

The Manning Times

• LIFE STORY

Live like you are dying

BY LEIGH ANN MAYNARD & MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY



If given the chance to live like you were dying, what would you do with your time? If you were told you had three to six weeks left on Earth, who would you spend your days with?

For beloved basketball coach and lifelong mentor Andy McLeod, these questions are no longer hypothetical.

McLeod, a Manning native, has spent his life dedicated to coaching and mentoring young athletes. His journey began early, fueled by a love for basketball and a work ethic that set him apart. From childhood games on the court to leading teams from the sidelines, he has never strayed far from the sport that shaped him. His career took him across South Carolina, where he built programs, mentored athletes, and formed lifelong friendships. His impact extends beyond wins and championships. His legacy is the players he guided, the friendships he built, and the lessons he instilled.

Now, McLeod faces the toughest opponent of his life. Diagnosed with renal cell carcinoma, he has made the decision to forgo aggressive chemotherapy and instead focus on living fully, surrounded by the people he loves. He refuses to be defined by illness or to let his final days be consumed by grief. Instead, he continues to do what he has always done: lead by example, show up for others, and embrace every moment with strength and humor.

This is the story of a coach, a mentor, a husband, a friend. A man who, even in the face of a terminal diagnosis, refuses to sit on the sidelines. A man who is choosing to live like he is dying.

A life on the court
Close friend and mentor Bill Brewer has known McLeod since childhood and saw his potential early.

“I could tell as a little boy Andy was going to be tall, but in the 12th grade, he was a grown man. He’s about six feet, five inches and was as good as any player I had seen,” Brewer said. “When he was a little boy, he was so little. But he wanted to be a basketball player, and let me tell you, he worked like the devil to be a player.”

McLeod played football and basketball at Laurence Manning Academy (LMA), excelling on state championship teams in both sports. He continued his basketball career at Newberry College, where he played for three years before shifting his focus to academics. After graduating in 1993 with a degree in history, McLeod returned to LMA to begin his coaching career at just 21 years old.

“I stayed two years but kind of felt that I would always be seen as the former student. I felt the need to establish myself as a coach,” McLeod said.

He moved on to Williamsburg Academy, where he coached for six years, ultimately serving as athletic director and varsity football coach before settling into his passion: basketball.

“My years at Williamsburg are so memorable. It helped me establish my coaching and teaching careers,” McLeod said. “I became ‘Coach Andy’ and not a former champ or student. I met so many good friends through coaching, and we are still friends to this day, 30 years later. It’s been an amazing journey.”

McLeod continued his coaching career at Huggens Academy until it closed, prompting his return to LMA. He later spent eight years at Holly Hill Academy, all the while making an impact on the lives of young athletes.

A life well-loved
More than anything, McLeod’s life has been defined by deep friendships, strong family ties, and unwavering loyalty. He has spent the past few days back in Manning, surrounded by the people who have shaped his life.

“If anything happens, if things go south, I want to be in Manning. This is where my

family is,” he said.

McLeod has found comfort in re-connecting with old friends and reliving memories.

“It’s been wonderful sitting around telling old stories,” he said. “[My friends and I] haven’t talked about the diagnosis, we haven’t talked about the disease. We’ve just talked and caught back up. A lot of them, I haven’t seen in so long. I know they care. They are worried, they are praying about it, but it’s not something we discuss when they visit. We just talk.”

To his closest friends, he is more than a coach or a mentor. He is family.

“He is my brother, he is my best friend,” said fellow coach and lifelong friend Will Epps. “When I was in seventh and eighth grade, I would be watching Andy play basketball. I looked up to him, he was who I wanted to be. I even wanted to wear his number when I played. After college, we just became best friends. He is the most loyal friend I have ever had. In life, if you are lucky enough to have one true friend, you are truly lucky. He is my one true friend.”

Epps recalled a moment from their youth that solidified their bond.

“He’s a competitor and the most brilliant coach, as smart as any coach I’ve met. He is someone I have always held in high regard in life,” Epps said. “I remember one Thanksgiving when I was 21 years old. I wrecked a soybean truck, spilling soybeans everywhere. Andy was the friend that left his Thanksgiving dinner to come help me literally pick soybeans up out of the road.”

Childhood friend Ron Lee remembers the McLeod home as a second home for him.

“I’m pretty sure Mr. Pete and Ms. Susie took extra jobs to keep us fed with mini pizzas, ice cream cups, and drinks,” Lee said. “We spent hours on end playing what Andy referred to as ‘option boption’ on the trampoline. This was where Mark Sexton and myself got crushed by Andy as he tackled the ball carrier. Of course, Andy

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• CRIME

Manning man charged with arson, desecration of remains

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

A Manning man has been charged with arson and desecration of human remains following the discovery of a body inside a burning car in Sumter late last year.

John Elliot Dingle, 27, turned himself in to authorities Tuesday

after police issued warrants for his arrest last week, according to the Sumter Police Department. Dingle was booked at the county detention center, where bond was set at \$50,000 surety with location monitoring.

Investigators determined that Willis Samuel Jr., 67, also of Manning, was already dead before the vehicle was set ablaze behind

the Eastwood Park apartment complex on Boulevard Road. Emergency responders were dispatched to the scene just before 2:20 a.m. on Dec. 31 after receiving reports of a car fire.

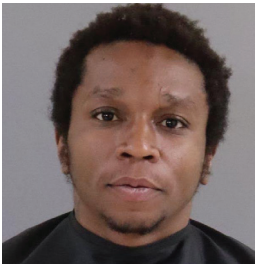
Authorities have not yet determined the manner of Samuel’s death. Further autopsy results are pending.

The Sumter Police Department

is working with the Clarendon County Sheriff’s Office, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Sumter County Coroner’s Office to investigate the circumstances surrounding Samuel’s death.

No additional details have been released at this time.

For updates, visit sumterpd.com.



JOHN ELLIOT DINGLE

• BLACK HISTORY MONTH

KEVIN JOHNSON: A LEGACY OF SERVICE, FAITH, AND LEADERSHIP

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

For over three decades, Kevin Johnson has been a pillar of leadership in Clarendon County and beyond. From his humble beginnings as a self-described “military brat” to his tenure as Mayor of Manning, South Carolina State Representative, and State Senator, Johnson’s career has been defined by service, integrity, and a deep commitment to his community. His story is not just one of political success but of faith, family, and a passion for uplifting others.

Rooted in service
Born into a military family, Johnson spent his early years moving from state to state, gaining a diverse perspective that would shape his future in leadership. His father served in the U.S. Army for 21 years, instilling discipline and resilience, while his mother’s generosity and dedication to helping others became the



cornerstone of his approach to public service.

“I grew up in a family where doing for others and helping wherever we could help was expected. It was the norm,” Johnson recalled.

From an early age, he was taught the value of hard work, honesty, and education. These principles would guide him through a career marked by dedication and an unwavering commitment to his constituents.

A family that stands together
Public service often demands long hours and difficult decisions, but Johnson credits his family for providing unwavering support throughout his career.

His wife, Gloria “Bee” Johnson, has been his steadfast partner for over 50 years. “She may not be seen openly, but she has always been working hard on behalf of our family and our community,” he said.

Together, they raised three children,

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• FIRST RESPONDERS

Three Summerton police officers resign, Chief to retire

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

Three officers from the Summerton Police Department have resigned, and Police Chief Donell Dixon has announced his upcoming retirement, effective April 18, 2025, according to information shared following the Feb. 11 Town Council meeting.

Mayor Keith Bowman stated that the resignations were not unexpected.

“It did not come as a surprise being that I, along with council, sat with each of these officers prior, and they informed us of their reasons for resigning,” Bowman said.

Regarding Chief Dixon’s retirement, Bowman clarified that the decision was unrelated to the resignations or any issues within the town.

“His decision was based on a personal matter,” Bowman said. “All of these officers expressed that this was not a town-related matter, and we wish them well on their future endeavors.”

Town officials have assured residents that the Summerton Police Department remains operational despite the resignations. Despite the town announcing the resignations on the same day, the officers had resigned throughout the month of

February. They left as of the following dates: Officer A on Feb. 11, Officer B on Feb. 25, and Officer C on Feb. 28.

To address the vacancies, the town has initiated a recruitment campaign and is working with the Clarendon County Sheriff’s Office to provide temporary law enforcement coverage.

“Sheriff Baxley has assured me, as well as council, that he will work with us to provide the needed law enforcement coverage during this transitional process beginning the last of February,” Bowman said. “The town has a very good relationship with our county’s Sheriff’s Department. They have assisted the town before during transitional periods similar to this, and we are extremely grateful for their assistance.”

Despite the staffing changes, Bowman emphasized that public safety remains a priority.

“The citizens of Summerton can rest assured that their safety is our top priority,” he said.

Town officials reiterated that there is “no need to panic” and that the Clarendon County Sheriff’s Office will continue assisting as they have in the past.

This is a developing story. The Manning Times will provide updates as more information becomes available.



Martha
CONYERS

Martha Conyers, 86, widow of Frank Conyers died Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at her residence. She was born September 23, 1938, in Clarendon County, SC. A daughter of the late Henry and Rose Kennedy Snider. Public viewing 2:00PM til 6:00PM Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at Hayes F. Samuels, Sr., Memorial Chapel, Manning, SC.

