

Lake Region Monitor

USPS 114-170 — Keystone Heights, Florida

Thursday, April 19, 2018

44th Year — 50th Issue — 75 CENTS

Higher taxes discussed as county looks at funding school security

BY MARK J. CRAWFORD
Telegraph Editor

Clay County government is coming together to address the cost of increasing school security, but the solution may rest in the pockets of taxpayers.

During an amicable meeting April 10, Sheriff Darryl Daniels was frank about the need to fill a \$4.5 million hole in his budget to help hire and outfit 48 new school resource officers.

"I have to stand up 48 new deputies in the sheriff's office that don't exist because of this state mandate to have these school resource officers in the schools — all the schools," Daniels said.

To have every campus covered by the next school year, the hiring must begin now, he said.

He broke down the \$4.5 million cost, including more than \$1.5 million in personnel salaries, \$340,000 for benefits, \$720,000 in operating expenses and \$1.9 million in capital outlay.

In addition to the cars and other equipment, this money would provide 36 deputies to serve as school resource officers; six deputies that could serve in a relief capacity; an additional training deputy to oversee performance of a minimum of 88 drills during the school year; one additional investigator; and four sergeants and a lieutenant to serve as supervisors.

The visit was not about bullying the board, Daniels said, just to present information about what they are facing. But along with that information the sheriff said he had spoken with members of the public, and they are telling him they want officers in the schools.

"As far as the sheriff goes, I want to do what's in the best interest of our children, and I'm

sure that each commissioner wants to do what's in the best interests of our children," he said.

They could hire in phases, biting off a chunk at a time, but that would leave schools exposed, and Daniels said he doesn't want to be the person in charge of prioritizing schools or, even worse, being seen as prioritizing some children's lives over others.

"I don't want to be that guy," Daniels said.

Daniels referred to having an alternative option in the Guardian Program, but School Board Member Betsy Condon told county commissioners that the school board was sticking by a longtime policy that only trained law enforcement officers would be allowed to carry guns on campuses.

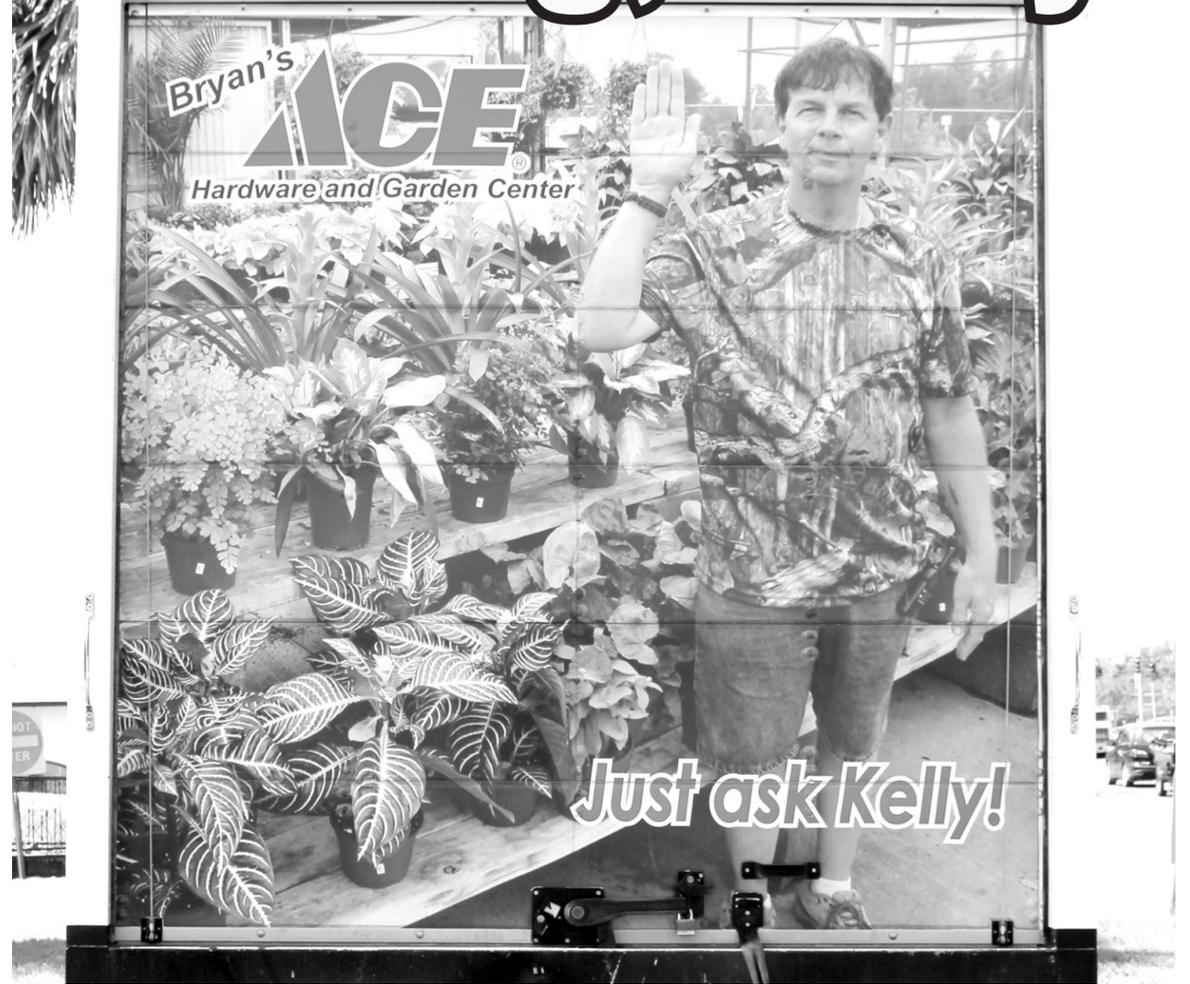
The sheriff acknowledged the commission was in a difficult position deciding whether or not to take on this funding responsibility.

"You're in a catch-22 position. You're danged if you do, danged if you don't, so I don't envy where you are tonight," he said. The sheriff's office is a vendor, a provider of security services, a middle man, he said. The commissioners hold the purse strings.

"What I'm saying and asking for as the sheriff is let's not politicize this subject. ... Let's do what's in the best interests of the county, do what's in the best interests of these kids. No one wants to be the one who has raising taxes or millage rates associated with their name, however, none of us expected this to fall in our laps in this budget year.

See SCHOOLS, 2B

So long, Kelly



The image of Kelly Thomas on a delivery truck of Bryan's Ace Hardware.

After 31 years, garden expert leaving Keystone Heights

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Managing Editor

Kelly Thomas is going home. The garden expert at Bryan's Ace Hardware has spent the last 31 years answering questions and solving problems for Lake Region gardeners.

Thomas will be returning to his hometown of Milledgeville, Georgia and also to take on the challenge of running one of the

largest garden centers in the southeast.

Thomas came to the Lake Region in 1987. A grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins already lived here.

"Over time, Grandma passed, and the others started to scatter," he recalled, "I had gotten this job and the people here became my family."

The only blood relatives that

remain with Thomas in the Lake Region is one aunt and uncle.

"After I leave, they will be moving to be with their son in Alabama," Thomas explained.

When asked how he first became interested in gardening, Thomas replied: "I was born that way," adding that he was raised by farmers and growers.

"My grandparents taught me a lot," he added. "My great-

grandmother was — they were all — native Americans and they were really into the herbs and the plants."

Thomas was raised in Homerville: between Valdosta and Waycross and later in Milledgeville: 159 miles north.

He said that after moving to

See KELLY, 2B

Thousands lose power as storm passes



A Bradford deputy warns motorists of a downed power line at Santa Fe Lake near Melrose.

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Managing Editor

Over 7,000 Clay Electric customers lost power throughout the cooperative's 14-county coverage area as storms passed through northeast Florida Sunday afternoon.

Most of the outages occurred in Marion and

Putnam Counties.

At 4 p.m. the co-op reported 949 customers without power in Alachua County, 204 in Bradford, 1,452 in Clay, 1,595 in Putnam and 108 in Union.

Several power lines went down in the Melrose area.

There were no reported injuries due to the storm.

Clay sheriff catches parent with drugs at school Man does not go to jail

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
Managing Editor

While making a goodwill visit to Keystone Heights Elementary School last Friday morning, Clay County Sheriff Darryl Daniels discovered marijuana in a parent's pickup, along with a young child. However, the parent did not go to jail.

According to a sheriff's office report, Deputy P.S. Mauricio issued a notice to appear in court to Stevie Lee J. Branch Jr. for possession of not more than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of drug equipment. The deputy also wrote the parent a traffic citation for leaving a child under age six in a motor vehicle with the engine running.

Mauricio wrote that he was dispatched to the school and met Daniels, "who advised that he was parked in the school's parking lot in his vehicle, when he noticed a child sitting alone in a pickup truck."

The sheriff and another deputy walked over to the truck and found the vehicle running and unlocked. A few minutes later, the father returned to the truck after dropping another child off at the school.

Mauricio added that when the parent retrieved his driver's



Stevie Lee J. Branch Jr. sits on the sidewalk to the right of his pickup while a deputy stands nearby. Photo: Clay County Sheriff's Office.

license from inside the truck, Daniels saw "two pipes and a small bag containing a leafy green substance inside."

After Mauricio arrived at the school, Daniels turned the matter over to the deputy. He then continued with his scheduled visit.

"We had a great time being at Keystone Heights Elementary School. Spending time with the students from all grade levels was exciting for everyone," an agency staff member wrote on

the sheriff's office Facebook page. "Sheriff Daniels and other members of our agency showed up at the start of school and stayed until lunchtime."

Deputy Mauricio wrote in his report that he verified Branch had no outstanding warrants. The substance tested positive for marijuana and weighed 0.5 grams.

