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The People-Sentinel

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VOLUME 147, NO. 48

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

2 SECTIONS / 18 PAGES / \$1

Bucket truck operator recovers after collision

Alexandra Whitbeck
Reporter
reporter@thepeoplesentinel.com

On Tuesday, March 12, 2024 around 1:50 p.m., a tractor trailer struck the deployed boom of a bucket truck causing the operator inside to fall out.

The accident occurred at the intersection of Marlboro Avenue and Patterson Street in Barnwell. A Georgia registered tractor trailer pulling a 53-foot enclosed trailer was traveling south on Marlboro Avenue in the outer lane when it "struck the bucket and the subject in the bucket was ejected," states the Barnwell Police Department's

(BPD) report.

Stanley Richard Randolph, 56, of Blythewood, S.C., was installing cables to the overhead traffic lights to prevent movement during inclement weather when he was ejected. Randolph is employed with Grant Electrical Contracting based in Columbia, S.C., where he lives with his family.

According to BPD's report, Randolph fell onto a sharp body panel of the truck, severely lacerating his leg. He then fell to the ground.

Before first responders arrived moments later, a witness of the accident rushed to the scene and put pressure on Randolph's wound. According

to Chief Michael Butts, this good samaritan performed live-saving action until first responders were able to place a tourniquet on Randolph's leg.

A week later, Randolph is still in the hospital receiving medical care and has undergone three surgeries, according to a close family member who declined to be named.

"We just want him to heal, and be able to recover from this. It is a miracle that he survived that," said the family member.

The decision to call in a helicopter was made quickly by officials after the incident occurred. In cases requiring

See COLLISION, 10A



The man who was struck while working in the bucket of a truck on March 12 is recovering. Contributed Photo



The People-Sentinel earned 26 awards from the S.C. Press Association, which were accepted at SCPA's March 15 awards lunch. Pictured from left to right: sports photographer Donna Miley, faith correspondent Donna-Maria Conzalina, publisher Jonathan Vickery, Report for America corps member Elijah de Castro, and reporter Alexandra Whitbeck.

Newspaper wins 26 S.C. Press Association awards

Alexandra Whitbeck named S.C. Weekly Journalist of the Year

Staff Reports
The People-Sentinel
www.thepeoplesentinel.com

The People-Sentinel brought home 26 awards from the S.C. Press Association, including General Excellence and Journalist of the Year.

The newspaper earned first place General Excellence in its circulation division.

"The People-Sentinel does a fantastic job of keeping its readers informed of news events, sports and upcoming activities. The ads you have are well-designed and attractive. The People-Sentinel reminds readers why newspapers continue to play an important part of their daily lives. Keep it up," stated the judge.

The judge highlighted the newspaper's "clean presentation." This included a "well-designed and attractive" front cover, "well-written" stories, attention-grabbing headlines, "good artwork", variety of viewpoints on the Opinion page, "robust" sports pages, and the Community Calendar page.

"This award means a lot because it looks at the paper as a whole! This is a very competitive award! It's all due to our great team," said Publisher Jonathan Vickery.



Alexandra Whitbeck, reporter for The People-Sentinel, accepts the 2023 Weekly Journalist of the Year award from Richard Whiting, outgoing president of the S.C. Press Association, during the SCPA awards lunch in Columbia on March 15. Gwinn Davis

"This is the second consecutive year The People-Sentinel has been awarded the General Excellence award out of all weekly newspapers in the state, which I truly think speaks to how much energy and love is put into each week's edition by every member of our staff. We take pride in making sure our community has the trusted news source they deserve," said reporter

Alexandra Whitbeck. **Journalist of the Year** For the first time ever, a reporter from The People-Sentinel won Journalist of the Year.

Whitbeck, who joined the team in May 2022, won the 2023 Weekly Journalist of the Year award out of all weekly newspapers in South Carolina.

See AWARDS, 3A

Felony charges sought for First Amendment "auditor"

Alexandra Whitbeck
Reporter
reporter@thepeoplesentinel.com

A local "First Amendment auditor" has been arrested for being a fugitive of justice.

On March 9, 2024, the Blackville Police Department (BPD) responded to Hampton Avenue in Blackville, near Farrell Lane, in reference to a person pointing a weapon.

During the response, officers identified Joshua David Washburn, 40, of Walterboro, S.C. After identifying Washburn, BPD coordinated with central dispatch and learned he had six warrants in Hamilton County, Indiana dating back to 2015.

Once apprehended, Washburn was served with the outstanding



Washburn

Indiana warrants by the Barnwell County Sheriff's Office on March 11 for being a fugitive of justice. These warrants include possession of a narcotic drug (a Level 6 felony), possession of paraphernalia,

resisting law enforcement, invasion of privacy, possession of marijuana, and disorderly conduct, according to Indiana public court records.

BPD is also seeking felony charges for the incident of pointing and presenting a weapon in Blackville.

BPD has been in communication

See ARREST, 10A

JDA donates big to animal shelter

Contributed
Barnwell County
Animal Shelter

The Jefferson Davis Academy (JDA) Lower School students donated \$1,849.34 and a surplus of food to the Barnwell County Animal Shelter (BCAS) after they held the Pennies for Pets fundraiser throughout the month of February.

According to first grade teacher Beverly Burton, the Little Raiders were very serious about helping out the animals in the shelter - bringing in Ziplock bags full of

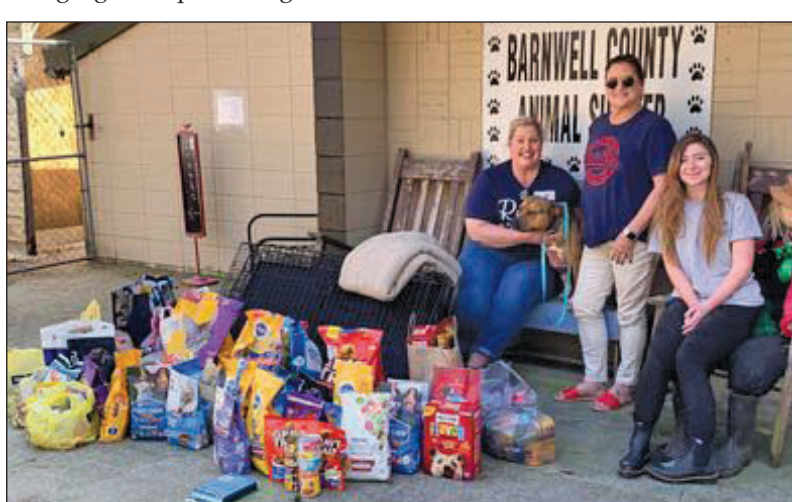
coins from their piggy banks.

"They even brought in birthday and Christmas money," said Burton of the 3K through sixth grade students.

The kids were inspired to help BCAS after connecting with one of its former residents, Burton's four-legged child, Roxie, a pit-mix. Burton adopted Roxie from the shelter in December 2023 and her students were very invested in their teacher's new addition.

Burton would update her inquiring students about Roxie's veterinarian appointments,

See ANIMALS, 10A



JDA teachers Beverly Burton, Beth Bodiford and BCAS employee Erica Ellis with all of the donations. Contributed



WHAT'S INSIDE

Sports	1-4B
Society	4 A
Kid Scoop	9, 10B
Calendar	5 A
Classifieds	5-6B
Puzzles	6 B

OBITUARIES, 7A

- Diane Hewitt Hughey - Fairfax
- Dean Theodore Koukos - Bluffton
- Johnny G. Morris - Graniteville

\$1.00 Retail
For home delivery pricing, 4B

Rocks & recognition discussed by Williston council

Alexandra Whitbeck
Reporter
reporter@thepeoplesentinel.com

At the Williston Town Council's March 11 meeting, resident Michelle Caldwell received some clarity on how the passenger window of her car was smashed by an airborne rock while driving into town.

"We definitely think it's a group of kids, hiding in the bushes, throwing rocks," said Mayor Brett Williams, who noted he is aware of two incidents in addition to Caldwell's.

Caldwell was driving on Barnwell Road between Marie Street and Chester Street on March 1 around 7:35 p.m. when the incident occurred.

In response, WPD has increased patrol near the park.

According to WPD Chief James Gainey, the department has been continuing with code enforcement efforts in relation to vacant properties and have been getting a good response.

Chief Gainey has also been looking into innovative ways to advance his department while saving the town money.

"We're trading in our weapons," said Chief Gainey.

WPD followed necessary channels to be able to exchange their current weapons and those aged-out of evidence holding for new ones – something the department has not had in 15 years, according to Chief Gainey. Officers will not only be receiving new weapons, but also new holsters.

In addition, Chief Gainey is currently writing two grants – one for new walkie talkies, and another for new in-car cameras. By 2025, their current walkie talkies will be no longer usable and the department's current car cameras are aging.

Chief Gainey also informed the council that



Shannon Mundy is recognized for 28 years of organizing town events. Mundy is the mastermind behind the annual Christmas parade and Easter egg hunt.

the Town of Williston has not seen any recent major crimes, and has been primarily dealing with shoplifting and trespassing.

The department is also considering a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Springfield Police Department. If accepted, this agreement would allow both departments to provide mutual aid to one another.

Litter control

Keep Barnwell County Beautiful (KBCB) representative Margo Huggins asked council members to make it a priority to attend local trash pick-up events. While littering is a visible problem in the county, Huggins expressed she has difficulty getting volunteers to attend clean-up efforts.

