



MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY / TIMES

**OFFICE.** Deputies of the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office stand united in the courthouse gallery as they take their oath of office.

# SHERIFF BAXLEY SWORN IN

## Celebrates team's dedication

By **MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY**  
mtscreporter@gmail.com

Sheriff Timothy "Tim" Baxley was officially sworn in for his third term as Sheriff of Clarendon County during a ceremony held on January 7 at the Clarendon County Courthouse. Surrounded by colleagues, family, and community members, Baxley reaffirmed his commitment to serving the citizens of Clarendon County with integrity and dedication. The ceremony began with an invocation that included gratitude for the sheriff's leadership and sought

blessings for the department and community. Judge R. Ferrell Cothran, who has presided over each of Baxley's oath-taking ceremonies since his initial swearing-in in 2017, administered the oath of office.

"I'm blessed. There's no doubt I've got a great group," Baxley said during his remarks. "This is a great county to live in, and we've got great people that we work with. It's been an honor for me to serve."

Honoring outstanding deputies During the ceremony, Baxley recognized several deputies for their exceptional contributions to

the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office and the community. Captain Matthew Stone was named Deputy of the Year for 2024, a recognition of his unwavering dedication to the department. "He's all about the sheriff's office, all about law enforcement, all about doing what's right," Baxley said of Stone. "He's a vital part of this operation, and I lean on him a lot. He makes split-second decisions that are almost always the right ones, and he's a man of God and a team player. He's an asset not just to the sheriff's department but to the entire county."



See **OATH**, Page 5

### BUSINESS

## Frierson Farms Expands with Storefront

By **MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY**  
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What began as a hobby farm in 2015 has flourished into a full-fledged business with the grand opening of Frierson Farms and Country Store on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025. Located at 10691 Scott Ave. in Pinewood, the store offers a wide variety of fresh, locally sourced products, embodying the dedication of owners Tanya and Jason Frierson to their community and their craft.

The Friersons started their farm with goats and Angus cattle, steadily expanding to include chickens, ducks, and hogs. This growth has culminated in the opening of the storefront, which bridges the gap between local producers and consumers by providing high-quality meats, produce, and specialty goods.

See **FARMS**, Page 4

### GOVERNMENT

## Appeals Board Rejects Pine Knoll Facility

By **MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY**  
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The Manning Board of Appeals denied a request Monday evening from Purpose SC to establish a residential care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities in the Pine Knoll neighborhood. The decision came after hours of deliberation and public comments from both supporters and opponents.

Purpose SC's Executive Director, LaTonya Williams, presented the proposal, emphasizing the organization's mission to provide community-based housing for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. "These individuals are highly functional and have lived together as family for years," Williams said. "We've put significant resources into this home to create a safe, supportive, and independent living environment for them."

The facility would have housed four adults with intellectual disabilities, supervised around the clock by trained staff. Williams highlighted the organization's national accreditation and its history of operating similar homes without

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### EDUCATION



## TEACHERS LEARN CPR THROUGH COLLABORATION

ALEX FEAGIN / TIMES

**EDUCATION.** (L to R) Manning Mayor Julia Nelson; Helen Ellis, representative from Manning United Methodist Church (MUMC); Rev. David D. McManus Jr., pastor at MUMC; Dr. Kelvin Lemon, principal of Manning High School; Susan Bench, assistant principal of Manning High School; and Alfonso Franco, community impact director with the American Heart Association, pose during a Hands-Only CPR training session at Manning High School.

**BY ALEX FEAGIN & MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY |** mtscreporter@gmail.com

Manning High School faculty participated in a Hands-Only CPR training session on January 6, thanks to a collaborative effort between the American Heart Association (AHA) and Manning United Methodist Church. The training, held in the school's lecture hall, aimed to empower educators with life-saving skills in the event of a cardiac emergency.

More than 60 teachers and staff attended the session, which focused on two critical steps of Hands-Only CPR: calling 911 and performing chest compressions at a rhythm of 100–120 beats per minute. Songs like the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" and Beyoncé's "Crazy in

Love" were used as tempo guides during the hands-on demonstration, making the training engaging and memorable. The Baby Shark song, also featuring the proper tempo, added a playful touch to the instruction.

The initiative was made possible through the generous support of Manning United Methodist Church, a participant in the American Heart Association's Sumter Clarendon Heart Walk. The church's sponsorship funded the donation of CPR kits, including manikins and AED training materials, which will remain at the school for future training sessions.

"CPR is a crucial skill that can

make the difference between life and death in an emergency," said Alfonso Franco, the AHA, who led the session. "By providing Manning High School with the training and tools they need, we are helping to ensure that these young people are ready to respond effectively in critical moments."


The CPR kits, which include manikins, instructional materials, and AED training tools, are designed to ensure that everyone participating in the session can practice and refine their skills. This collaboration supports the AHA's mission to create a Nation of Lifesavers.

See **CPR**, Page 4



HARRIETTE WARD

MANNING - Harriette Elizabeth Ward, 82, entered into eternal rest on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, at Prisma Health Tuomey.



Born January 21, 1942, in Manning, she was the daughter of the late Marion S. Ward and the late Betty Bradham Ward. She was a member of Manning First

Baptist Church, the Joy-Ruth Sunday School class, Women on Mission Afternoon Group, Royal Servants, and Wednesday morning Bible study group. Harriette was employed with Walmart for over 20 years and in her free time she was faithful in her card ministry and visits with many family, friends and fellow church members. She also enjoyed spending time tending to her flowers and plants and cheering on her Clemson Tigers.

She is survived by a sister-in-law, Donna Ward Holladay (Buddy) of Manning; two nephews, Marion Stanley "Mark" Ward II of Columbia and John Brandon Ward (Renee) of Manning; two great nephews, John Brandon "J.J." Ward, Jr. and William Coleman Ward; and several cousins.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a brother, Marion Stanley Ward; and a nephew, William Matthew "Matt" Ward.

A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, January 11, 2025, at Manning First Baptist Church with the Rev. Dr. Phillip Reynolds officiating. Burial will follow at Clarendon Memorial Gardens.

Pallbearers will be Eddie Ward, Matthew Evans, Dave Harrison, Edward Lavender, Daryle Walker and Jay Eaddy.

Visitation will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, January 10, 2025, at Stephens Funeral Home and other times at the residence, 4203 Paxville Highway, Manning.


The family would like to thank the staff of NHC Healthcare in Sumter and the second floor Critical Care and Hospice staff at Prisma Health Tuomey for their love, care, and support.

Memorials may be made to Manning First Baptist Church, 49 W. Boyce Street, Manning, SC 29102.

Stephens Funeral Home & Crematory, 304 N. Church Street, Manning, is in charge of arrangements, (803) 435-2179. [www.stephensfuneralhome.org](http://www.stephensfuneralhome.org)

BO BRUNSON, JR

DAVIS STATION – Charlie Edward “Bo” Brunson, Jr., 66, passed away on Saturday, January 11, 2025, at McLeod Regional Medical Center.



Born July 30, 1958, in Limestone, ME, he was a son of Lula Dell Hemingway Brunson and the late Charlie Edward Brunson, Sr. Bo was the owner and operator of Brunson Septic Tank & Landscaping of Manning and a member of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. He was an avid outdoorsman and especially loved to hunt and fish.

He is survived by his mother of Davis Station; four children, Sarah Brunson Thomas of N. Myrtle Beach, Drake E. Brunson (Alisha) of Sumter, Daniel M. Brunson of Manning and Katrina Brunson Renyard (Cory) of Pamplico; seven grandchildren, Espen, Ava, Luke, Liam, Samuel, Declan and Hannah; three siblings, Charlene Brunson Houser of Bishopville, William E. "Billy" Brunson (Diana) of Dalzell and Christopher "Duke" Brunson (Ashleigh) of Manning; and numerous nieces and nephews.

In addition to his father, he was preceded in death by a sister, Jenny Lynn Tallon.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at Bethlehem United Methodist Church Cemetery with the Rev. Morris Smith officiating.


The family will receive friends immediately following the graveside service in the church fellowship hall.

Memorials may be made to Bethlehem United Methodist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Gayle Brunson, 405 Sylvan Drive, Manning, SC 29102.

Stephens Funeral Home & Crematory, 304 N. Church Street, Manning, is in charge of arrangements, (803) 435-2179. [www.stephensfuneralhome.org](http://www.stephensfuneralhome.org)

MARTHA WARD

ANDREWS – Martha Ann King Ward, 79, widow of Homer Lavern Ward, died Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the home of her sister.



Born September 25, 1945, in Andrews, she was a daughter of the late James King and the late Katie McCall King Cales. She was a member of Gour-

dines Chapel Christian Fellowship Church.

She is survived by a son, Steven Anthony Ward of Andrews; two grandchildren, Steven Tyler Ward of Andrews and Chloe Ward of Georgetown; a sister, Maude Brown (J.W.) of Sumter; three brothers, James Cales (Hallie), Roger Cales (Kathy), both of Manning, and Randy Cales (Judy) of Sumter; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Sheila Ward Cribb; a grandson, Dustin Cribb; and five siblings, Tommy King, Elanora King Coker, Jimmy King, Robert King and Andrew Cales.

