to the countries of Belize, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Haiti, Macedonia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and the African countries of Botswana, Gabon, Ghana, Madagascar, Niger and Seychelles. My family served at the Atlanta Processing Center over Thanksgiving weekend, inspecting and cartonizing shoeboxes going to Dominican Republic and Madagascar. Others from First Baptist Church of Keystone Heights and Trinity Baptist will be serving in Atlanta for the first time Dec. 9-11.

Sincere thanks goes to each and every person who packed a shoe box gift or in some way helped to promote this worldwide ministry of sacrifice to needy children. This was my seventh year as the Keystone Heights Relay Center Coordinator. I am always moved by the generous response by so many in our community. Stores and restaurants advertised with colorful posters. The *Lake Region Monitor* encouraged participation through articles and photos. Beall's Outlet Store donated countless numbers of empty shoeboxes to wrap and pack. Red and green decorative OCC shoeboxes (now known as Gospel Opportunities) were offered at Bonnie's Pizza, Hedrick's Hair Salon, Johnny's Bar-B-Q, and Mallard's Dollarama to fill.

McDonald's bigheartedly donated 12 large boxes of Happy Meal toys as fillers. The Salvation Army donated American Girl charm necklaces and bookmarks, as well as socks to multiply shoeboxes. Ladies knitted hats, purses, and dolls. Toothbrushes and toothpaste were donated by Keystone Dental and Dr. Cunningham in Starke. Johnny's Bar-B-Q graciously advertised Trinity Baptist Church as the Relay Center for shoebox drop off on its sign. Friendship Bible Church promoted the National Moment of prayer on its sign. Bryan's Ace Hardware and Elixson Wood Products helped to transport 252 heavy cartons of shoeboxes to the Alachua Collection Center. Sixty-two volunteers served to collect, count and cartonize the shoeboxes at the Relay Center over eight days. Rising to the top were the 46 churches, 4 civic groups, 5 schools and 4

families who joyfully packed the 5018 shoeboxes. Many tears were shed throughout the week as individuals shared amazing testimonies of how shoeboxes were packed and goals were reached and surpassed. Selfless donors, you did an absolutely incredible job! You have indeed made a difference in the lives of 5018 boys and girls. Our global world has allowed us to touch the lives of these children in desperate need of hope. The simple gift of a shoebox is a treasure that holds love beyond measure.

Words of thanks are not enough to the Lake Area Region for your sacrificial giving of shoeboxes. We are the hands of Jesus when we give these wonderful gifts. Pray for the children who will receive our shoeboxes. Just imagine the smiling faces and twinkling eyes as the children open their shoeboxes! Whenever the shoeboxes arrive, it is Christmas! This year is special as Operation Christmas Child celebrates 20 years totaling over 100 million shoeboxes! We celebrate each shoebox packed in this region with caring hearts and hands. Everyone is invited to attend a Celebration Tea at Forest Grove Baptist Church, 22575 NW 94th Ave, Alachua (386) 462-3921. Thank you and thank you again. Merry Christmas!

Preparing already for our next Shoe Box Season in 2014,

Diane Michel
Keystone Heights Relay Center Coordinator
Operation Christmas Child

Reader against closure of thrift store

Dear Editor,

This letter is to inform the citizens of Starke and The Lake Region, that The ARC of Bradford County's "Board of Directors" have decided to close The ARC Thrift Store. I have a petition with 204 signatures, including addresses & phone numbers, that is requesting an emergency meeting with this "Board of Directors" but they are not accepting any e-mails or phone calls with regards to this matter. Therefore, I am writing this letter to be published in The Bradford County Telegraph. We are requesting an emergency "board meeting" to be as soon as possible, as the plans are to close the ARC Thrift Store on Dec. 20, 2013. We want this "board" to understand why this thrift store means so much to our area. Many folks, especially those on a fixed income just do not have the money to shop for new clothes for their children and themselves. Also, this store has furniture and necessary household items, dishes, glasses

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and pictures. If you want it, they probably have it! I have shopped at this store since they opened and the staff here are wonderful people who care very much for their loyal customers. In fact, I donated a blue sofa to the store and it is now in the living room of one of the group homes. The loyal customers of the ARC Thrift Store would like for our voices to be heard. This cause is very dear to my heart, as I have a five year old nephew with downs syndrome, who lives in Holly Hills, FL. Thanking you for your attention in regards to this matter, I am,

Sincerely
Miriam Blankenship
Keystone Heights

Ready for progress

Dear Editor:

Now I'm just about as conservative as you can get but after living the last eighteen years in the geographical anomaly of northern Bradford County I must cry uncle and ask if we can get a little progress in here? I mean, I'm thirty-five miles in any direction from a nice restaurant or shopping, other than basic necessities. This might not be so bad, except if I want to go in a southerly direction I have to contend with two nationally recognized speed traps and the

unnecessarily congested Starke. Really? Does everything have to be crammed along 301 south of Call St.?

I'm not bashing Starke or any of the small businesses but here is what have been my thoughts over the years and I'm sure I am not alone in these.

Each time the subject of the by-pass has come up I've thought, well, it might make a little dent in the burger joint business but at least I won't get stuck behind four semis acting as a rolling road block through Starke anymore. I won't mention the nightmare of getting through town after a Gator home game and if we don't want a by-pass couldn't we just get DOT to put up those nice "trucks stay in right lane" signs?

When, back seven or eight years ago, we heard we were getting a SUPER Walmart I thought, Awesome! No more trying to squeeze down tiny isles to find very limited selections! Son-of-a-biscuit-eater! I got fooled on that. We just upgraded to a medium Walmart where if you like an item and it sells well, you can bet it won't be reordered again. I guess that makes sense. There's already too much restocking on the same narrow isles during the day anyway.

Each time one of our fast-food joints has closed up I've hoped quietly to myself; please let a nice sit-down, national chain, restaurant open up. Maybe a Carrabba's or an Olive Garden?

And please let it open on the north end of town? I like Western Steer and Sonny's just fine before you get all riled up. Just once again, it seems everything had to be squeezed along 301 south of Call St. and with space being a premium the tables had to be small and close to accommodate a small building to accommodate cramped parking to accommodate... Well, just make sure your fellow diner sitting on your right shoulder isn't a southpaw and it'll all work out. Unless, he's a loud talker or halitosis sufferer.

I've long since abandoned all hope of a drinking establishment that plays anything other than country music but if I must listen to the twangy stuff could it be in say something like a pub or a club? You know..., a place that serves "pub grub" and has a larger draught beer selection than just Bud light.