The next pick up in Williston will be on Saturday, April 20 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. This event will be part of a county-wide KBCB clean-up initiative for Earth Day on April 22. Volunteers can meet at Folk Funeral Home in Williston.

Upcoming trash pick-ups in Williston include July 13 and October 12.

Recognitions

Shannon Mundy has been the mastermind behind the town's annual Christmas Parade and Easter Egg Hunt for 28 consecutive years. Mundy was presented with a plaque at the meeting "for everything that you do for the Town of Williston," said Mayor Williams.

"The time, the sweat, the tears that you put into it, we really appreciate it," said Mayor Williams.

Mundy holds these events rain or shine, with the annual Easter Egg Hunt set for March 30, 2024 at 1 p.m. at the town park.

Public works director Dennis Williams was recognized for six months of dedication to improving the town's water infrastructure.

"Our infrastructure is one of our main concerns," said Mayor Williams.

Multiple water projects have been underway in the town funded by S.C. Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

Some water lines were excluded due to an unprojected increased bid cost. Administrator Michael Beasley hopes a \$1.5 million forgiveness loan grant will address the water lines omitted from



Mayor Brett Williams shakes hands with the town's public works director, Dennis Williams, who has played a major role in water system advancements.

the previous grant projects. This loan grant will be forgiven over time and will be no cost to the town, according to Beasley.

"Another \$1.5 million toward our water system improvements will help tremendously," said Beasley.

Dennis Williams has been essential with aiding in implementing these projects, according to Mayor Williams. Since becoming employed by the town, Dennis Williams has obtained the needed certifications to keep the town from using outside resources.

"It's been years since we've had a public works director with the licenses Mr. Dennis has, and we don't have to depend on outside entities to help us," said Mayor Williams. "Working together, Williston is going to move forward thanks to guys like him that want to invest time into this town and this community."

Mayor Williams said he expects a big change in the quality of Williston water in the future.

Fire Update

Williston Fire Department (WFD) Chief John Melton provided the council with a first quarter update as the department's

calendar cycle begins in December.

From December 2023 to February 2024, WFD responded to 71 calls with the majority being first responder calls followed by structure fires.

WFD purchased new extraction tools last year with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to help with entrapment crashes. Since acquiring this equipment, first responders are able to extract an individual from a vehicle in under ten minutes, showing a significant decrease in time before they had this equipment.

On May 4, 2024, WFD will be holding their annual smoke alarm blitz. This year, they will be installing fire detectors in 12 homes.

Similarly to WPD, WFD is also applying for grants. The department submitted a grant for \$13,000 for new bunker gear, boots, and helmets, as well as a \$700,000 grant to replace the service truck.

The \$700,000 grant would require the town to provide a 5 percent match if awarded; making the total cost to the town \$35,000 in next year's budget cycle.

Administrator Update
Administrator Beasley's contract renewal for a two-year term was unanimously approved by the council.

Administrator Beasley also updated the council about meeting with Dominion Energy about changing street lights to LED. Dominion Energy is crafting a proposal to pitch to the council.

The fencing at the Academy Street park is ready to be installed. The total cost of the fencing is \$43,000, paid for by the \$66,000 Parks And Recreation Development (PARD) grant the town previously received. The remaining \$23,000 is set for improvements to other parks and playground equipment.

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Frances Ward celebrates 99th birthday

Jonathan Vickery
Publisher
jvickery@thepeoplesentinel.com

Long-time Williston resident Frances Ward celebrated her 99th birthday on March 11, 2024.

Her family of close to 60 members came together to celebrate, including her six children, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, her three living sisters, and other relatives. A few close family friends also joined.

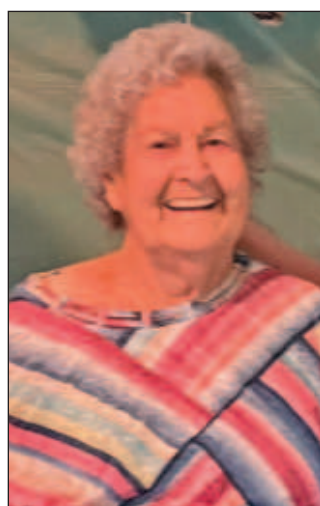
"I've been blessed with a good husband and family, including six children, in which they all stand equal in my sight," said Ward.

Born into a family of 10 children, Ward grew up in a small community in Tennessee.

"We had little but were blessed plenty by the good Lord," she said.

Ward married her late husband of nearly 52 years, L.B. Ward, in 1945. They first moved to Williston in 1953 when L.B. took a job at the Savannah River Site. That job was short-lived and they returned to Tennessee. However, L.B. was soon called back to SRS and the family moved back to Williston in 1954. The town soon became home.

"The house she's living in right now is the house they bought in 1954," said daughter



Frances Ward was all smiles on her birthday as she was surrounded by family.

come through its doors of learning and go on to become Blue Devil alumni.

"She has had a child, grandchild, or great-grandchild in the Williston school system since 1954. There are two sets of five generations in the family," said JoAnne Wagnon, one of Ward's 11 grandchildren.

Though she had some secretarial and bookkeeping jobs over the years, Ward was mostly a stay-at-home mom.

"She is very talented and should have been an engineer because she enjoys working with wood," said Wilson. "She is smart financially and has a good head on her for business."

Having grown up during the Great Depression, Ward learned to be thrifty and resourceful – two things she has carried with her throughout her life.

"She knows how to save a dollar," said Wilson.

As a great gardener, Ward cans vegetables and has even raised her own beef. She is also a skilled seamstress who sewed a lot of her family's clothes while growing up.

As a mother of six, Ward has always sought to help her family.

This includes teaching valuable life lessons and skills they need to be



Frances Ward (center, seated) of Williston celebrated her 99th birthday on March 11, 2024 with family, including her three sisters, Nancy Jenkins, Brenda Penix, and Jane Miller.

successful in life.

"Mom has set the bar unreachable as a mother. If I'm half the woman and mother my mom is, then I'll be doing well," said Wilson.

After dedicating years to caring for her children, they are now

returning the favor to make sure she is cared for in her senior years. Her children are Arthur Jann Ward of Gilbert, Sharon Ward Moody of Lake Murray, Jo W. Owens of Williston, Lloyd Ward of Williston, Edie Ward Wilson of Williston, and

Elaine Ward Boyleston of Williston.

"My children care for me very well and I feel well loved," said Ward.

Though she doesn't know the secret to a long life, she said, "I know God has a reason for all things."

Winfield Heights Christian Kindergarten names Valentine Prince & Princess



Connor Jackson (left) and Willow-May Johnson (right) were crowned the Valentine prince and princess at Winfield Heights Christian Kindergarten in Williston.



Ellie Jennings and Cal Jones at the Winfield Heights Christian Kindergarten Valentine's party.

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Poor communication, financial management holding back projects in Town of Allendale

Elijah de Castro
Report for America
elijah@thepeoplesentinel.com

A pattern of poor communication between council members and other municipal employees in the Town of Allendale is holding back several community projects, as discussed at the Town of Allendale's March 12 monthly meeting.

Additionally, vegetation growth in the town of Allendale's sewer system has created issues for public works foreman Lonzado Badger and other municipal employees.

Community center delays

In October 2023, council member Marlon Creech received a \$25,000 grant from the Municipal Association of South Carolina's Hometown Economic Development Council to reopen Allendale's community center. According to a budget report distributed at the March 12 meeting, \$40,000 has been allocated for community center repairs.

At the time that Creech received the grant, Creech



At the March 12 Allendale Town Council meeting, council members Pookie Smith and Marlon Creech raised frustrations regarding communication between council members and the handling of the town's money.

Photo By: Elijah de Castro / Report for America

said he hoped that the necessary repairs — which include repairing a leaky roof and refurbishing the building's interior — could be made by the new year.

However, work on the community center has yet to begin. At the March 12 meeting, Creech attributed this to a lack of behind-the-scenes financial organization and communication in the town's administration.

"I need to know what I need to do to make these

projects come to fruition so our downtown area can look like something," Creech said. "Why everytime somebody has a question about money, we don't know the answer? If the citizens come up and ask a question about money, we still don't know the answer."

Financial issues

In addition to financial issues regarding the community center project, the Allendale town council had issues with commu-

nication regarding movement of town funds.

"I did see something today that somewhat disturbed me: having a negative account," said mayor pro tem Pookie Smith. "I didn't have any knowledge that we're at that point... There's nobody that can make any decision about moving any monies to any account without the full body agreeing, no one."

This issue stems from a lack of larger coordination between all council mem-

bers about ongoing issues the town is facing, Smith said; Making clear who is doing what must be a priority going forward.

"To be transparent to the citizens and the council, I ask moving forward that not one brown penny of town money moves without the full body agreeing to it," Smith said.

Sewer System issues

The growth of vegetation in Allendale's wastewater treatment plant was a major issue this winter due to it being the warmest winter in history, a result of global climate change. Lonzado Badger, the town's public works foreman said at the meeting that he and other municipal workers have had to work overtime to address the issue.

"The vegetation is out of control," Badger said. "We need to address that situation sooner rather than later."

These issues were discussed by Sonya Johnson and Madison Leonard of Water Systems, Inc., a water system servicing company that works for the Town of Allendale.

Leonard said the town's wastewater system is facing "major issues" that range from the town's pumps and wastewater plants.

"As far as the wastewater plant, we are seeing some excessive growth in the lagoons and the ponds themselves," Leonard said. "It was a warmer winter, I think we can all agree to that, and spring is on the way. We need to prioritize getting that vegetation removed from ponds."