A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday, January 13, 2025, at Gourdines

Chapel Christian Fellowship Church with the Rev. Randy Gamble officiating. Burial will follow in Ward Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be Ronnie Bevell, James Cales, Jr., Jason Cales, Michael Cales, Stanley Fulford and Tony Tilton.


Visitation will be one hour prior to the service from 10 to 11 a.m. at the church.

Memorials may be made to Gourdines Chapel Christian Fellowship Church, c/o Beverly Thompson, 9520 Saints Delight Road, Andrews, SC 29510.

Stephens Funeral Home & Crematory, 304 N. Church Street, Manning, is in charge of arrangements, (803) 435-2179. [www.stephensfuneralhome.org](http://www.stephensfuneralhome.org)

WARREN FODHAM

MANNING – Warren Carl Fordham, 88, widower of Sandra Jean Vance Fordham, died Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at Lake Marion Nursing Facility.



Born June 21, 1936, in Muskegon, MI, he was a son of the late Clarence Fordham and the late Elizabeth Blank Fordham. He was a US Army

veteran and a retired accountant.

He is survived by a daughter, Linda F. Santis of Salisbury, NC; a son, Mark W. Fordham (Sandy) of Clover; three grandchildren, Daniel, Heather and Drew; and five great grandchildren.

In addition to his wife and parents, he was preceded in death by three siblings, Larry, Mary and Tony.

A memorial service will be held at a later date in Charlotte, NC.

Stephens Funeral Home & Crematory, 304 N. Church Street, Manning, is in charge of arrangements, (803) 435-2179. [www.stephensfuneralhome.org](http://www.stephensfuneralhome.org)

COMMUNITY EVENTS

**JANUARY 25**  
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**JANUARY 17**  
CLARENDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY @ CLARENDON COUNTY ADMIN. BLDG., 7:30 PM: 803-435-0328

**JANUARY 20**  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. (JAN 15, 1929) HOLIDAY: MLK JR DAY OF SERVICE

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CYBERSECURITY

# SCDE responnds to data

By MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY  
[mtscreporter@gmail.com](mailto:mtscreporter@gmail.com)

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is working to assess the impact of a cybersecurity breach involving PowerSchool, a widely used student information system, that compromised data across multiple states and school districts, including nearly all in South Carolina.

PowerSchool informed the SCDE of the breach on Tuesday, identifying its PowerSource portal as the source of unauthorized access to personally identifiable information (PII).


While PowerSchool assured the breach has been contained and steps have been taken to secure its systems, state and district officials are still determining the extent of the damage.

"The protection of our South Carolina students' and educators' personal data is non-negotiable," said State Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver. "We fully recognize the anxiety this raises for them and their families. Our Department will take uncompromising action to uncover the complete extent of this incident and ensure affected individuals are notified and supported."

PowerSchool has committed to notifying those impacted and providing credit and identity monitoring services. Additionally, the SCDE is collaborating with the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED), the Attorney General's Office, and the Governor's office to address the breach.

On Thursday, SCDE provided an update to school districts, revealing that all South Carolina districts except Edgefield County School District, Greenville County Schools, Horry County Schools, and Richland School District Two were identified by PowerSchool as being affected. However, inclusion on the list does not confirm data extraction, according to PowerSchool. Several districts are now working with the South Carolina District Data Governance Group (DDGG) and SCDE to determine whether data was accessed or extracted. SCDE continues to support districts in mitigating potential harm to students and educators.

"We will remain in close communication with districts and PowerSchool to ensure the necessary steps are taken to address this incident," the SCDE stated. The SCDE urges parents, students, and educators to remain vigilant about potential identity theft or fraud as the investigation continues. More updates will be shared as the situation develops.



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MT. HOPE SCROLLS

# Childhood Battles and Forts of MaTaVa Heights

Walked by Fort Greeleyville today. Bet you didn't know that Greeleyville had a fort. Actually, Greeleyville had two forts.



Bobby JONTE

The forts were located on Varner Avenue near Taylor Street. Main Street is a half block over. You could call the area MaTa-Va Heights. That's because of the streets coming together on the south side of town.

The forts were near the corner of Varner and Taylor between the Masonic Lodge and the edge of the Greeleyville High School football field. That's as close as I can get you to the fort unless you come over and I show you the actual spot where these two forts were located.

The forts were on the same side of the road. They were about sixty feet apart. Each fort was only about 100 square feet. The fortification for the fort might have been a piece of wood that acted as an exterior wall. Mostly the defense of the fort was just a few pine trees. There wasn't any furniture in the fort nor was there any treasure of any sort. Mostly, we just defended the little 10X10 bit of land that became our forts.

There were about a dozen kids that lived in MaTaVa Heights then. That was enough to have two armies. It was an easy walk to the fort and an easier bike ride of half a block for the most distant kids in this area of opposing forts.

The major battle was keeping the invading army from entering your fort. Actually, both forts were the same. (No furniture or any possessions at all) The difference was the people that were in charge of the forts.

Ralph and Risa were neighbors just a little ways down the street. Ralph seemed to be in charge of the fort closest to his house. Risa had to go past Ralph's fort to get to her fort. That was like passing through enemy territory to check on her fort.

She always claimed that she couldn't get her parents to move down the street to be closer to her fort. She was afraid that Ralph was messing with the stuff in her fort. Remember there was nothing in the forts but you understand the whole territorial consequences.

For most of one summer we would have battles defending the forts. I was a little kid and I was on Team Risa. Team Ralph had some older kids on it. In the afternoon, all the kids would make dirt balls out of mud. The next day the mud balls would be dried out and you would have some fine weaponry to throw at each other. When we ran out of these dried mud balls, we used finger pistols to shoot at each other.

This went on for most of the summer. Right before school was about to start for the year, the battles started increasing. Tromping around in the fort all summer had made a smooth floor and you could really tell where you fort was.

The week before school started, the first injury of this war happened. We had thrown a big volley of mud balls and were about to charge each other's fort. I had thrown all the mud balls I had and was hiding behind a tree. It seemed to me that all the mud balls had been thrown and it was time to pull out my finger pistol and charge. I stuck my head out from behind the tree and the last mud ball had been thrown and hit me square in the nose. Of course, blood poured out of my nose and covered my t-shirt. Risa said I should probably go home.

It was only two hundred yards to get home and have a cold rag put on my nose. That was the end of the fort battle for the day.

That was the end of the fort battle for me forever. School started next week and the forts seemed to fall into disrepair, as we didn't go there anymore.

A lot has changed after all these years. There was no treasure left at the fort. There is really no distinguishable way to tell where the fort actually was. The good part is that a walk by a tiny little piece of land can bring out memories from a long time ago.

MANNING MAMA

# WHY I DON'T DO RESOLUTIONS and you don't have to either

**Trigger warning: This column discusses mental health and suicide.**

Want to know something I don't do? New Year, new you. Nope. I don't mess with that nonsense anymore. I used to, though. I'd make my lists, write my goals, and by February, I'd be staring down the wreckage of all the life-changing that didn't happen.

Miserable.

Here's the thing: I know my faults. I could be more organized. I could be more punctual. Once upon a time, I ran half-marathons and tackled obstacle races. I should probably haul myself off the couch this year. How do I know all this? Because I'm self-aware.

Painfully so.

The kind of self-aware that comes with a clinical diagnosis. The kind where my brain replays everything I've done wrong—not just today, but this week, this decade—on a nightly loop. The kind of self-aware where, mid-panic attack, I'm berating myself for not being a functional adult. Or a good mom. Or both.

The good news is therapy and medication exist for this kind of “awareness.” I've shared before that I live with major depression and anxiety. When you've been to the brink, when

you've stood in the darkness of suicidal thoughts, you don't need a New Year's resolution to remind you where your life could use improvement. Believe me, you've already thought about it. On repeat.

So, no. I don't do resolutions. I don't need that kind of negativity in my life, and maybe you don't either. Especially if

you're struggling with your mental health. You don't have to overhaul your life. You just need to focus on living the day-to-day.

Sometimes the hard thing isn't running a marathon or earning another degree. It's getting out of bed. It's taking a shower. It's feeding yourself or asking for help. And that's okay.

Now, I'm not saying there's no place for resolutions. My publisher, Leigh Ann, loves them. She's been bringing salads for lunch every day and cleaning out her garage like a woman on a mission. It's inspiring, really. Though I'm going to need her not to leave Tupperware in the office fridge, okay? Some



Melissa FOUST-MCCOY



COMMANDERS IN THE UNLIKELY

# From Legally Blonde to Leader of the Free World

Before diving into this piece, let me clarify – this is pure satire. It's part of “Commanders in the Unlikely” – a lighthearted series exploring why public figures (who have no actual intention of running) would make great presidential candidates. So, grab some sweet tea and enjoy this playful take on why Reese Witherspoon, America's sweetheart, should consider a run for the White House.