Celebration of life 12:00 Noon Wednesday, February 19, 2025. At Hayes F. Samuels, Sr., Memorial Chapel, Manning, SC. Burial will follow in Junky Yard Cemetery, Manning, SC.

The family is receiving friends at her residence, 1146 Waynes Drive, Manning SC.



Jackie
“Jack”
Lee
SECOR

Jackie “Jack” Lee Secor, 89, husband of Cena Anne Hodge Secor, died Friday, February 14, 2025, at his home.

Born September 11, 1935, in Los Angeles, CA, he was the son of the late Arthur Emmett Petersen and the late Lily May Abernathy Secor. He was a retired US Air Force veteran of the Vietnam War.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years of Manning; two children, Dean Hodge Secor (Sonya) of Mt. Pleasant and Jackie La Cena Secor (Stephanie) of Columbia; a daughter-in-law, Darla Lee (Adam) of Manning; three grandchildren, Thomas David Secor, Jr. of Sumter, Grace Anne Secor and Brenda Ashleigh Secor, both of Mt. Pleasant; two step grandchildren, Greyson Wessinger and Peyton Wessinger of Columbia; a great grandson, Jack Secor; a great granddaughter, Katie Johnson; several nieces and nephews; and special friends, J.B. Hodge and Sellarhea Jordan.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a son, Thomas David Secor, Sr.; and a grandson, Zachary Douglas Secor.

A funeral service will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 23, 2025, at Providence Baptist Church with the Rev. Dr. Harold Greene officiating. Burial with full military honors will follow in the Secor Family Cemetery, 2590 Old Manning Road, Sumter.

Visitation will be one hour prior to the service from 2 to 3 p.m. at Providence Baptist Church and other times at the residence, 1031 Calico Avenue, Manning.

Memorials may be made to Providence Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, 2445 Old Manning Road, Sumter, SC 29150.

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



Valiane
Gail
GOODMAN

Valiane Gail Goodman, 69, died Saturday, February 15, 2025, at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center, Florence, SC. She was born April 7, 1955, in Clarendon County, SC. A daughter of the late Eva Mae Goodman.

The family is receiving friends at her residence, 1348 Horse Branch Rd. Turbeville, SC.



Lois
Caroline
Pace
SCHMIDT

Lois Caroline Pace “Charley” Schmidt, 72, entered the Pearly Gates and was welcomed by friends, family and Jesus on Thursday, February 13, 2025, at Lake Marion Nursing Facility.

Born June 16, 1952, in Washington, DC, she was the daughter of the late Willard Raye Pace and the late Mildred Virginia Ingram Pace. She was a real estate agent serving Clarendon and Sumter County with seventeen years of service. She was a member of Summertown Baptist Church.

She is survived by a son, Duane Brown (Lynn) of Summertown; two grandchildren, Jackson Pace Brown of Johnsonville and Steven Lavern Brown of Summertown; a great grandson, Aslan Pace Brown; two brothers, Larry Raye Pace (Rose) of Manning and Willard Bob Pace (Karla) of Sumter; and several nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, in the chapel of Stephens Funeral Home with the Rev. Don Witherspoon and the Rev. Billy Carlisle officiating. Burial will follow at Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery in Sumter.

Pallbearers will be Troy Allan, Stan McLeod, Pace Brown, Steven Brown, Josh Griffin and Vince Watkins .

Visitation will be one hour prior to the service from 10 to 11 a.m. at Stephens Funeral Home and other times at the home of her son, 3962 Princess Pond Road, Summertown.

The family would like to thank Lake Marion Nursing Facility, Professional Care of Manning and Glenda Garriss for her love and care the past two years.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Summertown Baptist Church, P.O. Box 100, Summertown, SC 29148.

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



Pamela
“Pam”
Denise
ROGERS

Pamela “Pam” Denise Rogers Brunson, 53, wife of Henry Franklin “Lin” Brunson III, died Wednesday, February 12, 2025.

Born August 14, 1971, in Manning, she was the daughter of Oleta Welch Rogers and the late Carnell Bobby Rogers. She was a member of Alcolu Church of God of Prophecy.

She is survived by her husband of 27 years of Alcolu; her mother of Alcolu; a brother, Chris Rogers (Dean) of Lake View; mother-in-law, Marie T. Brunson of Alcolu; two sisters-in-law, Kathy Cramer (Larry) of Alcolu and Cheryl Blank (Bryan) of Manning; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by her father-in-law, Henry Franklin “Frankie” Brunson, Jr.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday, February 17, 2025, at Pine Dale Pentecostal Holiness Church Cemetery with the Rev. Chris Galloway and the Rev. Elton “Pappy” Hilton officiating.

The family will receive friends immediately following the graveside service and other times at the residence, 3160 Tearcoat Road, Alcolu, SC 29001.

Memorials may be made to Alcolu Church of God of Prophecy, P.O. Box 1322, Alcolu, SC 29001.

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



Jane
Laverne
DYMOND

Jane Laverne Dymond, 88, widow of Howard Lanning Dymond, died Friday, February 14, 2025, at McLeod Hospice House.

Born July 27, 1936, in Indiana, PA, she was the daughter of the late Arthur Clair Lentz and the late Florence B. Doumont Lentz.

She is survived by a brother, Jack Lentz of Pennsylvania; a sister, Joyce Rizzuto (Vito) of New Jersey; a daughter, Deborah “Debbie” Campbell (David) of Alcolu; a son, Gary Dymond (Karen) of Alcolu; four grandchildren, Christopher Dymond (Avril) of Manning, Danielle Campbell (Jacob) of Columbia, Kayla Dymond Brooks (Steven) of Manning and William Campbell (Melody) of Columbia; seven great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

The family would like to thank McLeod Hospice House for above and beyond care given to Mama Jane and the family. A special thank you to Sheryl Miles and Cindy Floyd for helping to care for mom at home.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to McLeod Hospice House, 1203 E. Cheves Street, Florence, SC 29506.

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

• LIVING ON PURPOSE

God always answers our prayers

God’s love and His provision of eternal salvation is the greatest peace and security we could ever hope for. We heard His truth, became convicted, we saw our need for a Savior, and by faith we repented of our sin, and cried out for Him to save us. Second Corinthians assures us that when we receive Jesus as our Lord, our old spirit becomes converted into a brand new creation.

Within this process, we became a child of God and our names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. How do we know this? Because the Bible teaches in many places including John 3:16, that whoever places their trust in God shall be saved. After we repent and are baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit, God’s plan is for us to grow strong in our faith, and become spiritually mature as the goal is to take on His nature and character – to be like Him.



William
HOLLAND

If there comes a time when we intentionally step off the narrow path, we can become what is called lukewarm or backslidden. I sing an old song called, “Your drifting too far from the shore” which is saying the Lord is beckoning for you to come back to Him. Yes, we all sin, but this does not mean we are lost again. The Holy Spirit will always convict God’s children to repent and then lead them back into a right relationship with Him. Remember the passage in Matthew 18:12 where Jesus leaves the ninety-nine to bring the one wayward sheep back into the fold. He loves His children and will never give up on us when we stray.

Romans chapter 6 explains about the transformed life and the dangers of sin after we are born-again. We should be encouraged to know that we cannot be made to disobey God as sin cannot overcome us or hold us captive any longer. Verse 14 says, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: you are no longer under the law, but now under His grace.” Verse 16 makes it clear that if we are drawn back into the darkness of disobedience, it’s because we made the

decision to follow the enemy and turn away from God. “Don’t you realize that you choose your own master? You can embrace sin and death or obedience to God. The one to whom you offer yourself, they will be your master, and you will be their slave. Do you not comprehend that when you yield yourselves to either God or the devil, your behavior reveals the one you truly love?”

The point is that when we sin, we do not need to be saved and baptized again, we simply need to be sorrowful for our rebellion and to repent for how we allowed our carnality to control us and disappoint Him. Sin should make the child of God nauseated and if it does not convict us, that individual has lost their reverential fear of God’s holiness. He is faithful to forgive and restore all those who are sincere. Grace allows us to be reconciled, and rededicate our promises to love and serve Him and be restored in our personal relationship with Him.

First John 1:6-10 reminds us of His willingness to forgive and reconcile us back to Him. Verse nine says, “If we confess our

sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Psalm 51 is a beautiful collection of verses for repentant prayer. Verses 10-12, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and sustain me by your mercy.”

Romans chapter 6 is such an amazing explanation of how a Christian has died to sin and is buried with Christ in His death. Then we are resurrected into a new creation as Christ rose from the dead by the glory of God the Father. Now when God sees us, He sees the righteousness of Christ. Romans 5:1-2 declares, that we have been justified by faith, which gives us joy and peace. May we wake up every morning and ask for an awareness of God’s presence, that we might be focused on Christ and be willing to do His will. Yes, we will be tempted to sin, but we are always given the freedom to choose good or evil.



• MT. HOPE SCROLLS

UFO at Virginia Beach

Dateline: Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA. I'm sitting at a table by a big window in a hotel restaurant. There is an excellent view of the beach and the Atlantic Ocean. It is almost daybreak. The sun is about to pop out of the ocean. The first sliver of orange comes over the horizon and the glory of the sunrise begins. The sun quickly emerges from the ocean and shines brighter and it is hard to look at the light. The sun wins the staring contest and I look away.