Other issues discussed

- The town has received 37 applications for its open town administrator position, two of whom were office managers.

- Bob Snead, president of the Southern Palmetto Regional Chamber, has proposed creating a satellite location in Allendale by repurposing an old hotel owned by the town.

- The town passed the second reading of an ordinance that would amend the town's budget and would increase revenue and expenditures for water and sewer use and appropriate insurance proceeds.

Town of Fairfax restructuring debt, working on digital payment system

Elijah de Castro
Report for America
elijah@thepeoplesentinel.com

At its March 18 meeting, the Town of Fairfax voted to restructure its debt, which has accumulated late fees as a result of lack of repayment. Additionally, the council updated the community on a new payment system for residents' bills.

Digital Payment System

The town is in the process of increasing its digital presence through the software company QS1. This includes adding a digital payment option for water bills and taxes; Currently, residents of Fairfax have to do this in person.

The upgrades, said council member Phyllis Smart, are currently underway. However, this first requires updating the Town Hall's digital systems. The town's efforts to strengthen its digital presence includes creating dig-

ital copies of town records, as previously reported by *The People-Sentinel*.

"Everyone has been waiting for us to get QRS and water bills online, but we [need] to upgrade the town system," Smart said. "We're trying to make it more convenient for you all so you don't have to come to Town Hall to pay your bills."

Restructuring Town Debt

The council passed a motion to use \$82,000 of its certificates of deposit (CDs) to pay off the town's debt. These were of the town's smaller CDs, Sauls said and the town has \$200,000 in CDs it hasn't used.

This debt, Sauls said, was built up over previous years and hasn't been paid off as a result of a failure to repay on time. As a result, late fees have been accumulated and "You've got to be smart about how you spend your money," Sauls said. "We've had to pay portions [of debt] to

be able to get to the point where we can get our bills paid."

This issue, Sauls said, is made more complex by the disorganization of documents and records in the Fairfax Town Hall. As previously reported by *The People-Sentinel*, prior mismanagement of town documents has held back progress in the Town Hall.

Freedom of Information Act

The Town Council went into executive session for an hour and a half and listed eight items on its agenda. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), councils are required to list the reason they are going into executive session as well as the exception they are citing under FOIA for each executive session agenda item.

The agenda did reference parts A, 1, 2 and 5 of section 30-4-70 of FOIA law, however, each agenda item must specifically cite the exemption un-



At its March 18 meeting, the Town of Fairfax voted to restructure some of its debt, which has accumulated late fees.

Photo By: Elijah de Castro / Report for America

der FOIA that allows the council to go into executive session.

At the meeting, *The People-Sentinel* raised these issues with the council.

"I will do a better job in doing that," Sauls said. "What we're discussing do[es] fall under these guidelines, but you want us to be more specific about which regulation falls under which one, and

we can do that."

After the meeting, *The People-Sentinel* spoke with Jay Bender, the South Carolina Press Association's attorney, who said much of what is in the agenda does not comply with FOIA; The verbal and written descriptions do not explain why the items must be discussed in executive session.

Other issues discussed

- The town also voted to give the Fairfax Police Department \$35,000, half of the town's municipal fund, to help with "operating expenses".

- The town accepted a bid from South Carolina roofing contractor Quality Roofing for the town hall's roof, which has been leaking.

\$10,000 Grant from Savannah River Mission Completion Creates 'Remarkable' Results at Allendale School

Contributed by SRS

The students at Allendale-Fairfax Elementary School are experiencing newfound enthusiasm as they build science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) camps using LEGOS purchased with a grant from Savannah River Mission Completion (SRMC).

Allendale-Fairfax Elementary School was able to acquire learning materials thanks to a \$10,000 grant provided by SRMC, the liquid waste contractor at Savannah River Site (SRS), during the 2022-



Allendale-Fairfax Elementary School students are pictured building a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) camp using LEGOS with materials purchased with the Savannah River Mission Completion grant.

Photo Contributed by SRS

2023 school year.

The funds provided an opportunity to supplement existing learning kits that allowed the school to offer an even more compre-

hensive and engaging curriculum to their students and enhance the learning experience in their STEM lab. The LEGO materials purchased with the grant

gives the students hands-on learning activities to explore STEM concepts and principles in an interactive manner. They constructed models that demonstrated scientific principles, engineering solutions, and mathematical concepts. The LEGO sets served as tools for fostering creativity, problem-solving skills, and teamwork among the students.

SRMC President and Program Manager Dave Olson said the investment in Allendale-Fairfax Elementary School is paying dividends for the students.

"The success experienced by the faculty and

students is exactly what SRMC hoped for when making the donation," Olson said. "The school has a thriving STEM program and is reaching new heights."

Principal Sheila Leath said the results have been truly remarkable and that student engagement has reached an all-time high, with scholars eagerly participating in collaborative activities.

"Savannah River Mission Completion's contribution has created a newfound enthusiasm in our students, and it is translating into effective problem-solving strategies," Leath

said. "We have witnessed our students tackling challenges in innovative ways. SRMC's belief in our mission and commitment to education has made a lasting impression on our school community."

SRMC comprises parent company BWX Technologies, Inc. with partners Amentum and Fluor. Its team brings the capabilities necessary to accelerate cleanup at the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Site through safe nuclear operations, optimized and integrated mission execution, and strong corporate governance.



Johnny G. Morris

Jackson, S.C. 29831).

Mr. Morris passed away at home on Sunday, March 17, 2024.

Born in Hilda, S.C., he was a son of the late Nicholas E. Morris and Bessie Mae Hutto Morris and was married to Linda K. Brown Morris. Johnny worked as a telephone Technician for Western Electric for 24 years then later for Bell South/AT&T until he retired after 42 years. In his early years, he enjoyed riding his motorcycle then he later traded for riding his golf cart. He loved fishing and watching NASCAR. Johnny was a family man, a great father, grandfather, great-grandfather and loved watching his grandchildren play sports. He liked to do crossword puzzles and listen to country music with Gene Watson's Farewell party being one of his favorite songs. He served in the South Carolina National Guard.

Survivors include his loving wife, Linda of the home; a son, Ray (Teresa) Morris of Jackson, S.C.;

daughters, Penny M. (Jimmy) Anderson of Beech Island, S.C. and Tricia Morris of Jackson, S.C.; 8 grandchildren, Sara Elisabeth Morris, Ali (Josh) Stephens, Kimberly (Jonathan) Lamb, Kyle (Christie) Anderson, Daniel (Kate) Anderson, Randall Anderson, Samantha (Elb) Porras and Penni Anderson (Zac Herndon); 20 great-grandchildren; his sisters, Shirley Purcell of Augusta, Ga. and Audrey Morris of West Columbia, S.C.; a brother, Kerry (Elaine) Morris of Myrtle Beach, S.C.; and a number of nieces and nephews that he loved dearly.

The family wishes to thank Crescent Hospice, nurses Lisa and Julie and the rest of the staff for the love and care shown to them over the last several weeks.

Folk Funeral Home, Inc. and Crematory is assisting the family with arrangements. Visit the online registry at www.folkfuneralhome.com.

The People-Sentinel
3/20/2024



FAIRFAX - Diane Hewitt Hughey, age 68, passed peacefully at home on March 17, 2024.

She was born on February 9, 1956, the daughter of the late Leroy and Elsie Faircloth Hewitt. She was

Diane Hewitt Hughey

a member of Mt. Arnon Baptist Church.

She is survived by a loving husband of 48 years, John H. Hughey Sr.; two cherished children, Teresa (Lee) Bowen and John (Gretchen) Hughey Jr.; three cherished grandchildren, Emily (Steven Layfield) Bowen, Kayla Hughey and Nicholas Hughey; three cherished great-grandchildren Abel, Rylan and Jaxson; and four sisters and one brother.

She will be remembered for her love of the

mountains and how much she loved her family and friends.

The family received friends from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at Keith Smith Funeral Service (128 Water Street Allendale, S.C.).

Graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at Harrison Cemetery, Brunson, S.C.

Sign the online guestbook at keithsmithfuneral.com.

The People-Sentinel
3/20/2024

Dean Theodore Koukos



BLUFFTON - Dean T. Koukos, D.O., 75, of Bluffton, SC died Tuesday, March 12, 2024. He was born in Darby, Pennsylvania on August 10, 1948. He was the son of the late Theodore and Helen Koukos.

He is survived by his wife, Dale Koukos of Bluffton, SC; one son, Chris (Carly) Koukos of Phoenixville, PA; step-daughters, Lauren Belvedere of Lancaster, PA, and Brittany Berliere of Phoenix, AZ; step-son, Brett Belvedere of Wayne, PA; one grandson, Luke Koukos; and one step-grandson, Harrison

Berliere.

Dean graduated from Upper Darby High School in Darby, PA in 1966. He graduated from Saint Joseph's College in Philadelphia, PA in 1970 and then received his D.O. degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1974. He attended his internship and General Surgical Residency at John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital. He began his medical career as Assistant Director at the Emergency Department at Washington Memorial Hospital in Turnersville, NJ and went on to become Director of the Emergency Department at Paoli Memorial Hospital in Paoli, PA. He owned and operated a private practice, Occupational, Industrial and Family Medicine, in West Chester, PA from 1987-2005. He and his wife then moved to Bluffton, S.C. and he began practicing

at Barnwell Family Medicine where he worked from 2005 until December 22, 2023. While in Barnwell, he served as Chief of Staff at Barnwell County Hospital. He was a career long member of the American Osteopathic Association and also a member of the South Carolina Osteopathic Medical Society where he even held the highest title of President from 2008-2009.