Reese Witherspoon for President? It's not as far-fetched as you might think. The Oscar-winning actress, producer, and entrepreneur has been building empires on and off the screen for decades. From her portrayal of Elle Woods in Legally Blonde to her real-life role as the queen of book clubs, Reese has the charisma, leadership skills, and down-to-earth charm needed to bring the country together. Plus, she's already proven she can handle difficult situations—remember when she bent and snapped her way into Harvard Law?

DIPLOMACY: CHARM WINS THE DAY

Reese's southern charm is her superpower. Whether she's negotiating trade deals or diffusing international tension, Reese's ability to connect with people is unmatched. Who could resist her disarming smile and genuine warmth? Imagine her sitting across from world leaders, opening with, “Y'all, let's talk this out.” Suddenly, we've got world peace and a casserole recipe exchange.

If Reese can convince us to care deeply about the literary adventures of her book club, she can surely persuade Congress to pass bipartisan legislation. She's not just Elle Woods; she's the Elle Woods who taught us all that you can't

underestimate someone in pink.

A CABINET FULL OF STARS

Reese has a knack for assembling star-studded casts in her movies and shows, so you know her cabinet would be an A-list dream team. Secretary of Education? Mindy Kaling, because humor and intellect make learning fun. Secretary of State? Nicole Kidman—stoic, elegant, and ready to out-diplomat anyone. And for Treasury? Oprah. Enough said.

Reese's ability to unite powerhouse women on-screen reflects her natural leadership skills. Her administration wouldn't just be effective; it would be inspiring. The White House press briefings would be standing-room only.

ECONOMIC POLICY: ENTREPRENEURIAL EXCELLENCE

Reese doesn't just play leaders on screen; she is one in real life. Her production company, Hello Sunshine, has redefined how women are portrayed in media, all while turning a massive profit. She knows how to build businesses that thrive, create jobs, and empower people along the way.

Who better to balance the federal budget than someone who turned a love of storytelling into a multimillion-dollar empire? Reese understands the importance of investing in people and ideas—a policy America could always use more of.

EDUCATION: THE ULTIMATE BOOK CLUB

Under President Witherspoon, education would get a much-needed glow-up. Reese's book club, which has turned countless novels into bestsellers, proves her commitment to literacy and storytelling. Imagine a nationwide reading program where every schoolchild gets access to the Reese's Book Club reading list. Standardized testing? Replaced with discussions on Where the Crawdads Sing.

Reese's leadership would ensure that schools aren't just about grades but about cultivating creativity and critical thinking. Plus, imagine the field trips—students touring Hollywood sets to learn how stories are brought to life.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT: GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

Remember Reese's infamous line, “Do you know who I am?” during an awkward traffic stop? She took full accountability for that moment and turned it into a lesson on humility and self-awareness. Reese can navigate public scrutiny with grace—a crucial skill for any leader.

Her calm, composed demeanor would serve the nation well in times of crisis. Natural disaster? Reese is already rallying support and calling in Oprah for a televised fundraiser. Economic downturn? Reese has Hello Sunshine's business model ready to scale up nationally. Alien invasion? Reese's charm could probably broker peace faster than the Pentagon.

*Ted Spencer is a resident of Manning, SC, a pizza enthusiast, and the owner of Qsigns. For any signage needs you can reach him at sales@qsigns.net*

# The Manning Times

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Deadlines  
Classified, Classified Display  
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Noon on Fridays

Display Advertising, Stories and Public Service Announcements:  
5 p.m. on Fridays

The Manning Times is published by  
Times Publishing Company Inc., weekly at  
230 E. Boyce St., Manning, SC 29102.

PUBLISHER: Leigh Ann Maynard  
OFFICE MANAGER: Alex Feagin  
MARKETING EXECUTIVE: Melissa Ard  
GRAPHIC DESIGN & EDITING: Katherine Hutchinson  
MANAGING EDITOR: Melissa McCoy-Foust

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CPR

FROM PAGE 1

ensuring that more people have CPR skills and knowledge to act during emergencies people have CPR skills and knowledge to act during emergencies. Assistant Principal Susan Bench expressed gratitude on behalf of the school. “We are grateful to the American Heart Association and Manning United Methodist Church for this generous donation. Giving our students the tools and knowledge to perform CPR not only empowers them, but it also makes our school a safer place for everyone,” she said.

The training aligns with AHA data showing that approximately 350,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of hospitals annually, and immediate CPR can double or triple survival rates. Teachers practiced chest compressions on training manikins equipped with feedback devices that clicked to indicate proper technique.

This training is part of the AHA’s broader goal of ensuring that one person in every home knows Hands-Only CPR. Christina Darby, Director of Development for the Sumter Clarendon Heart Walk, emphasized the importance of starting with high schools. “Our goal is to have at least one person in every household who knows how to perform Hands-Only CPR,” she said. “We start with high schools because students and staff often have the strength to perform effective compressions.”

The training session marked the beginning of an ongoing effort to bring CPR education to more schools in Clarendon County. Darby highlighted plans to eventually train students and younger age groups, teaching primary school children the importance of calling 911 in emergencies.

For more information about Hands-Only CPR and upcoming training sessions, visit the American Heart Association’s website at [www.heart.org/HandsOnlyCPR](http://www.heart.org/HandsOnlyCPR).

APPEALS

FROM PAGE 1

incident. However, residents of Pine Knoll raised concerns about the potential impact on their tight-knit neighborhood, citing safety, property values, and zoning laws. Kass Varn, a retired teacher and longtime resident, expressed her opposition. “We’ve lived here for decades, and this neighborhood has always been a place where families know each other and children feel safe,” she said. “We just want to preserve that atmosphere.”

Other residents echoed similar concerns, pointing to the precedent such an exemption might set and fears about the behavior of the facility’s residents. Some also questioned the track record of Purpose SC’s leadership and operations elsewhere, referencing legal and regulatory issues associated with its parent organization.

Chairman Mark Bellamy clarified the nature of the request. “This is not a rezoning,” Bellamy explained. “This is a special exemption to allow this specific operation in a residential district. The property would remain

residential.”

Despite these clarifications, the Board ultimately voted to deny the request, citing overwhelming community opposition. The motion to deny was supported unanimously by the Board, with Bellamy summarizing the decision: “We are here to convey the will of the people, and based on their input, this is not a good fit for this neighborhood.” In his closing remarks, Bellamy commended Purpose SC for its efforts. “I applaud you for trying to do what’s best for those who need services. Please don’t let this

decision hinder your mission. Sometimes a place is just not a good fit for certain projects, but your work remains vital.”

Residents left the meeting feeling vindicated in their efforts to protect Pine Knoll’s residential character. The issue, however, highlighted the neighborhood’s ability to unite across political and cultural divides to advocate for their shared vision.

The Board’s decision does not preclude Purpose SC from seeking other locations for the facility. For now, the organization’s plans for 640 Pickwood Drive are on hold.



FARMS

FROM PAGE 1

The store boasts an impressive selection of meats, including beef, pork, quail, rabbit, and seafood such as catfish and shrimp. Visitors will also find locally made jams, jellies, pickled items, honey, salad dressings, rice, grits, seasonings, and baked goods.

Specialty items such as Amish peanut butter, honey butter, cheeses, and handcrafted candles add to the store’s appeal, while feed and seed, pet supplies, and skincare products round out the offerings.

The Friersons have infused the store with a warm, welcoming atmosphere, evident in its carefully curated displays and the personal attention given to every visitor. Each product reflects their commitment to supporting local artisans and producers. For example, the store’s sourdough bread comes from a local baker, while other items, such as pickled goods and salad dressings, are sourced from small businesses in nearby towns.

The grand opening drew a strong response from the community, with enthusiastic shoppers snapping up many of the store’s offerings. By the end of the first day, some items, such as catfish, had already sold out. The Friersons’ dedication to fostering local partnerships and providing natural, high-quality goods has clearly resonated with their customers.

Frierson Farms and Country Store is open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The business is positioned to become a staple in the Pinewood community, offering not only a variety of products but also a connection to the region’s agricultural roots.

For more information, visit Frierson Farms and Country Store at 10691-C Scott Ave. in Pinewood or call (803) 452-6000.

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Photos C/O Melissa Foust-McCoy)

## OATH

FROM PAGE 1

Deputies Casey Connors and Marshall Taylor were presented the Above and Beyond Award for their tireless work in animal control and litter enforcement. Since July, the pair have handled 1,830 animal control complaints, transported 594 canines, issued 51 summonses, and 105 warnings. Additionally, they investigated 132 litter complaints, issued 17 citations, and wrote 2,034 warnings for litter violations.

“These two are a team, and they work tirelessly,” Baxley said. “They’re constantly on the move, responding to calls from early morning to late at night. They’ve even managed to combine their duties on the lake with their animal control responsibilities. They do all of this without complaint, and their work ethic is unmatched.”