It is a beautiful sight. The beach is pretty with only a few birds flying and a lone human walking his dog. My mind shifts gears from watching the beauty of the sunrise to a crazy thought of "What if the earth is flat?"

The beach of Virginia Beach is very wide. The ocean is not making many waves and it is a tranquil scene. The wide beach, flat ocean and the sun makes me think that this looks like the world could be flat looking this way.



If this thing is moving and it really is a UFO, where is it going?

light causing auto kinesis. This cloud does look like it is moving.

Now I know what it is. The cloud is actually some type of UFO. It looks just like a flying saucer that you would see at the beginning of the television show called "The X-Files". Now my mind really jumps in a different direction.

If this thing is moving and it really is a UFO, where is it going? Virginia Beach has all sorts of Navy activity around and a lot of shipbuilding happens near here. Heck, Washington, D.C. is close by also. This could be the start of the invasion. I've gone from the flat earth to an alien invasion and the waitress hasn't even taken my breakfast order.

Now what do I do? The cloud-UFO doesn't appear to be moving now. Certainly it must be a lone cloud and my active imagination just running wild. It sure does look like a UFO though.

The waitress comes by and gets my order and when I look back the UFO has appeared to start moving again. To make matters worse, now there are five more UFOs to be seen looking through a different window. This has to be it. The five UFOs have the same cloud shape but the bottoms have a metallic like ring around it. Is this the sun reflection or some sort of lighting system? I look out another window and don't see anything. There is just the one UFO to be seen through one window and five through the next window. How many of these things are coming to take over the Navy bases and maybe Washington, D.C.?

The sun is higher now and I look for more of the saucer looking clouds and then realize that I'm looking at the reflection of the built in lights in the ceiling of the restaurant. I ask the waitress has she ever seen the funny looking reflections in the window. She thinks they do look like flying saucers. She said she used to be an X-Files fan too.

Breakfast came and I wrote some quick notes before trying to get my brain off of the flat earth and alien space ships. Some other people came in and said the clouds looked like some sort of space ship. I told them that it was the reflection of the restaurant lights and I had thought they were space ship too. Didn't mention anything about the flat earth thought I had first.

They were the ones that thought space ships were coming. No need for them to think I'm some kind of nut.



• OPINION

Letter from the editor

Hello, Clarendon County!
I'm feeling extra grateful today as I reflect on all the things I love about our work, our community, and, most of all, the wonderful people who make it all worthwhile.

Just this weekend, our previous editor, Jake, was married, and as I danced with him alongside our co-workers Leigh Ann and Kat, I was reminded of one of the main reasons I love my job so much: because I get to work with such an amazing group of people. Don't get me wrong, our office is a bit nuts. With only five of us, we do it all. Lending a hand even with tasks we weren't specifically hired for, and always

with minimal complaining. Come by around 5 on any random weekday and you'll hear our contagious laughter and the cheerful echoes of "I love you! Drive safe!" as we head home. We're girl's girls, and it is one of the pure joys of my life to share this journey with these incredible women.

I also want to share my love for being a member of the Manning Rotary Club. It's a fantastic group, and I feel we've all been infused with a renewed sense of energy lately. I often joke about being an unserious person with a very serious job, and in the beginning, sitting with some of those old-school, established businessmen and women was a little intimidating. But I think they've grown to love me as I pass out Valentine's candy and share the corniest dad jokes I can find. That group really has my heart!

And of course, I love you, Clarendon County.

Following county news, politics, and crime can sometimes feel divisive and disheartening. Reporting on this county while living here is no small feat, and I often wish I could just write "good" news, days filled with love and lollipops, but reality isn't always that sweet. Still, I do my best to keep my head down, write the facts, and keep moving forward. Just know that, like you, my dear readers and neighbors, I want nothing but the best for this county.

Thank you for being part of this vibrant community, for supporting local journalism, and for inspiring me everyday. Let's keep celebrating the love, the laughter, and all the wonderful things that make Clarendon County a truly special place.

Warm regards,
Melissa

• POLAND'S VIEW

The forgotten rain porch

A reader and friend, Zilphy DuRant of Florence, South Carolina mailed me a letter and clipping from The Post and Courier about an architectural feature I'd never heard of, rain porches. In the clipping Seth Taylor wrote about the Pee Dee being the "birthplace of a

porch unlike any other." Driving back from Chapel Hill, I saw a road worthy of my ramblings. In one of those life coincidences I came across what appears to be a house with a rain porch on North Carolina Highway 79, which runs through Gibson, North Carolina. Zilphy, by the way, hails from Gibson.

Just a few miles across the South Carolina state line I spotted what seemed a rain porch on an old house missing its porch. Even so, it was obvious that the columns went to the ground and beyond where the porch would be. As Taylor wrote, "The columns aren't attached to the floor; they're freestanding." So were these.

Now I'll admit this so-called rain porch may simply be supports for

ongoing restoration but its columns go straight to the ground and the columns themselves seem as old as the house. This rain porch will do to another one comes along, and it did. Near Cassatt, South Carolina, on old US Highway 1 I found a rain porch off the road a ways. Problem was it looked too modern all bricked up as it was. Cassatt does, however, have a classic rain porch house, the two-story, ca 1820 McCoy house. I aim to find it next time I'm driving old US 1 north of Camden.

Now this "rain porch" is known to some as a "Carolina porch." They came to be in the early 1800s. and enjoyed popularity in the 1800s when such porches enjoyed a bit of fame and fashion. Taylor wrote that they fell out of favor almost as quickly as they caught people's fancy. It's a mysterious thing, this rain porch and how it's restricted to the Pee Dee.

Speculation holds that the porches provided a way to minimize rotting of porch timbers. Perhaps the porch kept gusts of rain from drenching porch sitters when a summer storm blew in. As I wrote several years back, it's a vanishing art, porch sitting. There was a time when folks retired to the porch just to pass the time, and passing the time watching a storm roll in was and

is relaxing for many. The South Carolina Encyclopedia references rain porches. "A sheltered exterior residential living area, the rain porch consists of a roof structure with freestanding supports, in an anterior arrangement to a pier-supported, balustraded deck. This vernacular form typically occurs on houses from ca. 1820 to ca. 1860 in the South Carolina counties located north of the Santee River and east of the Wateree and Catawba Rivers. Isolated examples have also been identified in Berkeley, Chester, Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, and York Counties, as well as in central and eastern North Carolina counties along the South Carolina border."

Whether you've seen a rain porch or not, my guess is you'll be looking for one whenever you're in the aforementioned regions. When you spot one, if you spot one, you'll be witness to a small mystery. Exactly why were these super-sized porches built?

Many thanks to Zilphy DuRant and to The Post and Courier and Seth Taylor. Because of them I will return to Highway 79 and seek other rain porches and more, for Highway 79 seems to be one of those roads where Father Time tarried a while and left stretches untouched by modern ways.

Special Occasion?

Make it even more special with an announcement in The Manning Times!

graduations | births | engagements | weddings | & more!

• COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 22

MAJOR LEAGUE FISHING BFL REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WEIGH-IN AT 3:00 PM

FEBRUARY 25

WORLD SPAY DAY



MARCH 1

FISHERS OF MEN, DISTRICT 3 WEIGH-IN AT 3:00 P.M.

MARCH 2

AMERICAN BASS ANGLERS

MARCH 3-8

NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL FISHING LEAGUE WEIGH-IN AT 3:00 PM

MARCH 15

MAR. 15 - CAROLINA BASS CHALLENGE

The Manning Times

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Deadlines
Classified, Classified Display and Legal Advertising:
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.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE WELCOME

When submitting a letter, please include the writer's name, address, phone number and signature. Please send the letter in Microsoft Word. Letters do not represent in any form the opinion or beliefs of The Manning Times. We reserve the right not to publish letters based on libelous or otherwise obscene material.

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Letters to the Editor » The Manning Times
P.O. Box 190, Manning, SC 29102

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MCLEOD

FROM PAGE 1

supplied the crowd noise to his big hits as well. I'm not sure how no bones got broken. Maybe there were and we just weren't told."

McLeod's friendships have always been built on laughter, shared memories, and unwavering support, but his most cherished relationship is with his wife, Mary.

"We actually went to church together at Emmanuel Baptist as children," McLeod said. "In 2007, we were set up by friends. We had both been married and divorced, and she had two children. It was in God's ultimate plan."

McLeod embraced his role as a stepfather to Brooke and Buddy and later became a grandfather to Mailee Kate.

"Mary is the best thing I have done in my life," McLeod said. "I've lived a life so many people would have loved to have lived."

A diagnosis that changed everything

In 2017, McLeod underwent surgery after being diagnosed with renal cell carcinoma.

"I was diagnosed [with] renal cell carcinoma, kidney cancer. I could go back further, but I really don't want to. The surgery in 2017 was simple," McLeod said.

Mary interjected.

CHARLESTON — Laurence Manning's 36-game winning streak was snapped Saturday when the Swampcats lost 69-52 to First Baptist in Charleston.

"An unprepared team entered that gym," Laurence Manning coach Eddie Talley said. "We beat them three times last year, including the state championship, and they were packed in there waiting for us."

First Baptist jumped out to a 20-11 first-quarter lead, but LMA came back in the second quarter to cut the lead to 35-30 at halftime. In the third quarter, though, First Baptist took control, outscoring the Swampcats 23-7, to take a 58-37 lead into the fourth quarter.