"The defendant met the requirements for notice to appear," he wrote.

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Thomas broke the news of his return to Georgia with a surprise cake to his mother which read, "I'm coming home."

KELLY

Continued from 1B

the Lake Region, he needed a job, heard that Ace Hardware had a nice garden center and that there was an opening.

"Bill Gibbs hired me," he recalled. "It worked. I fit right in, became friends with the people and friends with the whole town."

Customers became family

He said the job description has been simple: "make customers happy."

A big part of that is answering their questions, but Thomas said many of the questions he fields have nothing to do with gardening.

"A lot of our customers are older, and their families are up north," he said. "They have no one here, so I'm kind of like their grandchild. They can come in and talk a little bit — gives them somebody to lean on."

"When they don't come in, I miss them," he added. "They are more than just customers. And when you are here for a long period of time, you become friends with their families. I became a part of their lives."

He also said he will miss his fellow members of the Garden Club of the Lakes. Thomas was the first male allowed to join the group.

"The Garden Club is my anchor," he said. "They are the

ones that make things happen."

He describes leaving those friends and his customers behind as "devastating."

"Then, it's great," he added, "because I'm moving closer to home, where all my family is now."

Thomas added that he will also remain in the garden field, working as the garden center manager for the largest Ace Hardware in the southeast: Ace of Gray, a seven-acre complex in Gray, Georgia, about halfway between Milledgeville and Macon.

"The job came open at a perfect time," he said, adding that leaving was still a very difficult decision to make, especially because of the relationships he has with the store's owners.

"Bill and Debbie and all the employees here, plus their kids: they're all like family," he said.

Reuniting with family

However, while leaving the Gibbs family and his Bryan's Ace Hardware co-workers, Thomas will be reuniting with his mother, whom he has telephoned every day and twice on Sundays for years.

Thomas's father passed away four years ago and is well known in the Milledgeville area as the founder of Freedom Church.

"I have two brothers, a sister, and all their children," he said, "plus lots of cousins."

Thomas said he particularly wants to spend more time with his mother while she is still in good health.

"This is the time that you need to go," he said. "Don't wait until it's too late. Mom's healthy. She loves to go out to dinner, she likes to go out and see a movie and do things. There will come a time when she can't. I want to be there for her now, when we can make those memories."

"It's the same for my nephews," he added. "I want to watch them grow up."

Surprise message on a cake

Thomas said he surprised his mother with the news of his return with a cake that read: "I'm coming home."

"I went up there one Monday after work and found out Mom had planned to go to a place called the Tea Room with some friends."

Thomas and his brother planned to surprise their mother by Thomas giving her a dozen roses and then the cake with its message.

"When she saw me she started crying and asking: 'Why are you here? What is wrong? You are supposed to be in Florida.'"

Thomas gave her the cake and asked her to read the message, which at first, she did not understand.

"Then, of course, we all had happy tears," he said. "She has prayed for years that I would come home."

He said the family is close, and frequently gathers for cookouts and other events.

"I miss that," he said. "I guess I'm getting older."

Looking back on his time in Keystone Heights, Thomas said he would not change a thing.

"Thirty-one years has been spent well," he said. "I don't know how I could have spent 31 years any better."



Thomas with Debbie Gibbs

CRIME

Deputies: Keystone man abducted woman and children, punched officer

Clay deputies arrested a Keystone Heights man after he led them on a chase and punched an officer in the face while being detained.

David Cirocco Fox, 26, was arrested for aggravated assault on an officer, firefighter or EMT, resisting an officer with violence, child abuse without great bodily harm, adult false imprisonment, false imprisonment on a child 13 years of age or younger, possession of a firearm by a felon, possession of ammunition by a felon, possession of cocaine, possession of drug equipment, driving with a suspended or revoked license, and fleeing and eluding.

According to an arrest report, deputies surrounded Fox's truck while looking for another suspect with Bradford and Clay county warrants.

As officers approached Fox's truck, he backed out of a driveway and fled the scene, with several deputies pursuing him and driving along parallel streets.

When the defendant got stuck in some sand, deputies were able to remove Fox from the truck.

"Deputy Sheriff Tomlinson and I were able to remove him from the truck," wrote arresting officer R.W. Freshour in a report. "pulling his foot away from the accelerator and stopping the truck. As the driver was removed from the vehicle, he struck me in the face with a closed fist, causing a laceration to my lower lip."

Freshour added that Fox continued to fight, even after a police dog bit him.

"The suspect finally complied and placed his hands behind his back, allowing us to place him into handcuffs," he added.

Deputies then interviewed a woman who was in the truck with her children. She told the officers Fox forced them into the vehicle.

"She explained that the children were crying and did not want to go into the truck because they were scared of the suspect," wrote the deputy.

Deputies also found cocaine, drug equipment and a firearm in the vehicle.

In other Lake Region arrests:

William Wyatt Harvin, 20, was arrested April 13 in Keystone Heights by Clay deputies for possession of not more than 20 grams of marijuana.

Coy Lee Franklin, 26, was arrested in Keystone Heights April 11 by Clay deputies for sale and delivery of methamphetamine.

Cody Franklin Rowe, 29, was arrested in Keystone Heights April 13 by Clay deputies for sale and delivery of narcotics.

Glenn Gary Stanton, 55, was arrested in Keystone Heights April 11 by Clay deputies for possession of methamphetamine, possession of not more than 20 grams of marijuana and possession of drug equipment.

Police: Man swiped watch from Walmart

Starke police arrested a 68-year-old Starke man after a Walmart loss prevention officer said he attempted to steal a watch and soft drinks.

Hiram Short was arrested April 14 for larceny.

According to an arrest report, the store employee saw the defendant take a Timex watch from a display case and open its package with a pair of pliers.

"She then observed Short select various food items and also a 24-pack of Pepsi soda." Arresting officer David Bukowski wrote in a report. "(She) also observed Short discard the case that the watch came in without the watch."

The defendant then tried to leave the business, but the store officer detained him until police arrived.

The defendant told police that he forgot to pay for the soda and that he left the watch in the store. It was not located.

Bukowski added that Short had one prior retail theft arrest.

In other Bradford County arrests:

Sarah Ann Benner, 28, of Lawley was arrested April 14 by Bradford deputies for a probation violation and possession of drug

See CRIME, 3B

SCHOOLS

Continued from 1B

Commissioner Wayne Bolla said at the end of the day this looks like a tax issue.

"I would hope that the citizens will understand that and possibly when the school board goes out with another ad valorem, they can understand where it's coming from," he said. "Having said that, it's incumbent on us to step up and make sure this happens."

Commissioner Diane Hutchings said if special tax funding is sought, it should be designated for this purpose and no other.

"It maintains its integrity, and the taxpayer knows 'That's what I'm paying for.' So if we could work toward that, I think that would be a positive," said Hutchings.

Commissioner Gavin Rollins asked the board's attorney if the legislation on school security obligated county government to fund anything they had discussed, and she said the legislation requires the school district and sheriff to work together but places no specific requirements on the county commission.

Had the mandate come sooner, Superintendent Addison Davis said the school

board could have made some different decisions regarding pay increases for its employees and put that money toward school security officers instead. If they had known what was coming, they would have done things differently, he said.

"I do believe openly that the school district owns this," Addison told Rollins, "however, I come to you as superintendent of schools along with the school board to ask for an extension of help and ask for you to be a partner in roundtable discussions about how we can make this expectation become a reality."

The state increased the school district's allocation of Safe Schools money from around \$500,000 to \$1.8 million. Of that amount, \$250,000 must be spent on other initiatives such

as antibullying. The remaining amount will be spent on resource officers.

Even if the county has reserve funding to cover the startup, Davis agreed with Bolla that they will have to think about ways to generate additional revenue. The school district hopes that state revenue to support the Guardian Program can be diverted to school resource officers in counties that opt out of arming employees.

Dates will be chosen for future discussions. In the meantime, Daniels said he needs to begin hiring. Those with experience can be placed in school positions immediately, but rookie hires will receive patrol positions as experienced deputies are moved from patrol into the schools.

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Pep rally gets students excited about testing

BY ATHIE SANDERS
Special to the Monitor

Third through sixth grade students about to take the Florida Standards Assessment at Keystone Heights Elementary School attended pep rallies in the gym to have fun and get excited about taking the tests in the coming weeks.

"We know you are going to do fantastic on your tests," Principal Melanie Sanders told the students. "You are ready. You have great teachers and they have taught you what you need to know to do awesome."

Sanders introduced special guests: varsity cheerleaders from the high school. The cheerleaders got the students boisterous.

Students were told of incentives they could earn by doing their best on the exams.

Limo rides, glow dance parties and food were mentioned.

Assistant Principal Corinne Lavin passed out coupons for snacks from the school's Snack Shack as student's names were called for making educational gains in one or more areas on last year's test.

Teachers chose a few students and they practiced dance moves for a dance contest, judged by which group received the loudest cheers.

Students also volunteered to be part of a panel. They were asked questions about what they should do to prepare for the test now that it was about to happen. The answers: eat a good breakfast, get plenty of rest, read every question carefully, read all the answer choices and choose the best one and don't rush were

some responses.

The Florida Standards Assessment measures student mastery of the standards taught. Critical thinking is emphasized. The test includes more than multiple choice questions. Students will create graphs, interact with test content and write and respond in different ways.

Third-grade students will be required to achieve a certain score on the third grade assessment in order to advance to fourth grade. Students not meeting these criteria may still meet promotion requirements through other options provided.

Testing started the week of April 16 and go until the end of the first week in May. Schedules vary by grade and students are not tested every day.



Front and center, teacher Kenny Seneca displays his superhero shirt that says "I TEACH. What's your SuperPower?" Students front row (L to R) Carl Gann, Trace Keen, Miles Johnson, Mathias Judson, Addison Smoth and Ryleigh Spivey.