Baxley also spoke regarding their role in maintaining order on the lake, particularly in areas prone to overcrowding and complaints, such as the sandbar near the Wild Oak subdivision. Deputies Connors and Taylor logged 232 boat patrol hours since July, often juggling multiple responsibilities to address community concerns. “They’re always ready to step in, whether it’s an animal control issue, litter enforcement, or an emergency call. Their dedication is truly above and beyond.”

Commitment to staff and community  
Baxley expressed his gratitude to the deputies and staff who have supported his vision, noting their role in the department’s progress since 2017. He also reaffirmed his promise to advocate for increased pay for his staff, acknowledging their hard work and dedication. “I know you can’t eat plaques or thank-yous,

but you can eat groceries,” he said, pledging to push for pay raises to match neighboring counties. In his speech, Baxley reflected on the challenges and triumphs of his tenure, confirming his commitment to collaboration with other county officials and departments. “We have come a long way, and it isn’t me—it’s we,” he said. “I love serving Clarendon County, and I’m going to continue to do what’s best for this county and its people.”

A legacy of service  
Baxley’s swearing-in marks the continuation of a nearly four-decade-long career in law enforcement. Born in Charleston and raised in Barnwell, he began his career as a South Carolina Highway Patrol Trooper in 1985 and later served in the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), where he specialized in evidence recovery and rose to the rank of Captain. After retiring from SCDNR in 2016, he was first elected sheriff in 2017.

In addition to his local leadership, Baxley was elected President of the South Carolina Sheriff’s Association in July 2024, further cementing his role as a leader in law enforcement across the state.

Baxley is married to Helen Powell Baxley, and together they have five children. A devoted family man and community member, he credits his faith and family as cornerstones of his life and leadership.

The ceremony concluded with a standing ovation from both the attendees and deputies, affirming their support for Baxley’s continued leadership. “I thank everyone who gave me the opportunity to serve as sheriff,” he said. “It’s been a blessing, and I look forward to continuing to serve this county with everything I have.”

## MAYOR

# Message from the Mayor

I believe that we have just experienced the most beautiful time of the year in our city. I have received compliments from far and near of our annual display of Christmas lights.

Our Team Manning members of the Landscaping/Street Department and other departments are to be commended for their dedication and attention to detail while installing the lights. Simply, a job well-done!



Mayor Julia Nelson

### 2025 STATE OF OUR CITY

I would like to take this opportunity to present our annual State of the City report. The City of Manning remains in a strong financial position, with an annual operating budget of approximately \$10.1 million. We are anticipating a busy and productive year in 2025 as several projects, which have been in the planning stages, begin construction over the next several months. These projects include:

#### 107-YEAR-OLD SEWER LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The City has secured approximately \$8.5 million from the Rural Infrastructure Authority to rehabilitate sewer lines in the downtown corridor. Many of these sewer lines are over 100 years old, and several have collapsed in recent years, requiring extensive repairs. Work will begin in 2025, with construction expected to take several months. The project will focus on replacing and rehabilitating lines along Brooks Street, Boyce Street, Keitt Street, Rigby Street, Lee Street, and several smaller locations.

#### DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The City has been awarded an \$8.2 million grant from the SC Office of Resiliency to improve drainage infrastructure in and around the City. Several drainage lines need to be repaired and enlarged to better manage storm water flow. This will be a three-phase project, which is expected to extend into 2026. The first phase will begin in January and will include improvements at the intersections of Gibbons and Mill, Keitt and Walker, Brooks and Memorial, and Boyce and Collins streets.

### CHURCH STREET TOWNE CENTRE AND VENUE

The City has received approximately \$1.7 million in grant funding to construct a new recreational facility on Church Street. The design of the facility has been approved by City Council, and a rendering is included on the back of this report. We hope to begin construction in the first half of 2025. The new facility will feature a walking path, a water feature, serve as a venue for outdoor concerts, and offer several other amenities. Additionally, the City is continuing to pursue other recreational opportunities for our community.

### ACADEMY DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to Old Georgetown Road are planned for the summer of 2025. The City has requested funds from SCDOT and the County to address traffic issues on Old Georgetown Road, particularly around Laurence Manning Academy. The project will add a turn lane and widen Academy Drive (the entrance to LMA). We are hopeful that this will help alleviate traffic congestion during school dismissal. The project will be bid in the first quarter of the year, and construction is expected to begin after the school year ends and be completed by the time school resumes in August 2025.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our community continues to experience growth with numerous developments in and around the City. This year, DR Horton developed residential property off Bloomville Road. We’ve also welcomed QuikTrip and will soon be welcoming a Tesla charging station and Lowe’s. The Tesla charging facility is currently under construction behind Shoney’s, and we expect Lowe’s to begin development on the old Walmart property in January. We also commend and congratulate Walmart on their recent successful remodeling project.

Thank you all for being a part of the City of Manning. We look forward to a successful year ahead with great anticipation! We wish you the happiest of New 5 Years, and as always, let us remain true to our city’s motto: “Matchless for Beauty and Hospitality.”

*The People’s Mayor,  
Julia A. Nelson, MPA*



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**TATUM** is a tan and white, male, Hound/Bully Mix just shy of 4 years old. Tatum has been neutered and is current on vaccinations. He did test positive for heartworms, though. Therefore, Tatum would need to continue treatment with a vet once adopted. Tatum is very sweet and loves attention! He walks gently on a leash and would make a great walking companion! Tatum currently weighs around 55 pounds. He gets along with most dogs but can be selective at times. If there are other dogs in the home, then a meet and greet would be required. Tatum has been at the shelter for just about 3 years now and is ready for his forever family. If you are interested in adopting Tatum, you can get pre – approved to adopt by submitting your adoption application online at [www.ASecondChanceAnimalShelter.com](http://www.ASecondChanceAnimalShelter.com). Our adoption fee for dogs is \$125.

**JAY** is a 1 ½ year old, black, male Domestic Short Hair cat. Jay is extremely friendly and outgoing. He loves to play and is quite active! Jay is current on all age-appropriate shots, has been neutered, and tested negative for Feline Leukemia and Aids. He seems to get along with all other cats. Please stop by the shelter to see this adorable cat. He deserves a loving home! Jay’s adoption fee is \$100. If you are interested in adopting Jay, you can get pre – approved to adopt by submitting your adoption application online at [www.ASecondChanceAnimalShelter.com](http://www.ASecondChanceAnimalShelter.com).

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ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE FOLLOWING ESTATES MUST FILE THEIR CLAIMS ON FORM #371ES WITH THE PROBATE COURT OF CLARENDON COUNTY, THE ADDRESS OF WHICH IS 411 SUNSET DR. MANNING SC 29102 WITHIN EIGHT (8) MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE TO CREDITORS OR WITHIN ONE (1) YEAR FROM DATE OF DEATH, WHICHEVER IS EARLIER (SCPC 62-3-801, ET SEQ.) OR SUCH PERSONS SHALL BE FOREVER BARRED AS TO THEIR CLAIMS. ALL CLAIMS ARE REQUIRED TO BE PRESENTED IN WRITTEN STATEMENTS ON THE

PREScribed FROM (FORM #371ES) INDICATING THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE CLAIMANT, THE BASS OF THE CLAIM, THE AMOUNT CLAIMED, THE DATE WHEN THE CLAIM WILL BECOME DUE, THE NATURE OF ANY UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE CLAIM, AND A DESCRIPTION OF ANY SECURITY AS TO THE CLAIM WILL BECOME DUE, THE NATURE OF ANY UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE CLAIM, AND A DESCRIPTION OF ANY SECURITY AS TO THE CLAIM.

Gamble Family Farms, 5300 Black River Rd., New Zion, SC 29111 has applied to the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services for a Groundwater Withdrawal Permit, under

the Groundwater Use and Reporting Act for one (1) proposed agricultural irrigation well(s) located at approximately N 33.835728, W-80.114267 in Clarendon County, SC. A proposed additional groundwater withdrawal of 106 million gallons per year from the McQueen Branch aquifer has been developed from calculated water use requirements for one (1) agricultural irrigation well(s) on approximately 130 acres. Additional information concerning this application may be obtained from Ashley Carothers by calling (803)898-4220 or e-mail at Ashley.Carothers@des.sc.gov. SCDES invites and will receive comments on the application until 01/23/2025, close of business day, 5:00pm EST.

Please submit comments using SCDES's ePermitting webpage. (<https://epermweb.dhec.sc.gov/ncore/external/publicnotice/search>) by navigating to the project and using the "Add Comment" tab at the top of the page. Comments may also be sent to: SCDES/Bureau of Water, Attention: Ashley Carothers, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201. Interested parties wishing to be notified of the final permit decision must make comment on the application and make a request to receive notice of the final decision and must provide the SCDES with correct name and mailing address. (12/24/24 - 01/23/25)

HEALTH

FLU ACTIVITY REMAINS HIGH

hospitalizations and deaths increase

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY  
[mtscreporter@gmail.com](mailto:mtscreporter@gmail.com)

South Carolina's flu season showed no signs of slowing during the first week of 2025, with high levels of influenza-like illnesses (ILI), an increase in hospitalizations, and three additional flu-associated deaths, according to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

From December 29, 2024, to January 4, 2025, 3,061 lab-confirmed influenza cases were reported, bringing the season total to 10,590. Influenza A accounted for nearly 99% of cases, with the A(H3) subtype comprising a small portion of the overall cases.