"We didn't handle their press very well," Talley said. "They used a man-to-man the whole game and we just didn't handle the pressure."

Andy McLeod scored 24 points and pulled down 18 rebounds to lead Laurence Manning, which fell to 13-1 overall and 4-1 in conference play. Matt Wilder added 11 points.

Ricky Smith and Robbie Walden led First Baptist with 16 and 14 points, respectively. Chad Elsey added 13 and Scotty Kampmeyer 10.

LMA plays host to Orangeburg Prep Friday.

Andy McLeod
24 points, 18 rebounds

Laurence Manning 52
McLeod 24, Wilder 11, Beaton 7, Lee 7, Ramsey 3, Sexton 1

First Baptist 69
Smith 16, Walden 14, Elsey 13, Kampmeyer 10, Langston 6, Mason 4, Brudisher 3

"Well, he says that, but they removed his entire right kidney. Then the cancer returned in August of 2023."

In December 2024, McLeod underwent surgery to remove remaining cancerous growths that immunotherapy had failed to eliminate. A follow-up scan in January 2025 revealed another strain of cancer.

"They couldn't seem to give me an answer to what could cure this, if anything," McLeod said. "They told me we could try chemotherapy, but it would take the harshest chemotherapy available. At first, I was gung-ho. OK, let's do this, I'm a fighter."

After weeks of research and reflection, McLeod made a decision. "I just decided I don't want to live the rest of my life sick and my family to see me sick," he said. "I want to live out whatever life I have left in my way, in God's way, however He wants me to live it. I don't want to be sick, suffering and my loved ones to see me suffering."

McLeod recalled witnessing his father's suffering with cancer.

"I was unfortunate enough to see my father suffer through cancer at the end. He did not recognize or know anybody the last few days of his life, and I don't want that," he said. "I don't want my family to go through that. I know how hard it is on the family."

Still, McLeod refuses to let his diagnosis define his final days.

"Life's too short, and mine's getting shorter, to just feel sorry for yourself," McLeod said. "My family, my friends, would be so disappointed if that's what I did. They wouldn't accept it. So, this is how I'll live with whatever time I have left. My oncologist is a super good man, but we don't know. Only the Ultimate Physician knows how much time I truly have left."

McLeod is determined to continue living on his own terms.

"I'm not naive enough to think [the doctors] are 100 percent. I know they're not wrong, I've got less time than what I've had, but I'm not going to give up and feel sorry for myself," he said. "I'm going to talk with people, visit with people, laugh with people. When Jimmy Valvano, head coach of basketball at NC State, was dying, he said, 'Think every day, laugh every day, cry every day, and if you do that, you're living a good life.' That is what I am living by."

As he repeated Valvano's words, McLeod's eyes welled up with tears. This was Coach Andy's cry for the day.

A lasting impact on youth sports

Since 2017, McLeod has worked as the athletic director and sports coordinator for the City of Laurens Parks and Recreation Department.

"We were very fortunate that he

kind of fell into our lap," Parks and Recreation Director Jason Pridgen said. "One of the things that was really intriguing about Andy is, and I knew from his experience, that I could leave him in charge of every event that I had. He was wonderful at managing what he had to do."

Despite his illness, the city has continued to provide McLeod with a salary.

"We trusted him for so long to take care of our program," Pridgen said. "It's the least we could do."

Even now, McLeod's mind remains on the program and the young athletes he has dedicated his life to mentoring.

"Yesterday, we talked like we always do, and Andy wanted to know how our Little League sign-ups were going," Pridgen said. "He wanted to know if we had a good turnout, who was coaching, and how the kids were looking. Then, of course, he asked about the [basketball] All-Stars. Who made the team, who's coaching, how they're doing. He's in the fight of his life and he's still thinking about those kids. That tells you everything you need to know about the kind of man he is."

Pridgen recalled a meeting he attended just that morning.

"When I went to our All-Stars meeting and told them about Andy's situation, they couldn't believe it," he said. "He's been going to these meetings himself for the past seven years, building relationships, making sure our kids had every opportunity to succeed. Nobody even knew what he was going through because he never made it about himself."

Even as he faces his toughest opponent yet, McLeod's heart remains with the game and the players who have meant so much to him.

A life without fear

Reflecting on his diagnosis, McLeod remains at peace.

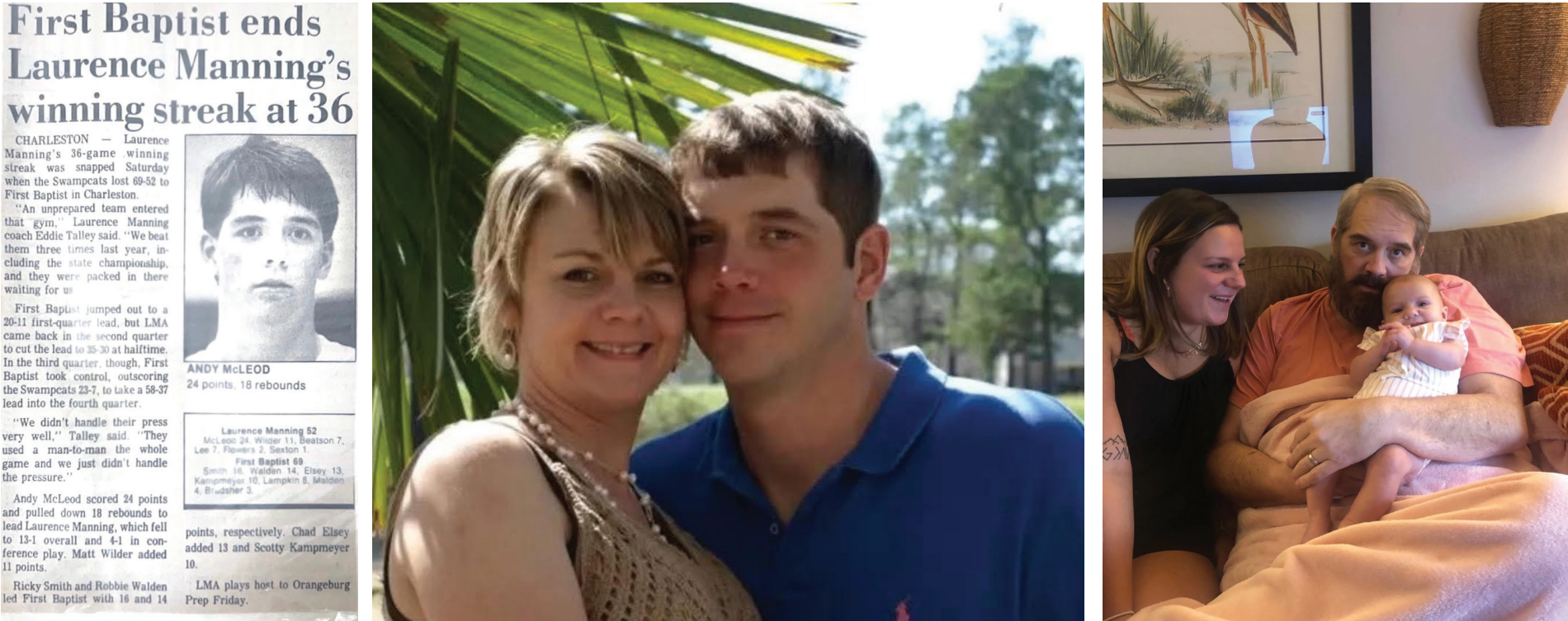
"Mary asked me if I was scared after the diagnosis, and I said no, absolutely not. I'm not afraid to die. I'm afraid of what I'm leaving behind," he said. "My family will be fine, my friends are going to be fine. This doesn't mean I want to leave them, but I'm not scared of dying."

Mary smiled as she recalled a moment that brought laughter into their home.

"Andy has always done the grocery shopping and the cooking. I never had to worry about any of that. When he couldn't do it anymore, I was trying to cook one night, and the kitchen got smokey," she said. "I remember Andy laughing and saying, 'The Lord's not gonna let me die because you will starve.'"

With whatever time he has left, McLeod remains grateful.

"It's been just a wonderful life."



MEMORIES. Clippings and snapshots from Andy McLeod's life. (Photo C/O the McLeod Family)

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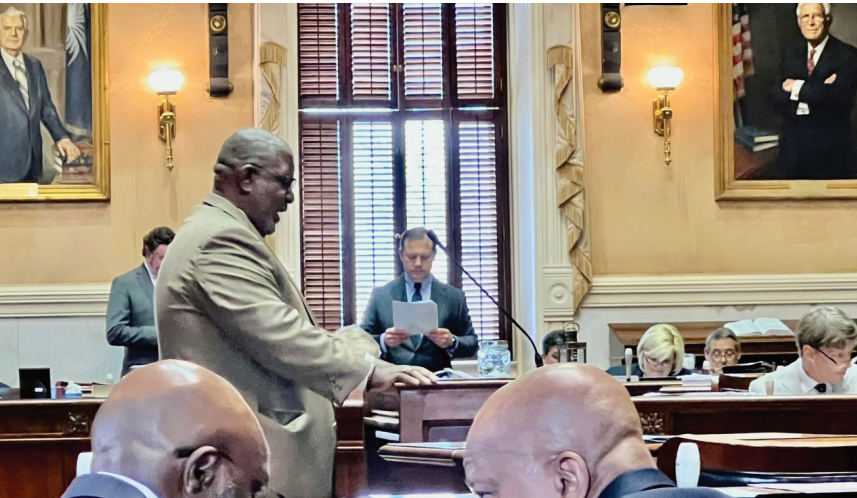
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BLACK HISTORY. Kevin Johnson spending time with his family and representing his community. (Photos C/O Kevin Johnson)

JOHNSON
FROM PAGE 1

Kimberly, Kenneth, and Kyndra, all Manning High School graduates who went on to earn master’s degrees and serve their community in different capacities. Kimberly and Kenneth, both U.S. Army veterans, could have pursued careers in larger cities but chose instead to give back to the community that shaped them.