Principal Melanie Sanders asked students to share one thing that was a good test taking technique or that they were going to do at home in the morning of test days. Willie said, "I'm going to eat pancakes!" (L to R) Garrett Roberson, Ashly McCarthy, Melanie Sanders, Willie Hills, Tyson Baxter, Kevin Carne and Kaylee Luka.

CRIME

Continued from 2B

equipment.

Dale Jeffery Burkett, 49, of Tampa was arrested April 12 by Bradford deputies for withholding support.

Otis Downer, 32, of Gainesville was arrested April 13 by Bradford deputies for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Janeka Breanne Green, 29, of Starke was arrested April 16 by Starke police for driving with a revoked or suspended license.

James Vincent Griffis, 37, of

Raiford was arrested April 15 by Bradford deputies for three probation violations.

Tom Marks, 65, of Starke was arrested April 11 by Starke police for battery.

Tyler Ryan Recard, 18, of Keystone Heights was arrested April 13 by Bradford deputies for burglary and larceny.

Cody Franklin Rowe, 28, of Starke was arrested April 11 by Bradford deputies for an out-of-county warrant.

Benjamin Phillip Stevens, 39, of Starke was arrested April 13 by Bradford deputies for battery.

Union County arrests:

Charles Arthur Futch, 33, of Lake Butler was arrested April 10 by Union deputies on a Union County warrant for vehicle theft-third degree grand theft.

Anthony D. Hendrith, 23, of Lake Butler was arrested April 14 by Union deputies for battery.

Michael Lloyd James, 43, of Lake Butler was arrested April 11 by Union deputies for an out-of-county warrant.

Samantha Shyann Polk, 26, of Brooker was arrested April 10 by Union deputies for fraud-insufficient funds check.



Keystone Heights High School cheerleaders, Front row, Ashley Hicks, Chloe Singletary, Victoria Bannon and Savanna Standridge. Back row: Sara Mason, Quartney Thursby, Grace Cigigliano, Jenna Williams, Morgan Mann and Kelsea Cox



Sixth grade teacher Jessica Carter, Bryce Hollingsworth and Jasmine Randall practice dance moves before their turn in the dance contest.

Corinne Lavin, assistant principal and Melanie Sanders, principal get ready to get students excited about FSA testing. "We do all sorts of silly things to get them excited and pumped up about the test," said Sanders.



Kendal Brice Seay, 24, of Raiford was arrested April 15 by Union deputies for driving under the influence.

Kerrie Crawford Shields, 42, of Lake Butler was arrested April 9 by Union deputies for an out-of-county warrant.

Arielle Suzanne Spangler, 19, of Lake Butler was arrested April 15 by Union deputies for possession of marijuana - not more than 20 grams.

Vinson O'Brian Wintons, 27, was arrested April 10 by Union deputies for an out-of-county warrant.

THANK YOU residents of the City of Keystone Heights!

I am grateful so many of you came out and supported me on April 10.

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Karen Lake
Mayor of Keystone Heights

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Church revives ministry to community

BY ATHIE SANDERS
Special to the Monitor

Primitimers at Keystone United Methodist Church reconvened in February after years of inactivity.

"Primitimers was a strong community outreach program that ended over 10 years ago, and we want to see it serving our community again," said Fred Getzman.

Getzman revived the ministry in February. "I'm giving it three months then I'm out of here. At that time, we need someone willing to continue leading this group. I'll help but I just can't lead," said Getzman.

Gilda Kinsey was introduced as the new chairwoman of the group. Kinsey provided an outline of programming through October.

The dining room was set up to accommodate those with reservations but easily expanded by moving room dividers to provide tables for others that had become aware of the event and attended. Primitimers is open to everyone. "We want to have the community come, take all the barriers down and fill the tables," said Kinsey.

Primitimers were served homemade chicken and rice, green beans, garlic bread or biscuit and chocolate frosted brownies.

Entertainment was provided



Fred Getzman announced the search for a permanent chairperson of Primitimers had been found. Chairwoman Gilda Kinsey will lead the interdenominational outreach program sponsored by Keystone Heights United Methodist Church. Kinsey provided an outline of upcoming events reaching into October.

by James and Sylvia, an acoustic guitar duo out of Jacksonville. The pair has released more than 15 CDs including classical and contemporary guitar styles. Sylvia performed with the famous Cleveland Orchestra and James with The Olympics in Barcelona, Spain in 1991 and the 2005 Super Bowl in Jacksonville.

Shelia Creigh will be guest speaker May 8 sharing her story of her childhood in England

during World War II.

"We celebrate Memorial Day in May and thought this a fitting program for all of us to remember the sacrifices made by all citizens in times of war," said Kinsey.

The May meeting will feature a covered dish salad luncheon. Call the church office for questions and to make May reservations at 352-473-3829.



Jim Smith is served chicken and rice, green beans and choice of biscuit or garlic bread by (L to R) Tanya Dennison, Laura Dean and Angel Linquist.

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(L to R) Sandra Park, Linda Hazen, Jerry Hartman, Amy Hughes, Mikie Crawford, Walter Koehler and Sharon Harris mingle with new acquaintances as they eat lunch.



Entertainment was provided by James and Sylvia, Classical and Contemporary guitarists.



Sheila Creigh and Pete Sutton purchased a CD from James Kalal at the end of James and Sylvia's performance.

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REGIONAL NEWS

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EDITORIAL

Bradford-Keystone-Union Relay for Life starts Friday at BHS track

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

You are invited to travel around the world to help fight cancer, but you only have to travel to Starke to do so.

The annual Bradford-Keystone-Union Relay for Life, a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, is this weekend, starting Friday, April 20, at 6 p.m. and ending

Saturday, April 21, at 2 a.m. The theme for the eight-hour event, which takes place at the Bradford High School track, is Relay Around the World.

For those unfamiliar with the event, it is not an actual relay or race, where runners hand off batons. Instead, it is an event that features food, entertainment and fun for the entire family, all for a good cause.

You will see people walking around the track as fundraising teams are asked to have at least one member walking at all times. Linda Lee, who is chairing this year's event, said that symbolizes the ongoing fight against cancer.

"When you have cancer, it's a full-time battle," she said.

Cancer survivors and their caregivers are encouraged to attend. Altrusa International of Starke will provide a free dinner for survivors and their caregivers at 5 p.m. After dinner, survivors and caregivers are asked to take part in the opening lap so that

they may be recognized.

Survivors and caregivers can register online at relay.acevents.org (enter zip code 32091 to find the event), but they can also register on site.

Prior to the opening lap, the event will begin with Emily O'Neal singing the national anthem and Roman Alvarez giving the invocation.

Various food options will be available for those who attend. For example, the Madison Street Baptist Church Tumornators will be selling sausage (Roy's) dogs, while Church of God by Faith will be selling

chicken and rice. In keeping with the Around the World theme, Community State Bank, representing Australia, will selling chicken on the barbie. The Bradford County Sheriff's Office will have one of your dessert options in the form of strawberry shortcake.

"A lot of people go out to eat on Friday night, so why not just come down to the track? You can eat your supper right there and get your dessert, too," Lee said.

Crowning royalty, racing boxcars and more Relay events

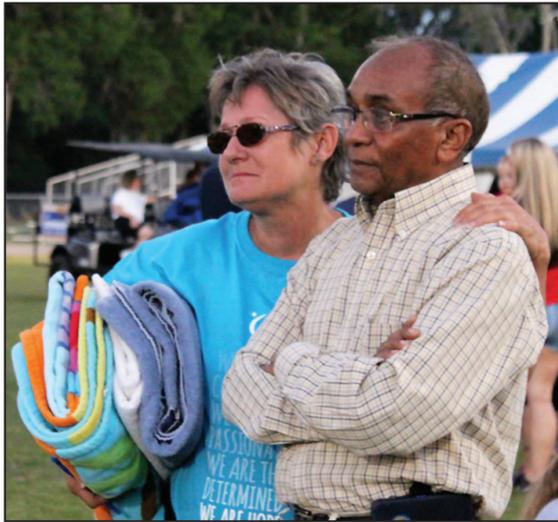
As usual, the Relay for Life will have several scheduled activities, including one that began last year and proved to be a hit — the I'm in for the Cure Royalty Pageant, which will start at 6:30 p.m.

"We had more spectators for

See RELAY, 2B



Esther Lawson waves the checkered flag to start last year's boxcar race. The race returned to the local Relay for Life when Lawson served as its chair and has proven to be a popular activity.



Linda Lee (left) shares an emotional moment with Sam Patel, who listens to his granddaughter Simran talk about how cancer affected their family at last year's Relay for Life. Patel lost his wife, Hema, to squamous cell carcinoma.

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Why I relay



I'm very blessed to have survived the disease. While I was going through treatments, I looked into what those drugs were and learned that for two of the three, the research were funded by the American Cancer Society. I decided to give back and help raise more money to fund more research to save other lives. Right now, my husband's best friend is battling pancreatic cancer. Several of my customers (at Walgreens of Starke) as well. They just keep adding up. So I keep going.
— Melanie Fuhrman



I relay because as a nurse, I'm tired of seeing my patients struggle with cancer. As a friend and family member, I'm tired of seeing people I love battle the disease. And as a mother, I never want my children to hear the words, "You have cancer." Raising money for the American Cancer Society is something that I can do to make a difference in the fight. Until there's a cure, I'll be Relaying.
— Esther Lawson



My passion to Relay began in 2009 when my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. I had a desire to make a difference for her or someone else battling cancer. I Relayed then because my faith and hope for finding a cure was so strong. I assured my mom that I would never lose hope. I Relay now for those that are fighting for another Birthday. I Relay because I love people.
— Dodie Sapp



The reason I relay is for our community. This is my 15th year helping with Relay for Life. On a more personal note, my mom had a five-year battle with cancer and lost the battle last July. Every single family is affected by this horrible disease. I hope and pray one day we find a cure. Every person and every dollar can make a difference I just hope I can do my part and help find a cure.
— Chrissy Thompson

RELAY

Continued from 1B

those nine little contestants than we've ever had for any other kind of entertainment," Lee said of last year's pageant.