Only 1.1% of cases were identified as Influenza B. These numbers reflect steady transmission and no decline from the previous week. The percentage of patient visits for influenza-like illnesses reached 8.2%, more than double South Carolina's baseline of 3.2%,

with all public health regions experiencing elevated activity. Providers in 22 counties reported cases, confirming that the flu's impact remains widespread across the state.

Influenza-associated hospitalizations saw a notable rise, with 356 new cases reported, increasing the total hospitalizations for the 2024-25 season to 1,047. Adults aged 65 and older continue to bear the brunt of severe outcomes, representing 218 hospitalizations during the week and accounting for over half of the season's total hospitalizations. The cumulative hospitalization rate now stands at 20.7 per 100,000 people.

DHEC reported three additional influenza-associated deaths, bringing the season total to eight. Six of these fatalities occurred among individuals aged 65 and older, emphasizing the increased vulnerability of older adults to severe complications from influenza. Health officials strongly recom-

mend flu vaccinations for everyone aged six months and older. Vaccines are widely available at clinics, pharmacies, and healthcare providers statewide. Vaccination is particularly critical for high-risk groups, including seniors, young children, pregnant individuals, and those with chronic conditions such as diabetes or asthma.

To further reduce the spread, DHEC advises frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home when experiencing symptoms such as fever, chills, and body aches. For those already ill, seeking medical attention promptly can reduce the severity and duration of symptoms, especially with the use of antiviral medications.

As flu activity continues at high levels, DHEC encourages residents to stay informed through its weekly Flu Watch updates, available at DHEC's Flu Watch.

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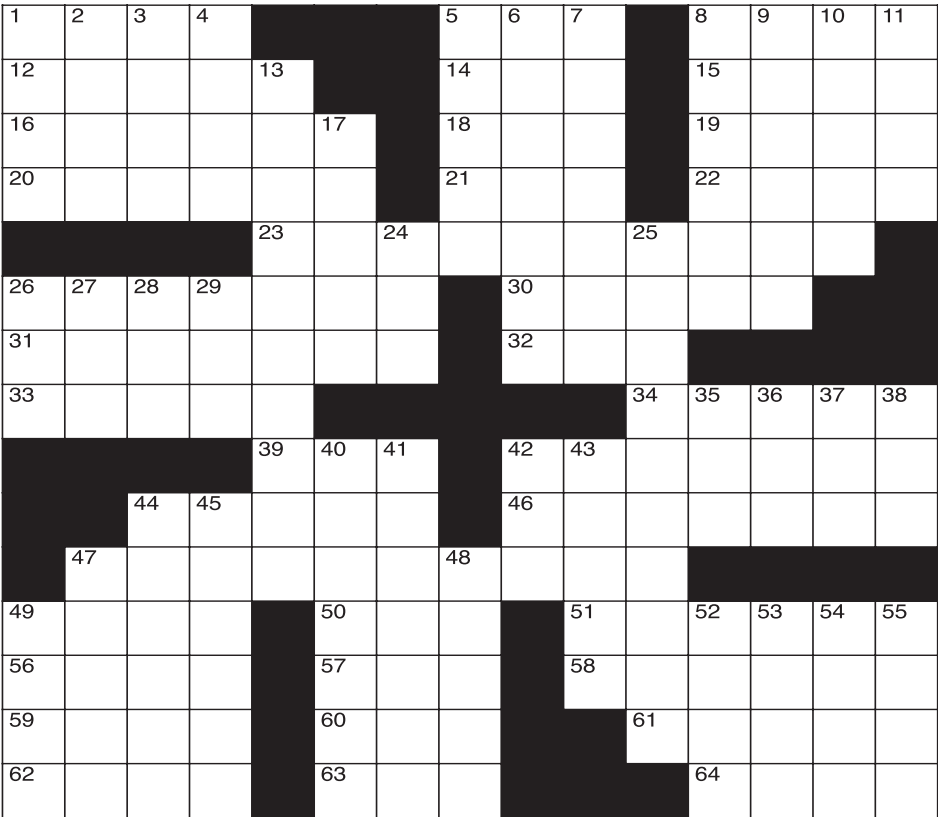


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# GAMEZONE



CROSSWORD ANSWERS ON THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE

- DOWN
- ACROSS
1. Partner to “oohs”

2. Scaly water dweller

3. Pueblo people of New Mexico

4. Music producer Teo

5. Greek mythological goddess

6. Got together to discuss

7. Acquires

8. Involve

9. Some are toma-to-based

10. Old Irish alphabets

11. A sheet of glass in a window or door

13. Blood poisoning

17. A moon of Saturn

24. Neither

25. Sums

26. They follow “A”

27. Satisfaction

28. People of south-eastern Burma

29. Small amount

35. Guy (slang)

36. Sound unit

37. Midway between northeast and east

38. Affirmative

40. Almost at the top

41. Extremely slow

42. Pearl Jam’s debut album

43. Influential mid-cen-tury playwright

44. Martens

45. Approval

47. Dallas-adjacent Texas city

48. African nation

49. Dark brown or black

52. A place to get caught

53. Large-headed, elongated fish

54. Type of sword

55. Scottish tax or levy

1. This regulates cortisol production (abbr.)

5. People of northern Vietnam

8. Employee stock ownership plan

12. Regions

14. The center of a city

15. Hindu serpentine deity

16. Roared

18. Sun up in New York

19. “Sir” in Malaysian

20. Shrimp dish

21. Muckraker Tarbell

22. Apex

23. Harmonic effects

26. One of Babe Ruth’s nicknames

30. Groups in organic chemistry

31. More pleasant-tast-ing

32. Spring forward

33. Noted writer

34. Building occupied by monks

39. “The world’s most famous arena”

42. Colorless liquid hydrocarbon

44. Long or fast speech

46. Things you can eat

47. Substance in which magnetic moments are not aligned

49. Actor Idris

50. I (German)

51. Taxes

56. Indonesian island

57. Nuisance (slang)

58. Shawl

59. Digits

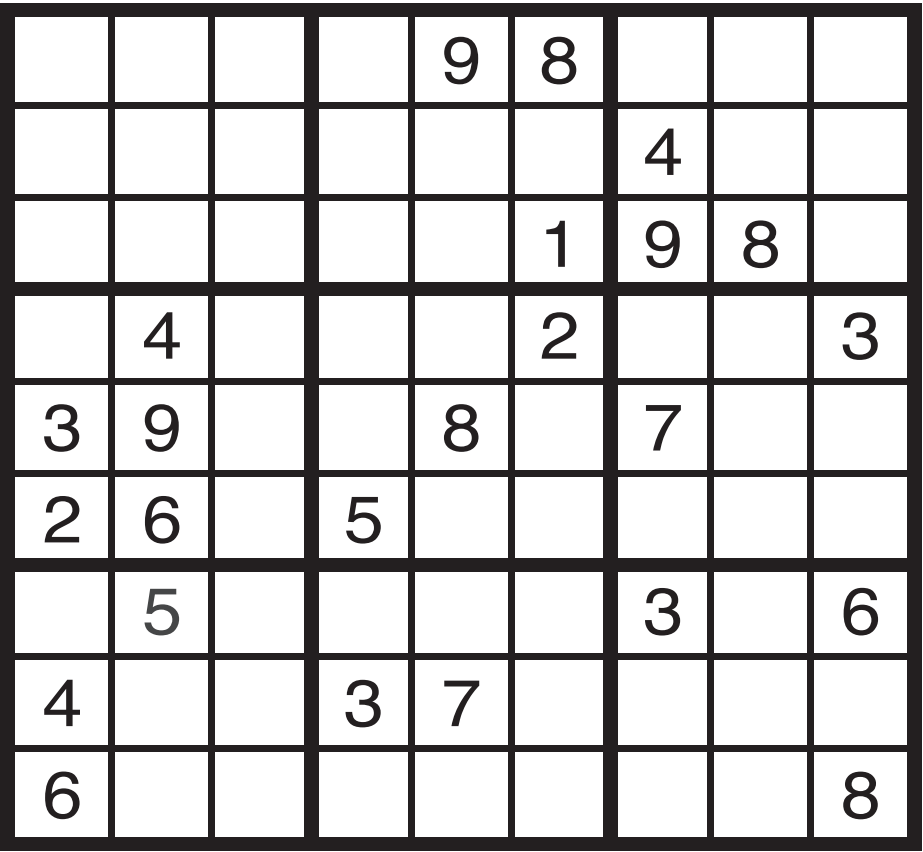
60. Moved on foot quickly

61. “For goodness \_\_”

62. Facial body part

63. Russian river

64. Urinates



## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to skating.