“I am happy that they chose serving our community over the big cities and the larger salaries,” Johnson said with pride.

His devotion to family extends beyond the home. Even in the height of his political career, faith and family remained his top priorities. “Although I took my role as a public servant very seriously, my priority has always been faith and family first,” he emphasized.

A journey through public office
Johnson’s entry into public service was not born out of personal ambition but from the encouragement of others who saw his potential to lead.

After serving on the Manning City Council, he was elected Mayor of Manning in 2000, a position he held for 11 years before stepping onto the state stage. His decision to run for the South Carolina House of Representatives in 2012 was heavily influenced by his supporters, who saw his ability to bring positive change.

“When my predecessor passed away, my [supporters] would not take no for an answer, so I ran and was successful in the election,” he explained.

His rise continued in 2013, when he won a seat in the South Carolina Senate, succeeding the legendary Senator John Land, who had served for over 30 years.

“Senator Land was very well admired and respected. I knew there would be some mighty big shoes to fill,” Johnson said. Yet, with years of experience in local government and a deep understanding of his community’s needs, he stepped into the role with confidence.

Throughout his tenure in both the House and Senate, Johnson became known for his advocacy in education, economic development, and access to quality healthcare. Issues that remain critical for the people of Clarendon County and beyond.

Faith as a guiding force
A lifelong believer in servant leadership, Johnson attributes much of his success to his faith and his commitment to community service.

“I learned long ago that the most important quality of a leader is to first of all be a servant,” he said. “Understanding that is what allowed me to be successful as a leader throughout our region, state, and country.”

As a member of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church since 1987, Johnson has leaned on his faith during the most difficult moments in his career. One such moment came on June 17, 2015, when a white supremacist entered Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston and killed nine Black parishioners, including Johnson’s friend and Senate colleague Rev. Clementa Pinckney.

“It was a tragic situation. It’s during times like that when you really must have a strong faith to rely on,” he said.

The future of Black leadership
Johnson has always viewed leadership as a responsibility, not a privilege. As a former board member of the National Conference of Black Mayors and longtime President of the South Carolina Conference of Black Mayors, he worked closely with leaders across the country to bring resources to smaller communities like Manning.

He believes the next generation of Black leaders must focus on solutions, not division. “We don’t need leaders who have come here with the intent of trying to destroy what others have worked hard to build over the years,” he said. “We need leaders who spend more time advocating and less time criticizing.”

A legacy of education and opportunity
If Johnson had to choose one area where he believes he made the biggest impact, it would be education.

“As a school board member for 12 years, a longtime member of the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, and a member of the Senate Education Committee, I have always believed that education is the key to success,” he said.

His efforts to strengthen public schools, advocate for equitable funding, and create opportunities for young people stand as a testament to his commitment to progress.

“Everything that we desire to do in life is contingent on getting a good education,” Johnson stated. “With a good education, the sky’s the limit.”

A life beyond politics
Despite losing his Senate seat in the 2024 election, Johnson remains committed to public service.

“Although I lost the election, nothing has changed,” he said. “I still intend to serve in whatever capacity I can to help improve the quality of life for others. Unlike others, I have always said that you don’t have to have a position or hold an office to serve.”

With new opportunities on the horizon, he remains determined to uplift his community in any way he can.

“As a matter of fact, losing that election has given me a golden opportunity to do some things that I always wanted to do,” he said. “I have the time now, and I am working on some things, so stay tuned.”

A lasting impact
From City Hall to the State Senate, Kevin Johnson’s legacy is one of hard work, faith, and an unyielding commitment to serving others.

As Black History Month reminds us of the sacrifices and triumphs of African American leaders, Johnson’s story is one that not only celebrates the past but also inspires the future. His dedication to community, his love for his family, and his lifelong belief in the power of service make him a true leader as well as a lasting symbol of what is possible when one chooses to serve.



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• WELLNESS

Flu cases decline, hospitalizations and deaths remain high

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

Flu activity in South Carolina remains at high levels despite a decrease in reported cases, according to the latest Flu Watch report from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Hospitalizations and deaths from influenza continue to rise, underscoring the severity of the season.

For the week of February 2–8, 2025, DHEC reported 8,232 lab-confirmed cases of influenza, bringing the season total to 48,590. While this marks a decrease from the previous week, flu remains widespread across the state, with reports coming in from 22 counties.

The percentage of patient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) dropped slightly to 12.6%, though it remains significantly above the state baseline of 3.2%. The decrease in flu cases does not indicate an end to the

season, as hospitalizations and severe outcomes continue to rise.

Hospitalizations remained high, with 1,230 new influenza-associated hospitalizations reported during the week. The total number of hospitalizations for the season has climbed to 5,488, with a cumulative hospitalization rate of 108.1 per 100,000 residents. Adults aged 65 and older remain the most affected group, accounting for 679 of the new hospitalizations this week.

Flu-related deaths saw another significant jump, with 37 new fatalities reported, including 10 from previous weeks. This brings the total number of flu-related deaths for the 2024-25 season to 104. The majority of deaths continue to be among older adults, with 80 of the 104 fatalities occurring in individuals aged 65 and older.

DHEC continues to urge South Carolinians to take preventive measures against the flu, including

getting vaccinated, washing hands frequently, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home when experiencing flu symptoms. The flu vaccine remains widely available at pharmacies, healthcare providers, and DHEC health department clinics.

Health officials also remind residents that antiviral medications can help reduce the severity and duration of flu symptoms when taken early. Those at high risk for complications, including seniors, young children, pregnant individuals, and those with underlying health conditions, are especially encouraged to seek medical care if they develop flu symptoms.

South Carolinians can schedule flu vaccinations at DHEC health clinics by calling 1-855-472-3432 or by visiting DHEC's Flu Page. Weekly updates on flu activity and other respiratory illnesses are available through DHEC's Flu Watch and Respiratory Disease Watch reports.

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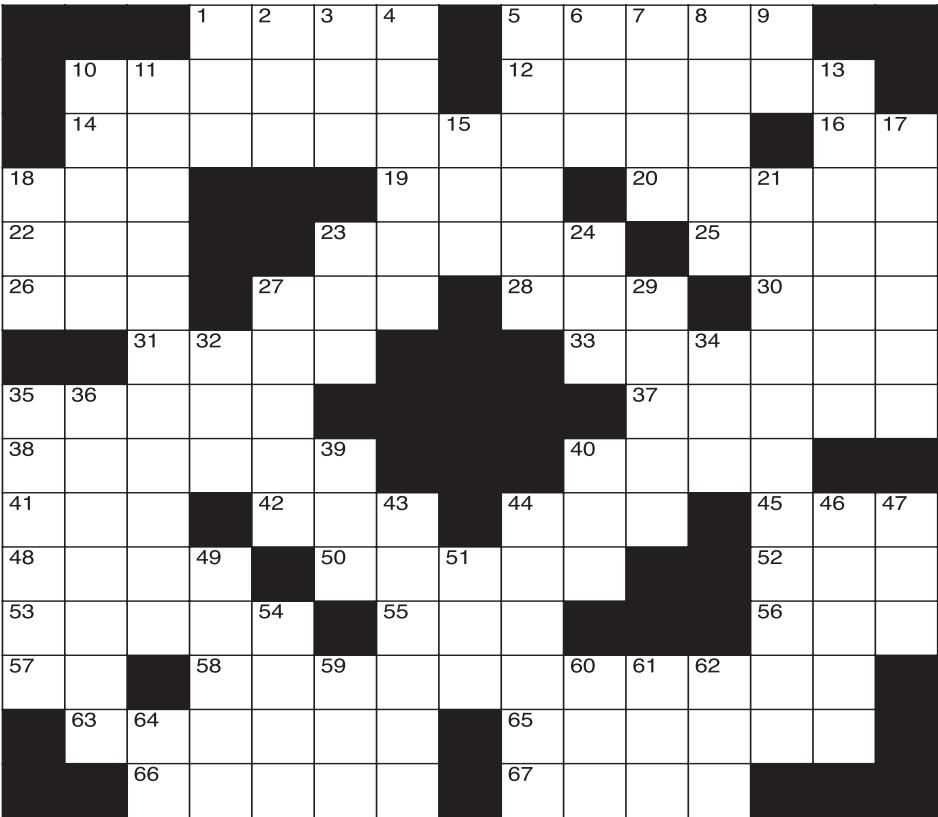
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GAMEZONE