A prince and princess will be crowned for each age division: 0-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12. Second- and third-place finishers will also be recognized.

An overall king and queen will be selected from among the division winners.

The entry fee is \$20 prior to Relay for Life and \$25 the day of the event.

To register or learn more, please send email to contact@rowepp.com or call 352-468-3306 (extension 226).

Another popular event returns at 7:15 p.m. — the boxer race.

"It's just gotten bigger and better every year," Lee said. "We expect it to grow this



"I just Relay to kick cancer's butt one day."
— Linda Lee



Getting others together from the community and raising awareness of all the different things the American Cancer Society does do — not just the Relay for Life. It has a place close to my heart.
— Hannah Honour

in bags lining the track. Each bag represents someone who has cancer or who has died because of cancer.

"Whenever you walk around the track and see those hundreds and hundreds of bags lit up, it really touches your heart," Lee said.

You may have a bag created in memory of someone by visiting relay.acsevents.org, contacting any fundraising team member, calling Lee at 904-966-3022 or sending email to mshonour@gmail.com.

A donation of \$5 is asked for a luminaria bag.

So many are touched by cancer. Lee is no exception. She continues to be involved with Relay for Life because of the loss of one of her parents.

"One of the things that really keeps me going is the form of cancer that my mom passed away from, which is squamous non-small cell lung cancer," Lee said. "When she passed away in '99, it was 100-percent terminal. You may live nine months, or you may live two months, but you weren't going to live past that.

"Now, there is a drug that will considerably extend the life expectancy for people with that form of cancer."

are scheduled as well, so do any necessary items if walking: NASCAR lap 7-8 p.m., Vintage Relay for Life Shirt 8-9 p.m., Paint Your World Purple (wear all the purple you can find) 9-10 p.m., Olympic Spirit (how many Olympic sports can you represent?) 10-11 p.m., Country 11 p.m.-midnight and Pajama Party/Wacky Hair or Hat midnight-1 a.m.

Why Relay exists

The overriding theme of Relay for Life, of course, is cancer. The event brings about a mixture of emotions, from elation as survivors walk the ceremonial first lap to sadness as those who've succumbed to the disease are remembered.

A survivor or caregiver is scheduled to speak at 8 p.m. At 9:30 p.m., the luminaria ceremony begins. That portion of Relay is when the track's lights are turned off, leaving only the light produced by candles that have been placed

Guy, McGruder, Williams combine for 5 district titles for KHHS

9 individuals, 2 relay teams earn the right to compete in Region 2-2A finals

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Keystone Heights High School's Alex Guy and Camryn Williams each won two events, while Marcus McGruder won another at the District 5-2A track and field finals, which were held April 11-12 in Gainesville at Oak Hall High School and Fred Cone Park.

Guy finished well ahead of runner-up Delton Nealy of Palatka in the 800m, crossing the line in 2:06.11. Nealy had a time of 2:31.48.

In the 1600m, Guy had a first-place time of 4:48.51 to finish ahead of Santa Fe's Rilyn Crouch (4:57.22).

Girls' team member Camryn Williams won both long-distance runs, finishing the 1600m in 5:37.42 and the 3200m in 12:50.09. Teammate Haley Phillips was second in the 1600m with a time of 5:54.86, while Eastside's Natalie Wolpert was second in the 3200m with a time of 13:20.43.

McGruder won the triple jump with a distance of 12.28 meters. He also qualified for regional competition in the long jump with a third-place distance of 5.96 and the high jump by clearing a fourth-

See KHHS, 3B



Camryn Williams takes off She won it and the 3200m. at the start of the 1600m.

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Lyn Veliz, who emceeds the Relay for Life with her father, Chuck Kramer, is pictured with her daughter, Dani, during last year's I'm in for the Cure Royalty Pageant. The pageant is open to age divisions 0-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12, with winners (male and female) being selected in each and an overall king and queen crowned.

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KHHS

Continued from 2B

place height of 1.75. The top four finishers in each event qualified for the Region 2 finals, which will be held Wednesday, April 25, at First Academy in Orlando. Besides Phillips' performance in the 1600m, Keystone also got second-place finishes from its boys' 4x400m relay team and girls' team member Jessi Yeldell in the high jump. The relay team, consisting of Guy, Ryan Williams, Garrett Stanley and Jerry Payne, had a time of 3:38.85, while Yeldell cleared 1.35. The girls' team, which finished as the district runner-up, got a pair of third-place finishes: Victoria Bannon in the 100m hurdles with a time of 19.55 and the 4x400m relay team of Phillips, Yeldell, Danielle Garvey and Lindsay Schrader with a time of 4:30.49. Emily Loose also qualified for regionals by placing fourth in the high jump with a height of 1.25. Bannon and Yeldell each came close to qualifying for regionals in other events as well. Bannon had a fifth-place time of 55.55 in

the 300m hurdles, while Yeldell had a fifth-place distance of 8.57 in the triple jump. Eastside's Keonna Perry grabbed the last regional spot in the 300m hurdles with a time of 52.46, while Santa Fe's Raven Harrison beat out Yeldell for the last spot in the triple jump with a distance of 9 meters. Natalie Hilliard missed out on a regional bid with a fifth-place time of 19.86 in the 100m hurdles. Newberry's Kaleo Marshall was fourth with a time of 19.75. The boys' team had another regional qualifier in Raymond Anderson, who was third in the discus with a throw of 36.24, while Payne and Tyler Shaw each missed qualifying for regional events by one place. Payne was fifth in the 800m with a time of 2:12.60, finishing behind Eastside's Stephen Smith, who had a time of 2:11.33. Shaw was fifth in the 3200m with a time of 11:20.32, getting beat out by Santa Fe's Blake Lofing, who had a time of 11:14.23. Keystone's boys had a pair of sixth-place finishes from its 4x800m relay team of Shaw, Tyler Colaw, Tyler Cumbus and Luke Qualls (10:07.95) and

Mason Stitt in the triple jump (10.76), a seventh-place finish from Cumbus in the discus (30.86) and an eighth-place finish from its 4x100m relay team of McGruder, Stitt, Williams and Josh Prendergast (46.97). Other boys' results: 100m — Prendergast 12.96, Qualls 14.20; 200m — Luke Van Zant 34.20; 400m — Van Zant 1:17.20; 800m — Stanley 2:33.99, Colaw 2:46.36; long jump — Stitt 5.17; shot put — Ian Schofield 9.80, Cumbus 9.61, Zachary Parmeter 8.82; and discus — Schofield 27.46, Parmeter 18.26. The girls' team got a pair of sixth-place finishes from Loose in the triple jump (8.52) and Emerald Hall in the discus (23.54) and a pair of seventh-place finishes from Garvey in the long jump (4.47) and Destiny Bright in the discus (23.16). Other girls' results: 100m — Garvey 14.35; 800m — Schrader 3:02.30; long jump — Loose 3.56, Catherine Shobris 3.12; shot put — Bright 7.71, Hall 6.68, Victoria Snider 6.27, Angelica Loftis 5.27; and discus — Snider 20.58, Brianna Riley 11.60.



Alex Guy won district championships in the 800m and 1600m.



Haley Phillips earned a regional berth with a runner-up finish in the 1600m.



Camryn Williams won district championships in the 1600m and 3200m.

BHS' Creighton to play volleyball at Belhaven



Bradford High School senior Chelsea Creighton, seated between parents Stacey and Dave Creighton, signs her letter of intent to play volleyball at Belhaven University.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

When you get chance to continue playing a sport you love in college, how many words do you need to describe your feelings?

One seemed pretty sufficient for Bradford High School senior Chelsea Creighton, who signed a letter of intent during an April 12 ceremony in the BHS gym to play volleyball at Jackson, Mississippi's Belhaven University.

"Super exciting," Creighton said when asked to describe how she felt. "Just blessed and excited."

She then laughed and said, "I don't want to say excited too much."

Why not? It seemed the perfect word for the right side hitter to use. She once couldn't imagine receiving such an opportunity. However, during the summer prior to her junior year, she created a profile on Next College Student Athlete, an organization that connects student athletes with college coaches. As a result, she received interest from schools such as Trinity College of Florida, Edward Waters College, Wesleyan College, Mississippi University for Women, College of Saint Elizabeth, Elms College, Haverford College, Wisconsin Lutheran College and Wheaton College as well as Belhaven.

"All these colleges started following me," Creighton said. "I took some visits. I just fell in love with Belhaven."

Creighton said Belhaven appealed to her because the campus is beautiful and it offers her the chance to take advantage of a dual-degree program with the University of Mississippi.

"My goal is to go into the field of surgery," Creighton said, adding, "I'm thrilled at the opportunities (the dual-degree program) presents."

Plus, Creighton said all the people in Mississippi are nice. She especially received a warm welcome from the school's coaches and players.

"They were so sweet," she said. "It's like a family — one big family."

At the conclusion of her senior season at BHS, Creighton was first on the team in service aces (26) and second on the team in kills (98), blocks (21) and digs (117).

Creighton, who began playing

volleyball in the seventh grade at Bradford Middle School, also played for the club teams Vision Volleyball of Gainesville and Black Creek Volleyball.

Former BHS Head Coach Belinda Phillips, who was Creighton's coach for her senior year, was unable to attend the signing ceremony, but sent the Telegraph-Times-Monitor the following statement in a text message: "Chelsea is a great volleyball player. I knew when I first started coaching her, she would be an asset, not only to Bradford, but to any team she was a part of. I wish Chelsea

the best and am glad she has the opportunity to further her education playing the sport she loves."