I know what some of y'all are thinking. If you don't like it, move. I suppose I could but have you ever tried packing eighteen years of stuff? Not to mention all those years of taxes I've invested here. And just what would I put in the real-estate ad for nearby amenities?

Please take this as slightly exaggerated humor as it is intended. It's all fun and games until we get them trucks moved over and you get between me and the cannoli or draught Guinness.

Tom Rice
Lawtey

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The 3rd Annual Light Up Crosby Lake Cemetery
December 17th • 7:00p.m. at the cemetery

For the past 3 years the Radical Hospitality Team of the First United Methodist Church has built a bridge from the church into the community by hosting the Light Up Crosby Lake Campaign. This act of "salty service" provides revenue for the Crosby Lake Cemetery Association to assist with the costs of maintaining the cemetery. The Crosby Lake Cemetery Association has done a wonderful job providing quality perpetual care for our loved ones who have been placed there. This year's service will be December 17th at 7:00p.m. at the cemetery. Luminaries can be placed for \$10 each in memory of a friend or loved one.

Get your luminaries beginning Dec. 1st by:
Visiting the church website online at (firstuumc.cc)
or
Stop by the church office (200 N. Walnut Street)
or
Mail donation to FUMC at (P. O. Box 157 Starke, FL 32091)
To find out how you can help with this event contact the church office at (904) 964-6864.

Volunteers Needed to place 4,000 candles
If you can volunteer, please show up at the cemetery at 1PM Dec. 17. Wear comfortable clothing and hats.

All proceeds benefit the Crosby Lake Cemetery Association

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Area motorsport park helps you get a 'firm' grip on the wheel

Editor's note: Lindsay Fox, who was the sales and marketing director at the Florida International Rally and Motorsport Park at the time the interview for this story was conducted, has since renewed an assignment with the International Motor Sports Association and no longer works at the FIRM.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Staff Writer

Global Rally Series driver Geoff Sykes believes he has a better handle on what it takes to be a successful driver. In fact, you could say he's "firm" in his belief that a school in Bradford County has helped him

tremendously.

Sykes attended a class at the Florida International Rally and Motorsports Park—referred to as the FIRM—which is adjacent to the Keystone Heights Airport. Sykes had yet to make it to the final stages of a race in his first year of competing in the Global Rally Series, but in his second race after attending the FIRM, he placed second in the GRC Lites Round 5 at the Charlotte Motor Speedway.

"I do attribute a lot of that to the Firm," Sykes said.

Located on 430 acres, the FIRM offers one of just three rally driving schools in the U.S., with the others located in



A student, along with instructor Bryn Walters, gets some work handling a car on dirt at the Florida International Rally and Motorsport Park, known as the FIRM.

New Hampshire and Montana. Lindsay Fox, sales and marketing director for the FIRM, described rally racing as basically off-road racing, but in cars such as the Ford Focus, Subaru Impreza WRX and MINI Cooper—in essence, cars anybody can buy at a dealership.

"It's not as popular here," Fox said of rallying. "I would say since I've been here, half of our students have not lived in the U.S."

A related style of racing is becoming popular, however.

"RallyCross has become pretty big, especially in the U.S.," Fox said. "That's where they transition from dirt to asphalt and back."

Sykes' background as a driver is in autocross and road racing—a background that includes multiple records and championships in the BMW Car Club of America racing series. He began participating in Global Rally Series races this year, which presented something that was new to him—driving on dirt.

He sought training and participated in a school in which he was in an eight-student class. The students shared driving time in a car, but Sykes said the problem was once you felt like you were getting the hang of things, you had to exit the vehicle and allow another student to get behind the wheel.

The FIRM is a little different. "The biggest thing with us is most of our classes have a one-on-one instructor-to-student

ratio," Fox said.

That limits the number of students that can attend a class at one time since the FIRM has one

full-time instructor along with four or five that can be called in if needed. However, that creates more driving time for students,

which was one of the appeals for Sykes.

"That's what got me out there," Sykes said, adding, "Right away, they put me in the front seat of a car. That's really the quickest way to learn."

Bryn Walters has been an instructor at the FIRM for approximately nine years, beginning when the facility was called the European Rally and Performance Driving School.

"I came out here, and I did a few events with the old owner (Ivor Wigham)," Walters said. "He liked how I drove and how I kept winning events that he put

See FIRM, 8B



Would you like to give a Lamborghini Gollardo a spin? The FIRM offers that opportunity, as well as hosting open-track days and offering a driver's club. Visit www.gorally.com to see what all the FIRM has to offer.

Grammer is new FIRM director

Florida International Rally and Motorsport Park (the FIRM) announced in July that Ken Grammer joined the company as managing director.

Grammer came to the FIRM from Virginia International Raceway, where he served as its driver's club director. Grammer oversees the day-to-day operation of the FIRM while expanding both its motorsport and military training business units.

Grammer will manage enhancements to The FIRM's 450-acre facility in north central Florida, including ongoing improvements to its road course, gravel and dirt motorsport trails, off-road tracks and courses, and its classrooms, tuning shop, private garages and firing ranges.

Used for both public and private special events, the FIRM is one of the most challenging and diverse motorsports parks in the country. Grammer will supervise the expansion of the FIRM's road course and



Ken Grammer

redevelop the driver's club, while continuing to expand off-road and defensive driving programs.

"We are excited to have Ken join the FIRM," said Robert Bunn, president and general counsel of the FIRM. "Ken's background in motorsports complements our long-term goal of making the FIRM the most exciting multi-purpose motorsport facility in the southeast."

"I am very pleased to be joining the FIRM," Grammer said. "I see the FIRM as a fantastic pencil drawing that is ready to have the final color applied. I find the prospect of helping build the FIRM into a premier southeast motorsports destination very exciting."

In addition to his work with Virginia International Raceway, Grammer has competed in several club and professional sports car race series, served as the director of operations for SCCA Pro Racing and managed championship winning race teams in SCCA, NASA and Grand-Am. In 2008, Grammer served as the first managing director of New Jersey Motorsports Park. Grammer has also promoted and managed major motorsports events throughout North America and served as race director for several professional race series.

Prior to his career in motorsports, Grammer worked for 20 years in the computer software industry.