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4. Norse god of thunder

8. Russian industrial city

10. What's good for the __

11. Round-ish shape

12. Baltimore MLBer

13. French modernist painter

15. Burned with water

16. Intestinal issue

17. Take the lead

18. Prove oneself worthy

21. None

22. Tax collector

23. Swiss river

24. Gymnast Raisman

25. Baby's dining accessory

26. Canadian beer distributor

27. Iconic American tourist destination

34. More expansive

35. Alert

36. Popular boots Doc

37. Showings

38. Conclusion

39. Share a common boundary

40. Shooting sport

41. Popular side dish

42. Global energy firm

43. Chronicles (abbr.)

1. Type of bomb

2. Polynesian island country

3. Heavenly body

4. Hard workers

5. Covered

6. Johns Hopkins Hospital founder

7. Plant of the grass family

9. Island person of the Bering Sea

10. Storehouse

12. Scarlet-flowered desert shrub

14. A pituitary hormone

15. Female sibling

17. Monetary unit of Afghanistan

19. Empowering

20. Space station

23. Disorder

24. State of fuss

25. Footwear for babies

26. Nuclear reactor (abbr.)

27. Drove

28. Affirmative

29. Male parent

30. Utter obscenities

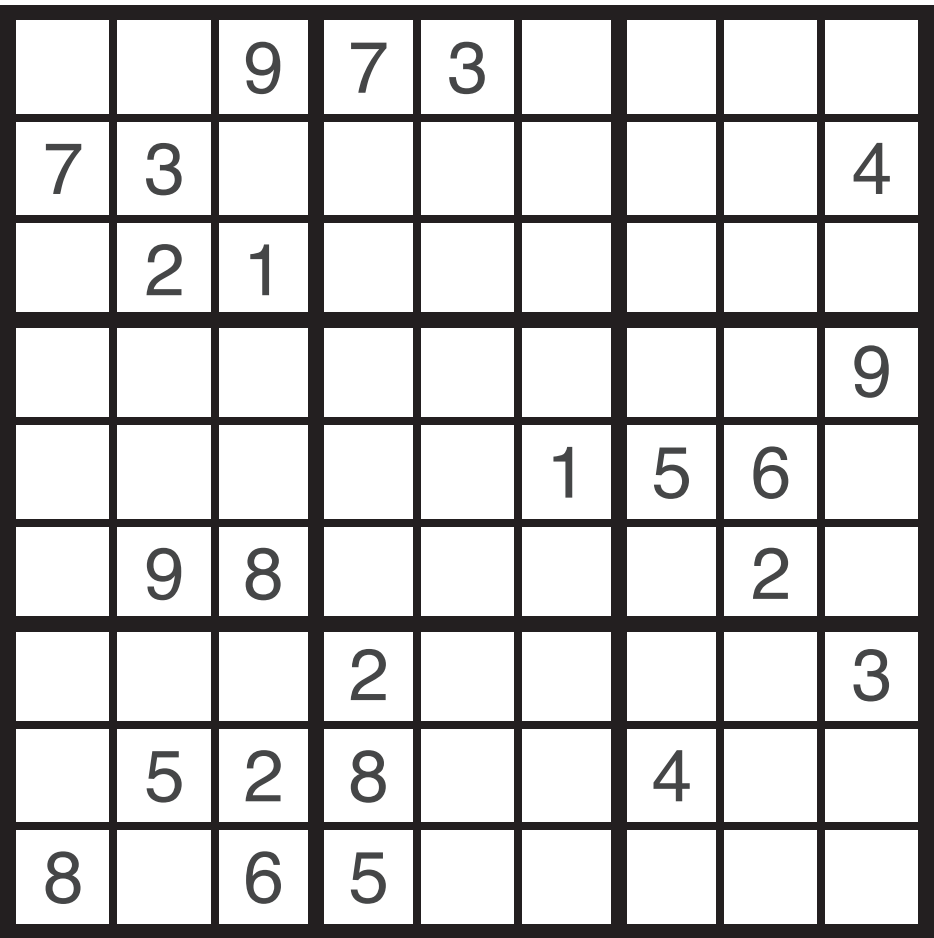
31. Type of verse

32. Unpleasant person

33. One who settles down

34. Founder of source-based history

36. A way to snarl



W O R D S C R A M B L E

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to heart health.

A Q P E U L

FUN FACT

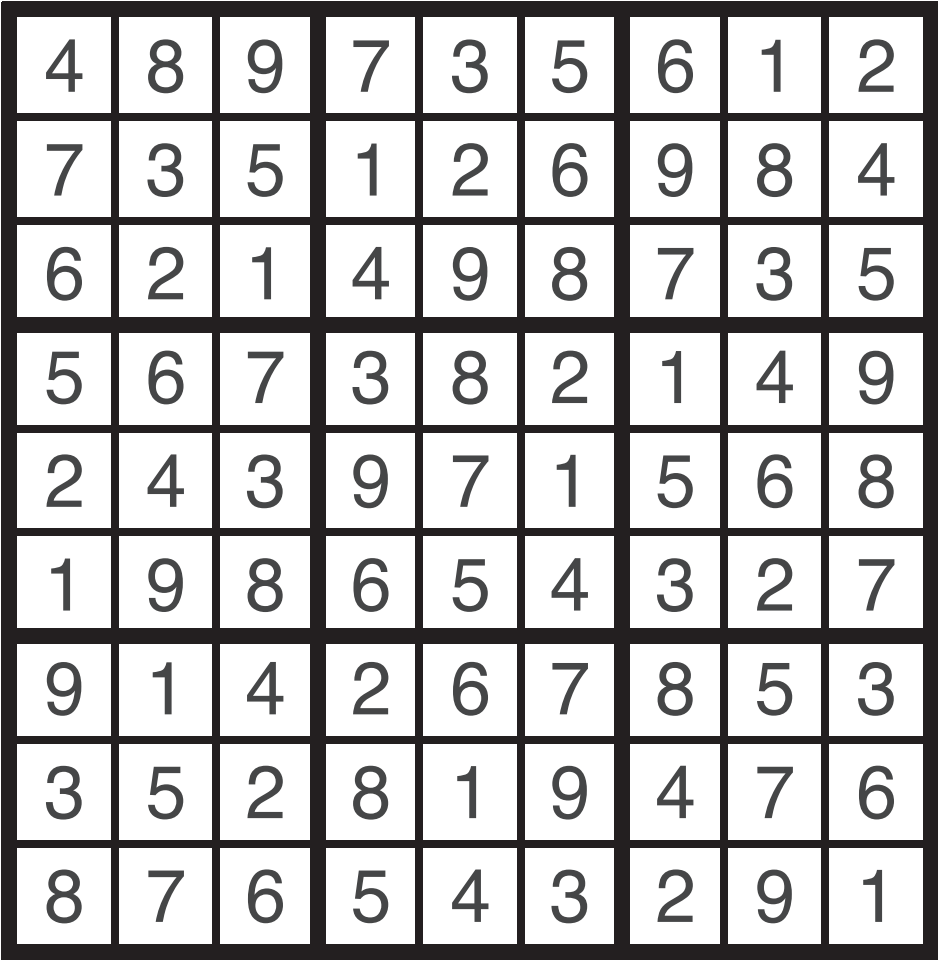
Geography Fact: This country contains 60% of the world's lakes.

« « «

DON'T PEEK!

» » »

GAME ANSWERS BELOW



E LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

• CRIME

CLARENDON CRIME BLOTTER

BY KATHERINE HUTCHINSON
mtscreporter@gmail.com

PROPERTY DAMAGE

On Jan. 20, 2025, an officer from the Manning Police Department was dispatched to the Manning Motel, located within the city limits of Manning. Dispatch informed the officer that the caller reported a subject on the scene who had broken a window in one of the rooms. Upon arrival, the officer made contact with the motel manager. The motel manager explained that a guest had approached the office complaining about an unpleasant smell in his room and indicated he would be leaving. The motel manager then went to the room and discovered that the window was broken. When the motel manager asked the guest, last name Simon, what had happened, Simon claimed that he accidentally broke the window while trying to identify the source of the smell. Simon stated he lifted the box spring off the bed to look under it. Simon stated he would pay for the damages to the window, which was valued at \$300. The motel manager decided to issue Simon a trespassing notice, and Simon then left the property.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

On Jan. 26, 2025 the officer was dispatched to a residence within the city limits of Manning in reference to a disturbance. The officer arrived on scene and spoke to the complainant. The complainant stated that he wanted a subject gone from his property. He stated that she did not live there and that she was causing a disturbance in the residence. The officer spoke to the subject, later identified by her SC ID as Davella Tindal. She stated that she did not live at the residence. The officer informed her that she needed to leave the property. After some time, Tindal finally left the property and sat on the sidewalk across the street. She then began to scream and yell profanities. After being warned multiple times to stop and refusing to do so, the officer placed Tindal under arrest for disorderly conduct. Tindal was transported to the Clarendon County Detention Center. Tindal resisted arrest throughout the process.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

On Jan. 29, 2025, an officer was dispatched to a residential area in Manning in reference to a suspicious person knocking on doors. The officer approached and identified the subject as Allen Driggers. Driggers had difficulty standing without assistance and smelled heavily of alcohol. Driggers stated that he was previously arrested and was released from jail. He stated that he needed to get home in Lake City so he was knocking on doors trying to get someone to take

him. The officer informed Driggers that he could not take him home. Driggers continued to ask. The officer asked Driggers if he had any alcohol since he was released. He stated that he bought a 40 ounce bottle of beer and drank it. The officer arrested Driggers for disorderly conduct and transported him to Clarendon County Detention Center without further incident.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

