

Bradford County Telegraph

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1 dead, 8 injured in KH crash

BY JENN SAMSEL
Special to the Monitor

A 31-year-old man died on the way to the hospital following a multi-vehicle accident on Saturday, Sept. 28, leaving eight other people, including three minors, injured, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

The accident happened at 11:30 a.m. at State Road 21 and County Road 352 near Keystone Heights, next to a Circle K Gas Station.

The crash involved a white Chevy Malibu Sedan, a Black

Dodge Ram Pickup, and a White Chrysler Voyager Minivan.

According to an FHP report, the pickup truck was heading south on S.R. 21, and the Minivan was at the corner of the gas station, waiting to head north on the state highway.

FHP said the pickup made a left turn, going into the sedan's path, causing a collision.

As a result of the initial crash, the sedan struck the Minivan.

According to the FHP crash report, no one was wearing a seatbelt.



According to Florida Highway Patrol, the pickup truck was heading south on S.R. 21, and the Minivan was at the corner of the gas station, waiting to head north on S.R. 21.

Helene leaves Union County with downed trees, no power

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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Gov. Ron DeSantis said that Union County, with 86% of residents losing power during Hurricane Helene, was one of the hardest-hit areas with power outages, following only those in the direct path of the storm, like Dixie, Lafayette, Suwannee, Hamilton, Taylor, Madison, and Columbia counties.

The state's chief executive said 99% of residents in the counties in

the direct path of the storm were without power.

Wind damage was visible the day following the storm at the Lake Butler Hospital's sign, Lake Butler Elementary School, and the city's First Baptist Church.

Ten people sought refuge at the Union County High School hurricane shelter.

Union County Sheriff's Captain Lyn Williams said crews worked throughout Thursday night and Friday clearing roads from downed trees.



One uprooted tree took out the sign at Lake Butler Hospital.



Winds took down an awning and conduit at Lake Butler Elementary School.



Ten people sought refuge at the Union County High School shelter. Staffing the facility were (l-r from top left) Christie Whitehead, Superintendent Mike Ripplinger, School Resource Officer Robert Fipps, and Stephanie Sellers.



Queen and King reign over Tornado Whirl

Kaylah Vargas and Brian "Trey" Clifflin III are Bradford High School's homecoming queen and king. They are pictured at the Sept. 28 Tornado Whirl after being crowned at halftime of the Sept. 25 football game — a 40-0 win for the Tornadoes over Keystone Heights. See inside for more homecoming photos.

Andrews thanks first responders for response to drowning

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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During the Bradford County Commission's October 1 meeting, Commissioner Diane Andrews thanked Sheriff Gordon Smith and Fire Rescue Chief Ben Carter for their agencies' response to a Brooker-area drowning on September 21.

Two-year-old Rhett Carson Green died in a pond on his family's property.

Sheriff Gordon Smith said the toddler was sleeping with a family member at their residence. When

the family member woke up, the two-year-old was missing.

Smith added that deputies and paramedics responding to the tragedy underwent peer counseling during debriefing.

"You've got to realize this is the same group that responded to a suicide this weekend," the sheriff said. "The same group dealt with the suffocation of two twins a while ago, and they've all got kids themselves."

Andrews asked community members to continue praying for the Green family.

"It is very hard," she said.



WORTH NOTING

Livestock judging interest meeting

Youth between the ages of 11 and 18 who are interested in livestock judging are invited to 4-H meeting on Thursday, Oct. 3, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Bradford County Extension Office, 2266 N. Temple Ave. in Starke. Last year, members were state champs and competed in the national competition.

For more information, please contact Lizzie Whitehead at 904-966-6224.

Community Fun Day and voter registration

A Community Fun Day and voter registration drive will take place on Saturday, Oct. 5, from 2-6 p.m. Sponsored by the Bradford County Democratic Party and co-sponsored by Twenty Strong Men and the Concerned Citizens of Bradford County, there will be free food, a bounce house, prizes, entertainment and a DJ. The fun will take place at 104 Harutha Drive off Old Lawtrey Road in northeast Starke, behind the former Cunningham's corner store.