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Altrusa embraces the season of giving

ABOVE: Altrusa of Starke made donations totaling \$2,845 to many causes at its November meeting. Checks were presented to (l-r) Barry Warren in the amount of \$500 for Shop With a Cop, Cheryl Canova in the amount of \$1,500 for the Santa Fe College Foundation's Altrusa scholarship, Misty DuBose and Kim Wheeler in the amount of \$200 to purchase books for children during the Bradford County Public Library's Santa program, Betty Warren in the amount of \$500 for the Food Pantry and Valerie Hoffer, representing Capital City Bank, in the amount of \$145 for Paws for a Cause—a project the bank participated in. LEFT: Altrusa also supported the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift drive, partnering with First Baptist Church of Starke and Trinity Baptist Church of Keystone Heights. Altrusa members Vicki Teal (left) and Cheryl Canova make the delivery.

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CRIME

Threat at S&S leads to 2 arrests

Two men were arrested by Union deputies after one man threatened an employee at the S&S convenience store in Worthington Springs Saturday evening.

According to the arrest report, Lopez Santiago, 40, attempted to purchase beer at the convenience store. The clerk refused to sell the beer, since he was accompanied by several males that appeared underage. The clerk had previously told Santiago on several other occasions she wouldn't sell him beer when he is in the store with the younger males.

Shortly after refusing to sell the beer, the clerk stepped outside the store to clean the windows. Santiago was sitting in his vehicle and made several threatening remarks to the clerk.

The clerk called the sheriff's office, and deputies located Santiago in a trailer park near the S&S a short time later. The clerk was brought to the trailer park to identify the suspect, and he was charged with assault-threat to do violence.

While the deputies were arresting Santiago, a neighbor in the park approached them and said a male had taken off through the back door of the residence running. Eric Cruz, 27, refused to stop and was tasered and handcuffed by the deputies. Cruz was charged with resisting an officer-interfering with an arrest, and he later admitted at the jail that he has warrants for his arrest from Michigan.

4 arrested for thefts at former business site

Four people were arrested for stealing scrap metal, sheets of tin, large bolts and a vehicle over the course of a month from the site of the former Olin's Mobile Home business at the corner of S.R. 100 and Edwards Road just west of Starke.

Arrested on Dec. 6 by Bradford deputies and charged with burglary, larceny and dealing in stolen property were: Kimberly Dawn Eason-Cowart, 42, of Starke; David Carl Gatlin, 36, of Starke; and Christopher D. Plemons, 25, of Starke. Hiram Lester Thacker, 32, of Waldo was charged with larceny and dealing in stolen property, along with probation violation. Eason-Cowart was also charged with probation violation.

According to the arrest report, the suspects admitted that they went to the Olin property at least eight times during the past month to steal the items and then take them to Guide Metal on U.S. 301 north in Bradford County to sell for scrap metal.

The suspects stated they would enter the property through a hole in a fence, remove the items and place them by the hole, then eventually return with a vehicle to take the items from the

property before selling them.

Bonds set were \$6,000 for Eason-Cowart, \$115,000 for Gatlin, \$60,000 for Plemons and \$40,000 for Thacker.

Lawtey man arrested in Hampton Villas incident

Joshua Logan Buchholtz, 24, of Lawtey was arrested Dec. 3 by Bradford deputies for an incident that occurred at the Hampton Villas Apartments that same day.

According to the arrest report, the victim was placing her son in a car seat when Buchholtz stepped between her and the vehicle, placed his hands around her throat and said he wished he could beat the (expletive) out of her. Buchholtz then hit the rear window of the car before the victim got into the vehicle and drove away.

After Buchholtz was located and arrested for battery, he was later charged with burglary, larceny and dealing in stolen property from previous warrants issued to the Bradford County Sheriff's office. Bond was set at \$1,000 for each of Buchholtz's four charges.

Recent arrests in Bradford, Clay or Union

The following individuals were arrested recently by local law enforcement officers in Bradford, Union or Clay (Keystone Heights area) counties:

Bradford

Emily Ann Adkins, 27, of Jacksonville was arrested Dec. 6 by Bradford deputies for failure to appear.

Brandon Michael Akins, 20, of Keystone Heights was arrested Dec. 7 by Bradford deputies for probation violation.

Erica Dawn Bailey, 33, of Keystone Heights was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies on an out-of-county warrant.

Lawrence Leon Cleesen, 18, of Starke was arrested Dec. 7 by Starke police for driving while license suspended or revoked.

Brian Sean Copeland, 39, was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies for probation violation.

Sarah Jane Drawdy, 18, of Starke was arrested Dec. 8 by Bradford deputies for vehicle theft, possession of cocaine, and possession of drug equipment. According to the arrest report, Drawdy took the vehicle while spending the night at the victim's residence. The vehicle was spotted later by Starke police at Old Lawtey Road and Estelle Street in Starke, with Drawdy in it, along with drugs and the drug equipment. After her arrest, Drawdy stated she had permission to have the vehicle and denied stealing it.

Deseree Jacqueline Evans, 30, of Starke was arrested Dec. 3 by Starke police for probation violation.

Janice Yvonne Giles, 57, of Starke was arrested Dec. 9 by Bradford deputies for possession of opium or derivatives and distribution of opium or derivatives.

Michael Douglas Goad, 29, of Melrose was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies for battery.

Anthony Glenn Gravely, 62, of Lawtey was arrested Dec. 4 by Starke police for disorderly intoxication.

Hesley Delmar Griffis, 20, of Lawtey was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies for two charges of felony probation violation.

Glenn Preston Haynes, 20, of Keystone Heights was arrested Dec. 3 by Bradford deputies for probation violation.

Joshua Alan Hobson, 26, of Starke was arrested Dec. 3 by Starke police on an out-of-county warrant.

Myeisha Laquanda James, 19, of Gainesville was arrested Dec. 6 by Starke police for larceny.

Craig J. Jenkins, 33, of Starke was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies for withholding child support.

Robert Earl Kish, 34, of Starke was arrested Dec. 7 by Starke police for possession of drugs and possession of drug equipment.

Rachel Rose Lasher, 29, of Lawtey was arrested Dec. 5 by Starke police for larceny.

Tracy Lynn Meadows, 33, of Starke was arrested Dec. 7 by Starke police for possession of drugs and possession of drug equipment.

Elisha Norman Nabors, 38, of Gainesville was arrested Dec. 9 by Starke police for probation violation.

Blaine Ernest Rivera, 49, of Keystone Heights was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies for resisting an officer and on an out-of-county warrant.

John Edward Dane Roberts, 21, was arrested Dec. 8 by Bradford deputies for possession of marijuana and driving while license suspended or revoked.

Kevin Larod Robins, 44, of Jacksonville was arrested Dec. 3 by Bradford deputies for withholding child support.