On Feb. 2, 2025, an officer with the Manning Police Department was dispatched to an area within the city limits of Manning in response to a vehicle collision. The caller reported that a white van had flipped over. Upon arrival, the officer saw that the driver was still inside the vehicle, attempting to leave the area but was unable to do so due to the damage. The officer made contact with her, later identified as Selena McFadden, who was trying to exit the vehicle. The officer instructed her to stay inside until EMS arrived to evaluate her condition. As the driver later exited the vehicle at the request of Manning Fire Department first responders, the officer detected an odor of alcoholic beverages and noted that she stumbled as she exited. The officer subsequently read McFadden her Miranda Rights and inquired about how much she had to drink that evening. McFadden claimed that she had not consumed any alcoholic beverages. The officer informed her that a field sobriety test would be performed to determine whether she was impaired during the time of the collision. The first test administered was the horizontal gaze nystagmus. The officer explained that he would observe the smoothness of her movements as they followed a stimulus. During the instruction stage, he asked McFadden to keep her eyes focused on the stimulus and follow it with her eyes alone. As the test commenced, McFadden demonstrated a lack of smooth pursuit, struggling to keep her eyes on the stimulus. Both of her eyes jerked at distinct nystagmus and maximum deviation and exhibited onset nystagmus prior to 45 degrees. The next test was the one leg stand, during which McFadden lost her balance and put her second foot down more than once. The last test was the walk and turn test. McFadden began this test before instructed, failed to walk heel-to-toe, stepped off the line, took the wrong number of steps, and performed an improper turn. After completing the tests, McFadden was evaluated by EMS but refused transport to the hospital and was taken to the Clarendon County Detention Center to perform a breath alcohol test. McFadden was informed of her rights and observed for 20 minutes before being given the test, which indicated a blood alcohol level of 0.11, which exceeded the legal limit. Consequently, McFadden was booked for driving under the influence.

LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

E LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS



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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.
Marantha Pentecostal Holiness Church - Horse Branch Road, Turbeville.
Marantha 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 Kerwood 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. Phillip RMUE - Old River Road, Pinewood.
Summerton Baptist Church - East Main Street.
Summerton Presbyterian Church - 16 South Cauty 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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• CLUB NEWS

Rotary Roundup: support for deputy and victim's advocate



DONATION. Manning Rotary Club President Johnson James presents a donation to Deputy and Victim's Advocate Scott Danback to support his mission efforts, including his work with therapy dogs and an upcoming church-led mission trip. (Photo C/O Melissa Foust-McCoy)

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

The Manning Rotary Club held its weekly meeting on February 12 at Porter Jack's, where members welcomed guest speaker Scott Danback, a deputy and victim's advocate with the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office. Danback shared the impact of his work with therapy and service dogs in assisting victims, children, and community members throughout Clarendon County.

Danback introduced members to Mateo and Micah, his two German Shepherds trained to provide comfort and support in schools, courtrooms, hospitals, and various community

settings. "I truly believe that the right dog with the right person in the right location is so necessary," he said. "It brings a lot of stability to places, and there are so many benefits to it."

He described how Mateo, who is certified as a service dog, has been instrumental in helping abuse victims, calming witnesses in court, and offering emotional support to children. "I've seen kids smack him, pull on his ears, and he just sits there looking at them like, 'Okay,'" Danback said. "That's part of what their training is, learning to be patient, calm, and present."

Beyond victim advocacy, Danback and his dogs visit day-cares, libraries, and after-school programs, helping children over-

come fear of dogs while promoting social engagement. "There are times we go into a classroom, and one or two kids are hesitant," he explained. "But when they see their peers interacting with the dogs, they slowly get more comfortable. Most of the time, by the end of our visit, every child is petting the dog."

Danback also discussed his newest endeavor: enrolling in an 18-month chaplaincy training program to become a first responder chaplain. "The sheriff has given us 100% support, and I take that very seriously," he said. "I know this is my calling, and I plan to continue this work in the mission field even after retirement."

At the conclusion of the

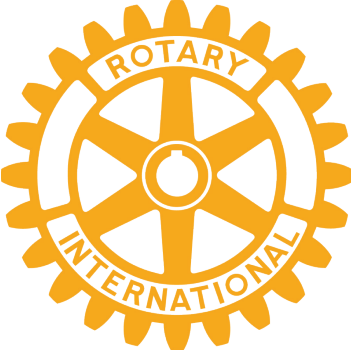
meeting, Manning Rotary Club President Johnson James presented Danback with a donation to support his mission efforts, including an upcoming church-led mission trip to assist Native American youth in Montana. "We appreciate what you, Renee, and Mateo are doing in the community," James said.

The club also provided updates on ongoing projects, including the canned goods collection competition between The Manning Times, Manning Junior High, and Manning High School's FFA programs. Donations will benefit at least three local organizations, with details on drop-off locations to be announced soon.

Additionally, members were

encouraged to follow the newly launched Manning Rotary Club Facebook page for updates on meetings, events, and service projects.

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



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GOVERNMENT

County Council approves board appointments, reviews key projects



MEETING. Robert Benefield, Director of Insurance Services for the South Carolina Association of Counties Workers' Compensation Trust, presents Clarendon County Council with a First Place Award for workplace safety. The county was recognized for having the lowest experience modifier among 43 counties, resulting in significant cost savings for taxpayers. (Photo C/O Clarendon County Administration)

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
mtscreporter@gmail.com

The Clarendon County Council convened its regular monthly meeting Monday evening, addressing a range of topics from service awards and board appointments to concerns over school district fiscal autonomy. The council also received a statewide award for workplace safety and reviewed ongoing county projects.

Chairman Jay Johnson opened the meeting with a brief welcome. "I'd like to welcome everyone here, and we're going to start our meeting off tonight," he said. Councilman Billy Richardson then delivered the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Service award and workplace safety recognition

Sergeant Stephen Switech of the Clarendon County Sheriff's Office was recognized for five years of service. Though he was not in attendance, County Administrator Lynden Anthony stated, "We'll see that he gets both the plaque and his five-year service pin."

Council also received a First Place Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties Workers' Compensation Trust for its risk management efforts. Robert Benefield, Director of Insurance Services, presented the award, noting, "Clarendon County has the lowest experience modifier of all 43 counties in our trust, which resulted in over \$200,000 in savings for taxpayers. This is a direct result of the commitment of your employees and supervisors to workplace safety."

Public comments address local history and fiscal autonomy

Two speakers took the floor during public comments, includ-

ing historian George Frierson, who highlighted the contributions of Clarendon County residents in shaping American history. "Levi Pearson, who led the effort in Pearson v. Clarendon County Board of Education, was born on this day in 1892," Frierson said. "This county played a major role in the history of this country, and it's important we continue to remember and honor that."

John Bonaparte, a member of the Clarendon County School District Board of Trustees, spoke in his personal capacity as a citizen regarding concerns over House Bill 3792, which he said could impact the district's ability to maintain fiscal autonomy. "We have worked for three years to ensure the district has the ability to manage its finances, and I personally believe that our board, with its combined 100 years of experience, is well-equipped to continue handling this responsibility," Bonaparte said. "I ask council members to consider this carefully."

Higher education in Clarendon County

Dr. Kevin Pollock, President of Central Carolina Technical College, presented an update on the college's impact in Clarendon County. "Last year, we had 378 students from Clarendon County enrolled, with 47 of them attending in-person at the F.E. DuBose Campus," Pollock stated. He noted the county's annual \$100,000 appropriation and the \$20,000 contribution to the Scholars Program, which awarded \$25,000 to local students last year.

Pollock requested that council renew the Scholars Program for another five years and acknowledged that while online courses remain the most popular option, in-person attendance at the DuBose campus continues. "We would love to have more

students attending in person, and we're working on ways to increase those numbers," he said.

Councilman William Frierson reflected on the county's longstanding partnership with the college. "We recognized over 25 years ago that in order to attract industry, we needed a college presence in Clarendon County," Frierson said. "This partnership has played a significant role in our economic growth."

Board appointments and intergovernmental agreement with Turbeville

Council approved several board appointments and reappointments, ensuring representation across county districts. The Planning Commission for District 1 will be represented by Ken Wells, Robert Borkin, and Roger Bober, while Barry Ham, GG Cutter, and Matthew Prince will serve on behalf of District 2. For the Development Board in District 3, Steve C. Gamble and H. Blade Givens were reappointed. In addition, the Clarendon County Behavioral Health and Service Commission reappointed Beatrice Knight for District 1 and Beulah Roberts, Kathy Gettings, and Joan Barber for District 2.

Council also voted to appoint a representative to the Santee Lynches Council of Governments (COG) to represent Clarendon County at regional meetings.

Additionally, the council approved an intergovernmental agreement between Clarendon County and the Town of Turbeville regarding a planned outdoor stage at the future site of the Turbeville Library. Anthony explained, "Since the town is applying for state funds for this project on county property, the grant requires an agreement between both entities."

Financial report shows positive budget trends

Chief Financial Officer Tammy Rodvansky presented the financial report, stating that general fund expenses were at 54% of budget as of January 31, lower than the expected 58%. "We're running lower than where we should be, which is a good thing," she said. She noted that revenue figures were not available due to a software issue but would be provided next month.