R L L R E O

## FUN FACT

Book Fact: Having sold more than 600 million copies worldwide, this book series is the best-selling in history.

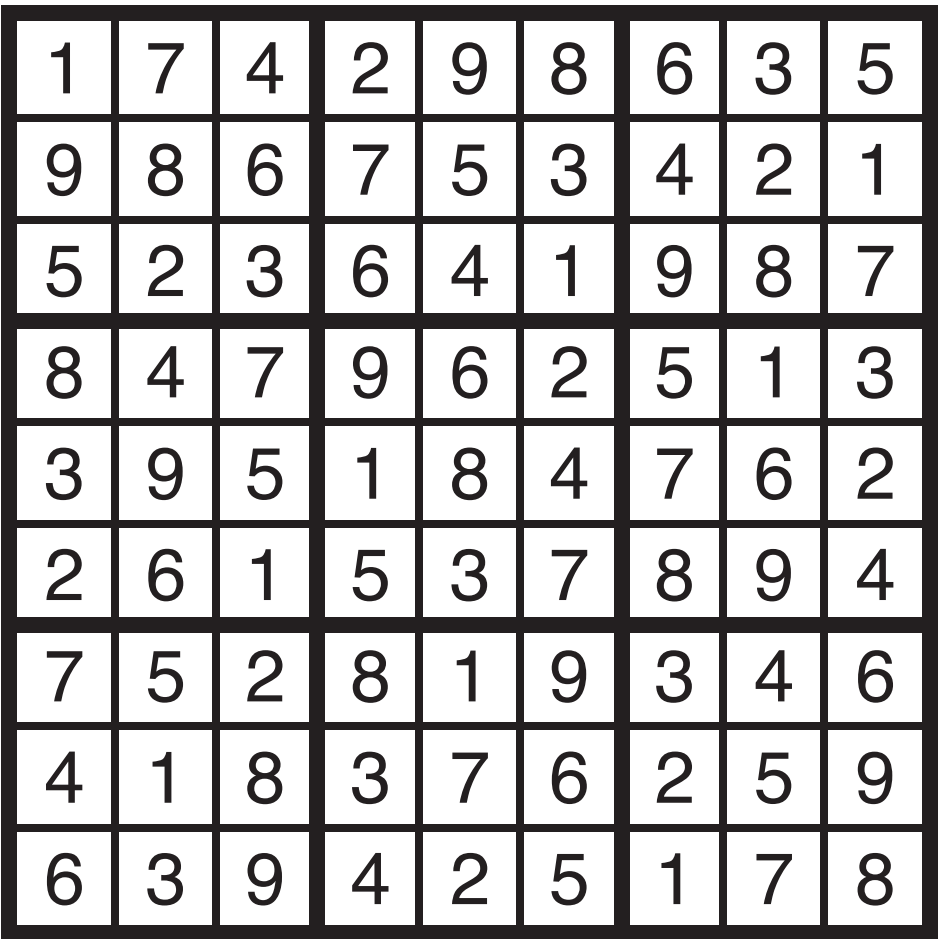


« « «

DON'T PEEK!

» » »

GAME ANSWERS BELOW





# Suspect arrested and stolen property recovered by CCSO



**BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY**  
mtscreporter@gmail.com

The Clarendon County Sheriff’s Office reported the arrest of a suspect and the recovery of stolen property in separate cases last month.

Jose Farguharson, 31, was apprehended on charges of identity fraud, criminal conspiracy, and obtaining goods under false pretenses. The arrest followed an investigation led by Investigator Ardis. Farguharson

was previously listed as wanted and is now in custody as the investigation continues.

In an unrelated incident, two stolen Seadoo RXT jet skis and a dual trailer were recovered after being reported stolen on November 29, 2024, from a residence in the Summerton area. The jet skis, described as green and red, were located through investigative efforts. Authorities thanked the community for their assistance in the case.

The Sheriff’s Office encourages anyone with further information related to these or other cases to contact the tip line at 803-433-8477.

Sheriff Timothy Baxley praised the efforts of law enforcement officers and reiterated the department’s commitment to safeguarding the community. For more updates, go to [www.clarendon-sheriff.org](http://www.clarendon-sheriff.org) or visit their Facebook page.

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# CHURCH DIRECTORY

Alcolu Church of God of Prophecy - Alderman Camp Rd.
Andrews Chapel United Methodist Church - Panola.
Antioch Baptist Church - Jordan.
Antioch RMUE Church - Pinewood.
Apostolic Revival Center - Manning.
Bethlehem Methodist Church - Davis Station.
Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church - Summerton.
Biggers AME Church - S.C. 261 East, Manning.
Briggs Chapel Missionary Baptist Church - Summerton.
Christ Tabernacle FWG Ministry - Summerton.
Church of God by Faith - Davis Station.
The Church of God Prophecy - Alcolu.
The Church of God of Prophecy - Home Branch
Clarendon Baptist Church - Alcolu.
Community Deliverance Temple - U.S. 301 North.
Congregation Temple Bethel - S.C. 261 East, Manning.
Cornerstone Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church - 2116 Greeleyville Highway., Manning.
Cross Roads Bible Fellowship - 5546 Paxville Hwy Manning
Cypress Fork Freewill Baptist Church - Cypress Forks community.
Deep Creek Pentecostal Holiness Church - Bloomville Highway.
Deliverance Ministries - Summerton.
Ebenezer Baptist Church - 105 Dinkins St., Manning.
Elizabeth Missionary Bapt. Church - U.S. 301 South, Box 748, Manning.
Emmanuel Baptist Church - 1794 Old Georgetown Road, Manning.
Faith Center - Rev. J. W. Carter Road, P.O. Box 233, Manning.
Fellowship of Praise - 8280 Old No. 6 Highway, Santee.
First Assembly of God - 3574 Hwy 260/Lake Road.
First Baptist Church - 49 West Boyce Street, Manning.
First Servant's Church - 6 Keitt St., Manning.
Fourth Crossroads Baptist Church - Off Highway 261.
Friendship AME Church - Silver Community
Friendship Presbyterian Church USA - 10123 Black River Rd., New Zion.
Global Harvest Church - Hwy 521 North.
Good Shepherd Baptist Church - 1891 Oak Grove Church Rd.
Goodwill Freewill Baptist Church - 1329 Goodwill Church Rd. Manning.
Grace Christian Fellowship Church - Raccoon Road, Manning.
Grace Gospel Church - Summerton. Rev. A.N. Adrans.
Grace Missionary Baptist Church - 7 E. Keitt Street, Manning.
Great Commission Ministries - 1631 Trinity Church Rd. I-95 & Highway 301, Alcolu.
Greater Union Cypress AME Church
Green Hill Baptist Church - Alcolu.
Hickory Grove Missionary Baptist Church - 1158 Driggers Rd., Manning.
Hickory Grove Baptist Church - Turbeville.
Home Branch Baptist Church - Manning.
Home Branch Church of God of Prophecy - 2211 Connor Road.
Holy Rock Holiness Church - Foreston.
Hope Lutheran Church - American Legion, Manning.
Horse Branch Freewill Baptist Church - Turbeville.
House of God - 119 W Huggins St., Manning.
Howard Chapel AME Church - New Zion.
Israelite Holy Temple Outreach Ministry - 125 W. Huggins St., Manning.
Jehovah Jireh Outreach - P.O. Box 13, Manning.
Jordan Methodist Church - Highway 260, Jordan.
Lake Marion Baptist Church - Off Hwy 301, North Santee.
Laurel Hill AME Church - 2032 M.W. Rickenbaker Road. Summerton
Liberty Hill AME Church - Summerton.
Liberty Free Will Baptist Church - 2761 Liberty Church Rd., Manning.
Lighthill Baptist Church - Manning.
Little Star Pentecostal Holiness Church - Juneburn Road, Manning.
Macedonia FBH Church - Silver.
Macedonia Church of God by Faith, Inc. - 26 Mazyck St., Summerton.
Manning Baptist Temple - Raccoon Road at I-95 and Highway 261.
Manning Church of Christ - 311 E. Keitt St., Manning.
Manning Deliverance Temple - (Apostolic Denomination) 6422 June Burn Rd, Manning.
Manning Progressive Church of Jesus - Hwy. 521, Manning.