The family received friends on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 beginning at 2 p.m. until the hour of the service at 3 p.m. at Sauls Funeral Home, 90 Simmonsville Rd., Bluffton with burial following at Maye River Cemetery, Bluffton.

Sauls Funeral Home of Bluffton was in charge of arrangements. Sign the online guestbook at saulsfh.com.

The People-Sentinel
3/20/2024

Faith

Community welcomed to worship with BCSO on March 23

Alexandra Whitbeck
Reporter
reporter@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Barnwell County Sheriff's Office's (BCSO) second annual Community Worship Service will be held on Saturday, March 23 at 1 p.m. at the Barnwell Elementary School on Marlboro Avenue.

"We invite the community to take part in this event," said BCSO Lieutenant Eric Kirkland. "We are delighted to have law enforcement officers from [across] the state of S.C. taking part in this com-

munity event."

Readings of scripture, prayer, and song will be led by varying law enforcement officers. Youth from the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy will be in attendance to reap the benefits of a room full of career officers.

The primary focus for this event is to highlight the commonalities that tie together law enforcement officers and those they protect through worship and fellowship.

For more information, contact Lt. Kirkland at ekirkland@barnwellcountysheriff.net.



The Barnwell County Sheriff's Office is welcoming the community to their second annual Community Worship event. Pictured are attendees from last year's event.

Photos By: Alexandra Whitbeck / Reporter



Rev. Bart Kelley speaks to the crowd at Ned Branch Missionary Baptist Church gathered for the March 13 Lenten service.

Photo By: Jonathan Vickery / Publisher

Jonathan Vickery
Publisher
jvickery@thepeoplesentinel.com

"What are you thirsting for?"

That was the question Rev. Bart Kelley, senior

pastor of Barnwell First Baptist Church, posed to the crowd gathered at the March 13 Lenten service held at Ned Branch Missionary Baptist in Barnwell.

With this year's Lenten services focusing on the

last statements of Jesus, Kelley's message came from John 19:28-29: "Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.' A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips."

Though Jesus was likely physically thirsty after carrying the cross through the streets, having a crown of thorns placed on His head, having spikes in His hands and feet, and being mocked as He hung on the cross, Jesus was referencing a different

kind of thirst.

"He was saying 'I thirst' to complete the scriptures and prophecies. What Jesus desired was to see all - you and me, every one of us - to be a man or woman made whole, to be saved, and to be made righteous," said Rev. Kelley.

The solution to this type of thirst isn't found in any earthly bottle, but rather in the Holy Spirit which is an "eternal thirst quencher," said Kelley.

He then asked the crowd what they were thirsting for.

"Everybody's thirsting for something in life. Is it heavenly things or earthly

things?" he asked.

Kelley said the answer can be found in one's actions.

"Are you desiring to have His word in your life? Do you throw your Bible in the back seat (after church) or are you on your third or fourth because you wear it out or give it away?" Kelley asked.

Matthew 25:35 states: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."

"Are you sharing the eternal thirst? Are you greater in your walk with

Christ than the day you accepted Him?" asked Kelley.

He encouraged everyone to reflect on what they are thirsting for in life.

Only two Lenten services remain for 2024 - March 20 at Second Baptist Church in Barnwell and March 27 at Gateway Church of Barnwell. A free lunch is served from noon to 12:30 p.m. with the service following from 12:30 to 1 p.m.

A love offering will be held at the end of each service to help the Barnwell County Ministerial Coalition with its efforts to help the community.

P. Cottontail's

Coloring Contest Rules:

1. Contest is open to children ages 3-10. Relatives of newspaper employees or contest sponsors are not eligible to win.
2. Contestants may use crayons, markers or colored pencils to color the pictures. Adults may assist in completing the contest entry form, but may not assist in coloring.
3. Entries are considered property of this newspaper and may be printed by this newspaper.
4. All entries must be postmarked before March 22, 2024 by noon for consideration.
5. No photocopies accepted.

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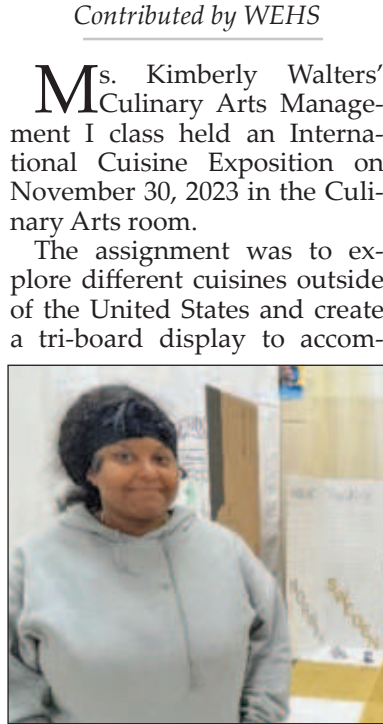
Child's Name: _____ Age: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mail or drop off at the office: The People-Sentinel, PO Box 1255, Barnwell, SC 29812 | 22 Burr Street, Barnwell, SC

WEHS culinary students explore international cuisine



Contributed by WEHS

Ms. Kimberly Walters' Culinary Arts Management I class held an International Cuisine Exposition on November 30, 2023 in the Culinary Arts room.

The assignment was to explore different cuisines outside of the United States and create a tri-board display to accom-

pany the food they would prepare. As students completed research and prepared different foods, they learned of different flavors, food textures, cultures, food customs, food preparation, and food demonstration.

It was great having our incoming Superintendent for Barnwell County School District, Dr. Crissie Stapleton, witness the exposition!

The following are the Principal and A/B Honor Roll recipients for Macedonia Elementary/Middle School Second Quarter



Principal's Honor Roll:

- 1st: Reese Holman, Kaisley Isaac, Everleigh Mims, Bailey Hunter, Aurora Wieland
- 2nd: Mauriyah Akins, Jesus Perez-Vasquez
- 3rd: Xyron Bongcawel, Jace Bryant, Rayven Howard, Khilee Howze, Jaycee Mims
- 5th: 'Miracle Alomar, Ayden Carrigg, Ian Hughes, Eli Walker
- 6th: Heather Nickens
- 7th: Abigail Smith

- Lebron Staley, Kaylee Brown, Ashondre Rowe Earl Walker, Maurice Williams Jr.
- 3rd: Hailey Cuthbertson, Ava Eady
- 4th: Stacy Bongcawel, Dareal Webster, Jewel Parker
- 5th: Sylvia Chavis, Chase Harrison, Ethan Jeter, Ivori Roundtree, Mauriyah Williams
- 6th: thuya Aung, Maurice Williams, Tarriah Johnson, Daquan Stroman, Lauren Frazier, Jackie Holman, Kahrin Mixon, DeMaurice Odom, Braylon Owens
- 7th: Davis Tyler, Sanaa Jenkins, Bryson Jones, Nevaeh Joyner, Tatiana Pernel, Tyliah Williams, Kenya Tyler
- 8th: Mylia Brown, Taylor Evans, Emmilee Moors, Tariq Odom, Rainey Priester, Kalayah Williams, Trevor Kinard, Faith Washington

A/B Honor Roll

- 1st: Terrie Close, Connor Collins, Angela Henry, Karmyn Jackson, Savannah Jones, Kendaya Sanders, Kash Woodley, Elsie Futrell, Zuria Hammonds, Jordyn Ware
- 2nd: Ranazmay Curtis, Tamia Foust, Kylie Hammonds, Imani Jones, Kirahyo McCreary, Jace Reed,



WEHS ninth grader "gears up" to become entrepreneur

Contributed by Yata Tobin Voorhees University

A Voorhees University GEAR UP student has dared to be different and soared to new heights in reaching her dream of entrepreneurship at an early age.

Camille Wallace is one of many bright ninth-grade scholars from one of 10 school districts who attended STEM-U/ S.O.A.R. (Success Opens Additional Resources). The Williston-Elko High School student expressed interest in starting and developing her own business as an eyelash technician.

"She was very inquisitive and volunteered to share her business venture in front of her fellow GEAR UP mates. Not only was she excited about attending SOAR, but she was also looking forward to absorbing all the information from the wonderful speakers. Camille communicated that she started doing lashes after watching YouTube videos and practicing on her friends and family," stated a press release from Voorhees.

Camille indicated that she has a business plan, which she created on her own. She even designed a logo along with her business cards. Camille plans to take classes to become certified.

Christopher Williams, the director of STEM-U, hosted the S.O.A.R. He is providing scholars with a unique approach to success and leadership.



Williston-Elko High School student Camille Wallace attended STEM-U/S.O.A.R. Contributed By: Voorhees University



He was so impressed with Camille's motivation and desire to succeed, that he invested in her entrepreneurial dream by giving her a \$1,000 business start-up donation.

"She was so ecstatic that GEAR UP afforded her this opportunity and that they were all willing to back her! Not only did GEAR UP and STEM U invest in her business, but her future as well. Camille walked away with a deeper understanding of

how success and leadership work hand in hand. She fully understands the value of education, working hard and never giving up," stated the release.

GEAR UP, its staff, and STEM U continually show that they really care about their students in and outside of the classroom. STEM U allowed our scholars to unpack and break down the meaning of success and GEAR UP is the constant that desires to give their students every opportunity to succeed in life.

