

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

★★★ No. 44,534

Lake Charles, Louisiana

Not guilty plea in Jeff Davis death

By Doris Maricle
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JENNINGS — A Jennings man accused of killing a Welsh man during a fight in the middle of the road in August pleaded not guilty Monday to manslaughter in the 31st Judicial District Court.

Blaine Michael Easley, 21, is charged with manslaughter in the shooting death of Steven Richard, 19.

A grand jury indicted Easley on the manslaughter charge last week. Easley was originally charged with second-degree murder and obstruction of justice, but the grand jury opted for the lesser charge of manslaughter after hearing testimony from half a dozen witnesses and viewing evidence in the case, according to Assistant District Attorney Kevin Millican.

A March 2017 trial date has been set for Easley.

If convicted of manslaughter, Easley faces up to 40 years in prison.

Two other men, Dylan Gary, 17, and Aubrey Lee Henderson, 17, both of Jennings were arrested for accessory after the fact to second-degree murder and obstruction of justice charges. They are currently out on bond.

The shooting occurred near Farm Supply Road and South Frontage Road after the two groups agreed to meet at a neutral location and fight, authorities said.

Presents from the heart



EDS student Julia McElveen presented one of her knit hats to Jeremy Horner at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital.

EDS students knit hats for patients

By Lisa Addison
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Students from Bishop Noland Episcopal Day School brought a little joy to cancer patients receiving chemotherapy on Monday at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital in the form of hats they had knitted themselves.

Sandy Franzen, 80, who said she has a rare blood cancer, held one of the hats in her hands and said she was touched by the handmade gift. "This is so beautiful but it's also very

See EDS, A6



Making their pitch

Candidates in race for LC mayor meet in

By Emily Fontenot
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Five candidates for Lake Charles mayor faced off on key issues Monday during a community-led forum at the Central School Arts and Humanities Center.

The candidates introduced themselves to the public and offered timed responses to questions on topics such as drainage, housing, crime, traffic and education.

Candidates largely agreed on the general approach to solving long-term community issues, such as urban flooding and housing costs. Many of them also pointed out that the next mayor's job will primarily consist of continuing efforts left over from Roach's term in office.

"This ain't going to be a sexy race for mayor," said candidate Dana Jackson, a Lake Charles city councilman. "It's all sewage and water."

Jackson, a councilman as a Calcasieu Juror are hopeful for mayor.

He said he would raise funds for public works spearheaded by location.

"We have Jackson said move it around to spur economic development by regulation see to it that the city coming and brought to

Candidate cited his lawyer, disbarred councilman as qualified said his ability to solve difficult issues is an exception

LC man gets 30 years in death of ex-girlfriend

By Marilyn Monroe
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A Lake Charles man was sentenced Monday in state district court for the 2014 beating death of his ex-girlfriend.

Mario Viltz, 36, was convicted of manslaughter on July 28 for the October 2014 death of A'Tasha LeShawn Hardy, 25. Police had found the seriously injured woman in her Anita Drive home at 2:41 a.m. Oct. 30, 2014.

She died the next day in a local hospital from multiple blunt-force injuries to her head and abdomen.

Viltz was indicted in January 2015 on a charge of second-degree murder in connection to Hardy's death and was tried in July on that charge.

However, jurors chose instead to return a verdict of manslaughter, a lesser charge, against him.

Judge Clayton Davis stated on Monday that Hardy was "clearly vulnerable" and "powerless physically" in comparison to Viltz, who used an end table to beat the young woman.

Davis sentenced Viltz to 30 years in prison with credit for any time already served.



Police investigate the scene of a fatal shooting Monday in Lake Charles.

Rick Hickman / American Press

Teaching

Special to the

Lake Charles investigating the Monday morning north Lake Charles James Le Jr., 18.

Deputy said that at 11:30 a.m. at 1835 Re

Freeman home, was p.m. He is degree m feticide.