Manning United Methodist Church - 17 E. Rigby Street.
Maranatha Pentecostal Holiness Church - Horse Branch Road, Turbeville.
Maranatha Seventh Day Adventist Church - 314 W. Huggins St., Manning.
The Master's Place - 7 S. Church Street, Manning.
McKenzie Tabernacle Church - New Zion.
Melina Presbyterian Church - Sardinia.
Mt. Calvary FBH Church - Boyce Street, Manning.
Mt. Carmel United Freewill Baptist Church - 207 Reardon St., Manning.
Mt. Chapel Baptist Church - Hwy. 260, Manning.
Mt. Hope FBH Church - Pinewood.
Mt. Nebo Baptist Church - Plowden Road.
Mt. Pleasant Union Methodist Episcopal Church.
Mt. Zero Baptist Church - S.C. 261, Paxville.
Historic Mt. Zion AME Church - Potato Creek Road.
New Bethel Holiness Church - Davis Crossroad, 1287 Starks Drive, Summerton.
New Covenant Holiness Church - 3699 Alex Harvin Highway, Manning.
New Covenant Presbyterian Church - U.S. 301 South, Manning.
New Harmony Presbyterian Church - New Harmony Church Road, Alcolu.
New Hope AME Church - Pinewood.
New Light Baptist Church - Davis Station.
New Start Community Church of the Nazarene - 4686 J.W. Rames Rd, Manning.
New Town Freewill Baptist Church - West Turbeville Highway, Lake City.
New Zion Church - Salem Road, New Zion.
Oak Grove Baptist Church
Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church - 2529 Raccoon Road, Manning -
Paxville Baptist Church - S.C. 261 Paxville.
Paxville United Methodist Church - S.C. 261 Paxville.
Pine Dale Pentecostal Holiness Church - Turbeville.
Pine Grove AME Church - 7779 Kenwood Rd.
Pine Grove Church - Turbeville, SC
Prayer House Mission Church - Davis Crossroads, Summerton.
The Presbyterian Church - North Brooks Street, Manning, Dr.
Providence AME Church - Mallet Road, Manning.
Providence Christian Church - Dozier Mallet Road, Manning.
Restoration Ministries Church of God - Manning.
Rock Hill Baptist Church - Old Georgetown Road, Manning.
Santee AME Church - Dingle Pond Road, Summerton.
Santee Baptist Church - Hwy. 260, Manning.
Sardinia Presbyterian Church - Sardinia.
Seacoast Manning - Weldon Auditorium.
Second Baptist Church - Alfred Henry Drive, Manning.
Shiloh AME Church - Foreston.
Society Hill AME Church - 1030 Morella Road, Manning.
Spring Hill AME Church -
St. James AME Church -
St. Luke Baptist Church - Foreston.
St. Mark AME Church - First Street, Summerton.
St. Mary's Catholic Church - N. Cantey St., Summerton.
St. Matthias Anglican Church - North Duke at Canty, Summerton.
St. Paul Holiness Church - St. Paul.
St. Peter AME - Rimini.
St. Philip RMUE - Old River Road, Pinewood.
Summerton Baptist Church - East Main Street.
Summerton Presbyterian Church - 16 South Canty Street.
Summerton Southern Methodist Church
Summerton United Methodist Church - Corner of S. Church St. and Briggs St.
Taw Caw Baptist Church - Summerton.
Trinity AME Church - 39 W. Rigby Street, Manning.
Trinity Church - U.S. 301, Alcolu.
Triumph The Church Kingdom of God in Christ - Davis Station.
Truckers' Christian Chapel - TA Travel Center, I-95, Exit 119.
True Way Holiness Church, Highway 521 in Alcolu
Turbeville First Baptist Church - 1020 Morris Street, Turbeville.
Turbeville Southern Methodist Church - Turbeville.
Union Community Christian Church - Nesbitt Rd.
Wyboo Community Church - 12135 Highway 260, Manning.



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BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL

MAKE IT NINE IN A ROW FOR MANNING

Manning had already won eight in a row (a stretch where they outscored their opponents by an average of 15.6 points) and they went ahead and made it nine on Tuesday. They secured a 57-53 W over the Mullins Auctioneers. The victory was all the more spectacular given the Monarchs' disadvantage in MaxPreps' South Carolina basketball rankings (they are ranked 100th, while the Auctioneers are ranked 26th).

Leading Manning to victory were Taivon Carter and Lovell Stevenson. Carter went 7 for 12 on his way to 17 points in addition to seven boards and four blocks, while Stevenson dropped a double-double on 16 points and 14 boards. That's the most points Stevenson has posted since back in January of 2024. The team also got some help courtesy of Lovon Stevenson, who posted eight points and seven rebounds.

Manning smashed the offensive glass and finished the game with 16 offensive boards. They easily outclassed their opponents in that department as Mullins only pulled down nine offensive rebounds.

Despite the loss, Mullins saw an underclassman step up: sophomore Dakarai Worley dropped a double-double on 29 points and 13 boards. Those 29 points set a new season-high mark for Worley. Another player making a difference was Deyon Ford, who put up 16 points and six assists.

Manning's win was their sixth straight at home dating back to last season, which pushed their record up to 9-2. Those victories came thanks to their offensive performance across that stretch, as they averaged 60.2 points per game. As for Mullins, with the defeat, they broke their eight-game winning streak and moved their record to 12-2.

Both teams are looking forward to the support of their home crowds in their upcoming games. Manning will square off against Atlantic Collegiate Academy at 7:30 p.m. on Friday. Atlantic Collegiate Academy is strutting in with some offensive muscle as they've averaged 62.5 points per game this season. As for Mullins, they will challenge East Clarendon at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday.

BRANCHVILLE NIPS SCOTT'S BRANCH

The crowd at Thursday's league challenge between the Branchville Yellow Jackets (Branchville, SC) and the host Scott's Branch Eagles (Summerton, SC), observed Branchville's basketball team edge Scott's Branch by a margin of 64-61.

The Yellow Jackets (4-6) will now prepare for their challenge against Military Magnet Academy (North Charleston, SC). The Eagles come into the A Region 5 challenge with a 5-11 record. In their last challenge, Military Magnet Academy was tipped by Bethune-Bowman (Orangeburg, SC), 70-48, in a league challenge.

In their next game, the Eagles battle the St. John's Islanders (John's Island, SC) in a A Region 5 challenge, on Tuesday, January 14. Scott's Branch will attempt to better on its 4-10 season record. The Islanders come into the challenge with a 1-12 record after their 73-31 league loss to Baptist Hill (Hollywood, SC).

EAST CLARENDON TAKES A LOSS

East Clarendon was not able to break out of their rough patch on Thursday as the team picked up their fifth straight defeat. They lost 66-42 to the Mullins Auctioneers. The Wolverines were up 42-23 in the first quarter but couldn't hold on to the lead.

Mullins found their leader in sophomore Dakarai Worley, who went 8 of 14 on his way to 18 points along with eight boards and five assists. Worley is also on a roll when it comes to steals, as he's now grabbed two or more in the last 13 games he's played. Amir Lee was another key player, putting up six points along with 11 boards and four steals.

East Clarendon's loss dropped their record down to 5-9. As for Mullins, they have been performing incredibly well recently as they've won nine of their last ten contests, which provided a nice bump to their 13-2 record this season.

East Clarendon will look to defend their home court on Tuesday against Atlantic Collegiate Academy at 7:30 p.m. As for Mullins, they will head out to take on Kingstree at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday. Mullins

is strutting in with some offensive muscle as they've averaged 63.5 points per game this season.

LAURENCE MANNING ACADEMY TAKES A LOSS

Laurence Manning Academy played a tough match-up on Tuesday in which they were outscored in every quarter. They lost 60-35 to the Pinewood Prep Panthers. The Swampcats haven't had much luck with the Panthers recently, as the team's come up short the last five times they've met.

It was another big night for Jayden Alexander, who went 6 of 11 from beyond the arc on his way to 28 points and four steals for Pinewood Prep. Alexander has been hot for a while, having posted two or more steals the last nine times he's played. The team also got some help courtesy of Tre Green, who went 6 of 12 on his way to 15 points and seven rebounds.

Laurence Manning Academy's loss dropped their record down to 6-8. As for Pinewood Prep, the victory (which was their fourth in a row) raised their record to 12-5.

Laurence Manning Academy and Camden Military will face off at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday without much rest having both just played. As for Pinewood Prep, they will look to defend their home court on Friday against First Baptist School at 7:30 p.m.

Pinewood Prep is facing First Baptist School at the right time seeing as First Baptist School is stuck on a seven-game losing streak.

CLARENDON HALL COMES UP SHORT

Clarendon Hall was not able to break out of their rough patch on Thursday as the team picked up their sixth straight defeat dating back to last season. They took a blow against the Holly Hill Academy Raiders, falling 71-43. One positive for the Saints, at least, is that this was the most points they've scored all season.

Clarendon Hall's loss dropped their record down to 0-5. As for Holly Hill Academy, the victory snapped their losing streak at five games and leaves them with a 3-5 record.

Clarendon Hall will take on Lee Academy at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday. As for Holly Hill Academy, they will face off against Calhoun Academy at 7:15 p.m. on Monday.

GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL

MULLINS CAN'T HOLD OFF MANNING

Manning Monarchs (Manning, SC) supporters left the game satisfied Tuesday as they witnessed their basketball squad nudge the visiting Mullins Auctioneers (Mullins, SC), 56-55 in a league match.