College Notes: Locals earn academic excellence in colleges, universities

Fall 2023 President's and Dean's Lists USC Salkehatchie

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie is proud to recognize 94 of its exceptional students for achieving the honor of President's List or Dean's List for the Fall 2023 term. To qualify for the President's List, students must earn a 4.0 GPA in all coursework attempted. To qualify for the Dean's list, a student must earn at least a 3.5 GPA in all coursework attempted.

"We are proud to recognize the hard work, dedication, and sacrifice of our students who have performed at the highest academic levels. The recipients of these awards should take pride in their success," Dean April Cone said. "Excellence in the classroom provides a transformative opportunity for our students that will help them realize their career goals and improve not only their lives, but also the lives of their families and those in our community."

President's List (4.0 GPA)

- Andrew Bradley, Jessica Conley, Caleb Cook, Makayla Craven, Ahava Folk, Gabrielle Goldab, Rocshe Green, Nora Holmes, Bená James, Jeremy Morris, Brittany Mullis, Shehzeen Muqri, Jalyn Perry,

Kaitlin Settle, Megan Williams, Mia Zito, Scarlett Zorn.

Dean's List (3.5 - 3.99 GPA)

- Amaika Adi, Moses Aguilar-Diaz, Kye Alberto, Gage Boykin, Julia Brand, Grace Breland, James Brown, Noah Brown, Jaiden Cancela, Noah Catterton, Nishant Chinnasami, Jai'Viaun Chisolm, Lillian Christensen, Jada Christian, Allen Colson, Molly Copley, Hailey Craven, Hannah Craven, Makayla Creech, Windell Crews III, Candis Cromedy, Bryan Crosby, Isaac Cubero, Caio Dias Reno Santana, Jahmai Dixon, Jessica Duberold, Recartez Dredden II, Sydney Driggers, Ameerah Evans, Sarai Frazier, Thiago Friedrich Cunha, Matthew Frye, Haley Grace Furr, Bradley Garland, Nicola Gray, Allen Herndon, Ethan Hodges, Rylee Hoeller, Mason Hutto, Leroy Ikejiaku, Reese Jordan, Sydney Kashner, Donovan Kirk, Charryl Gwyne Lacanin, Cade Linder, Cindy Lopez, Taylen Lyons, Angel Minchew, Jake Muir, Jeremy Orr, Diya Patel, Leah Polite, Aiden Pomnitz, Andre Portal Jr., Makhi Rivers, Keyanna Roden, Allison Rose, Alexandra Rosier, Dakota Sanders, Laynie Sanders, Ashlyn Sarvis, Amanda Sharpe, Jaylin Shaw, Islene Silva Gutierrez, Ka'Liyah Taylor, Ella Tevid, Leah

Tevid, Lillie Thompson, Shontavia Tyler, Alicia Vasquez, Joelliane Vasquez, Laney Vaughn, Janaysha Walker, Mackinsie Ward, Jabari Washington, Sarah Williams, Nyasia Wright

Olivia Hartley named to Wofford College's fall 2023 Dean's List

Olivia Hartley of Barnwell has been named to the fall 2023 Dean's List. To be named to the Dean's List, a student must be enrolled for at least 12 semester hours of graded courses and attain a semester grade point average of 3.6 or higher.

Wofford College, established in 1854, is a four-year, residential liberal arts college located in Spartanburg. It offers 27 major fields of study to a student body of 1,875 undergraduates. Nationally known for the strength of its academic program, outstanding faculty, experiential learning opportunities and successful graduates, Wofford is recognized consistently as a "best value" and for its commitment to student success and accessibility for low- and middle-income students. The college community has 12 sororities and fraternities as well as 20 NCAA Division I athletics teams.

ARREST: Washburn facing extradition for out-of-state charges

FROM PAGE 1A

with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office and South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) throughout this process.

Washburn will remain incarcerated at the Barnwell County Detention Center until extradited to Noblesville, Indiana for the six charges, according to the Barnwell County Sheriff's Office who assisted in the arrest.

Washburn, a self-titled "First Amendment auditor," has been vocal about transparency within local government, often filming

many of his interactions with municipal employees and agencies, such as BPD, and posting on YouTube and social media.

First Amendment audits are part of a growing social movement across the country involving video and audio recording in public spaces.

"What we're doing is exposing the corruption going on in the county of Barnwell, and it's all over South Carolina, and we're bringing education to the public," said Washburn in a Feb. 21 interview with

The People-Sentinel. "These people do not know their rights and they are being infringed upon all the time."

On February 21, Washburn alongside two other "auditors" went to the Barnwell County Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) requesting information through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request such as names of employees, salaries, disciplinary practices, and the budget expenditures. Washburn explained he

then disseminates this information via YouTube.

According to an article by the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC)'s Uptown, auditors, "armed with mobile devices and a YouTube channel, have been pushing the boundaries of the First Amendment by entering public buildings, disrupting business and recording reactions" with the primary goal being "to provoke a reaction."

It is well within an individual's First Amendment rights to photograph, film, or audio record public officials in public spaces. However, auditors with a larger audience can earn profit from posting their video to social media through advertisements and views - causing out-of-state organizations like the New Hampshire Municipal Association to question whether their motives are truly in the effort of increasing governmental transparency.

While the First Amendment allows for freedom of speech and the press, grants the right to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances, municipalities can place policies on properties they own or certain public areas to ensure normal operations, according to MASC.

On February 5, the City

of Barnwell approved the First Amendment Audit policy; an ordinance that sets guidelines for public spaces and expectations for municipal employees.

According to Mayor Ron Still, individuals entering municipal facilities "can be a little bit intimidating to some employees," and this ordinance "curtails" that.

On February 13, the Town of Williston passed a similar ordinance that sets guidelines to prevent "activity that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of administration of municipality business."

The ordinance further deems certain municipal properties as limited access areas, such as employee offices, mailrooms and break areas, and maintenance and warehouse facilities.

Only employees, elected and appointed officials, and those invited can access limited access areas for the "express purpose of conducting business."

According to the Town of Williston's ordinance, law enforcement can approach those recording video or audio in public spaces if a complaint is made from municipal employees who find the action suspicious.

However, law enforcement cannot use photography, audio, or recording as a

reason for probable cause in a potential future investigation.

The Town of Blackville has been the recipient of numerous FOIA requests by local "auditors" and interactions with town employees have been shared across social media.

At the town's February 20 meeting, Washburn alongside another local auditor, John "Ethan" Hutson, spoke during public comment stating the town has failed to provide timely fulfillment to submitted FOIA requests.

Hutson detailed interactions between himself and town administrator Fonda Patrick, as well as interactions with BPD Chief Ray Crawford which he recalls being "scared" during. Many of these interactions were filmed and are available on the social media accounts of "auditors."

At the town's March 18 meeting, the council passed an ordinance titled the First Amendment Audit Policy. This ordinance similarly sets guidelines for the use of public spaces and requirements of municipal employees.

"We do not want to impact anybody's rights," said Mayor Pernell. "You have the right to certain things, but at the same time there is a guideline that needs to be followed, and that's why we're adopting this policy."

ANIMALS: JDA students donated to shelter

FROM PAGE 1A



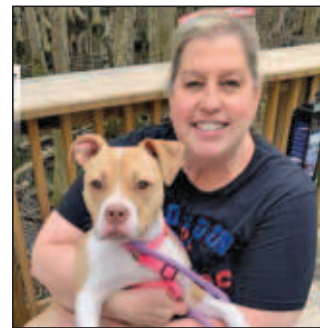
Contributed Photos

Ms. Burton's first graders and Ms. Bodiford's second graders loading up the donated items to send to the shelter.

transition from the shelter, and a bit about where she came from. When she told her students the shelter always was in need of animal food and supplies, they immediately wanted to help.

"We are very grateful to JDA and Ms. Beverly Burton's Class. We could

see that each one of them genuinely cared about our animals and their stories. They were so proud to be able to do so much for them. BCAS is touched by their outpouring of love for Barnwell County's abandoned animals," said shelter director Marlena Ray.



Ms. Burton with her rescue dog Roxie.

COLLISION: Bucket truck operator remains in hospital after on-the-job injury

FROM PAGE 1A

a medical helicopter, the patient is transported to the Barnwell Regional Airport off of Ellenton Street via ambulance and then transferred via helicopter to receive care.

However, a tire issue with the responding ambulance resulted in the helicopter changing route and landing in an adjacent lot to the scene. Randolph was then transported directly from the scene to the helicopter

headed to Augusta, Ga. Crews were on scene for over an hour.

The 2016 Ford bucket truck in which Randolph was operating from was legally parked facing north against the curb in the outermost lane, according to BPD's report. However, the bucket truck "did not have traffic control measures in place prior to moving the bucket out."

According to Chief

Michael Butts, two orange cones were placed in front and behind the truck.

BPD is not pursuing charges in relation to this accident.

The tractor trailer reportedly had \$500 worth of damages, and the bucket truck had \$1,000 worth of damages.

The People-Sentinel has contacted Grant Electrical Company but has not heard back as of press time.

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Warhorse softball wins four straight



Jaidyn Devore pitched a masterful 7-inning no-hit shutout against a good Silver Bluff team, striking out 15 in the victory.

Photo By: Donna Miley



The Barnwell Warhorses won 4 straight, beating Ridgeland-Hardeeville (twice), Branchville, and Silver Bluff over a three-day period.