James Randall Sapp, 26, of Starke was arrested Dec. 8 by Bradford deputies for battery.

Amanda Shae Stevens, 32, of Hawthorne was arrested Dec. 2 by Bradford deputies for possession of marijuana and possession of drug equipment.

Rocky Clinton Thompson, 56, of Starke was arrested Dec. 7 by Bradford deputies for battery.

Daniel Ray Thornton, 33, of Middleburg was arrested Dec. 3 by Starke police for possession of marijuana and possession of drug equipment.

John Wesley Tucker, 47, of Starke was arrested Dec. 3 by Bradford deputies for possession of marijuana.

Dana W. Vincent, 33, of Starke was arrested Dec. 4 by Bradford deputies for probation violation.

Anthony Williams, 21, of Hawthorne was arrested Dec. 6 by Starke police for larceny.

Keystone/Melrose

Kevin Donley, 36, of Melrose was arrested Dec. 4 by Clay deputies for aggravated assault on a pregnant person.

Michael Lavane, 38, of Melrose was arrested Dec. 3 by Clay

deputies for non-support.

Laura Rayhorn, 28, of Melrose was arrested Dec. 7 by Clay deputies for DUI with injury to a person or property damage.

Blaine Ernest Rivera, 49, of Keystone Heights was arrested Dec. 5 by Putnam deputies for two probation violations.

Clinton Skipper, 20, of Keystone Heights was arrested Dec. 5 by Clay deputies for battery.

Ronnie Stratten, 49, of Melrose was arrested Dec. 6 by Clay deputies for driving with a suspended license.

Union

Hector Rodriquez Cruz, 36, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 8 by Union deputies for possession of marijuana and possession of drug equipment.

Robert Wayne Douglas, 29, was arrested Dec. 6 by Union deputies for disorderly intoxication.

Michael Daniel McNeill, 25, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 4 by Union deputies for battery. McNeill had also been arrested Nov. 27 by Union deputies for driving while license suspended or revoked.

Robert Stoutamire, 20, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 4 by Union deputies for battery

and resisting an officer.

James Randall Smith, 44, of Lake City was arrested Dec. 4 by Union deputies on a warrant from Clay County for probation violation-felony.

Arthur Clarence Stalnaker, 24, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 6 by Union deputies on a warrant from Columbia County.

Donald James Roberts Jr., 35, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 6 by Union deputies on a warrant from Clay County for contempt of court-child support.

Mary Louise Wright, 51, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 8 by Union deputies for three warrants on failure to appear.

A 13-year old female juvenile from Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 6 by Union deputies for intimidation-written threat to kill or injure. According to the arrest report, the juvenile threatened another classmate with a letter on Facebook. When confronted by the Union deputy, she admitted to posting the letter.

Jorge Montoya Bocanegra, 23, of Lake Butler was arrested Dec. 8 by Union deputies for fraud-utter false instrument. According to the arrest report, Bocanegra used a fake passport when identifying himself to deputies during a disturbance call.

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OBITUARIES



Ricky Gillette
Ricky Gillette

STARKE—Ricky Allen Gillette, age 51, of Starke, passed away suddenly on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2013. He was born in Jacksonville on Sept. 27, 1962 to Phanita Miller Gillette and the late James Iva Gillette. Richard was an avid Gator fan, bicycle enthusiast and was loved by all. Richard was preceded in death by: his wife, Tammy Ann Baker Gillette; his son, Matthew Bradley Pierce; and his sister, Bonnie Finley.

Richard is survived by: his children, Carlos D. Gumbs of Gainesville, Gregory Pierce and Sarah Pierce, both of Waycross, Ga.; his step-children, Rebecca and Gator Baker of Starke; his brothers, Jessie Carter, Dexter Carter and Chris "Catfish" Miller; his sisters, Tammy (Jimmy) Harrel and Joy Carter Gray; and numerous grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, aunts, and uncles.

Visitation was held Dec. 9, at Archie Tanner Funeral Services. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Arrangements are under the care and direction of Archie Tanner Funeral Services, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit archietannerfuneralservices.com to sign the family's guest book.

PAID OBITUARY



Jeannell Hosley
Jeannell Hosley

HILLIARD—Jeannell Hosley, 49, of Hilliard recently died at her residence. She was born in Richland, Ga. and moved to Starke at an early age. She was a member of Hilliard Baptist Church, and attended the local schools of Bradford County.

She is survived by: sisters, Clara (Rev. Alvin) D. Green of Starke and Betty Foster of Mississippi; brothers, Herbert Tyson Jr. of Gainesville and Timothy Tyson of Jacksonville.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14, in the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Starke with Rev. Alvin Green, eulogist and Rev. Richard Chandler presiding. Interment will be held in Bob Love Cemetery in Starke. Visitation is: family hour from 2-3:00 pm, friends from 4-7:00 pm on Friday, at the funeral home. The cortege will form at the residence of Rev. Alvin and Clara Green.

Arrangements are under the direction of Haile Funeral Home.

Edith Kennan

LAKE BUTLER—Edith Bennett Kennan, 84, died Monday, Dec. 9, 2013 at Shands UF Hospital with her family by her side. She was

born in Stateburg, S.C. to the late James Bennett and Maud Virginia Paul Bennett. She was a member of Morgan Rd Baptist Church. She lived most of her life in Waldo and is preceded in death by her husband, George Anthony Kennan Sr.

She is survived by: daughters, Carolyn Phillips of Keystone Heights, Elaine Kennan of Waldo, Paula (Bill) Horton of Waldo, and Stephanie (John) Sneed of Gainesville; son, Tony (Elaine) Keenan Jr. of Waldo; sister, Frances Boyce of Charleston, S.C., nine grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren.

Services will be held Saturday, Dec. 14, at 11:00 a.m. in the Chapel of Archer Funeral Home with Rev. Lonnie Broome and Rev. Al Paulson. Burial with be at Crosby Lake Cemetery in Starke. Family will have a visitation Friday from 6 pm to 8 pm at the funeral home.

Summerlyn Porfiriadis

STARKE—Summerlyn Grace Porfiriadis, 12 days old, of Starke, died Friday, Dec. 6, 2013 at Shands Starke. She was born on Nov. 24, at North Florida Regional Medical Center in Gainesville.