Rodvansky reported that the C-Fund had a cash balance of \$7,890,941, with \$6,582,333 already committed to road projects, leaving \$1,308,608 uncommitted. Water and sewer revenue for the year totaled \$901,134, with a net surplus of \$21,878 after expenses, depreciation, and bond payments. She also confirmed that Weldon Auditorium's revenue was \$802,000, with all expenses covered by hospitality tax funds. In closing, Rodvansky noted that budget packets had been distributed to all county departments, with submissions due by the end of February and departmental meetings set for March.

Administrator's report updates on key county projects

Administrator Lynden Anthony reported that the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is in its final planning stages, with groundbreaking expected by fall. The Turbeville Fire Station remains on schedule, with a Certificate of Occupancy expected in April.

Work continues on the Public Works, Fleet Maintenance, and Animal Control Facility, where site layouts are being modified before permits are issued. In the Davis Station area, a test well is currently being drilled, and new water mains will soon go out for bid as part of a water expansion project. Meanwhile, renovations

at Weldon Auditorium are moving forward, with bid documents being finalized.

Anthony also updated council members on Summerton's wastewater development project, reporting that engineering design is near completion. The Law Enforcement Joint Training Facility is making progress, with construction on the fire ranges underway and the support building now out for bid. He further noted that an engineering firm has been selected for the Newman Branch Restoration Project, with environmental planning conversations beginning.

In recreational updates, basketball season has concluded, and baseball and softball registration recently closed, with games set to begin soon. Anthony also reported that repairs to Taw Caw Park's fire-damaged boardwalk are nearly complete.

Before closing, he thanked first responders and county staff for their work during the recent winter storm. "It's not often we get an ice event like this, but thanks to our emergency teams and the South Carolina Department of Transportation, we were able to minimize accidents," Anthony said.

Chairman's report and adjournment

Johnson noted that he had no formal chairman's report but took a moment to thank county staff and his fellow council members. "I'd like to just take a quick second and say a big thank you to everyone—from Administrator Anthony to the entire team—y'all have been bringing me along, and I'm figuring it out," he said.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned. The next council meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2025, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 411 Sunset Drive, Manning.

IN MEMORY

County auditor honors plane crash victims at National Cathedral service

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
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More than four decades after losing her brother in the Air Florida Flight 90 crash, Clarendon County Auditor Patricia Pringle traveled to Washington, D.C., on Feb. 8 to speak at a National Cathedral service honoring victims of recent tragedies, including those who perished in a recent plane crash near Reagan National Airport.

The interfaith service, organized by Dr. Stephne Coney of the International Stop the Violence Alliance, brought together law enforcement officers, first responders, religious leaders, and families impacted by loss. Among those attending was Pringle, whose brother, Joe Nathan Pringle, was killed on Jan. 13, 1982, when Flight 90 struck the 14th Street Bridge before plunging into the icy Potomac River. He was driving home from his job as a top mechanic at Arlington National Cemetery

when the plane crashed into traffic, claiming his life at just 26 years old.

"For 43 years, we have carried this grief," Pringle said. "My heart aches for the families experiencing this same pain now. I came to let them know they are not alone."

The service was held in remembrance of the 67 passengers killed in the recent crash, along with victims of other tragedies, including the New Orleans terrorist attack and the Los Angeles fires.

Ann Buckley, president of the Skating Club of Boston, attended to honor six young club members who were among those killed in the plane crash.

"We have been so deeply touched by the outpouring of love and support from all over the United States and from other countries," Buckley said.

Pringle, who has visited memorials dedicated to Flight 90's victims at Reagan National Airport, recalled how her family

endured the agony of waiting for confirmation of her brother's fate. The traffic delays from the crash kept many from realizing he had been in the direct path of the disaster.

"I remember my sister-in-law calling to check on him, thinking maybe he was stuck in traffic," Pringle said. "We didn't know until later that night."

Pringle said the grief of sudden loss never fades, but the shared pain among families of victims creates an unbreakable bond. She hopes to see continued support for those affected.

"We wanted to let them know that we are here, that we love them, and that we grieve with them," Coney said.

As prayers filled the cathedral, Pringle said she felt the weight of history repeating itself, but also a sense of unity and healing.

"It's heartbreaking, but I know my brother would want me here," she said. "To stand with these families, to remind them they are not alone."



TECH. Clarendon County Auditor Patricia Pringle stands inside the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 8, 2025, after speaking at a service honoring victims of recent tragedies. Pringle attended in memory of her brother, Joe Nathan Pringle, who was killed in the 1982 Air Florida Flight 90 crash. (Photo C/O Patricia Pringle)

• EDUCATION

A Legacy of Success: Sonja Rush-Harvin and the impact of WTC Dual Enrollment

SUBMITTED
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Sonja Rush-Harvin, a lifelong advocate for education, has played a pivotal role in promoting dual enrollment opportunities in Williamsburg County. Born and raised in Kingstree, SC, Sonja attended East Clarendon High School before embarking on a career in education. Following in the footsteps of her mother, Gwendolyn Rush—one of the first instructors at Williamsburg Technical College—Sonja developed a deep passion for academic advancement within her community. She has dedicated 27 years to C.E. Murray High School (now C.E. Murray Middle School), serving in multiple roles including lab proctor, biology teacher, curriculum coordinator, and currently, Assistant Principal.

Sonja has been instrumental in supporting dual enrollment initiatives at C.E. Murray, where she once served as the school’s primary contact for the program. She has witnessed firsthand how these opportunities provide students with a head start on their college education while also easing financial burdens. “I’ve always instilled the importance of education,” Sonja stated. “Often, people aren’t able to afford higher education, so dual enrollment plays a significant role in helping students reduce costs while still

obtaining a four-year degree. By taking advantage of these courses, students can complete an associates’ degree in high school, then continue to pursue a bachelors’ degree if desired post graduation.

Her commitment to the program is reflected in her own children’s success. All three of her children—Marcus, Darius, and Kayla—have participated in dual enrollment through Williamsburg Technical College. Marcus utilized his college credits to advance his business education at the University of South Carolina and later earned a master’s degree from Stanford University. Darius leveraged his dual enrollment experience to graduate in just three years from USC before entering the NFL, where he currently plays for the Kansas City Chiefs. Kayla, currently a junior at Kingstree High School, is on track to complete her associate degree through dual enrollment before graduating high school, positioning herself for academic and professional success.

Beyond its benefits for individual students, Sonja recognizes the positive impact dual enrollment has on the local community. “Now, you can’t just walk out of high school and get some of the higher-paying jobs students want,” she explained. “You need post-secondary education, and dual enrollment can help with that. Not only does it cover

general studies, but students can also earn certifications in fields like HVAC or Welding, allowing them to enter the workforce immediately with salaries starting at \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year. In a small rural town like ours, these opportunities are invaluable.”

Williamsburg Technical College offers a variety of dual enrollment options designed to help high school students gain a competitive edge. The Dual Enrollment Advanced Learning (D.E.A.L.) program allows students to earn tuition-free college credits, while the Early College program provides selected 10th graders the chance to complete an associate degree before high school graduation. Additionally, the Career and Technology Education (C.A.T.E.) courses offer career-ready pathways for students interested in technical fields.

Sonja Rush-Harvin’s advocacy for dual enrollment underscores its role as a transformative force in students’ lives. Her dedication ensures that more students in Williamsburg County can access these opportunities and build successful futures. For more information about dual enrollment programs at Williamsburg Technical College, visit <https://www.wiltech.edu/> or contact Paige Brown, Associate Vice President of Academics and Special Projects.



TECH. Sonja Rush-Harvin and her family. (Photos C/O Williamsburg Technical College)

• BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Lake Marion Artisan Gallery hosts Black history celebration in Summerton



ART. Attendees at the Lake Marion Artisan Gallery’s Black History Month celebration on Feb. 12 enjoyed an evening of powerful speeches, soulful gospel music, and inspiring artwork. The event highlighted the achievements of local Black artists and brought the community together in celebration of history, culture, and creativity. (Photos C/O Melissa Foust-McCoy)

BY MELISSA FOUST-MCCOY
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The Lake Marion Artisan Gallery honored Black History Month with an evening of reflection, music, and art on Feb. 12. The event, held at the gallery’s Main Street location, featured guest speaker Aaliyah Arrahman and a performance by the Clark

Brothers Gospel Singers. Arrahman delivered a speech highlighting the legacies of President Abraham Lincoln and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., reading excerpts from the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address. She spoke on the lasting impact of these historical figures and their roles in shaping the civil rights movement.

The Clark Brothers Gospel

Singers followed with a soul-stirring performance, blending traditional spirituals with original compositions. Their set included themes of faith, perseverance, and unity, encouraging the audience to reflect on the significance of Black history and culture.

The event was part of the gallery’s ongoing efforts to celebrate local Black artists and creators. Attendees were invited to view

artwork, enjoy refreshments, and engage in conversations about the role of art in shaping culture.

“Art plays a crucial role in shaping and renewing culture,” said Tim Jones of Artscape, as quoted in the gallery’s promotional materials. “In times like these, we need to empower artists like never before to help us reflect, rekindle our hope, and imagine a better future.”

The Lake Marion Artisan Gallery, a nonprofit organization, continues to provide a platform for artistic expression and community engagement in Summerton.

For more information, visit the gallery’s Facebook page at Lake Marion Artisans Gallery-LMAG.