Creighton also loves to play tennis, having played all four years at BHS, the last three of which she was the number-one seed. She may try to play at Belhaven.

"Possibly," Creighton said. "After a year, when I see how it is playing volleyball, I could maybe try to pursue it if I still wanted to. I don't see why not."

For now, though, the focus is on volleyball. She can't wait for her first time on the court as a

Belhaven Blazer. "Wow. That's just going to be amazing," Creighton said.

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Obituaries

Alicia Baker

HAMPTON— Alicia Dawn Baker passed away at home on Sunday, April 15, 2018 following a lengthy illness. Alicia was born in Gainesville on Oct. 20, 1978 to Lynda Clayton Baker and Jeffery Baker. Alicia was raised in and around the Starke Area and attended Bradford County public schools. She loved to cook, do art projects with her children and going to the beach. She had a passion for music and was an avid movie buff. She loved to make people laugh and had a generous heart and a forgiving nature.



She is survived by: her daughters, Mia Thomas of Hampton Lake and Anna Strickland of Keystone Heights; her mother, Lynda Baker of Hampton; her father, Jeffery Baker of Hampton; sister, Nicole Baker of Hampton; brother, Jeffery Baker of Hampton; sister, Leigh-Ann Baker of Hampton; grandmothers, Anna Clayton of Hampton Lake and Helen Baker of Hampton and numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles.

A celebration of life will be held beginning at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 19th at 7664 SW CR 18 on Hampton Lake. A family burial service will be held at a later date at Santa Fe cemetery.

PAID OBITUARY

Arthur Cote

STARKE— Arthur "Art" Roland Cote, age 65, of Starke passed away on Monday, April 9, 2018 at Shands at the University of Florida in Gainesville with his loving family by his side. Art was born in Derry, New Hampshire on Aug. 23, 1952 to the late Roland "Roe" Cote and Evelyn "Eve" Lambert Cote. Art was raised in New Hampshire and attended Pinkerton Academy. After school, Art relocated to Jacksonville to help his grandfather with beekeeping. Shortly after, Art joined the United States Navy and proudly served during the Vietnam War. Following his honorable discharge from the military, Art worked in many different careers. Art was a jack of all trades and enjoyed many hobbies throughout his life. He was a Carriage Driver for the horse and buggies in St. Augustine, a cabinetmaker, mechanic, and finally a manager at Call a Mattress in Starke for over 25 years. Art met the love of his life, Cynthia Elder Thomas, while working at the mattress factory and happily married her on April 6, 2003. Art was a devoted husband and loved Cindy and her son, Scott, dearly. Art enjoyed wood working, fishing, cooking and collecting frogs. He was nicknamed the "Frog Prince" for his frog fascination and was known for his amazing meals. He was preceded in death by his parents; nephew, Freddie Smith; his brother-in-law, Mr. David Walton.

Art is survived by: his loving wife, Cynthia M. Cote of Starke; his step-son, Scott Thomas and companion, Sara Bayles, of Hawthorne; his brother, Peter Cote of Manchester, New Hampshire; and his sisters, Donna Smith Walton of Goffstown, New Hampshire and Martha Cote of St. Augustine.

A Celebration of Art's Life will be held at a later date. Arrangements are under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit www.ferreirafuneralservices.com to sign the family's guest book.

PAID OBITUARY

Cleo Goss

STARKE— Cleo Marie Goss passed away peacefully on Friday, March 30, 2018 at the age of 102. Cleo was born on Nov. 14, 1915 in Dallas, Georgia. For many years, Cleo worked in Jacksonville at Purcell's and Nancy Scott as credit manager. She was predeceased by her parents, Georgia and Garrett Ragsdale; sister, Mildred Ragsdale; brother, George L. Ragsdale; first husband, Charles William Strickler; second husband, James Edwin Goss; and step-son, Charles W. Strickler, Jr.

Cleo is survived by stepdaughter, Nancy Strickler Arnold; nieces, Brenda Ragsdale Roberts, and Martha Ragsdale Muntean; nephew, Jerry Ragsdale.

The family gives special thanks and praise to Jeanette Campbell for the many years of loving care and friendship given to Cleo and to Cleo's wonderful caregivers and friends at Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to First United Methodist Church, Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center in Starke, Haven Hospice in Orange Park or charity of your choice.

A memorial service will be held May 8 at 2:00 pm at First United Methodist Church, 200 N. Walnut Street, Starke, followed by a private burial service at Jacksonville National Cemetery where her ashes will be placed next to those of James E. Goss. Arrangements are under the care and direction of V. Todd Ferreira Funeral Services and Archie Tanner Memorial Chapel, Starke. 904-964-5757. Visit www.ferreirafuneralservices.com to sign the family's guest book.

PAID OBITUARY

Mary Jenkins

LAKE BUTLER— Mary Alice Jenkins, 72, a lifelong resident Lake Butler died on Monday, April 9, 2018. She was born to the late Lloyd and Margaret Bradley in Jacksonville. She is preceded in death by her husband of 52 years, Walter Wayne Jenkins Sr.; son, Walter Wayne Jenkins Jr.; grandchildren, Daniel T. Jenkins II, Edward Wayne Stratton Sr., Callie Rose Stratton.

She is survived by: children, Daniel T. (Lydia) Jenkins, Scott B. Jenkins, Janet Diane (Lydia) Stratton; fourteen brothers and sisters; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

A graveside service was held on April 13 at Mt. Zion Cemetery. Arrangements are under the care of Archer Funeral Home, Lake Butler.

Betty Lee

LAKE BUTLER— Betty Jean Feagle Lee, age 89, passed away on Wednesday, April 11, 2018. She was born in St. Petersburg to the late Albert and Bertie Keene Feagle on Jan. 21, 1929. As a young girl she moved to the Lake Butler area and met her husband George W. Lee, Jr. of Lulu. At 21, Betty and George married on April 15, 1950. Betty was a homemaker and devoted mother to their one son, Ronald (Ronnie) D. Lee. She was a longtime member of The Lulu Advent Christian Church in Lulu. She and George enjoyed traveling together and for many years she enjoyed square dancing. Betty was an excellent seamstress and she also crocheted. She loved dogs and she especially loved beagles. She collected many kinds of figurines over the years and beagles were one of her favorites. She loved to read and enjoyed being at home.



Betty is preceded in death by her parents; her husband, George W. Lee, Jr.; and her son, Ronald D. Lee. Betty will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Services for Betty were held on April 13 at Archer Funeral Home in Lake Butler, Pastor Roy Morrison officiating. Interment followed at Oak Grove Cemetery.

PAID OBITUARY

Cecil Taylor

LAKE BUTLER— Cecil Jessie Taylor, 63, of Lake Butler died on Saturday, March 31, 2018. He was born to the late Howard and Virginia Taylor in Peirce County, Georgia where he was raised. He retired as a maintenance technician. He is preceded in death by: father, Howard Taylor; mother, Virginia Durrance Taylor; brother, Sgt. Larry Durrance; sister, Jenny L. Taylor; sister-in-law, Annie Dickson; maternal grandparents, Jessie and Hattie Durrance; and paternal grandparents, William and Jennie Taylor.

He is survived by: brothers, Bruce E. Dickson, Howard (Cathy) Taylor Jr.; and sisters, Jeanette King, Mildred L. (Jerry) Thompson.

A graveside service will be held on April 21 at Ramah Cemetery in Pierce County, Georgia. Arrangements are under the care of Archer Funeral Home, Lake Butler.

Joseph Thornton

LAKE BUTLER— Joseph B. "Joe" Thornton, 75, of Lake Butler died on Friday, April 13, 2018 at home, surrounded by his family, following a lengthy illness. He was born March 17, 1943 to the late Carl Thornton and Beulah Green Thornton. He was retired from E.I. DuPont and was a farmer. He was a member of Pine Level Baptist Church.

He is survived by: his wife of 57 years, Dorothy "Dottie" Thornton; children, Suzanne Mills, Janice (Joe) Thagard and Blaine Thornton; four grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Services were held on April 16 at Archer Funeral Home, Lake Butler with Bro. Mark Ogle and Bro. Roman Alvarez officiating. For more information, please call 386-496-2008. A private burial will be at later date at the family cemetery.

Louis Wilkins

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS— Louis E. "Mr. Lou" Wilkins, age 83, of Keystone Heights passed away Sunday, April 15, 2018 at his home after an extended illness. He was born July 26, 1934 in Newfane, New York to the late Elwood and Marion (Hall) Wilkins. Following his years of service in the United States Army, Mr. Wilkins decided to make Florida his home. He had lived in Lake City for several years then he retired to Keystone Heights in 1991. Mr. Wilkins spent 28 years in law enforcement and 16 of those were in Union County as a corrections officer. He is preceded in death by: his wife, Danette Wilkins; a son, David Wilkins; a daughter, Wendy Wilkins, and a granddaughter, Cynthia "Nikki" Mann.

His survivors are: his son, Douglas Wilkins; three daughters, Linda Buckler, Melanie Wilkins, and Cyndi Warfel. Also left behind are five grandchildren Crystal Browning, John Warfel, Tanisha Adkins, Jessica Hunt, and Jasmine Warfel along with seven great-grandchildren.

A memorial service for Mr. Wilkins will be held at 6:00 p.m., Monday, April 23 in the Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home Chapel. Arrangements are under the care of Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, Keystone Heights. 352-473-3176. www.jonesgallagherfh.com

PAID OBITUARY

Wayne Wilson

MELROSE— Wayne "Pork Chop" Wilson, 61, of Melrose died on Monday, April 9, 2018 at Shands UF in Gainesville after an extended illness. He was born in Augusta, Georgia on July 12, 1956 to Albert Pinkney and Bessie Sue Wilson. Raised in Archer, he moved to Melrose 30 years ago. He was preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by: his wife of 29 years, Darla J. Wilson of Melrose; sons, Kevin Wayne (Heidi) Wilson of Melrose and Kevin Michael (Cassie) Wilson of Melrose; brother, Danny Wilson of Ocala; two grandchildren and many other family members.