She is survived by: her parents, Blake and Amber Porfiriadis of Starke; her brother, Blakemon Porfiriadis, Jr.; her sister, Ava Hebert; her paternal grandparents, Nicholas Porfiriadis and Wanda Hutchins; her maternal grandparents, and Glenn and Angie Baker.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date. Arrangements are under the care and direction of Archie Tanner Funeral Services of Starke.

Lillie Reeves

RAIFORD—Lillie M Reeves, 92, of Raiford, died Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013 at ET York Haven Hospice Center. She was born in Jacksonville and a resident of Raiford. She was a member of Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church, attended the local schools of Union and Bradford County and was a homemaker.

She is survived by: her children, Rocille Warren and Elcano Reeves Sr., Olla Paige, Myrtes Reeves, Melba Reeves and Rosemary Jackson, all of Raiford, and Artha Reeves Sr. of Lake Butler; 15 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren, and nine great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 12:00 noon in the Magnolia Baptist Church in Raiford with Rev. JW Warren Presiding and Rev. Henry Ortiz, Eulogist. Interment will be held in Five Saplin Cemetery in Raiford. Arrangements are under the direction of Haile Funeral Home. Viewing will be held on Friday, Dec. 13, Family hour 3-4:00 p.m. at the Carl D. Haile Memorial Chapel in Starke and friends 4-7:00 p.m. and 1 hour prior to funeral services on Saturday. The Cortege will form at the home of Mrs. Lillie M. Reeves at 11:45 a.m.



Sandra Schwab
Sandra Schwab

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS—Sandra M. Schwab, 70, of Keystone Heights, died Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013 at Shands Cancer Center following a brave battle with cancer. She was born in Staten Island, N.Y. on April 17, 1943, and had moved to Keystone Heights 32 years ago. Prior to retirement several years ago, Sandra was employed with the VA Medical Center in Gainesville.

Sandra is survived by: her husband of 50 years, George B. Schwab; and their four legged babies, Honeybee and Brandi of Keystone Heights. She is the loving mom of two daughters, Denise C. Christian and Virginia M. Reames, of Keystone Heights; two sons, George W. Schwab of Keystone Heights and Scott A. Schwab of Bessemer, Ala. She is also grandma to six granddaughters, Beth V. Donovan, Sallina R. Reames, Casey L. Reames, Deanna N. Davids,

Angie M. Christian, and Cristina M. Christian; and one grandson, Grant W. Schwab, and the loving sister of Cathy Fraser, all of Keystone Heights, and James "Skip" Stroud of Staten Island, NY. There will be no services. Arrangements are under the care of Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, 340 E. Walker Dr., Keystone Heights, FL 32656. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com

PAID OBITUARY

Powell of Starke; her brothers, Lane Powell, John Powell, Thomas Powell, and Gene Powell and her sister, Karen Adams.

Memorial services were not scheduled as of press time. Arrangements are under the care and direction of Archie Tanner Funeral Services, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit archietannerfuneralservices.com to sign the family's guest book.

PAID OBITUARY

Linda Sheffield

STARKE—Linda Faye Sheffield, age 59, of Starke, passed away at her residence on Dec. 10, 2013. She was born on Patrick Air Force Base, Florida on April 1, 1954. Linda was an educator in Bradford County for 38 plus years. Upon graduating from Bradford County High School in 1972, Linda attended the University of Florida and in three years, earned her Bachelor's Degree in Education and returned to teach in Bradford County. Linda was an educator at Bradford Middle School and a professor at Santa Fe Community College, where she was the Director of the College for Kids program. In addition to teaching locally, Linda also used her talents abroad and taught at Big Ben Community College, helping G.I.'s earn their GED. As a member of First Baptist Church of Starke, Linda taught Sunday school and was recently voted as the Sunday School Director. Linda leaves a legacy of education as she touched so many lives through her teaching.

Linda is survived by her loving husband of 33 years, Johnnie Sheffield of Starke; her children, Lindsey Marie Sheffield of Starke, and Courtney Elizabeth Sheffield and her fiancé William Kelly also of Starke; her mother, Janet M.

Joyce Tetstone

BROOKER—Joyce Louise Johns Tetstone, 72, of Brooker died at her residence Thursday, Dec. 5, 2013 after an extended illness. She was born near Kingsley Lake and lived most of her life in Bradford County. She was a homemaker and was a member of the Church of God of Prophecy in Brooker. She was preceded in death by: her parents, Luther Johns and Louise Padgett Johns; and two sons, Hubert Tetstone, Jr. and Bernell Tetstone.

She is survived by: daughters, Linda L. Lynn, Sharon (Matthew) Ellis, and Norma Jean Bass; sons, Adro (Linda) Johnson, Dickie Tetstone, and Jeremy Tetstone; sisters, Alma Nazworth and Betty Johns; brothers, Ernest Johns, Wayne Johns, Eugene Johns, Charles Johns and Lester Johns, 16 grandchildren; and 15 great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday, Dec. 9, in the Chapel of Archer Funeral Home of Lake Butler with Pastor James Parker officiating. Burial followed at Dedan Cemetery in Brooker.

The family requests in lieu of flowers donations be made to the funeral home at, 55 North Lake Avenue; Lake Butler, FL 32054.

LIGHT

Continued from 1B

memory—for the times we laughed, the times we cried, the times we were angry with each other, the silly things you did and the caring and joy you gave us," Ann Fosser said.

Finally, Lyn Veliz, Chuck and Mary Kramer's daughter, lit the fifth candle to represent love.

"We light this candle so that your light will always shine," Fosser said. "As we share this night of remembrance with our family and friends, we cherish the special place in our hearts that will always be reserved for you."

Alice Watts and her husband, Jay, who established the Lake Area-Keystone Heights chapter and were its leaders, attended the event. The 28th anniversary of their daughter's death is in January, but Watts said her thoughts were not reserved only for her daughter, Debbie. She pointed to a board upon which pictures of the deceased had been applied, saying, "When I hear these names, I know the faces behind every one of them. I can name every kid on that board over there and the reason they died."

Watts, who was also a Compassionate Friends regional coordinator, said the support group is not for everyone, but she does encourage people who've lost a child to give it a chance.

"It's such a great place because this is the only place you can go where people understand (what you're going through)," Watts said.

Mary Kramer said she and her husband began attending Compassionate Friends meetings approximately seven to eight month's after their daughter's death. Initially, they attended a different support group that wasn't limited to people who had lost a child. The atmosphere just wasn't the same as what she encountered at Compassionate

Mary and Chuck Kramer light a candle in honor of their daughter Danielle. The Kramers are the leaders of the Lake Area-Keystone Heights chapter of Compassionate Friends, which meets every second Monday of the month in Keystone.