The voter registration deadline is Oct. 7, and you must be registered in order to vote on Nov. 5. Bring your friends and family to take advantage of this opportunity to register to vote and enjoy an afternoon of family fun. Seating is limited. Bring your lawn chair and tent. For further information, you can call 904-966-2480.

Union County Republicans hosting Rep. Kat Cammack Oct. 8

The Union County Republican Party is hosting Congresswoman Kat Cammack on Tuesday, Oct. 8, at 7 p.m. at 395 W. Main St., Suite B, in Lake Butler. Anyone may attend. Learn more and connect at Facebook.com/UnionCountyGOP.

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Pastor integrates sports into ministry

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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The pastor of First Baptist Church in Keystone Heights has just as much of a presence on the sideline of a high school football game as in the pulpit.

Ryan Begue says he uses his lifelong passion for sports to connect with young people.

The Asbury Lake native, who started in ministry teaching 15-year-old boys in a Sunday School class, served in churches in the panhandle and the Orlando area before returning to Clay County and eventually settling at First Baptist.

“I think God wires us all in unique ways,” he said. “For me, I guess I’ve always been sort of a sports enthusiast. I played a lot of sports growing up and different things like that. And my boy was playing football here at Keystone Heights, and he was a weightlifter, and obviously, Keystone Heights weightlifting has had a great run for quite a while.”

Begue said he started coaching with the football team and then coached the golf team.

“My wife took a job at the school a few years ago,” he said, “and so she became one of the cheerleading coaches, the girls’ head tennis coach, and the girls’ golf coach.”

Begue’s connection with young people was displayed during a fifth-quarter event following the varsity football team’s game with Union County on August 30.

The church’s gym was filled with high school students.

First Baptist’s youth minister, Tom Rosier, said the event is designed to offer students



Ryan and Emily Begue snap a selfie with a Keystone Heights student during a fifth-quarter event.

an alternative to post-game partying.

“We open up the church, give them some snacks and drinks, and play basketball and volleyball and stuff like that,” he said.

Rosier said the youth ministry is comprised of seventh to 12th-graders, and around 50 students attend the ministry’s Wednesday night events.

“We have worship and a sermon,” he said. “We also are starting to do outreach programs, trying to get the youth engaged in their youth group.”

Rosier added that the youth ministry is expanding.

“We’ve got a worship team that’s starting,” he said. “We

have a welcome team that’s starting. We have a media team that’s already started, so we’re just trying to get them more engaged in the gospel.”

Begue said the ministry is anchored in a love for teenagers and an appreciation for the Lake Region.

“We have a heart for teenagers,” he said. “We have a heart for this community. We love it. I can’t say how much of a blessing it is to be a part of a small community and to sort of be able to weave it all together. And I think that the Lord’s called us obviously to be salt and light and to be involved and to plant ourselves in a community.”

Woman’s Club weathers storm

BY JENN SAMSEL
Special to the Monitor

The Keystone Heights Woman’s Club hosted its third annual Fall Festival on Saturday, Sept. 28, and was determined not to let Hurricane Helene ruin the festivities.

With their cheering spirit, passing rain showers, and no power, the club moved forward, letting all the vendors and customers know they were open for business via email and social media.

Brooklyn Hayes-Yelin, owner of Southern Embellishes and president and event coordinator of the Woman’s Club, said, “I’ve been doing this for the third year now, and it’s a labor of love. We bring together the Community, putting weather aside, and we appreciate the community. The fall festival was created as a community event to get the community involved.

We look forward to hosting next year’s event again.”

Samantha Key, owner of Baskets & Bloom, is a photographer who showcases a variety of photos and creates custom gift baskets while supporting her daughter Emma Key with her foundation, Ribbons, 4 Cures.