A memorial service was held April 13 at Eliam Baptist Church, Melrose. Arrangements are under the care of Jones-Gallagher Funeral Home, Keystone Heights.

Letters

On Their Job

Last Friday as I was going south on the road to the east of the Union County School, I received a phone call, so I pulled off to the edge of the highway so I could answer the call. Less than a minute into the phone call two Union County deputies pulled up wanting to know if they could help me. So I got off the phone

and answered the deputies, I needed to go get a key from a teacher at the high school to do work at a local church in Lake Butler. I thanked the deputies for being alert to the safety of the students at the school. Deputies keep it up.

Henry Hodge
Lawtey

11-1 loss to Baker is Indians' 3rd straight

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Baker County handed the Keystone Heights High School baseball team its third straight loss by a score of 11-1 on April 16 in Glen St. Mary.

Cole Mattox went 2-for-2 for the Indians (8-11), but the rest of the team went a combined 3-for-18. One of those three hits was a double by Trey Alsbrook.

Prior to playing Baker, Keystone dropped two straight District 5-5A games.

On April 12, visiting Fort White scored three runs in the top of the sixth to defeat Keystone 5-3.

A single by Andrew Cox in the bottom of the fifth scored Conner Osteen, who walked, and gave the Indians a 3-2 lead.

Osteen went 2-for-3 with a solo home run and two RBI.

Keystone's district record dropped to 5-6 with a 14-12 loss to Santa Fe on April 13 in

Alachua.

The Raiders scored 11 runs in the second inning, taking advantage of nine hits, two errors and a hit batter.

Keystone had a nine-run third inning that featured two two-run doubles by Alsbrook and Gary Searle.

Alsbrook had three RBI, while Searle, who went 3-for-5, had two. Mattox and Osteen each had one RBI, with Osteen going 2-for-4. Nate Gagnon went 2-for-5.

Searle pitched the final 4.2 innings, giving up one unearned run on three hits and two walks.

The Indians played North Marion this past Tuesday and will host district opponent P.K. Yonge on Friday, April 20, at 7 p.m. Keystone then travels to play Ridgeview on Tuesday, April 24, at 4:30 p.m. before returning home to play Clay on Wednesday, April 25, at 7 p.m.

BHS softball team ends regular-season district play with 10-9 win

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Savana Shealey drove in what would prove to be the game winner as the Bradford High School softball team defeated visiting Palatka 10-9 on April 12 to end regular-season District 5-5A play with a 6-6 record.

Shealey hit a sacrifice fly in the bottom of the fifth that scored Brooklyn Wiggins, who reached on a double, and put Bradford up 10-7.

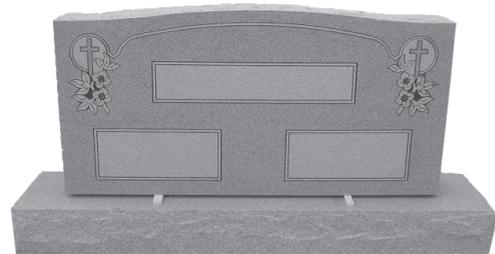
Palatka scored two runs with two outs in the top of the seventh before a ground out to second baseman Shianne Cassels ended the game.

Cassels, who went 2-for-2, Jaycee Edwards, who went 2-for-4, and Shealey each had two RBI. Talia Brown, Gracie Blankenship, Emily McCoy and Markayla Sanford each had one RBI, with Blankenship

See BHS, 5B

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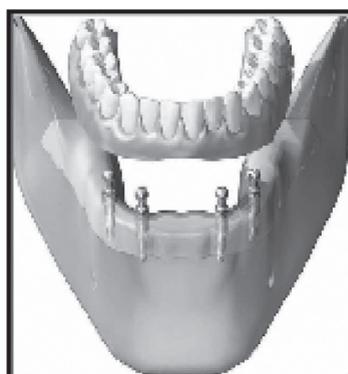
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UCHS baseball team sweeps double-header against Cottondale

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Union County High School pitchers gave up a combined eight hits, while Trace Croft drove in a total of five runs as the Tigers swept an April 14 double-header, defeating visiting Cottondale 9-4 and 12-2 (five innings).

Croft and Skyler Shatto each had an RBI single in an eight-run second inning in the first game. Garrett Mullins scored on a steal of home in the same inning, which saw one run scored on a wild pitch, one scored on an error, one scored on a hit batter with the bases loaded and two scored on bases-loaded walks.

Croft went 2-for-4 with a double. He, Shatto, Matthew Starling, Trevor Rogers and Jake Worthington each had an RBI.

Starting pitcher Mullins gave up four runs (one earned) in 6.2 innings on three hits and one walk. He had seven strikeouts.

Whip Davis closed it out, giving up one hit and one walk, while striking out one.

In the second game, the Tigers (11-8) put together a nine-run fourth inning that featured a pair of two-run singles by Croft and Mullins, as well as an RBI double by Tripp Davis.

Croft finished with four RBI, going 2-for-4, while Mullins, who went 2-for-3, had three RBI. Braxton Dukes, who went 2-for-2, had two RBI.

Tripp Davis, who finished with the one RBI, earned the win on the mound, giving up four hits and two walks, while striking out five.

Prior to the double-header, Union lost 6-1 to visiting Trenton on April 12. Trailing 5-0, Rogers drove in the lone run with a two-out single that scored Paden Clyatt in the bottom of the fifth.

The Tigers played Duval Charter on April 16 and Bell on April 17. They travel to play District 6-1A opponent Hilliard on Friday, April 20, at 7 p.m. Union then hosts Lake Weir on Monday, April 23, at 6 p.m. before traveling to play Bell on Tuesday, April 24, at 6 p.m.



Paden Clyatt takes a low pitch for a ball.



Jake Worthington (right) avoids the Cottondale third baseman during a successful steal attempt.



Skyler Shatto slides into home plate to score one of eight runs in the second inning of the first game of the Cottondale double-header.



Center fielder Trace Croft (right) makes a running catch, while avoiding diving left fielder Skyler Shatto.



Tripp Davis (left) takes a lead at third, while Coach Boo Mullins looks on.



Third baseman Whip Davis awaits a throw that's too late on this Cottondale steal attempt.



Garrett Mullins hurls a pitch in the first game of the Cottondale double-header.

Right: Trevor Rogers bats for the Tigers in the first game of the double-header. He was one of five Union players to drive in a run in the game.



BHS Continued from 4B

going 2-for-4 and McCoy going 2-for-5. Wiggins went 3-for-4.

Shealey pitched a complete game to earn the win. She had six strikeouts.

Bradford (8-11 overall) lost 6-0 at West Nassau on April 5, getting held to three hits, and then lost 15-0 in five innings to district opponent Santa Fe on April 11 in Starke.

Wiggins went 2-for-2 against Santa Fe, with the rest of the team going a combined 1-for-17.

The Tornados played West Nassau this past Tuesday and will travel to play Ridgeview on Thursday, April 19, at 4 p.m. Bradford concludes the regular season by hosting Bishop Snyder on Friday, April 20, at 6:30 p.m.

See related story for the District 5-5A tournament schedule.

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for the election of Directors, and the transaction of any other business that may come before the meeting, will be held at *The Woman's Club of Starke*, 201 North Walnut Street in Starke on Thursday, April 26, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

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Coldwell Banker owners love new hometown

Unlike many Bradford County residents, Marty and Lisa Shaw have not lived here their entire lives. However, the new owners of Coldwell Banker Smith and Smith Realty may appreciate Starke and the surrounding communities even more than the natives.

Although raised in Jacksonville, Marty has deep roots in Bradford County. His great-grandfather was well known in the community and his uncle, Gene Shaw practiced law here for years and represented the area in the Florida Legislature.

"So, growing up I had a lot of visits to Starke," he recalled.

From boom to bust in real estate development

His father, Lamar Shaw graduated from Bradford High School and the University of Georgia before working for Charter Mortgage in Miami briefly and then in Jacksonville.

Marty earned a real estate finance degree at the University of Alabama and worked at Florida National Bank and a real estate development firm before launching his own firm in 1992: Skyline Realty Services.

"We developed about \$400 million worth of real estate in northeast Florida," he said, "subdivisions, shopping centers, office buildings, warehouses, Golden Corrals, Walgreens, Goodyear Tire Stores, you name it. The

economy went really well for the next 18 years."

However, in 2008 the recession hit and wiped out his business.

"Fortunately, we had sold off 80 percent of our portfolio in '05, '06 and '07, but nobody was doing anything. The phone wasn't ringing, nobody was doing any business, and nobody was loaning any money."

Selling custom homes

Lisa made her way to Starke along a more winding route, from Columbus, Georgia through Phoenix City and Mobile Alabama and finally by way of Lakeland and Orange Park, Florida.

After graduating from Orange Park High School, Lisa worked as a receptionist for a car dealership while she studied for her real estate license, then sold homes for a custom home builder.

She met Marty in 2006 and the couple moved to Kingsley Lake to care for Marty's mother.

The custom home business also took a downturn in 2008, so both Marty and Lisa semi-retired, taking on occasional projects.

The worst round of golf

In 2016, Tom Smith, one of the owners of Smith and Smith Realty played a round of golf with Marty at the Starke Golf and Country Club, and the

pair discussed real estate. By the end of the 18 holes, Marty had a deal to buy the real estate office.

"It was the worst round of golf I ever played," he recalled. "The wheels were turning in my head the entire 18 holes."

Lisa said that she and Marty were contemplating their next career moves. "The real estate market was turning around," she said. "We were trying to decide what to do."

Although they both had backgrounds in real estate, Marty and Lisa said they had some learning to do moving from custom home building and real estate development to residential rural sales.