Friends, Kramer said.

"Everyone knows what you're going through," Kramer said. "You have an instant bond with a parent who's lost a child."

Kramer encourages people in the area who've lost a child to attend group meetings, which are held the second Monday of each month (except December) at 7 p.m. in the Potter House behind Trinity Baptist Church in Keystone. "Compassionate Friends" is a perfect name for the group, she said, because it consists of people who are there to listen if you need somebody to talk to.

Yes, some meetings are "heart wrenching," Kramer said, but there are also happy meetings where members fondly recall the some of the things their children did.

"It's just a way to talk about your child with people who really care and want to listen," Kramer said.

Death may take loved ones away, but they are never forgotten and never totally gone. Natalie Bickford, who lost a son named Mark, provided proof of that during a reading at the Dec. 8 candle-lighting event:

"I saw your face in the garden as the flowers bloomed and the birds gently sang; I knew you were beside me, and for a moment felt no pain.

"I heard your voice in the wind today and turned to see your face; the breeze of the wind hugged me, and I stood quietly in place.

"I felt your touch in the sun today as warmth filled the sky; I closed my eyes, I felt your embrace and my spirit soared high.

"I saw your eyes in the window pane as I watched the falling rain; it seemed as each rain drop fell, it quietly said your name.

"I held you close in my heart today; it made me feel complete.

"You may have left us, but you are not gone. You are part of me as long as the flowers grow, the birds sing, the wind blows, the sun shines and the rain falls. You will live inside me forever, and that my heart knows."

If you would like to know more about the Lake Area-Keystone Heights Compassionate Friends chapter, please call 352-468-2389 or visit www.compassionatefriendslakearea.com.

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McDonald's, Kiwanis tourney returns Dec. 19-21

The Kiwanis Club of Starke will once again host the annual Lake Area McDonald's Christmas Tournament, which will be played at Bradford High School Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 19-21, and feature eight high school boys' basketball teams.

Bradford, Keystone Heights and Union County will be part of the field.

Daily admission is \$5, with tip-off times at 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 7 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. each day.

The tournament concludes with the championship game at 8:30 p.m. on Dec. 21.

Bradford was last year's runner-up to Potter's House.

Bradford parents' group registering for flag football

Registration is currently under way for the Bradford Parents Athletic Association's 2014 flag football season, which will consist of five age divisions: 5-7, 8-10, 11-13, 14-16 and 17+. The age-determining date is Sept. 1, 2013.

You may register by sending email to bradfordparents@gmail.com. You may also request a registration form on the group's Facebook page. Enter "Bradford Parents Athletic Association" in the Facebook search bar.

Registration is \$50 per player. Games will be played Saturdays at the Edwards Road Sports Complex beginning early January to mid-February.

Teams are co-ed. Adults of any age can register in the 17+ division.

BHS boys drop game against Englewood

After a road District 5-4A win over Interlachen on Dec. 5, the Bradford High School boys' basketball team returned home, suffering a 66-60 loss to Englewood on Dec. 7.

Kearis Ardley, who was 12-of-12 at the foul line, led Bradford (3-3 prior to Dec. 10) with 17 points, while Caleb Jones and Joquez Ivey scored 15 and 14, respectively. Alex Mejias had seven points, while Kenny Dinkins and Tyler Wainwright had five and two points,

respectively.

The Tornadoes played district opponent Fort White this past Monday and will host district opponent P.K. Yonge on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 7:30 p.m. Bradford then hosts Palatka on Friday, Dec. 13, at 7:30 p.m. before hosting Ed White on Monday, Dec. 16, at 7:30 p.m.

Keystone gets 1st win of season

Three players scored in double figures to help lead the Keystone Heights High School boys' basketball team to its first win of the season, 78-68 over District 5-4A opponent Interlachen on Dec. 6 in Interlachen.

C.J. Rogers led the Indians (1-5, 1-2 in District 5 prior to Dec. 10) with 12 points, while Juwan Crum and Travis Wheeler had 11 and 10 points, respectively. Brandon Nicholas and Buck Shobris each scored nine points, while Micah Brown and Anton Noble each had seven points. Tyler Teague had six points, while Fletcher Teague and A. Bass each had four points.

Brown and Shobris each grabbed a team-high seven rebounds, with Nicholas and Tyler Teague each dishing out four assists.

Prior to playing Interlachen, the Indians couldn't make a three-point lead hold up as they were outscored 13-4 in the fourth quarter of a 40-34 loss to Oak Hall on Dec. 5 in Gainesville.

Wheeler led the team in the loss with 13 points.

Keystone played district opponent Fort White this past Tuesday and will travel to Lake Butler to play Union County on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. The Indians will travel to Gainesville to play St. Francis on Friday, Dec. 13, at 7:30 p.m.

Tigers get win in 1st district game

Austin Dukes and Kyle Mosher scored 17 and 14 points, respectively, as the Union County High School boys' basketball team defeated Dixie County 60-54 on Dec. 5 in Cross City.

Princeton Alexander, who had eight rebounds, added eight points for the Tigers (2-3, 1-0 in District 7-1A prior to Dec. 10). Daquin Edwards and Geordyn Green (four assists, four steals) each scored six points, while Daryl Watkins and Dakenundrick Wells each had four points. Trey Spitze added one point.

The win snapped a three-game losing streak. On Dec. 3, the Tigers lost 77-23 to visiting Eastside. Mosher and Spitze each

had five points, while Alexander and Brennan Clyatt had four and three, respectively. Edwards and Watkins each scored two points.

Union played district opponent Chiefland this past Tuesday and will host Keystone Heights on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. On Friday, Dec. 13, the Tigers travel to play district opponent Williston at 7:30 p.m. before returning home to play district opponent Newberry on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

Lady Tornadoes move to 2-1 in district

Nyasia Davis poured in 27 points and grabbed 17 rebounds as the Bradford High School girls' basketball team defeated District 5-4A opponent Fort White 49-37 on Dec. 9 in Fort White.

Tracey Kemp scored 12 points and had 16 assists for Bradford (6-5, 2-1 in District 5), which played district opponent Keystone Heights this past Tuesday.

Mackenzie Gault and Diamond Hudson added seven and three points, respectively.

The Tornadoes travel to Glen

St. Mary to play Baker County on Friday, Dec. 13, at 5 p.m. before returning home to play Gainesville on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

BHS girls off to 2-0 start in weightlifting

Bradford High School has won its first two girls' weightlifting meets, starting with a 65-61 win over Ocala Forest on Nov. 15.