She said, “I love the Fall Festival. It’s a great way to get face into the Community, especially if you are starting a new business. You get people in the door. Even without having power today, we still have a great crowd.” I believe this event will get bigger and better every year, and there will be more foot traffic.

Emma Key—Ribbons 4 Cures—is an advocate and founder who is raising awareness in the Community by selling ribbons, stickers, and key chains for organizations such as Autism, Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, and Cancer. “I have all types of ribbons for everything, and the Fall Festival is a great event,” she said,

Morgan Lambert, Owner of Candles By Mo, said, “I was excited as a returning vendor. I love coming to the Fall Festival because I get to see all kinds of people, meet people, make new friends, talk and sell to people about my products, and meet new vendors. Thanks, everyone, for coming out to support the vendors. I look forward to returning for a third year.”

Sue Weiner—Sue Weiner Books’ first year as a vendor previously worked at the Fall Festival and decided to come



Samantha Key and Emma Key



Brooklyn Hayes-Yelin (right), Cindy Hayes and Levi Yelin.



Tanya Dennis (left) and Morgan Lambert.

out this year to promote her new book, Patty Pinksnoot.

She said, “This would be a great place for a book launch. Being part of the Keystone community and the Woman’s Club was the best place to launch my book and be amongst everyone else. I would love to write more books in the future.”

Weiner is an active club member and first-grade teacher at Keystone Heights Elementary. Lake Area Kiwanis supported

the Woman’s Club by selling funnel cakes during the event.

Around noon, the power came back up.

The Woman’s Club plans to return its fall festival next.

If you are interested in more information about the Keystone Heights Woman’s Club or being a vendor for next year’s fall festival, please reach out to khjuniorwomensclub@gmail.com.

Crime

Recent arrests in Bradford, Union and Clay

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

Bradford

Gordon Chris Crawford, 66, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 25 for resisting an officer and a probation violation.

Joshua Charles Davis, 36, of Macclenny, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 24 for an out-of-county warrant.

Ocial Odie Green, 37, of Green Cove Springs, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 27 for an out-of-county warrant.

David Alan Hagerman, 34, of Jacksonville, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 27 for failure to appear.

Adrain Antwon Hankerson, 40, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 23 for battery and resisting an officer.

James Ray Harris, 38, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 22 for battery and larceny.

Chelsea Danielle Holley, 30, of Wellborn, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 27 for failure to appear.

Dario Jimenez Aguilar, 23, was arrested by FHP troopers on September 21 for driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Tiffany Danielle Laycock, 37, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 27 for larceny.

Kirk Allen Lambert, 45, of High Springs, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 24 for failure to appear.

Kenneth Ray McAllister, 41, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 24 for withholding support.

Levy Deshaun McCloud, 44, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 26 for possession of cocaine and resisting an officer.

John Franklin Ragin, 20, of Sanderson, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 24 for an out-of-county warrant.

William Elzie Sanders, 42, of Starke, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 27 for burglary, possession of burglary tools, and criminal mischief with property damage.

Heather Jeannette Stamper, 34, of Sampson, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 25 for a probation violation.

Thomas Dewayne Stevens, 44, of Starke, was arrested by FHP troopers on September 26 for an out-of-county warrant and failure to appear.

Jacob David Thornton, 32, of Live Oak, was arrested by Bradford deputies on September 23 for a probation violation.

Union

Matthew Aaron Dover, 31, of Lake Butler, was arrested by Union deputies on September 28 for a probation violation and resisting an officer.

Racheal M. Rosier, 29, of Lawtey, was arrested by Union deputies on September 28 for a probation violation.

Carlos Daniel Vazquez-Mendez, 25, of Worthington Springs, was arrested by Union deputies on September 25 for burglary and larceny.

Clay

Rodney Allen Farmer, 26, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on September 25 for contempt of court.

Crystal Marie Lyons, 25, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on September 26 for battery.

Jillian Kimberly Miranda, 42, of Keystone Heights, was arrested by Clay deputies on September 26 for a writ of bodily attachment and trafficking in methamphetamine.