With the victory, Manning advances its record to 5-8 on the year. The Monarchs host Atlantic Collegiate Academy (Conway, SC) to face the Armada in a AA Region 7 match on Friday, January 10. The Armada enter the match with a record of 2-9. Atlantic Collegiate Academy lost 43-40 in their recent league match against Lake City (Lake City, SC)

The Auctioneers now own a 4-3 record. They put it on the line next when they host East Clarendon for a AA Region 7 match on Friday, January 10. Mullins will face a Wolverines squad coming off a 45-38 league loss to Kingstree (Kingstree, SC). The Wolverines record now stands at 2-6.

SCOTT'S BRANCH'S LUCK CHANGES FOR THE BETTER

After having lost a blowout in their previous game against Crestwood, Scott's Branch was happy to have turned things around on Friday. They walked away with a 39-27 win over the Williamsburg Academy Stallions. That looming 39-27 mark stands out as the most commanding margin for the Eagles yet this season.

Despite the loss, Williamsburg Academy still got an impressive performance from Audrey Wadford, who posted 11 points. Trystan Burrows was another key player, putting up six points.

Scott's Branch moved to 4-6 with that victory, which also ended their five-game losing streak. As for Williamsburg Academy, they are on a seven-game losing streak that has dropped them down to 1-8.

Scott's Branch has already played their next contest, a 42-41 win against Dillon on the 28th. As for Williamsburg Academy, they also didn't take long to hit the court again: they've already played their next match-up, a 45-33 defeat against Manning on the 28th.

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# BRAVO Education Foundation Empowers Clarendon Teachers

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY  
mtscreporter@gmail.com

Born from an extraordinary act of friendship and fueled by a passion for education, the BRAVO Education Foundation is making waves in Clarendon County schools by empowering teachers to dream big and innovate in their classrooms.

The foundation was established in September 2023 by retired special educator Maureen Calvo, who saw the need to support teachers with funding for projects that traditional budgets could not cover. “We want to encourage teachers to bring something new into the classroom. We want to hold them to that standard and bring the best we can to our kids in the classroom,” said Calvo.

The idea for the foundation took root when Calvo’s longtime friend, Barbara Bradley, a retired speech and language therapist, gave her a monetary gift during the summer of 2023. Bradley’s generosity, an expression of gratitude for their 40-year friendship, provided the seed money to bring Calvo’s dream to life. “That day, I was overcome with emotion,” Calvo said. “It was the sign I had been praying for—a way to make a meaningful, long-term contribution to my community and its schools.”

In its inaugural grant cycle, BRAVO awarded \$11,900 to teachers across Clarendon County, funding innovative projects aimed at enhancing student learning. These

Teacher Innovation Grants have supported a range of initiatives that reflect the foundation’s mission to foster creativity and engagement in the classroom. One recipient, Willette Sheard of Dr. Rose H. Wilder Elementary School, used the grant to guide her first-grade students in creating interactive e-books. “The project involves writing, illustrating, and publishing their own interactive e-books on topics they are passionate about,” Sheard said in her application. “It fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and technical proficiency.”

At Manning Elementary School, fifth-grade teacher Terri Harrelson implemented STEAM-based lessons using Ozobot Evo robots. “These lessons promote collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity,” Harrelson explained.

High school teachers have also benefited from BRAVO’s support. Manning High School’s Lori Johnson used her grant to purchase new PE gear, including pedometers, to motivate students to engage in physical exercise. “Students are more excited to participate when they have choices that match their interests and ability levels,” Johnson said.

These projects illustrate the diverse and creative ways teachers are using BRAVO grants to make a difference. “It’s not just about funding,” Calvo emphasized. “It’s about inspiring teachers to think outside the box and create meaningful learning experiences for their students.”

BRAVO also offers Service-Learning Grants, designed to connect classroom content with community service projects. While no applications for these grants have been received yet, Calvo sees great potential for student-led initiatives that extend learning beyond the classroom.

“Service-learning is about engaging students socially, civically, and academically,” she said. “It begins in the classroom and moves into the community, creating high-quality learning experiences.”

Calvo hopes to raise awareness about these grants, particularly among teachers and students interested in community-based projects. Earlier this year, BRAVO received a \$50,000 State Appropriations Grant, a significant milestone for the young foundation. “This funding is exciting because it allows us to expand our reach and support more teachers,” said Calvo.

While grateful for the state funding, Calvo emphasized the importance of building long-term sustainability through private donations and business sponsorships. “Our goal is not to be subsidized by state grant funding,” she said. “It’s really the kind of thing that is a community-based effort. The way these are usually designed, they are grown through community support, through businesses, and other past foundations.”

BRAVO is actively seeking partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and individuals who share its vision of empowering teachers and enriching education. “The ability to serve all schools, including private institutions, depends on donations from the local community,” Calvo explained.

Since moving to Clarendon County in 2020, Calvo and her husband, Jose, have worked to integrate themselves into the community. “It’s not about coming in and changing things to suit your needs,” Calvo said. “It’s about learning the community, respecting its rich history, and finding ways to enhance what’s already here.”

Calvo has joined the Clarendon County Chamber of Commerce and attended local festivals like DuckFest, where BRAVO hosted informational booths to raise awareness.

The foundation plans to have a presence at future events, including the Striped Bass Festival, to connect with more community members.

“We’re trying to build authentic, collaborative, and transparent relationships with the schools and the community,” Calvo said. “You don’t do that without conversations and trust.”

As BRAVO prepares to launch its next grant cycle in March 2025, Calvo is focused on securing additional funding and increasing the foundation’s board membership.

“We’re looking for board members who are passionate about education and committed to supporting teachers,” she said. “It’s about building partnerships and relationships to sustain this foundation for the future.”

Calvo encourages businesses and individuals to invest in BRAVO’s mission, emphasizing the long-term benefits for the community. “This isn’t just an investment in teachers. It’s an investment in our kids, and our kids are the future of this county,” she said.

Applications for BRAVO’s 2025-26 Teacher Innovation and Service-Learning Grants will open on March 15 and close on May 31. The foundation hopes to receive a strong response from educators eager to bring innovative ideas to life.

“We want teachers to know that we’re here to support them,” Calvo said. “If they have a vision for something that will enhance their students’ learning experience, we want to help make it happen.”

To learn more about the BRAVO Education Foundation, visit their website at [braveeducationfoundation.org](http://braveeducationfoundation.org) or follow them on Facebook. Those interested in supporting the foundation through donations or sponsorships are encouraged to get in touch.

ROTARY

# Manning club kicks off their new year



MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY / TIMES

**ROTARY.** Eliana Jenkinson of Well Watered Ministries speaks during the Manning Rotary Club’s first meeting of the year.

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY  
mtscreporter@gmail.com

The Manning Rotary Club held its first meeting of 2025 on January 8, after a two-week break for the holidays. Members were inspired by guest speaker Eliana Jenkinson, founder and director of Well Watered Ministries in Summerton, who shared her journey of transforming personal hardship into a mission of service for families

in need.

Jenkinson recounted how her daughter’s battle with late-stage Lyme disease motivated her to create the nonprofit organization, which provides critical resources to families through referrals from the Department of Social Services, local churches, and schools.

She highlighted the organization’s free boutique, The Well, which offers clothing and essentials to children in

foster and kinship care, as well as their plans for future initiatives like temporary housing for families.

“Everything we do is about sharing the love of Jesus and helping people feel valued,”

Jenkinson said. “It’s been an amazing journey so far, and I can’t wait to see where it goes.”

The Manning Rotary Club also provided updates on its current community service projects. John Place’s is continuing its shoe drive through January 31, collecting new and gently used shoes for those in need. Donation boxes can be found at their building at 16 N. Brooks Street, as well as at Clarendon Behavioral Health and Manning United

Methodist Church.

In addition, The Manning Times is partnering with Manning Junior High School and Manning High School’s FFA teachers and students for a canned goods competition. The friendly rivalry aims to collect the most donations to benefit at least three organizations in Clarendon County. More details, including drop-off locations and collection dates, will be announced soon.

The club is also excited to announce the creation of its official Facebook page. Residents are encouraged to follow the Manning Rotary Club on Facebook to stay informed about club news, upcoming events, and community initiatives.

Club President Johnson James expressed gratitude for the dedication and energy members bring to these initiatives. “Starting the year with such an inspiring presentation and opportunities to give back reminds us of what Rotary is all about—service above self,” James said.

For more information about the Manning Rotary Club and its activities, visit their new Facebook page or contact the club directly.




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# Thank You Clarendon County



To the people of Clarendon County,

I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who placed their trust in me to continue leading as your Sheriff. Serving this community has been one of the greatest honors of my life, and I truly love what I do.

We've come a long way together since 2017, and I'm proud of the progress we've made as a team. None of this would be possible without the dedicated men and women of the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office and the support of the wonderful people in this county. I promise to continue serving with the same dedication and integrity that guided my first term. I will always strive to do what's best for the people of this county and what's right by God.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to lead and for allowing me to serve this community that I hold so dear.



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