Placing first for Bradford were: Kierston Boatwright (101) 75 bench press, 70 clean and jerk, 145 total; Karen Clark (110) 90-100-190; Brittany Broome (154) 60-75-135; and Ryann Clemons (169) 80-95-175.

Second-place finishers were: Luci Hamm (110) 75-85-160, Brandi Hopkins (119) 70-100-170, Autumn Rodgers (129) 80-115-195, Jordan Davis (139) 90-75-165, Sydnie Davis (169) 85-70-155, Shannon Mikell (183) 80-80-160, Brooke Shireman (199) 80-90-170 and Haley Sweat (unlimited) 125-120-245.

Placing third were: Leah

See LIFT, 10B

FIRM

Continued from 5B

on. Then he tried romancing me to come work here."

Walters, who is 58 and started racing when he was 13 or 14, said he kept putting Wigham off until he finally agreed to be an instructor for a particular weekend.

"That was eight years ago," Walters said. "I'm still here."

Fox said Walters deserves a lot of the credit for the positive reviews the FIRM receives from those who attended classes there. She said Walters is good at adapting his teachings to fit each individual.

"He's amazing to watch and see," Fox said of Walters. "No class is the same with him. He immediately picks up on other drivers' abilities and what they're looking for, and can change a class (accordingly)."

Fox said Walters and the FIRM's other instructors have up-to-date experience when it comes to racing.

"Our instructors are active racers," she said. "They didn't race 15 years ago so they can tell you what they did then. I think the first week I was here, (Walters) was away at a rally."

The FIRM, now under the direction of Managing Director

Ken Grammer, has been offering rally school courses for 14 years and maintains its own fleet of cars. It also offers performance-driving courses that allow drivers to improve their skills—regardless of the type of vehicle—on a tarmac surface and is home to the International Security Academy, which contracts with military and private-security groups to offer tactical training as well as all-terrain/utility task vehicle training.

Fox said 7 miles of training courses are at the disposal of the International Security Academy, which can offer training on driving up onto sand hills and reversing without tipping vehicles and how to wench a Jeep out of mud or sand.

"We have a lot of obstacles," Fox said.

If you'd like to know more about the FIRM and the opportunities it provides, visit the website www.gorally.com.

If you ask Sykes, the only downside to the FIRM is that it's located on in the eastern United States, while he's on the west coast. Still, it's worth the trip, he said, and it would definitely benefit him to return in the future.

"I really do appreciate everything they've done," Sykes said.

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53B Keystone Yard Sales
YARD SALE Fri & Sat 7am-?? Antiques, Christmas items, household items, furniture. 4661 SE 6th Lane, Keystone Hts. on golf course

YARD SALE Fri & Sat 13th & 14th. 7am-?? Antiques, Christmas items, household items, furniture, 4661 SE 6th Lane, Keystone Hts. on golf course

Yard Sale Saturday Dec. 14. 7:30am-3pm. 7708 Clover Lane, Keystone Heights. Household items, furniture, books, and other misc. items.

Keystone Heights Yard Sale— 445 SW Nightingale St. 8-12. Lots of holiday decorations, especially Christmas. Including lighted Christmas tree.

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Keystone's Hanna Crane (left) and Bradford's Rachel Ricker battle it out for control of the ball in the Indians' 7-0 win.



Cory Hedding gains possession of the ball in front of a Clay defender in Keystone's 8-0 win. Hedding scored three goals.

Hedding gets 3 goals in KHHS boys' 8-0 win

Cory Hedding scored two goals in the first six minutes and finished with three overall to help lead the Keystone Heights High School boys' soccer team to an 8-0 victory over visiting Clay on Dec. 5.

Wyatt Graziano scored two goals, including the final one to enforce the mercy rule in the 56th minute as the Indians improved to 10-1-1. Juan Grimaldo, Nacho Grimaldo and Brandon Hannah each scored a goal as well.

Juan Grimaldo had three assists, while Zach Hawkins had two. Hedding, Nacho Grimaldo and Zach Fairbanks each had one assist.

Prior to playing Clay, the Indians defeated visiting Crescent City 2-0 on Dec. 3. Hedding and Juan Grimaldo each scored a goal.

Keystone, which played Crescent City this past Tuesday, will host District 5-2A opponent Eastside on Friday, Dec. 13, before traveling to play district opponent Newberry on Monday, Dec. 16. On Tuesday, Dec. 17, the Indians host district opponent Santa Fe.

All matches are scheduled for 7 p.m.

KHHS girls shut out BHS for 10-1 district mark

Hanna Crane and Caroline Dixon scored two goals each for the Keystone Heights High School girls' soccer team, which defeated visiting Bradford 7-0 on Dec. 5 to improve to 10-1 in District 5-2A.

Keystone (10-4 overall prior to Dec. 10) scored twice in the first eight minutes, with Raychel Trimble assisting on goals by Dixon and Crane. Dixon added a

Keystone lifters drop 2 of 1st 3 meets

The Keystone Heights High School girls' weightlifting team has opened the season, with a win over Crescent City coming between losses to Ridgeview and Bradford.

In a season-opening loss to Ridgeview on Nov. 12, the following lifters won their classes: Julia Sorano (110) 110 bench press, 65 clean and jerk, 175 total; Tyllyn Davis (183) 95-85-180; Rachael "Shelly" Schammert (199) 135-105-240; and Ciera Conley (unlimited) 85-70-155.

Second-place finishers were: Victoria Bannon (101) 60-45-105, Blair Graff (110) 55-55-110 and Skye Smith (183) 60-50-110.

Three lifters placed third: Juliana Kraemer (101) 45-40-85, Jolene Miller (139) 90-90-180 and Samantha "Sami Jo" Anderson (199) 95-80-175.

In a 40-20 win over Crescent City on Nov. 14 in Keystone, five lifters won their classes: Bannon 60-45-105, Sorano

110-70-180, Miller 90-85-175, Davis 95-85-180 and Schammert 130-90-220.

Lifters placing second were: Kraemer 45-45-90, Graff 55-60-115, Kayla Baker (119) 70-80-150, Breanna Wells (154) 85-85-170, Anderson (183) 100-75-175, Smith (199) 70-50-120 and Ashlee Smith (unlimited) 105-85-190.

Three lifters placed third: Callee Harrison (119) 75-70-145, Dakota Harper (154) 50-45-95 and Conley 90-70-160.

In a loss to visiting Bradford on Dec. 5, two lifters placed first: Wells 95-90-185 and Schammert (183) 130-110-240.