Former Keystone firefighter sentenced

Sheriff: ‘He’s an embarrassment’

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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A former Clay County firefighter stationed in Keystone Heights was sentenced to two years in prison, 20 years’ probation, and ordered to register as a sex predator.

Sean Evert Carpenter, 37, was arrested in Putnam County in October 2023, charged with four counts of lewd and lascivious behavior on a victim younger than 12 years old.

According to the Putnam County Sheriff’s Office, the victim reported the abuse to a family member. Carpenter was not related to the victim but was considered a family acquaintance and lived close by.

The defendant was arrested at Keystone’s Station 11 while on duty.

Sheriff Gator DeLoach called Carpenter’s actions a disgrace to anyone who serves the public and sacrifices their lives every day to help people.

He added that the firefighter’s violation of the victim’s trust was especially heinous, considering children are taught to trust firefighters, law enforcement

officers, and other first responders.

“(Carpenter) took full advantage of his position as a trusted first responder to defile a child’s innocence,” DeLoach said in a social media post. “He is an embarrassment to all of our fellow brothers and sisters in the fire service, and we share in their disgust and disappointment for the shame he has brought down.”

Man seeking treatment sentenced to 10 years

BY DAN HILDEBRAN
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A 47-year-old former Lake Butler resident was sentenced to 10 years after pleading to a probation violation.

According to a violation report, Dexter Dewin Edwards told a Flagler County deputy he broke into a Palm Coast home to be arrested and receive treatment for his mental illness.

Edwards was first detained on December 8, 2022, after he was accused of throwing a rock into the window of a vehicle on State Road 16 in the area of the Starke Golf and Country Club.

Bradford Deputy Jared Mallard wrote in an arrest report that while taking Edwards into custody, the then-44-year-old brandished a knife and was concealing a firearm in his backpack.

The following April, Judge James M. Colaw ruled the defendant incompetent to proceed and ordered him into the custody of Florida’s Department of Children and Families.

Six months later, the judge ruled Edwards competent to proceed and sentenced him to four years’ probation after Edwards pleaded to throwing a missile into a vehicle, criminal mischief, and carrying a concealed firearm.

The defendant’s probation violation came six months after he was first sentenced.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Bradford County Value Adjustment Board, in compliance with § 196.194, Fla. Stat., will conduct hearings in the County Commission Chambers located in the North Annex of the Courthouse at 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida, to hear objections to the valuation placed on real estate and tangible personal property, on the following date:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024
Beginning at 9:45 a.m.

Separate lists of applicants for exemption that have been wholly or partially approved by the Property Appraiser and of applicants for exemptions that have been denied by the Property Appraiser are maintained for public viewing in the Property Appraiser’s Office, located in Suite A in the south annex of the Bradford County Courthouse, 945 N. Temple Avenue, Starke, Florida, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. If you have any questions, please call the Property Appraiser’s Office at (904) 966-6216. The lists may include applicants for the following exemptions or classifications:

- Homestead-all categories
- Certain Permanently & Totally Disabled Veterans
- VA Partial Disability exemption
- VA Discount exemption
- Licensed Child Care Facility in Enterprise Zone
- Totally & Permanently Disabled persons
- Tangible Personal Property exemption
- Exemption for Nonprofit home for aged
- Affordable Housing property exemption
- Government property exemption
- Economic development ad valorem tax exemption
- Exemption for Historic properties
- Widow exemption
- Widower exemption
- Property of persons Totally & Permanently Disabled
- Charitable, religious, scientific or literary uses exemption

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Fla. Stat. §286.26, persons needing special accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact Rachel Rhoden, VAB Clerk, P.O. Drawer B, Starke, Florida, at least 24 hours prior to the proceeding. Telephone: 904-368-3917. Any person desiring to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at these hearings will need a record of the proceedings. For such purpose, said person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based, F.S. 286.0105.

Denny Thompson, Clerk of the Circuit Court
As Clerk of the Value Adjustment Board