"First of all, banking had completely changed during the time we were semi-retired," recalled Marty. "Everything had collapsed and had been restructured."

Loving small-town values

Then, the couple had to change their mindsets from the cookie-cutter, go-go orientation of the big city to slowing down and paying attention to each individual customer with unique needs.

"Your customers are your friends," Lisa said. "You may not remain friends for the rest of your lives, but during the time you are working for them, you become the most important person because you are taking care of them. Your job is to nurture them and protect them,

and to make sure everything goes just exactly like it's supposed to."

Lisa added that she soon came to appreciate the small-town attitude of rural northeast Florida.

"Here, people hold the door open for me," she said. "In Jacksonville, I used to get so irritated at people that did not have common courtesy. In Starke, common courtesy is standard. People in Jacksonville are so wrapped up in themselves and people here are about giving and community."

Having values is important here," Marty said. "Values don't seem to be important in a bigger city."

"Bradford County and the surrounding area has so much to offer," he added. "We may lack some of the amenities like Starbucks or Publix but we have great community activities like the fair, strawberry festival and high school athletics. It's a fun place to live, and if you really need something you can go to Gainesville or Jacksonville to get it."

Lisa added that she appreciates the ability to personally know the people she does business with.

"Here, you know the people who work at city hall," she said. "You know the sheriff. You know the principal at the high school. You know the school superintendent. In a big city you don't have those opportunities."



Coldwell Banker Smith and Smith Realty owners: Lisa and Marty Shaw

Local real estate trends

Marty and Lisa said the biggest problem in the local residential real estate market today is a lack of inventory. More people are looking for homes than there are available.

Marty added that as both Jacksonville and Gainesville expand toward Starke, the housing market here will likely tighten further.

The couple is trying to lure builders to the area. They are also working with partners to develop some spec houses in

the area of Starke Elementary School.

However, one bright spot locally is that commercial properties are selling.

"The commercial activity is good because you've got to have a job to live here," Lisa said, "and you've got to have places to spend your money."

Lisa and Marty said they not only love their new hometown, they also want to do their part to make it better.

"We want to see families stay together and this community flourish," they said.



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BHS baseball team struggles in district losses to P.K. Yonge, Newberry

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

The Bradford High School baseball team couldn't get much going with its bats, while shaky play in the field helped visiting P.K. Yonge score runs in what would be an 8-3 District 5-5A loss on April 11.

It was the second straight district loss for the Tornadoes, who then went on to lose another district game by a score of 10-0 against Newberry on April 13.

P.K. Yonge took advantage of four errors to score four runs in the top of the third, giving the Blue Wave a 5-1 lead.

The Blue Wave scored all of its runs against Bradford starter Trent Bryant, but only two of those were earned. Bryant gave up eight hits and one walk in four

innings.

Cayden Martin pitched the final three innings, giving up one hit and one walk.

The Tornadoes struggled at the plate, getting only four hits.

Brandon Anders, Jacob Polk and Sterling Raab each had an RBI.

In the April 13 loss to Newberry, the Tornadoes had just two hits.

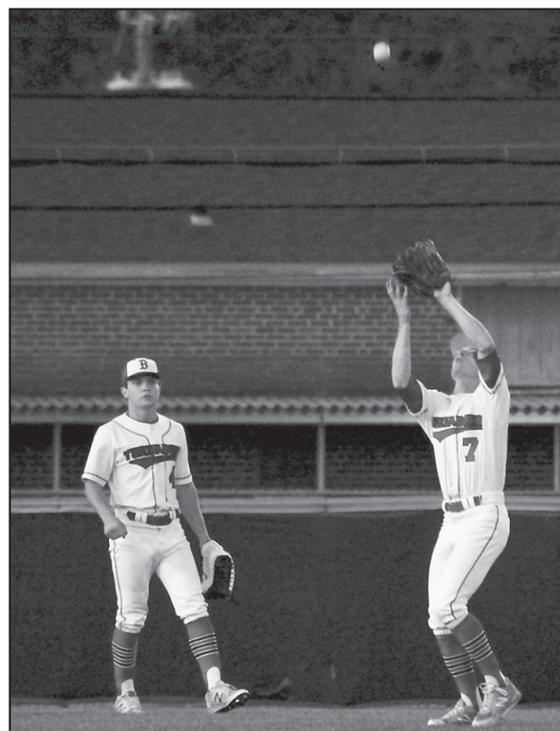
Bradford (8-9, 6-6) played Ridgeview this past Tuesday and will travel to play district opponent Fort White on Thursday, April 19, at 7 p.m. The Tornadoes then travel to play West Nassau on Friday, April 20, at 6 p.m. before traveling to play district opponent Interlachen on Monday, April 23, at 6 p.m.



Above: Trent Bryant pitches against P.K. Yonge.



Right: Cayden Martin make a relief appearance against P.K. Yonge.



Center fielder Brandon Anders (right) catches a fly ball as left fielder Dakota Mathews looks on in the Tornadoes' loss to P.K. Yonge.



Sterling Raab fields a ground ball.



Brandon Sanford (left) gets tagged out at home against P.K. Yonge.



Shortstop Jacob Polk prepares to throw to first.



Dakota Mathews makes a throw from left field.

BHS' Blankenship to play softball at Florida State College - Jax



Bradford High School senior Gracie Blankenship (second from left) signs her letter of intent to play softball at Florida State College at Jacksonville. She is seated between her parents, Kevin Blankenship (who is also the BHS head coach) and Dana Bell. Her stepfather, Mark Bell, is pictured at the far right.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Playing ball has been a part of Gracie Blankenship's life for more than 10 years. Thanks to Florida State College at Jacksonville, the Bradford High School senior gets to don another school's uniform and play for another couple of years.

Blankenship signed a letter of intent to play softball at FSCJ during an April 12 ceremony in the BHS gym.

"I didn't really think I would have this opportunity," Blankenship said, "but I'm proud I have it. I'm just happy."

Bradford Head Coach Kevin Blankenship, who is Gracie's father, said the opportunity came about because of Gracie's efforts and the help of former BHS and FSCJ player Lainie Rodgers, who joined the team this year as an assistant coach.

"It's exciting knowing (Gracie) really put the hard work in and really prepared herself and pushed herself this last year," Kevin Blankenship said. "Coach Lainie's really helped also — pushing her and giving her the confidence, she needs."

Gracie had other schools that were interested in her, but they didn't "really fit me," she

said. FSCJ did. "The coaches, the atmosphere, the players — they were all just real nice. They took me in as one of the players already," she said.

Blankenship, a catcher, is currently batting .352, which is fourth among teammates who've played every game this season. Since playing varsity as a sophomore, she has a cumulative batting average of .286 with 12 doubles.

Kevin Blankenship said Gracie has worked hard at becoming more aggressive at the plate — something he and Rodgers have tried to instill in all of the Bradford players this season — "Attack. Don't sit back and hope you get a good pitch. Just be ready for that first pitch."

The coach said what really stands out is Gracie's willingness to do what's asked of her.

"She's always been one to listen to her coaches and try to continue to do what her coaches ask her to do," Kevin Blankenship said.

Gracie will have the opportunity to play catcher and in the outfield at FSCJ. She's open to any position as long as she can play, but she does have a preference.

"I like outfielder a lot better," she said. "The high school needed a catcher, so I just kind of stepped in."

As his daughter prepares to play at the collegiate level, Kevin Blankenship said the main thing she'll have to do is improve her work ethic, which is key for any player

wanting to improve her game. "That's the biggest thing she's going to have to get better at — working hard on her own," he said. "I think she will once she gets up there around some of the other girls."

Suiting up to play college ball will be a change that will make Gracie Blankenship a little nervous at first, but it's a change she's looking forward to.

"It's going to be really different — a lot of emotions, but it'll be fun," she said.



Second baseman Sterling Raab (right) tries to handle a throw that was too late in trying to get P.K. Yonge's Devante Mitchum out on a steal attempt.

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Hill, Hines win district titles for BHS 5 Tornadoes qualify for April 25 regional competition

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Jordan Hill and Jade Hines each won an event for Bradford High School, with Hines also placing second in another at the April 11-12 District 5-2A track and field finals in Gainesville at Oak Hall High School and Fred Cone Park.

Hill cleared 1.8 meters in the high jump, while Hines won the long jump with a distance of 5.36 meters. Hines was second in the 200m with a time of 25.84 seconds. Interlachen's Reva Godbolt won the 200m with a time of 25.24.

The top four finishers in each event qualified for the Region 2 finals, which will be held Wednesday, April 25, at First Academy in Orlando. Meghan Harris, Travis Lee and Jeremiah Vaughn will join Hill and Hines as regional participants.

Harris will compete in

three events at the Region 2 finals. She was the district runner-up in the 300m hurdles with a time of 49.84 seconds (Eastside's Natiya James had a time of 46.02) and the triple jump with a distance of 10.80 meters (Eastside's James had a distance of 10.82). She also placed third in the 400m with a time of 59.62.

Vaughn earned the right to advance in two events. He tied with Palatka's Jaylan Sessions for second in the 200m with a time of 22.67, which was behind the 21.95 posted by Palatka's Trayvon Williams. Vaughn was fourth in the 100m with a time of 11.09.

Lee will compete in the triple jump at the Region 2 finals after jumping a third-place distance of 11.89 meters at the District 5 finals.

The boys' 4x400m relay team of Kamren Thomas, Jalen Lane, Randy Lott and Austin Lovell just missed qualifying for regionals with a fifth-place time of 3:53.91.

Fort White earned the last regional spot with a fourth-place time of 3:50.48.

Thomas and Gabe Cook earned points with sixth- and seventh-place finishes. Thomas was sixth in the 400m (55.25), while Cook was sixth in the discus (31.76) and seventh in the shot put (10.83).