Placing second were: Sorano 110-75-185, Miller 90-90-180, Davis 100-85-185 and Anderson (100-75-175).

Finishing third were: Bannon 55-50-105, Rebecca West (110) 50-55-105, Baker 80-90-170, Skye Smith (199) 70-55-125 and Conley 100-60-160.

Keystone hosts Interlachen on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 2:30 p.m. before hosting Union County on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 2:30 p.m. The Indians then host Santa Fe on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 4 p.m.

LIFT

Continued from 8B

Bryant (129) 70-95-165 and Carson Elder (139) 65-80-145.

On Dec. 5, the Tornadoes defeated Keystone Heights 59-27 in Keystone.

Placing first were: Hamn (101) 80-90-170, Clark 95-95-190, Christin Hopkins (119) 95-105-200, Rodgers 85-120-205, Davis 105-105-210, Jamie Perry (154) 65-70-135, Clemons 85-105-190, Shireman 90-95-185 and Sweat 125-120-245.

Earning second-place finishes were: Boatwright 80-80-160, Olivia Archer (119) 90-90-180, Haleigh Clary (129) 85-85-170, Courtney Stanton (169) 95-80-175 and Ashleigh Williams (unlimited) 105-85-190.

Bradford had two third-place lifters: Elder 70-85-155 and Mikell 85-85-170.

The Tornadoes travel for a meet with Palatka on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 3:30 p.m. before traveling to lift against Ridgeview on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 3 p.m.

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FINS, FUR & TAILS

Crappie fishing with T.C. Lloyd

When it comes to crappie fishing, you have to look hard to find someone more knowledgeable than T.C. Lloyd of Middleburg. Lloyd fishes crappie professionally and guides part time in the northeast and north central section of Florida primarily for bream, shellcrackers and crappie. He is enlisted in the Navy—stationed in Jacksonville—and guides two to three times per week in his off time. He has been featured in the Florida Times-Union for his accomplished fishing skills and has no difficulty finding clients.

Lloyd cites Santa Fe, Alto, Newnans and Lochloosa as his typical fishing targets. He indicates that Santa Fe and Lochloosa have not reached their peak. He suggests that the specks will gather into their winter schools at different times in each lake, probably due to water depth and temperature. He specified Kingsley as one of the more difficult lakes to catch specks in on a year-round basis. He has actually caught specks in Kingsley near the bottom when the depth finder read 60 feet, and when he netted the fish, their eyes were bulged due to the fast change in water pressure.

Next to knowing when and where the bite takes place, Lloyd attributes most of his success to his equipment and



T.C. Lloyd (right) displays another crappie catch in the front of his crappie-rigged boat.

presentation techniques. He has an 18-foot bass boat that is rigged for crappie and about 20 crappie rods that are from 10 to 15 feet in length. Both the front and back of his boat are rigged for about 10 rod holders on each end, and he presents the jigs, grubs and/or Missouri minnows by spider rig or long-lining techniques. Interestingly enough, he never gets lines tangled.

When spider rigging, he has about 10 rods set out in the front of his boat from 90 degrees to the left to 90 degrees to the right, and he typically slow trolls from that arrangement. He uses three quarter ounce weights to get his lures to the right depth and a crappie net with a 14-foot handle to land his catch.

When long lining, he uses up to 10 rods from the back of the boat and arranges them from 90 degrees right to 90 degrees

left. He normally lets more line out from this setup, trolls a little faster and, again, uses no bobber.

In addition to the preferred presentations, Lloyd recommends that you use the lightest line possible—preferably 4-pound test—and fish with the wind as opposed to into the wind.

If you are interested in contacting Lloyd, you can just Google his name with the word “crappie,” and you will get numerous links and contact information. You might also enjoy his YouTube videos as well since they are all made on local lakes.

Outdoors outlook

Saturday, Dec. 21, will be the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year. Every day subsequent to that will be a step closer to spring. Already the

buck bass are competing for the favored fanning spots in Lake Okeechobee. We are full steam into hunting season and the local winter crappie bite is picking up.

Randy Harris tells us that the wind has hampered fishing efforts on the west coast recently, but the inshore bite prevails despite the conditions. On one trip last week, he landed and released most of 14 reds and 25 trout. Those numbers included some small fish.

The eastern coast seems to present similar conditions with a little more diversity. Pompano and whiting are available on the beaches, and sheepshead and small black drum are present around the jetties and bridge pilings. Like the western coast trout, reds are present, and they migrate between the channel holes and the shallows depending upon the temperature.

Joey Tyson of Bald Eagle Bait and Tackle says the local crappie bite is picking up and referenced one catch from Lowry that boated 38 slabs. Santa Fe has not peaked yet, but it continues to produce sunshine bass around the pass, and the warmer trend should stimulate the largemouth bass.

Tim Tebow's dad to be guest at Crosshorn Christmas banquet

John Whitfield said Tim Tebow's father, Bob, will be the guest speaker at the Thursday, Dec. 19, Crosshorn Ministries Christmas banquet at the Starke Golf and Country Club. The event will begin at 7 p.m. and



T.C. Lloyd (left) and a client display a crappie catch in the back of his truck.

end before 9 p.m. If you plan eat, please call 352-468-3595 to register.

Outdoors calendar

- Dec. 17, full moon;
- Dec. 19, Crosshorn Ministries Christmas banquet, 7 p.m., Starke Golf and Country Club;
- Dec. 14-Jan. 12, second phase of Florida's dove season;
- Jan. 1, deer season ends in north Georgia;
- Jan. 15, deer season ends in

south Georgia;

- Jan. 19, antlered deer season ends in Florida's Zone C;
- March 2, squirrel and quail seasons end in Florida's Zone C.

If you have a story, idea or photo to share, please contact Mickey Agner via email at mka@maoutdoors.com, or by phone at 904-964-1488. Photos may also be submitted in person at the Bradford County Telegraph, Union County Times or Lake Region Monitor.

TECH

Continued from 3B

and Security+ certification as seniors.)

"It took a lot of hard work," Carney said. "It definitely paid off."

The Bradford-Union Technical Center covers the costs of certification tests for high school students.

"They don't have to pay for it," Ledger said. "All they have

to do is put in the brain power."

Carney said she is still unsure of what her future plans are and if those plans will include computers, but added, "I like the idea of being able to get certified and have that career opportunity."

If you'd like to know more about the Bradford-Union Technical Center's Computer Systems and Information Technology program, please visit the center or call 904-966-6769.

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