Photo Contributed



Brooklyn Gordon hit a homerun to help Barnwell win a tight 5-4 battle over Branchville.

Photo By: Mike Beasley

VARSITY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCHEDULE

BASEBALL

Wednesday, March 20

- JDA @ Heathwood Hall 6:00

Thursday, March 21

- Bamberg-Ehrhardt @ Barnwell 7:00
 - Williston-Elko @ Horse Creek Academy 5:00
- Monday, March 25
- Edisto @ Barnwell 6:00
 - Williston-Elko @ Calhoun County 6:00
- Tuesday, March 26
- Wagener-Salley @ Barnwell 7:00

SOFTBALL

Wednesday, March 20

- Barnwell @ Wagener-Salley 6:30
- Thursday, March 21
- Williston-Elko @ Horse Creek Academy 5:00
- Friday, March 22
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt @ Barnwell 6:30
- Monday, March 25
- Edisto @ Barnwell 6:30
 - Williston-Elko @ Calhoun County 7:00
- Tuesday, March 26
- Wagener-Salley @ Barnwell 6:00

BOYS SOCCER

Thursday, March 21

- Bamberg-Ehrhardt @ Blackville-Hilda 5:30
- Friday, March 22
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt @ Barnwell 7:00
- Monday, March 25
- Barnwell @ Edisto 7:30
 - Blackville-Hilda @ Ridge Spring-Monetta 6:00

GIRLS SOCCER

Friday, March 22

- Barnwell @ Midland Valley 6:00
- Monday, March 25
- Barnwell @ Edisto 6:00

TRACK & FIELD

Wednesday, March 20

- Blackville-Hilda and Williston-Elko @ Calhoun County 5:00

GOLF

Wednesday, March 20

- Barnwell/Edisto/Horse Creek Academy @ River Birch 4:00
- Thursday, March 21
- Barnwell/Silver Bluff/Pelion/Midland Valley @ Sweetwater CC 4:00
 - Region Match @ Williston-Elko 4:30
- Monday, March 25
- Barnwell/Wagener Salley/Silver Bluff @ Indian Trail 4:00
- Tuesday, March 26
- Barnwell/Williston-Elko/Bamberg-Ehrhardt @ Sweetwater 4:00

TENNIS

Wednesday, March 20

- Fox Creek @ Williston-Elko 5:00
- Friday, March 22
- Williston-Elko @ Hannah Pamplico 5:00
- Monday, March 25
- White Knoll @ Williston-Elko 5:00

Jeff Miller

Sports Writer

sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Barnwell Warhorse softball team had a busy week, playing four times last week, against Ridgeland-Hardeeville (twice), Branchville, and Silver Bluff. The Warhorses ran the table and won all four games to improve to 5-1 on the season and 2-0 in Region 6 AA competition.

On Tuesday, March 12, the Horses loaded the bus and traveled to play a doubleheader against their region foes from Ridgeland-Hardeeville High School. Despite playing in Ridgeland, there was no home field advantage for the Jaguars. Barnwell pitched two shutouts on the way to 16-0 and 10-0 wins.

In game one, freshman hurler Laney Grubbs struck out seven Jaguars in three innings for the complete game shutout. Offensively, Grubbs went 1 for 2 from the plate, with a run batted in (RBI), and scored a run. Jaidyn Devore went 2 for 3, had an RBI, and scored 3 runs. Brianna Croft was 1 for 2 and scored a run. Abigail Corley had a big game go-

ing 1 for 1 with 2 RBIs and scored 2 runs. Kaylen Mays was 1 for 1 at the plate. Bre'Anna Buckmon went 1 for 3 with 2 runs and an RBI. Brooklyn Gordon scored 2 runs. Kendall O'Berry was 1 for 3 with a run scored. Kah'miyah Williams had an impressive game, going 2 for 2 with 2 RBIs and scoring 2 runs.

In game two, Tiera Arnold pitched 3 scoreless innings with 7 strikeouts and threw a complete game shutout. Kaylen Mays and Brianna Croft led the Horses offense, both going 2 for 3 from the plate and both adding an RBI and scoring runs for Barnwell.

"The double header was our first two region games. I'm proud of our team on the two wins to become 2-0 in the region," said Barnwell head coach Michael Beasley.

After playing twice the night before, the Horses hit the road again to face a tough Branchville team the next night. Barnwell had to fight for this one, but pulled out a 5-4 win over Branchville. Jaidyn Devore pitched 7 innings and collected 10 strikeouts for Barnwell and was a star at the plate for the Horses. Offensively, Devore went 3 for 4, hit two

doubles, scored 2 runs, and had an RBI. Brooklyn Gordon went 2 for 4 with 2 RBIs, scored a run, and hit a homerun.

"We headed out again on Wednesday to take on a very good Branchville team and Jaidyn Devore got the start and held Branchville to 1 hit that came in the top of 7th. Our hitting was the difference maker, we hit for three doubles, a triple and a two-run homerun by Brooklyn Gordon. I was also proud of our defense that made solid routine plays," said Coach Beasley.

The Barnwell Warhorses played their fourth game in three days when they hosted the Silver Bluff Bull Dogs on Thursday, March 14. Barnwell played a tough Bull Dog squad, but came out on top 2-0 securing their fourth victory of the week. Jaidyn Devore collected the hard-fought win, pitching 7 scoreless innings for the complete game shutout. Jaidyn struck out 15 Bull Dogs and only allowed 2 walks on the night. Offensively, Jaidyn walked twice, matching the total she allowed for the whole Silver Bluff team. Abigail Corley led the Warhorse offense, going 1 for 2 for the game with a triple, a walk, and scoring both

runs for the Horses.

"On Thursday evening, we squared off with rival Silver Bluff. We didn't muster many hits, but we didn't need many with the pitching performance of Jaidyn Devore, pitching a no hitter and striking out 15," said Coach Beasley.

Coach Beasley was pleased with his team's effort. "I'm proud of our team for the growth that they are displaying in each game we play. The team is believing in each other and supporting each other. This team can be special if they continue to strive together towards improving each practice and game. I also would like to thank everyone in our community for their support of our players. Please continue to support them, they work really hard," said Coach Beasley.

Barnwell will travel to Wagener-Salley on Wednesday, March 20 for a 6:30 game and will host Bamberg-Ehrhardt Friday, March 22 with first pitch scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Come out and support this really good Warhorse softball team.

Blackville's Tamari Daniels and Jamarien Priester shine at Pelion track meet

Jeff Miller

Sports Writer

sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Blackville-Hilda Hawks track and field team, coached by Rushani Burke, traveled to Pelion last Saturday, March 16 for a multi-team track meet. The Hawks had several athletes that improved upon their personal bests, but the two names Coach Burke first mentioned were Tamari Daniels and

Jamarien Priester.

Coach Burke was asked how he thought the meet went, and replied, "It went really well. We had some of our athletes improving on their personal records. The most impressive was Tamari Daniels running a 10:99 in the 100-meter preliminary and then went back and ran a 10:83 in the finals. He also came 2nd overall in the 200-meter dash. Jamarien Priester also stood out and was the overall winner at the meet in



Jamarien Priester was the 1st place finisher in the 110-meter hurdles at Pelion.

Photo By: Jeff Miller



Tamari Daniels posted a 10:83 time in the 100 meters and he finished 2nd overall in the 200 meters.

Photo By: SCFCA

the 110-meter hurdles."

Tamari Daniels is a familiar name to Hawk fans. Tamari was a standout football player for Blackville's football team and has signed to play college football at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. Tamari has been recruited to play slot receiver, punt returner, and kickoff returner for the Golden Bulls.

Jamarien Priester is a true track star. Jamarien just recently signed to run track at Voorhees University in Denmark, South Carolina. Priester is a hurdle specialist who can compete in other events, but

his love is running the hurdles. When asked about his favorite memory as a Blackville-Hilda Hawk, Jamarien said his favorite was "winning my first medal in the 110-meter hurdles." Coach Burke said Priester has "natural athleticism and a drive to succeed".

Coach Burke has high expectations for his Hawks track and field team and will push his athletes to continue to improve in life's biggest challenge, the battle to beat their personal bests, over and over again. Good luck Blackville-Hilda Hawks track and field team.

Local football athletes showcase talents at combine

Jeff Miller
Sports Writer
sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

Local athletes from Blackville-Hilda and Barnwell high schools participated in the Carolinas' Coaches Combines this past Saturday, March 16 at Woodland High School.

Some of Blackville-Hilda's and Barnwell's best high school football players attended and competed at the invitation only combines to showcase their skills and talents and see how they stack up against others from all over the state. Results from these combines are monitored by players, fans, high school coaches, and colleges looking for future prospects.

The Carolinas' Coaches Combines is a series of combines that are hosted throughout the states of South Carolina and North Carolina. The players selected are the top players in the classes of 2025, 2026, and 2027 in the states of South Carolina and North Carolina. This is an invitation only event for athletes and specialists to show off their athletic abilities. The combines are in conjunction with the South Carolina Football Coaches Association (SCFCA) and the North Carolina Football Coaches Association (NCFCA). This series of combines provides football players with the opportunity to display their abilities through a variety of measurable combine stations, as well as participate in competition activities to showcase their skills.

Blackville-Hilda rising seniors that partici-

pated were Jaquel Holman, Namair Anderson, Samari Williams, Timothy Beard and Jabarius Johnson. Barnwell had rising seniors Cam Austin, Jayden Pinkney, Logan Sturkie, Tony Cherry, and Ja'Quan Peeples participate.