Other BHS boys' results: 100m — Erric Smith 11.87; 200m — Smith 24.30; 400m — Lovell 56.54, Lee 1:01.17; long jump — Lee 5.48, Hill 5.29; shot put — Jacory Clark 8.52, Jamir Tyson 7.60; and discus — Tyson 25.74, Clark 24.22.

Kayla Daniel was the only girls' participant besides Harris and Hines. She competed in the shot put (6.98) and the discus (16.36).



Jade Hines (left) prepares to cross the finish line ahead of Eastside's Faith Turner to take second in the 200m.



Jeremiah Vaughn competes in the 200m prelims. He finished tied for runner-up in the finals.

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UNION COUNTY TIMES
Lake Region Monitor
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Jordan Hill (pictured at the March 12 BHS Invitational) won the District 5-2A championship in the high jump.



Jeremiah Vaughn (left) and Palatka's Jaylan Sessions cross the finish line at the same time in the 200m. The runners were tied for second.



Meghan Harris is pictured at the start of the 400m finals.



Meghan Harris was the runner-up in the 300m hurdles.

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Bakken wins district title for UCHS track, field teams

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Four Union County High School track and field athletes will advance to regional competition, including Kurston Bakken, who won the discus at the April 11-12 District 5-2A finals in Gainesville at Oak Hall High School and Fred Cone Park. Bakken had a throw of 25.74 meters to beat out Interlachen's Elizabeth Finley, who had a throw of 25.54.

The top four finishers in each event qualified for the Region 2 finals, which will be Wednesday, April 25, at First Academy in Orlando.

Jaylon Diston was the runner-up in the high jump after clearing 1.80 meters, while Solomon Jones and Austin Wilson each earned a third-place finish — Jones in the shot put with a distance of 11.83 and Wilson in the 1600m with a time of 4:57.43. Bakken just missed qualifying for regionals in the shot put, placing fifth with a distance of 8.53. Newberry's Lauren Bryant earned the last regional spot with a fourth-place distance of 9.59.

The boys' team had three sixth-place finishes — Diston in the 200m (23.47), Wilson in the 3200m (11:37.01) and the 4x100m relay team of Diston, Te'veon Lee, B.J. Harvey and

Keyshawn Young (45.24). Lee also earned points for the boys' team with a seventh-place finish in the 200m (23.64). Other UCHS boys' results: 100m — Lee 11.77, Young 12.01, Harvey 12.38; 200m — Harvey 25.07; long jump — Lee 5.32, Harvey 5.14; shot put — Matthew Lynch 9.10; and discus — Haven Johns 26.32, Lynch 19.76, Jones 17.62.

Union earned a seventh-place finish in the girls' 4x100m relay (Sydney Personette, Erica Roseke, Madelyn Whitehead, Chloe Johns) with a time of 55.18. The girls' team also had the following results: 100m — Whitehead 13.70, Roseke 14.37, Johns 14.49; long jump

—Personette 3.87; and discus — Roseke 19.26.

Clockwise from top, left:

Austin Wilson placed third in the 1600m.

Kurston Bakken was the District 5-2A champion in the discus.

Jaylon Diston competes in the 200m. Though he didn't qualify for regionals, placing sixth, he did qualify in the high jump with a second-place finish.

Solomon Jones placed third in the shot put.



6 BHS, KHHS girls' basketball players earn Sun All-Area honors

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Bradford and Keystone Heights high schools had a combined six players earn recognition with the release of The Gainesville Sun's All-Area girls' basketball teams, including Keystone's Haley Julius, who was a first-team selection. Julius, a junior guard, averaged 13 points, four rebounds and three steals per game this past season.



Keystone's Haley Julius moves past Bradford's Olyvia Griffin earlier this year.

Two of Julius' teammates were second-team selections: senior forward Victoria Snider, who averaged eight points and 10 rebounds per game, and junior guard Savannah Channell, who averaged nine points, seven rebounds and five steals. Bradford had two second-team selections in senior forward Jah'mya Henderson,

who averaged 11 points, four rebounds and two steals, and sophomore guard Olyvia Griffin, who averaged eight points, four rebounds and four steals. Bradford sophomore guard/forward Meghan Harris earned honorable mention. Union County received no recognition since its coach did not respond to Gainesville Sun requests for player nominations.

Sun recognizes 5 BHS boys' basketball players



Bradford's Chris Cummings (center) draws contact on a drive to the basket earlier this year in a game against Bolles.

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Chris Cummings earned first-team honors, while four of his Bradford High School teammates were also recognized with the release of The Gainesville Sun's All-Area boys' basketball teams. Cummings, a senior guard, averaged 15 points and four assists per game. Earning second-team honors were senior forward D.J.

Mackey, who averaged eight points and eight rebounds, and junior forward Taz Curry, who averaged 11 points and six rebounds. Junior guards Matthew Crawford and Jordan Lee earned honorable mention. Neither Keystone Heights nor Union County received recognition as their coaches didn't respond to Gainesville Sun requests for player nominations.

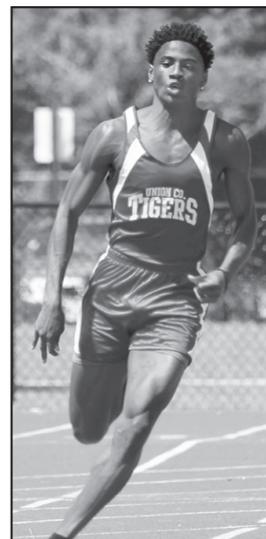
Tigers ride 13-run inning to 17-2 win in regular-season finale

BY CLIFF SMELLEY
Telegraph Staff Writer

Visiting Crescent City held the lead briefly, but the Union County High School softball team won in convincing fashion, scoring 13 runs in the second inning to close out the regular season with a 17-2, three-inning District 6-1A victory on April 13.

The Tigers (13-4, 7-1) trailed 2-1, but drew five bases-loaded walks as part of the big second inning, which also included two runs scored on errors and two runs scored on a Tiffany Clark double. Katie Caren, Kamaya Cohen, Kensley Hamilton and Teala Howard each had an RBI single in the inning. Howard finished with a triple and four RBI, while Cohen had three RBI. Clark finished with the two RBI, while Caren, Hamilton and Shelby Spratlin each had one. Pitcher Lexi Androlevich, in relieving starter Howard, gave up no hits and no walks, while striking out six in 2.2 innings.

Union went 1-2 in the three games preceding the regular-season finale, beginning with a 16-5 district win over host Williston on April 3. Howard drove in three runs, going 3-for-4 with a double, a triple and an inside-the-park solo home run. Cohen went 3-for-6 with three RBI, while Clark went 2-for-5 with two RBI. Hamilton and Madelyn Kish each had an RBI, with Hamilton going 2-for-4 with a triple and Kish going 2-for-5. Brooke Waters, who hit a double, drove in a run as well, while Spratlin went 2-for-4. Androlevich earned the win, giving up five hits and



Keystone outlasts Santa Fe in 1-0 thriller

Softball team ends season with 12-0 district record

BY BRANDON LUDWIG
Monitor correspondent

This past Thursday, the Keystone Heights High School softball team traveled to Alachua to face fellow district powerhouse Santa Fe in a game that had big implications for the Raiders. Hot on a five-game winning streak, the home team looked to take advantage of an opportunity over the stumbling Indians, who had started off the season strong, but encountered midseason struggles, losing three of their last five games.

Keystone wasn't deterred. Behind a strong performance from pitcher Megan Moncrief, and a strong defense with big plays made by Savannah Channell, Cami Worley, and Ashton Ludwig, the game remained 0-0 until reaching the top of the sixth inning. Lexi Northway singled for the Indians on a ground ball to the Raiders' shortstop and stole both second and third base while Bailey Story was at bat. Story sealed the deal for the Indians, with a hard-hit single to bring Northway across the plate for the only run of the game.

It wasn't all fun and games from there, however, for Keystone; in the bottom of the sixth, Santa Fe's Annalyn

Burnham sent a hit into left field for another single, giving the Raiders a chance to tie the game.

However, in an incredible play that sent the entire crowd into an uproar, left fielder Lexi Northway made a diving catch, that sent her rolling, only for her to put her glove up just a moment later still holding the ball.

That play, which ended the sixth inning, would be the turning point, and Keystone would go on to defeat Santa Fe 1-0.

With this win, the Indians finished their district schedule with a perfect 12-0 record, and an overall tally of 15-7.

This past Monday, the Indians traveled to Gainesville to face the Hurricanes, and returned home for Senior Night against the Clay High Blue Devils (both scores unavailable by press time). They'll travel to Trenton this Thursday night to wrap up the regular season.

Next week, the Indians will head to the District Playoffs, which are hosted in Keystone Heights again this year. Two games will be held each day from Monday through Wednesday, with the District Championship game on Thursday night, April 26th, at 7 p.m.

striking out eight.

Despite a nine-strikeout performance by Androlevich on April 5, Union lost 10-4 to visiting Trinity Christian — the fifth-ranked team in Class 4A.

The Tigers recognized seniors Androlevich, Howard, Kish and Waters prior to the game. Unfortunately, they would lose Waters (first baseman/pitcher) to a broken bone in her forearm, when she was hit by a pitch in her first at-bat.

Hamilton (who went 2-for-4), Clark, Cohen, and Reah Jones each had an RBI, with Clark hitting a double. Howard hit a double and went 2-for-4.

On April 9, host Hilliard hit a two-run double in the bottom of the seventh in handing Union a 4-3 district loss.

It was the first district loss for the Tigers since Feb. 18, 2016.

Cohen, Hamilton and Angela Shope each had an RBI, with Hamilton going 2-for-4. Shope's one hit was a double.

Howard went 2-for-4 with a double and a triple, while Spratlin went 2-for-3. Androlevich hit a double.

Androlevich earned the loss in the circle despite giving up just one walk and striking out eight.

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