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INSIDE

Business B1-B2, B4-B6
Classified D1-D3
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Deaths A2
Entertainment C5
Life C6
Local/State A3, A5-A6, D6
Lottery A2

OUTSIDE

74°

Fog in the a.m.; mostly cloudy, showers

Details — D6

Season's

American Press

Dept. of Education ranks Allen Louisiana's top school system

By Doris Maricle
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Cameron and Vernon

The district rose from 98.5



Students from Bishop Noland Episcopal Day School brought a little joy to cancer patients receiving chemotherapy on Monday at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital in the form of hats they had knitted themselves.

Special to the American Press

EDS

Continued from A1

special that these children took the time to do this," Franzen said. "I've been to many hospitals through my health journey and I have to say that this is one of the nicest things that anyone has done for me. It's great to see that some of these old crafts such as knitting are being kept alive by young people."

Fourth-grader Clara Karpovs said she enjoyed knitting hats for the patients because "I kept thinking that it would make them smile and maybe even make them feel better and keep their heads warm

too."

Julia McElveen, a 3rd grader, said, "I knitted seven hats because I thought this was a great cause and I was also hoping that it would bring a lot of joy to people. I put a flower on one of my hats and made it a little more special. I like thinking that someone will wear my hats and feel happy knowing that I made something just for them."

Dr. Michael Broussard, oncologist at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital, led a group of students down the hall toward the chemotherapy unit, saying, "Come on kids; let's go make some rounds." Broussard said that the students and their gifts would likely bring

"smiles to the faces of our patients and help them cope with difficult situations they are facing."

It's the third year that EDS students have undertaken this project for patients going through chemotherapy.

Another patient, Anthony Arceneaux, 67, said that getting one of the hats "meant a whole lot in my heart. Some people think that it's the big things in life that are important but it's the little things because those little things add up and become the big things. This sure does make me feel good."

Abby Broussard, a 4th grader who has grown up hearing about cancer due to her father

Dr. Broussard's profession, said when she was knitting hats, "I felt really good because I knew that it could help some of my dad's patients and that it might lift them up and make them feel happy."

Diagnosed with leukemia in 2014, Jeremy Horner, 26, was a recipient of one of the hats and he said he was impressed with the students and their endeavor. "I think it takes a lot of bravery for a kid to approach a cancer patient," he said. "It's remarkable that these students wanted to do something so nice for us. I really like my hat and it makes me feel good to know that someone I didn't even know cared enough to make something special for me and others."

Sulphur moves Suddenlink franchise fees at 3 percent

By Heather Regan White
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SULPHUR — The Sulphur City Council on Monday amended a proposed ordinance that would have increased franchise fees for Suddenlink Communication customers to keep those fees at their current 3 percent.

The item was brought up in a public hearing and resident Charlie Atherton took the podium to state that franchise fees are "pass-thru" fees, the burden of which fall on customers.

Councilman Stuart Moss made a motion to set the fees in franchise agreement to zero. But after Financial Director Jennifer Thorne reported that those fees, along with a 5 percent from Cameron Communications, bring in about \$210 thousand annually, Moss withdrew his motion. Councilwoman Dru Ellender made a motion to keep the fees at 3 percent. The city will meet with Cameron Communications about lowering their franchise fee to 3 percent as well.

The Council also approved a request from Dr. Charles Smith for a rezone from residential to commercial for property located east of Beglis Pkwy, north of Interstate 10, and south of Linda Avenue. Smith is selling the property to a developer who reported plans to build motels and perhaps a restaurant on the property in September. Several Linda Avenue residents spoke in opposition and reported a petition against the rezone with 76 signatures.

Chris Sonnier, a Linda Avenue resident expressed concern about any development nearby exacerbating existing drainage issues. Kristina Ramirez, a resident of the Rosepark subdivision to the north of the proposed development, said she worried about customers in

multi-story line of

Matt Blum, a the seller to area showing stipulations. Favre a stipulation required more than the i

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CRIME BRIEFS / ARREST REPORTS

LC men arrested for stealing from store

Four Lake Charles men have been arrested for stealing from a store located inside a local casino, said authorities.