"I was really proud of how our kids competed and tested. We know going into the fall that we have a lot of players returning and we also know we are blessed with a significant amount of team speed," said Blackville-Hilda head football coach Kevin Jones. "We are fortunate to have a lot of naturally talented kids but the kids in the track program have seen a



Barnwell's Cam Austin, Logan Sturkie, Ja'Quan Peeples, (coach Isaac Cooper), Jayden Pinkney, and Tony Cherry participated in the Carolinas' Coaches Combines held at Woodland High School.

Photo Contributed



Blackville's Jabarius Johnson, Samari Williams, (coach Kevin Jones), Timothy Beard, Namair Anderson, and Jaquel Holman participated in the Carolinas' Coaches Combines held at Woodland High School.

Photo Contributed

significant jump in speed over the last year. We are excited heading into late

spring and early summer about the possibilities for 2024."

forty while throwing up 21 reps on the 185-pound bench press. Jabarius Johnson put a 4.8 forty on the board from his linebacker spot."

Barnwell's head football coach Brian Smith was pleased with his players' showings at the combines saying, "I am very excited and proud of the way our guys competed at the Carolina Coaches Combine. This group has represented our school and community well."

Smith was quick to point out Barnwell's quarterback, Cam Austin, ran the second fastest time for the combines in the 40-yard dash, posting a laser measured 4.54 seconds. Wide receiver Logan Sturkie ran a 4.68 40-

yard dash. Both teams also took several underclassmen to the combines. Blackville's Messiah McFadden, Jayden Dash and Kaiden Aiken along with Barnwell's Jackson Bedingfield, Copeland Owens, Damajhai Devoe, Torye Pickens, and Henri Creech all participated.

McFadden ran a 4.6 forty which is a great time, but even better when you realize he posted that time while being almost 6 feet, 4 inches tall.

With such great athletes for both schools, it looks like Blackville-Hilda and Barnwell will have exciting football seasons to come.

Speaking of his athletes, Coach Jones said, "Jaquel Holman is someone everyone knows about due to his big season last year. For him to go out at his size and run a laser timed 4.45 40-yard dash, which was the fastest of the session, and then also run the fastest 3-cone drill at 4.22 seconds is hard to imagine. Samari Williams turned in a great 3-cone drill time and also ran a 4.5 forty. Namair Anderson got off track on his forty, hit a cone and still turned in a 4.6 and was dominant in DB drills. Timothy Beard is our nose guard and offensive tackle and even he ran a sub 5



Blackville-Hilda's Jaquel Holman had the fastest 40-yard dash and shuttle runs at the combines.

Photo By: Kevin Jones

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Barnwell baseball wins three in a row



The Warhorses watch and cheer for their teammate at the plate in an extra-inning win against 4A May River.

Photo By: Aerial Baxley

Jeff Miller
Sports Writer
sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Barnwell Warhorse baseball team had a good week, winning three straight games to improve

to 5-1 early in the season. After taking both games of a doubleheader played at Ridgeland-Hardeeville High School, the Horses beat the 4A May River team two days later in dramatic fashion.

On Tuesday, March 12,

Barnwell traveled to face the Ridgeland-Hardeeville Jaguars for a doubleheader. In game one, Barnwell cruised to a 14-0 shutout behind the excellent pitching from Case Davis. Davis tossed 5 scoreless innings, striking out 13 Jaguars and only allowing one hit and one walk. Offensively, Tommy Reid led the Horses going 3 for 4 from the plate and scored 2 runs.

Game two saw Kaleb McCormack take the mound for an inning, striking out 3 Jaguars and only allowing one walk. The Warhorse offensive attack was led by a trio of hitters that all went 3-for-3 from the plate. Cam Austin went 3-for-3 with 3 RBIs, and scored 3 runs. Jaevin Santos went 3-for-3 at the dish, scored 3 runs, and contributed 4 RBIs. Trey Boleman hit 3-for-3, scored 3 runs, and drove in 6 runs for the Horses.

Barnwell head coach Cody McCollum was asked about his thoughts on the doubleheader wins and said, "In game one, Case Davis gave an unbelievable pitching performance. In games like this, it is imperative to have a guy out there that will throw strikes and that is exactly what he did. In game two, I was very pleased with our approach

at the plate. Our guys took advantage of good pitches when they were thrown. I believe we tallied eighteen hits in two innings. We always talk about playing in May, well starting 2-0 in the region helps us to accomplish that goal."

Two days later, the Warhorses hosted a good 4-A baseball squad when May River rolled into Barnwell. May River jumped out to an early lead, but the Warhorses continued to battle, tying up the game at 5-5 after five innings. From that point on, both teams' pitching would not allow another run over the next 4 innings.

At the end of nine innings, the score stood at 5-5. Kaleb McCormack scored the winning run in the 10th inning to give the Horses a hard fought 6-5 win.

Coach McCollum was happy with his team's comeback win, saying, "I am super proud of this team for battling the way we did. May River is a very good baseball team and will compete for a region title in Class 4A. We trailed 5-1 at one point in this game and the guys never flinched. Cameron Austin gave us a chance to win coming in in relief of Trey Boleman in the 4th inning.

Holding May River scoreless for the next 6 innings. Kaleb McCormack worked a leadoff walk in the 10th inning which ended up being the winning run."

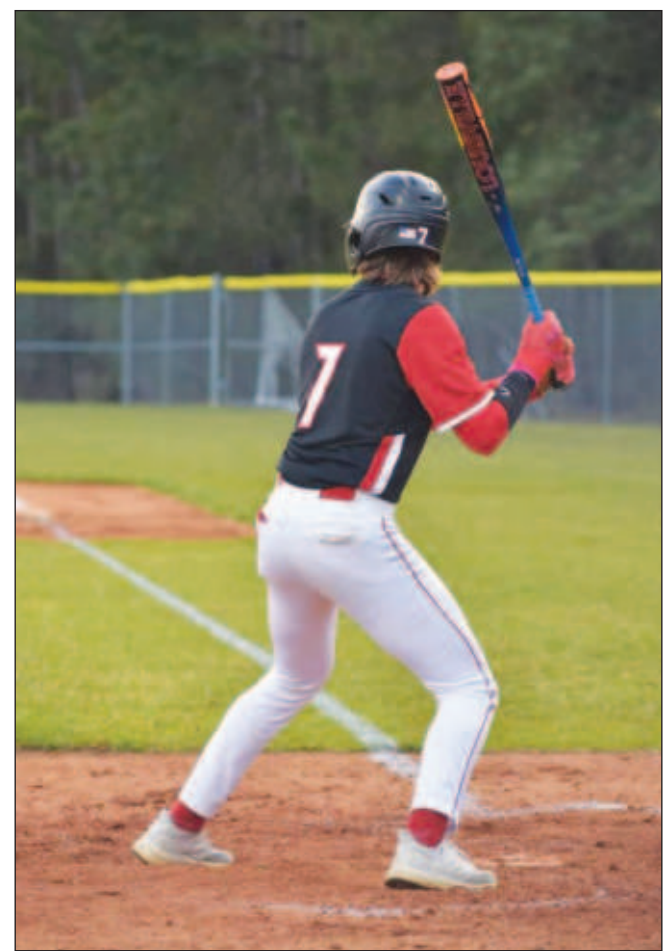
Barnwell will host local rivals from Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School on

Thursday, March 21 with first pitch scheduled for 7 p.m. Come out and support this tough Warhorse team as they look to keep adding to their win total.



Cam Austin pitched 6 scoreless innings in Barnwell's 6-5 win over May River.

Photo By: Aerial Baxley



Trey Boleman went 3/3, scored 3 runs, and had 6 RBIs in one game vs. Ridgeland-Hardeeville.

Photo By: Aerial Baxley

Warhorse girls soccer scores 3-0 win over Jaguars

Jeff Miller
Sports Writer
sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Barnwell Warhorse girls soccer team hit the road for a region match against the Ridgeland-Hardeeville Jaguars last Friday, March 15 and came away with a 3-0 region win. The victory moved the Warhorses to 5-1 on the season, but more importantly, it was a Region 6-AA win.

The Warhorses have been playing a much-improved game under new head coach Noel Conaway. When asked about getting that first region win and her outlook for her team, she responded by saying, "Last week was like a whole new season for us as we started region play. The girls played well and pulled out an important win. We're looking forward to keeping the momentum going with a couple of non-region matchups this week."

The Warhorses are playing a lot of underclassmen, and those young players are producing for the Horses. All three goals in



Coach Noel Conaway talks to her much improved Barnwell Warhorse squad.

Photo By: Heather Brown

the Ridgeland-Hardeeville win were scored by underclassmen. Shelby McHenry (freshman), Ruthee Hamby (freshman), and Libby Vanacore (sophomore) accounted for all of Barnwell's scoring in the win.

Barnwell is getting some unselfish, tough play from her seniors. Kaydrian Poplin had an assist and is always tough on defense.

Senior Sara Rudd is also an important part of the Warhorse defense.

As far as leadership goes, Coach Conaway said, "We've got a mix of leaders in our senior class as well as our freshman and sophomore classes. Seniors Sara Rudd and Kaydrian Poplin along with sophomore Samariona Mayes and freshman Shelby McHenry are

making big contributions on defense. We've also got a mix of kids from all classes making offensive contributions as well. We will miss our seniors next year but we've got talented underclassmen group who will continue to grow and take over increasing leadership roles over the next few years as well."