Security staff at the casino identified four men on Dec. 7 that they said were involved in a theft the previous day, said Cmdr. James McGee, Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office spokesperson. He said that the staff stated that Isaiah D. Williams, of 2727 3rd Street; Aaron C. LeBlanc, of 2618 Southern Ridge; Demine L. Bryant, of 702 Sycamore; and Gregory P. Griffin, Jr., of 700 North Booker, had entered a casino clothing store and stole \$1,108 worth of merchandise by concealing the items in their pants. The four returned to the property on Dec. 7 and were recognized by casino security, said McGee.

The men were arrested and charged each with theft \$750 to \$5,000. Griffin, said McGee, was also charged with resisting an officer by providing false identification.

Judge Michael Canaday set bond for Williams and Bryant at \$10,000 each. Canaday set LeBlanc's bond at \$12,000 and Griffin's at \$12,500.

The Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests:

Daniel Dees, 18, 3650 Hwy 27, Sulphur — 3650 Hwy 27, Sulphur — drug possession.

Christian Zimmerman, 18, 801 A St. Anthony St. — drug possession, marijuana possession. Bond: \$15,000.

Daniel Wilson, 44, 1109 Richard Allen, DeQuincy — drug possession. Bond: \$10,000.

Danny Rider, 30, 5000 Leon Drive No. 174 — domestic abuse battery.

James Lavergne, 37, 1505 23rd St. — domestic abuse battery.

Denise Lastie, 28, 809 Fiegel St., Sulphur — drug possession.

Kade Jeter, 24, 3517 Ernest St. — attempted purse snatching, two counts of drug possession, drug possession with intent to distribute.

Thomas Chargois, 27, 1909 Townsend St. — possession of stolen

things over \$1,500, simple criminal damage to property \$500 to \$50,000.

Branden Roberts, 19, 2034 13th St. — resisting an officer, aggravated assault with a firearm.

Jacob Wells, 24, 2847 Smith Ferry Road — simple battery, resisting an officer. Bond: \$5,000.

Terald Simpson, 33, 2107 Rose St. — theft \$5,000 to \$25,000, resisting an officer by refusal to ID, disturbing the peace. Bond: \$15,000.

Javon Thomas, 24, 410 Louie St. — DWI, drug possession with intent to distribute. Bond: \$9,000.

Clay Miller, 23, 2918 Cypress St. — possession of stolen things less than \$500, possession of stolen firearms. Bond: \$20,000.

Joseph Clift, 19, 2932 Rene St. — domestic abuse battery. Bond: \$5,000.

Travis Willard, 52, 533 Joe Miller Road — domestic abuse battery.

Marlin Green, 24, 208 Princess St., Westlake — simple burglary, simple criminal damage to property \$500 to \$50,000.

Angela Nazir, 37, 3203 Angela

Loop, Sulphur — illegal use of weapons or dangerous instruments, two counts of simple cruelty to animals, two counts of simple criminal damage to property \$500 to \$50,000, possession of a firearm by convicted felon, driving with suspended license. Bond: \$87,500.

Cheri Pradia, 29, 5514 James Clark Road, Sulphur — two counts of simple burglary. Bond: \$25,000.

Delisa Mitchell, 25, 1325 St. Mary Drive — drug possession. Bond: \$15,000.

Casey LeDoux, 28, 1125 Bilbo St. — drug possession.

Anna Gribble, 37, 1222 Park Road — headlamps on vehicle, marijuana possession, drug possession with intent to distribute, two counts of possession of Legend drug without prescription, drug possession, carrying of weapons during commission of a crime, drug paraphernalia. Bond: \$61,250.

Kenneth Arvie, 50, 1011 Magdalena Drive, Sulphur — domestic abuse battery, resisting an officer. Bond: \$5,000.

Cynthia Guillory, 36, 713 Reigel St. — drug possession, drug paraphernalia. Bond: \$12,500.

Davante Ba St. — drug \$5,000.

Jacob Frye, — drug possession with Bond: \$50,

Yvette Thac Lane, West

Shawnea Fr St., Westlak drug posse distribute, possession

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