Coach Conaway went

on to say, "We've got a lot of kids who want what's best for the team and are willing to play anywhere I put them. During Friday's game, we were able to move a lot of people around in different positions and that versatility will help us continue to be successful down the road."

This sounds like a true "team first, me second" atti-

tude. The best teams always seem to know that what is important for the team's success is far more important than individual successes. With that mindset, and continued improvement from the younger players, along with strong leadership from the upperclassmen, this team is looking to be a contender now, and for years to come.



Libby Vanacore scored a goal for the Horses in their 3-0 win over Ridgeland-Hardeeville.

Photo By: Heather Brown

Salk wins Region 10 Championship, heads to national tournament



Coach Matt Lynch cuts down the net to celebrate USC Salkehatchie's Region 10 Tournament Championship.

Photo By: Grace Sorrells



USC Salkehatchie basketball team is Region 10 Champions! Sitting: Tyler O'Neill, Justin Baxter, Makhi Rivers, Isaac Cubero; Standing: Assistant Coach Maurice Crowder, Finley Batchler, Leroy Ikejiaku, Jaiden Cancela, Rhys Grocott, Darcy Pares, Head Coach Matt Lynch, Jay Chisolm, Declan Kom, Kye Alberto, Nevada Higgins, Grayson Kirk, Assistant Coach Christian White.

Photo By: Grace Sorrells

Contributed by USC Salkehatchie

The USC Salkehatchie men's basketball team capped a run through the Region 10 Tournament with a 69-58 victory over regular-season champion Caldwell Tech. The win earned the team a trip to the 32-team NJCAA national tournament in Hutchinson, Kansas where they will face Hutchinson in the first round. It is Salkehatchie's first trip to the men's national tournament since 2020.

"What this young group was able to accomplish over the course of the season was nothing short of spectacular," said Head Coach Matt Lynch. "Every coach in the country dreams about his team playing its best basketball in March. I'm living that dream."

The team celebrated by cutting down the nets after the game. With the wire-to-wire victory Salkehatchie improved to 20-13.

Salkehatchie, which had the youngest team in the conference with a freshman-only roster, came together down the stretch, winning its final three games of the regular sea-

son, including a dominant win over Caldwell Tech two weeks ago.

"Fourteen freshmen have won 6 games in a row (and 8 out of the last 10), with 2 of those wins coming against a nationally ranked opponent in Caldwell Tech. Our guys deserve all the credit for the work they put

in and the resiliency they have shown throughout the grind that is a college basketball season," Lynch said.

Salkehatchie seized control of the game early and carried a 36-24 lead into the half. Unlike the previous meeting, Caldwell Tech surged back into the game.

But Salkehatchie answered each run with one of its own.

Caldwell Tech sliced the lead to 61-55 but would get no closer as Salkehatchie, which overcame injury and foul trouble, made 8 of 10 free throws in the final 90 seconds to seal the victory.

Salkehatchie defeated

Brunswick and Richard Bland in the first and second rounds of the Region 10 tournament to reach the final.

Be sure to follow @USC-SalkMBB on Facebook, X, and Instagram for updates and livestream information.

JDA baseball wins two in a row

Jeff Miller Sports Writer sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Jefferson Davis Academy (JDA) Raiders baseball team faced Wardlaw Acad-

emy and Williston-Elko last week, and came away with wins over both. The first was an expected easy win, but the Williston-Elko win surprised quite a few people.

On Thursday, March 14, the Wardlaw Academy Patriots visited Blackville for a baseball game against the JDA Raiders. The Raiders had previously beaten the Patriots 6-0 at Wardlaw's home field, so JDA was pretty confident they would win again. This time the JDA home crowd got to cheer the Raiders on to a 16-1 one-sided game. JDA took control early and never looked back.

The next night, the Friday night Raider crowd was a little less certain as the Williston-Elko Blue Devils baseball team invaded JDA's stadium for a Barnwell County showdown. What a showdown it was with the underdog Raiders claiming a hard fought 6-4 victory.

"I think we played our best complete game versus

Williston-Elko. We played our brand of baseball, being fast and disruptive on the bases, moving the runners, getting timely hits when needed, and leaning on our outstanding pitching staff," said Raiders head coach Manny Wright. "Offensively, we were led

by Logan Croft who went 2-for-2 with 1 RBI. He also came in to close the game going 4 strong innings, giving up 2 hits and striking out 5 Blue Devils. We are 7 pitchers deep which will keep our pitchers fresh for the deep stretch of the season."

With the win over Williston, Jefferson Davis now has a 5-2 record as they get ready for region play and hopefully a playoff run. Good luck to JDA as they will travel to Heathwood Hall on Wednesday, March 20 for a 6 p.m. game against the Highlanders.



(Above) JDA's Logan Croft struck out 5 Blue Devils in the win over Williston-Elko. (Below) Tucker Fields and the JDA Raiders cruised to a 16-1 win over Wardlaw Academy.

Photos By: Donna Milley / Contributing Photographer



Raiders softball wins 2 in a row

Jeff Miller Sports Writer sports@thepeoplesentinel.com

The Jefferson Davis Academy (JDA) Raiders softball team collected two wins last week when they faced the Wardlaw Academy Patriots and then the Blue Devils from Williston-Elko High School the following night.

The Wardlaw Academy Patriots hit the road to take on the JDA Raiders last Thursday, March 14. The game was stopped in the fifth inning when JDA took a 13-3 lead and secured the victory by the 10-run rule. The 10-run rule declares the game completed after a 10-run lead is attained.

"The game against Wardlaw started off slow but in 4th and 5th innings our bats came alive and we ended in 5 innings with a 13-3 score," said JDA head coach Bart

Owens.

The next night, Friday, March 15, the Raiders would face a stronger opponent when the Williston-Elko Blue Devils would visit for a contest between Barnwell County softball teams. JDA's star pitcher, Reagan Still, took to the circle looking to send the local rivals home with a loss, and that is just what she did.

"Reagan Still pitched well in the win on Friday against Williston. We took the lead 3-0 early, then they tied the game at 3 each, before they took the lead. We were really good in the 6th and 7th innings, scoring 5 runs to win 8-5. Reagan Still pitched all 7 innings and was lights out in the 6th and 7th innings on the mound to get the win," said Coach Owens.

The JDA Raiders will get a little time off from playing with spring break coming, but will resume play on



Reagan Still pitched a complete game and earned the win over Williston-Elko.

Photo By: Tammy Still

April 8 when they hit the road for a game against Calhoun Academy, with the first pitch scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Come out and support the Raiders softball team!

Salk's Justin Baxter recognized on sophomore night



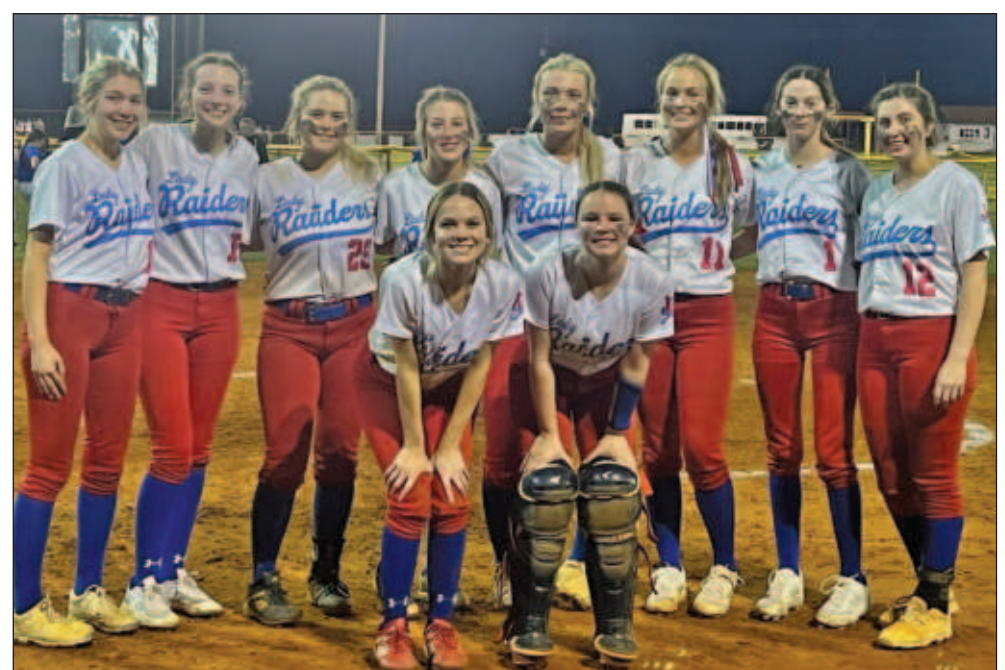
Sophomore Justin Baxter with coaches Matt Lynch, Maurice Crowder and Christian White.

Photo Contributed

USC Salkehatchie sophomore Justin Baxter was recognized at his last home men's basketball game this season against Denmark Tech. For the season, he averaged 12 points and 8.1 rebounds per game.

"JB is a perfect example of what the JUCO route can lead to... growth and success! He started as a practice player, turned walk-on, turned starter, to currently leading Region 10 in FG% (64%) and is third in re-

bounding. He's been a critical part of our success, and his teammates absolutely love him. I am grateful to have him on my bench and I am so excited to see what the future holds," Coach Matt Lynch said.



The JDA Raiders were all smiles after collecting back-to-back wins over Wardlaw Academy and Williston-Elko.

Photo By: Kathy Googe